

INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND PERCEIVED PARENTAL SUPPORT ON LIFE
SATISFACTION OF STUDENTS IN NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY, MAFIKENG CAMPUS

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NEO MOUTLOATSE

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Dissertation (article format) submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree in
Masters of Social Science in Research Psychology at the North West University

(Mafikeng Campus)

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my supportive mother (Irene), grandmother (Phoebe), son (Waona)
and my two siblings (Tsholofelo and Puseletso)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dear God, I thank you for your grace and mercy that brought me through. I am living this moment because of your faithfulness in my life. You have been God, you are God and you will always be God in my life. I am overwhelmed by your profuse love.

- Ms P.S Kolobe I thank you for your patience, support and your expert guidance as my supervisor, as well as encouraging me throughout my study period. May God richly bless you.
- I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor E. S. Idemudia, for his advice and expert guidance as my second supervisor for his contribution to the completion of this research.
- Dr. O. Ojedokun, thank you for your assistance with data processing.
- I sincerely thank my mother for showering me with love, care and support. Had it not been for your prayers I could not have been a better woman I am today.
- To my grandmother, I thank you for your support and words of wisdom. I will forever remember to “be patient with life”.
- To my son Waona Moutloatse, you are the reason I smile today. Thank you for your support and understanding. My love for you is indescribable. You are such a blessing!
- Tsholofelo Mmadi and Puseletso Moutloatse, thank you for showering me with the support I always needed throughout my study period.
- To my friend Lerato Leshomo, thank you for availing yourself to me, you stuck by me in hardship and defeat, encouraging me to press on, spending sleepless nights together and sharing your space of comfort with me.
- To my Pastor, Mr T.J Chauke and his lovely wife, thank you for your prayers, support and the words of life that flow from your mouth not forgetting the kind of love you shower me with.
- To my Pastor, Dr. D.L and P. Molokoli, you will always be my inspiration and thank you for your love and encouragement.
- To Obakeng Phiri, Khumbudzo Leburu and Lesego Moerane-Lenyidi, thank you for your support.
- To all who assisted with data collection, I thank you.



SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to investigate the influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of students in NWU Mafikeng campus. The study was anchored on four (4) hypotheses: (1) to determine whether self-efficacy and perceived parental support predict life satisfaction of university students, (2) to compare life satisfaction between students who reside in urban and rural areas, (3) to examine the influence of employment status of the mother on life satisfaction of university students and (4) to examine the influence of socio economic status of the family on life satisfaction of university students. The study used a questionnaire with four sections 1, 2, 3 and 4. Section 1 contained demographic items, section 2 contained general self-efficacy scale that facilitated goal setting, effort investment, persistence in face of barriers and recovery from setbacks; section 3 contained child and adolescent social support scale comprised of the subscale measuring emotional, instrumental, appraisal and informational support from parents, and section 4 contained the satisfaction with life scale measuring global cognitive judgment of one's life satisfaction. Psychometric properties of all the scales used are reliable.

Three hundred (300) participants were randomly selected from five (5) Faculties (Human and Social Sciences, Agriculture Science and Technology, Law, Education and, Commerce and Administration) within the North West University, Mafikeng Campus. The researcher approached the students during lecture period where the sample was stratified by age, preferably 18-29 years. Both males and females stood equal chances to participate in the study. Participants (N=300) consisting of males (N=134) and females (N=166) who enrolled with the university for the first time were included while those who repeat modules were excluded. The age of participants ranged from 18-29 years, their mean age was 23.5. The first hypothesis was tested using a simple linear multiple regression statistical analysis, second hypothesis was tested using a t-test, third and fourth hypotheses were tested using one way ANOVA.

The results for hypothesis one revealed a significant joint influence of self-efficacy and social support on the life satisfaction of students $R^2 = .242$, $F(2,297) = 47.314$, $p < .001$). The result indicated that jointly, self-efficacy and perceived social support accounted for about 24% of the variance in life satisfaction of the students. Also, the results demonstrated that independently, self-

efficacy contributed significantly to life satisfaction of students ($\beta = .241$, $t = 4.635$, $p < .001$). Meaning that high score on self-efficacy is significantly related to high scores on life satisfaction. Similarly, perceived parental support contributed significantly to life satisfaction ($\beta .375$, $t = 7.223$, $p < .001$). This suggests that students who perceived more parental support from their significant others reported being more satisfied with their lives while those who perceived less parental support reported less life satisfaction. The results for hypothesis two showed no significant mean difference on life satisfaction between students who resided in urban and rural areas, $t(2, 298) = .167$; $p = n.s$).

The results for hypothesis three revealed a significant influence of employment status of mother on life satisfaction of the students ($F(4, 295) = 5.042$; $p < .001$). An observation of mean differences showed that students who have permanent employed mothers ($M = 23.965$, $SD = 6.339$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have temporarily employed mothers ($M = 19.711$, $SD = 6.766$), and those whose mothers were previously employed ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$). However, students who have permanent employed mothers ($M = 23.965$, $SD = 6.339$), students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$), and those who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. In addition, students who have temporarily employed mothers reported low levels of life satisfaction ($M = 19.711$, $SD = 6.766$) compared to students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$), and those who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$). Meanwhile, students who have temporarily employed mothers ($M = 19.711$, $SD = 6.766$) and those who have previously employed mothers ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$) reported the same levels of life satisfaction.

The results for hypothesis four revealed a significant effect of socio-economic status on life satisfaction of the students ($F(4, 295) = 4.961$; $p < .001$). An observation of the mean differences showed that students from the lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD = 7.402$) reported lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those from middle income families ($M = 24.041$, $SD = 5.089$), and those from upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$). However, students from lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD = 7.402$), lower middle income families ($M = 24.024$, $SD = 6.058$), and those from upper class ($M = 19.500$, $SD = 7.778$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. In addition, students from lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD =$

7.402) reported lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those in the middle income families ($M = 24.041$, $SD = 5.089$), and upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$). Meanwhile, students from lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD = 7.402$) those from upper class ($M = 19.500$, $SD = 7.778$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. Lastly, students in middle income families ($M = 24.041$, $SD = 5.089$) and those from upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. Finally, students from upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$) and those from upper class ($M = 19.500$, $SD = 7.778$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction.

Furthermore, students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have previously employed mothers ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$), while students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$) and those who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. Lastly, students who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have previously employed mothers ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$).

It was noted in conclusion that the study contributed to the body of knowledge by showing that self-efficacy and perceived parental support have a significant influence on life satisfaction of university students. It was also noted that there is a no significant difference on life satisfaction between students who reside in urban and rural areas. It was noted again that employment status of the mother and socio economic status have a significant effect on life satisfaction of university students.

PREFACE

Article format

For the purpose of this dissertation, as part of the requirements for a professional master's degree, the article format as described by General Regulation A.7.5.1.b of the North West University was chosen.

Selected Journal

The target journal for submission of the current manuscript is Journal of Social Sciences (JSS). For the purpose of examination, tables will be included in the text.

Letter of consent

The letter of consent from the co-authors, in which they grant permission that the manuscript, "Influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of students in North West University, Mafikeng campus", may be submitted for purpose of thesis, is attached.

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I, the undersigned, hereby give my consent that Neo Moutloatse may submit the manuscript entitled “INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND PERCEIVED PARENTAL SUPPORT ON LIFE SATISFACTION OF STUDENTS IN NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY, MAFIKENG CAMPUS” for the purpose of a thesis in fulfillment of the requirement for the Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology.

.....

Prof. E.S Idemudia

Supervisor

.....

Ms. P.S Kolobe

Co-Supervisor

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INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND PERCEIVED PARENTAL SUPPORT ON LIFE
SATISFACTION OF STUDENTS (NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY, MAFIKENG)

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Abstract

Objectives: (1) to determine whether self-efficacy and perceived parental support predict life satisfaction of university students, (2) to compare life satisfaction between students who reside in urban and rural areas, (3) to examine the effect of employment status of the mother on life satisfaction of university students and (4) to examine the effect of socio economic status of the family on life satisfaction of university students.



Method: Three hundred (N=300) participants, N=134 males and N=166 females, who were randomly selected from five (5) faculties within the North West University, Mafikeng Campus. Stratified random sampling was employed. A cross sectional survey design was adopted for the study and the statistical analyses employed included simple linear multiple regression, t-test for independent samples and One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Results: Results for hypothesis one suggested that self-efficacy and perceived parental support significantly influenced life satisfaction of university students. Further, self-efficacy and perceived parental support jointly accounted for about 24% of the variance in life satisfaction of students. Hypothesis two showed no significant mean difference on life satisfaction between students who resided in urban and rural areas. Hypothesis three and four showed a significant effect of employment of the mother and socioeconomic status on life satisfaction on students.

