

Do Self Esteem and Family Relations Predict Prosocial Behaviour and Social Adjustment of Fresh Students?

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Received 12 February 2014; accepted 26 June 2014
Published online 25 July 2014

Abstract

Most of the studies about prosocial behaviour and adolescent adjustment focus on some personality factors or peer group influence as separate sources of influence and do not take into account some important variables like self esteem and family relations. The aim of this paper is therefore to analyse the relationship between self esteem and family relations of a sample of Nigerian undergraduates as indicated by their prosocial behaviour and social adjustment. To achieve this, 294 fresh students who have spent at least 30 weeks in the university were randomly selected (using cross-sectional sampling method) from both Ambrose Alli and Adekunle Ajasin universities in Nigeria. Out of these were 161 (54.8%) males while 133 (45.2%) were females. Two hypotheses were stated and tested. Results revealed that self esteem and family relations independently predicted prosocial behaviour. Their joint prediction of prosocial behaviour was also significant [$R^2 = .279$, $t = 9.07$; $p < .01$]. Analysis of the second hypothesis also revealed that self-esteem independently predicted social adjustment but family relations did not predict social adjustment significantly. However, *self-esteem* and family relation jointly predicted social adjustment [$R^2 = .384$, $t = 7.972$; $p < .01$]. It was recommended that efforts to boost the new students' self-esteem should not be spared and the relationship between family members should be cordial so as improve the level of prosocial behavior and social adjustment of individuals.

Key words: Prosocial behavior; Family relations; Self-esteem; Social adjustment; Students

Afolabi, O. A. (2014). Do Self Esteem and Family Relations Predict Prosocial Behaviour and Social Adjustment of Fresh Students?. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 7(1), 26-34. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/5127>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/5127>

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have investigated predictors of students' decision to pursue higher education and/or continue their education after entry to college or university. Predictors include primary and secondary school preparation, family dynamics, self-esteem, commitment to goals, social support systems, and the like (Bryce, Anderson, Frigo, & McKenzie, 2007). Yet with all the services available to students and the research conducted to better understand factors associated with the above issues, there are some students who never successfully assimilate into and navigate through the university system. Factors which have not yet been examined may have influences on a student's ability to successfully adjust to and progress through postsecondary education and earn a degree. For individuals who matriculate into university education, not all adjust socially and complete the programme. Some of the factors which predict this problem which are yet to be thoroughly examined include the roles of self-esteem and family relations (Rautopuro & Vaisanen, 2001). These factors are also expected to influence prosocial behavior.

Prosocial behavior is defined as any voluntary actions that are intended to help or benefit another individual or group of persons (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006; Afolabi, 2013). It refers to the activities that are conducted or planned to help other people without expecting anything in return. Prosocial activities involve attention and assistance towards other people, or devotion (love, loyalty, and service) which are given to other people without any expectation to get something in return (Myers, 1996). Prosocial behaviors may be performed for a host

of reasons including egoistic, other-oriented, or practical concerns (Boxer, Tisak, & Goldstein, 2004). Thus, it is the purpose of this study to examine the roles of self-esteem and family relations on social adjustment and prosocial behavior of newly admitted students.

Adjustment is a behavioral process by which a person maintains a balance among various needs that one encounters at a given point in time. On the other hand, social adjustment is a skill that enables an individual to interact effectively and avoid undesirable responses (Mousavi, 2012). For the purpose of this research, adjustment is defined as a process wherein one builds variations in the behavior to achieve harmony with oneself, others or the environment with an aim to maintain the state of equilibrium between the individual and the environment. Socialization, on the other hand, is a process of mutual interaction between the individual and his/her society. Social skills and social adjustment are related and are important every day activity. Social adjustment therefore, is the achievement of balance in social relationships usually aided by the appropriate application of social skills. Social adjustment is therefore, the adaptation of the person to the social environment. This may take place by adapting the self to the environment or by changing the environment. It includes the types of relationships involving the accommodation of the individual to circumstances in his social environment for the satisfaction of his needs or motives.

1. SELF ESTEEM AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Research suggests that self-esteem influences many aspects of your life, such as your relationships with others, your emotional well-being, school achievement, vocational aspirations, your acting out behavior, the quality of your communication, the quality of your problem solving and your striving behaviors. McKay and Fanning (1998) linked low self-esteem to a higher need for social approval and also stronger reliance on social relations such as group membership and family relationships. Dubois, Bull, Sherman and Roberts (1998) investigated (a) global self-esteem and (b) social-contextual incongruity in factors contributing to the development and maintenance of self-esteem as predictors of the emotional, behavioral, and academic adjustment of 213 young adolescents. Higher reported levels of global self-esteem were associated with more favorable scores on most measures of adjustment.

