

**SPOUSAL SUPPORT AND GOAL ORIENTATION AS PREDICTORS OF
LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY
STAFF**

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TITLE PAGE

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A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY/PSYCHOLOGY
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CERTIFICATION PAGE

I hereby declare that the work presented here was done by me, and not by a third party. Should I be convicted of having cheated in this work, I shall accept the verdict of the university.

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DEDICATION

To God Almighty for His Grace, enablement and gift of knowledge and understanding bestowed upon me.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated spousal support and goal orientation as predictors of life satisfaction among Godfrey Okoye University staff. One hundred and sixty-five (165) GOU staff comprising eighty-nine (89) males and seventy-six (76) female staff participated in the study. Participants were randomly selected from different departments/units using convenient sampling technique. Participant's ages ranged from 23 to 68 years with a mean age of ($M = 39.74$, $SD = 8.23$). Cross sectional design was adopted. Three instruments were used for data collection: Life Satisfaction Scale, Goal Orientation Scale, and Spousal Support Scale. Two hypotheses were tested. Hierarchical multiple regression was the main statistic used for data analysis. Result of the multiple regression analysis showed that spousal support was a significant predictor of life satisfaction among GOU Staff. Goal orientation is also a significant predictor of life satisfaction among GOU Staff. The implications of these findings were discussed, and suggestions for further studies were equally made.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of The Study

Individuals all over the world wishes to achieve more and more satisfaction in their lives. Multiple aspects of well-being have been studied by different researchers; and as stated by McMahon (2008) the search for happiness in life has encouraged individuals across cultures and societies, as well. Motivating vast works in art, such as Bronzino's (1564) Allegory of Happiness (Smith, 1984), in religion, such as St. Augustine's Confessions (397–398), and in science, such as Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics (350 BC) and Epicurus' Principle Doctrines (341–270 BC) are all sources of wellbeing that makes life happy. Amongst the dimensions of well-being that have been systematically investigated based on three prominent models of well-being is life satisfaction - a positive subjective evaluation of one's life, using any information the person considers relevant. Life satisfaction has been conceptualized as a cognitive assessment of life as a whole based on the fit between personal goals and achievements (Pavot & Diener, 1993). It has also been referred to as a component and a crucial indicator of SWB (Vaillant, 2003) and quality of life (Moons et al., 2006). According to Diener (1984), the way in which life satisfaction and positive affect relate to one another is an empirical question, not one of definition.

Recent years have seen an increase in research on subjective well-being (Diener, 1984). For Shin and Johnson (1978) life satisfaction is a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his/her chosen criteria. Implying that judgments of satisfaction are dependent upon a comparison of one's circumstances with what is thought to be an appropriate standard. It is important to point out that the judgment of how satisfied people are with their present state of affairs is based on a comparison with a standard which each individual sets for him or herself; it is not externally imposed. It is a hallmark of the subjective well-being area that it centres on the person's own judgments, not upon some criterion which is judged to be important by the researcher (Diener, 1984).

Interest in life satisfaction has led to numerous attempts to measure this complex psychological state from different perspectives such as quality of life investigations, examinations of subjective wellbeing, research on happiness and morale, and attempts to assess successful aging. Life Satisfaction is a subjective, open measure of human welfare. Life satisfaction refers to one's cognitive evaluations of his or her subjective well-being (Diener, 2000). Congruent meaning structures can provide individuals with senses of purpose, personal growth, unity, and stability as a self and meaning in life (Cantor & Sanderson, 1999; Erickson, 1968) that are elements of life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is subjective because in surveys people are simply asked whether they are satisfied with their life as a whole and open because researchers do not pre-define the components of social welfare—it is up to each individual respondent to judge whether they are satisfied (Donovan & Halpern, 2002).

Life-satisfaction is the degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as-a whole. In other words, how much the person likes the life he/she leads (Veenhoven, 1996). Donovan &

Halpern (2002) discuss that when people are happier, they tend to be more open minded and creative in their thinking. In contrast, people who are unhappy, stressed or dissatisfied tend to exhibit tunnel vision and rigid thinking. Furthermore, people who are satisfied with their lives tend to be healthier and life satisfaction is inversely related to turnover intent (Donovan & Halpern, 2002; Lambert et al., 2009). Life satisfaction has been one of the oldest and most persistently investigated issues in the study of adulthood (Lewis & Borders, 1995). In this regard, it refers to an assessment of the overall conditions of existence as derived from a comparison of one's aspirations to one's actual achievement. Self-reported life satisfaction essentially reflects the individual's cognitive evaluation of his/her progress towards desired goals in life (Brown & Duan, 2007).

Scientifically, well-being research was for long mostly concentrated on correlates and predictors of life satisfaction (Diener & Diener, 1995). Only much later has its possible health effects gained attention (Danner et al., 2001; Darling et al., 2012; Koivumaa-Honkanen, 2012). Nowadays, mortality and morbidity, as well as individual, societal, and financial costs due to mental health problems have increased for several reasons (Murray et al., 2012). Thus, knowledge of the health effects of subjective wellbeing (SWB) has made it a more relevant research focus in health sciences. Life satisfaction, measured with a short four-item life satisfaction scale (LS) modified by Allardt (1973), has been noted as a health predictor associating, for instance, with psychiatric morbidity and total mortality (Koivumaa-Honkanen et al., 2000 & 2004a & b; Härkönen, 2012) among the general population. Michalos (1986) found that life satisfaction is related significantly to the discrepancy between current experiences and personal standards of comparison in over 80% of the tests provided by the existing research.

