Psycho-Social Predictors of Life Orientation among Visually Impaired and Sighted Undergraduate Students

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That visual impairment is significantly correlated with low self-efficacy and low self-esteem is an assertion that is not being contested, but the manner in which self-efficacy, self-esteem and locus of control influences the life orientation of the visually impaired is the crust of this study; an inquiry into the moderating effect of sight in the relationship of self-esteem, self-efficacy and locus of control with life orientation. The study employed a cross-sectional survey designed to sample two hundred and one (201) undergraduate students of University of Ibadan and Federal College of Education (SPED), Oyo, of which one hundred and one (101) of them were sighted while the remaining hundred (100) were visually impaired. A structured questionnaire made up of the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale, the Locus of Control Behaviour Scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Life Orientation Scale was used for data collection. Result indicated that self-esteem and self-efficacy significantly jointly predicted the life orientation of undergraduates \( F(2,183) = 7.463, p < .01, R^2 = .073 \). Self-esteem and self-efficacy significantly independently predicted life orientation of the undergraduates \( \beta = .106, p < .05 \), \( \beta = .180, p < .05 \) respectively. This means that, besides having a complementary influence, an undergraduate’s self-esteem and self-efficacy can independently determine his/her life orientation. However, sight did not significantly moderate the relationship of self-esteem and self-efficacy with life orientation among visually impaired and sighted undergraduates \( F(3,182) = .167, p > .05, R^2 = .001\), inferring that sighted and visually impaired undergraduates have their experience of life orientation influenced similarly by self-esteem and self-efficacy. Hence, self-esteem and self-efficacy should be the focus for improving the life-orientation of both sighted and visually impaired undergraduates.

Introduction
In a modest society, an average person has a basic desire to lead a life full of pleasure, be positively engaged and be able to construe life as meaningful. Life however faces one with tough choices of living either for what is right and profitable or for what is meaningful and pleasurable (Wong, 2012). At this juncture, the choice made by an individual is a reflection of his/her basic life orientation.

Fundamentally, life orientation has been classified into two categories; the one primarily concerned with how to live a meaningful life and the other concerned with living a personally successful and happy life (Wong, 2012). The former could be likened to Aristotle’s idea of eudaimonia, a moral philosophy that characterizes the well-lived life - irrespective of the emotional state of the person experiencing it, hence objective. It connotes a virtuous life of serving a higher purpose and making a significant difference in the world. The latter however describes individuals who pursue subjective happiness, who having satisfied their personal needs are less concerned about global issues of poverty and injustice and are less identified with humanity.

This study however has its flood-lights on the aspect of life orientation defined by the meaning mindset, with an objective to investigate the influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and other demographic variables on the life orientation of a special population; the visually impaired.

Several studies have reported that visual impairment is significantly correlated with
feelings of incapacity (low self-efficacy) and inferiority (low self-esteem) which results in lack of social acceptance, low academic results, physical incapacity and poor social adjustment (Beaty, 1991; Meighan, 1971; Lifshitz, Hen and Weisse, 2007). As much as these assertions are not being contested, the influence of these factors on the life orientation of the visually impaired is yet to be investigated. This study seeks to examine the moderating effect of sight in the relationship of self-esteem, self-efficacy and locus of control with life orientation.

Self-esteem describes the evaluation we make of ourselves or the degree to which we perceive ourselves positively or negatively on our overall attitudes in the direction of ourselves. Individuals with high self-esteem are said to have a clear intellect of what their private qualities are, think well of themselves, have appropriate goals, use feedback mechanism to enhance themselves and gain successfully with difficult situations (Wood & Hem Pet, 2003). People with low self-esteem, on the other hand, are said to have less understandable self-conceptions, think poorly of themselves, tend to be negative about the future, dwell on their negative past experiences, get negative feedback that they make themselves, are weak in generating positive criticism for themselves, and are more disturbed about their social relationship that they strongly believe that they will be encountered with regular worry (Brown & Marshall, 2001).