In another study, Friedlander, Reid, Shupak and Cribbie (2007) examined the joint effects of stress, social support, and self-esteem on adjustment to university. First-year undergraduate students ($N = 115$) were assessed during the first semester and again 10 weeks later, during the second semester of the academic year. In study,

multiple regressions predicting adjustment to university from perceived social support (friends and family), self-esteem (academic, social, and global), and stress were conducted. From the fall to winter semesters, increased social support from friends, but not from family, predicted improved adjustment. Decreased stress predicted improved overall, academic, personal-emotional, and social adjustment. Increased global, academic, and social self-esteem predicted decreased depression and increased academic and social adjustment. Self-esteem operates as a valuable resource for the social-emotional adjustment of adolescents but only under some conditions (Friedlander, Reid, Shupak, & Cribbie, 2007). Low self-esteem seems to be at more risk of maladjustment, but that does not mean any causal relationship. Adolescents with high self-esteem can be considered as a heterogeneous category. High self-esteem associated with excessive self-concern has less beneficial effects on adjustment than high self-esteem associated with low self-concern (Kostoqianni & Andronikof, 2009).

Lipschitz-Elhawi and Itzhaky's (2005) study explored the relationship between internal resources (self-esteem, sense of mastery), external resources (social support) and the adjustment of 112 adolescents living in a typical Israeli residential treatment center. All had been exposed to abuse and neglect in their familial homes. Although none of the resources was related significantly to all of the adjustment measures, various resources were related to individual adjustment measures in different ways. Peer support did not relate significantly to any of the adjustment measures. However, self-esteem was related to the academic adjustment of adolescents, and a sense of mastery was related to social and personal adjustment.

2. FAMILY RELATIONS AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

The family in its most common form is a lifelong commitment between men and women who feed, shelter and nurture their children until they reach maturity. It is a primary socialization context and is, therefore, considered to be a very important factor influencing children's social adjustment (Ozcinar, 2006, cited in Deepshikha & Bhanot, 2011). The same way, the school is another important growth environment that contributes to intellectual, social and emotional development of adolescents (Lee, 2012) and influences accomplishment and adjustment in adulthood. Thus, the school life adjustment is very important. Among some factors that influence school life adjustment, family relations is an important factor because it influences initial relationship between parents and children, and it has, in turn, crucial effect on children's psychosocial development, namely personality and emotion as well as self-concept, attitude, value, and performance ability (So, Song, & Kim, 2010).

According to Osarenren and Ajaero (2013), family relationship includes different dimensions, such as love, respect, friendship, hate, conflict, resentment, jealousy and rivalry that are typically present in a normal family setting. Fischer, Wallace and Fenton (2000) are of the opinion that family relations are processes of interactions through which the concepts of identities and self-esteem are formed with significant others typically, parents and siblings. Therefore, family relationship is essential in providing a sense of socialization, security and identity necessary for these young adolescents to successfully learn from each other and fit into the larger society.

The way adults relate to their children, whether it be adaptive or maladaptive, affected how children attached to their parents, and ultimately to people later in life as well. If parents were responsive to their children's needs and consistently showed care for them, then children were likely to form secure parent-child attachments and this pattern of secure attachment was likely to follow them through life and make them well-adjusted individuals (Gray, 2011; Bowlby, 1988). Thus, it is the opinion of Shaver, Hazan, and Bradshaw (1988) that if a person is securely attached as a child, with good family relations, he or she learns to feel lovable and capable, and comes to understand that others are trustworthy. This can lead to good social adjustment. Besides this, individuals from stepfamilies, compared to those from intact families, tended to fare worse emotionally, socially, physically, and psychologically (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Family links may also contribute to the importance of "word of mouth" as a route into volunteering for adults (Low, Butt, Ellis, & Smith, 2007) and young people alike (Gaskin, 2004). In another study, Parade, Leerkes, and Blankson (2010) also found that those with secure parent-child attachments (positive family relations) formed friendships more easily, most likely because these young adults were more comfortable seeking out new relationships due to their positive experiences in secure attachments with their parents.

