

Volume 5, Issue3, 2020

**Enugu State University
of Science & Technology**
Journal of Social Sciences
& Humanities



Journal of Social Sciences

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published by

Faculty of Social Sciences

Enugu State University of Science & Technology

www.esutjss.com

Relationship between Personality Traits, Academic Performance and Suicidal Ideation among Undergraduates in the University of Lagos

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Abstract

Suicide remains a global issue mainly affecting young adults all over the continents. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between personality types, academic performance and suicidal ideation, and also test for age and gender differences between these variables. Participants for the study were undergraduates of the University of Lagos. The research made use of cross-sectional survey design and convenience sampling technique was used to select 307 undergraduates (151 females and 156 males) from different faculties in the University. Six hypotheses were developed and tested. Data was gathered making use of three research instruments (Big five scale, Suicide Ideation Scale, and CGPA). T-test analysis, regression analysis, correlation analysis were used to test the hypotheses. Results demonstrated that personality predicted suicidal ideation ($R^2=0.171$, $F(5,302)= 12.394$, $p<.01$) Also certain personality traits showed significant relationship with suicidal ideation. Neuroticism was positively correlated with suicidal ideation ($r =.349$; $p<.01$). Agreeableness ($r= -.222$; $p<.01$), conscientiousness ($r= -.346$; $p<.01$), and openness ($r= -.177$; $p<.01$) showed negative significant correlations with suicidal ideation. Both academic performance and personality traits jointly predicted suicidal ideation ($R^2= .200$; $F(6,300) = 12.490$; $p<.01$). Academic performance was negatively correlated with suicidal ideation ($r= -.252$; $p<.01$) and also accounted for just 6.3% significant variance in the population of suicidal ideation, while personality was a stronger predictor accounting for 17.1% of the significant variance in the population of suicide. No gender and age difference was reported. Limitations of the study and recommendations made based on the findings were discussed.

Introduction

Suicide has been a concern for the public worldwide as many adolescents keep on taking their lives. The recent increase in suicide among undergraduates in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has been a major concern to University administrators and researchers. Recently it has been observed that suicide cases on campuses has risen to an epidemic proportion over the past few years this has call for improved mental health needs of universities students. According to O'Carroll, Berman, Maris, Moscicki, Tanney, and Silverman (1996) suicide is viewed as self - inflicted death by trauma, from injury, poisoning, or suffocation, in which the deceased committed the act with the intention of killing himself or herself. The process of

suicide involves suicide ideation, suicide attempt, and completed suicide (Vilhjalmsson, Kristjansdottir, & Sveinbjarnardottir, 1998). Suicide encompasses any self-initiated or committed actions with the intention or expectation of dying which includes active or passive self-inflicted acts (De Leo, Burgis, Bertolote, Kerkof, & Bille-Brahe, 2004) with suicidal ideation being the earliest step of suicide ideation, thus, suicide ideation plays a central role in detection and prevention suicide behavior.

Personality is the way we are seen by others and the impression we make on them in consistent and relatively enduring manner. Allport (1961) also defined personality as a dynamic organization inside the person of psychophysical systems that creates the person's characteristic, patterns of behavior, thoughts and feelings that determine the person's adjustment to the environment. Weinberg and Gould (1999) defined personality as "the characteristics or blend of characteristics that make a person unique. Both definition lay emphasis on the distinctiveness of the individual. Researchers have reported several psychosocial factors to be associated with suicide and suicidal ideation. Some studies have indicated academic performance to be associated with personality; Laidra, Pullmann, & Allik, 2007; Lounsbury et al., (2003) found academic performance to be positively associated with openness to experience, agreeableness and extroversion, however, neuroticism is negatively associated with academic performance. In fact, academic achievement is considered as one important criteria of educational quality.

Predictors of academic achievement frequently lie at one end on a continuum with cognitive measures, intelligence and mental abilities and non-cognitive variable (such as personality characteristics, socioeconomic status, etc.) at the other one (Soraya et al., 2011). Although results of studies trying to predict academic achievement have yielded different results, they have consistently pointed out the role of cognitive abilities and personality characteristics in academic achievement (Paunonen & Ashton, 2001).