Recommendations: Programmes with support from social resources are needed to improve students' self-efficacy to reach their goals and be satisfied with life. Intervention for parents will play a pivotal role in the life satisfaction of their children.

Key words: self-efficacy, perceived parental support, university students, life satisfaction.

Introduction and problem statement

Life satisfaction is described as a general cognitive evaluation of a person's contentment with his or her entire life, or particular areas of life being the family, friends and the living environment (Civitci & Civitci, 2009). This cognitive assessment, however, is based on how people's current life is and how they believe it should be (Paschali & Tsitsas, 2010). In essence, higher life satisfaction is determined by higher levels of human being's Subjective Well-Being (SWB), and this is associated with positive emotions more than negative ones (Suldo & Huebner, 2006). SWB among the youth and adolescents is being expansively studied, with the aim of broadening the definition of positive mental health to comprise more than simply the absence of psychopathology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This increase in publication may be because there are unusual psychological characteristics that adolescents experience, and they are often coupled with the first year experience of tertiary education (Serin, Serin & Ozbas, 2010). Research show that after the students started their tertiary education and later found that their expectations about tertiary life or the departments they studying are not met, they usually feel unsatisfied (Tumkaya, Aybek & Celik, 2008). During tertiary education, some adaptation failures or other psychological troubles are quite common owing to the emotional and communal characteristics of this period (Tumkaya *et al.*, 2008).

Research show that adults with high life satisfaction are likely to possess healthy social relationships, active participation in politics, fewer physical complaints, and a longer life, while those with low life satisfaction may suffer from adjustment disorders, depression, isolation, aggressive behaviour, and become addicted to substances (Huebner, 2004). Research on children and adolescents yield comparative findings, with findings demonstrating associations between life satisfaction and a few variables, including physical well-being, self-perception, depression and social interactions, extraversion, internal focus of control, self-concept, active coping, pro-social

behaviours, the utilization of addictive substances and psychopathology (Huebner, 2004; Kaya & Siyez, 2008 in Baltaci, 2013). Moreover, research report has also shown that youths who have low life satisfaction are more inclined to violence (Valois, Paxton, Zullig & Huebner, 2006), destructive and risky behaviours (MacDonald, Piquero, Valois & Zullig, 2005), stealing and robbery (Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2001) and hence become potential threat to themselves as well as others in society (Oladipo, Olapegba & Adenaike, 2012).

It has been shown in the literature that life satisfaction is the most significant aspect within positive psychology (Gilman & Huebner, 2003). Although adult life satisfaction has been studied within a wide scope (Suldo & Huebner, 2004; Huebner, 2004), children and adolescents' life satisfaction has only received attention more recently (Proctor, Linley & Maltby, 2008; Antaramian, Huebner & Valois, 2008), and it is not known how much attention has been given to university students, especially first year students, in the North West Province.

Mokoena and Materechera (2012) found that the dropout rate of first year students in South Africa is a trend. This was seen as being generally ascribed to the underpreparedness for higher education. The Mafikeng Campus of the North West University appeared to have experienced the same challenge. Research shows that this problem is not just unique to South Africa, but it is a global problem (Rutschow & Schneider, 2011). In a study conducted with university students by Gündogar, Gul, Uskun, Demirci and Kececi (2007), it was found that if students are in a field that they are not genuinely engrossed by, it influences their life satisfaction adversely. In order for students to have good academic performance, they need adequate parental support. However, the support should not be excessively offered for the students. Some studies give an idea about the level of anxiety that students experience during first years of university (Serin, Serin & Ozbas, 2010). Anxiety may lead to the use of substances among students, antisocial behaviour, a decline

in ability, an increase in absconding from school, engaging in wrong relationships and a decrease in motivation and success (Cai, 2000). A range of risky behaviours (e.g., substance use, hostile and brutal behaviour, sexual activities), mental disorders symptoms (anxiety, low self-efficacy, loneliness, depression) and physical well-being (e.g., eating behaviour, work out) are other effects of low life satisfaction, that universal life satisfaction intervenes leading to stressful life situations (Cakar, 2012).

The studies related to life satisfaction mostly deal with university and high school students (Chow, 2005; Civitci, Civitci & Fiyakali 2009; Gundogar, Gul, Uskun, Demirci & Kececi, 2007; Tumkaya *et al.*, 2008) and are not being precise. Discovering the aspects that influence life satisfaction at early ages helps to deal with the desired improvement to enhance future life satisfaction, and to plan the preventive activities. In studies on children and adolescents, the association between life satisfaction and family support (Bradley & Corwyn, 2004; Nansook, 2005; Petito & Cummins, 2000), self-efficacy, extraversion (Fogle, Huebner & Laughlin, 2002), parental and friend relationships (Levin & Currie, 2010; Nickerson & Nagle, 2004), age or education level (Dew & Huebner, 1994; Huebner, 1991; Huebner, Drane & Valois, 2000), gender (Dew & Huebner, 1994; Huebner, 1991; Huebner & Alderman, 1993; Huebner, Drane & Valois, 2000; Verkuyton, 1996), academic success (Salmela-Aro & Tynkkynen, 2009) are investigated (Baltaci, 2013). However, adjustment to life in college can be challenging for many students, thus perceptions of parental support and having self-efficacy belief is imperative to levels of satisfaction with life.

Mafikeng Campus is one of the three campuses of North-West University, also categorized as previously/historically disadvantaged. It is located in a rural area and draws students from mainly rural and urban environments as well as international students from 22 different countries (Mokoena & Matechera, 2012). Because of its location, the campus is also affected by the problem

of underprepared students. Results from the study conducted by Mokoena and Matechera (2012) indicate that many students entering Mafikeng Campus are underprepared for their academic journey. As a result, students drop out at first year or they exceed the duration of the degree they study. To understand this, the present study is formulated.

Parental support is defined as a parent or guardian's emotional, informational, and practical support of a child's academic or career endeavours (Malecki & Demaray, 2003). Research consistently shows that there is more than one source that youth obtain social support from (e.g., parent/family, peers/classmates, and teachers), and each source has its specific social support with beneficial outcomes (Malecki & Demaray, 2003). To date, the literature has supported the existence of four main types of social support: emotional, instrumental/tangible, informational, and personal feedback/appraisal (e.g., Tardy, 1988; Tetzloff & Barrera, 1987; Wills, Blechman & McNamara, 1996; in White, 2009). According to Jacobs (2011), emotional support is described as supplying a student with the required comfort or encouragement that they need. By providing this form of support student will perceive it as being cared for (Tardy, 1985; Wentz-Gross & Siperstein, 1997). Informational support refers to assisting students to solve their academic and social problems in their life whereas instrumental support is described as providing another individual with tangible resources (e.g money, materials, or clothing) (Tardy, 1985).

According to Cohen (2004), social support is needed by individuals who are affected by social or psychological problems for them to overcome their challenges. Hence, social support and social relations are essential to the individual's life. They can solve their problems without difficulty and feel accompanied when they perceive support from significant others. Whereas, social support is not ruled out by age, university students also need support to face difficulties caused by separation

from the family, different cultures and different environment. Thus an individual can handle problems that are common to students (Öz, 2004) (as cited in Akhunlar, 2010).

Apart from parental support, life satisfaction is guaranteed if students believe in their own potential to carry out their given tasks (Mustafa, Nasir & Yusoof, 2010). Tenaw (2013) posited that if students are efficacious, then they will attempt their academic requirements. If they perceive the task to be too difficult they will avoid it (Bandura, 1986 & 1997). The fundamental source in completing any task becomes an individual's belief in oneself or self-efficacy (Mustafa *et al.*, 2010). Self-efficacy is a belief that an individual possesses about his potential to perform a planned task to achieve a set goal in life. However, people's belief in self-efficacy, determines whether they will make any attempt to deal with a given task in order to achieve a set goal. Self-efficacy influences motivation, persistence and the resilience required for one to face the given tasks and to deal with failures and problems in life. Self-efficacy would also influence decision making on whether to attempt a given task or not depending on the situation. In other words people would tend to choose situations in which they believe they will achieve success to avoid mental ill health (Bandura, 1997).

The self-efficacy belief which influences people's emotions, thoughts and behaviour (Bandura, 1997) determines the choice about activities, the effort required to clearly understand these activities and how resilient they will be when they encounter problems (Bandura, 1977) (as cited in Capri, Ozkendir, Ozkurt & Karakus, 2012). Students' self-efficacy is improved by achievements but is eroded by failures (Margolis & McCabe, 2006). This is the robust source of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy can be strengthened by witnessing a peer's success. Effective communication and feedback on student's effort can also strengthen self-efficacy through guidance and motivation from lecturers. Optimism can enhance one's belief about their capabilities, whereas anxiety can

weaken the belief. Appropriate emotional stimulation may lead to an inspiration that can influence strong performances. Exams and presentations are anxiety triggering events, however much can be done by lecturers to alleviate stress related to such events (Margolis & McCabe, 2006).

