



EFFECT OF EMOTIONAL STABILITY AND SELF-EFFICACY ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF EMERGING ADULTS DURING COVID-19 IN NIGERIA

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Abstract:

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of emotional stability and self-efficacy on psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria. The sample consists of 50 (23 male and 27 female) emerging adults across the six geopolitical zones of the country. It was found that self-efficacy and emotional intelligence had significant main and interaction effect on psychological well-being; there was no significant gender difference on psychological well-being and that demographic predictors made a contribution of 10.1% to the psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19. The need to promote the psychological well-being of all emerging adults during and post-COVID-19 must be embraced.

Keywords: emotional stability; self-efficacy, psychological well-being, emerging adults and COVID-19

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1. Introduction

The coronavirus disease (Covid-19) came as a result of a new strain of coronavirus (SARS-Cov-2) that has not been previously identified in humans. It was first reported to WHO on the 31st of December, 2019 in Wuhan, China. Although for most people COVID-19 causes mild illness for some people, while it can make others very ill and even leads to death. Older people and those with pre-existing medical conditions (such as high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes) appear to be more vulnerable. The pandemic is having a serious effect on the education, employment, mental well-being, social activities and training of the emerging adults. It has disrupted every aspect of life globally and if urgent action is not taken it will bring severe suffering and long-lasting negative impact (International Labour Organization, 2020). This pandemic if not taken care of early will surely affect the psychological well-being of an emerging adult.

Emerging adults are those between secondary school leaving age and the University. This paper adopts the age between fifteen and thirty years as emerging adults. This category of people has a different way of responding to the pandemic of COVID-19 in Nigeria and its effect on their psychological well-being within the period. Through this pandemic, millions of emerging adults around the globe are forced to learn remotely through digital devices, access to education has become challenging, making life a bit difficult especially for those who are not computer literate. The use of laptops and iPod are now an educational necessity that are not affordable by majority in the country, which led many students out of schools due to COVID-19 according to UNESCO nearly 830 million children don't have access to a computer at home. Another study by ILO that just emerged indicating that more than one in six emerging adults has stopped working since the beginning of the pandemic. Human talents and energy are not in use during this period, resulting to a large extent, distorted growth and development which will in turn lead to difficulties even in rebuilding a better post-COVID economy, (Lodding, 2019).

2. Literature Review

Psychological well-being is the condition of satisfaction with oneself, one's job and those attributes one is surrounded with (Deirbatir, Hrlvac, Yilmaz, & Gulnihal Gul, 2013). This is a condition of satisfaction with everything that one is doing. It is the ability of the emerging adults to understand themselves and act appropriately even in stressful circumstances, thereby adding value to the society (WHO, 2019). Studies with young adults have shown that using strengths is related to life satisfaction, psychological wellbeing, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and positive emotions (Douglass and Duffy, 2015). It is the combination of happiness, satisfaction with life and depression (Salami, 2010). A full state of mental health in young adults involves understanding the factors that minimize mental dysfunction. Mental dysfunction in young adults predicts days of missed school (Lawrence, Hafekost, Johnson, Saw, Buckingham and Sawyer, 2016),

which may adversely affect academic and career futures, and in-turn, later socioeconomic resources; a potentially compounding and negative reinforcing in-turn. It also involves studying the factors that maximize psychological wellbeing, which is defined as a state of feeling good and functioning well (Huppert and So, 2013).

Psychological well-being is a state of happiness and satisfaction with oneself, with direct and positive implication on one's health. The more the psychological well-being of the emerging adults, the more happy they become in handling the issues of COVID-19 and thereby coming out strong of the global pandemic. This is because happiness is the basic method for assessing good psychological health (Balogun, 2014). Research on happiness and subjective wellbeing has shown that they are distinct from, and potentially preventative of, mental illness (Wong, 2011, Hoyt, Chase-Lansdale, Mcdade, and Adam, 2012) Recent global studies indicates, around 60% of young adults are happy with their lives, showing much room for improvement (Helliwell, Layard and Sachs, 2016). Meta-analytic studies also complement these findings, indicating happiness is predicted by educational attainment and cognitive ability (Harris, Brett and Deary, 2016), socio-economic status and various forms of social support, physical health, personality traits (Harris, ,Brett and Deary, 2016) and a connectedness with nature (Capaldi, Dokpo, and Zelenski, 2014). According to Ryff (2014), a take-home message is that increasing evidence supports the health protective features of psychological well-being in reducing risk for disease and promoting length of life. He made mention of resilience as one of the themes- the capacity to maintain well-being in the face of adversity.

