

ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY OF SCHOOL LIFE AMONG UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES IN KWARA STATE

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\Abstract

Quality of school life among undergraduates in universities is a multifaceted and critical aspect of students' academic journey that should provide valuable insights into their experiences and needs. This study investigated the quality of school life among undergraduates of three selected Universities in Kwara State. Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The study population is undergraduates of three selected Universities in Kwara State with population size of 31,325. Multistage sampling that included proportionate and random sampling techniques was used to select a total of 1253 undergraduates. A researcher-designed questionnaire which was validated by three experts and with overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.82 was used collect data. The collected data was analysed with descriptive (Percentages, mean and standard deviation) and inferential (5-Way Analysis of Variance) statistics. Findings revealed that quality of School life among university undergraduates in Kwara State is high. The commonly enjoyed dimension of quality of school life by the undergraduates is school physical environment. There was no significant difference in quality of school life among university undergraduates in Kwara State based on gender, academic level and type of residence. However, it was revealed that institution ownership influenced the quality of school life enjoyed by the university undergraduates in Kwara State. Based on the findings of the study lecture room environment is a potential area for improvement, seating comfort, acoustics, or technological resources, can guide targeted interventions.

Key words: Assessment, Mode of entry Quality of School life, University Undergraduates

Introduction

Education is a fundamental pillar of societal development, playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of individuals and communities. Within the realm of higher education, universities serve as crucibles for intellectual and personal growth, providing a platform for students to acquire knowledge, skills, and experiences that will shape their professional and personal trajectories. The concept of the quality of school life in universities goes beyond traditional academic metrics and encompasses a holistic evaluation of the overall student experience. The assessment of the quality of school life is a complex undertaking, as it involves examining not only academic performance but also the broader educational environment, encompassing social, cultural, and personal aspects. The university experience is a pivotal period in an individual's life, marked by academic challenges, personal growth, and the development of interpersonal skills. Factors such as

the learning environment, campus culture, extracurricular activities, access to support services, and the overall campus infrastructure collectively contribute to shaping the quality of school life for undergraduates.

Moreover, the importance of evaluating the quality of school life is underscored by its impact on students' academic success, mental well-being, and overall satisfaction with their educational journey. Positive school experiences have been linked to higher levels of engagement, motivation, and a sense of belonging, which, in turn, influence academic achievement and personal development. On the contrary, challenges in any of these dimensions may contribute to dissatisfaction, stress, hinderance to academic progress and inhibition to social interaction and relation-ship (Abdullah 2019).

Social interactions and relationships are integral to the school life experience, playing a vital role in personal and social development (Fredricks et al 2015). Students engage in communication, collaboration, and social interactions with their peers and teachers, acquiring essential skills for effective social navigation. Additionally, the school environment exposes students to diverse perspectives, fostering cultural awareness and appreciation (Cooper, 2016). Through these social interactions, students gain valuable social and emotional competencies that contribute to their overall growth and well-being.

Dimensions of quality of school life encompass various aspects that contribute to students' overall educational experience and satisfaction (Abdullah, 2019). These dimensions include the school physical environment, facilities, academic work, social interaction, learning resources, and co-curricular activities. Adeyemo and Adeyemo (2015) submitted that the commonly enjoyed dimension of quality of school life is school physical environment. The school physical environment comprises the campus infrastructure, cleanliness, and safety measures (Aboagye & Yedu Quansah, 2018). Facilities encompass the availability and quality of resources such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and computer centers (Sarfo, 2017). Academic work relates to the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment methods, as well as the relevance and applicability of the curriculum (Yahaya & Umar, 2015). Social interaction involves relationships and interactions among students, faculty, and staff, along with the social climate and diversity of the university (Abdullah, 2019). Learning resources refer to the availability and accessibility of materials and tools for learning, including textbooks, journals, and online resources (Yahaya & Umar, 2015). The co-curricular activities encompass sports, clubs, and organizations that provide opportunities for students to develop leadership skills, interests, and social connections (Aboagye & Yedu Quansah, 2018).

The Quality of School Life (QSL) is an important aspect of the student experience, as it affects their overall well-being, academic performance, and satisfaction with their education. The quality of school life is a critical aspect of students' academic experience. Increasing emphasis is on educational quality seems not commensurate with the product of higher education institutions (graduates). The question then is what is the nature of quality of school life enjoyed by university undergraduates? Factors such as the learning environment, campus culture, extracurricular activities, access to support services, and the overall campus infrastructure collectively contribute to shaping the quality of school

life for undergraduates. Moreover, the importance of evaluating the quality of school life is underscored by its impact on students' academic success, mental well-being, and overall satisfaction with their educational journey. This necessitates this study and specifically this study seeks to investigate:

1. quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State.
2. common dimension of quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State
3. difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based on gender, type of residence, mode of entry, academic level and institution.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study:

1. What is the quality of life among University undergraduates in Kwara State?
2. What are the commonly enjoyed dimensions of quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State?

