Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

Contributions of Self-Construal and Emotional Intelligence in Affective and Cognitive Components of Subjective Well-Being among Undergraduate Students

[1] Blessing Nneka Onyekachi, [2]Maurice Kosisochukwu Oodo, & [3]JohnBosco Chika Chukwuorji

[1,2,3] Department of Psychology University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu state, Nigeria.

Corresponding Author
Email: johnbosco.chukwuorji@unn.edu.ng Phone: +2348039655344

Abstract
This study examined the contributions of self-construal and emotional intelligence in affective and cognitive components of subjective wellbeing (SWB) among undergraduate students. Two hundred and ninety nine (299) students (163 males and 136 females) sampled from University of Nigeria Nsukka participated in the study. Their ages ranged between 18 - 32years (mean age = 22.24; SD = 2.54). They completed the Self-Construal Scale (SCS), Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT), International Positive and Negative Affect Schedule – Short Form (I-PANAS-SF), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SwLS). Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the data. Findings indicated that independent self-construal positively predicted positive affect, and negatively predicted negative affect, but it did not significantly predict life satisfaction. Interdependent self-construal did not significantly predict positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. Emotional intelligence positively predicted positive affect and negatively predicted negative affect, but it did not significantly predict life satisfaction. In general, independent construal of the self and emotional intelligence significantly predicted the affective component of SWB, but not the cognitive component of SWB. The findings are consistent with relevant theoretical and empirical literature, and underscore the relevance of self-definition in emotions in affective wellbeing.

Key Words: *Affect; Emotional intelligence. Life satisfaction; Self-construal; Subjective well-being.*

One of the major challenges facing those living in technologically advancing societies is the need to adjust to various, and sometimes conflicting, social systems such as the family, friendship networks, work or school groups (Adeniyi & Onadiji, 2016). Adeniyi and Onadiji opines that for undergraduates, the conflict among the demands of several groups is likely to be particularly acute, as the emerging adults struggle to gain freedom from parents, to meet the demands for good academic performance, to make and maintain friendships, and to find a place for themselves in the society. In spite of the challenges associated with this life stage, the undergraduate student, like every other person, is fundamentally driven by the desire to make life more meaningful and improve his/her sense of well-being.

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to individuals' feelings about themselves, their general happiness and their overall satisfaction with life (Uche & Ngwu, 2017). It is viewed as the extent to which individuals show a high level of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationship with others in life and self-acceptance (Azeez & Omolade, 2013; Urry et al., 2004). SWB is defined as "a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life" (Diener, Lucas, & Oshi, 2002, p. 63). Specifically, it consists of two distinctive components - an affective part, which refers to both the presence of positive affect (PA) and the absence of negative affect (NA), and a cognitive part (Diener, 1994). The affective part is a hedonic evaluation guided by emotions and feelings, while the cognitive part is an information-based appraisal of one's life for which people judge the extent to which their present life measures up to their expectations and resembles their envisioned 'ideal' life (van Hoorn, 2007). The cognitive evaluation of one's life can be his or her life satisfaction in global terms (life as a whole) and in domain terms (specific areas of life such as work, relationships, etc.) (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). In other words, the affective component is represented by affective states (which can be positive or negative) while life satisfaction represents the cognitive component.

Affect is considered positive when the emotions, moods and feelings experienced are pleasant (e.g., joy, elation, affection etc.), and it is deemed negative, when the emotions, moods and feelings experienced are unpleasant (e.g., guilt, anger, shame etc.) (Albuquerque, 2010). Positive and negative affect are independent factors that should be measured and studied separately, and the presence of positive affect does not necessarily imply the absence of negative affect and vice versa (see Albuquerque, 2010).

Extant literature shows that subjective well-being could be influenced by dispositional factors (e.g., Balogun, 2014), social relationships and work

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

environment (e.g., Uche & Ngwu, 2017); demographic characteristics (e.g., Adeniyi & Onadiji, 2016; Agbo & Ome, 2016); cultural differences and cultural contexts (e.g., Agbo & Ome 2016; Ogihara & Uchida, 2014; Uchida & Ogihara, 2012; Joshanloo & Jarden, 2016), and goal pursuits (Ford et al, 2015; Yamaguchi & Kim, 2015). Of all these factors, individual factors appear to be mostly amenable to micro-level interventions. The purpose of the present study is to examine the contributions of emotional intelligence and self-construal in subjective well-being of undergraduates.

One factor that could be implicated in SWB is self-construal which is a psychologically meaningful route to subjective well-being (Chang, Osman, & Tong, 2011; Kwan, Bond, & Singelis, 1997). Self-construal refers to how individuals define and make meaning of the self. Markus and Kitayama (1991) coined the term self-construal in describing the ways that Americans and Japanese define and make meaning of the self. To construe means to "show or explain the meaning or intention of" (Random House Dictionary, 1980). Broadly, self–construal is concerned with how an individual develops and defines information about one's relationship with the self, with others, and between one's self and others (Mara, DeCicco, & Stroink 2010; DeCicco & Stroink, 2007; Hardin, Varghese, Tran & Carlson, 2006).

