

**FAMILY CLIMATE AS PREDICTOR OF QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG
UNDERGRADUATES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN ANAMBRA STATE**

KIZITO CHUKWUNONSO UMENNADI
Faculty of Education
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam Campus.
kizitoumennadi@gmail.com

IFEOMA E. OBI
Faculty of Education
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam Campus.
ifyobi25@yahoo.com

&
UJU P. EGENTI
Faculty of Education
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
Igbariam Campus.

Abstract

The study investigated family climate as a predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. The aim of the study was to explore family climate as a predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 54,998 undergraduates from public universities in Anambra State. Taro Yamane was used to determine the sample size of 397 undergraduates. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select the sample. The instruments used for data collection were Family Climate Scale (FCS) and World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BRIEF). Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficients method was used to establish the reliability of the instruments. The computation yielded co-efficient values of 0.82 and 0.80 for FCS and WHOQOL-BRIEF respectively. Simple regression analysis was used for data analysis. The findings indicated that Family Climate had a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among undergraduates. The findings also showed a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state. Based on the findings, it was recommended that university management and community based organization should organize regular sensitization programmes, workshops and seminars for parents on the importance of maintaining a positive family climate.

Key Words: Family Climate, Quality of Life, Undergraduates, Predictor.

Introduction

University students constitute a vital segment of the population and represent the future workforce and leadership of any nation. The university years are a developmental period characterized by significant psychological, social, and emotional changes. During this stage, students undergo the transition from adolescence to young adulthood, which requires them to develop independence, manage academic workloads, and establish social and professional relationships (Arnett, 2014). While this transition provides opportunities for growth and self-actualization, it also exposes students to a variety of stressors such as academic pressure, financial constraints, and emotional challenges which have a profound influence on their general well-being and quality of life (Duffy et al, 2019).

Quality of life is a multidimensional construct that reflects an individual's overall well-being and satisfaction with life. World Health Organization (WHO 1997) defined quality of life as individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live, and in relation to their goals, expectations, and concerns. It encompasses several domains including physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships and environmental satisfaction (Diener et al, 2018).

Among university students, quality of life has been associated with mental health, academic engagement, interpersonal relationships, and life satisfaction (Salavera et al 2017). When students experience high quality of life, they are more likely to perform well academically, maintain positive relationships, and exhibit emotional stability. Conversely, poor quality of life has been linked with increased stress, poor academic performance, depression and maladaptive coping behaviours (Bukhah et al, 2011). In Nigeria, undergraduates often face multi socio-economic and institutional challenges that may negatively affect their well-being. Factors such as poor learning environments, high unemployment rates, unstable academic calendars, high parental expectations, and limited financial support contribute to stress among students (Ojedokun, 2015). Despite these challenges, the family remains a fundamental source of support for students, providing financial assistance, emotional security and moral guidance. However, the nature of family climate can significantly influence how well students adapt to university life and maintain a satisfactory quality of life.

Family climate is the emotional atmosphere, cohesion, interpersonal dynamics and relational patterns within a family. It encompasses the overall quality of relationships, communication patterns and emotional tone that prevail among family members. Hughes and Rankin (2021) defined family climate as the emotional atmosphere and quality of relationship within the family, including dimensions such as warmth, conflict, and communication. Moos and Moos (2009) described family climate as the overall quality of interpersonal relationships, communication patterns, cohesion, and emotional expressiveness within the family system. A positive family climate is characterized by warmth, acceptance, open communication, mutual respect, and supportive interactions (Olson & Gorall, 2016). Such environments nurture individuals' self-esteem, resilience, and capacity to handle stress effectively. Conversely, a negative or conflictual family climate marked by hostility, criticism, neglect or rigid control may undermine a students sense of security, autonomy and self-worth.

Studies have demonstrated that family climate plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' self-esteem, emotional regulations and psychological wellbeing. Students from supportive family tend to exhibit higher life satisfaction, better coping skills and enhanced

academic performance (Sharma & Sirah, 2018; Garcia-Mandoza et al 2020). On the other hand, family environments marked by poor communication and excessive control have been associated with low self-worth, emotional instability, and reduced quality of life (Yap & Jorm, 2015). These findings suggest that family climate remains a vital predictor of undergraduates wellbeing even as they strive for independence and autonomy.

Despite the growing concern about student well-being in Nigeria, limited research has focused on how family climate predicts the quality of life of undergraduate in public universities in Anambra state. Most existing studies have explored related constructs such as academic performance, mental health, or stress without considering the family climate as a determinant of quality of life. Therefore, the study investigated family climate as a predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state.