Dockery (2003) reported that it is clear that humans have an intrinsic tendency to be happy and satisfied, or at least to report that they are happy and satisfied. When people are asked to rate their levels of happiness or life satisfaction on a scale the resulting distribution is highly skewed. Life satisfaction is an important construct in positive psychology (Gilman and Huebner 2003). Measures of life satisfaction are sensitive to the entire spectrum of functioning, and thus, provide indicators of both well-being and psychopathology. Recently the burgeoning field of positive psychology has re-illuminated the need for psychology to address areas associated with optimal functioning and happiness. From the time of Aristotle (1925), the pursuit of happiness and the achievement of the 'good life' has been a major concern among philosophers and theologians, and was included as a foundational mission of psychology (Seligman 2002b; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi 2000). Within the field of psychology, the study of 'happiness' generally falls under investigations of subjective well-being (SWB) (see Diener 1984; Diener 1994; Diener et al. 1999, for reviews). The SWB construct is a tripartite category of phenomena, which includes: emotional responses (i.e. positive affect e.g. joy, optimism and negative affect e.g. sadness, anger), domain satisfactions (e.g. work satisfaction, relationship satisfaction), and global judgements of life satisfaction (Diener et al. 1999). In the research literature the components of SWB are often used interchangeably with each other and considered synonymous with term 'happiness' (Diener 1994; Seligman 2002a); despite that the term 'happiness' is not consistently defined and is associated with many varied meanings, including: hedonic level, joy, positive affect, satisfaction with life, and pleasantness. Considered to be the key indicator of SWB, LS is a subjective evaluation of overall quality of life (Diener and Diener 1995). Throughout the research literature, scores on measures of LS are often used to indicate happiness or unhappiness. In general, positive evaluations of LS

are linked with happiness and the achievement of the 'good life', whereas negative evaluations of LS are associated with depression and unhappiness. Moreover, healthy psychological states, such as happiness and LS, are often assumed to be the by-products of social and economic resources and success, despite research indicating a bidirectional relationship (Lyubomirsky et al. 2005). Indeed, cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental data have all shown that well-being and happiness can precede diverse positive personal, behavioural, psychological, and social outcomes (see Lyubomirsky et al. 2005), just as low LS and unhappiness can predict the onset of depression and psychological disorder up to two years prior to diagnosis (see Lewinsohn et al. 1991). Hence, this paper investigates the factors that influence life satisfactions of Nigerian university staff. Certain variables are key in determining many different aspects and outcomes of life satisfaction (Fernet, Austin, & Vallerand, 2012). Amongst these factors are calling and personality. Understanding these factors is very important in attempting to create a higher level of life satisfaction.

One variable that have been shown to play crucial role in life satisfaction is spousal support. Spousal support has been defined as social interactions or relationships that provide couples with actual assistance or feeling of attachment to each other (Hobfoll & Stoke, 1988). Spousal support is considered an interpersonal resource in that couples who use support systems are likely to receive assistance meeting demands, feeling satisfied in life (House, 1981). With the recognition that marital partner is the principal source of spousal support for most adults, and that spousal support is one of the most reliable sources of social support available (Beach, Martin, Blum, & Roman, 1993), the role that a supportive spouse plays has been recognized as critical to understand and of optimal importance to marital satisfaction.

Spousal support plays a big role in determining the extent of life satisfaction among couples. The type of spousal support that is most beneficial to marital quality may vary depending on both an individual's gender and his/her gender role attitudes. For instance, women with traditional gender role attitudes consider housework to be the woman's responsibility. As such, instrumental support from a husband is less often expected, and, therefore, should be less important than emotional spousal support for these wives' perceived marital quality. By contrast, women with egalitarian gender role attitudes consider housework a shared domain. As such, instrumental support from a husband is greatly expected, and, therefore, it may be as important as emotional spousal support for these wives' perceived marital quality. For men, on the other hand, the opposite pattern may be found; traditional men expect more instrumental spousal support from their wives than egalitarian men do. Traditional notions that a wife is expected to remain at home and take care of the house, children, and family, while the husband is expected to be the breadwinner and "head of the household," have begun to decrease and more egalitarian notions (men and women are equal in all domains) have increased among both men and women (Botkin, Weeks, & Morris, 2000).

Research on spousal support has repeatedly found that emotional support from a spouse is a significant predictor of both greater life satisfaction (e.g., Acitelli & Antonucci, 1994) and less marital conflict (e.g., McGonagle, Kessler, & Schilling, 1992; Schuster, Kessler, & Aseltine, 1990) and more so for women than for men. Emotional support is thought to be more important for women's well-being, in general, because of women's emphasis on intimacy in relationships. Within the context of marriage, the expectation for intimacy and caring may make emotional support salient in a wife's evaluation of marital quality (Acitelli, 1996). On the other hand, married men's well-being within marriage may be strongly connected to both instrumental

spousal support (because of their socialized expectations for marriage and marital roles; Thompson, 1993) and emotional spousal support (because the wife is often the sole confidant for married men; Belle, 1987). The ongoing realities of a marital relationship present a more complex challenge than simply falling in love, having a marriage ceremony, and living happily ever after. Two people must interact on a daily basis and find ways to deal with an almost endless list of potential problems, such as dividing up the household chores, dealing with the unexpected events that arise each day, meeting the demands of those outside the relationship (e.g., parents, siblings, and friends), and juggling the requirements of a job (or jobs). In addition, economic concerns (Conger, Rueter, & Elder, 1999), the stresses of parenthood (Kurdek, 1999), and the complications of a non-traditional family composition can bring unexpected complications.

This is where the need for spousal support comes to play. When we mention spousal social support, we mean the help, responsibilities; contribution and sacrifices spouses make for each other that increase life satisfaction. Furthermore, spousal social support also has to do with the psychological, emotional, financial and domestic assistance spouse gives to each other in order to make their marriage work. In young couples, a sense of equity in terms of each spouse's contribution to and benefit from the marriage predicts satisfaction (Utne, Hatfield, Traupmann, & Greenberger, 1984). One hand they say cannot carry a heavy load. When spouses play complimentary supporting roles to each other, comfort and peace are usually evident as factors for marital satisfaction. Early in marriage, couples are in the process of developing a shared life (Murray, Holmes, Bellavia, Griffin, & Dolderman, 2002). Shared life connotes shared feelings, shared responsibilities and support for one another. Although the patterns are gradually changing, men do most of the repairs and women do most of the cooking and cleaning, even if they both have active careers (Yu, 1996). Marital conflict and dissatisfaction often involve the perceived unfairness in the way such chores are divided (Grote & Clark, 2001). By mid-life—which, for most couples, occurs 10–20 years into marriage—life tasks have changed considerably.

Spouses are raising their family, facing increased responsibility in the workplace, and coping with greater role strain than at any other life stage (Moen, Kim, & Hofmeister, 2001). At this point, the focus for many couples seems to be less on the marriage itself and more on meeting individual and shared responsibilities. In some homes where there may be many responsibilities like NEPA bills, house rents, school fees, taking children to school and some other daily expenses couples must attend to, and there were left unsettled or unattended to as a result of diffusion of responsibility, the couples are likely to have marital dissatisfaction. However, if the couples are supportive to each other in tackling their responsibilities, they are likely to experience marital satisfaction.