Markus and Kitayama (1991) identified two self-construal patterns - independent and interdependent. Although they noted that these are only two of many possible self-construals, the term self-construal has become virtually synonymous with independence and interdependence. Hence, self-construal is typically defined as how individuals see the self in relation to others. Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed that Europeans and Americans construe the self as fundamentally individual and separate from others, and they labelled this the independent self-construal. According to Cross, Hardin and Gercek-Swing (2011), for persons with high independent self-construal, the question, "Who am I?" is likely to be answered with reference to internal traits that are stable across situations (e.g., outgoing, shy, intelligent, ambitious) or that set one apart from others (e.g., especially creative, a straight-A student). Demonstrating one's uniqueness is an important basis of self-esteem, while being "the same person" across situations and communicating assertively are considered signs of maturity. Interpersonal relationships are, of course, important to those with an independent self-construal, but significant others are typically important foremost for how they benefit the individual (e.g., for the support or esteem they provide to the independent individual). Furthermore, others are a source of

social comparison for confirming one's uniqueness (compared to my friends, I am more creative) and internal traits (I demonstrate my compassion in my relationships with my family) (Cross et al., 2011).

In contrast to Europeans and Americans, Markus and Kitayama (1991) pointed out that the Japanese tend to construe the self as fundamentally connected to others and defined by relationships with others, which they labelled the interdependent self-construal. According to Cross et al. (2011), for persons with high interdependent self-construal, the question, "Who am I?" is likely to be answered with reference to important relationships (e.g., daughter, friend, co-worker) or group memberships (fraternity member, Asian American). Demonstrating one's ability to fit into the group is an important basis of self-esteem, while changing one's behaviour in response to the demands of different situations, as well as regulating emotional expression in order to maintain group harmony are considered signs of maturity (Cross et al., 2011). Interpersonal relationships are of utmost importance to those with an interdependent self-construal, with the individual concerned primarily with how he or she benefits the group. Others become a source of definition for the self (I am a responsible student and an impulsive friend), and social comparison is used to determine whether one is fulfilling obligations within those relationships (Cross et al., 2011). For collectivist cultures which are related to interdependent self-construal, well-being depends on the social context, as well as positive self-evaluations. They considered social support, relationship harmony, positive relationship, and ordinariness as yard sticks for measuring individual's level of happiness (Balogun, 2014).

Researchers (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994; Triandis, 1989) have argued that individuals possess both independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal but that cultural context typically promotes the development of one or the other self-construal more strongly. As noted above, the United States and Japan are generally considered prototypical cultures that promote the development of independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal, respectively, with independent self-construal tending to be better elaborated and salient in Western countries and interdependent self-construal tending to be better elaborated and salient in non-Western countries, including parts of Asia, Africa, and Central and South America (Cross et al., 2011). Not surprisingly then, independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal are typically identified as corresponding to individualist and collectivist cultures respectively (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). However, Markus and Kitayama (1991) did not make this connection explicitly as collectivism-individualism are cultural variables, whereas self- construal are individual variables despite having a

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

cultural undertone. In terms of individual perceptions, independent and interdependent selves may co-exist, but the strength of each may vary due to the influence of the cultural context (Utz, 2004).

Some theorists have argued that subjective well-being or happiness is determined by the way people construe and interpret the world around them and emphasises the role of hedonically relevant cognitive and motivational processes as mediators of person and situational effects on perception of happiness (Lyubomirsky, 2001). Based on this potential to either promote or undermine a positive view of the self (Lyubomirsky, 2001), studies have shown that individuals with an independent self-construal typically have higher levels of well-being because these individuals are more consistent in their self-view (Cross, Gore & Morris, 2003; Elliott & Coker, 2008; Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2004). In contrast, Hardie, Critchley and Morris (2006) opined that those with a strong individual orientation reported poorer social and psychological health. In another study by Reid (2004), both the independent and the interdependent self-construal can lead to greater well-being, but through different mechanisms. For example, self-esteem leads to greater well-being in individuals with an independent self-construal, and relationship harmony leads to greater well-being in individuals with an interdependent self-construal. Taken together, it may be reasoned that yet both types of self-construal may be buffers of subjective well-being since the basic factor may be alignment between ones' own self-construal and the valued social norms of the immediate cultural context (see Suh, 2000). However, there is a dearth of studies in Nigeria on self-construal and its association with subjective well-being. Hence, the present study.

One other factor that could be implicated in SWB is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence (EI) involves the ability to understand and manage one's and others' emotion, feelings of emotions, to discriminate among them and to use information to guide one's thinking and action (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). It can also be defined as the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in self and others as well as adapt to environmental pressure (Goleman, 1995; Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2000). It is the capacity to know oneself and to quickly know others based on their expressions, feelings, behaviours and verbal statements which makes one able to effectively work and get along with others (Anitha & Swaranalatha, 2016).

Some decades ago, Goleman (1995, 1998) described emotional intelligence as having five components. Three dimensions - self-awareness (ability to recognise emotions and know one's strengths and limits), self-regulation (the realisation of what is behind an emotion, what triggers the emotion and then learning ways to handle the accompanying feelings), and motivation (striving to improve or meet standard of excellence), - described personal competencies related to knowing and managing emotions in one's self. Two dimensions - empathy (compassion to others' feelings and taking an interest in their concerns) and social skills (developing and bolstering other persons' abilities), - described social competencies related to knowing and managing emotions in others (Goleman, 1998).