3. SELF-ESTEEM AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Self-esteem is defined as an overall evaluation of one's self-worth (Rosenberg, 1965). Positive self-esteem does not require that we be perfect. High self-esteem is the realization that you sometimes make mistakes, but you value yourself in spite of those mistakes. Self-esteem means appreciating our own worth and importance. It also means having a strong enough character to be accountable for ourselves and to act responsibly toward others (Matthews, 1998). Thus, self-esteem is the value we place on what we believe to be true about ourselves. So, the potential for esteem enhancement may motivate individuals to give to charitable organizations (Mathur,

1996). Haggberg (1992, in Weymans, 2010) suggests that, by giving (to charity), people can feel themselves more appreciated or recognized, what makes the intended objective esteem enhancement.

Prosocial behavior has been theoretically and empirically linked with self-esteem in childhood and adolescence. With respect to prosocial behavior, researchers have speculated that the relationship between self-esteem and prosocial behavior is likely bi-directional (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998; Laibe, Carlo, & Roesch, 2004). They found a moderate relation between self-esteem and prosocial behavior in elementary school children (Larrieu & Mussen, 1986), but research with youths and adolescents is lacking (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Thus, prosocial behavior was a significant predictor of self-esteem, particularly in females. Females who reported high levels of prosocial behavior also reported high levels of self-esteem. Low levels of self-esteem have also been linked to low take up of leisure participation, and young people with low self-esteem were also more likely to report more barriers than others (Lee, Morrell, Marini, & Smith, 2010).

4. FAMILY RELATIONS AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Family structure, socialization within the family, and socialization by peers and in the schools may augment or counteract prosocial influences. It is likely that the relations of aspects of parental control and punitiveness to developmental outcomes (including prosocial and moral development) vary somewhat across cultures (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998; Trommsdorff & Kornadt, 2003). Findings are inconsistent about the relation of indices of socioeconomic status such as family income or parental education to most types of prosocial behavior (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998).

In a large study of volunteering among at-risk adolescents, family poverty was negatively associated with males' involvement in volunteering and community activity (Lichter, Shanahan, & Gardner, 2002); a similar relation was obtained for both sexes in another large study involving a more representative sample (Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998). In other words, socially competent behavior, such as prosocial behavior and negotiation, appear to be associated with positive peer relationships that in turn are related to successful socio-emotional adjustment (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1995; Rubin, Bukowsky, & Parker, 2006). Findings on the relation of family structure and family size to prosocial behavior are therefore mixed. Having limited exposure to family or friends who have volunteered has also been cited as a barrier to young people volunteering. This is in line with the finding that 83 per cent of 18-24 years old volunteers had family members who had also volunteered (Gaskin, 2004).

Rehberg and Richman (1989) found that preschool boys from father absent homes comforted (but did not help) a peer more than did girls and boys from two-parent homes. Other researchers have not found effects of father absence on measures of prosocial responding (Call, Mortimer, & Shanahan, 1995; Dunn, Deater-Deckard, Pickering, O'Connor, Golding, & the ALSPAC Study Team, 1998), and some researchers have found that adolescents in two-parent families volunteer more than those in one-parent homes (Huebner & Mancini, 2003). That children in a large family volunteer more (Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003); and that children with siblings are less likely to help in an emergency situation or to comfort a peer (Rehberg & Richman, 1989). They speculated that children from small families are more self-assured and, consequently, are more likely to take initiative and intervene spontaneously to help someone else. In contrast, children in larger families, perhaps due to the need to engage in chores, are particularly likely to learn everyday helping and sharing behaviors. Consistent with this reasoning, Weissbrod (1976) found that large family size was related to slower helping in emergency but higher levels of generosity.

Based on the reviewed literature and the purpose of this study highlighted above, the following hypotheses are stated and tested.

5. HYPOTHESES

A. Self-esteem and family relations would be independently and jointly predict the prosocial behaviour of newly admitted students.

B. Self-esteem and family relations would be independently and jointly predict the social adjustment of newly admitted students.

6. METHOD

6.1 Design and Setting

The design for this study is correlational design. It assesses the relationship between independent variables of self-esteem and family relations and the dependent variables of prosocial behavior and social adjustment. Newly admitted students of Ambrose Alli and Adekunle Ajasin Universities in Ekpoma, Edo State and Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State respectively were used for this study. These two universities were chosen because of accessibility and convenience. This is because the author lectures at the two universities.

6.2 Participants

The participants were newly admitted students of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State and those of Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State. The sample consists of 50 newly admitted students

(100L) each from the Faculties of Arts, Education, Law, Management Sciences, Sciences and Social Sciences in the two Universities. That is, 25 students each were sampled from each of the identified faculties of each of the universities. They were made up of 161 (54.8 %) males and 133 females (45.2 %). In all, 294 students participated in the study. All the participants randomly selected were those who have spent not less than 30 weeks in the universities.

