

FAMILY RELATIONSHIP AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATES. A CASE STUDY OF A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of family relationship on psychological wellbeing among Covenant University undergraduates. A survey design was adopted for this research. A total number of 300 participants consisting of 150 female and 150 male respondents (Mean=19.4, SD =1.9). The three hypotheses were developed and tested. Hypotheses stated were tested using Zero order correlation, Multiple regression and Independent T-test at 0.05 level of significance of the SPSS version 20. Purposive sampling was adopted to select the setting of the study while stratified and systematic sampling techniques were employed to select the participants. The results revealed that there is a significant relationship between family relationship and psychological wellbeing; Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance with $p < .001$. Observation of coefficient of determination [$R^2 = 294$] showed that both functional and dysfunctional family relationship significantly and jointly accounted for 29.4% of the total variance observed in psychological wellbeing among Covenant University undergraduates. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that family relationship had a significant influence on university student's psychological well-being. This study therefore recommended that parents and stake holders in the family should strive for a healthy and functional relationship in the family as it has implications for their Psychological well-being. Also, psychologists in education sector should often design psycho-education programs on the implications of family relationship on psychological well-being of university students for their parents.

Key words: Family Relationship, Psychological Well-being, University Students

INTRODUCTION

Psychological Well-Being: is simultaneously the absence of the crippling elements of the human experience, depression, anxiety, anger, fear and the presence of enabling ones' positive emotions, meaning, healthy relationships, environmental mastery, engagement, self-actualization. Psychological wellbeing is above and beyond the absence of psychological ill-being and it considers a broader spectrum of constructs than what is traditionally conceived of as happiness (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2011).

It has to do with people's feelings in their day-to-day life which could be positive or negative (Bradburn, 1969). Psychological well-being refers to the positive aspects of an individual's life, including positive affect, optimal functioning, and the realization of personal potential" (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct that encompasses



positive emotions, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment" (Seligman, 2011) coupled with a sense of meaning and purpose in life" (Diener et al., 2010).

Psychological wellbeing can be viewed in different ways which are: Hedonic, Eudaimonic" The term "Hedonic" wellbeing is normally used to refer to the subjective feelings of happiness. It comprises of two components, an affective component (high positive affect and low negative affect) and a cognitive component (satisfaction with life). It is proposed that an individual experiences happiness when positive affect and satisfaction with life are both high (Ryff&Keyer,1995). The less well-known term, "Eudaimonic" wellbeing is used to refer to the purposeful aspect of Psychological well-being. The psychologist Carol Ryff developed a very comprehensible model that breaks down Eudaimonic wellbeing into six key types of psychological wellbeing involving: Self-acceptance: High scores reflect the respondent's positive attitude about his or her self. An example statement for this criterion is "I like most aspects of my personality", environmental mastery: (Ryff, 2014)

High scores indicate that the respondent makes effective use of opportunities and has a sense of mastery in managing environmental factors and activities, including managing everyday affairs and creating situations to benefit personal needs. An example statement for this criterion is "In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live", positive relations with others: High scores reflect the respondent's engagement in meaningful relationships with others that include reciprocal empathy, intimacy, and affection.

An example statement for this criterion is "People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others", personal growth: High scores indicate that the respondent continues to develop, is welcoming to new experiences, and recognizes improvement in behavior and self over time. An example statement for this criterion is "I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world purpose in life: High scores reflect the respondent's strong goal orientation and conviction that life holds meaning. An example statement for this criterion is "Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them autonomy: High scores indicate that the respondent is independent and regulates his or her behavior independent of social pressures. An example statement for this criterion is "I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus".

Although important for overall psychological well-being, subjective well-being is insufficient on its own. When your mind is in good shape and you have a generally optimistic attitude toward life, you are in a state of psychological well-being.

It's essential to understand the impact psychological well-being plays in your general health as more awareness and knowledge about mental health and self-care enter the public discourse. Prioritizing one's psychological well-being has been linked to improved happiness ratings, fewer risks for physical illness, and deeper interpersonal connections.

Therefore, the two important ingredients in psychological wellbeing are the subjective happy feelings brought on by something we enjoy and the feeling that what we are doing with our lives has some meaning and purpose. (Ryff, 2014)

The family is usually an individual's first point of contact and reference for social and emotional development, which makes it an important factor to the learning and formation of social and emotional ideals and norms for the developing child. If the family and family relationships lay the foundation on which individuals builds their social interactions, skills and relationships as they grow up, then it shows that it is important to the overall well-being of an individual. The family

relationship has been defined as "the connections between family members, including the quality and patterns of interactions that take place within the family unit" (APA, 2021). Similarly, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) defines family relationships as "the ways in which family members relate to one another, including their patterns of communication, interactions, and emotional bonds" (NICHD, 2021).

