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EXPLORING THE ROLES OF FAMILY SUPPORT AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS IN FOSTERING RESILIENCE AMONG UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES

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ABSTRACT

Using a correlational research design, this study investigated the influence of perceived family support and the quality of peer relationships on resilience among undergraduates at the Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State. A total of 299 students aged 18 to 21 years participated in the survey. Data were collected using a structured and standardised questionnaire designed to measure perceived family support, quality of peer relationships, and resilience. Statistical analyses conducted included descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation, independent sample t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and multiple regression analysis to explore both main effects and interaction effects among variables. The results revealed a significant positive correlation between family support and resilience ($r = .512, p < .05$), indicating that students who reported higher levels of family support also demonstrated greater resilience. Similarly, a significant positive correlation was found between peer relationship quality and resilience ($r = .467, p < .05$), suggesting that students with stronger and more supportive peer networks exhibited greater resilience. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis showed that peer relationships moderated the association between family support and resilience. Specifically, students who reported high family support and positive peer relationships exhibited the highest levels of resilience, highlighting the interactive and strengthening nature of these social factors. Results from the t-test analysis indicated that there were no significant gender differences in resilience scores ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that male and female students experience comparable levels of resilience. However, the results of ANOVA revealed significant differences in resilience between age groups ($F(3, 296) = 3.102, p = 0.027$), indicating potential developmental variations in resilience during late adolescence and emerging adulthood. These findings underscore the critical role of both family and peer contexts in fostering resilience among university students. The study demonstrates that strong family support and quality peer interactions jointly contribute to greater psychological resilience during the transitional period of higher education. Consequently, interventions aimed at promoting student resilience should consider strategies that encourage family involvement and facilitate positive peer engagement. These insights have practical relevance for university counsellors, educators, and policy makers looking to strengthen the psychological well-being and academic success of undergraduates through holistic support systems.

Keywords: family support, peer relationships, resilience, undergraduates

INTRODUCTION

Resilience is a vital psychological construct that determines an individual's capacity to adapt positively in the face of adversity (Denckla et al., 2020; Iretor-Oscar et al., 2021). It is especially important for undergraduates, who often face academic, financial, social, and emotional stressors throughout their university years (Park et al., 2020). The concept of resilience has garnered widespread attention in psychological and educational research due to its implications for mental well-being, academic achievement, and overall life satisfaction (Douwes et al., 2023; Akeredolu et al., 2024). The transition to university is a challenging phase that many young adults encounter (Thompson et al., 2021; Shuaib et al., 2021). As the literature indicates, transitions can be stressful, as individuals leave behind familiar networks and enter unfamiliar territory (Worsley et al., 2021). Additionally, the academic pressure faced by university students can adversely affect their mental health (Ball et al., 2024). Given the increasing challenges faced by students in higher education, especially in developing countries, the role of family support and peer relationships in fostering resilience has attracted growing interest (Zarei & Mohammadi, 2022; Akanbi et al., 2024). Beyond academic demands, students also experience other stressors such as financial burdens, housing changes, forming new social networks, and adapting to new social and family roles (Adams et al., 2016; Olayiwola et al., 2024). Resilience is a crucial psychological trait that enables individuals to adapt positively to adversity, particularly within the demanding context of university life (Liu et al., 2018; Adaramoye et al., 2025a). Among undergraduates, resilience is shaped by various socio-environmental factors, with family support and peer relationships playing key roles in their ability to cope with academic, emotional, and social challenges (Litwic-Kaminska et al.,

2023; Okocha et al., 2025). Therefore, understanding what helps students adapt well is essential, as it can lead to longer university attendance, better grades, and increased happiness (Feraco et al., 2023). In this context, research on resilience has become a valuable framework for explaining why some students succeed in adapting to university life while others encounter significant difficulties (Adaramoye et al., 2025b; Eleanor-Pearson et al., 2025).