To this end, the feeling of dependency and the disproportionate number of negative interactions which visually impaired individuals experience may make them more vulnerable to low self-esteem in comparison to their sighted peers. Being dependent also has its tone on their perceptions of self-efficacy, bearing that assistance from others is absolutely necessary if they’ll be able to complete any reasonable task.

Self-efficacy explains a person’s belief about his/her ability to influence events that affect their lives to accomplish personal goals. It determines how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave (Bandura, 1997). People with visual impairment have been reported to exhibit lower levels of self-efficacy than their peers without visual impairment bearing that visual impairment has been found to be associated with reduced social and physical competence (Gronmo & Augestad, 2000; Huurre & Aro, 1998) as well as restrictions in daily living (Talbert-Kipasa, 2008). Public misconceptions about blindness which tends towards low expectations and over-assisting behaviour of significant others may also explain the low levels of self-efficacy observed, which may limit the development of skills that would be needed to succeed and to compete with sighted pairs (Adenzato, Ardito & Izard, 2006).

Differences in the locus of control of sighted and visually impaired individuals have also been speculated, with a larger number of researchers opinionated that visually impaired individuals are likely to have an external locus of control compared to the sighted, thereby explaining out all their life challenges, since they could hardly do anything by themselves (Dodds, 1993; Roy and MacKay, 2002). However, some other researchers are of the opinion that the visually impaired are likely to demonstrate a higher internal locus of control compared with sighted people (Klinkosz, Sekowski and Brambring, 2006; Papadopoulous et al., 2013).

However, there appears to be paucity of empirical work investigating the phenomenon of life orientation and factors that are likely to influence it in the Nigerian environment. Most of the works that have been done in this regard has been preponderantly in Europe and America. Also, very few efforts have been made in comparing visually impaired individuals and sighted individuals on life orientation and allied psychological factors. Based on the foregoing, this research investigated the influence of self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and other demographic variables on the life orientation of a special population; the visually impaired. It also compared the life orientations between the sighted and the visually impaired.

**Method**

**Research Design**

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design. This involves measuring the dependent variable. In this case, Life Orientation, and the independent variables of Locus of Control, Self-esteem, and Self-efficacy.
Setting and Sampling Technique
The sample participants for this study were drawn from undergraduate students of University of Ibadan and Federal College of Education (SPECIAL), Oyo. The sighted participants were sampled using accidental sampling technique while the visually impaired were purposively selected from the Department of Special Education in University of Ibadan, Ibadan and Federal College of Education (SPECIAL), Oyo.

Participants and Procedure
The sample size consisted of two hundred and one (201) undergraduate students of University of Ibadan and Federal College of Education (SPECIAL), Oyo of which one hundred and one (101) of them were sighted while the remaining hundred (100) were visually impaired. Eleven (11) of the visually impaired were students of University of Ibadan while the remaining eighty-nine (89) were students of Federal College of Education (SPECIAL), Oyo. Their ages ranged from nineteen (19) to thirty-two (32) years, 94 (47%) were males and 107 (53%) were females. Amongst them, 157 (78%) were Yoruba, 26 (13%) were Igbo, 6 (3%) were Hausa while the remaining 12 (6%) belong to other ethnic groups. Also, 161 (80%) of the participants were Christians, 37 (18%) were Muslims, 1 (0.5%) was a traditional worshipper while the last person (0.5%) belong to some other religious groups.

The informed consent was stated in the questionnaire, such that participants consented as a volunteer to be a part of the research. Names and personal details of the respondents were not included in the questionnaire in an attempt to assure them of anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. A general instruction was given to them on how to fill the questionnaire, with a corresponding instruction preceding each section. Administration for the visually impaired was done orally with assessor recording their responses on the questionnaire sheets; the sighted filled the questionnaire themselves. The process of data collection lasted for about three weeks. Of the total two hundred and twenty seven questionnaire distributed, seventeen copies of questionnaire were not returned (all from the sighted undergraduates), and nine were not well filled (two (2) from the visually impaired and five (5) from the sighted), hence discarded. Only two hundred and one copies of questionnaire were returned and well filled, and only these were used for the final analysis.

