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Overcrowding, age and gender differences in the manifestation of state anxiety among undergraduate students in a Nigerian public university

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Abstract

Most students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria have a hard time procuring adequate accommodation. Hence, they are usually left with the option of having to share a room with many people resulting in

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over-crowded hostels. This study sought to examine the effect of over-crowding, age and gender on the state anxiety levels of undergraduates in a Nigerian public university. 192 participants were selected from male and female students residing in the hostels and off-campus with age range of 16 – 30 (mean age = 22.80; SD = 2.70). Average person per room was used to determine how crowded the room was and the State Trait Anxiety Inventory form Y – 1 (STAI – Y1) was administered on the participants. A three-way ANOVA showed a non significant interaction effect between overcrowding, age and gender on the manifestation of anxiety among university undergraduates, $F(2, 180) = 2.22, p = 0.11$. The result also revealed a significant main effect of gender on the manifestation of state anxiety among undergraduates, $F(1, 180) = 18.212, p = 0.00$, where males manifested more anxiety than female undergraduates. There was also a significant interaction effect of overcrowding and gender $F(1, 180) = 5.67, p = 0.02$. It was concluded that university undergraduates should be provided with adequate accommodation in higher institutions they attend in order to reduce overcrowding and state anxiety among undergraduates.

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