Emotionally intelligent people are more flexible, assertive, optimistic, capable of communicating their feelings to others, influencing others people's feelings, and controlling their own emotions. Thus, they are often capable of adjusting to or withdrawing from pressure and regulating stress (Furnham & Christoforou, 2007). Such individuals are always cheerful and satisfied with their lives, confident, and tend to focus on the good side of life (Carmeli, 2003). As EI is a mental ability to process affective information, emotional skills may change the balance of affective experiences from negative to positive, leading to higher positive affect (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2012). Higher level of emotional intelligence is associated with high subjective well-being because they are able to manipulate their emotion and that of others to significant happy ends of life (Adeniyi & Onadiji, 2016). Moreover, measures of emotional intelligence and subjective happiness are positively correlated (Furnham & Petrides, 2003). EI helps an individual to be in touch with their emotion and regulate it in ways that promotes well-being and happiness (Adeniyi & Onadiji, 2016; Balogun, 2014; Furnham & Petrides, 2003). Although the foregoing studies show that emotional intelligence promotes SWB, little research have been conducted in the Nigerian culture to examine the contribution of emotional intelligence in SWB. Findings from the western countries may not be applicable to or reflect happenings in Nigeria due to socio-cultural differences. In the present study, we hypothesise as follows: (1) Independent self-construal will positively predict subjective well-being. (2) Interdependent self-construal will positively predict subjective well-being. (3) Emotional intelligence will positively predict subjective well-being.

Method

Participants

Two hundred and ninety nine (299) undergraduate students of University of Nigeria Nsukka, participated in this study. They consisted of 163 males and 136

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

females. The sample was drawn from the following departments: Psychology (122), Social Work (67), Public Administration (51) and Political Sciences (59). Their ages ranged from 18 to 32 years (M = 22.24; SD = 2.52). All levels of undergraduate study were represented – first year (20), second year (146) third year (41), and fourth year (92).

Instruments

Four instruments were used in the study, namely: the Self-Construal Scale (SCS), the Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT), the International Positive and Negative Affect Schedule – Short Form (I-PANAS-SF), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SwLS).

The Self-Construal Scale (SCS)

This is a 30-item self-report inventory developed by Singelis (1994). It was employed to assess the extent of participants' interdependent and independent self-construal. Fifteen (15) items in the SCS were designed to measure independent self-construal, and the other fifteen (15) items measure interdependent self-construal. Sample items from the scale include: "I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects"; "I can talk openly with a person who I meet for the first time, even when this person is much older than I am" (Independent); "Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument"; I usually go along with what others want to do, even when I would rather do something different" (Interdependent); etc. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed (or did not agree) with each of the items on a 7-point scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Singelis (1994) found the scale to be reliable with acceptable Cronbach's alpha for independent (.79) and interdependent (.75) subscales. For the present study, internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha, α) of the independent and interdependent components of the scale were .70 and .71 respectively. Individuals' scores are calculated for each self-construal dimension with higher scores representing higher independent or interdependent construal of the self.

The Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT)

This is a 33-item inventory developed by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998), to measure respondents' self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Example of items in SREIT are "I know when to speak about my personal problems to others"; "When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame

them", etc. Items are scored on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Schutte et al. (1998) reported a two-week test-retest reliability of .78 for the SREIT. In Nigerian samples, Ehigie, Oguntuase, Ibode and Ehigie (2012) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .84, while Salami (2010) reported internal consistency reliabilities ranging from .78 to .85. Responses on 3 items (5, 28 and 33) are reverse-coded while there is direct scoring for all other items. Higher scores indicate more characteristics of emotional intelligence.

The International Positive and Negative Affect Schedule – Short Form (I-PANAS-SF)
The I-PANAS-SF is a 10-item abridged form of the original Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). It was developed by Thompson (2007) to address problems associated with the original PANAS, and assesses the two major independent dimensions of affect – Positive (PA) and Negative (NA) affects. Basically, it assesses the affective component of SWB. The PA dimension consists of the following items: *alert, active, determined, inspired,* and *attentive,* while the NA dimension consists of *ashamed, afraid, nervous, upset,* and *hostile*. Respondents are required to rate these positive and negative adjectives according to the extent to which they feel the emotions using a 7-point response format, ranging from *never* (1) to *always* (7). Scores range from 5-35 on each dimension with higher scores on both PA and NA items indicating the tendency to experience a positive and negative feeling respectively. The instrument has been shown to perform creditably well across cultures (Thompson, 2007). It has been validated for use in Nigeria by other researchers (Agbo, 2016; Agbo & Ome, 2016), and it had good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .80 for PA and .70 for NA).

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SwLS)
The SWLS is a five-item measure developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) that assess the cognitive component of SWB as shown by an individual's global judgement of satisfaction with life as a whole. The items are - (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 most important things I want in life,* and (5) *if I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.* Participants are requested to indicate the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point response format, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). Items are directly scored, and response ratings are added to calculate a composite score, which could range from 5 to 35 (Pavot & Diener, 2008). Higher scores indicate more satisfaction with life as a whole.

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108
©The Author(s) 2017
http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

The SWLS has been used in numerous studies and has demonstrated good psychometric properties (see Pavot & Diener, 2008). Diener et al. (1985) reported internal consistency using Cronbach's coefficient alpha .87 and 2-months test re-test reliability of .82. It has been shown to perform creditably well across cultures (see Abolghasemi & Varaniyab, 2010; Diener, Inglehart, & Tay, 2003 for a review). In Nigeria, Oladipo and Balogun (2012) obtained an alpha reliability coefficient .79 and split-half reliability coefficient .65, while Agbo and Ome (2016) reported internal consistency using Cronbach's coefficient alpha that ranged from .69 to .79.