Statement of the Problem

The term quality of life entails living a life that is fulfilling in purpose, joy, and with the resources and support to pursue one's desires, and to plod through life's tribulations with hope and resilience. In relation to academic studies, it involves making requisite adjustment to cope with academic needs, socio-economic aspirations and the complete expectations of university education outcome. It is a universal belief and expectation from the university administrators, government, and guardians to be optimistic that students given admission into the university will do well in acquiring desired knowledge, skills, abilities and to finish their studies within the scheduled time frame to be viably employable in the world at work. Nonetheless, facts have revealed that most undergraduates in higher institutions do experience low quality of life, a great challenge that could negatively affect their mental, physical, social, and academic results, culminating in stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and poor academic performance. This trend poses a great worry and concern. In most cases, this problem could be attributed to unconducive family climate, academic pressure and poverty, which in turn wane down resilience of the students and adverse low quality of life.

Family climate is an effective coping strategy and a substantial approach to addressing low quality of life and ameliorating its consequential effects to foster a positive and viable undergraduate with high quality of life. The problem of this study is thus hinged on ascertaining the predictive value of family climate and quality of life among undergraduate students in Anambra state public universities.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the predictive value of family climate on quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.
2. determine the predictive value of family climate on quality of life of male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of family climate on quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive value of family climate on quality of life of male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Family climate is not a significant predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.
2. Family climate is not a significant predictor of quality of life among male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Method

The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 54,998 undergraduates; 39,999 (18,143 males and 21,856 females) from Nnamdi Azikiwe University and 14,999 (5,597 males and 9,402 females) from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu university. This was determined using Taro-Yamane. The sample of the study was 397 (178 males and 219 females) undergraduates. This consisted of 218 (106 males and 112 females) from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, (Unizik), Awka and 179 (72 males and 107 females) from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU). Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Family Climate Scale (FCS) by Kurdek and Sinclair (1995), and World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire (WHOQOL-BREF) were used for data collection. The face validity was established by three experts, two experts from Guidance and Counselling and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instruments was established using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient. The computation yielded co-efficient values of 0.82 and 0.80 for Family Climate Scale and World Health Organisation Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire respectively. The researchers administered the questionnaire directly to the respondents with the help of six research assistants. Direct delivery method was adopted to ensure high return rate. The data collected were analyzed using simple linear regression analysis.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What is the predictive value of family climate on quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis with Family Climate as Predictor of Quality of Life among Undergraduates

Predictor	Unstandardized B	SE	Standardized β	Remark
(Constant)	0.90	0.18		
family climate scores	0.64	0.06	0.59	Strong positive predictive value

R = 0.59
 R² = 0.38
 Adjusted R² = 0.38

The results in Table1, indicated that the regression of quality of life on family climate scores yielded an unstandardized B of 0.64 and standardized β of 0.59. The β value indicates

that a unit increase in positive family climate resulted in 0.59 unit increase in quality of life of undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. This implied a strong positive predictive value. Furthermore, the model R^2 of 0.38 implies family climate explained 38% of the variance in quality of life of the undergraduates while the remaining 62% could be explained by other factors.

Research Question Two: What is the predictive value of family climate on quality of life among male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State?

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis with Family Climate as a Predictor of Quality of Life of Male and Female Undergraduates in Public Universities in Anambra State.

Predictor	Unstandardized B	SE	Standardized β	Remark
(Constant)	0.60	0.22		
Family Climate scores	0.66	0.07	0.59	Strong positive predictive value
R = 0.59 R ² = 0.39 Adjusted R ² = 0.39				
(Constant)	1.04	0.21		
Family Climate scores	0.59	0.06	0.52	Strong positive predictive value
R = 0.52 R ² = 0.30 Adjusted R ² = 0.29				

As shown in Table 2 the regression of quality of life on family climate of male and female undergraduates yielded a unstandardized B value 0.66 and a beta weighting(β) of 0.59 for the male undergraduates, and a B value of 0.59 with a beta weighting(β) 0.52 for the female undergraduates. The beta weighting (β) value of 0.59 for male and 0.52 for female indicated that a unit increment in Family climate among the students results in a 0.59% and 0.52% unit increment in the quality of life of male and female undergraduates respectively. These two values revealed a strong positive predictive value of family climate for quality of life among both genders. Similarly, the Model R^2 of 0.39 for the males and 0.30 for the female implies that family climate explained 39% and 30% of the variance in quality of life of the male and female undergraduates respectively in public universities in Anambra State while 61% and 70% of the variance of quality of life of the male and female undergraduates respectively were accounted for by other variables. This implied family climate had relative importance in explaining the quality of life of both genders.