Aim of the study



This study aimed to investigate the influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of university students. The four constructs of self-efficacy include mastery experience, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasions and physiological feedback while perceived parental support is measured as emotional, tangible, informational and appraisal support.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are identified as follows:

- To determine the joint self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of university students;
- To investigate the independent influence of self-efficacy on life satisfaction of university students;
- To investigate the independent influence of perceived parental support on life satisfaction of university students;
- To explore the difference on life satisfaction between students who reside in urban and rural areas;
- To examine the influence of employment status of the mother on life satisfaction of university students; and
- To examine the influence of socio economic status of the family on life satisfaction of university students.

Significance of the study

This study intends to come up with informed solutions that will assist policy makers and higher institution stakeholders in policy formulation of perceived parental support among students. The conclusions made from this study will also assist in better understanding of self-efficacy and perceived parental support factors that affect life satisfaction especially of university students in the North West University, Mafikeng campus. It was therefore the intention of the researcher to come up with informed findings and conclusions that would guide all relevant players within the institutions of higher education, society, community and curriculum planners. Moreover, the current study provides findings on the influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental on life satisfaction to stakeholders and to inform existing policy makers and higher institution stakeholders, and re-persuade existing ones to desirable quality standards that are inclusive of the individual and familial dynamics of students, hence provision of parents with insight on how to assist their children. There parents will obtain information from this research: families of university students will be able to understand the pivotal role they play towards students' life satisfaction. Furthermore, the current study will assist scholars to embark on further research on the phenomenon using other methodologies which the current study did not use such as qualitative and triangulation.

Based on the literature reviewed, there has not been much research conducted on the influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of university students. It was also evident that inadequate information, practices or results have been disseminated to the public on the proposed topic, where the literature shows that many studies address young adult life satisfaction and job self-efficacy, general self-efficacy but no emphasis on the influence of self-

efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of university students. It was of importance to build on the existing findings and information.

Self efficacy

According to literature from previous studies, social cognitive theory perceives human performance in a transactional approach, contingent upon proportional relations between an individual's behaviour, their inherent components such as thoughts and beliefs, and environmental events. In other words, behaviour is determined by the interaction of the person, the situation and the behaviour that takes place in this situation (Bandura, 1986, 1997). According to Bandura (1995) self-efficacy beliefs are comprised of four main sources. These are direct experiences and indirect experiences provided by social models, verbal persuasion and the individuals' physical and emotional situations. Direct experiences are most effective for self-efficacy beliefs gained as they are gained through personal sense and perception (Bandura, 1995). An individual's belief in self-efficacy can be determined by his or her own experiences, and as much as the belief is strengthened by previous success it can also be eroded by failures. Efficacy beliefs related with past experiences' and consequences determine the future success or failure and subsequently influence academic motivation (Bandura, 1995). For example, Bandura remarks that when students are confident in performing little academic tasks, they are more likely to manage the tasks at the next more complex academic level; this signifying an increased self-efficacy. Thus, self-efficacy beliefs can considerably influence the change in academic planning behaviour. Augmenting students' self-efficacy would assist in reaching the set goals of education system (Bandura, 1995). This study, however, investigated how self-efficacy and perceived parental support influence life satisfaction of university students. The literature has also found that

perceived parental support and self-efficacy are more important than material resources concerning their relationship with life satisfaction (Bandura, 1997; Diener & Fujita, 1995; Hobfoll, 2002).

According to Vitaro, Larocque, Janosz and Tremblay (2001) personal (that is behavioural, academic, intellectual, and self-efficacy) and familial factors determine predictive variables of poor academic outcome. Suldo and Huebner (2006) believe that self-efficacy gives an important improvement concerning both enhancement of life satisfaction as well as psychological and social development. A negative relationship between self-efficacy and social stress, anxiety, depression and violence was observed (Gilman & Huebner, 2006; Valois *et al.*, 2006). The current study investigated the effect of self-efficacy as one of the factors that influence student's life satisfaction. At this point, self-efficacy perceptions influence the thinking pattern of people and their intrinsic responses, and determine people's enthusiasm and performance (Bandura, 1994).

Perceived parental support

Family role as well as particular relations between the child and parents has been identified as powerful indicators of development (Dietzman, 2002). Joronen and Astedt-Kurki (2005) projected that the family may influence students' subjective well-being through secure attachment, interactions, or joint activities. In agreement with this viewpoint, Danielsen, Samdal, Hetland and Wold (2009) stated that parents are the primary sources of social support for their children's needs and their support contributes to their children's academic outcomes. Consistent family interactions such as discussions, affection, encouragement and intellectual stimulation (Dietzman, 2002) provide home background for the children's outcomes (Danielsen *et al.*, 2009).

As indicated by the socio-cognitive models of Bandura and of Harter, children's confidence of aptitude develop as they mature and give meaning to the consequences of their behaviour in their

environment; however their parents as social mediators contribute to their life (Bandura, 1989, 1995; Bandura *et al.*, 1996; Harter, 1978, 1996). Therefore, it was hypothesized that children interpret verbal feedback from parents according to their academic achievements (Galand & Vanlede, 2004). In this regard, subsequent to controlling for the influence of the academic achievement, McGrath and Repetti (2000) observed a positive relationship between students' insight of their own aptitude and their parents' satisfaction with their performance and success at school. These findings demonstrate that students depend not only on their accomplishment to appraise their capability, but also on parents' feedback which has an impact on the development of their perception of their academic capability (Cote & Bouffard, 2011).

Plunkett and Bamaca-Gomez (2003) found that perceived parental support and encouragement can help and protect students from educational risks, develop high-self esteem and motivate students to succeed academically. Mustafa *et al.* (2010) seem to support the view that parental support is essential for educational and career development. They further stated that such support would give emotional strength to the students and would prevent them from depression throughout their studies.

Many students are usually encouraged by their parents to pursue an academic degree (Mustafa *et al.*, 2010). According to the study conducted on Mexican-American students' academics, Schumann (2010) concluded that parents who are less educated have limited ability to help their children meet their academic demands because they are unfamiliar with how the education system operates. In other words, parental support towards the students is determined by parents' educational level. Plunkett and Bamaca-Gomez (2003) also maintain that students are more likely

to succeed academically if they see their parents as the source of support during their academic endeavour rather than if they believe that their parents cannot help them academically.

Parent-child relationship is closely related to students' life satisfaction. Baumrind (1991), in her naturalistic investigation of interactions between parents and young children, portrayed critical measurements of parenting. These were warmth (rather than disagreement or disregard) and control methods. Parenting typologies were, therefore, developed from a cross of warmth, disagreement and control: 'authoritative' (high warmth, positive/self-assured control and in adolescence elevated prospect), 'authoritarian' (low warmth, high clash and coercive, punitive control attempts), 'permissive' (high warmth coupled with low control endeavors) and 'neglectful/disengaged' (low warmth and low control). These four typologies have been more than once related with a child's pleasant and unpleasant results. Each measurement influences parenting styles and the child development outcomes in exclusive ways.

Children and adolescents of authoritative parents are reliably portrayed as most pro-social, academically and socially competent, and least symptomatic (O'Connor & Scott, 2006). Grolnick, Ryan and Deci (1991) recommended that parents therefore help the "inner resources of achievement" of their children. According to their model, parents who are high in autonomy support (in other words, low on control/overprotectiveness) would permit their children to create a feeling of being instigators of their own practices and action (therefore promoting more perceived autonomy, more prominent sense of capability and more prominent control considerate).

Furthermore, children of profoundly involved parents (accordingly parenting high on care/concern) would feel more capable, demonstrate more significant control and understanding and increased independent motivational orientations than those of less involved parents (Sonnak

& Towell, 2001). It is hypothesized that students with higher parental support are more likely to be satisfied with their university life than students with less or lack parental support. In concurrence with this statement according to Harter's perspective, the availability of support from parents causes children to inspect themselves and weigh particular principles that are used the criteria to evaluate themselves. According to Harter (1992), instead of providing children with instrumental and conditional support, parents can provide their children with a general positive support which is a compilation of enthusiastic and absolute support. Instrumental and conditional support give the impression for one to inspect an inflexibility in principles and lesser parental responsiveness to satisfy their children as well as their needs, consequently reinforcing children to feel approved on condition they abide by the rules and conduct themselves well and for what they bring into being rather than for themselves as individuals. In other words, children's competency does not only depend on them for success, parents' approval and encouragement plays a pivotal role in children's development. On the contrary, enthusiastic and absolute support gives you an idea to children that they are appreciated for who they are, and that this adoration is not incapacitated by their failure to please their parents (Cote & Bouffard, 2011).



