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## **Influence of Personal and Environmental Factors on Psychological Well-Being of Students with Hearing Impairment in Ibadan, Oyo State**

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### **Abstract**

*The poor state of the psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment has been worrisome to researchers, teachers, parents and students with hearing impairment over the years. Hence, this study examined influence of personal and environmental factors (Parental involvement and social support) on psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment. The descriptive research design of the correlational type was adopted. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 100 students with hearing impairment from three senior secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Data were collected with: Personality Questionnaire ( $r = 0.87$ ), Parental Involvement Questionnaire ( $r = 0.79$ ), Social Support Scale ( $r = 0.82$ ) and Ryff Psychological Wellbeing Scale ( $r = 0.85$ ). Data were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation and Multiple regressions at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that: Personality ( $r = .727$ ), Parental Involvement ( $r = .446$ ) and Social Support ( $r = .806$ ) positively correlated with psychological well-being. Personality, parental involvement, and social support jointly contributed to psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment. The relative contributions of the independent variables to psychological well-being were as follows; personality ( $\beta = 0.622$ ,  $t=7/377$ ), parental involvement ( $\beta = 0.205$ ,  $t=4.093$ ) and social support ( $\beta = 0.622$ ,  $t=12.161$ ). Personality, supportive parental involvement and positive social support are important determinants of psychological wellbeing of students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Parents, teachers and members of the community where students with hearing impairment live, should make the environment friendly in order to help boost their psychological well-being.*

**Keywords:** *Anxiety, Distress, Psychological well-being, Social support, Students with hearing impairment*

## Introduction

Psychological well-being is central to human existence and adjustment to the environment. This makes it a subject of concern to all and sundry. Most times, students face difficulties that can really affect their psychological well-being. In the majority of cases, adolescents are able to handle the difficulties which they face; however, in the number of cases these challenges may have a serious influence on the young person's psychological well-being. In order for adolescents to achieve their goals in life and obtain academic success, it is important to be psychologically adjusted. Stressful atmosphere may create and/or elevate psychological distress and reduce happiness in their academic pursuit and adjustment to the society later in life. Depression, Stress and Anxiety are common disorders that are capable of affecting individual's ability to perform life activities including those required at the workplace.

Anxiety, which is a psychological condition, is a common experience to every individual on daily basis. Often, we use terms like *jittery*, *high-strung*, and *uptight* to describe anxious feelings. Feeling anxious is normal and can range from very low levels to such high levels that social, personal, and academic performance is affected. At moderate levels, anxiety can be helpful because it raises our alertness to danger or signals that we need to take some actions. Anxiety can arise from real or imagined circumstances. For example, a student may become anxious about taking a test (real) or be overtly concerned that he or she will say the wrong thing and be ridiculed (imagined). Anxiety results from thinking about real or imagined events as almost any situation can set the stage for it to occur. Studies indicated that many students suffered from psychological problems, which in turn affected their wellbeing in which students with hearing impairment are no exemption. Pomerantz, Grolnick and Price (2005) for example, reported that stressful life events are significantly elevated in anxious and depressed youths, thus could lead to low academic performance. Anxiety is a well-studied psychological variable. It is defined as a condition of intense agitation, apprehension, tension, fear and worry, occurring from a real or intuited threat of imminent danger, which causes instantaneous mind-body reaction and its effects are felt behaviourally and psychologically often at the same time (Gurung, 2006).

The emotional health and overall functioning of students with hearing impairment cannot be overemphasised. These are the factors which determine the psychological well-being of an individual. Amy (2019) submitted that psychological well-being of an individual refers to the emotional health and overall functioning. According to her, it is the combination of feeling good and functioning effectively in the society. People are more likely to enjoy positive psychological well-being when they have their basic needs met. Psychological wellbeing is the overall concept that binds the fulfillment of all and sundry. Hence, the absence or poor psychological wellbeing of students with hearing impairment could affect their lives in all ramifications. Psychological well-being is important to understanding children and youths with hearing loss because of the importance of communication and social participation in everyday life. Well-being is conceptualised as a broad assessment across various domains. However, well-being is a broad concept and there seems to be no consensus on its definition or measurement. In essence, well-being is about the meaning that people attribute to and derive from the important aspects of their lives; thus it is a social construct and highly individualised. The implication of this is that, the needs of students with hearing impairment should be met in terms of their academics and interactions with the people in their environment. This will make them have high sense of belonging and

improved psychological well-being.