Hypothesis One: Family climate is not a significant predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Table 3: Test of Significance of Simple Regression with Family Climate Scores as Predictor of Quality of Life among Undergraduates in Public Universities in Anambra State.

Predictor	B	SE	B	T	p-value	Remark
(Constant)		0.18		5.19	0.000	
Family Climate Scores	0.90	0.06	0.59	13.95	0.000	Significant

Table 3 showed that family climate was a significant predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State, $\beta = 0.59$, $t = 13.95$, $p < 0.05$. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected,

Hypothesis Two: Family climate is not a significant predictor of quality of life among male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Table 4: Test of Significance of Simple Regression with Family Climate Scores as Predictor of Quality of Life among Male and Female Undergraduates.

Gender	Predictor	B	SE	B	t	p-value	Remark
Male	(Constant)	0.60	0.22		5.44	0.000	
	Family Climate Scores	0.66	0.07	0.59	10.98	0.000	Significant
Female	(Constant)	1.04	0.21		4.99	0.000	
	Family Climate Scores	0.69	0.06	0.52	9.51	0.000	Significant

Table 4 showcased that family climate significantly predicted quality of life for both male and female undergraduates. For male undergraduates, family climate is a strong predictor of quality of life with $\beta = 0.59$, $t = 10.98$, $p < 0.05$; female undergraduates also significantly predicted quality of life with a slightly lower effect size, $\beta = 0.52$, $t = 9.51$, $p < 0.05$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected for both groups since the p-values are less than 0.05.

Discussion

The findings of the study indicated that family climate had a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state. This showed that the quality of life of undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state tend to increase strongly when there is an increase in their family climate. More so, the findings of the corresponding null hypotheses revealed that there was a significant relationship between family climate and quality of life of undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state. The result of the corresponding null hypotheses showed that family climate was a significant predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State. This is in agreement with the findings of Gomez-Baya et al (2020), Neyisci et al (2021), Sood and Gupta (2024), and Galambos et al (2016) which reported a positive relationship between family climate and quality of life of students. The possible reasons for this could be that students come from supportive and nurturing family environment which provides emotional security. This help them manage the stress and pressure associated with academic life. When students feel loved, accepted, and understood by family members, they are more likely to experience emotional stability and psychological well-being, both of which are crucial components of quality of life. In addition, family that promote encouragement, and positive expectations tend to instil a strong sense of self-efficacy and motivation in the students, such students are more likely to be goal-oriented, resilient, and optimistic. These traits can contribute to higher life satisfaction and overall well-being.

The findings showed that family climate has a strong positive predictive value for quality of life among male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state. This indicated that the quality of life of both male and female undergraduates in public universities in Anambra state tend to increase strongly when there is an increase in their family climate. The results of the corresponding null hypotheses revealed that family climate significantly predicted quality of life for both male and female undergraduates. This finding is in agreement with that of Morales and Nunes (2024), and Sood and Gupta (2024), which revealed that family climate is positive predictor of quality of life of both male and female undergraduates. This finding is not surprising because family support provides a stable emotional foundation for the students. Both male and female students often rely on their families for reassurance, encouragement and unconditional acceptance, especially during times of academic and social stress. This emotional stability contributes significantly to psychological well-being, a core element of quality of life.

Conclusion

The study investigated family climate as predictor of quality of life among university undergraduates in Anambra State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that family climate is a positive predictor of quality of life among undergraduates in public universities in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Parents and guardians should foster a family atmosphere characterized by love, care, respect, and open communication. A warm and supportive family climate helps undergraduates develop emotional stability, confidence, and a sense of belonging, which inturn enhance their quality of life both within and outside the university.

2. University management and community based organizations should organize regular sensitization programmes, workshops and seminars for parents on the importance of maintaining a positive family climate. These programmes should emphasize how mutual understanding, emotional support and conflict resolution at home contribute to students' well-being and academic success.
3. University counsellors should provide family counselling services to help parents and students address communication breakdown, conflicts and emotional distance. Such interventions can rebuild trust and harmony within families, leading to improved student morale and life satisfaction.
4. Parents should avoid gender bias in emotional expression, support or expectations. Parents should recognize that both males and females experience academic, social and emotional challenges during university life, and thus require equal care, empathy, and attention to maintain a high quality of life,.

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