Life satisfaction

The construct of life satisfaction and its associates have much research consideration in last decades (Eid & Larsen, 2008). Existing literature has documented that high life satisfaction is related to fewer psychological issues as well as positive qualities and results (Diener, 1994; Diener, Suh & Oishi, 1997). Life satisfaction is the cognitive fragment of subjective well-being, which reflects a person's general assessment about his or her personal satisfaction with life (Diener &

Fujita, 1995). Distinct from the enthusiastic fragments is subjective well-being (satisfying and unsatisfying emotional encounter) that can be predisposed by momentary mood; life satisfaction is a continuous evaluation and therefore is generally utilized as the indicator of one's subjective well-being (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999).

It has been shown that the determinants of happiness are more likely to be positive, close relationships, whereas the material conditions of life are more likely to affect life satisfaction (Haller & Hadler, 2006). Satisfaction with diverse parts of life entails relationship with parents, close friends, siblings, living environment and living arrangements; (educational familiarity, self-efficacy, self-esteem, relationships with noteworthy people, and living conditions, expressed in particular higher level of satisfaction with life socioeconomic status (Chow, 2005). Then again, according to Palmer, Donaldson and Stough (2002), people need to encourage themselves, lead their lives regardless of hardship, abstain from negative thoughts and destructive things, and become optimistic keeping in mind the end goal to have a high life satisfaction. Abolghaseni and Varaniyab (2010) advocate a positive relationship between life satisfaction and self-esteem, positive parent-child and interpersonal relations, and academic ability and adjustments which are found to be key indicators of adaptive functioning including.

It appears from the literature that in general, life satisfaction is inclusive of one's whole life period, and the different dimensions of life. Thus, life satisfaction implies not only a specific fulfilment unique for a situation, but also a whole fulfilment covering the whole life (Vara, 1999). It also refers to the individuals' evaluation of their present life or that of previous times (Myers, 2000). However, Schmitter (2003) advocated that life satisfaction can be influenced and affected by factors like being content in life, discern life is worth living, determination towards goal

attainment, positive individual uniqueness, physical health, financial security and social relationships (Capri *et al.*, 2012).

Theoretical background

While self-efficacy is hypothesized as a contributing factor to students' life satisfaction, Albert Bandura's (1977) theory that was initially called social learning theory and later named social cognitive theory in 1986, describes self-efficacy as a principal aspect in observational learning which characterizes people's belief that their performance influences their desired outcome (Passer & Smith, 2007).

According to Bandura (1995), self-efficacy refers to one's beliefs in his/her own capabilities to organize and execute the behaviours required to manage prospective situations. Snyder and Lopez (2007) believe that self-efficacy is a belief imparted in an individual that he or she has a potential of reaching set goals in certain situations. Self-efficacy has been thought to a specific description of self-esteem (Lunenburg, 2011). The fundamental rule underlying self-efficacy theory is people with high self-efficacy are more likely to be strongly motivated to engage in activities than the ones who mistrust their own capabilities (Van der Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett, 2002). People's initial beliefs predict their behaviour for that reason, self-efficacy has the same capacity as a self-fulfilling prophecy (Gecas, 2004).

According to Van Dinther, Dochy and Segers (2010), and in correspondence with social cognitive theory, there is a list of four main sources of information that make students self-efficacious: Enactive mastery experiences, vicarious (observational) experiences, social persuasions and physiological and psychological states. Enactive mastery experiences are genuine achievements in attempting to take control of a particular situation (Bandura, 1997). Mastery experiences are

significantly influential to all the other sources of augmenting efficacy of students because they enable students to reflect back and perceive their previous successes as credible proof that they possess capabilities to be successful at their given tasks (Palmer, 2006). These occur when students have attempted to do a task and are successful. Students who have experience studying prior to starting the next level of studies are expected to be more confident in their academic abilities, even more so in completing academic tasks they did frequently. Students develop a sense of self-efficacy by interpreting and using the outcomes of their own previous successful performances. Usually, successes create a strong sense of self-efficacy and failures lower it, particularly an enthusiastic sense of self-efficacy is enhanced after prior failures (Bandura, 1997). In this regard, easy success does not predispose a vigorous sense of self-efficacy; it compels knowledge in triumph over obstacles and complex circumstances through maintained endeavour and determination (Bandura, 1997).

In other words, the individual's ability to learn from the experience of others broadens their capabilities enormously. Students acquire information about their own competences by witnessing peers whom they can easily and appropriately compare with (Schunk, 1987). Probably the most notable consequences of increase of self-efficacy by observing others can easily be emasculated by following failures (Schunk, 1989). Though this vicarious source of information has a weaker effect than does performance-based information, people with little mastery experience or those who are uncertain about their capacities, are more sensitive to it (Bandura, 1997). Students frequently get information that confirms and convinces them that they find themselves able to perform a task (Schunk, 1989). It is less demanding to generate and endure a sense of efficacy, particularly under complicated situations; than if significant others express their confidence in the individual's potential instead of expressing uncertainties (Bandura, 1997). In other words, students

watching other students like themselves successfully accomplish their academic performances would like to attempt an increase in self-efficacy. On the other hand, if the observed students fail, that threatens self-efficacy of the one observing. “If they can do it so I can”, is the attitude associated with vicarious experiences.

The third source that helps in developing students’ belief of self-efficacy is social persuasion. Positive persuasory feedback increases self-efficacy, however verbal persuasion single-handedly is inadequate in its influence to create a strong and enduring sense of self-efficacy (Schunk, 1991). People are persuaded if they can effectively achieve a task or behaviour through the use of proposal, advice, or self-instruction. But, because verbal persuasion is not grounded in individual experience, it has weak influence on efficacy and it is likely to be eroded by previous failures (Bandura, 1977). When people who provide persuasive communication and evaluative feedback are perceived by students as educated and trustworthy and the information is rational they are more likely to influence the efficacy of the students (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003).

The fourth source of efficacy information is that which people draw from their physiological, emotional and mood states. Psychological factors such as anxiety, stress reactions, tension and pleasure can be perceived as indicators of failure and feebleness. A positive mood state reinforces the individual’s self-efficacy; a depressed mood state enfeebles it. Individuals depend partially on these states in evaluating their abilities by seeing and interpreting this information (Pajares, 1997). As people possess the ability to adjust their own thoughts and feelings, students with a high sense of self-efficacy can perceive a state of tension as motivating in the face of a performance; while the individuals who have less self-confidence perceive their difficulties as limitation. Self- efficacy information that emerges from these four sources does not impact reasonability towards self-efficacy directly, for it is assessed cognitively (Bandura, 1977, 1986). In the course of this

cognitive efficacy assessment individuals weigh and consolidate the effects of individual and circumstantial aspect, for instance the complexity of task, how much they try, the support acquired, the results of the task, their failures and accomplishments, apparent comparability to models (Schunk, 1989, 1991).

The use of this theory offers structure and organization of knowledge, and provides guidance as to how self-efficacy is essential for students to be satisfied with life. In relation to this study, when students believe in their capacity to perform academic tasks, they will be able to have control over the school environment and the events thereof. It was observed that self-efficacy influences the way one thinks and it determines individuals' motivations and behaviour (Bandura, 1994), thus the social cognitive theory was perceived as relevant and important to guide the current study.

Attachment theory is another useful theory in explaining parental support and parental structure, as it outlines different roles played by parents in a child's life. Scharf, Mayseless and Kivenson-Baron (2004) believe that attachment theory explains the mechanisms of long-standing relationships particularly contained by families and among life-long friends. In agreement with this viewpoint, the most important principle of this theory is that a child needs to develop a relationship with no less than one essential parental figure for normal social and emotional development to occur, and that further relationships expand on the examples developed in the primary relationships (Bowlby, 1988). Theories of early childhood development also stress the importance of a high-quality relationship with parents for the acquisition of needed life skills. It is hypothesized that a secure relationship with parents throughout childhood contributes to the development of positive schemata regarding oneself (that is high self-worth and self-efficacy) and what can be expected in relationships with others (that is a belief that others are trustworthy and available), (Bowlby, 1973; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Reis & Shaver, 1987). According to Bowlby

(1979, 1982), a child's attachment relationship with a parent has an enduring impact on his/her adjustment, particularly, through the improvement of internal working models which are equally structured representational models of self as well as other people. In this way, a model of self emerges which incorporates positive or negative feelings of self-esteem and self-acceptance and a model of others structured on the basis of trust or distrust in the accessibility and responsiveness of the relative figure. Children can easily predict the parent's reactions in different situations through the permission of these models. Cassidy (1999) posited that parents have an impact on children's perceptions and emotions and influence their conduct. Availability and responsiveness of parents towards children's emotional needs assist the child to acquire secure base from which they will explore the world and develop capabilities. Despite the fact that, as children grow older, they request their parent's availability to a lesser degree and depend less on this individual's presence in difficult situations, the significance of the attachment figure's accessibility in their eyes does not lessen (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). Consequently, perceived parental support is a proximal measure of a child's internal working model and his or her attachment to parents (Rubin, Dwyer, Booth-LaForce, Kim, Burgess & Rose-Krasnor, 2004).