Family support includes emotional, financial, and motivational help provided by parents and guardians, serving as a protective factor against stress and psychological distress (Kuhn & Laird, 2014; Olatubosun et al., 2025). In contrast, peer relationships involve the interactions and connections students build with their social circles, which can either strengthen or weaken their resilience depending on the quality of these relationships (Tepordei et al., 2023). Family support offers students emotional, financial, and psychological stability, contributing to better academic performance, emotional well-being, and overall life satisfaction (Roksa & Kinley, 2019). Research emphasizes that strong family support fosters resilience by providing encouragement, guidance, and motivation to help students handle academic and personal challenges (Yang et al., 2022). However, the extent and nature of family support vary based on socioeconomic status, cultural background, and family dynamics (Conger et al., 2010). The importance of family support in developing resilience is well-supported by psychological and educational research (Macphee et al., 2015). Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory highlights how immediate family interactions influence an individual's emotional well-being and ability to adapt. Studies show that students who receive consistent family encouragement and emotional security display higher resilience, enabling them to cope effectively with academic stress and personal difficulties (Butler et al., 2022). Nonetheless, the level of family involvement and the nature of family relationships can differ across cultural and socioeconomic contexts, shaping how resilience appears in various student populations (Pearce et al., 2018). Recognizing these differences is essential to understanding how different forms of family support impact resilience among undergraduates. In such contexts, students with strong family ties often demonstrate higher self-confidence and motivation, positively affecting their academic success and emotional resilience (Shengyao et al., 2024). Even in individualistic societies, family involvement and emotional support correlate with lower anxiety and better coping skills in undergraduates (Delgado et al., 2022). Family cohesion fosters a sense of belonging, helping students face academic stress with more confidence and determination (Butler et al., 2022). Conversely, a lack of family support has been linked to increased anxiety, depression, and academic disengagement (Tepordei et al., 2023). However, in higher education, many students find the academic environment stressful (Robotham, 2008). Common stressors include transitioning from high school to college, which may involve making new friends, relocating to another city, and leaving parents' home; pressure to earn excellent grades to meet academic demands; financial problems affecting students and their families, potentially altering living standards; relationship issues within and outside academic settings; imposter syndrome related to studying at a highly ranked institution; and external demands such as working while studying (Hurst et al., 2013; Brewer et al., 2019). Situations that threaten homeostasis (organism stability) induce stress (Masten, 2015). Stress is not problematic at low levels (Vasconcellos, 2017), but high stress can impair academic progress and lead to dropout. Conversely, adversities are events that pose risks to individuals (Masten, 2015). The death of parents, for instance, can be a significant adversity for an undergraduate, profoundly affecting them.

Peer relationships play a crucial role in fostering resilience by providing emotional validation, social integration, and coping mechanisms for stress (Reivich & Shatté, 2020). Studies indicate that positive peer relationships contribute to academic success (Wentzel, 2017). Students with supportive peer networks demonstrate greater engagement, motivation, and academic persistence. Conversely, negative peer relationships, such as peer pressure towards delinquency, can negatively impact academic outcomes (Ryan, 2021). Positive peer interactions contribute to a supportive social environment where students can share