One other variable of interest in this study is goal orientation. Psychologists and researchers have long considered the role of goal orientation in life satisfaction (Rawsthorne & Elliot, 1999; Valle et al., 2003). Goal orientation is commonly defined as the purpose of an individual's achievement pursuit (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Much of the early research or a variety of studies has shown that different goal orientations determine people's life satisfaction as well as success (Ames, 1992). Generally, it is assumed that individuals entirely are more satisfied and achieve better performance if they pursue a goal that is well intrinsically motivated (Fortune, 2005). Staff who are engaged meaningfully seem to be more willing to pursue challenging tasks; have positive feelings towards the learning situation and exhibit an adaptive attribution

pattern (Ames, 1988). Goal orientation is often traced to long-term and high-quality involvement in life pursuit or skills. Goal orientation can be thought of as interpretative frameworks or schemas, which focus the individual's attention towards the self or the task (Maehr, 2001). People vary in their reason for engaging in a particular achievement behavior and endorse various achievement goals (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot, 2000; Elliot & McGregor, 2001).

Similarly, achievement contexts vary with respect to goal orientations. They invoke environments mastery, the importance of outperforming others, developing competence (Ames & Patrick, 2001), and research has sought to understand how these contextual goal structures influence personal goal orientations with a particular interest in understanding how to design environments that engender adaptive patterns of motivation and learning (Maehr & Midgley, 1996). Related studies in this area have investigated the effect of goal orientation and learning motivation by examining shifts in goals across work transitions (Gutman, 2006) as well as the relation between staff perceived goal orientation structure and their own goal endorsement (Church et al., 2001).

The present study highlights the importance and understanding of goal orientation on related contingencies of self-worth, as well as its potential roles as psychological process through which goals can be shaped. Because goal orientation comprises a host of beliefs regarding competence and achievement, it can be influenced by multiple sources. Understanding components of goal orientation in achievement contexts will be essential to the design of work and learning environments and the effectiveness with which goals are pursued. However, this spectrum of motivational factor, which is goal orientation, refers to a worker's schemata of approaching a language task (Pintrich, 2000). This construct reflects internal motivational processes that affect an individual's task choices, self-set goals, and effort mechanisms in learning and performance (Button, Mathieu, & Zajac, 1996). Individuals with learning goal orientation are concerned about developing their ability and thus seek out opportunities that foster learning and their focus is to gain understanding, insight, and skills. Staff with a performance goal orientation are concerned about demonstrating their ability and their focus is on gaining favorable judgment and competence (VandeWalle, 1997).

Statement of the Problem

Understanding why people do what they do, and providing answers to the question of what motivates and makes people happy has become very necessary in our present society. One good reason could be because individuals all over the world will continue to work towards achieving more and more satisfaction in their lives. Another is because the search for happiness in life has encouraged individuals across cultures and societies to study multiple aspects of well-being. The pursuit of life satisfaction has made individuals have positive subjective evaluations of their lives, using any information the person considers relevant. Life satisfaction is one of the oldest and most persistently investigated issues because it spans from birth to late adulthood, reflecting an assessment of the overall conditions of existence as derived from a comparison of one's aspirations to one's actual achievement. The meanings and values that people attribute to their jobs not only influence important work-related outcomes, such as job satisfaction, commitment and involvement, but also affect the individual's general wellbeing and quality of life. Perceiving a sense of purpose and meaningfulness in our work, and feeling driven by a vocation to put our talents to good use and make a

positive contribution to the world around us in form of calling has health benefits. This is why some researchers believe that calling is a role in society that a person feels destined to occupy because of their talents or gifts. Individuals believed to be doing a job of their calling pass through transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self, to approach a particular life role in a manner oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goals as primary sources of motivation; and may have better life satisfaction. Therefore, the following research questions are stated to guide the study:

- 1). Will spousal support significantly predict life satisfaction of GOU Staff?
- 2). Will goal orientation significantly predict life satisfaction of GOU Staff?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the present study is to determine the extent to which spousal support and goal orientation serve as predictors of life satisfaction among staff of Godfrey Okoye University. Specifically, the study will:

- 1). Determine whether spousal support predicts life satisfaction among GOU staff.
- 2). Investigate if goal orientation is a predictor of life satisfaction among GOU staff.

Operational Definition of Terms

Life Satisfaction: This is a positive subjective evaluation of one's life, using any information the person considers relevant as measured by Life Satisfaction Index-Short Form (Barrett & Murk, 2009).

Spousal Social Support: Spousal social support in this study refers to the social support spouses provide for their partners which may be in form of emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support as measured by Provision of Spousal Social Support Scale.

Goal Orientation: This is defined as an individual's purpose of achievement pursuit that triggers actualization of one's objective/aims as measured by Goal Orientation Scale (VandeWalle, 1997).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature is examined from two perspectives – theoretical and empirical reviews.

Theoretical Review

The following theories are reviewed in this research:

- Whole Life Satisfaction Theories of Happiness
- Hedonism Theory (Bentham, 1978)
- Desire Theory (Griffin, 1986)
- Social Comparison Theory
- Achievement Goal Orientation Theory
- Social Exchange Theory
- Social Penetration Theory
- Interdependence Theory

Whole Life Satisfaction Theories of Happiness: Whole life satisfaction theory of happiness was proposed by Brandt, Kekes, Nozick, Sumner, Tatarkiewicz, Telfer, Wright and many others. Tatarkiewicz says that happiness (in the most important sense of the term) is “satisfaction with one’s life as a whole” (Tatarkiewicz, 1966, p. 1). He apparently means to defend the view that if a person is happy then he must not only be fully satisfied with the current segment of his life, he must be satisfied with the past segment of his life and the segment of his life that is yet to come. In his discussion of happiness and time, he makes the point explicitly: Satisfaction with life as a whole must be satisfaction not only with that which is, but also with that which was and that which will be, not only with the present, but also with the past and the future (Tatarkiewicz, 1976, p. 140). Telfer (1980) formulates the theory in a different way. She writes: “My suggestion for a definition of happiness, then, is that it is a state of being pleased with one’s life as a whole . . .” (Telfer, 1980, pp. 8–9). She expands upon this by saying that “a happy man does not want anything major in his life to be otherwise; he is pleased with, that is wants [to keep], what he has got; there is nothing major which he has not got and which he wants (to get).”