Hypotheses

There is no significant difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based on gender, type of residence, mode of entry, academic level and institution

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey design using a population of undergraduate students of three Universities in Kwara State. The population size is 80650 (each of the public owned institutions has population size of 10,825 and 15,375 while the privately owned university has population size of 5125). Multistage sampling that includes proportionate and random sampling techniques was used to select the sample. Four percent (4%) of undergraduates in each institution were randomly selected, hence, 433, 615 undergraduates from each of the public owned institutions, and 205 undergraduates from the privately owned university were respectively selected for the study. A researcher designed questionnaire with 4-point Likert response option was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire had a pre-scale section designed to collect the demographic information of respondents (gender, type of residence, mode of entry, academic level and institution) and 6 sub-scales labelled as sections A- F which respectively elicited information on each of the dimensions of quality of school life which includes school physical environment, school facility, academic work, social interaction, lecture room environment and cocurricular activities. The questionnaire had a pre-scale section designed to collect the demographic information of respondents (gender, type of residence, mode of entry, academic level and institution) and 6 sub-scales labelled as sections A- F which respectively elicited information on each of the dimensions of quality of school life which includes school physical environment, school facility, academic work, social interaction, lecture room environment and cocurricular activities. The questionnaire was validated by three experts in the department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin and its reliability was determined using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The sub-scales had values of 0.78, 0.85, 0.79, 0.88, 0.78 and 0.76. An overall

coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. Thus, the obtained coefficients showed that the questionnaire is reliable for data collection. Data collected for this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while 5-Way ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Research Question One: What is the quality of life among University undergraduates in Kwara State?

In order to answer research question one, participants' responses to all items in the questionnaire were subjected to percentage analysis. The minimum, maximum and range score of respondents were 45, 168 and 123. The range was divided by two levels (Low and High). The cut off was approximately 62. Thus, 45-106 and 107-168 scores indicated low and high quality of School life respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of quality of School life among University Undergraduates in Kwara State

Quality of School Life	Frequency	Percentage
Low	137	10.9
High	1116	89.1
Total	1253	100

Table 1 shows the descriptive analysis of quality of school life among University Undergraduates in Kwara State 137 (10.9%) and 1116 (89.1%) of the participants indicated low and high quality of school life respectively. Thus, quality of school life among University Undergraduates in Kwara State is high because majority of the respondents 1116 (89.1%) indicated that.

Research Question One: What are the commonly enjoyed dimensions of quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State?

Participants' response to items on dimensions of quality of school life in the questionnaire was subjected to descriptive analysis (Mean and Standard Deviation) the result is shown on Table 7.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of dimensions of quality of school life among among University undergraduates in Kwara State

Dimensions of quality of school life	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
School Physical Environment	1253	23.42	3.23
School Facility	1253	14.97	2.42
Academic Work	1253	15.05	2.27
Social Interaction	1253	14.81	2.40
Lecture Room Environment	1253	13.45	2.41
Co-curricular Activities	1253	18.57	2.67

Table 2 revealed highest mean of 23.42 for School Physical Environment, followed by 18.57, 15.05, 14.97, 14.81, for Co-curricular Activities, Academic Work, School facility, Social Interaction, and least mean of 13.45 for Lecture Room Environment respectively. This implied that the commonly enjoyed dimension of quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State is School Physical Environment because it has the highest means of 23.42.

Research Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based on gender, academic level, mode of entry, type of Residence and institutions.

Participants' responses on quality of school life based on gender, academic level, mode of entry, type of Residence and institutions was analysed with 5-Way ANOVA. The result is shown on Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of 5-Way ANOVA showing difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based on gender, academic level, mode of entry, type of Residence and institutions

Source	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Corrected Model	49360.11	112	440.72	2.75	0.000
Intercept	1977306.07	1	1977306.07	12324.09	0.000
Gender	432.03	1	432.03	2.70	0.101
Academic Level	534.26	3	178.09	1.11	0.344
Mode of Entry	4216.54	2	2108.27	3.14	0.000
Type of Residence	279.45	1	279.45	1.74	0.187
Institutions	4286.91	2	2143.46	13.36	0.000
Error	182904.26	1140	160.44	2.00	0.113
Total	18597771	1253			
Corrected Total	232264.37	1252			