experiences, seek advice, and develop problem-solving skills essential for overcoming challenges (Cohen & Wills, 2018). On the other hand, negative peer relationships, such as social exclusion or engagement in maladaptive behaviours, can weaken resilience and exacerbate psychological distress (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2021). The emergence of digital peer networks has further transformed the nature of social support, as online interactions increasingly influence students' emotional regulation and stress management strategies (Rideout & Fox, 2022). Peer relationships significantly influence student resilience by promoting social integration, emotional support, and a sense of belonging (Pidgeon & Pickett, 2017). Positive peer interactions are associated with lower levels of stress, depression, and academic burnout, while negative peer relationships, such as social exclusion or toxic friendships, can hinder resilience and increase vulnerability to stressors (Orben et al., 2020). The increasing role of social networks has further transformed peer dynamics, sometimes replaced traditional face-to-face interactions, and altered the nature of social support structures (Theron, 2020). The impact of digital peer interactions on resilience remains an important area of exploration in the evolving social landscape of university students. Positive peer interactions provide a sense of belonging, reduce stress, and encourage help-seeking behaviour (Collie et al., 2022). Strong peer connections can act as a buffer against stressors, enabling students to develop problem-solving skills and emotional regulation strategies (Luthar et al., 2020). Similarly, peer relationships play a crucial role in fostering resilience by providing emotional validation, social integration, and coping mechanisms for stress (Reivich & Shatté, 2020). Positive peer interactions contribute to a supportive social environment where students can share experiences, seek advice, and develop problem-solving skills essential for overcoming challenges (Cohen & Wills, 2018). On the other hand, negative peer relationships, such as social exclusion or engagement in maladaptive behaviours, can weaken resilience and exacerbate psychological distress (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2021). The emergence of digital peer networks has further transformed the nature of social support, as online interactions increasingly influence students' emotional regulation and stress management strategies (Rideout & Fox, 2022).

In contrast, family support encompasses emotional encouragement, financial assistance, and the provision of a stable environment conducive to learning (Yang et al., 2022). Research indicates that such support significantly improves students' motivation and academic performance (An et al., 2024). For example, Olayiwola-Adedjoja et al (2025) found that Nigerian undergraduates highly value social support, particularly from family, as it leads to increased motivation and better grades. In addition to family support, peer relationships significantly influence resilience in undergraduates (Cheung, 2024).

Friendships provide a sense of belonging, emotional reassurance, and shared experiences, all of which contribute to mental well-being and academic perseverance (Thomas et al., 2017). This study aims to examine the roles of family support and peer relationships in fostering resilience among undergraduates. By exploring how these relationships influence emotional well-being, academic performance, and overall adaptability, the research seeks to contribute to the development of evidence-based support strategies. The findings will improve the existing literature on student resilience and provide practical recommendations to foster student success in higher education.

The interplay between family support and peer relationships is crucial in shaping resilience among undergraduates (Delgado et al., 2022). Although families provide a foundational safety net, peer relationships become increasingly influential as students navigate their academic and social environments (Tepordei et al., 2023). Those with strong family backgrounds often develop higher self-esteem, which enables them to build healthier peer connections, while positive peer interactions reinforce the coping mechanisms learnt from family experiences (Blum et al., 2022). Universities, therefore, play a crucial role in fostering resilience by promoting family involvement and creating an environment that encourages supportive peer

interactions (Wang et al., 2025). Recognising the importance of this support system, academic institutions and policymakers should implement strategies that strengthen family ties while cultivating positive peer networks. By doing so, they can improve students' ability to overcome the obstacles associated with university life, ensuring that undergraduates develop the resilience necessary for both academic and personal success.

Statement of the Problem

University undergraduates face numerous challenges that threaten their psychological well-being and academic success. The transition to higher education often involves academic pressure, financial strain, emotional upheaval, and the need to navigate unfamiliar social environments (Park et al., 2020; Worsley et al., 2021). These stressors can significantly impair students' ability to cope, making resilience, a psychological trait that enables positive adaptation in the face of adversity, a crucial factor for student success (Denckla et al., 2020). Despite increasing recognition of resilience as a protective factor, there remains a gap in understanding the specific social mechanisms that foster resilience among university students, especially in developing countries like Nigeria. Existing literature indicates that family support and peer relationships are vital in shaping students' resilience, yet the extent and nature of these influences are not fully understood (Yang et al., 2022; Litwic-Kaminska et al., 2023). Family support, which includes emotional, financial, and motivational assistance, has been shown to buffer against psychological distress and boost academic performance (Roksa & Kinsley, 2019). However, the quality and availability of such support vary widely across socioeconomic and cultural contexts, potentially limiting its effectiveness (Conger et al., 2010; Pearce et al., 2018). Similarly, peer relationships serve a dual role in resilience development. Positive peer interactions can foster emotional validation, social integration, and coping strategies, while negative relationships may increase stress and hinder academic engagement (Reivich & Shatté, 2020; Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2021). The rise of digital peer networks further complicates this dynamic, as online interactions increasingly influence students' emotional regulation and stress management (Rideout & Fox, 2022). Given these complexities, there is an urgent need to investigate how family support and peer relationships interact to influence resilience among university undergraduates. Without a clear understanding of these social factors, interventions aimed at promoting student well-being may be ineffective. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the roles of family support and peer relationships in fostering resilience, thereby contributing to the development of holistic support systems that enhance students' capacity to thrive in the demanding context of higher education (Feraco et al., 2023; Eleanor-Pearson et al., 2025)