Extensive literature was reviewed on the causes of suicidal behavior and different factors were seen to be the cause of suicidal behavior. Many of these literatures were American and European studies and may not be applicable to Nigeria and African countries. Being a tertiary institution, the researcher decided to add an interesting variable based on the academic environment and number of suicide cases reported to student's service division and the university medical facilities. The objective of this study is to; To ascertain if personality trait will predict suicidal ideation; To determine if there exists a relationship between personality trait and suicidal ideation; To ascertain if academic performance and suicidal ideation have a relationship; To ascertain if personality trait and academic performance will jointly predict suicidal ideation; To ascertain the role of gender in the manifestation of suicidal ideation; To ascertain the role of age in the manifestation of suicidal ideation.

In this study, Personality is defined as the sum total of enduring behavioral characteristics that is distinctive of an individual that uniquely influences his cognitions thoughts and behaviors as measured by the Big Five John Etal 1992. Suicidal ideation is the thoughts about the desire, intent and method for committing suicide (Luxton, Rudd, Reger & Gahm, 2011).

While Academic Performance is the assessment of the extent to which an individual- typically a student- has achieved an educational goal, operationalized as the use of Cumulative Grade Points (Vedel & Poropat, 2017).

Academic performances of students are affected by a wide range of variables including ethnicity, family background, age, gender, and personality characteristics. Students have distinctive characteristics of personality that makes them ready for different worldviews and various activities in different social and educational settings. Taking these differences into account can help educators recognize their students' individual differences (Soraya, Elaheh, & Masoud, 2011).

Participants

The participants for this study were drawn from Faculty of Social Sciences, Medicine and Environmental Sciences of the University of Lagos. 350 were randomly sampled using balloting system. They were made up of 156 (50.82%) males and 151 (49.18) females, (70.4%) were of Yoruba ethnicity, (17.6%) were of Igbo ethnicity, (2.9%) were of Hausa ethnicity while (9.1%) belonged to other ethnic groups. Religion showed that (79.5%) practiced the Christianity religion, (18.6%) practiced the Islam religion and (1.9%) belonged to others like varieties of the African traditional religion. Their ages ranges 16 years to 28 year with 22 as the mean age.

Instruments

The measuring instruments used in this research included the Suicide Ideation Scale (SIS; Rudd, 1989), the Big-Five Personality Inventory (BFI; John et al, 1991) and the Cumulative Grade Point of participants.

(a) Suicidal Ideation Scale (SIS) - The SIS (Rudd, 1989), originally developed for and validated with non-clinical samples of young adults it was designed to as a brief measure of ideation for use in both clinical and non-clinical population. It is a 10-item self-report scale designed to assess the severity or intensity of suicidal ideation. Responses on the SIS are scored on a Likert-type scale with anchors at 1 (never or none of the time) to 5 (always or a great many times) based on what the respondent has felt or behaved over the past year. Items were scored by direct scoring and the total score was calculated by finding the sum of 10 items. The total score ranges from 10 to 50. Based on results from the initial SIS validation study (Rudd, 1989), Rudd recommended scores greater than one standard deviation above the mean (SIS total score of 15 or greater) to be considered *serious suicidal ideation* (Luxton, Rudd, Reger & Gahm, 2011) Rudd (1989), reported a high internal consistency (Cronbach alpha of .86) as well as adequate item-total correlations ($r_s=.45$ to $.74$; Rudd, 1989). Luxton et al. (2011) also tested the internal consistency of the SIS on this same sample and resulted in a Chronbach's Alpha of .91 for the overall SIS. The SIS was moderately correlated with the Centre for Epidemiologic Studies- Depression scale ($r=.55$) and the Beck Hopelessness Scale ($r=.49$). Students who had attempted suicide scored higher than students who had never contemplate suicide.

(b) **Big-Five Personality Inventory (BFI)** - The BFI is a 44-item scale developed by John et al. (1991) and it measures an individual on the Big Five Factors (dimensions) of personality: Extraversion (8 items), Agreeableness (9 items), Conscientiousness (9 items), Neuroticism (8 items), and Openness (10 items). Examples of the scale items include 'I see myself as someone who tends to find fault with others', 'I see myself as someone who can be somewhat careless'. Responses to the scale items varied according to the five point Likert Scale from disagree strongly to agree strongly on a scale of one to five. The negative items (item 2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 18, 21, 23, 24, 27, 31, 34, 35, 37, 41 and 43) were scored in a reverse order and the total score for each factor was calculated by finding the sum of the corresponding items measuring each factor.