6.3 Instrument

The instrument used in this research was a well-designed questionnaire which consisted of five (5) sections. Four standardized scales were used. These include the Index of Family Relations, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Prosocial Behaviour and School Life Adjustment Scales.

The first part consists of statements related to the demographic characteristics of the participants which include gender, age and academic level, type of family, etc..

Self-esteem was measured with a 10-item scale by Rosenberg (1965). The scale is rated on a 5 point Likert scale from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* used to assess the participant's overall perception of self-worth. Items look at both the positive and negative perceptions of self (e.g., I feel I do not have much to be proud of; I take a positive attitude toward myself). Scores on the scale ranged from 10 to 50, with higher scores reflecting higher self-esteem. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale demonstrates good reliability in studies with Nigerian undergraduates (e.g. Taiwo, 2012). A test re-test reliability coefficient of .79 was established in this study.

Social adjustment was measured in School Life Adjustment Scale (SLA) developed by Min (1991, cited in Sil, 2009). The scale measures the level of school life adjustment of students. The scale consists of 18 items on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very much) and the four subscales assess: (a) learning activities, (b) school rule, (c) relationship with teachers, and (d) relationship with friends. High scores indicate a higher level of adaptability to school life. According to the author, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was .91. Lee (2012) in his own study reported an alpha coefficient of .84. For the present study, a test re-test reliability of .78 was established.

Prosocial behavior was measured with 12-item Prosocial Behavior Scale by Afolabi (2013). Sample items from the scale include: I enjoy helping others, it is Godly to work for the well-being of one's community, I feel fulfilled whenever I have helped somebody in need of assistance, etc. The scale according to the author, had coefficient alpha of .81, test re-test reliability of .77 and a split half reliability of .72 among a sample of Nigerian undergraduates. Besides, the scale was said to correlate positively with social responsibility scale by Rossi (2001) with $r = .81$. For the present study, a Cronbach alpha of .89 was established.

Family relations was measured using the Index of Family Relation (IFR) developed by Hudson (1982) to measure the problem of interpersonal relationships among members of the same family. The IFR contains 25 items, and was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1-rarely or none of the time, to 5-most or all of the time. The scale consists of both direct and reversed scored items. Sample items include “I get along well with my family” (reversed) “I wish I was not part of this family” (direct). Hudson reported an alpha coefficient of .95 for the American sample. The present study had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability of .88. High scores indicate poor family relations while low scores indicate appropriate family relations.

6.4 Procedure

During class, the Researcher who also happens to be a Lecturer in the identified schools addressed the students during class telling them the importance of the research and that it is for academic purpose only. He also informed them that it is not compulsory for them to take part in it. After the address, the newly admitted students were encouraged to ask questions on any area they do not understand in the research and all the questions raised were all answered. It was after the session that the questionnaires were shown to them and instructions given that they should neither put their names nor their identification numbers.

Three hundred and fifteen (305) copies of the questionnaire were administered using a simple random sampling technique. Depending on the number of students in a class, numbers were assigned to the entire students in the different classes. After this, those with number 4 and its multiples (for example, students whose numbers were 4, 8, 12, 16, 20, etc.) were selected. It was after the selection that the questionnaires were administered to those selected. They were encouraged to fill the questionnaires at their convenience and that it’s a personal thing which should not be discussed with anyone who may convince them to fill the study instrument in a particular way.

Those who were too eager and those who are not

interested were not included in the study. The same procedure was utilized in the 2 universities. At the end of the exercise, out of the 297 (97.3%) copies of the questionnaire retrieved, only 294 were found useful for analysis. This is because 3 of the questionnaires were not completely filled. Some of them claimed they were still resolving issues with either their hostel accommodation, identification numbers, missed tests or that they have misplaced the questionnaire. Thus, it took the researcher about 10 days to retrieve the study instruments from the participants.

6.5 Data Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the relationship between the variables of study while simple multiple regressions was utilized to investigate the independent and joint predictions of the independent variables (self-esteem and family relations) on the dependent variables (prosocial behavior and social adjustment).