Measures
A structured questionnaire with five sections, A to E was administered to both sighted and visually impaired participants with the first section requesting the demographic factors of age, sex, level of education, ethnicity and religion of the respondents. The following sections measured Self-esteem, Locus of Control, Self Efficacy and Life Orientation respectively.

Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale is a ten item scale which has been translated by Mary Wegner from the original German Version by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1992). It assesses the strength of an individual’s belief in his or her own ability to respond to novel or difficult situations and to deal with any associated obstacles or setbacks. The scoring procedure indicates that the higher a respondents score on the scale, the higher his/her level of self-efficacy. The Cronbach Alpha reliability for the ten (10) standardized items was 0.87 (Luszczynska and Schwarzer, 2005), while this study found a Cronbach Alpha reliability of 0.83 among its population.

Locus of Control Scale is a standardized psychological assessment instrument developed by Craig, Franklin and Andrew (1984) to access the main behavioural characteristics of internal and external locus of control among adolescents. The instrument has 17 bipolar adjective item and scored on a 5 point scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree so that high score means external locus of control and low score indicates internal locus of control. No item was reversed in scoring, all relevant item answered by the participants were equally weighed and summed together to get a composite score. Craig, Franklin and Andrew (1984) reported an alpha coefficient of 0.79 for the scale; Ilevbare (2011) also reported a reliability coefficient of 0.51 for the scale among a Nigeria sample. This
study however found a reliability coefficient of 0.63 in this present population.

**Life Orientation Scale** is a ten item scale developed by Wong (2012) to determine the extent to which an individual hold a meaning mind set or global belief that life has intrinsic meaning. Five of the items are scored in the reversed (i.e. items 3, 4, 6, 8 and 10) while the remaining five are scored directly. The higher the total score is, the greater the meaning mindset. The scale reflects a positive mindset with strong emphasis on moral excellence and altruism. The test is consistent with the lifestyle of individuals who choose to sacrifice personal success and happiness and give of themselves to a higher cause. It has a Cronbach alpha of 0.54 in this population.

**Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale** is ten-item scale that evaluates general self-esteem by referring to global feelings of self-evaluation. It is a 4-point likert response scale developed by Rosenberg (1965), ranging from Strongly agree (3) to Strongly disagree (0). Five of the items are scored in the reversed (items 2, 5, 6, 8 and 9) while others are scored directly (items 1, 3, 4, 7 and 10). The resultant scores are summed for each respondent; the higher a participants score, the higher the individual's self-esteem. The Cronbach alpha reported for RSES in Nigeria is .67, though the global value is at .83 (Olapegba, 2008).

**Results**

Statistical analysis using descriptive statistical tools was carried out to summarize the demographic data.

Table 4.1: Summary of Zero Order Correlation showing the interrelationships of Life Orientation, Self Esteem, Locus of Control and Self-Efficacy of Sighted and Visually Impaired Undergraduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>SEff</th>
<th>LOC</th>
<th>SEst</th>
<th>LOr</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>.231*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Control</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>-.511*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>.189*</td>
<td>.391*</td>
<td>-.460**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level
*Correlation is significant at the .05 level**

Table 4.1 shows the summary of zero order correlation of the interrelationship of Life Orientation, Self Esteem, Locus of Control and Self-Efficacy of Sighted and Visually Impaired Undergraduates. Result reveals that Self-Efficacy and Self-Esteem are significantly positively correlated with Life Orientation [(r=.189, p<.01) and (r=.231, p<.01)] respectively. This infers that as the perception of Self-Efficacy and Self Esteem improves in these undergraduates, their experience of having a proper Life Orientation also improves. It could then be subsumed that an attempt to better the life orientation of undergraduate students should give attention to enhancing their self-esteem and self-efficacy, among other things. However, Locus of Control was not significantly correlated with Life Orientation (r= -.017, p>.05). Hence, an undergraduate’s locus of control, either internal or external has no relationship with their experience of life orientation.