Brandt (1967) states two conditions for happiness. Brandt writes: . . . the following proposal for a definition of “happy” may be suggested . . . in order to be happy it is necessary that one like . . . those parts of one’s total life pattern and circumstances that one thinks are important. To say that one likes them is in part to say that one is “satisfied” with them – that one does not wish them to be substantially different, and that they measure up, at least roughly, to the life ideal one had hoped to attain . . . We would not call a man happy if he did not frequently feel joy or enthusiasm or enjoy what he was doing or experiencing (Brandt, 1967). Brandt apparently intends to propose an account of what it means to say that a person had a happy life, or was a happy person. His idea seems to be that in order to be a happy person, one must meet two

conditions. First, one must be satisfied with the life one in fact has lived – that life must measure up (or must be believed to measure up) sufficiently to the “life ideal” one had hoped to attain. Secondly, one must have felt joy or enthusiasm frequently during that life.

Like Brandt, Sumner claims that in order to have a happy life, a person must (a) be satisfied with his life as a whole, and (b) enjoy certain moods or emotions. Sumner describes the first component in these words: The cognitive aspect of happiness consists in a positive evaluation of the conditions of your life, a judgement that, at least on balance, it measures up favourably against your standards or expectations. This evaluation may be global, covering all of the important sectors of one’s life, or it may focus on one in particular (your work, say, or your family). In either case it represents an affirmation or endorsement of (some or all of) the conditions or circumstances of your life, a judgement that, on balance and taking everything into account, your life is going well for you (Sumner, 1996). The second component of Sumner’s analysis is the affective component. Sumner requires that a happy person experience “a sense of well-being” that is directed upon a specific object – his life as a whole: The affective side of happiness consists in what we commonly call a sense of well-being: finding your life enriching or rewarding, or feeling satisfied or fulfilled by it.

WLS conceptions of happiness seem to confront two closely related problems right at the outset. One problem arises because a person might judge at one time that important aspects of his whole life do match up with his expectations; but the same person might judge at another time that important aspects of his whole life do not match up with his expectations. This sort of change in judgement is unproblematic in itself. Just as your blood pressure may vary through time, so may the extent to which you judge that important aspects of your life as a whole match up with your expectations. However, the advocate of the WLS concept of happiness surely does not want to say, in such a case, that the person both did have a happy life and also did not have a happy life. That would simply be a contradiction. This is the instability problem.

A second problem is generally known as the lability problem. Empirical testing has demonstrated that an individual’s judgement about whole life satisfaction can be affected by seemingly trivial features of the context in which he is making the judgement. Thus, for example, if a subject is first allowed to discover a “lost” dollar bill, and then is asked to make a judgement about whole life satisfaction, he is likely to indicate greater satisfaction than he would if he had not found a free dollar bill. Many other contextual factors – the weather, the decor of the room in which the subject is questioned, the attractiveness of the questioner – are seen to affect life satisfaction judgements. This seems to suggest that such judgements are somehow “wrong” – that they fail to track our actual levels of life satisfaction. The idea that a subject genuinely becomes more satisfied with his life as a whole simply because he came across a dollar bill seems incredible.

Some have suggested that these problems could be avoided if there were some ideal moment for measuring life satisfaction. For example, we might say that a person has a happy life if, at the moment of death, when he looks back and surveys his life as a whole, he judges that important aspects matched up with his expectations. The problems with this approach should be obvious: some people do not look back and survey their lives on their deathbeds. Some who do thus survey their lives may make a favourable judgement even though they in fact led miserable lives; others may not make favourable judgements even though their lives were very happy. Surely it is unreasonable to link a person’s lifetime happiness level to the life assessment he makes in extremis.

Advocates of the WLS approach to happiness can then say that a person's happiness at a moment is equal to his level of whole life satisfaction at that moment; and happiness in life as a whole is equal to his whole life satisfaction for the interval that is his whole life. The fact that there were times when he was not satisfied with his life as a whole does not introduce a contradiction; it just lowers his net whole life satisfaction level and thus his total amount of happiness in life. Thus the instability problem does not arise.

Hedonism Theory (Bentham, 1978): The hedonism theory was proposed by Bentham (1978). In all its variants, it holds that happiness is a matter of raw subjective feeling. A happy life maximizes feelings of pleasure and minimizes pain. A happy person smiles a lot, is ebullient, bright eyed and bushy tailed; her pleasures are intense and many, her pains are few and far between. This theory has its modern conceptual roots in Bentham's utilitarianism (Bentham, 1978).

Consider the following scenario: researchers call on people at random during the day, ask how much pleasure or pain a person is experiencing right now (the Experience Sampling Method, ESM), and extrapolate to an approximate total for the experienced happiness over the week. They also ask the same people afterwards "how happy was your week?" The retrospective summary judgment of happiness often differs greatly from the extrapolated total of experienced happiness. Remember your last vacation? "Yes, it was great!" you might say, even though if beeped during it, the mosquitoes, the traffic, the sunburn, and the overpriced food might gainsay your summary judgment. At the hands of an experimental psychologist, hedonism becomes a methodological commitment: your "objective happiness" for a given time period is computed by adding up your on-line hedonic assessments of all the individual moments that comprise that period. This computed aggregate of "experienced utility" becomes the criterion of truth about how genuinely happy your vacation (your childhood, your life) should be taken to be. On this view, the experiencer is always right. If the experiencer and the retrospective judge disagree, so much the worse for the judge.

One basic challenge facing a hedonist is that when we wish someone a happy life (or a happy childhood, or even a happy week), we are not merely wishing that they accumulate a tidy sum of pleasures, irrespective of how this sum is distributed across one's life-span or its meaning for the whole (Velleman, 1991). We can imagine two lives that contain the same exact amount of momentary pleasantness, but one life tells a story of gradual decline (ecstatic childhood, light-hearted youth, dysphonic adulthood, miserable old age) while another is a tale of gradual improvement (the above pattern in reverse). The difference between these lives is a matter of their global trajectories and these cannot be discerned from the standpoint of its individual moments. They can only be fathomed by a retrospective judge examining the life-pattern as a whole.

Desire Theory (Griffin, 1986): This theory was proposed by Griffin (1986). Desire theory can do better than Hedonism. Desire theory holds that happiness is a matter of getting what you want (Griffin, 1986), with the content of the want left up to the person who does the wanting. Desire theory subsumes hedonism when what we want is lots of pleasure and little pain. Like hedonism, desire theory can explain why an ice-cream cone is preferable to a poke in the eye. However, hedonism and desire theory often part company. Hedonism holds that the preponderance of pleasure over pain is the recipe for happiness even if this is not what one desires most. Desire theory holds that the fulfilment of a desire contributes to one's happiness regardless of the amount of pleasure (or displeasure). He wanted truth and illumination and

struggle and purity, and he did not much desire pleasure. His life was "wonderful" according to Desire theory because he achieved more of truth and illumination than most mortals, even though as a "negative affective," he experienced less pleasure and more pain than most people.

