



A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF OBAFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY, ILE-IFE, NIGERIA

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Abstract:

The study investigated the university life satisfaction among undergraduates. The study employed the survey design technique. The population consisted undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. A total of four faculties out of the thirteen faculties in the school were selected using simple random sampling technique. From each faculty, 150 undergraduates were selected using convenience sampling technique. An adapted instrument titled "Students University Life Satisfaction Scale (SULSS)" was used to collect information from the students and the instrument yielded Spearman Brown Coefficients and Spearman Brown Split-half reliability tests values of 0.77 and 0.83 respectively at 0.05 level of significance. Percentage, rank order and t-test statistics were employed to analyse the data. The results showed that 342 (57%) of undergraduates were highly satisfied with the university life. It was revealed that the most factors that were responsible for the university life satisfaction among the undergraduates were academic activities 563 (94%), recreational activities 521 (87%) and spiritual programmes/activities 521 (88%). Also, the results showed that the problems of university life satisfaction were overcrowded lecture rooms 573 (96%), academic workload 548 (91%) and unstable academic calendar 538 (90%). Finally, the results showed that there was no significant difference between sex and university life satisfaction (t-test = -0.582, df.= 598, $p > 0.05$), but significant difference was found between place of residence and university life

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satisfaction (t -test = 0.012, df . = 598, $p < 0.05$), The study concluded that the students were highly satisfied with university life but depended much on factors such as academic activities, recreational activities and spiritual programmes/activities and physical facilities for their satisfaction.

Keywords: factors, university, life satisfaction, undergraduates

1. Introduction

The main aim of any student is to achieve the highest level of satisfaction by exploring a host of all resources within and outside the confine of the university. Hill (1995) considered higher education as a service industry which places greater emphasis on meeting the expectations and needs of students. This implies that academic degree may be an avenue to a better and more satisfied life among the members of many societies.

According to Safari (2007), human is an objective creature always evaluating his/her life and feels no satisfaction until he/she attains his goals. No wonder, a saying among the educated adults "school life is the best" is a popular slogan which is commonly echoed especially when the adults are reflecting on their experiences on campus. Most at times, many individuals cast their minds and relay many activities they had engaged in during their school days. As they do this, they give account of their previous university activities ranging from academic and non-academic. At this point, individuals view their life's accomplishments, then evaluate their actions with the ultimate of aim of coming to a conclusion whether they are satisfied with their life patterns on campus or not. From their judgement, life perceived as well-spent will result in sense of well-being and integrity, while an unpleasant or unsatisfactory life will make someone unhappy.

Conceptually, satisfaction is seen as a feeling of happiness or pleasure because one has achieved something or got what he wanted. It is regarded as a fulfillment of need or desire, the pleasure obtained by such fulfillment. Also, it is the feeling of pleasure or disappointment attained from comparing a product's perceived performance (outcome) in relation to his or her expectations. Hence, Adeyemi and Farayola (2014) expressed that life satisfaction involves people thinking about their life as a whole, including factors such as whether they are achieving their goals, are doing as well as other people around them, and are happy generally rather than just right now. In his own view, Beutell (2006) indicated that life satisfaction is an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular in time ranging from negative to positive. While corroborating the above, Huebner, Valois, Paxton and

Drane, (2005) and Myers and Diener (1995) defined life satisfaction as a cognitive evaluation of one's life as a whole and or of specific life domains. This cognitive assessment however is based on how people believe their life should be in relation to how it is (Paschali & Tsitsas, 2009). Consequent upon the above definitions, Julie and Andrea (2011) explained that life satisfaction, even though, it is sometimes used interchangeably with happiness, however, being happy simply means the current state of one's emotion, while, life satisfaction is closer to the concept of an overall and more stable living, and realizing the best potential within oneself. Above all, life satisfaction is the judgement or meaning a person gives to his/her life style in terms of its quality.