There are several factors that are capable of influencing the psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment; they include personality, parental involvement and social support.

Personality is used in a number of ways including the apparent features of a person. However, psychologists use it to refer to the characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling and acting. Characteristic pattern mean the consistent and distinctive ways our ideas, feelings and actions are organised. Personality refers to the totality or whole of the person. Thus, the enduring pattern expressed by the person in various situations is the hall mark of personality. The way students with hearing impairment see themselves will determine the way they will adjust to immediate environment. Adjusting to hearing impairment and accepting hearing loss can be difficult for many individuals, as well as for their families. The most significant consequence of growing up with hearing loss is the difficulty in perceiving others, and this limitation has direct effect on the ability to develop speech and language skills which is essential for communication. Heward (2000) observed that there is a cascading effect of hearing impairment on every aspect of a child's psychosocial development, self esteem, self efficacy, emotional development, family concern, social competence and over all perceived quality. Studies revealed that students with hearing impairment present more behavioural and social problems than their hearing peer (Oyewumi, 2012).

Parental involvement in psychological growth of the child is capable of influencing a number of positive outcomes. There is no gain saying therefore that, parents play a major role in making the psychological wellbeing. It is of great importance to stress that students need the involvement of their parents in all aspects of life, especially as they deal with the demands of society. Parental involvement is the sum total of parents' responsibilities towards the success of their wards. Students with hearing impairment required parental involvement in all ramifications in order to have improved psychological well-being. Kayla and Brett (2009) reported that parental involvement in school and social activities directly impacts student success and well being. The level and type of parental involvement as perceived by students are correlated with students' psychological well being, especially self-esteem, self-evaluation and peer relationship. The physical presence of parents is not enough, their being emotionally invested and responsive is also essential for a healthier development.

Social support is a multi-faceted concept that has been very difficult to conceptualise, define and measure. Although, this concept has been extensively studied, there is little agreement among researchers as to its theoretical and operational definition. As a result, the concept remains fuzzy and almost anything that infers a social interaction may be considered social support. Social support refers to the experience being valued, respected, cared about, and loved by others who are present in one's life (Gurung, 2006). It is seen as the existence or availability of people on whom we can rely, people who let us know that they care about, value, and love us. It may come from different sources such as family, friends, teachers, community, or any social groups to which one is affiliated. Social support can come in the form of tangible assistance provided by others when needed which includes appraisal of different situations, effective coping strategies, and emotional support. Social support is an element that can help individuals to reduce the amount of stress experienced as well as to help individual cope better in dealing with stressful situations. Social support is an aspect that should be reviewed since it is described as both a buffer against life stressors as well as

an agent promoting health and wellness (Dollete, Steese, Phillips & Matthews, 2004). Research has shown that social support plays an important role in managing psychological problems. Lack of social support has been found to be one of the factors that lead to many psychological problems among students with hearing impairment. A growing number of literature and empirical researches have indicated the relationship between social support and psychological problems among students with hearing impairment.

Social support has been found to have great consequence on the education of students (Dollete *et al.*, 2004). However, the influence of social support, especially from parents, is mostly felt in the well-being of persons with hearing impairment. They require social supports in order to cope with life and stressful situations. Students with hearing impairment without social support can become increasingly lonely and depressed. Deficits in social support have been shown to be related to many psychological problems such as depression, loneliness and anxiety (Eskin, 2003). Elliot and Gramling (1990), on the other hand, found that social support helps students to lessen depression, anxiety, and stress. They also found that social support could help the students manage and lessen their psychological problems. It has also been recognised to have significant impact on the achievement and well-being of the students. The support received by the students could help to decrease their psychological problems since they feel that someone is there to help them.