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to carry out a task or responsibility however stressful it is. It is the ability to carry out behaviour that is relevant to some given and specific tasks. It is the confidence one has in one's ability to perform a task that is in line with the outcome that is expected (Bandura, 1977). Like other components of psychological wellbeing, self-efficacy and associated causal and control beliefs are variously placed under the banners of non-cognitive, social-emotional, character and positive education skills (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger, 2011; Waters, 2011). It has to do with being optimistic of the positive outcome despite the different stressful events one encounters on a daily basis (Siddiqui, 2015).

Equally important may be other psychological resources influencing well-being, described by Taylor and Broffman (2011), which become significant when individuals face challenges (Chudzicka-Czupala and Lunkiewicz, 2020). However, low self-efficacy has been found to have correlation with increasing depression and anxiety symptoms. Emotional stability is a dimension of personality that determines the capacity of a person to maintain calmness in the presence of pressure or stress (Bhagat, Simbat and Haque, 2015). The product of emotionality is the ability to maintain behavioural calmness in every way. People who are emotionally unstable tend to display violent and harmful behaviour in the midst of stress. Mediation of emotional stability is done through adequate nutrition, good diet, meditation, sleeping habit that is healthy and good exercise (Bhagat, Simbat and Haque, 2015).

This paper focused on their emotional stability and self-efficacy towards maintaining a psychological well-being. The following research objectives were investigated in this study:

- 1) To determine the main and interaction effect of self-efficacy and emotional stability on psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria.
- 2) To examine the gender difference on psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria.
- 3) To ascertain the joint effect of demographic factors on psychological well-being of emerging adults in Nigeria during COVID-19.

The following research hypotheses were tested in this study:

- 1) There is significant main and interaction effect of self-efficacy and emotional stability on psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria.
- 2) There is significant gender difference on psychological well-being of the emerging adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria.
- 3) There is significant joint effect of demographic factors on psychological well-being of emerging adults in Nigeria during COVID-19.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Sample

The sample of this study was made of 50 (23 male and 27 female) emerging adults across the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The age of the participants is in the following order: 15-20 years 12 (24%), 21-26 years 13 (26%) and 27 years and above 25 (50%).

3.2 Instruments

3.2.1 Psychological Well-being Scale

This scale was designed by Carol Rhyff (1989). It was a 54-item scale, with the response format ranging from 1 to 5 of strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scale had a Cronbach's alpha of between .680 and .719.

3.2.2 General Self-Efficacy Scale

The general self-efficacy scale was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). It is a 10-item scale designed to measure the level positive self-belief that one has in dealing with different stressful issues of life. It has a response format of 1 to 4, of "not at all true = 1 to exactly true = 4". It has a Cronbach's Alpha of between .797 to .798.

3.2.3 Emotional Stability Scale

Emotional stability scale was re-validated by Cohen (2013). It was designed to measure the level of emotional responses of the participants with regards to emotional control, courage, ego strength and balance. The scale consists of 33 items with the response format of strongly agree = 5 to strongly disagree = 1. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability of the scale was between 0.505 and 0.538. The participants were informed through the social media

on what the research was about. Their permission to partake in the study was obtained with the confidentiality of the participants guaranteed. Google form questionnaire was designed by the researchers which led to the generation of a link. The link to the questionnaire was sent to the participants through their e-mail, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. All submitted responses were downloaded after three weeks.

4. Results and Discussion

Data obtained in this study was analysed with t-test for independent samples, regression analysis and two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Hypothesis One: There is significant main and interaction effect of self-efficacy and emotional stability on psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria.