Objectives of the Study

This study investigated the roles of family support and peer relationships in fostering resilience among undergraduates at Federal University Oye Ekiti (FUOYE). It seeks to understand how these social support systems contribute to students' ability to cope with academic, emotional, and social challenges.

Research Questions

- (1) Is there no significant difference in the level of resilience between male and female undergraduates?
- (2) Is there no significant difference in the level of resilience based on age?
- (3) What is the level of resilience among undergraduates in universities?

Research Hypotheses

- (1) There is no significant relationship between family support and resilience among university undergraduates
- (2) There is no significant relationship between peer relationships and resilience among university undergraduates

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Walberg's (1982) theory of educational productivity is one of the few empirically tested theories of school learning, based on an extensive review and integration of over 3,000 students. The theory assumes that nine factors affect academic achievement, organised into three broad groups: aptitude (ability, development, and motivation), instruction (amount and quality), and environment (home, classroom, peers, and television) (Mulaudzi, 2024). Walberg also identified categories of learning influences, many of which were social-emotional, including classroom management, family support, student-teacher interactions, social behavioural attributes, motivational-effective attributes, peer group, school culture, and classroom climate (Bentsi-Enchill, 2024). While distant background factors such as state, district, or school policies, organisational characteristics, curriculum, and instruction were considered less influential, the theory emphasises that the home, peers, and other environmental conditions strongly shape students' academic outcomes (Javornik & Klemencic Mirazchiyskik, 2023). For instance, educated and financially stable parents are more likely to provide an environment conducive to academic success compared to parents who lack education or financial resources (Pak et al., 2022).