Family Relationships: are the foundation of social structure, providing individuals with a sense of belonging, identity, and purpose, and shaping their development throughout the life course." (Bowen.1966). They are the connections between individuals that are shaped by their shared experiences, values, and emotions, and that contribute to their sense of identity and belonging as well as the social ties that bind individuals together in a familial context, encompassing the roles, responsibilities, and expectations that are associated with different family members.

Family relationship has been reported to have significant correlation with mental health (Rohner, Khaleque & Cournoyer; Burns & Kaufman 2000) as well as helping individuals cope with the psychological effects of natural disasters (Kaniasty and Norris, 2008). Adult children of dysfunctional families have been found to develop deficits in problem-solving and communication in addition to establishing and maintaining trust in close relationships (Harrington & Metzler, 1997; Hinz, 1990; McKenna & Pickens, 1983; Webb, Post, Robinson, & Moreland, 1992). Family functioning and family support were found to have positive impact and association with psychological wellbeing among rural left behind Chinese (Wang et al, 2019) and Nigerian adolescents. Aloba et al. (2019) conducted a study on "Family Functioning and Psychological Well-being of Adolescents in Nigeria: The Moderating Role of Social Support". This study made use of a sample of 600 Nigerian adolescents to examine the relationship between family functioning, social support, and psychological well-being. Participants completed self-report measures of family functioning, social support, and psychological well-being. The study found that family functioning was positively associated with psychological well-being, and that this relationship was moderated by social support. Despite different literatures reviewed on family relationship and psychological well-being, few literatures investigated how psychological well-being of private university students in Nigeria is influenced by family relationship, hence, the need for this study. It is therefore based on this background that this study seeks to find out if family relationship would influence the psychological well-being of students of Covenant university, Ota, Ogun State..

Research objectives

- 1.To investigate the relationship between family relationship and psychological well-being (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance) of covenant university undergraduates.
- 2.To ascertain the influence of functional and dysfunctional family relationship on psychological well-being of covenant university undergraduates.
- 3.To determine gender differences on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates.

Research Hypotheses

1. There will be significant relationship between family relationship and psychological well-being (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance) of covenant university undergraduates.

2. There will be significant influence of functional and dysfunctional family relationship psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates
3. There will be significant gender differences on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates

METHOD

Research Design

Cross sectional survey design was adopted for this study. It was conducted in Covenant University, Ota, Ogun state.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants who were involved in this study consist of three hundred (300) undergraduates of Covenant University within the age range of 16-23 years. Multi-stage sampling was employed in the study. The setting (Covenant University) was purposely selected while the study is stratified according to gender strata after which each of the participants was selected through systematic sampling. One hundred and fifty (150) male and one hundred and fifty (150) female undergraduates were selected from Covenant University, Ota, Ogun state.

Instruments

A self-reported questionnaire was developed using the scales adopted for study.

The questionnaire comprises demographic information of the participants (age, gender, level of study, department or course of study), Index of Family Relations and Psychological Well-being Scale.

The Index of Family Relations (IFR)

This scale was devised to estimate the level, severity, or extent of a difficulty that family members are having in their relationships with each other as felt or experienced by the responder. Score Interpretation: The scale generates ratings ranging from 0 to 100. The scores can be taken as actual ratio scale values for all practical purposes. A score of 0 indicates that the customer lacks all of the traits, while a score of 100 represents the highest potential stress level that the scale is capable of assessing (Ben & Valerie, 2005).

Cutting Scores: This scale has two clinical cutting scores. The first is a thirty. A score of 30 suggests that there is no clinically relevant concern in this area, assuming clients make accurate and sincere responses. Clients with a score of 30 or higher are likely to have a clinically significant issue in this area. The second cutting score is 70. Clients with this or higher scores are virtually always in misery. When anxiety reaches this level, there is a good chance that violence may be considered or used to handle problems in this area.

This scale consistently gets an Alpha coefficient of .90 or above. This scale's validity has been evaluated in terms of content, concept, factorial, and known groups validity. It almost always gets validity coefficients of .60 or higher.

Psychological wellbeing scale (PWBS)

The Ryff psychological wellbeing scale was used to measure psychological wellbeing of research participants. Psychological wellbeing defined as comprising six core dimensions (Ryff, 2014). The

initial research by Ryff (1989) found that the six scales have satisfactory internal consistency ranging from.93 to.86.