Table 3 shows F-value of 2.70, 0.11 and 1.74 for gender, academic level and type of residence respectively which are not significant at 0.05 alpha level because their p-value of 0.101., 0.344 and 0.187 are greater than 0.05 alpha level ($0.101 > 0.05$; $0.344 > 0.05$; $0.187 > 0.05$). It implies that gender, academic level and type of residence did not significantly influence quality of school life enjoyed by University undergraduates in Kwara. Thus, there is no significant difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based gender, academic level and type of residence. However, F- value of mode of entry and institutions shown on Table 3 are 3.14 and 13.36 which are significant at 0.05 alpha level because their p-value of 0.00 are respectively less than 0.05 ($0.00 < 0.05$). The significant difference based on mode of entry was in favour of undergraduates admitted through Direct entry and transferred students with higher mean than their counterparts that were admitted through UTME with least mean, while significant difference based on institutions is in favour of undergraduates from Privately owned university with higher mean than their counterparts from Public University.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that the Quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State is high. This finding contradicts the submission of Hassan et al. (2015) and Akinpelu and Jegede (2016) that quality of school life among undergraduates in Nigeria is low. However, the present finding corroborates the submission of Omotosho and Adebisi (2017) and Adebayo and Afolabi (2021) that quality of school life among undergraduates is high. Higher quality of school life discovered in this study could be linked to several positive factors such as internet facility, virtual lecture and so on.

The finding also revealed that the most commonly enjoyed dimension of the quality of school life among University undergraduates is the School Physical Environment. The findings indicate that among University undergraduates in Kwara State University, the aspect of School Physical Environment is the most positively rated dimension of the quality of school life. On the other hand, Lecture Room Environment received the least mean score indicating a comparatively lower satisfaction level in this particular dimension. This Finding aligns with the Findings of Yasin et al 2018) that the physical environment which comprises the campus infrastructure, cleanliness, and safety measures plays a crucial role in undergraduates well-being. The finding also corroborates Adeyemo and Adeyemo's (2015) submission, that safety within the school environment plays a crucial role. Students who perceive a secure and protected atmosphere tend to have a better quality of school life. This finding may be attributed to Kwara State University's investments in safety measures and infrastructure enhancements, which have had a positive impact on students' well-being and academic experiences. Lowest mean for Lecture Room Environment suggests that there are challenges related to lecture spaces and seating arrangements that students find less satisfactory.

Finding of hypothesis one showed that there was no significant difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara based on gender, academic level and type of residence. The finding negates the findings of Oyekale, Ojewale, and Ayodele (2017) which revealed that female students often face more restrictions on their social interactions and mobility compared to male students. Cultural norms and conservative values may influence the level of freedom and engagement in social activities for female students, potentially impacting their overall satisfaction and quality of school life. This finding also negates the finding of Omonijo (2021) which found that female student may benefit from gender-specific counseling services that address the unique challenges they face, such as sexual harassment or gender-based violence. Based on academic level. The finding disagrees with that of Idowu, Ogunyemi and Aluede (2018) who found that students in higher levels have a better understanding of the campus environment generally compared to the lower-level students. Finding based on type of residence do not align with the submission of Yusuf, Adetunji, and Adewole (2015) that students residing on-campus hostels enjoyed quality of school life compared to their counterparts that stay off-campus.

A significant difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based on mode of entry in favour of undergraduates that were admitted through direct entry and transferred students. This finding may be due to Direct Entry and transferred students' maturity level, clearer educational and career goals, level of

academic preparedness, previous educational experiences or work backgrounds and more adept at utilizing support services, such as academic advising or career counseling. The finding is consistent with the findings of Balogun, Adebayo, and Tijani (2017) that direct entry and transferred students had higher GPAs and better academic outcomes, potentially due to their prior academic qualifications and experiences compared to UTME students. Thus, they have a stronger foundation and a better understanding of their chosen fields which could positively influence their academic success and overall quality of school life. The finding also supports the findings of Iyamu, Oluwalana and Olatunji (2020) that UTME students may face challenges in social integration compared to direct entry students since some of them are still adolescent.

A significant difference in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based on institution is in favour of undergraduates from a privately owned university. This finding suggests an intriguing discrepancy in the quality of school life among undergraduate students in Kwara State, Nigeria, with undergraduates from private university reporting a more positive experience compared to their counterparts in public universities. This aligns with broader global discussions on the differences between public and private higher education institutions. Factors that can contribute to this finding include smaller class sizes and lower student-to-faculty, student-to-lecturer ratios as such their substantial financial resources per student compared to public institutions is better.

Conclusion

This research work examined quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State. It was concluded that the quality of school life enjoyed by the participants is high and their commonly enjoyed dimension of quality of school life is School Physical Environment. No significant difference was found in quality of school life among University undergraduates in Kwara State based on gender, academic level and type of residence. However, mode of entry and institution ownership significantly influenced quality of school life among the undergraduates.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. lecture room environment should be improved: seating comfort, acoustics, or technological resources, can guide targeted interventions.
2. Favorable school physical environment in the sampled institution should not only be sustained, but the institutions should commit to ongoing maintenance and infrastructure upgrades which includes regular upkeep of buildings, classrooms, and common areas to create a conducive learning atmosphere.
3. Orientation programmes, mentorship initiatives, and academic support groups aimed at fostering a sense of belonging among undergraduates admitted through UTME should be re-emphasized.

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