Procedure

The questionnaire form containing the measures of relevant study variables and a demographic section was given to the participants in their classrooms.. They were approached in their classes during free lecture periods by the second author who explained the purpose of the study to them and requested for the completion of the form. Participation was voluntary and only those who gave informed consent received the quesionnaire. They were assured of confidentiality of their responses and anonymity was achieved since there was no provision on the questionnaire for any identifying personal information. Upon completion of the questionnaire, respondents returned it and were verbally appreciated for taking time to take part in the study.

Design/Statistics

The study is a survey and cross-sectional design was adopted. Hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis was used for data analysis to test the hypotheses of the study. Multiple regression was an appropriate statistical tool because the research was aimed at predicting values on a criterion variable from multiple predictor variables.

Results

Table 1: Inter-correlations of demographic variables, self-construal, emotional intelligence and indicators of subjective wellbeing

Variables		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Age	-							
2	Gender	-.25***	-						
3	Year of study	.34***	-.14*	-					
4	Independent Self-Construal	.09	.06	-.03	-				

5	Interdependent Self-Construal	.09	.03	-.04	.36***				
6	Emotional intelligence	.11*	.02	.05	.20**	.23***	-		
7	Positive affect	.12*	-.00	.07	.20**	.04	.19**	-	
8	Negative affect	-.19**	.09	-.11	-.17**	-.05	-.21***	-.18**	-
9	Life satisfaction	.07	.02	.07	.11	.13*	.08	.17*	-.04

Note. ***p<.001; **p<.001; *p<.05; Gender (0 = Male, 1 = Female)

In Table 1, age was negatively correlated with gender, indicating that female participants were younger in age than males. Age had a positive relationship with year of study, emotional intelligence, and positive affect, but it negatively correlated with negative affect. Gender had a negative relationship with year of study. Independent self-construal had a positive relationship with emotional intelligence and positive affect, but it was negatively correlated to negative affect. Interdependent self-construal had a positive relationship with emotional intelligence, but it did not significantly correlate with positive affect, and negative affect. Emotional intelligence correlated positively with positive affect, but it was negatively related to negative affect. There was a negative relationship between positive affect and negative affect.

Table 2: Hierarchical multiple regression predicting positive affect (affective component of SWB) by self-construal and emotional intelligence

Predictors	**Step 1**			**Step 2**			**Step 3**		
	B	**Beta (*β*)**	***T***	***B***	**Beta (*β*)**	***t***	***B***	**Beta (*β*)**	***t***
Age	.21	.12*	2.08*	.19	.11	1.87	.16	.09	1.63
Independent SC				.07	.30**	3.32**	.07	.18**	2.98**
Interdependent SC				-.02	-.04	-.71	-.03	-.07	-1.17
Emotional intelligence							.05	.16**	2.81**
R^2	.01			.05			.08		
ΔR^2	.01			.04			.03		
F	4.33* (1, 297)			5.24**(3, 295)			5.99** (4, 294)		

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

ΔF	4.33* (1, 297)	5.62** (2, 295)	7.91** (1, 294)

Note: ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05; ΔR^2 = Change in R^2; ΔF = Change in F; SC = Self-construal

In Table 2, age was included in step 1 of the regression analysis because of its significant relationship with positive affect – an affective component of psychological wellbeing. Results showed that age was a significantly positive predictor of positive affect (β = .12, p<.05), indicating that higher age was associated with higher positive affect. The B (.21) showed that for every one unit rise in age, positive affect increases by .21 units. Age accounted for 1% of the variance in affective aspect of SWB as represented by positive affect (ΔR^2 = .01). The F statistics associated with age in the model was 4.33 (1, 297), p<.05.

Step 2 showed that independent self-construal significantly predicted positive affect (β = .20, p<.01). The B (.07) showed that for every one unit rise in independent self-construal, positive affect increases by .07 units. Interdependent self-construal did not significantly predict positive affect (β = -.04). Self-construal (independent and interdependent) accounted for 4% of the variance in affective aspect of SWB as represented by positive affect (ΔR^2 = .05). Hence, the F statistics for the variables in the model was significant, F (3, 295) = 5.24, p<.01.

In step 3, emotional intelligence significantly predicted positive affect (β = .16, p<.01). The B (.05) showed that for every one unit rise in emotional intelligence, positive affect increases by .05 units. Emotional intelligence accounted for 3% of the variance in affective aspect of SWB as represented by positive affect (ΔR^2 = .03). Thus, the F statistics for the model was significant, F (4, 294) = 5.99, p<.01.

Table 3: Hierarchical multiple regression predicting negative affect (affective component of SWB) by self-construal and emotional intelligence

Predictors	**Step 1**			**Step 2**			**Step 3**		
	B	**Beta (*β*)**	***t***	***B***	**Beta (*β*)**	***t***	***B***	**Beta (*β*)**	***t***
Age	-.33	-.19**	-3.31**	-.31	-.18**	-3.12**	-.28	-.16**	-2.88**
Independent SC				-.06	-.16*	-2.68*	-.05	-.14	-2.33

Interdependent SC			.01	.02	.35	.02	.05	.82
Emotional intelligence						-.05	-.17**	-2.94**
R^2	.04		.06			.09		
ΔR^2	.04		.02			.03		
F	10.97** (1, 297)		6.25***(3, 295)			6.97*** (4, 294)		
ΔF	10.97** (1, 297)		3.75* (2, 295)			8.63** (1, 294)		

Note: ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05; ΔR^2 = Change in R^2; ΔF = Change in F; SC = Self-construal

In Table 3, age was included in step 1 of the regression analysis because of its significant relationship with negative affect – an affective component of SWB. Results showed that age was a significantly negative predictor of negative affect (β = -.19, p<.05), indicating that higher age was associated with lower negative affect. The B (-.33) showed that for every one unit rise in age, negative affect decreases by .33 units. Age accounted for 4% of the variance in affective component of SWB as represented by negative affect (ΔR^2 = .04). Therefore, the F statistics associated with age in the model was 10.97 (1, 297), p<.01.