The test-retest reliability over six weeks yielded values ranging from.88 to.81, suggesting that, in the absence of intervention, survey responses remain relatively consistent over time. These findings show that the questionnaire is sufficiently reliable. Convergent validity was determined by comparing the scales to existing measures of positive and negative functioning, such as the Self-Esteem Scale, the Life Satisfaction Index, and Zung's Depression Scale.

Procedure

The sampling technique used in this research is Gender Stratified sampling technique. The questionnaires were printed out and distributed randomly to participants from the pool of students that were readily available and willing to participate in the study. Participants were informed and consent was gotten before the commencement of the study. Confidentiality of participants' data was assured. Instructions on how to answer the questions were provided and participants were encouraged to answer accordingly. The questionnaires were then retrieved and cleaned or sorted before the data was extracted for analysis.

Data analysis

Demographic variables were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Hypotheses were tested using zero order correlation, multiple regression and the independent T-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used in the analysis of the data collected.

RESULTS

The result of the study and the stated hypotheses were analyzed and thus presented in tables below.

Demographic Data

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Age	16-18	84	28.0	28.0	28.0
	19-21	194	64.7	64.7	92.7
	22 and above	22	7.3	7.3	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Gender	Male	150	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Female	150	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Educational Level	100	60	20.0	20.0	20.0
	200	26	8.7	8.7	28.7
	300	52	17.3	17.3	46.0
	400	138	46.0	46.0	92.0
	500	24	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

A total number of 300 participants were used in this study. Table 1 shows the age, gender distributions and the educational level of participants. 84 participants representing 28% were

between the ages 16-18; 194 participants representing 64.7% were between the ages of 19-21; and 22 participants representing 7.3% were between the ages 22 and above.

Table 1 also depicts the gender distribution in which 150 female participants represent 50% of the participants responded and 150 male participants are representing the other 50% of the participant population.

Hypotheses Testing

The outcome of the analyzed data using appropriate statistics are presented.

H1: This hypothesis stated there will be significant relationship between family relationship and psychological wellbeing (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance) of covenant university undergraduates. This hypothesis was tested using zero order correlation (Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation) and the result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Summary of zero order correlation showing the relationship between family relationship and psychological wellbeing (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance) of covenant university undergraduates

S/ No	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean	SD
1	Family Relationship	-							95.17	16.88
2	Autonomy	.437**	-						23.56	5.77
3	Environmental Mastery	.395**	.579**	-					23.74	5.38
4	Personal Growth	.451**	.468**	.604**	-				23.57	5.61
5	Positive Relationship with others	.399**	.558**	.588**	.484**	-			23.81	6.83
6	Purpose in Life	.347**	.526**	.571**	.629**	.408**	-		23.59	5.75
7	Self-Acceptance	.311**	.564**	.616**	.467**	.596**	.465**	-	24.14	5.01

** Result is Sig at .001.

Result in table 2 shows the relationship between family relationship and psychological wellbeing (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance) of covenant university undergraduates. The result shows that there was a significant relationship between family relationship and autonomy [r = .437; p<.001], family relationship and environmental mastery [r = .395; p<.001], family relationship and personal growth [r = .451; p<.001], family relationship and positive relationship with others [r = .399; p<.001], family relationship and purpose in life [r = .347; p<.001] and family relationship and self-acceptance [r = .311; p<.001]. There was a significant relationship among the dimensions of psychological wellbeing too including autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationship with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. Based on this result, hypothesis one which stated that ‘there will be significant relationship between family relationship and psychological wellbeing (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance) of covenant university undergraduates’ was therefore accepted.

H2: This hypothesis stated that there will be significant influence of functional and dysfunctional family relationship on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates. This hypothesis was tested using regression analysis and the result is presented in table 2.

Table 3: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of functional and dysfunctional family relationship on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates.

DV	Predictors	R	R ²	F	Df	P	B	t	P
Psychological Wellbeing	Constant	.542	.294	69.203	2, 294	<.001			
	Functional						.311	5.792	<.001
	Dysfunctional						-.589	-10.972	<.001

Result in table 3 shows the influence of functional and dysfunctional family relationship on psychological wellbeing among covenant university undergraduates. The result shows that both functional and dysfunctional family relationship significantly and jointly influence psychological wellbeing among undergraduates of Covenant University [R = .542 and R² = .294; F (2, 294) = 69.203; p<.001]. Observation of coefficient of determination [R² = 294] shows that both functional and dysfunctional family relationship significantly and jointly accounted for 29.4% of the total variance observed in psychological wellbeing among Covenant University undergraduates.