Given the above points, Muhammed and Mohsin (2013) conceived university life satisfaction as a state felt by a person after experience or it is an outcome that fulfills person's expectations on campus. Sustaining the view, Abbasi, Malik and Imdadullah (2011) believed that it is not really about quality of education received by a student, rather, it is measured based on the student's self-reported experiences about school activities. In their own reaction, Elliot and Shin (2002) revealed that university life satisfaction is the favourability of subjective evaluation by a student about numerous outcomes and experiences with education and overall environment. In essence, Elliot and Shin (2002) saw the benefits of students' university life satisfaction as not only to enable universities re-engineer their organizations to adapt to students' needs, but also to assist them to develop a system for continuous monitoring of how effectively perform their responsibilities to the students.

According to Wiers-Jenssen, Stensaker and Groggaard (2002) life satisfaction is an overall response not only to the learning experience of a student but other co-curricular activities. Reacting to the above, Josephat, Ismail and Martin (2014) mentioned that there are two main activities which form students' satisfaction on campus. These include academic and non-academic. The academic factors include students' satisfaction with learning activities, environment, facilities, methods etc, while the non-academic factors include co-curricular activities such as sporting, parties or social gathering, religious and commitments and unionism. Also, Haque, Das and Farzana (2001), identified independent factors that can affect student satisfaction based on services offered by universities. These include quality of teaching, student research facilities, library book collections and services, campus infrastructure, canteen facilities, space for group discussions, sport programmes, ICT (PC and Internet) facilities etc.

Although, several studies have been carried out on the subject-matter, but, most of the available studies have been conducted in the Western educational context (Maggs, 2014; Arambewela & Hall, 2013) and in the Gulf region, (Parahoo, Harvey, & Tamim, 2013), where both the culture and climate are considerably different from those

of the Sub-Saharan Africa. Even, in Nigeria, there has not been so much focus on the study of life satisfaction among undergraduates in Nigeria (Oladipo, Adenaike, Adejumo & Ojewumi 2013). Nevertheless, the few research results about the life satisfaction of college or university students, e.g. Chow (2005) have indicated that students were most satisfied with their social relationships and living for example, environment. In their own contrary opinion, Oladipo and Olapegba (2012) found that there was an evidence of low satisfaction with life among undergraduates in Southwestern Nigeria.

In Obafemi Awolowo University (O. A. U.), Nigeria, among the undergraduates, there is a general consensus that academic activities of the university are characterized with a lot of ups and down and this is putting a lot of stress on them. Even though, in the midst of this stressful situation, the students are adjusting to the situation, nonetheless, one is uncertain of the students' university life satisfaction. For instance, a cursory look at the teaching assessment form that students of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife are meant to fill, through school's electronic portal, at the end of each semester has suggested that students may after all, dissatisfied with academic factors and hostel facilities than the non-academic factors which are all components of university life satisfaction. Arising from this assumption, it is not sure the extent of university life satisfaction among the undergraduates of O. A. U. While some students believed that the stressful situation on campus notwithstanding, they are finding the university life quite interesting. Others opined that some situational factors have denied them the satisfaction they would have enjoyed on campus. Given the fact that there are contrary opinions among the students, the present study seeks to investigate the level and identify the factors that are responsible for of university life satisfaction among undergraduates of O. A. U. These are with a view to adding to the existing literature.

By and large, various attempts have been made on the factors that are responsible for university life satisfaction among students across continents, countries races, universities. Many of these studies conducted internationally and locally have emphasized specific factors influencing university life satisfaction. For instance, a study carried out in the United Arab Emirate (UAE) by the pair of Wilkins and Stehens Balkrishnan (2013), showed that quality of lecturers, resources and effective use of technology were the most influential factors of university life satisfaction among students in a university in UAE. However, the results generated here were not generalized to all international campuses because of differences in cultures, customs, traditions and social contexts were taken into consideration. Also, the study carried out by Roger and Smith (2010) revealed that the predictors of overall satisfaction of students were real interest in the individual's learning needs and progress,

development of understanding of concepts and principles, clear expectations, genuine interest of staff in teaching and realistic job. Furthermore, Douglas, Douglas and Barnes (2006) indicated that students responded that the factors that determined their university life satisfaction were the ones associated with teaching and learning, while the least important associated with the physical facilities. In his own reaction, Coskun (2014) expressed that students gave more importance to academic staff, teaching and relationships apart from technology, administration, and campus facilities as the ingredients of university life satisfaction.