Step 2 showed that independent self-construal significantly predicted negative affect (β = -.16, p<.01). The B (.-.06) showed that for every one unit rise in independent self-construal, negative affect decreases by .06 units. Interdependent self-construal did not significantly predict negative affect (β = .02). Self-construal (independent and interdependent) accounted for 2% of the variance in negative affective component of SWB (ΔR^2 = .02). The F statistics for the variables in the model was significant, F (3, 295) = 6.25, p<.001.

In step 3, emotional intelligence significantly predicted negative affect (β = -.17, p<.01). The B (-.05) showed that for every one unit rise in emotional intelligence, negative affect decreases by .05 units. Emotional intelligence accounted for 3% of the variance in negative affective component of SWB (ΔR^2 = .03). The F statistics for the variables in the model was significant, F (4, 294) = 6.94, p<.001.

Table 4: Hierarchical multiple regression predicting life satisfaction (cognitive well-being component) by self-construal and emotional intelligence

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108
©The Author(s) 2017
http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

Predictors	Step 1			Step 2		
	B	**Beta (*β*)**	***t***	***B***	**Beta (*β*)**	***t***
Independent SC	.03	.07	1.20	.03	.07	1.09
Interdependent SC	.05	.10	1.68	.05	.10	1.51
Emotional intelligence				.02	.05	.82
R^2	.02			.02		
ΔR^2	.02			.00		
F	3.28^{*} (2, 296)			4.01^{*}(1, 295)		
ΔF	3.28^{*} (2, 296)			2.41 (3, 295)		

Note: $^{***}p < .001$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; ΔR^2 = Change in R^2; ΔF = Change in *F;* SC = Self-construal

In Table 3, none of the demographic variables was controlled for because they did not correlate significantly with life satisfaction. Step 1 showed that both independent and interdependent self-construal did not significantly predict life satisfaction ($\beta = .07$, and $\beta = .10$, respectively). Self-construal accounted for 2% of the variance in cognitive component of SWB ($\Delta R^2 = .02$). Hence, the *F* statistics for the regression model was significant, $F (2, 296) = 3.28$, $p<.05$.

In step 2, emotional intelligence did not significantly predict life satisfaction ($\beta = -.05$). Emotional intelligence did not account for any variance in cognitive component of SWB ($\Delta R^2 = .00$). Thus, the *F* statistics for the variables in the model was not significant, $F (3, 295) = 2.41$.

Discussion

This study investigated the contributions of self construal and emotional intelligence in the subjective well being of undergraduate students. The first hypothesis which stated that independent self-construal will positively predict subjective well-being was partly confirmed. Findings showed that independent self-construal positively predicted positive affect and negatively predicted negative affect, but did not significantly predict life satisfaction. Thus, independent self-construal had a significant relationship with the affective dimension of SWB and not with the cognitive domain.

This finding is consistent with studies that have shown that individuals with an independent self-construal typically have higher levels of well-being because these individuals are more consistent in their self-view (Cross, Gore & Morris, 2003; Elliott & Coker, 2008; Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2004). This finding is also in line with the findings of Agbo and Ome (2016) who reported that Igbo young adults in Eastern Nigeria define happiness with focus to the self more than in terms of relationships. It is also consistent with the findings of previous studies (e.g., Duncan, Ornaghi, & Grazzani, 2013; Yu, Zhou, Fan, Yu, & Peng, 2016), who reported that the set of thoughts and feelings of one in relation to the self and others increases one's experiences of more positive emotion and less negative affect among young adults. However, the finding is in contrast with the findings of Hardie, Critchley and Morris (2006) who reported that those with a strong individual orientation reported poorer social and psychological health.

Based on our finding, it may be reasoned that an individual's conception of himself/herself as a bounded, coherent, stable, autonomous individual is a predisposition to one experiencing more positive affect and less negative affect. The more independent one is in his/her self-view, the more one experiences pleasant emotions such as, joy, elation, alertness, etc., and the less he/she experiences unpleasant emotions, moods, feelings, such as, guilt, anger, sadness, shame, etc. This could be because the independent self-view believes in the uniqueness as well as separateness of an individual's configuration of internal attributes, and it locates crucial self-representations within the individual, which makes the individual solely responsible and accountable for his/her actions. Thus, the self is construed as fundamentally individual and separate from others. This self-view seems to augur well with the self-concept of the young adults and promotes their idiocentric view of seeing themselves as independent of others, believing in their inner qualities, attributes, potentials and capabilities to be responsible for the outcome of their actions. This may in turn increase the positive emotions experienced and reduce the negative feelings. With this self-view, the typical belief that as a young adult one can actually achieve one's goals and objectives is strengthened. Individuals who develop internal and unique set of thoughts and feelings in relation to self and others tend to emphasize autonomy, independence, and self-sufficiency. They focus on the expression and affirmation of intrinsic positive attributes and the pursuit of self-realization, thereby fostering a sense of self-worth, respect, and superiority, which in turn results in more positive emotions and less negative feelings.