On the independent basis, the result shows that functional family relationship [$\beta = .322, t = 5.792; p < .001$] positively influence psychological wellbeing while dysfunctional family relationship [$\beta = -.589, t = -10.972; p < .001$] negatively influence psychological wellbeing among undergraduates of Covenant University. Based on this result, hypothesis two which stated that 'there will be significant influence of functional and dysfunctional family relationship on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates, the hypothesis is therefore accepted.

H3: This hypothesis stated there will be significant gender differences on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the result is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Summary of independent t-test showing gender difference on psychological wellbeing among undergraduates of Covenant University.

DV	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	df	P
Psychological Wellbeing	Male	150	153.32	33.03	2.69	3.564	296	<.001
	Female	148	141.65	22.59	1.86			

Result in table 3 shows gender differences on psychological wellbeing among undergraduates of Covenant University. The result shows that there was a significant gender difference on psychological wellbeing among undergraduates of Covenant University [t (296) = 3/564; p<.001]. Observation of mean difference shows that male participants (Mean = 153.32; SD = 33.03) significantly scored higher on psychological wellbeing compared to their female counterparts (Mean = 141.65; SD = 22.59). Based on this result, hypothesis three which stated that 'there will be significant gender difference on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates' was therefore accepted.

DISCUSSION

This study assessed the responses of three hundred undergraduate students of Covenant University in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis one which states that there will be significant relationship between family relationship and psychological wellbeing (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life and Self-Acceptance) of covenant university undergraduates was rejected as the result showed a significant relationship between family



relationship with psychological wellbeing (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth and self- acceptance). This result is in line with the result of the study carried out by Aloba et al. (2019) which found out that family functioning was positively associated with the psychological wellbeing of adolescents when moderated by social support. It is also supported by the results of Albakour and Alharbi (2021), the researchers examined the relationships between family communication patterns, family functioning, and psychological well-being in Saudi Arabian families. The results showed that positive family communication patterns and family functioning were positively associated with psychological well-being. The study also found that the relationship between family communication patterns and psychological well-being was partially mediated by family functioning.

Hypothesis two which states that there will be significant influence of functional and dysfunctional family relationship on psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates was also accepted. This study found that both functional and dysfunctional family relationship significantly and jointly influence psychological wellbeing among undergraduates of Covenant University and that functional family relationship positively influence psychological wellbeing while dysfunctional family relationship negatively influenced psychological well-being among undergraduates of Covenant University.

This result is in line with a study by Wang et al. (2021) which found that parental warmth was positively associated with Psychological wellbeing while parental psychological control was negatively associated with Psychological wellbeing. Umberson et al. (2010) found that individuals who reported higher levels of emotional support from their family members had lower levels of psychological distress. Another study by Proulx et al. (2007) found that positive interactions with family members, such as expressions of love and affection, were associated with better mental health outcomes.

Hypothesis three which states that there will be significant gender difference in psychological wellbeing of covenant university undergraduates. The result shows that there was a significant gender difference on psychological wellbeing among undergraduates of Covenant University. Male students reported significantly higher on psychological well-being.

This result negated a study on gender differences in various aspects of psychological well-being among Filipino college students from various schools in the Philippines. Gender differences were found in terms of daily spiritual experience, father relationship, peer relationship, autonomy, positive relations with others, and purpose in life. No gender differences were found in the aspects of positive affect, negative affect, mother relationship, teacher relationship, environmental mastery, personal growth, and self-acceptance. Results are found to be confirmatory of prior studies and in parallel with gender stereotypes and socialization practices in the Philippines. It is not also in consonance with Ooi, et al., (2022) in their study on positive effect of university support and gender difference on postgraduate students' psychological well-being which revealed no significant differences between male and female groups with university support on postgraduate students' psychological well-being.

Conclusions

The results of this study brought about the following conclusions: that Family relationship and family systems whether functional or dysfunctional has the tendencies and potential to affect an individual's psychological wellbeing positively or negatively. From the results,



Family relationship has an influence on Psychological well-being of private university students. It was also drawn from the result that male students scored significantly higher than female student on psychological wellbeing hence female students are likely to feel the impact more if there are problems at the home front or if the family relationship is dysfunctional in nature.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, it is recommended that parents and guardians or relatives who constitute or make up a family should be cautious and conscious of the kind of relationship that thrives within it.

The Psychological and by extension the overall wellbeing of children and adolescents in the family is largely dependent on the type of relationship they see and experience in the home. Married couples should settle grievances quietly and amicably. Stake holders in the family should strive for a healthy and functional relationship in the family as it has implications for their Psychological well-being.

Moreover, psycho–education programs on the implications of family relationship on psychological –well being of university students for their parents.

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