The original psychometric property for American samples was provided by (John et al., 1991) while the property for Nigeria sample was provided by (Umeh, 2004). The of Reliability BFI was Cronbach Alpha (.80), and 3-month test-retest (.85) BFI has mean convergent validity coefficient of .75 and .85 with the Big Five Instrument authored by Costa & McCrae (1992) and Goldberg (1992) respectively. The divergent validity coefficients obtained by Umeh (2004) with University Maladjustment Scale (Kleinmuntz, 1961) are Extraversion .05, Agreeableness .13, Conscientiousness .11, Neuroticism .39, and Openness .24. The mean scores are the basis for interpreting the scores of the respondents. Scores higher or equal to the norms shows that respondent manifests the specific personality type while scores lower than the norms indicate that the respondent does not manifest the specific personality type. BFI has been employed both for for research and clinical use in Nigeria (Oladimeji 2015).

Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) – The CGPA is an assessment tool used to evaluate a student academic performance. It is calculated to determine a student's current standing. this includes all courses counting towards the degree both in the Majors as well as minors concentrations and specializations. It is based on a 5 scale categories; first class (4.5-5), second class upper (3.5-4.49), second class lower(2.5-3.49), third class (1.5-2.49).

Procedure

The researchers and research assistance meet the students in the class during lectures introduced self to the lecturer who coordinate the balloting on behave of the researchers, the students that pick YES were told to sit dawn while those that picked NO were told to stay out of the class while the researchers administered the instruments to the correspondent. The correspondent were told to read the instruction on the instruments as they is correct or wrong answers that it's not an examination nor a continuous assessment test, therefore they should attend to questions as it applied to them. The administration and collection was done in one hour. The students were debriefed immediately after the instruments were collected.

Design and statistics

The design used for this study was a cross sectional survey research design and descriptive statistics, multiple regressions and t test were used for statistical analysis through SPSS version 20.

Results

Table 1: The mean and standard deviation of scores of the independent variables

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
CGPA	307	3.78	0.76
Extraversion	307	24.57	5.53
Agreeableness	307	34.10	6.72
Conscientiousness	307	32.42	6.89
Neuroticism	307	21.79	6.06
Openness	307	35.24	6.35
Suicidal Ideation	307	13.52	6.57

The above table shows the mean and standard deviation of CGPA, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness and Suicidal Ideation. The CGPA Mean = 3.78, SD = 0.76, Extraversion Mean = 24.57, SD = 5.53, Agreeableness Mean = 34.10, SD = 6.72, Conscientiousness = 32.42, SD = 6.89, Neuroticism Mean = 21.79, SD = 6.06, Openness Mean = 35.24, SD = 6.35 while Suicidal Ideation Mean = 13.52, SD = 6.57. Comparing the mean scores of respondents show index of openness has the highest with a value of 35.24 while index of CGPA has the lowest with a value of 3.78.

Table 2: Regression statistics of personality traits on suicidal ideation

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>eta</i>	<i>sig</i>
Extraversion	-.039	.064	.030	580
Agreeableness	-.040	.060	.041	512
Conscientiousness	-.195	.064	.205	003
Neuroticism	-.252	.065	.232	000
Openness	-.039	.060	.038	515

$R = .413$, $F(5, 301) = 12.394$, $P = 0.000$

Regression analysis in table 2 above shows that personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness) significantly contributed to observed variance in suicidal ideation among undergraduate students of University of Lagos ($F(5, 301) = 12.394$; $R^2 = 0.171$; $p < .01$). All the personality traits collectively accounted for 17.1% of the variance in suicidal ideation, while the remaining 82.9% could be due to other variables. Furthermore, all the personality traits contributed at different degrees to the variance in suicidal ideation; Extraversion (Beta= -.030; $p < .01$), Agreeableness (Beta= -.041;

$p < .01$), Conscientiousness (Beta= $-.205$; $p < .01$), Neuroticism (Beta= $.232$; $p < .01$), and Openness to experience (Beta= $-.038$; $p < .01$).