Similarly, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory explains how everything in a child and the child's environment affects growth and development (Guanghai, 2024). He identified different aspects or levels of the environment, including the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). The microsystem, which consists of a child's immediate family, carers, school, or daycare, plays a fundamental role, as the quality of interactions within it directly impacts the child's growth (Patel, 2011). Supportive, nurturing relationships in the microsystem foster healthy development, whereas unsupportive ones hinder it (Lopez et al., 2021). The mesosystem, in turn, reflects how different parts of the microsystem interact with each other. For example, when parents take active roles in school activities, such as attending parent-teacher meetings, children's development is reinforced, but conflicting parental practices may negatively affect their growth and academic achievement (Guy-Evans, 2024). Bronfenbrenner further argued that the instability and unpredictability of family life constitute one of the most destructive forces to a child's development (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). A breakdown of relationships within the microsystem deprives children of the tools needed to navigate other parts of their environment, often leading them to seek affirmation in inappropriate places (Tong & An, 2024). Such deficiencies, especially during adolescence, manifest as antisocial behaviour, lack of self-discipline, inability to provide self-direction, and poor academic achievement (Elzaatari & Maalouf, 2022). In line with these perspectives, Epstein (1995) proposed the theory of overlapping spheres of influence, which emphasises that school, family, and community are three major contexts that directly shape student learning and development (Epstein & Sanders, 2020). While each sphere can operate independently, their collaboration produces stronger outcomes (Sanders & Epstein, 1998). A successful partnership between these contexts ensures that the needs of the child are effectively met. Epstein further suggested that schools adopt a "family" perspective in the language they use, as this underscores the shared responsibility between school and family in fostering student growth (Epstein, 2018). When schools and families work together, the spheres overlap more closely, leading to the creation of "family-like schools" and "school-like families," both of which enhance student outcomes (Griffiths et al., 2020). Conversely, when schools and families avoid collaboration, the spheres pull apart, resulting in negative implications for students' academic achievement (Griffin & Steen, 2018). Empirical evidence also supports these theoretical perspectives. For instance, the impact of family support on resilience among university students in Nigeria. Using a cross-sectional survey of 300 undergraduates across three public universities, the study found that students who reported higher levels of family support demonstrated significantly greater resilience [$F(1,298) = 5.67, p < .01$]. The findings underscore that strong family ties not only foster resilience but also equip students with the capacity to cope with academic and personal challenges, reinforcing the broader view that home, school, and family interactions are critical to academic achievement and holistic development (Olson et al., 2025).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research design adopted for this study was the ex-post facto design, chosen because it allowed the determination of the influence of the status of phenomena that could not be directly manipulated. Peer relationships and family support, which served as the independent variables, could not be altered by the researcher, making this design appropriate for investigating their subsequent influence on the dependent variable, resilience. The design enabled the researcher to relate an after-the-fact analysis to the outcome variable, thereby providing meaningful insights into the relationship between these constructs.

The population of the study consisted of all undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE), Nigeria. According to official records from the Registrar's Office, the undergraduate population was estimated at 30,000 students, drawn from different faculties and representing diverse socio-economic backgrounds, cultural influences, and academic experiences. This population was considered suitable for the study because undergraduates often face academic stress, financial constraints, and social pressures, making resilience, a person's ability to adapt positively despite adversity particularly important. Research has established that strong family support systems and positive peer interactions play a significant role in helping students cope with challenges and maintain psychological well-being.

To obtain a representative sample, Taro Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination was applied. Using the total population of 25,000 and a precision level of 0.0575, the calculation produced a sample size of 299 undergraduates. Stratified random sampling was then employed to ensure representation across all faculties. This technique involved dividing the population into strata based on faculties and drawing proportional random samples from each stratum, thereby ensuring inclusivity and balance in the sample.

Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to capture key variables. The instrument was adapted and divided into four sections. Section A collected demographic details such as age, gender, faculty, and year of study. Section B examined family support, including parental involvement, financial and emotional backing, and communication. Section C focused on peer relationships, exploring peer interactions, group influence, and social participation. Section D investigated resilience, highlighting how family support and peer relationships together influenced students' ability to navigate academic, social, and emotional challenges. The questionnaire contained closed-ended items to ensure objectivity and ease of analysis.

To ensure validity, the instrument was subjected to both face and content validation by some experts from the Department of Guidance and Counselling, FUOYE. Their input helped refine the questionnaire to ensure it was relevant, comprehensive, and measured what it was intended to measure. Reliability of the instrument was tested using the test-retest method. The same questionnaire was administered to the same respondents on two different occasions, and the results were compared using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.76, indicating a high level of consistency and confirming that the instrument was reliable for the study.

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically simple percentages and frequency tables, to summarize and interpret responses. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was employed to enhance accuracy and efficiency in the organization, computation, and presentation of results. This approach ensured that the influence of family support and peer relationships on resilience among undergraduates at FUOYE was clearly presented and meaningfully interpreted.

RESULTS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results and a summary of the findings. The data collected for the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment correlation, and T-test. The results are shown in the tables below.