Four hypotheses were stated in line with the objectives of this study. The first hypothesis tested the joint and independent influence of self-esteem and self-efficacy on life orientation among visually impaired and sighted undergraduate students. This hypothesis was tested with a multiple regression analysis as presented in model 1 of table 4.2.
Table 4.2: Summary table of multiple regression analysis showing the moderation influence of Sight, Locus of Control and Age in the relationship between Self Esteem, Self-Efficacy and Life Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R²Δ</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>FΔ</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>PΔ</th>
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<td>Model 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>2.253</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>7.463</td>
<td>7.463</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficacy</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>1.331</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
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<td>Model 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>1.922</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>5.009</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficacy</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>1.339</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sight</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.456</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
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<td>Model 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>2.570</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>5.661</td>
<td>1.961</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficacy</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>2.127</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
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<td>LOC</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>1.401</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
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<td>Model 4</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esteem</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>2.427</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>4.403</td>
<td>1.934</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficacy</td>
<td>.195</td>
<td>1.255</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>1.391</td>
<td>&gt;.05</td>
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</table>

Results from model 1 of table 4.2 reveals that self-esteem and self-efficacy significantly jointly predicted the life orientation of undergraduates ($F_{(2,183)} = 7.463, p <.01, R^2 = .073$). This infers that 7.3% of the variation observable in the life orientation of undergraduates can be accounted for by their self-esteem and self-efficacy. Further results also revealed that self-esteem and self-efficacy significantly independently predicted life orientation of the undergraduates ([β = .106, p <.05], (β = .180, p <.05)) respectively. This also means that, besides having a complementary influence, an undergraduate’s self-esteem and self-efficacy can independently determine his/her life orientation.

The second hypothesis tested the moderating role of sight in the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, and life orientation among visually impaired and sighted individuals. This was tested with a moderated regression analysis (Aiken and West, 1991; Aguinis, 2004; Louis, 2009; Jose, 2013).

Model 2 in Table 4.2 is a test of moderation; Sight was introduced into the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation. It did not significantly moderate the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation among visually impaired and sighted individuals ($F_{Δ (3,182)} = .167, pΔ >.05, R^2Δ = .001$). This infers that being sighted or not does not have any significant influence on how self-esteem and self-efficacy determines the life-orientation of undergraduates. Hence, sighted and visually impaired undergraduates have their experience of life orientation influenced similarly by self-esteem and self-efficacy.

The third hypothesis tested the moderating role of locus of control in the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, and life orientation among visually impaired and sighted individuals. This was tested with a moderated regression analysis (Aiken and West, 1991; Aguinis, 2004; Louis, 2009; Jose, 2013).

Model 3 in Table 4.2 is a test of moderation; Locus of Control was introduced into the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation. It was shown from model 3 on table 4.2 that locus of control did not significantly moderate the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation among visually impaired and sighted individuals ($F_{Δ (3,182)} =$...
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1.961, \( p > .05, R^2 = .010 \). This infers that having an internal or external locus of control does not have any significant influence on how self-esteem and self-efficacy determines the life-orientation of undergraduates. Hence, undergraduates with internal locus of control and those with external locus of control have their experience of life orientation influenced in the same way by self-esteem and self-efficacy.

The fourth hypothesis tested the moderating role of age in the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, and life orientation among visually impaired and sighted individuals. This was tested with a moderated regression analysis (Aiken and West, 1991; Aguinis, 2004; Louis, 2009; Jose, 2013).

Model 4 in Table 4.2 is a test of moderation; age was introduced into the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation. It was shown from model 4 on table 4.2 that age did not significantly moderate the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation among visually impaired and sighted individuals (F(3,182) = 1.934, \( p > .05, R^2 = .010 \)). This infers that being young or old does not have any significant influence on how self-esteem and self-efficacy determines the life-orientation of undergraduates. Hence, young undergraduates have their experience of life orientation influenced by self-esteem and self-efficacy the same way as old undergraduates.

Discussion and Conclusion

The principal aim of this study was to examine the psychosocial factors that predicted life orientation among undergraduates of University of Ibadan and Federal College of Education (SPECIAL), Oyo. The study also investigated the moderating role of sight, locus of control and age in the relationship of psychosocial factors (self-esteem and self-efficacy) and life orientation. It was hypothesized that self-esteem and self-efficacy will significantly jointly and independently predict the life orientation of undergraduates, and that this prediction will be significantly moderated by sight, locus of control and age.