Pearson Correlation Statistics between Personality Types and Suicidal Ideation

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Extraversion	1					
2. Agreeableness	.123*	1				
3. Conscientiousness	0.086	.501**	1			
4. Neuroticism	.201**	-.271**	-.449**	1		
5. Openness	.066	.322**	.381**	-.198**	1	
6. Suicidal Ideation	-0.101	-.222**	-.346**	.349**	-0.177**	1

** $p < 0.01$

The table shows that there is a significant positive correlation ($p = .000$) between neuroticism ($r = .349$) and suicidal ideation. Equally, result also shows negative significant correlations ($p < .01$) between agreeableness ($r = -.222$), conscientiousness ($r = -.346$), openness ($r = -.177$) and suicidal ideation. On the other hand, result further shows that no significant correlations ($p > .05$) existed between extraversion ($r = -.101$) and suicidal ideation. Overall, the hypothesis is partially supported on the basis of the mixed findings among all personality dimensions as shown in Table 3 above.

Table 4: Test of Relationship between Academic Performance and Suicidal Ideation

<i>Model</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Academic Performance</i>	<i>Suicidal Ideation</i>
Academic Performance	3.78	0.75	1	.252**
Suicidal Ideation	13.52	6.57	-.252**	1

** $p < .01$

Result in table 4 above reveals a significant negative correlation between academic performance and suicidal ideation ($r = -0.252^{**}$).

Table 5: Summary of Regression Analysis Showing the Relationship Contribution of Personality Traits and Academic Performance to the Prediction of Suicidal Ideation

Variables	β	SE	Beta	Sig	R	R ²	F	P
Extraversion	-.031	.063	-.026	.622				
Agreeableness	-.031	.060	-.032	.599				
Conscientiousness	-.185	.063	-.194	.004	.447	.200	12.49	p<.01
Neuroticism	.223	.064	.206	.001				
Openness	-.041	.059	-.040	.481				
CGPA	-1.51	.459	-.175	.001				

F (6,300) = 12.490, P= 0.000

Regression analysis in Table 5 shows that jointly, the variables yielded significant coefficient of regression (R²=.200; F(6,300) = 12.490; p<.01). Both personality traits and academic performance collectively accounted for 20% of the observed variance in suicidal ideation among undergraduates of the University of Lagos. Also, it can be drawn from the analysis above that personality trait – extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and academic performance are negative predictors of suicidal ideation while neuroticism was the only positive predictor of suicidal ideation among undergraduates of the University of Lagos (Extraversion: Beta= -.026; p<.01; Agreeableness: Beta=-.032; p<.01;

Conscientiousness: Beta= -.194; p<.01; Neuroticism: Beta= .206; p<.01; Openness: Beta= -.040; p<.01; CGPA: Beta= -.175; p<.01).

Results of t-test and Descriptive Statistics for Suicidal Ideation by Gender

	Mean	N	SD	Df	t-value	Sig.	p-value
Male	13.94		6.90	05	1.12	.088	p > .05
		156					
Female	13.09	151	6.21				

From table 6 above, we observed that the mean of males and females on suicidal ideation (males (Mean= 13.94, SD= 6.90) and (females (Mean= 13.09, SD= 6.21), thus the main difference between the two group was negligible at 0.05. To test for significance of difference, the data was subjected to t-test and the results indicate a calculated t-value of 1.12 as against a critical value of 1.96 given 306 degree of freedom at 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated t-value is lower than the theoretical t-value of 1.96, we reject stated hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference between female undergraduates scoring higher in suicidal ideation scale than male undergraduates of the University of Lagos. Thus, female will not score higher than males.

Table 7: Independent t-test comparison of suicidal ideation by age

	Mean	N	D	f	t-value	Sig.	p-value
16-20	13.26	195	.34	05	-.931	.103	p > .05
21 and above	13.98	112	=6.93				

It's observed on the table above that the means of undergraduates aged 16-20 [16-20 years (Mean = 13.26; SD= 6.34)] and [21and above (Mean= 13.98; SD=6.93)]. Thus the main difference between the two groups was negligible at 0.05. To test for significance of difference, the data was subjected to t-test and the results indicate a calculated t-value of -1.227 as against a critical value of 1.96 given 306 degree of freedom at 0.05 alpha level. Since the calculated t-value is lower than the theoretical t-value of 1.96, we reject stated hypothesis and conclude that, undergraduates age 16-20yrs will not score higher in suicidal ideation scale than undergraduates aged 21years and above.