Nozick's (1974) experience machine (your lifetime is in a tank with your brain wired up to yield any experiences you want) is turned down because we desire to earn our pleasures and achievements. We want them to come about as a result of right action and good character, not as an illusion of brain chemistry. So the Desire criterion for happiness moves from Hedonism's amount of pleasure felt to the somewhat less subjective state of how well one's desires are satisfied. Our principal objection to Desire theory is that one might desire only to collect china tea cups or orgasms or only to listen to Country and Western music or to count fallen leaves all day long. The world's largest collection of tea cups, no matter how "satisfying," does not seem to add up to much of a happy life. One move to deflect this objection is to limit the scope of Desire theory to the fulfilment of only those desires that one would have if one aimed at an objective list of what is truly worthwhile in life.

Social Comparison Theory: Social comparison theory, initially proposed by social psychologist Leon Festinger in 1954, centers on the belief that there is a drive within individuals to gain accurate self-evaluations. The theory explains how individuals evaluate their own opinions and abilities by comparing themselves to others in order to reduce uncertainty in these domains, and learn how to define the self. Following the initial theory, research began to focus on social comparison as a way of self-enhancement (Gruder 1971; Wills 1981), introducing the concepts of downward and upward comparisons and expanding the motivations of social comparisons (Schachter, 1959). Social comparison theory states that individuals determine their own social and personal worth based on how they stack up against others they perceive as somehow faring better or worse. People sometimes compare themselves to others as a way of fostering self-improvement, self-motivation, and a positive self-image. As a result, humans are constantly evaluating themselves and others across a variety of domains, such as attractiveness, wealth, intelligence, and success. These evaluations can also promote judgmental, biased, and overly competitive or superior attitudes. Most people have the social skills and impulse control to keep envy and standards for social comparison quiet, but someone's true feelings may come out in other ways. Some research shows that people who regularly compare themselves to others often experience negative feelings of deep dissatisfaction, guilt, and remorse, and engage in destructive behaviours, like lying and disordered eating.

In the initial theory, Festinger provided nine main hypotheses. First, he stated that humans have a basic drive to evaluate their opinions and abilities and that people evaluate themselves through objective, nonsocial means (Hypothesis I) (Festinger, 1954). Second, Festinger stated that if objective, nonsocial means were not available, that people evaluate their opinions and abilities by comparison to other people (Hypothesis II) (Festinger, 1954). Next, he hypothesized that the tendency to compare oneself to another person decreases as the difference between their opinions and abilities becomes more divergent (Festinger, 1954). In other words, if someone is much different from you, you are less likely to compare yourself to that person (Hypothesis III). He next hypothesized that there is a unidirectional drive upward in the case of abilities, which is largely absent in opinions (Festinger, 1954). This drive refers to the value that is placed on doing better and better (Suls, & Miller, 1977) (Hypothesis IV). Next, Festinger hypothesizes that there are non-social restraints that

make it difficult or even impossible to change one's ability and these restraints are largely absent for opinions (Festinger, 1954). In other words, people can change their opinions when they want to but no matter how motivated individuals may be to improve their ability, there may be other elements that make this impossible (Suls & Miller, 1977) (Hypothesis V). Festinger goes on to hypothesize that the cessation of comparison with others is accompanied by hostility or derogation to the extent that continued comparison with those persons implies unpleasant consequences (Hypothesis VI). Next, any factors which increase the importance of some particular group as a comparison group from some particular opinion or ability will increase the pressure toward uniformity concerning that ability or opinion within that group. If discrepancies arise between the evaluator and comparison group there is a tendency to reduce the divergence by either attempting to persuade others, or changing their personal views to attain uniformity. However, the importance, relevance and attraction to a comparison group that affects the original motivation for comparison, mediates the pressures towards uniformity (Hypothesis VII). His next hypothesis states that if persons who are very divergent from one's own opinion or ability are perceived as different from oneself on attributes consistent with the divergence, the tendency to narrow the range of comparability becomes stronger (Hypothesis VIII). Lastly, Festinger hypothesized that when there is a range of opinion or ability in a group, the relative strength of the three manifestations of pressures toward uniformity will be different for those who are close to the mode of the group than for those who are distant from the mode. Those close to the mode will have stronger tendencies to change the positions of others, weaker tendencies to narrow the range of comparison, and even weaker tendencies to change their own opinions (Hypothesis IX) (Festinger, 1954). Motives that are relevant to social comparison include self-enhancement, and maintenance of a positive self-evaluation.

Self-evaluation: This is one process that underlies how an individual engages in social comparison (Thornton & Arrowood, 1966). Each individual's specific goals will influence how they engage in social comparison. For self-evaluation, people tend to choose a comparison target that is similar to themselves (Wood, 1989). Specifically, they are most interested in choosing a target who shares some distinctive characteristic with themselves. Research suggests that most people believe that choosing a similar target helps ensure the accuracy of the self-evaluation. However, individuals do not always act as unbiased self-evaluators, and accurate self-evaluations may not be the primary goal of social comparison.

Self-enhancement: Individuals may also seek self-enhancement, or to improve their self-esteem (Wood, 1989). They may interpret, distort, or ignore the information gained by social comparison to see themselves more positively and further their self-enhancement goals. They will also choose to make upward (comparing themselves to someone better off) or downward (comparing themselves to someone worse off) comparisons, depending on which strategy will further their self-enhancement goals. They may also avoid making comparisons period, or avoid making certain types of comparisons. Specifically, when an individual believes that their ability in a specific area is low, they will avoid making upward social comparisons in that area. Unlike for self-evaluation goals, people engaging in social comparison with the goal of self-enhancement may not seek out a target that is similar to themselves. In fact, if a target's similarity is seen as a threat, due to the target outperforming the individual on some dimension, the individual may downplay the similarity of the target to themselves. This notion ties closely to the phenomena in psychology introduced also by Leon Festinger himself as it relates to the diminishing of cognitive dissonance. One does not want to perceive oneself in a way which would downplay one's original belief upon which one's self-esteem is based and

therefore in order to reduce the cognitive dissonance, one is willing to change the cognitive representation of the other person whom one compares oneself to, such that one's own belief about oneself remains intact. This effectively leads to the comparison of apples to oranges or psychological denial.