Nevertheless, each stage in life has its unique drives and goals, and as an undergraduate student, most of the life goals set seem only attainable through one's strengths, talents, potentialities and strivings devoid of external influence. This might not be the ideal situation in real life settings especially when judging

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108
©The Author(s) 2017
http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

life satisfaction as a whole. Life satisfaction was assessed in more general terms. Thus, the finding that the independent self-view did not significantly predict life satisfaction is understandable.

The second hypothesis that interdependent self-construal will positively predict SWB was not supported by the findings of this study. Interdependent self-construal did not predict any of the components of SWB. Thus, the conception of the self as fundamentally connected to others and defined by relationships with others was not significantly related to one's experience of neither positive/negative affect nor satisfaction with life. This finding is consistent with the findings of Puente-Díaz and Cavazos (2013), who did not find a significant relationship between self-construal and SWB. This implies that having a relational, collective or allocentric view of the self has no significant relationship with one's experience of happiness particularly among undergraduate students.

The present finding explained from view that the social-oriented self is generally associated with relationship strength, inclusion of others in the self, communal orientation and harmony beliefs, with achievement motivation not being autonomous, rather individuals persevere to fulfil the expectations of significant others, typically the family. This self-view seems to contradict that of the undergraduate students, whose family and significant others might not be contributing much to their self-perception, rather self-perception seems to be highly influenced by peers. Thus, emphasizing roles, statuses, positions, commitments and responsibilities as advocated by the interdependent self might not have an impact on the level of SWB, as much as affirming to intrinsic and unique positive attributes in relation to self and others. On the other hand, the self-view of being a free entity and independent might predispose students to creating duties, obligations and social responsibilities in line with their abilities and competencies, thereby exercising mastery and control over social situations. Thus, connectedness is not seen as an obligation but as a thing of convenience.

The third hypothesis which stated that emotional intelligence will positively predict SWB was partly confirmed. Emotional intelligence positively predicted positive affect, and negatively predicted negative affect, but did not significantly predict life satisfaction. Thus, as emotional intelligence increased, positive feelings also increased, and as emotional intelligence decreased, negative feelings increased. This finding is in line with the findings of previous researchers (e.g., Koydemir & Schütz, 2012; Koydemir, Simsek, Schutz, & Tipandjan, 2013) who reported that EI was more highly associated with the

affective than with the cognitive component of SWB. The theoretically postulated link between EI and affective component of SWB is evident, given that EI involves the ability to accurately understand and effectively regulate a full range of emotions (see Gallagher & Vella-Brodrick, 2008; Schimmack, 2008; Schimmack, Radhakrishnan, Oishi, Dzokoto, & Ahadi, 2002). Moreover, the finding that EI did not predict life satisfaction agrees with Dabke (2014), who reported that emotional intelligence was not associated with life satisfaction. EI does not relate to the level of satisfaction an individual feels in life.
The finding implies that an increased ability to know oneself and to quickly know others based on their expressions, feelings, behaviours and verbal statements, results in one experiencing more pleasant emotions, feelings and moods, while a decline in this emotional management ability fosters one's experience of unpleasant emotions, feelings and moods. Emotional intelligence gives one emotional control over social situations which in turn makes one feel happy. Thus, an individual who is aware of his/her emotions and that of others and can regulate them positively in relation to self and others reports more happiness.

As humans, an ability to be in control always triggers pleasant feelings, much less when it has to do with knowledge of appropriateness of affect in dealings with self and others. It is also evident that emotionally intelligent individuals are more adaptive in their emotional functioning. Thus, emotional intelligence could be implicated in the affective domain of SWB by fostering adaptive methods of coping with social challenges, social stress and interpersonal conflicts, thereby promoting the development of supportive social networks which in turn results in decreased negative feelings and increased positive emotions. One who has the ability to understand and manage one's and others emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use information to guide one's thinking and action would not only be happy but would spread happiness around.

Finally, age correlated positively with both emotional intelligence and positive affect, and negatively with negative affect, but was not significantly related to life satisfaction. Thus, the older one gets, the more emotionally intelligent one becomes, the more positive emotions experienced and the less negative emotions felt. This could be explained by the notion that as ones get older, the more his exposure and experiences, which apparently broadens his/her repertoire of knowledge and information on how to manage range of his/her emotions and that of others. Based on this, he/she reports more positive feelings. In addition, younger age is often associated with a focus on the negative aspects of information processing, impression formation, decision making and memory (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finenauer, & Vohs, 2001).

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

The strength of the present study is that we used measures of the affective component (I-PANAS-SF) and cognitive component (SwLS) in assessment of SWB. However, we could not derive a composite score for affective wellbeing because PA and NA are independent constructs which cannot be used to form composites. The scores of I-PANAS-SF and SwLS cannot also be merged in order to have a score that represents the current understanding of SWB. Our analysis was therefore run separately for each dimension of I-PANAS-SF and for SwLS. Assessment of the construct using a single standardized and valid measure that taps the essential components of SWB would add more value to current knowledge on SWB. Therefore, studies that adopt a unified measure of SWB are hereby recommended. Our study was also cross-sectional and students were mostly from South-east Nigeria. Future researches should be designed to be longitudinal and include larger number of participants from other geographical regions of Nigeria. In conclusion, our findings underscore the relevance of self-definition and emotions in affective wellbeing.

References

Abolghasemi, A., & Varaniyab, S. T. (2010). Resilience and perceived stress: predictors of life satisfaction in the students of success and failure. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences 5*, 748–752.

Adeniyi, W. O., & Onadiji, O. (2016). Influence of psycho-demographic variables on psychological well-being of undergraduates of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun state*. European Scientific Journal of Well Being, 12*(13), 1857-7881.