Consequently, self-esteem and self-efficacy were found to be significantly positively correlated and also predicts life orientation among undergraduates of University of Ibadan and Federal College of Education (SPECIAL), Oyo. This implies that an undergraduate level of self-efficacy and self-esteem has positive implications on the life orientation experiences. In other words, an undergraduate with high self-esteem and high self-efficacy should not have problems with deducing meaning from life and would be able to live a virtuous life of serving a higher purpose and making a significant difference in the society. On the other hand, undergraduates with low self-esteem and or low self-efficacy might have difficulties identifying the meaning and purpose of life, with tendencies to give up at striving for any utmost expectations that brings moral sense. These might tend to be less concerned about global issues of poverty and injustice and do not see any need for themselves to take any noteworthy steps towards standing out in the society. Whereas, such other undergraduates with high self-esteem and efficacy are more confident towards facing life challenges and making an excellent success of it, this they do maximizing their beliefs in themselves and in their abilities. To this end, it could be concluded that undergraduates would need to develop a good sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy in order to have proper life orientation.

However, the population of this study being a mix of sighted and visually impaired undergraduates, the moderating role of sight in the identified influence of self-esteem and self-efficacy on life orientation was tested, with results showing that sight did not significantly moderate the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation. This infers that being sighted or not does not have any significant influence on how the self-esteem and self-efficacy of undergraduates determine their life orientation. In other words, undergraduates who are visually impaired are not significantly different from the sighted undergraduates in the manner in which self-esteem and self-efficacy influence their life orientation. Studies on people with visual impairment have reported that visually impaired individuals exhibit lower levels of self-efficacy and self-esteem than their peers without visual impairment and that visual impairment has been found to be associated with reduced social and physical competence (Huurre & Aro, 1998; Gronmo & Augestad, 2000; Talbert-Kipasa, 2008).

Holding on to this, the result of this present study indicates that although visual impairment
has a significant influence on the self-esteem and self-efficacy of individuals, and self-esteem and self-efficacy significantly influence an individual’s life orientation, visual impairment does not significantly influence the path through which self-esteem and self-efficacy influence the life orientation of individuals. This finding could be further understood when attention is giving to the percentage variation accounted for by self-esteem and self-efficacy in the prediction of life orientation; only 7.3% of the variation observed in life orientation is accounted for, meaning that about 92.7% is accounted for by other factors not included in this study. Hence, that visual impairment affects self-esteem and self-efficacy, and the latter can determine an individual’s life orientation does not infer that visual impairment can moderate their relationship with life orientation.

Further, the moderating role of locus of control in the relationship of self-esteem and self-efficacy with life orientation was tested, and the results revealed that locus of control also did not significantly moderate the relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and life orientation. Put differently, having an internal or external locus of control does not significantly affect the path through which self-esteem and self-efficacy determines the life orientation of individuals. Individuals with external locus of control have low self-esteem and low self-efficacy, while those with internal locus of control have high self-esteem and high self-efficacy. Bearing this observed relationship in mind, this test of moderation infers that the direction of an individual locus of control does not significantly affect the way self-esteem and self-efficacy determines the life orientation of individuals.

Also, age of respondents was found not to have moderated the relationship of self-esteem and self-efficacy with life orientation. That is being young or old does not have a significantly influence on the path through which self-esteem and self-efficacy determines the life orientation of individuals.

Overall, the findings of this study have brought to fore that self-esteem and self-efficacy are very germane factors towards the development of a proper life orientation of undergraduate students, with a clear emphasis that the conditions surrounding the undergraduates; either sighted or not, young or old and having an internal or external locus of control do not interfere with the manner in which these two prominent self-concepts determine the life orientation of undergraduates.

References
Lifshitz, Hen and Weisse. 2007. “Self-Concept, adjustment to blindness and quality of friendship among adolescents with visual impairments,”
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