Wills introduced the concept of downward comparison in 1981 (Wills, 1981). Downward social comparison is a defensive tendency that is used as a means of self-evaluation. When a person looks to another individual or group that they consider to be worse off than themselves in order to feel better about their self or personal situation, they are making a downward social comparison. Research has suggested that social comparisons with others who are better off or superior, or upward comparisons, can lower self-regard, whereas downward comparisons can elevate self-regard (Gibbons, 1986). Downward comparison theory emphasizes the positive effects of comparisons in increasing one's subjective well-being (Wills, 1981). For example, it has been found that breast cancer patients made the majority of comparisons with patients less fortunate than themselves.

Although social comparison research has suggested that upward comparisons can lower self-regard, Collins indicates that this is not always the case (Collins, 1995). Individuals make upward comparisons, whether consciously or subconsciously, when they compare themselves with an individual or comparison group that they perceive as superior or better than themselves in order to improve their views of self or to create a more positive perception of their personal reality. Upward social comparisons are made to self-evaluate and self-improve in the hopes that self-enhancement will also occur. In an upward social comparison, people want to believe themselves to be part of the elite or superior, and make comparisons highlighting the similarities between themselves and the comparison group, unlike a downward social comparison, where similarities between individuals or groups are disassociated (Suls, Martin, & Wheeler, 2002).

It has also been suggested that upward comparisons may provide an inspiration to improve, and in one study it was found that while breast cancer patients made more downward comparisons, they showed a preference for information about more fortunate others (Taylor & Lobel, 1989). Another study indicated that people who were dieting often used upward social comparisons by posting pictures of thinner people on their refrigerators (Collins, 1995). These pictures served as not only a reminder of an individual's current weight, but also as an inspiration of a goal to be reached. In simple terms, downward social comparisons are more likely to make us feel better about ourselves, while upward social comparisons are more likely to motivate us to achieve more or reach higher.

Achievement Goal Orientation Theory: The achievement goal theory was developed by Nicholls (1989). Achievement goal theory proposes that individuals approach achievement tasks with qualitatively different types of goals depending on how they are evaluating their competence and ability. Goal orientation theory, which is theoretically grounded on achievement goal theory, assumes that persons vary in the way they define accomplishment and perceive competence.

Individual goal perspective influences how one thinks, feels and acts in achievement situations such as education and academic engagement. Based on Nicholls' theoretical work, Duda (1992) proposed the formation of two predominant achievement goal perspectives, namely task orientation and ego orientation,

relating and differentiating how individuals estimate their level of ability, effort, and judgment of performance.

In task orientation, ability evaluation is self-referenced, and is judged in relation to one's own perceived mastery, understanding, or knowledge. Improving mastery and the execution of the task at hand remains the individual's major concern. In addition, perceived success is founded on personal improvement, skill learning, and effort exhibition. Overall, task orientation corresponds to adaptive cognitions and positive achievement behaviours, such as sustained involvement in academic settings, practice, and optimal motivation, regardless of the person's level of perceived ability (Duda, 1992, 2001).

On the other hand, an individual is "ego oriented" when perceived ability is evaluated with regard to the performance of others, implying a heavy reliance on social comparison for estimating personal ability. In this interpersonal comparison, outperforming others with the least effort signifies superior competence (Nicholls, 1984, 1989; Duda, 1992). It is in this type of challenge that negative achievement behaviours (such as debilitated performance, deceptive tactics, reduced effort, and a lack of persistence) and maladaptive cognitive responses are assumed to result when individuals are ego-oriented and doubt their competence (White & Duda, 1994). It is supposed that an ego oriented individual will show increased motivation only in conditions of high competence exceeding demands. Results indicated that most highly motivated students were high task/high ego oriented, and the least motivated students were low task/low ego oriented, whereas the rest of the students were in between (Fox et al., 1994; Georgiadis et al., 2001).

Social Exchange Theory: The social exchange theory was developed by Emerson (1976). The theory mainly uses a cost-benefit framework and comparison of alternatives to explain how human beings communicate with each other, how they form relationships and bonds, and how communities are formed through communication exchanges (Homans, 1958). The theory states that individuals engage in behaviours they find rewarding and avoid behaviours that have too high a cost. In other words, all social behavior is based on each actor's subjective assessment of the cost-benefit of contributing to a social exchange. They communicate or exchange with each other contingent on reciprocal actions from the other communicating party (Emerson, 1976). The mutual reinforcement could be analyzed through a microeconomic framework, though many times the rewards are not monetary but social, such as opportunity, prestige, conformity, or acceptance (Emerson, 1976). The theory was arguably best summarized by Homans (1958). For Homans, persons that give much to others try to get much from them, and persons that get much from others are under pressure to give much to them. This process of influence tends to work out at equilibrium to a balance in the exchanges. For a person in an exchange, what he gives may be a cost to him, just as what he gets may be a reward, and his behavior changes less as the difference of the two, profit, tends to a maximum. Hence, the reasons why people engage in a social exchange have been posited as (a) an expected gain in reputation and influence on others; (b) an anticipated reciprocity on the part of others; (c) altruism; and (d) direct reward.

Social Penetration Theory: Similar to social exchange theory, social penetration theory explains how human exchange forms relationships (Altman & Taylor, 1973). However, the latter focuses more on individual and dyadic levels while the former could explain behavior at aggregated and organizational levels. Social penetration theory states that human beings form close relationships through self-disclosure. Using an analogy of peeling off the layers of an onion, one must disclose him or herself through the continuous

process of exposing one's inner self and identity. It starts with public, visible and superficial information, such as gender, clothing preferences, and ethnicity; slowly, as the relationship progresses, one starts to share his or her feelings; in the deepest level, one will expose his or her goals, ambitions and beliefs (Altman et al., 1981).

Interdependence Theory: Interdependence theory was first introduced by Harold Kelley and John Thibaut in 1959 in their book, *The Social Psychology of Groups* (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In their second book, *Interpersonal Relations: A Theory of Interdependence* (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978), the theory was completely formalized in 1978. Interdependence theory is part of a larger scale of social exchange theories. Social exchange theories look at how people exchange rewards and costs in a relationship. Interdependence theory takes it another step further and demonstrates how these rewards and costs collaborate with people's expectations of interpersonal relationships. This theory comes from the idea that closeness is the key to all relationships; that people communicate to become closer to one another. This theory states that there are rewards and costs to any relationship and that people try to maximize rewards while minimizing costs. Interdependence theory stipulates that an ideal relationship is characterized with high levels of rewards and low levels of costs. Rewards are "exchanged resources that are pleasurable and gratifying," while costs are "exchanged resources that result in a loss or punishment" (Sprecher, 1998). This theory distinguishes between four types of rewards and costs: emotional, social, instrumental, and opportunity.