Similarly, Haider and Mannan (2014) mentioned that academic staff, teaching level, relationship, technology, administrative styles and campus facilities were the major factors responsible for life satisfaction of students. Besides, Mehdipour and Zerekafi (2013) examined the relationship between university services and students' university life. Their results showed that there was high level of relationship between university services and satisfaction of students to university life. They opined that relationship between students and teachers; school authority and students were the major determinants of satisfaction of university life. In their own submission, Muhammad and Mohson (2013) and Munawar and Musarrat (2011) stated that though there was wide spread that there was relationship between service quality and students' satisfaction, yet, every aspect of students' experience should be worthwhile from the day of orientation/matriculation till the day of convocation.

Generally, studies have been carried out on the influence of sex on university life satisfaction among students. One research (World Health Organisation) revealed that males were happier than females. Others researches have shown that females were significantly restricted in their ability to move around when compared to their males. And this would limit the level of satisfaction of female students. James and Dorine (2013) carried out a research on international students' satisfaction of university life and they came up with the findings that female students were found to be more satisfied with the university life than their male counterparts. Supporting this view, Pinqart and Sorensen (2000) asserted that men and women derive satisfaction from different sources. In their study, life satisfaction was more highly related to income for men than for women. Likewise, Sorensen (2000) found that correlations between life satisfaction and gender. While reacting differently, Khartibi (2013) showed the influence of welfare services and management, while revealed that no relationship with student's sex. Furthermore, Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith (1999) expressed that men and women have been found to be similar in their overall levels of life satisfaction. On the final note, the findings of Grace, Paul and Moonlong (2003) revealed that there was no significant relationship between student's sex and university life satisfaction.

In conclusion, it is of worth note to ascertain if students living on and off campus differed in their level of satisfaction of university life. Adams, Bezner, Drabbs, Zambarano, and Steinhardt (2000) remarked that, the environment in which students live has a direct impact on the student's overall adjustment. Likewise, according to Dinger (1999), students who lived in environment that is conducive to learning and provided ample study space and opportunities for growth and interaction tend to have an easier time adjusting than students who live in other environment. Also, a study by Kuh (2000) highlighted the important characteristics of a supportive academic environment as one that provided support to students to succeed academically and socially. However, Douglas, *et. al.* (2006) study showed that physical facilities like hostel ranked least among those factors that bring satisfaction to students. For this reason, the current study is also aimed at examining the effect of residence on university life satisfaction among the students.

2. Objectives of the Study

- a. ascertain level of university life satisfaction among undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria;
- b. investigate the factors that are responsible for university life satisfaction among undergraduates;
- c. identify the problems to university life satisfaction among undergraduates; and
- d. determine the difference between each of sex and place of residence and university life satisfaction among undergraduates.

2.1 Research Questions

1. What is the level of university life satisfaction among undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?
2. What are the factors that are responsible for university life satisfaction among undergraduates?
3. What are the problems to university life satisfaction among undergraduates?

2.2 Research Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between each of sex and place of residence and university life satisfaction among undergraduates.

3. Methodology

The study employed the survey design technique. The population consisted undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. A total of four faculties out of the thirteen faculties in the school were selected using simple random sampling technique. From the four faculties, 150 undergraduates were selected using convenience sampling technique. An adapted instrument titled "Students University Life Satisfaction Scale (SULSS)" was used to collect information from the students. SULSS was divided into four sections. Section A comprised five items on demographic variables such as student's faculty, department, level, sex and place of residence. Section B comprised 25 items that requested information on the undergraduates' level of university life satisfaction. Section C had 14 items on the factors that are responsible for students' university life satisfaction. The last section was a 12-item on problems of students' university life satisfaction. The instrument was thoroughly validated through expert judgment and the reliability tests carried out. Thus, the results showed the Spearman Brown Coefficients and Spearman Brown Split-half reliability tests values of 0.77 and 0.83 respectively at 0.05 level of significance. Percentage, rank order and t-test statistics were employed to analyse the data.

4. Results

A. Research Questions One: What is the level of university life satisfaction among undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria?