7. RESULT ANALYSIS

From the results on Table 1, self-esteem had a significant but negative relationship with family type [$r(292) = .171$; $p < .05$]. Family relations was also found to have significant relationship with self-esteem [$r(292) = .231$, $p < .01$]. This means that the higher the level of family relations of the newly admitted students, the higher their self-esteem. The table also indicates that there was significant correlation between family type and prosocial [$r(292) = .156$, $p < .05$]. This implies that the type of family in which the individual was born has a relationship with the person’s prosocial behaviour. Self-esteem too was found to have a significant relationship with prosocial behaviour [$r(292) = .471$, $p < .01$], meaning that the self-esteem of the newly admitted students have an influence on their perceived level of prosocial behaviour. The relationship between family relations and prosocial behaviour [$r(292) = .197$, $p < .05$] was also significant. It shows that family relations have influence on prosocial behaviour.

Table 1
Correlation Matrix Showing the Mean, SD and the Inter-Variable Correlations of the Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1) Age	19.24		1						
2) Gender			.03	1					
3) Family type			.17	.09	1				
4) Self esteem	27.84	1.41	.241**	.167*	-.171*	1			
5) Family relations	32.71	1.69	.17*	.25**	.159*	.231**	1		
6) Prosocial behaviour	41.07	1.77	.41**	.402**	.156*	.471**	.197*	1	
7) Social adjustment	19.11	1.92	.205*	.177*	.281**	.180*	.378**	.411**	1

Note. ** Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Beside these, social adjustment also has a significant relationship with family type [$r(292) = .281$, $p < .01$], self-esteem [$r(292) = .180$, $p < .05$], family relations [$r(292) = .378$, $p < .01$] and prosocial behaviour [$r(292) = .411$,

$p < .05$]. By these relationships, it implies that those who are high on family type, self-esteem, family relations will also be more socially adjusted.

Results of the first hypothesis (Table 2 below) showed

that self-esteem [$\beta= 0.178, p <0.05$] and family relations [$\beta=-0.241, p >0.05$] independently predicted prosocial behaviour among the newly admitted students. This

implied that self-esteem and family relations are good predictors of prosocial behaviour.

Table 2
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Self Esteem and Family Relations on Prosocial Behaviour

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	T	P	R	R^2	F	P
Prosocial behaviour	Self-esteem	.178	2.646	<.05	.529	.279	9.07	< .01
	Family relations	.241	3.306	<.01				

The joint contributions of the predictor variables were also significant [$R^2= .279, t = 9.07; p < .05$]. The R^2 indicates that this observed joint influence is 27.9% of the total influence on the prosocial behaviour of the participants. The other 72.1% influence is from other sources outside the variables in the study.

The results of the second hypothesis (Table 3 below) showed that self-esteem [$\beta= 0.320, p <0.01$] and family relations [$\beta=-0.212, p <0.01$] independently predicted social adjustment among the new students. This implied that new students with high self-esteem and good family relations adjusted well socially.

Table 3
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Self Esteem and Family Relations on Social Adjustment

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	T	P	R	R^2	F	P
Social adjustment	Self-esteem	0.320	4.603	<0.01	0.620	.384	7.972	<0.01
	Family relations	0.212	3.049	<0.01				

The joint contributions of the predictor variables (self-esteem and family relations) were also significant [$R^2= .384, t = 7.972; p < .01$]. The R^2 indicates that this observed joint influence is 38.4% of the total influence on the social adjustment of the participants. The other 61.6% influence is from other sources outside the variables in the study.

the benefits of feeling good about their involvement in such positive activities. However, this result is not in line with the speculations of Laibe, Carlo and Roesch, (2004), that the relationship between self-esteem and prosocial behaviour is likely to be bi-directional.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the extent to which self-esteem and family relations influence the prosocial behaviour and social adjustment of newly admitted undergraduates of two Nigerian Universities.

The finding that family relations predicted prosocial behaviour is also in line with the findings of Rubin, Bukowsky and Parker (2006) that socially competent behaviour, such as prosocial behaviour and negotiation appear to be associated with positive peer relationships that in turn are related to successful socio-emotional adjustment. In another study by Huebner and Mancini (2003) they found that adolescents in two-parent families volunteer more than those in one-parent homes and that children in a large family volunteer more (Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Willams, 2003). That family relation predicted prosocial behaviour is expected because adolescents from intact families where attention is given to the children by the parents are expected to enjoy social relationships and thus be ready to render assistance. Also, children from small families are expected (by African culture) to be more self-assured and consequently, are more likely to take initiative and intervene spontaneously to help someone else. However, Weissbrod (1976) found that large family size was related to slower helping in emergency but higher levels of generosity.