Discussion

The main aim of this study was to determine the relationship between personality traits and academic performance on suicidal ideation among undergraduate in the University of Lagos; Personality traits predict suicidal ideation. Result in table 2 revealed that personality trait is related to suicidal ideation, this means that, there is a significant influence of personality traits on suicidal ideation though, conscientiousness and neuroticism have strongest predicting power of personality traits on suicidal ideation. Personality traits account for 17.1% of the significant variance in suicidal ideation among sampled undergraduates, while, 82.9% may be caused by other extraneous variables that were not included in this study.

Result of the correlation analysis between personality types and suicidal ideation reveals that four of the dimensions of personality correlate significantly with suicidal ideation (agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness). Agreeableness was negatively correlated with suicidal ideation. Although agreeableness has been less ascribed to suicidal ideation, yet similar finding have been reported by Segal et al (2012) who found a negative association between agreeableness in addition to conscientiousness and extraversion and suicidal ideation. Contrary to this, Useda, Duberstein, Conner, & Conwell (2004) found positive association between agreeableness and suicidal ideation. The reason for the contradiction in findings may be due to the nature of samples employed in those studies. They employed clinical samples comprising of depressed inpatients. Conscientiousness was negatively correlated with suicidal ideation. This finding is in concordance with the work of Tsoh, Chiu, Duberstein, Chan, Chi, Yip and Conwell (2005) and Useda, Duberstein, Conner, Beckman, Franus, Tuand Conwell (2007). They reported that those who attempted suicide had lower level of conscientiousness than those who completed suicide. This findings is also consistent with Abdollah et al.(2014), they also reported a significant negative relationship between conscientiousness and suicide, they reported that the more individuals have these three personality factors (conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness) are less prone to suicide ideation, they are associated with a reduced risk of suicide.

Openness to experience was negatively correlated with suicidal ideation, this result is consistent with other studies that supported the proposition that low openness may increase risk for suicidal ideation (Duberstein, Conwell, & Caine, 1994; Duberstein et al., 2000; Heisel et al., 2006; Tsoh et al., 2005). Correlation analysis showed that extraversion was negatively correlated with suicidal ideation. Although extraversion had negative associations with suicidal ideation, the correlation coefficients are insignificant. This finding is consistent with the correlation study by Abdollah et al.(2014), who found extraversion to be negatively correlated with suicidal ideation because it is directly connected to vitality, positive emotions, joy, and sociability. In contrary to these findings, other studies have shown significant negative association between extraversion and suicidal ideation, and have supported the notion that low openness may increase suicidal risk (Kerby, 2003; Duberstein et al., 1994). Contrary to this finding is a study conducted by Bluml, Kapusta, Doering, Brahler, Wagner and Kersting (2013), they revealed that neuroticism and openness had a positive relationship with suicidal risk while extraversion and conscientiousness had a negative relationship with suicidal risk.

Neuroticism showed positive correlation with suicidal ideation. This result showed in essence that all other traits of personality besides neuroticism were negatively correlated with suicidal ideation which means that as these traits increases, suicidal ideation decreases. This is different for neuroticism as this trait was significantly associated with suicidal ideation, meaning that as scores in neuroticism increases, suicidal ideation also increases. This finding is consistent with Useda et al. (2004) which found extraversion to have a negative association to suicidal ideation, attempts, and completion. Also in consistent to this finding, neuroticism have shown to be a risk factor while extraversion personality types have shown to be resilience or protective factor for suicides (Brezo et al, 2006). Five factor model of personality suggests that personality characteristics can be categorized into five main personalities: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Studies have suggested that there is a relationship between some personality traits and suicidal thoughts. For example, neuroticism personality dimension is associated with negative emotions like depression and tendency to depression is considered a risk factor for suicide (Abdollah, et al., 2014). Studies have also shown that suicidal ideation is associated with low levels of extraversion which may reflect a low tendency to experience positive emotions (Singh & Joshi, 2008). According to Vrshek-Schallhorn, Czarlinski, Mineka, Zinbarg, and Craske (2011), suggests that personality may have an indirect effect on suicidal ideation through its relationship with depression and depressive symptoms. In fact, De Man and Leduc (1995) showed that many variables are no longer associated with suicidal ideation when depression is controlled. The hypothesis tested and findings are in consonance with review literature as different scholars have reported several psychosocial factors to be associated with the phenomenon of suicide and suicide ideation.