Thus, both this theory and the socio-cognitive perspective to which Bandura's studies and Harter's studies are related suggest that examining parent-child relationships is a promising course of action to better understand how students develop self-efficacy. The accessibility as well as authenticity of emotional support from parents represents an important indicator of this relationship. As a result, it can be assumed that fewer children feel they can depend on parental support but the more they accept that the accessibility of this support is liable to their ability to live up to their parents' desires and guidelines, the more there is a probability of developing self-efficacy (Cote & Bouffard, 2011). Ma and Huebner (2008) maintain that young people who have secure attachment

to their parents confirm higher life satisfaction (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Nickerson & Nagle, 2004); self-efficacy (Arbona & Power, 2003; Thompson, 1999); and lower psychological distress (Bradford & Lyddon, 1994). According to the attachment theory, early child-parent relationships position the establishment for children's later social, emotional, and school functioning (Appleyard & Berlin, 2007). The attribute of attachment theory is particularly useful for understanding the child-parent relationships and how to support them.

Life satisfaction is a great importance for carrying out communication with a person's environment healthily and providing necessary motivation in life. From the external world to receive a person's satisfaction one should be able to interact with the environment (Akhunlar, 2010). Ego identity is explained to be one of key components of Erikson's psychosocial stage theory in development (Erikson, 1968). Ego identity is described as the conscious individuals' image of themselves that develops through social relations. Erikson posited that new experiences gradually change our ego identity and the feedbacks we obtain in our daily relations with others also influence our ego identity. Furthermore ego identity, Erikson believes that the feeling of coherence additionally encourages behaviours and actions. At each stage in Erikson's theory a certain aspect of personality emerging is characterized as a means of becoming competent in an area of life (Erikson, 1963).

Erikson, in his investigation of adolescents' search for self, believes that development of people's self-image provides a solid foundation for adulthood (Erikson, 1968). Identity development may not be completely fulfilled by the time adolescents graduate from high school, but may continue and advance through the first years of university (Acher, 1982). While students choose their college majors, those who are at this time struggling with identity formation may depend on their interests in light investments conveyed forward from high school. Subsequently, those students

might not have the chance to examine their capabilities, weak points and the career opportunities accessible to them (Marcia, 1987; Marcia, 1980; Schiedel & Marcia, 1985). Such an absence of chance to explore may not only be the basis for dispossessing one's career choice prior to their educational process, but being ungrateful of one's decision. Exploration of either self or career decisions takes into account improvement of the values of life and self-concept (Erikson, 1980; Marcia, 1987). Self concept, the combination of thoughts, emotions and mentality that the individuals have about themselves (Hilgard, Atkinson & Atkinson, 1979) may amplify as one's bank of self knowledge increases, accordingly, holding an individual liable and responsible for his/her life (Kimweli & Richards, 2011).

Developmental theories best explain the links of age and life satisfaction. Developmental theorists (Perry, 1970; Levinson, 1978; Erikson, 1968; Freud, 1947) outline life tasks such as engaging in intimate relationships, developing a sense of autonomy, establishing a solid identity, and advancing cognitive processing skills. Having established their identity in their adolescence stage, they are able to enter into intimate relationships with others and they are eager and ready to strengthen their personality identity (Ryckman, 2004). The search for identity is a key task of adolescence. With age, adolescents who have not yet experienced an identity crisis become more likely to do so, and most resolve it successfully. Relationships become more important since many adolescents are able to maintain their peer' and parents' relationships. This, according to Passer and Smith (2007) influences their satisfaction with life. Psychosocial development theory was employed to understand life satisfaction better.

Hypotheses

1. Self-efficacy and perceived parental support will significantly independently and jointly predict life satisfaction
2. There will be a significant difference in life satisfaction between students who reside in urban and rural areas
3. There will be a significant influence of employment status of the mother on life satisfaction of university students
4. There will be a significant influence of socio economic status of the family on life satisfaction of university students.

Methodology

North West University (Mafikeng campus) enrollment of students for the academic year 2014 according to gender consists of males (4105, 41%) and females (6009, 59%). According to their race it consists of Asians (49, 0%), Blacks (9859, 97%), Coloured (87, 1%), Whites (118, 2%) and others (1, 0%). The number of students enrolled per qualification group were undergraduates (8837, 87 %) and postgraduate (1262, 12%) and 15 (0%) occasional students. The newly merged North-West University symbolises a new era in tertiary education (www.nwu.c.za).

Design

This study is a cross-sectional survey design within a quantitative research approach. The independent variables are self-efficacy and perceived parental support. The dependent variable is life satisfaction.

Sample and characteristics:

A total number of 300 students participated in this study. The sample was drawn from the population of first year students registered at NWU (Mafikeng Campus) to enhance the generalization of study results on particular first year population. Participants were randomly selected in classes from five (5) faculties (Human and Social Sciences, Agriculture, Science and Technology, Law, Education and, Commerce and Administration) within the North West University, Mafikeng Campus. The researcher approached the students during lecture period where the sample was stratified by age, preferably 18-26. Both males and females stood equal chances to participate in the study. Participants who enrolled with the university for the first time were included while those who repeated modules were excluded. The age of all participants ranged from 18-29. The respondents comprised males 134 (44.7%) and females 166 (55.3%).

Characteristics of participants (n=300)	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	134	44.7
Female	166	55.3
Age		
18-21	235	78.3
22-25	57	19
26 and above	8	2.7
Race		
Asian	9	3.0
Black	275	91.7
White	5	1.7
Other	11	3.7
Language		

Afrikaans	14	4.7
English	6	2.0
Ndebele	11	3.7
Pedi	6	2.0
Sotho	16	5.3
Swati	5	1.7
Tsonga	10	3.3
Tswana	206	68.7
Venda	5	1.7
Xhosa	4	4.7
Zulu	17	2.3

Marital status

Single	289	96.3
Married	4	1.3
Divorced	5	1.7
Widowed	2	0.7

Place of origin

Urban	123	41.0
Rural	177	59.0

Family background

Nuclear family	135	45.0
Single parent	113	37.7
Cohabiting family	8	2.7
Extended family	40	13.3
Step family	2	0.7

Adoptive family	2	0.7
Parental support		
Mother	136	45.3
Father	17	5.7
Both	147	49.0
Parent's level of education		
Primary education	78	26
Apprenticeship	17	5.7
General Certificate of Education (high school)	93	31.0
University or college degree	101	33.7
Others	11	3.7
Marital status of parents		
Single	98	32.7
Married	132	44.0
Separated	15	5.0
Divorced	20	6.7
Widowed	35	11.7
Employment status of the mother		
Permanent	113	37.7
Temporary	38	12.7
Self-employed	26	8.7
Unemployed	110	36.7
Previous occupation if unemployed	13	4.3

Employment status of the father

Permanent	88	29.3
Temporary	20	6.7
Self-employed	26	8.7
Unemployed	54	18.0
Previous occupation if unemployed	112	37.3

Socioeconomic status (SES)

Lower	44	14.7
Lower-middle	84	28.0
Middle	146	48.7
Upper-middle	24	8.0
Upper class	2	0.7

Faculty

HSS	63	20.7
FAST	62	20.0
LAW	60	20.0
EDUCATION	60	18.3
COMMERCE	55	21.0

Instrument and psychometric properties

The data was collected by using a self report questionnaire that consisted of socio-demographic information, General Self Efficacy Scale (GSES) (Jerusalem & Schwarzer, 1992), Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS) (Malecki, Demaray & Elliot, 2000) and Satisfaction

with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). The description of each scale follows next.

Socio-Demographic Information

The socio-demographic information collected includes gender, age, race, language, marital status, place of origin, faculty, and parents' marital status.