Emotional: Emotional rewards and costs are the positive and negative feelings, respectively, that are experienced in a relationship. These types of rewards and costs are especially pertinent to close relationships (Guerrero, Anderson, & Afifi, 2007).

Social: Social rewards and costs are those related to a person's social appearance and the ability to interact in social environments (Guerrero, Anderson, & Afifi, 2007).

Instrumental: Instrumental rewards and costs deal with activities and/or tasks in a relationship. Instrumental rewards are obtained when a person's partner is proficient in handling tasks, while instrumental costs occur when a partner causes unnecessary work or impedes progress in a task (Guerrero, Anderson, & Afifi, 2007).

Opportunity: Opportunity rewards and costs are associated with the opportunities that arise in relationships. Opportunity rewards are gains received in a relationship that one could not receive alone, whereas opportunity costs occur when a person must give up something for the sake of the relationship.

With every relationship there is an outcome determined by comparing rewards versus costs. According to interdependence theory, people mentally account for rewards and costs to evaluate their relationship outcome as positive or negative (Guerrero, Anderson, & Afifi, 2007). The outcome is positive when rewards outweigh costs, and negative when costs outweigh rewards. Interdependence theory also considers the comparison level—the outcomes a person expects to receive based on past relationships and observations (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

Empirical Review

Spousal Support and Life Satisfaction: Lee, Lee, and Choi (2020) examined whether marriage buffers the negative consequences of low income among elderly people. Using two large national survey datasets, the Korean Community Health Survey ($n = 126,936$) and the Korean Longitudinal Study of Aging (KLoSA) ($n = 5,687$), they examined the relationship between household income, marital condition, and life satisfaction in adults over 50. Results showed that increases in life satisfaction were associated with higher income, marital status, and spousal satisfaction, with beneficial effects stronger in men.

Wortman and Lucas (2016) explored individual differences in subjective well-being, focusing on married couples to test the impact of shared life circumstances on life satisfaction before and after divorce. Using a nationally representative panel study from Germany, they showed that similarity in life satisfaction between spouses declined substantially following divorce, demonstrating that life satisfaction is closely tied to shared life circumstances.

Yedirir and Hamarta (2015) examined the relationship between spousal support, emotional expression, and marital satisfaction among 195 married couples ($N = 390$). Results indicated a significant positive relationship between all sub-dimensions of spousal support and marital satisfaction, confirming spousal support as a significant predictor of marital satisfaction.

Rostami, Ghazinour, and Richter (2013) investigated marital satisfaction in relation to social support, coping mechanisms, and quality of life among 653 medical staff in Tehran. Spousal support was significantly associated with marital satisfaction, especially among female staff. Hierarchical regression analysis revealed that job satisfaction, social support, and coping mechanisms explained between 24% and 38% of the variance in marital satisfaction.

Gallimore, Hughes, and Geldhauser (2006) studied 143 dual-income married couples and confirmed that as spousal support increases, marital satisfaction increases significantly across varying demographic backgrounds.

Choi, Wan, Jaccard, and Ramey (1996) examined the discriminant validity of four types of social support among 512 parents. Their findings highlighted the importance of distinguishing who provides social support, showing that spousal support had unique and significant correlations with overall life satisfaction.

Goal Orientation and Life Satisfaction: Arunkumar (2020) assessed the influence of goal orientation on life satisfaction among 321 undergraduate students in Mumbai. Findings indicated that while performance-approach goal orientation was most common, only mastery goal orientation was positively associated with life satisfaction.

Wang, Li, Sun, Cheng, and Zhang (2017) examined how achievement goals affect life satisfaction in China. Survey results demonstrated that achievement goals were positively related to life satisfaction ($R^2 = .20$), with successful agency fully mediating the relationship.

Krasko, Schweitzer, and Luhmann (2020) validated the Happiness Goal Orientation (HGO) scale across four studies, demonstrating that Happiness-Related Strivings were positively associated with well-being, whereas Happiness-Related Concerns were negatively associated with well-being.

Heinke (2007) analyzed data from 2,309 college students to explore goal orientation, academic engagement, and satisfaction. Results supported the notion that individuals pursuing both mastery and performance goals experience higher satisfaction than those pursuing single or work-avoidance orientations.

Summary of Literature Review

In summary, the literature highlights that life satisfaction represents a global cognitive assessment of an individual's quality of life based on their chosen criteria. Spousal support functions as a crucial interpersonal resource that buffers against stress, enhances marital quality, and promotes overall subjective well-being. Concurrently, goal orientation dictates how individuals approach life goals, structure personal achievement pursuits, and derive satisfaction from mastery and performance outcomes.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- 1). Spousal support will significantly predict life satisfaction of GOU Staff.
- 2). Goal orientation will significantly predict life satisfaction of GOU Staff.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

Participants

Data for this study were collected from a sample of one hundred and sixty-five (165) Godfrey Okoye University Staff, Enugu. They were selected using simple random and convenient sampling techniques. Their ages ranged from 23 to 68 years with an average age of 39.74 years ($SD = 8.23$). All the participants were of the Christian religion. They include 76 females and 89 males. The minimum educational qualification of the participants was First School Leaving Certificate, while the highest was a First Degree. Information was equally obtained on the participants' marital status and job status.

Instruments

A questionnaire comprising three scales was used for data collection:

1. Provision of Spousal Social Support Scale (SSSS)
2. Goal Orientation Scale (VandeWalle, 1997)
3. Life Satisfaction Index-Short Form (LIS-SF; Barrett & Murk, 2009)

Provision of Spousal Social Support Scale (SSSS): The Provision of Spousal Social Support Scale was developed by House (1981) to measure the degree of support spouses provide for their partners. The 20 items cover Emotional Concern (6 items), Instrumental Support (6 items), Informational Support (4 items), and Appraisal Support (4 items). It is structured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores indicating higher levels of spousal support. Items 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 15, and 18 are reverse scored. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .76 was obtained for the Nigerian sample in this study.

Goal Orientation Scale (VandeWalle, 1997): The Goal Orientation Scale (VandeWalle, 1997) was used to measure goal orientation. It is a 5-item scale rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). A sample item includes: "I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills." The scale yielded an acceptable Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of approximately .81.