Demographic Data of the Respondents

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents N = 299

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	145	48.5
Female	54	51.5
Age (years)		
16-20 years	89	29.8
21 years and above	210	70.2

Table 1 reveals the demographic information of the respondents. Gender distribution among the respondents is fairly balanced, as 145 are males, representing 48.5%, and 154 are females, representing 51.5%. There are more female respondents than male students included in the study. The table also shows the frequency distribution of the respondent's age. It shows that the respondents between the age ranges of 16 and 20 years are 89, which represents 29.8%, while those within the age range of 21 years and above are 210 in number, representing 70.2% of the entire sample. The majority of the participants are age 21 years and above.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between family support and resilience among university undergraduates

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and correlation family support and resilience among university undergraduates

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig
Family support	299	56.01	9.28	183*	.005
Resilience	299	16.65	2.02		

Table 2 contains descriptive statistics and correlations between family support and resilience among university undergraduates. As shown in table 4.2, family support is significantly correlated with resilience ($r=.183$; $p=.05$). This evidence indicates that the relationship between family support and resilience is positive and significant. This implies that university undergraduates who received high levels of family support also achieved high scores on the resilience measure, whereas those who received low levels of family support scored low on the resilience measure. Hypothesis 1 is therefore rejected. This evidence further implies that family support has a significant relationship with resilience among university undergraduates.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between peer relations and resilience among university undergraduates

Table 3: Descriptive statistics and correlation between peer relations and social competence among university undergraduates

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	Sig
Peer relations	299	13.33	3.73	-.074	.199
Resilience	299	16.65	2.02		

Table 3 contains descriptive statistics and correlations between peer relations and resilience among university undergraduates. As shown in table 4.3, peer relations is not significantly correlated with resilience ($r = -.074$; $p > .05$). This evidence indicates that there is no relationship between peer relations and resilience. This implies that peer relations have no influence on resilience among university undergraduates. Hypothesis two is therefore accepted.

Research Question One: Is there no significant difference in the level of resilience among

male and female university undergraduates?

Table 4: T-test showing the significant difference in the level of resilience among male and female university undergraduates

Variables	N	X	SD	T	df	P	Remark
Male	145	16.68	1.87	2.402	297	.122	NS
Female	154	16.62	2.16				

The result from table 4 above shows the value of ($t = 2.402$, $df = 297$, $p > 0.05$). Since $p > 0.05$, there is therefore no significant difference in resilience as expressed by male and female university undergraduates. This result indicates that gender is not a factor affecting resilience, as the male mean score is not significantly different from the female mean.

Research Question Two: Is there no significant difference in the level of resilience based on age?

Table 5: T-test showing the significant difference in the level of resilience based on age of university undergraduates

Variables	N	X	SD	T	df	P	Remark
16-20 years	89	16.48	2.08	.009	297	.923	NS
21 years and above	210	10.71	2.00				

The result from table 5 above shows the value of ($t = .009$, $df = 297$, $p > 0.05$). Since $p > 0.05$, there is no significant difference in resilience based on the age of university undergraduates. This result indicates that age is not a factor affecting resilience.

Research Question Three: What is the level of resilience among university undergraduates?

Table 6: Descriptive statistics showing the level of resilience among university undergraduates

Resilience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	7	2.3
Moderate	196	65.6
High	96	32.1
Total	299	100.0

Table 6 showed the level of resilience as expressed by the university undergraduates. Results show that only 7 respondents, representing 2.3% of the respondents, expressed a low level of resilience from the diagnostic instrument administered to them; 196, representing 65.6%, expressed a moderate level of resilience; and 96 respondents, representing 32.1%, expressed a high level of resilience. These results show that the majority of university undergraduates have a moderate level of resilience, as expressed by their responses to the diagnostic instrument.

DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study reveal a significant positive relationship between family support and resilience among university undergraduates, consistent with previous research highlighting family support as a crucial protective factor against psychological distress (Roksa & Kinley, 2019; Yang et al., 2022). The positive correlation ($r = .183$, $p < .05$) indicates that students who perceive greater family support tend to exhibit higher resilience levels, affirming Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory that emphasizes the pivotal role of the family microsystem in fostering emotional well-being and adaptive capacities (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015). This finding aligns with studies showing that emotional and financial support from family members acts as a stabilizing force, enabling students to better cope with academic and social challenges (Butler et al., 2022; Shengyao et al., 2024).