The first hypothesis which states that self-esteem and family relations would = independently and jointly predict the prosocial behaviour and social adjustment of newly admitted students was confirmed. It shows that newly admitted students with high self-esteem and good family relations were also high on prosocial behaviour. It also indicated that self-esteem and family relations have jointly predicted prosocial behaviour among the participants. Since self-esteem is the value we place on what we believe to be true about ourselves, thus, the potential for self enhancement may motivate an individual to be involved in prosocial behaviour. This is in line with findings of Weymans (2010) that by giving to charity, people can feel themselves more appreciated or recognized. According to him, it makes the intended objective esteem enhancement. Also, Larrieu and Mussen (1986) found moderation between self-esteem and prosocial behaviour in students. The reason for this is because adolescents who engage in high levels of prosocial behaviour are likely to reap

The second hypothesis which predicted that self-esteem and family relations would = independently and jointly predict the social adjustment of newly admitted students was also confirmed. The finding that self-esteem predicted social adjustment was in consonance with the work of McKay and Fanning (1998) that linked

low self-esteem to a higher need for social approval and also stronger reliance on social relations. This showed that self-esteem is actually a good predictor of social adjustment. In another study, Friedlander, Reid, Shupak and Cribbie (2007) found that social self-esteem predicted increased academic and social adjustment. The outcome of the research shows that self-esteem operates as a valuable resource for the social-emotional adjustment of adolescents. However, the outcome of this research did not support that of Kostoqianni and Andronikof in 2009 which concluded that high self-esteem associated with excessive self-concern has less beneficial effects on adjustment than high self-esteem associated with low self-concern. It is not also in line with the findings of Lipschitz-Elhawi and Itzhaky (2005) that self-esteem was related to the academic adjustment of adolescents and a sense of mastery was related to social and personal adjustment. The reason for this difference could be as a result of the type of respondents and the methods used in gathering the data.

The contribution of family relations to social adjustment of newly admitted students was also significant. This is in line with the conclusion of Deepshikha and Bhanot in 2011 that family is the primary socialization context which is considered to be a very important factor influencing children's social adjustment. This result also found support in the work of So, Song and Kim (2010) which stated that among some factors that influence school life adjustment, family relations is an important factor because it influences initial relationship between parents and their children. The same way, Fischer et al. (2000) are of the opinion that family relationship is essential in providing a sense of socialization, security and identity necessary for adolescents to successfully learn from each other and fit into the larger society. From the outcome of these researches it is the opinion of the researcher that if an individual is securely attached as a child, with good family relations, he/she learns to feel lovable and capable, and comes to understand that others are trustworthy. This can lead to social adjustment. This is also the position of Amato and Keith (1991) that individuals from stepfamilies, compared to those from intact families, tended to fare worse emotionally, socially, physically, and psychologically.

By this discussion, it is the opinion of the researcher that self-esteem and family relations are significant predictors of prosocial behaviour and social adjustment of fresh undergraduates.

CONCLUSION

By the findings of this research, it has been shown that self-esteem and family relations and their combination predict prosocial behaviour. The same way, the variables predict social adjustment significantly. By this, it is

concluded that newly admitted undergraduates in these universities with high self-esteem and those with positive/high family relations would be more prone to help/assist others than those with low self-esteem and low family relations. Also, those with high self-esteem and good family relations would be more socially adjusted than those with low self-esteem and family relations.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Taking into consideration the scope of this research, its findings will be beneficial to students, as well as members of their families. Therefore, everyone has to be mindful of his interpersonal relationship with others in the family and ensure that he/she uses the same to build what is good and reject what is abnormal in order to have a better society. There is need for the family to realise its significant role as the bedrock of the society and contribute positively to it by building the personality and self-esteem of its members. Also, with the understanding that self-esteem and family relations influence behavioural outcomes, further research should be conducted to investigate other variables that contribute to the development of the art of helping others with social skills that encourage good social adjustment among young adults. Other researchers are encouraged to investigate other salient variables that may also influence prosocial behaviour and social adjustment like gender, place of residence, income level, personality factors (like the big five), type of job, etc.. Larger sample size from more universities is also encouraged so as to be able to generalize the results.

This study may not be generalised because the sample size is small and insufficient. Also, limited researches related to prosocial behaviour and social adjustment have been done in Nigeria. Most of the current investigations and existing studies related to the variable of the study have been conducted in the West. This has led to the limited published empirical research examining the relationship between self-esteem, family relations, prosocial behaviour and social adjustment of young adults in Nigeria.

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