The data collected on the level of university life satisfaction among undergraduates were analysed using percentage statistical analysis. The results are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Percentage Analysis of University Life Satisfaction among Undergraduates

Level of University Life Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage %
Highly	342	57%
Moderately	246	41%
Poorly	12	2%
Total	600	100

The results in Table 1 above showed the level of university life satisfaction among the undergraduates in the study area. From the above, it is evident that 342 undergraduates representing 57% indicated that they were highly satisfied with the university life. Another 246 (41%) expressed that they moderately satisfied, while the remaining 12

(2%) revealed that they were poorly satisfied with the university life. From the above, it is thus concluded that most undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife were highly satisfied with the university life.

B. Research Question Two: What are the factors that are responsible for university life satisfaction among undergraduates?

The data collected on the factors that are responsible for university life satisfaction among undergraduates were analysed using rank order statistical analysis. The results are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Rank Order Analysis of Factors which are responsible for University Life-Satisfaction among Undergraduates

Factors	Frequency	Rank
1. Academic Activities	563 (94%)	1 st
2. Recreational Activities	521 (87%)	2 nd
3. Spiritual Programmes / Activities	521 (88%)	3 rd
4. Quality of Instruction/Teaching	510 (85%)	4 th
5. Quality of Friendship	508 (85%)	5 th
6. Quality of Teaching Staff	506 (84%)	6 th
7. On-campus Hostel Activities/Relationship	505 (84%)	7 th
8. Life After Graduation	502 (84%)	8 th
9. Campus Facilities	493 (82%)	9 th
10. Social Life Interest	491 (82%)	10 th
11. University Reputations	482 (80%)	11 th
12. Academic Advising	465 (78%)	12 th
13. Participation in Political / Students Unionism	422 (70%)	13 th
14. Clubs and Parties	352 (59%)	14 th

Table 2 revealed the response on factors that were responsible for the university life satisfaction among the undergraduates. The results showed that the first three factors identified as responsible for the university life satisfaction among the undergraduates were academic activities 563 (94%), recreational activities 521 (87%) and spiritual programmes/activities 521 (88%). Also, the three least factors were academic advising 465 (78%), participation in political /students unionism 422 (70%) and Clubs and Parties 352 (59%).

C. Research Question Three: What are the problems to university life satisfaction among undergraduates?

The data collected on the problems to university life satisfaction among undergraduates among undergraduates were analysed using rank order statistical analysis. The results are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Rank Order Analysis of Problems of
University Life Satisfaction among Undergraduates

Problems	Frequency	Rank
1. Overcrowded Lecture Rooms	573 (96%)	1 st
2. Academic Workload	548 (91%)	2 nd
3. Unstable Academic Calendar	538 (90%)	3 rd
4. Congested Hostel / Overcrowded Hostel	535 (89%)	4 th
5. Unfriendly Attitudes of Some Lecturers	535 (89%)	5 th
6. Financial Challenges	532 (88%)	6 th
7. Disappointing Academic Results	520 (87%)	7 th
8. Long Distance from Hostel to Lecture Halls	454 (76%)	8 th
9. Nature of Campus Health Facilities	447 (75%)	9 th
10. Students' Unrest / Crisis on Campus	445 (74%)	10 th

From Table 3, according to the reactions of the respondents, the first three problems that were inimical to the university life satisfaction among the undergraduates were overcrowded lecture rooms 573 (96%), academic workload 548 (91%) and unstable academic calendar 538 (90%). Whereas, long distance from hostel to lecture halls 454 (76%), nature of campus health facilities 447 (75%) and students' unrest/crisis on campus 445 (74%) were considered as the least problems to the university life satisfaction among the undergraduates.

D. Research Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between each of sex and place of residence and university life satisfaction among undergraduates.

Data collected from the respondents on difference between each of sex and place of residence and university life satisfaction among undergraduates were analyzed using t-test statistical analysis. The results are presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4: t-test Statistical Analysis of Difference between each of Sex and Place of Residence and
University Life Satisfaction among Undergraduates

Variables	N	Mean	S. D	df	t	P	
Sex	Male	446	76.56	11.35	598	-0.582	> 0.05
	Female	154	77.18	11.44			
<i>Not Significant at p > 0.05</i>							
Place of Residence	On-campus	494	77.26	10.37	598	0.012	< 0.05
	Off-campus	106	74.22	14.97			
Significant at p < .05							