Table 4 showed that there is a significant negative relationship between academic performance and suicidal ideation among the sampled undergraduates. This implies that as academic performance increases, the risk of suicidal ideation reduces. Findings from other

studies are inconsistent between academic performance and suicidal ideation. However, at this time, an extensive literature search revealed no other studies of relationships between perceived and actual academic performance and suicide. Self-esteem (SE), as an evaluation of global self-worth (Rosenberg, 1979), is also important to consider in relation to suicidal behavior and academic self-perception. Low self-esteem has been found to be associated with suicidal thoughts and behaviors depression, delinquency and substance use, poor emotional, behavioral and academic adjustment, and poor academic outcomes. Although, in a study conducted by Lester (2013), he reported no association between suicidal ideation and CGPA in smaller samples which was consistent with Nyer et al. (2013) study. Contrary to these results, was one conducted in a larger study of 1296 medical students (Miletic et al., 2015) found that those with lifetime suicidal ideation and/or suicide attempt(s) had a lower CGPA compared to those who never experienced suicidal behavior. Based on this, the findings of this study are in line with previous studies, that mean, as cumulative grade point average is increasing, suicidal ideation will be decreasing. Therefore, the tendency to have negative relationship between suicidal ideation and academic performance is realistic. Hence, the finding is supported.

Table 5 revealed that, personality traits and academic performance are both predictors of suicidal ideation accounting for 20% of the observed variance of suicidal ideation among sampled undergraduates. Results of regression analysis showed that some certain traits of personality (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness) with academic performance were negative predictors of suicidal ideation. This implies that as measures on these traits increases, the risk for suicidal ideation decreases.

Further analysis showed that academic performance only accounted for 6.3 percent of the significant variance in suicidal ideation, while personality type only accounted for 17.1 percent of the significant variance in suicidal ideation. Here, it is pertinent to note that despite its significant correlation with suicidal ideation, academic performance was the third strongest predicting contributors to suicidal ideation. It's indicated that neuroticism was the strongest predictor, followed by conscientiousness, then CGPA. These three were the robust predictors of suicidal ideation, as extensive literature review has proven participants who showed low level of conscientiousness and high level of neuroticism are prone to suicidal risk than their counterparts who are don't score low on conscientiousness and high on neuroticism.

In support of the findings, some studies have suggested that there is a relationship between some personality traits, academic performance and suicidal ideation. According to these authors, people choose environments which are consistent with their personalities; when achievement criteria and personality characteristics overlap, personality and academic achievement may be directly related. Recent meta-analyses of educational research based on FFM measures have shown that there are indeed consistent associations between personality and academic performance (Poropat, 2009; Richardson, Abraham, & Bond, 2012). Rolfhus and Ackerman (1999) also supported that the Big Five traits measurement is powerful enough to explain a moderate percentage of the variance in academic achievement. For example, neuroticism personality dimension is associated with negative emotions like depression and tendency to depression is considered a risk factor for suicide (Abdollah, et al., 2014). Findings

from different studies are inconsistent academic performance and suicidal ideation. However, at this time, an extensive literature search revealed no other studies of relationships between perceived and actual academic performance and suicide. In this case, the joint effect of personality traits and academic performance jointly predict suicidal ideation with neuroticism being the strongest predictor, followed by conscientiousness and CGPA.