General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES)

The scale was developed to measure a general sense of perceived self-efficacy aspiring to predict managing daily hassles as well as adjustment subsequent to encountering all kinds of stressful life situations. General adult population, including adolescents may use this scale as it is designed for them.

This scale is usually self-administered. The GSES consists of 10 items, with a scoring format from 1-4, where 1 represents not at all true, 2 represents hardly true, 3 represents moderately true and 4 represents exactly true. Participants respond on a 4-point scale. The responses are added to all 10 items to grant the total score ranging from 10 to 40. Higher scores indicate stronger belief in self-efficacy. In samples from 23 nations, Cronbach's alphas ranged from .76 to .90, with the majority in the high .80s. Studies have shown that the general self-efficacy has high reliability and construct validity (Capri, Ozkendir, Ozkurt & Karakuz, 2012; Leganger, Kraft, Roysamb, 2000). In the present study an internal validity of 0.72 was elicited.

Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS)

The CASSS (Malecki, Demaray, & Elliot, 2000) is a 60 item rating scale measuring four types of student's perceived social support including emotional, instrumental, appraisal, and informational

from five major sources including parents, teachers, classmates, close friends, and school. All of the five source subscales consist of 12 items. Participants respond by rating the frequency of how they perceive every type of support is performed by a certain source (e.g., “My parent(s) show they are proud of me,” “My teacher(s) care about me”, and “My classmates treat me nicely”). Ratings are listed in a Likert format and range from 1 (never), 2 (Almost Never), 3 (Some of the Time), 4 (Most of the Time), 5 (Almost Always) and 6 (Always). Subscale frequency scores on the CASSS are calculated by summing the frequency ratings on the 12 items on each subscale. Higher scores are indicative of higher perceptions of support from a specific source. In the current study, only the Parent(s) subscale was used. The reason for omitting the teacher and close friend subscales was because the study focuses specifically on perceived parental support.

Previous studies with middle school students support for the reliability and validity of the CASSS (2000) as summarized by Malecki and Demaray (2006). This scale was adapted to the current study by the researcher with reference to the psychosocial development theory, which argued that young adult college students’ development stage (18 – 24 years) is intertwined with the stage of adolescence (Mahmoud, 2011). Moreover, the tertiary education phase, equivalent to ages 18-25, in which prominent and speedy psychological and social developments are observed, when physiological development is accomplished, that concerns a variety of developmental tasks and communicate the transition to adulthood (Renk & Creasey, 2003; Dyson & Renk, 2006). The CASSS (2000) Parent, Teacher, and Classmate subscales were significantly correlated with parent, teacher, and classmate frequency scores from the Social Support Scale for Children (SSSC; Harter, 1985; $r = .56, .48, \text{ and } .36$, respectively), which indicates moderate to high construct validity (Malecki & Demaray, 2003). Regarding reliability, evidence was found for high 8 to 10 week test–retest reliability ($r = .78$). High internal consistency of the subscales of interest (i.e., Parent,

Teacher, and Classmate) is supported by alpha coefficients ranging from .92 to .93 (Malecki & Demaray, 2006). Internal validity of 0.91 was found in the present study. Additional research regarding the CASSS (2000) type (of support) items help to provide some evidence that the items on the CASSS reflect the various types of support (e.g., emotional, instrumental) that were intended (Malecki & Demaray, 2003).

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

SWLS is a 5-item scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larson, and Griffin (1985) in order to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction. The internal consistency of the SWLS was reported to be .87 and the test-retest correlation is .82 (Diener, 1984). In the present study the internal validity of 0.74 was elicited. Participants responded by indicating how much they agree or disagree with each of the 5 items using a 7-point scale that ranges from 1 strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree. This scale has been used by many researchers (Capri *et al.*, 2012; Abolghasemi & Varaniyab, 2010).



Procedure

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the North West University ethics committee. Informed written consent was obtained from the school director and participants individually. The students were informed that their participation is voluntary and responses will be anonymous. With permission from the university, a total of 300 questionnaires with a covering letter were distributed among respondents guaranteeing confidentiality or anonymity after the approval from the school

director. That is, questionnaires were distributed and completed during school hours. The researcher supervised the completion of the questionnaires by the students. Participants were informed that the questions were self-explanatory and if they needed clarity they should indicate by a show of hand. After the completion of questionnaires, students personally submitted the questionnaires by dropping them into a box of the returning questionnaires.

Data collection took four (4) days because of different class periods. The lecturer gave permission to the researcher to introduce the title of the study. Administration of the questionnaire took approximately the first fifteen (15) minutes of each lecture under the supervision of the researcher. They also completed the questionnaires anonymously and no harm or incorporation was experienced by the researcher as anticipated. After receiving all returned questionnaires, the researcher thanked both the students and the lecturer for their time and participation.

Data analysis

A simple linear multiple regression statistical analysis was used to test hypothesis 1 for statistical significance. Hypothesis 2 was tested using t-test for independent sample. Hypothesis 3 and 4 were tested using ANOVA and Post-hoc test for mean difference.

Results

The study was based on four hypotheses and thus (1) there was a significant joint and independent influence of self-efficacy (mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasions and physiological experiences) and perceived parental support (emotional, tangible, informational support and appraisal) on life satisfaction of university students; (2) there was a difference in life

satisfaction between students who reside in urban and rural areas; (3) there was a significant effect of employment status of the mother on life satisfaction of university students; and (4) there was a significant effect of socio economic status of the family on life satisfaction of university students.

The first analysis involved intercorrelations among variables of the study using Pearson *r* correlational analysis. This is done to test the direction and strength of the relationship between the variables in the present study. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlations showing the relationship among the variables of study

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Life satisfaction	-			
2. Self-efficacy	.329**	-		
3. Parental support	.432**	.235**	-	
4. Gender	.098	-.114*	.070	-
Mean	22.970	30.957	52.930	
SD	6.461	4.116	12.651	-

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

The results showed a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and life satisfaction of the students ($r = .329; p < .01$). This means that life satisfaction increased when students reported higher levels of self-efficacy. There was also a significant positive relationship between perceived parental support and life satisfaction of the students ($r = .432; p < .001$). This means that students who perceived more parental support from their significant others are more likely to score higher on life satisfaction. There was no significant relationship between gender and life satisfaction ($r = .098; p = n.s$). This means that gender of students has nothing significantly to do with their levels of life satisfaction.

Additional results showed a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and perceived parental support ($r = .235; p < .001$). This means that students who perceived more parental support from their significant others are more likely to perceive themselves as more

efficacious. There was also a significant negative relationship between perceived parental support and gender ($r = -.114; p < .05$). This means that male students are more likely to report higher levels of perceived parental support compared to their female counterparts.

The first hypothesis stated that there will be a significant joint and independent influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of students was tested using simple linear multiple regression statistical analysis. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Multiple regression showing influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life-satisfaction

Variables	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Self-efficacy	.492	.242	47.314	<.001	.241	4.635	<.001
Parental support					.375	7.223	<.001

Dependent Variable: Life satisfaction

n.s = not significant

The results revealed a significant joint influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of students $R^2 = .242$, $F(2,297) = 47.314$, $p < .001$). The result indicated that jointly, self-efficacy and perceived parental support accounted for about 24% of the variance in life satisfaction of the students while parental support being a stronger predictor than self-efficacy.

Also, results demonstrated that independently, self-efficacy contributed significantly to life satisfaction of students ($\beta = .241$, $t = 4.635$, $p < .001$). Meaning that high score on self-efficacy is significantly related to high scores on life satisfaction. Similarly, perceived parental support contributed significantly to life satisfaction ($\beta .375$, $t = 7.223$, $p < .001$). This suggests that students who perceived more parental support from their significant others report more life

satisfaction while those who perceived less parental support report less life satisfaction.

Therefore, hypothesis one was accepted.

Hypothesis two stated that there will be a significant difference on life satisfaction between students who resided in urban and rural areas was tested using t-test for independent sample.

The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: t-test Showing place of residence on life satisfaction

Life satisfaction	Urban			Rural			Df	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
	N	M	S.D	N	M	S.D			
	123	24.34	5.98	177	22.01	6.63	298	.167	n.s

The results showed no significant mean difference on life satisfaction between students who resided in urban and rural areas, $t(2, 298) = .167$; $p = \text{n.s.}$ However, an analysis of the mean differences indicated that students who resided in urban areas (Mean = 24.34, SD = 5.177) are reporting higher scores on life satisfaction when compared to the students who resided in rural areas (Mean = 22.01, SD = 6.63. Therefore, hypothesis two was partly accepted.

The third hypothesis stated that there will be a significant effect of employment status of mother on life satisfaction of the students was tested using one way ANOVA. The result is presented in Tables 4 and 4a.