Agbo, A. A. (2016). The validation of the international positive and negative affect schedule – short form in Nigeria. *South African Journal of Psychology, 46*(4), 477– 490.

Agbo, A. A., & Ome, B. N. (2016). Happiness: meaning and determinants among young adults of the Igbos of Eastern Nigeria. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 18*(1), 151-175.

Albuquerque, B. (2010). *What is subjective well-being? Understanding and measuring subjective well-being.* Retrieved from http://positivepsychology.org.uk/subjective-well-being/

Anitha, J., & Swaranalatha, J. (2016). Impact of emotional intelligence on the subjective well-being of women entrepreneurs in Coimbatore city.

International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education, 1(3), 56 – 60.

Azeez, O. R., & Omolade, M. A. (2013). Workload, subjective wellbeing and organisational commitment of bank workers. *Contemporary Humanities, 6*, 23-25.

Balogun, A. G. (2014). Dispositional factors, perceived social support and happiness among prison inmates in Nigeria: A new look. *The Journal of Happiness & Well-Being*, *2*(1),16-33.

Baumeister, R. F., Bratslavsky, E., Finkenauer, C., & Vohs, K. (2001). Bad is stronger than good. *Review of General Psychology, 5*, 323-370.

Carmeli, A. (2003). The relationship between emotional intelligence and work attitudes, behavior and outcomes: An examination among senior managers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 18*(8), 78-83.

Chang, W. C., Osaman, R. D., & Tang, F. (2011). Self-construal and subjective wellbeing in two ethnic communities in Singapore. *Psychologia*, *2,* 63 – 70.

Cross, S. E., Gore, J. S., & Morris, M. L. (2003). The relational-interdependent self-construal, self-concept consistency, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 85*, 933-944.

Cross, S. E., Hardin, E. E., & Gercek-Swing, B. (2011). The what, how, why, and where of self-construal. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 15*,142–179

Dabke, D. (2014). Can life satisfaction be predicted by emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and personality type? *A Peer Reviewed Research Journal, 17*(1), 51-60.

DeCicco, T. L., & Stroink, M. L. (2007). A third model of self-construal: The metapersonal self. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, *26*, 82-104.

Diener, E. (1994). Assessing subjective well-being: Progress and opportunities. *Social*
Indicators Research, 31(2), 103-157.

Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffen, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 49*(1), 71-75.

Diener, E., Inglehart, R., & Tay, L. (2013). Theory and validity of life satisfaction scales. *Social Indicators Research*, *112*, 497–527.

Diener, E., Lucas, R. E., & Oishi, S. (2002). Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and life satisfaction. In C.R. Snyder and S.J. Lopez (Ed.), *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Lucas, R. E., & Smith, H. L. (1999). Subjective well-being: Three
decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin, 125*(2), 276-302.

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

Duncan E., Ornaghi V., Grazzani I. (2013). Self-construal and wellbeing in Scottish and Italian young adults. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *14*(4), 1145-1161.

Ehigie, B. O., Oguntuase, R. O., & Ibode, F. O., & Ehigie, R. I. (2012). Personality factors and emotional intelligence as predictors of frontline hotel employees' emotional labour. *Global Advanced Research Journal of Management and Business Studies*, *1*(9), 327-338.

Elliott, I., & Coker, S. (2008). Independent self-construal, self-reflection, and self-rumination: A path model for predicting happiness. *Australian Journal of Psychology, 60*, 127-134.

Ford, B. Q., Dmitrieva, J. O., Heller, D., Chentsova-Dutton, Y., Grossmann, I., Tamir, M., . . ., & Mauss, I. B. (2015). Culture shapes whether the pursuit of happiness predicts higher or lower well-being. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 144*(6), 1053-1062.

Furnham, A., & Christoforou, I. (2007). Personality traits, emotional intelligence, and multiple happiness. *North American Journal of Psychology, 9*(3), 439-462.

Furnham, A., & Petrides, K. V. (2003). Trait emotional intelligence and happiness. *Social Behaviour and Personality*, *31*,815–823.

Gallagher, E. N., & Vella-Brodrick, D. A. (2008). Social support and emotional intelligence as predictors of subjective well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences, 44*, 1551–1561.

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam.

Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam

Hardie, E. A., Critchley, C., & Morris, Z. (2006). Self-coping complexity: Role of self-construal in relational, individual and collective coping styles and health outcomes. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 9*(3), 224-235.

Hardin, E. E., Varghese, F. P., Tran, U. V., & Carlson, A. Z. (2006). Anxiety and career exploration: Gender differences in the role of self-construal. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *69*(2), 346-358.

Joshanloo, M., & Jarden, A. (2016). Individualism as the moderator of the relationship between hedonism and happiness: A study in 19 nations. *Personality and Individual Differences, 94*(3), 149-152.

Koydemir, S., & Schütz, A. (2012). Emotional intelligence predicts components of subjective well-being beyond personality: A two-country study using self- and informant reports. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 20*, 1–12.

Koydemir, S., Simsek, O. F., Schutz, A., & Tipandian, A. (2013). Differences in how trait emotional intelligence predicts life satisfaction: The role of affect balance Versus Social Support in India and Germany. *Journal Happiness Studies, 14*(7), 51- 60.

Kwan, S. Y., Bond, M. H., & Singelis, T. M. (1997). Pancultural explanations for life satisfaction: Adding relationship harmony to self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*, 1038- 1051.