The result in table 6 shows that there is no significant difference between genders on suicidal ideation. Thus, the result revealed that females did not demonstrate higher level of suicidal ideation than males among University of Lagos undergraduates. Ellis and Lamis (2007) revealed that although women had more reasons for living than men, no significant difference exist in their reported suicidal ideation. This result is in concordance with Baalbaki (2016) who examined the psychological and demographic predictors of suicidal risk in students. His results showed no significant relationships between suicidal risk on both age and gender. This result opposes (Arria et al., 2009; CDC, 2011; Gould et al., 2003). Previous longitudinal studies have suggested that gender plays an important role in the developmental of suicidal thoughts and behaviors during adolescents and emerging adulthood. Lewinsohn et al. (2001) found that the risk of suicide attempts was highest for females between ages 15-19 and their risk decreased significantly during the period of 19 to 23 years. Boys risk during adolescents was about half that of the girls, their risk was similar but did not decline over time. Similarly, Boeninger, Masyn, Feldman, & Conger (2010) found that in a sample of 11 to 19 year old adolescents, boys' have serious suicidal ideation and plans. A recent study in North Korea reported that refugee women were more likely to have suicidal ideation than men. It is unclear why the data from the present study demonstrated no differences in suicidal ideation between males and females. One possible reason for no gender effect on the suicidal ideation was that the Lewinsohn et al. (2001) and Boeninger et al. (2010) studies examined serious suicidal ideation, plans and attempts, whereas the current study examined suicidal ideation as a continuous variable capturing very few symptoms of suicidal ideation all the way through more frequent and intense thoughts of suicide. These findings may indicate that, despite the gender differences in the suicidal ideation of more severe levels of suicidal (e.g., seriously considering suicide and attempts), differences in suicidal ideation may not be as prevalent when the full spectrum of suicidal ideation, including the lower end, is considered. These findings may suggest that adolescent males may be more reactive to the family environment and experience of dysregulated behaviors, which may elevate subsequent suicidal ideation. These findings suggest that special attention on these constructs in gender demonstrating suicidal ideation may be warranted in clinical assessments.

Table 7 showed that undergraduate aged (16-20) reported no higher scores on measures of suicidal ideation than colleagues aged (20-above) years. This implies that there was no significant difference between the two age groups. In contrary to these findings, thoughts and behaviours about suicide are a substantial issue among youngsters (adolescents) (Hawton & Fortune, 2008). It has been noted also among adolescents that suicidal acts have a serious impact on both families and communities at large (Fresco, 2002). Records have shown that in 2010, the hospitalization rate on intentional self-harm of young people who are between the

ages of 15 years and 19 years was higher than any other age range (Miranda & Nolen-Hoeksema 2007).

Conclusion

This research investigated the relationships between personality types and academic performance with suicidal ideation and the gender differences in suicidal ideation. The study through due process of empirical research asserts that suicidal ideation is an issue of concern among young adults in University of Lagos. Also, there are some personality types that predispose young adults to suicidal ideation.

Recommendations

Since this study has indicated reliable relationship between some personality types and suicidal ideation, most young people should be encouraged to take personality tests and close monitoring should be done for people who score very high on neuroticism, low on conscientiousness. These set of people according to this research are prone to suicide risk than others. Secondly, since this research has also established a relationship between academic performance and suicidal ideation, it is pertinent to note that educators can do their part in preventing suicidal ideation by also monitoring students who are doing woefully in school. Organize intervention plans for students lagging behind in their school work. As this study as highlighted, in concordance with existing literature that the population of the world that commits suicide is the young adults. The government is not left behind also; as they should provide more intervention plans and programs, employ more psychologists, social workers to help the significant others of students already with early signs of suicidal behavior. Ultimately, this research highlights the importance of considering personality types and academic performance in suicide risk assessment and intervention tailoring. Because college campuses are ideal environments for developing, implementing and assessing suicide prevention strategies, it is recommended that prevention initiatives should be developed specifically for college students addressing these established risk factors for suicide.

First limitation is the scope of study, the sample of the study wasn't a large representative of the young adults in Lagos as samples were drawn from one tertiary institution. Future research should employ a larger sample from different tertiary institutions so that results can be generalized. Another limitation is the retrieval of instruments (questionnaires) not all questionnaires were retrieved from the field of study. Another limitation is that the study employed a cross-sectional survey design, which cannot affirm causal effect relationship. Future research should employ longitudinal based design which will follow up participants for a long period maybe from high school to college. Another limitation faced was the issue of respondents who at first gave false information to look good in the eyes of the researcher until the researcher assured them of confidentiality.

Given these limitations, the results provide strong empirical evidence for the literature in terms of correlations between academic performance, personality characteristics and suicidal ideation and may be a critical component of any successful intervention effort to reduce the global alarming suicide rate.

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