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA showing the effect of employment status of mother on life satisfaction

Source	SS	Df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Between employment statuses	798.826	4	199.707	5.042	< .011
Within	11683.904	295	39.606		
Total	12482.730	299			

Table 4a: Post Hoc Tests of effect of parental employment status of mother on life satisfaction

ESM	1	2	3	4	5	N	Mean	SD
1. Permanent	-	4.254*	-.805	.856	4.888*	113	23.965	6.339
2. Temporary		-	-5.059*	-3.340*	.634	38	19.711	6.766
3. Self-employed			-	1.660	5.692*	26	24.769	5.476
4. Unemployed				-	4.032*	110	23.109	6.930
5. Previously employed					-	13	19.077	7.123
Total						300	22.970	6.41

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The result revealed a significant effect of employment status of mother on life satisfaction of the students ($F(4,295) = 5.042$; $p < .001$). An analysis of mean differences showed that students who have permanent employed mothers ($M = 23.965$, $SD = 6.339$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have temporary employed mothers ($M = 19.711$, $SD = 6.766$), and those who have previously employed mothers ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$). However, students who have permanent employed mothers ($M = 23.965$, $SD = 6.339$), students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$), and those who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction.

In addition, students who have temporary employed mothers reported low levels of life satisfaction ($M = 19.711$, $SD = 6.766$) compared to students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$), and those who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$). Meanwhile, students who have temporary employed mothers ($M = 19.711$, $SD = 6.766$) and those who have

previously employed mothers ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$) reported the same levels of life satisfaction.

Furthermore, students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have previously employed mothers ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$), while students who have self-employed mothers ($M = 24.769$, $SD = 5.476$) and those who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. Lastly, students who have unemployed mothers ($M = 23.109$, $SD = 6.930$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have previously employed mothers ($M = 19.077$, $SD = 7.123$). This result confirmed hypothesis three.

The fourth hypothesis stated that there will be a significant effect of socio-economic status of the family on life satisfaction of the students was tested using one way ANOVA. The result is presented in Tables 5 and 5a.

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA for showing the effect of socio-economic status on life satisfaction

Source	SS	Df	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Between SES's	786.782	4	195.695	4.961	< .001
Within	11695.948	295	39.647		
Total	12482.730	299			

Table 5a: Post Hoc Tests of differences of socio-economic status on life satisfaction

SES	1	2	3	4	5	N	Mean	SD
1. Lower	-	-1.978	-3.996*	-5.371*	.545	44	20.046	7.402
2. Lower middle		-	-2.017*	3.393*	2.524	84	24.024	6.058
3. Middle			-	-1.376	4.541	146	24.041	5.089

4. Upper middle	-	5.917	24	25.417	6.107
5. Upper class	-		02	19.500	7.778
Total			300	22.970	6.41

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The result revealed a significant effect of socio-economic status on life satisfaction of the students ($F(4,295) = 4.961; p < .001$). An analysis of mean differences showed that students from the lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD = 7.402$) reported lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those from middle income families ($M = 24.041$, $SD = 5.089$), and those from upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$). However, students from lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD = 7.402$), lower middle income families ($M = 24.024$, $SD = 6.058$), and those from upper class ($M = 19.500$, $SD = 7.778$) reported comparable levels of levels of life satisfaction.

In addition, students from lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD = 7.402$) reported lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those in the middle income families ($M = 24.041$, $SD = 5.089$), and upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$). Meanwhile, students from lower income families ($M = 20.046$, $SD = 7.402$) and those from upper class ($M = 19.500$, $SD = 7.778$) reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. Lastly, students in middle income families ($M = 24.041$, $SD = 5.089$) and those from upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$) reported comparable levels of levels of life satisfaction. Finally, students from upper middle income families ($M = 25.471$, $SD = 6.107$) and those from upper class ($M = 19.500$, $SD = 7.778$) reported higher levels of life satisfaction. This result confirmed hypothesis four.

Discussion and conclusion

The present study was designed to investigate the influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on students' life satisfaction of university students. The study was anchored on four hypotheses: (1) self-efficacy (mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasions and physiological experiences) and perceived parental support (emotional, tangible, informational and appraisal support) will significantly independently and jointly predict life satisfaction of university students; (2) there was a difference on life satisfaction between students who reside in urban and rural areas; (3) there was a significant difference in employment status of the mother on life

satisfaction of university students; and (4) there was a significant difference of socio economic status of the family on life satisfaction of university students.

Many areas have been discussed by different researchers under this broad phenomenon, like satisfaction with family life, satisfaction with school life, satisfaction with job, satisfaction with peers (Gilman & Huebner, 2003). Huebner (2004) discussed the predictors of life satisfaction. He claimed that healthy inter and intrapersonal relationships, less physical complaints, positive psychological health are strongly associated with high level of life satisfaction and poor life satisfaction linked with depression, poor self-concept, adjustment problems, alcohol use and different other psychopathologies. Another researcher dealing with children and adolescents population also found the strong relationship between life satisfaction, depression, anxiety, self-concept, and personality types (Mehmood & Shaikat, 2014). This study has shown through the literature and different theories, the influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of university students. How a student evaluates the convenience of Instrumental, Appraisal, Emotional, and Informational support and observes helpful assistance through accessible individuals within their community, for example parents, lecturer, and peers influence his/her life satisfaction (Malecki & Demaray, 2002, 2006).

Correlational analysis indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and life satisfaction of university students. These results are consistent with earlier studies that reported the link between self-efficacy and life satisfaction (Gilman & Huebner, 2003; Luszczynska, Gutiérrez-Doña & Schwarzer, 2005). The results maintain the analysis, influenced by the investigation of socialization in the United States, that self-efficacy (as an articulation of individual agency) is more firmly identified with life satisfaction than is school satisfaction (as an outflow of harmony) (Helgeson, 1994). According to Palmer, Donaldson and Stough (2002), in

order to have high life satisfaction level, individuals have to motivate themselves, be resilient in the face of obstacles, avoid negative thought and have hope for the best. When individuals have competence to triumph over difficult circumstances, it can be easy to understand a positive relationship between self-efficacy and life. People with high self-efficacy have a “can-do” attitude (Salvador & Mayoral, 2011). The findings suggest that life satisfaction increased when students reported high self-efficacy level. This means that when students are efficacious, they are motivated to achieve their set goals by attempting the given academic tasks and succeeding in them. Students’ level of self-efficacy determines their level of life satisfaction. Students with high level of self-efficacy can recognize their capabilities and manage their performance towards the planned task.

There was also a significant positive relationship between perceived parental support and life satisfaction of the students. This means that students who perceived more parental support from their significant others (parents) are more likely to score higher on life satisfaction. Correlational investigation has highlighted the responsibility of familial variables, such as, style of child rearing, parental enthusiasm and social support, as vital in the achievement of students’ life satisfaction (Proctor, Linley & Malby, 2009). For example, when students perceive that their parents encourage them, help them with academic work and provide for them financially, students become competent academically and are more likely to succeed and be satisfied with life. For instance, Suldo and Huebner (2004) found that all three proportions of the authoritative parenting style: social support, social involvement and psychological autonomy were definitely identified with life satisfaction among students, with perceived parental social support having the profound relationship. The results again revealed a significant joint influence of self-efficacy and parental support on life satisfaction of students. The result indicated that jointly, self-efficacy and perceived parental support accounted for about 24% of the variance in life satisfaction of the students.

Also, the results demonstrated that independently, self-efficacy contributed significantly to life satisfaction of students. Meaning that high score on self-efficacy is significantly related to high scores on life satisfaction. Results from previous studies on the effect of self-efficacy correspond with each other. In support of these findings, Proctor, Linley and Malby (2009) stated that self-efficacy, the individual's confidence to perform a given task, or is competent in, is an imperative determinant of performance and influences an individual's determination and motivation against the obstacles and difficulties of life (Maddux, 2002). In other words, if students believe in their capabilities they will take a risk because they have a belief that they can succeed despite the difficulties they are faced with in life.

Overall, life satisfaction was found to be positively related to self-efficacy (Pinquart, Silbereisen & Juang, 2004). If a student has a high level of self-efficacy for a particular module, the student is more likely to have confidence to complete tasks, answer correctly, reach set goals, and outshine fellow students. In this regard, self-regulatory practices are created and maintained when students sustain self-efficacy in a specific subject or skill (Koehler, 2007).