Table 4 showed the t-test statistical analyses of difference between each of sex and place of residence and university life satisfaction among undergraduates. The t-test results revealed that for male, the mean and standard deviation yielded values of 76.56 and 11.35, while it yielded 77.18 and 11.44 for female. Again, the t-test results of -0.582

obtained was considered greater than p value of 0.05 at level of significance. Hence, there was no significant difference between sex and university life satisfaction among undergraduates. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Also, the responses of the undergraduates based on the place of residence showed that mean values for on-campus and off-campus were 77.26 and 74.22. While the corresponding standard deviation for the two were 10.37 and 14.97. The results further showed that t-test value of 0.012; df. = 598, at $p < 0.05$ was significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

5. Discuss of findings

One of the findings from the study was that more than half of the undergraduates in the study area affirmed that they were highly satisfied about the university life. Of course this finding buttressed the previous study of Chow (2005), which indicated that students were most satisfied with their social relationships and living for example, environment. In their own contrary opinion, Oladipo and Olapegba (2012) found that there was an evidence of low satisfaction with life among undergraduates in Southwestern Nigeria. Arising from the above, it can be inferred that despite the perceived academic stress among the students, yet they considered their university experiences as very satisfying.

Also, the findings of the results showed that factors such as academic activities, recreational activities and spiritual programmes/activities were rated as the most factors that were responsible for students' university life satisfaction. The findings were supported by Douglas, *et. al.* (2006) that the factors that determined their university life satisfaction were the ones associated with teaching and learning. In his own reaction, Coskun (2014) expressed that students gave more importance to academic staff, teaching and relationships apart from technology, administration, and campus facilities as the ingredients of university life satisfaction. Wilkins and Stehens Balkrishnan (2013) showed that quality of lecturers, resources and effective use of technology were the most influential factors of university life satisfaction among students in a university. Similarly, Haider and Mannan (2014) mentioned that academic staff, teaching level, relationship, technology, administrative styles and campus facilities were the major factors responsible for life satisfaction of students. The implication of the above is that students' university life satisfaction is hinged on the quality and efficient academic activities, good recreational facilities and an enabling ground for spiritual programmes/activities.

Moreover, the findings on the problems of students' university life satisfaction revealed that overcrowded lecture rooms, academic workload and unstable academic calendar were the major constraints to the satisfaction of undergraduates. The findings contradicted the view of Behlau (2010) that academic stress was a key problem to the university life satisfaction among students. However, this might not be said about the undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, despite the level of perceived academic stress, they were still found to be highly satisfied with their university life. This suggests that these students have considered stress as a normal and inevitable part of everyday life individual students must experience and cope with on campus.

Furthermore, it was revealed that no significant difference was found between sex and students' university life satisfaction. The previous study conducted by Grace, *et. al.* (2003) had established the findings. This was also corroborated by khartibi (2013) that no significant relationship was noticed between student's sex and the level of university life satisfaction. However, the findings was disputed by James and Dorine (2013) that female students were found to be more satisfied with the university life than their male counterparts. The reason for this is that, even though males are more social and outgoing than the females, yet it has been established that female students are happier and do well when they are confronted with challenges such as stress (Talib & Zia-ur-Rehman 2012).

Above all, significant difference was found between the students living on and off campus. These results upheld the previous findings of Adams, *et. al* (2000) that the environment in which students live has a direct impact on the students' overall adjustment. Likewise, according to Dinger (1999), students who lived in environment that is conducive to learning and provided ample study space and opportunities for growth and interaction tend to have an easier time adjusting than students who live in other environment. From the above, it is implied that both academic and academic factors are related to the university life satisfaction of students. Conversely, Douglas, *et. al.* (2006) indicated that students placed least important associated with the physical facilities. Obviously, students will be happier when there are friendly and appropriate environment for academic, recreational/social and religious/spiritual activities.

6. Conclusion/Recommendation

The study above has concluded that undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife were highly satisfied with university life. It was concluded that satisfaction of students depended much on factors such as academic activities, recreational activities and spiritual programmes/activities and physical facilities. Therefore, it is

recommended that the school system should intensify its effort towards providing more qualitative and quantitative academic and non-academic experiences for undergraduates.

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