Life Satisfaction Index-Short Form (LIS-SF; Barrett & Murk, 2009): The LIS-SF consists of 12 items scored on a 6-point Likert scale measuring overall life satisfaction. Barrett and Murk (2009) reported a Cronbach alpha reliability of .90 for the short form. In Nigerian samples, Onyishi, Okongwu, and Ugwu (2012) reported item-total correlations ranging from .27 to .77, with a Cronbach alpha reliability of .82 in the present study.

Procedure

The researcher introduced himself through an informed consent form that participants read and signed before participating. Questionnaires were administered across various university departments with the help of trained research assistants. Participants were assured of strict confidentiality and voluntary participation. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 165 fully completed and valid questionnaires were retained for data analysis. Participants were fully debriefed and thanked upon completion.

Design and Statistics

A cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study. Data were analyzed using Hierarchical Multiple Regression and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation via SPSS version 22.0.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

After data cleaning and checking for statistical assumptions, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and Pearson correlation coefficients were computed. Subsequently, Hierarchical Multiple Regression was performed to test the hypotheses, with Life Satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender	-	-	-					
2. Age	39.74	8.23	.91***	-				
3. Job Status	-	-	.83***	.53***	-			
4. Spousal Support	24.70	6.73	.19***	.19***	.13**	-		
5. Goal Orientation	27.83	5.38	.14**	.15**	.08	-.01	-	
6. Life Satisfaction	49.61	13.52	-.25***	-.21***	-.24***	.39***	.003	-

***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

Correlation results in Table 1 showed that gender had a significant negative relationship with life satisfaction among GOU staff ($r = -.25$, $p < .001$). Age ($r = -.21$, $p < .001$) and job status ($r = -.24$, $p < .001$) also had significant negative relationships with life satisfaction. Spousal support ($r = .39$, $p < .001$) was significantly positively correlated with life satisfaction. Goal orientation showed a non-significant relationship with life satisfaction ($r = .003$, $p > .05$).

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Life Satisfaction

Step & Predictor Variables	R	R ²	ΔR^2	B	β	t
Step 1						
Gender	.259***	.067***	.067***	-.343	-.116	-1.734
Job Status				-.709	-.179	-2.693**
Step 2						
Spousal Support	.436***	.190***	.123***	.719	.357	6.617***
Step 3						

Step & Predictor Variables	R	R ²	ΔR^2	B	β	t
Goal Orientation	.436	.190	.000	-.041	-.016	-.301

***p < .001, **p < .01, *p < .05

Hierarchical regression results in Table 2 showed that in Step 1, job status was a significant negative predictor of life satisfaction ($\beta = -.179$, $p < .01$), whereas gender was not significant. Demographic variables accounted for 6.7% of the variance ($R^2 = .067$). In Step 2, spousal support entered as a highly significant positive predictor of life satisfaction ($\beta = .357$, $p < .001$), explaining an additional 12.3% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .123$). In Step 3, goal orientation was a non-significant predictor ($\beta = -.016$, $t = -.301$, $p > .05$).

Summary of Findings

1. Gender, age, job status, and spousal support were significantly correlated with life satisfaction.
2. Job status significantly predicted life satisfaction among GOU staff.
3. Spousal support was a significant positive predictor of life satisfaction among GOU staff (Hypothesis 1 confirmed).
4. Goal orientation did not significantly predict life satisfaction among GOU staff (Hypothesis 2 not confirmed).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This study examined spousal support and goal orientation as predictors of life satisfaction among Godfrey Okoye University staff. The first hypothesis, which postulated that spousal support would significantly predict life satisfaction, was confirmed. This finding implies that high spousal support enhances workers' well-being, buffers against work-related stress, and fosters positive cognitive evaluation of life. This aligns with findings by Solar and Irwin (2007) and Mirabzadeh et al. (2013), who observed that spousal support builds resilience, direct self-esteem, and social adjustment among working adults.

The second hypothesis, which stated that goal orientation would significantly predict life satisfaction, was not confirmed. Goal orientation did not contribute significantly to the regression model. This finding contrasts with earlier studies (e.g., Janula & Mahipal, 2015; Wang et al., 2017), which suggested a strong direct link between goal orientation and life satisfaction. The divergence may stem from sample homogeneity or specific institutional and cultural factors contextually unique to the sample population.

Implications of the Study

The findings carry important practical implications. Spousal support emerged as a key social resource for university staff. Lack of adequate spousal support may increase vulnerability to burnout, workplace anxiety, and reduced life satisfaction. Institutional programs aimed at promoting work-life balance and family support structures could yield positive outcomes for staff well-being and institutional productivity.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations should be noted:

1. The sample was limited exclusively to staff of Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu, restricting the generalizability of findings to other institutions or geographic regions.
2. Cross-sectional design limits causal inferences regarding the relationships between variables.
3. Reliance on self-report questionnaires may introduce common method variance or response bias.

Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the limitations, future studies should:

1. Expand the sample to include staff from multiple public and private universities across various geopolitical zones in Nigeria.
2. Adopt longitudinal designs to establish causal trajectories between spousal support, goal orientation, and life satisfaction.
3. Explore potential mediating or moderating variables such as personality traits, emotion regulation, emotional intelligence, and organizational climate.

Summary and Conclusion

This study investigated spousal support and goal orientation as predictors of life satisfaction among Godfrey Okoye University staff. Results established that spousal support is a crucial positive predictor of life satisfaction, whereas goal orientation did not significantly predict life satisfaction in this sample. Fostering supportive family dynamics and work-life balance remains essential for enhancing overall quality of life among academic and administrative university staff.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Life Satisfaction Scale (LSI-SF)

Below are statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the scale below, indicate your agreement with each item.

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my time over, I would change almost nothing.
6. I am content with my accomplishments.

Appendix B: Spousal Social Support Scale (SSSS)

Indicate how often your spouse provides support in the following areas:

1. Listens when I need to talk about work/personal problems.
2. Helps with domestic chores and responsibilities.
3. Offers helpful advice when making important decisions.
4. Expresses love, care, and emotional concern.
5. Provides financial or instrumental assistance when needed.

Appendix C: Goal Orientation Scale (VandeWalle, 1997)

Indicate your level of agreement with each statement regarding your work goals:

1. I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from.
2. I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge.
3. I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills.
4. I prefer to work on tasks that force me to learn new things.

Appendix D: SPSS Output Summary

SPSS output files and statistical matrix printouts for Pearson correlation and Hierarchical Multiple Regression analysis (Model Summary, ANOVA, and Coefficients tables preserved on record).