Table 1: Analysis of Variance of Main and Interaction effect of Self-Efficacy and Emotional Stability on Psychological Well-being of Emerging Adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1740.971	37	47.053	4.572	.015
Intercept	53210.405	1	53210.405	5170.242	.000
Self_Efficacy	717.359	13	55.181	5.362	.012
Emotional_Stability	932.146	14	66.582	6.469	.006
Self_Efficacy * Emotional_Stability	423.177	8	52.897	5.140	.016
R Squared = .955 (Adjusted R Squared = .746)					

Table 1 shows that there was significant main effect of self-efficacy on psychological well-being, F-ratio = (13,37; 5.362; P <.05), emotional stability had significant main effect on psychological well-being, F-ratio = (14,37; 6.469; P<.05). It further indicates that self-efficacy and emotional stability had significant interaction effect on psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19, F-ratio = (8,37; 5.140; P<.05). The combined effect of the predictors on psychological well-being was $R^2=0.955$.

It was found that self-efficacy and emotional stability had significant main effect on psychological well-being. This was in line with the submission of Durlak et al. (2011) and Waters (2011) who opines that students with high self-efficacy will enjoy positive psychological well-being. This implies that each of the predictor had effect on the emerging adult's psychological well-being. It was also found that self-efficacy and emotional stability had significant interaction effect on psychological well-being.

Hypothesis two: There is significant gender difference on psychological well-being of the emerging adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria

Table 2: Summary of independent t-test on the effect of gender on psychological well-being of the Emerging Adults during COVID-19 in Nigeria

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Male	22	40.27	3.83	47	.799	>.05
Female	27	38.85	7.58			

Table 2 indicates that there is no significant gender difference on psychological well-being of emerging adults in Nigeria during COVID-19 [$t(47) = .799$; $P >.05$]. The result indicates further that male emerging adults reported higher psychological well-being ($\bar{x} = 40.27$) while female emerging adults reported lower psychological well-being ($\bar{x} = 38.85$).

It was found further that there is no significant gender difference on psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19. This was refuted by Siddiqui (2015) who found that there was significant gender difference on psychological well-being among undergraduate students. The result also indicates that male emerging adults had higher difference on psychological well-being than female emerging adults. The finding of this study shows that gender is not a prerequisite for enjoying good psychological well-being or mental health by the emerging adults in the period of COVID-19. Whether the emerging adults are male or female, it does not have effect on their level of psychological well-being.

Hypothesis three: There is significant joint effect of demographic factors on psychological well-being of emerging adults in Nigeria during COVID-19.

Table 3: Joint Effect of Demographic Factors on Psychological Well-being of Emerging Adults in Nigeria during COVID-19

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	R Square Change
1	.318 ^a	.101	-.003	.101
Predictors (Constant): Family Type, Education, Gender, Religion, Age.				
Dependent Variable: Psychological Well-being.				

Table 3 indicates a model summary of the joint contribution of the demographic factors on the psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19. The correlation between the demographic factors (family type, education, gender, religion and age) and psychological well-being was .318, while the actual contribution of the predictors on the psychological well-being is depicted by R Square Change which is .101. This implies that the predictors had 10.1% contribution to the psychological well-being of the emerging adults during COVID-19.

It was also found that demographic factors made a substantial contribution to the psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19. This was supported by Lincoln et al. (2011) that there exist some correlates of psychological well-being across African American families. This shows that the psychological well-being of the emerging adults can be more sustained by taking into consideration some of the demographic factors such as family type, gender, educational qualification and age.

5. Recommendations

The researchers recommended that:

- 1) Steps should be taken by relevant stakeholders in increasing the psychological well-being of emerging adults during and after COVID-19. This can be achieved by making sure that life becomes suitable for them and basic amenities such as stable electricity supply and good roads are provided. More so, they should be provided jobs after graduating from the higher institutions of learning.
- 2) The need to treat all emerging adults across gender with equality is important. This would guarantee their sense of worth and optimism. It would help them see life out there and they will be happy all the time. Their enliven nature will increase their psychological well-being.
- 3) The family, educational institutions, age groups and significant others can add value to the emerging adults. This is because when the emerging adults find a sense of warmth from others important to them, it would boost their morale and their psychological well-being.

6. Conclusion

The psychological well-being of emerging adults during COVID-19 is an important component that must be taken into consideration by the health ministry. This is made possible by making sure that things that would enhance the emotional stability and self-efficacy of this group are given prerequisite. There is correlation between people with high self-efficacy and stress regulation, positive well-being, high recuperation from diseases and high self-esteem compared with people of low self-efficacy who can be stressed out easily and doubt their potentials.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interests.

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