Bandura (1995) also notes that students with high self-efficacy beliefs become more willing in learning activities compared with students with low self-efficacy. These students spend more effort towards the activities and can develop more effective strategies against the difficulties they have faced (Eggen & Kauchak, 1997). Self-efficacy is known to provide for individuals to obtain new information and to develop their abilities for a better life or for their own purposes (Bandura, 1995). Self-efficacy beliefs have been found to be one of the most predictable indicators of life satisfaction among adolescents from five socio-cultural groups living in America (that is European, African, Chinese, Mexican, Dominican). In addition, results have exhibited reasonability toward oneself to be identified with exceptionally high life satisfaction (Suldo &

Huebner, 2006). The theory supports the above results that the stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the objective difficulties individuals set for themselves and the firmer is their dedication toward these. The higher the level of people's perceived self-efficacy, the more extensive the scope of profession choices they sincerely consider, the level of enthusiasm towards them, and the better they organize themselves academically for the career they want to pursue and subsequently have greater accomplishment (Bandura, 1994). This confirms the effect of self-efficacy on life satisfaction of university students.



Similarly, perceived parental support contributed significantly to life satisfaction. This suggests that students who perceived more social support from their significant others report more life satisfaction while those who perceived less social support report less life satisfaction. Parents assist students' results by affording them home background, and as the main guardians, they are key sources of social support for their children's needs. Through authoritative parenting, children's academic results are influenced by the school-related social support provided by parents (Baumrind, 1978). An authoritative parent is comprised of demandingness and responsiveness. They make reasonable requests, put restrictions and are adamant on children's obedience, while in the meantime, they are warm, respect children's opinions, and promote the children's contribution towards decision making and often seek their children's views in family considerations and decisions (Bibi, Chaundhry, Awan & Tariq, 2013). Cakar (2012) hypothesizes that parental support consists a variety of related constructs including responsiveness, warmth, acceptance, support, and nurturance. Regarding the relationship between parenting and children and adolescent behavior problems, it is indicated that there are two key dimensions of relevant parenting; one is support such as involvement, attachment, warmth; the other is control such as monitoring, supervision, discipline (Reitz, Dekovic' & Meijer, 2006). Parents who direct the activities and

decisions for their children through reasoning and discipline are authoritative (Baumrind, 1966). According to Mahanta and Aggarwal (2013), parental support is by all accounts most significant to development before adolescence. Edwards and Lopez (2006) and Suldo and Huebner (2006) stated that the increase in indicators of well being such as life satisfaction as been associated with positive family interactions. Higher level of parental support is associated with an increase in happiness and decreased chances of being depressed compared to lower level of parental support (Holahan, Moos, Holahan & Brenman, 1995). According Danielsen *et al.* (2009), perceived parental support has direct effects on students' life satisfaction. Supportive parenting is related to more positive reports of life satisfaction among youth (Petito & Cummins, 2000; Suldo & Huebner, 2004).

The results showed no significant mean difference on life satisfaction between students who resided in urban and rural areas. However, an observation of the mean differences indicated that students who resided in urban areas reported higher scores on life satisfaction when compared to the students who resided in rural areas. The recent study conducted in South Africa by Botha, Snowball, de Klerk and Radloff (2013) found the difference between needs and wants in the quality of life indicators in developing countries moreover McGregor, Camfield and Woodcock (2009) pointed out that the significance of variables might be different for people living in different contexts. For example, those living in rural areas judged access to food and electricity as more important to their quality of life than those who lived in cities, because food and electricity were readily available in urban communities. However, this confirms an observation of the mean differences which indicated that students who resided in urban areas are reporting higher scores on life satisfaction when compared to the students who resided in rural areas.

Students who have self-employed mothers reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have previously employed mothers, while students who have self-employed mothers and those who have unemployed mothers reported comparable levels of life satisfaction. Finally, students who have unemployed mothers reported higher levels of life satisfaction compared to those who have previously employed mothers. These findings are in accordance with the results of Francavilla, Giannelli and Grilli (2012) who discovered educated mothers to have a lesser likelihood of being employed both in rural and urban areas, while the duration of studying is factually important merely in urban areas. The likelihood of mothers' employment drastically decreases from being uneducated to being educated in both areas, although in rural areas it begins from much higher worth. Regardless of level of education, it stays unvarying that in rural areas additional years of education are not statistically substantial, though in urban areas it enhances recurrently with years of education. Women who intensively need a job would accept a job offer with low wages because of them being inexperienced. In this light, it is less demanding to comprehend the negative relationship between work and literacy. Moreover, opportunities for women to work are more disposed to incorporate higher quality employment, so that education recuperates its role in enhancing women's employment (Francavilla *et al.*, 2012).

The results for hypothesis 4 revealed a significant difference of socio-economic status on life satisfaction of the students. An analysis of the mean differences showed that students from the lower income families reported lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those from middle income families, and those from upper middle income families. However, students from lower income families, lower middle income families, and those from upper class reported comparable levels of levels of life satisfaction.

In addition, students from lower income families reported lower levels of life satisfaction compared to those in the middle income families, and upper middle income families. Meanwhile, students from lower income families and those from upper class reported comparable levels of levels of life satisfaction. Lastly, students in middle income families and those from upper middle income families reported comparable levels of levels of life satisfaction. Finally, students from upper middle income families and those from upper class reported higher levels of life satisfaction.

According to Diener & Fujita (1995) income and social status draw significant impact on the individual's life satisfaction level. Tuzgöl-Dost (2007) claimed positive relationship between economic status and life satisfaction level in young university students, as income increases, life satisfaction level also increases. Easterlin (2006) and Lelkes (2008) also investigated comparable results. Boyce, Brown and Moore (2010) also claimed that an individual's level of life satisfaction relies on his economic status. On the other hand, many researchers claimed that no relationship exists between people's level of life satisfaction and their economic status (Mehmood & Shaikat, 2014).

An alternating perspective, the relationship between youth's life satisfaction and the family's socioeconomic status is generally documented (Wilson, Henry & Peterson, 1997). Higher levels of family SES usually enhance adolescents' well-being (Piko & Fitzpatrick, 2007). As the latest paper review contends, the unique elucidations for social inequity in well-being have a relationship through the component of socialization that integrates the intergenerational exchange of mentality, beliefs and behaviours (Siahpush & Singh, 2000). Socioeconomic background may have an impact on parent/child relationship prompting cognitive and psychosocial inequality in children for example, parents from higher social classes religiously have discussions with their children religiously (Kroenke, 2008). The findings showed that an individual's level of life satisfaction is

strongly dependant on the dynamics such as financial stability, social equality. Within general studies exploring the aspects most associated to life satisfaction, findings indicate that the level of one's life satisfaction is robustly reliant on dynamics such as financial prosperity, social equality and political freedom in one's shared settings (Veenhoven 1996). Yet disparities in life satisfaction can exist among the populace, for example, within the same city, province or even country (Martikainen, 2009).



The following conclusions are made in this study:

- Self-efficacy and perceived parental support jointly and independently influence life satisfaction of university students.
- There is no significant difference on life satisfaction between students who reside in urban or rural areas.
- Differences in employment status of the mother influences life satisfaction of the university students.
- Differences in socio-economic status of the family influences life satisfaction of the university students.

Limitations of the study include the fact that the students used the self-reported measures and the tendency to appear good may be affected by the fact that most students do not stay with their parents. Other limitations relate to the fact that participants were only selected from one class within the faculty. The study did not involve parents to participate thus the results might be biased. Regarding external validity, the population and ecological transferability of the research is thus minimized (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Population validity concerns generalizing results from the sample to the population from which it was drawn (Gall, Borg & Gall, 2006). Within the current

study, characteristics unique to the sample population have been limited to the extent that conclusions drawn cannot be transferred to the university population as a whole.

Recommendations

In summary, this study has shown through the literature and theories on students' life satisfaction, that self-efficacy and perceived parental support have an influence on life satisfaction of university students. Given the limitations of the current study, several suggestions are offered for future research investigating the influence of self-efficacy and perceived parental support on life satisfaction of university students. Parental level of education is an extremely important factor to be considered in future studies. Parents should also be included as participants to report subjective parental support to their children. In addition, it is important to know whether age has a main effect on life satisfaction of university students. As adolescents grow up, their transition from high school to university leads to separation from their parents. Their perceptions of parental support structure shift to peer support. As a result time for perceived parental support is limited thus its effect on university student's life satisfaction might be negatively affected. The findings in this study are relevant and helpful to policy makers and higher institution stakeholders in policy making. The findings are also helpful to students in believing that they have the ability to control or alter life's situations or events by focusing on what they "can do" rather than on what they "cannot do" and for parents to provide necessary support to the students. Thus it is necessary to equip students with necessary skills like believing in oneself to thrive in their different life roles. More programmes with support from social resources are needed to improve students' self-efficacy to reach their goals and be satisfied with life. Interventions for parents will play a pivotal role in the life satisfaction of their children.

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Declarations

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