Lucas, R. E., & Dyrenforth, P. S. (2006). Does the existence of social relationships matter for subjective well-being? In K.

D. Vohs and E. J. Finkel (Eds.), *Self and relationships: Connecting intrapersonal and interpersonal processes* (pp. 254-273). New York: Guildford Press.

Lyubomirsky, S. (2001). Why are some people happier than others? The role of cognitive and motivational processes in well-being. *American Psychologist*, *56*, 239 – 249.

Mara, C. A., DeCicco, T. L., & Stroink, M. L. (2010). An investigation of the relationships among self-construal, emotional intelligence, and well-being. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies, 29*(1), 11-15.

Marian, V., & Kaushanskaya, M. (2004). Self-construal and emotion in bicultural bilinguals. *Journal of Memory and Language, 51*(2), 190-201.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion and motivation. *Psychological Review, 98*, 224-253.

Mayer, J. D., Caruso, D., & Salovey, P. (2000). Emotional intelligence meets traditional standards for an intelligence. *Intelligence, 27*, 267-298.

Ogihara, Y., & Uchida, Y. (2014). Does individualism bring happiness? Negative effects of individualism on interpersonal relationships and happiness. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *5*, 135-141.

Oladipo, S. E., & Balogun, S. K. (2012). How suitable is the satisfaction with life scale for use on adolescents in Nigeria. *Science Journal of Psychology, 2*(3), 1-3.

Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2008). The Satisfaction with Life Scale and the emerging construct of life satisfaction. *Journal of Positive Psychology, 3*, 137–152.

Puente-Díaz, R., & Cavazos, J. (2013). Personality factors, affect, and autonomy support as predictors of life satisfaction. *Universitas Psychologica, 12*(1), 41-53.

Salami, S. O. (2010). Psychosocial factors as predictors of mentoring among nurses in South- western Nigeria. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 20*(5), 348-363.

Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 9*(3), 185-211.

Schimmack, U. (2008). The structure of subjective well-being. In M. Eid and R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Schimmack, U., Radhakrishnan, P., Oishi, S., Dzokoto, V., & Ahadi, S. (2002). Culture, personality, and subjective well-being: Integrating process

Practicum Psychologia 7 (2), 87-108

http://journals.aphriapub.com/index.php.pp
ISSN: 2006-6640

models of life-satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*, 582–593.

Schutte, N. S, Malouff, J. M., Hall L. E, Haggerty, D. J., Cooper, J. T., Golden, C. J., & Dornheim, L. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *25,* 167-177.

Singelis, T. M. (1994). The measurement of independent and interdependent self-construals. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *20*(5), 580-591.

Suh, E. M. (2000). Self, the hyphen between culture and subjective well-being. In E. Diener and E. M. Suh (Eds.), *Culture and subjective well-being*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Thompson, E. R. (2007). Development and validation of an internationally reliable short-form of the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS). *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38,* 227–242.

Triandis, H. C. (1989). The self and social behavior in differing cultural contexts. *Psychological Review, 96*, 506-520.

Utz, S. (2004). Self-construal and cooperation: Is the interdependent self more cooperative than the independent self? *Self and Identity, 3*, 177-190.

Urry, H. L., Nitschke, J., Dolski, I., Jackson, D., Dalton, K., Mueler, C., Rosenkranz, M., Ryff, C., Singer, B., & Davidson, R. (2004). Making a life worth living. *Psychological Science, 15*(6), 367–72.

van Hoorn, A. (2007). *A short introduction to subjective well-being: Its measurement, correlates and policy uses.* Prepared for the international conference "Is happiness measurable and what do those measures mean for policy?" on 2-3 April 2007, University of Rome, Tor Vergata.

Yamaguchi, A., & Kim, M. S. (2015). Effects of self-construal and its relationship with subjective wellbeing across cultures. *Journal of Health Psychology, 20*(1), 13–26.

Yu, X., Zhou, Z., Fan, G., Yu, Y., & Peng, J. (2016). Collective and individual self-esteem mediate the effect of self-construals on subjective well-being of undergraduate students in China. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, *1*(3), 200-209

Zeidner, M., Matthews, G., & Roberts, R. (2012). *Emotional intelligence 101.* New York: Springer.

Authors' Biographies

Blessing Nneka Onyekachi, is a lecturer in Department of Psychology at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu state, Nigeria. She obtained her Bachelor of Science (First Class Honours) degree in Psychology as well as her Master of Science (M.Sc) degree in Social Psychology from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. She has served as Circulation/Sales Manager of Nigerian Journal of Psychological Research (2012-2014). She is currently a PhD student in the Department of Psychology, University of Nigeria Nsukka.
Email: blessing.ome@unn.edu.ng
Telephone: 08069407578

Maurice Kosisochukwu Oodo, holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from University of Nigeria, Nsukka. He lives in Nsukka, Enugu state, Nigeria.

JohnBosco Chika Chukwuorji, is a lecturer in Department of Psychology at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu state, Nigeria. He currently serves as Editor of *Nigerian Journal of Psychological Research*. He has reviewed scores of papers for reputable journal titles published by acclaimed publishers such as Sage, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, etc. His research focuses on clinical health psychology and positive psychology with primary research interest in mental health status and services for vulnerable populations such as internally displaced persons and refugees. He has published research papers in health behaviours, psychotraumatology, emotion regulation, affective disorders, successful ageing, posttraumatic growth, academic engagement, and suicide ideation.

Email: johnbosco.chukwuorji@unn.edu.ng
Telephone: 08039655344