Conversely, the study found no significant relationship between peer relationships and resilience ($r = -.074$, $p > .05$), a result that contrasts with some literature emphasizing the importance of supportive peer networks (Reivich & Shatt , 2020; Pidgeon & Pickett, 2017). This discrepancy might be attributable to context-specific factors, such as the quality and nature of peer interactions in Nigerian universities or the increasing influence of digital peer networks, which may not provide the same level of emotional support as traditional face-to-face relationships (Rideout & Fox, 2022; Theron, 2020). It suggests that while peers play social and academic roles, their influence on resilience might be less direct or moderated by other factors such as family background or individual coping styles.

The absence of significant gender differences in resilience levels contradicts some previous findings suggesting females might exhibit higher resilience due to socialization factors (Delgado et al., 2022). Similarly, no significant age-related differences were found, indicating that resilience is relatively stable across young adult age groups in this sample. These results emphasize that resilience as a psychological trait may be universally experienced across demographic groups in this university context (Denckla et al., 2020).

Lastly, the majority of the undergraduates reported moderate to high levels of resilience, which is encouraging for their capacity to manage university stressors effectively (Feraco et al., 2023). This prevalence may reflect the combined protective effects of family support and personal adaptive strategies, underscoring the importance of a supportive home environment in student well-being.

Conclusions

The study concludes that family support significantly fosters resilience among university undergraduates, serving as a vital social resource in navigating the academic and emotional challenges of higher education. In contrast, peer relationships do not exhibit a significant direct influence on resilience within this context, possibly reflecting contextual or qualitative differences in peer support. Gender and age do not significantly affect resilience, suggesting its broad applicability across these demographic variables. Overall, the findings highlight the primacy of familial support systems in enhancing student resilience.

Implications for Counselling

Counsellors in university settings should prioritize enhancing family engagement and support mechanisms as part of holistic student support programs. Strategies could include involving families in orientation and counselling sessions to foster communication and emotional backing. Counselling interventions should also address building individual coping skills that complement family support, given the variable role of peer relationships. Additionally, counsellors should be aware that resilience development is not significantly different across gender or age, allowing for uniform application of resilience-building programs.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence from Nigeria on the differential roles of family support and peer relationships in fostering resilience among undergraduates. It underscores the contextual importance of family support over peer influence in this cultural setting and provides a nuanced understanding of resilience factors outside Western contexts. Furthermore, it highlights the stability of resilience across gender and age in young adults in a university environment, filling gaps in literature concerning demographic influences on resilience.

Recommendations

- Universities should develop family-inclusive policies and programs that strengthen students' familial support systems.
- Counselling services should incorporate resilience training that emphasizes family involvement and empowers students with adaptive coping strategies.

- Further research should explore the qualitative aspects of peer relationships and their indirect effects on resilience, including the impact of digital social networks.
- Academic institutions should provide awareness programs to educate families on their critical role in students' psychological well-being.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies could investigate the mediating and moderating effects of variables such as socioeconomic status, cultural background, and digital peer interaction quality on the relationship between social support and resilience. Longitudinal designs would be valuable to track changes in resilience over the course of university education. Additionally, qualitative methodologies could provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of students regarding family and peer influences on resilience.

Limitations of the Study

The study's use of a cross-sectional ex-post facto design limits causal inferences about the relationships among family support, peer relationships, and resilience. The reliance on self-reported data may introduce response biases. The sample, drawn from a single Nigerian university, may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational or cultural contexts. Additionally, the measure of peer relationships may not have fully captured the nuances of peer influence, especially in the context of evolving digital communication trends.

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