Calvete and Connor-Smith (2006) believed that support from family and friends will reduce the influence of psychological problems among students with hearing impairment. This is because social support includes social resources that individuals perceive to be available or that are actually offered to them which could help protect against psychological problems. According to Teoh and Rose (2001), lower level of social support is one of the predictors of psychological problems among students with hearing impairment.

Students with hearing impairment may have partial or total hearing loss on one or both ears. The characteristics exhibited by the students depend on the degree of hearing loss and the onset of the loss. The earlier the age of onset of hearing loss, the more difficult the development of speech and language becomes. A hearing handicap or deafness involves not only the loss or impairment of hearing, but the loss or limitation of the ability to acquire language and speech naturally or spontaneously. For its insidious and hidden nature, hearing loss can be devastating. It can be particularly traumatic because it is often mistaken for absent mindedness or senility. For most learners, having a hearing loss threatens their self image and may manifest as feelings of inadequacy, being constrained or being abnormal. It is obvious that students with hearing impairment generally have less positive ideas about themselves than do comparable groups of hearing peers. It has also been observed that there is a high incidence of emotional, behavioural and psychological problems among students with hearing impairment of all ages, hence, majority of students with hearing impairment experience low psychological well-being. This study therefore, examined the influence of personal and environmental factors on psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is most important to stabilise the psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment based on the limitations placed on them as a result of their impairment. The limitations include inability to adjust favourably to their environment.

Students with hearing impairment, most times, are not helped to develop good personality, hence, their psychological wellbeing is not guaranteed. Parental involvement in both the school and home has been argued to influence psychological wellbeing, but with little or no attention to how the same can be achieved amongst students with hearing impairment. Social supports and parental involvement in students schooling is one of the crucial mechanisms through which children are socialised, so that they can cope with the challenges of academic success. Going through literature and researches, it has been discovered that few studies have been able to examine the influence of personality, parental involvement and social support on psychological wellbeing among students with hearing impairment. This study therefore, examined the influence of personal and environmental factors on psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo state Nigeria.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study.

1. What is the relationship between the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) to the dependent variable (psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment)?
2. What is the composite contribution of the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) to the dependent variable (psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment)?
3. What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) to the dependent variable (psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment)?

### Methodology

The descriptive survey research design of the correlational type was adopted in carrying out the study. The population comprised all students with hearing impairment in Oyo State. While the sample consisted of 100 students with hearing impairment selected from three secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The participants were selected using purposive sampling technique. Four instruments, namely, Personality Questionnaire, Parental Involvement Questionnaire, Social Support Scale and Ryff Psychological Well-being Scale, were used for data collection. The data collected were analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to measure the relationship between the variables of interest, while multiple regression analysis (MRA) was used to find out the joint and relative contributions of the independent variables to the dependent variable.



**Results****Inter-correlation Matrix of independent and dependent variables**

Variables	Psychological Wellbeing	Personality	Parental Involvement	Social Support
Psychological Wellbeing	1			
Personality (P value)	.727** .000	1		
Parental Involvement (p value)	.446** .000	.442** .000	1	
Social Support (p value)	.806** .000	.375** .001	.372** .002	1
Mean	69.22	69.51	26.17	24.27
Standard Deviation	13.97	13.74	8.83	6.27

The table showed that there was a significant relationship between the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) and the dependent variable (Psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment). That is, Personality ( $r = .727, N = 70, p < .05$ ), Parental Involvement ( $r = .446, N = 70, p < .05$ ) and Social Support ( $r = .806, N = 70, p < .05$ ). It implies that, there was a significant relationship between the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) and the dependent variable (Psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment).

**Summary of Regression Analysis of the combined prediction of personality, parental involvement and social support on the dependent variable (Psychological well being) among students with hearing impairment**

.R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
0.928	0.861	0.854	5.33511			
Summary Regression		ANOVA				
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Remark
Regression	11603.759	3	3867.920			
Residual	1878.584	66	28.463	135.891	0.000	P<0.05 Sig.
Total	13482.343	69				

The table showed there was a significant composite contribution of the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) to the dependent variable (Psychological well being) among students with hearing impairment. That is, the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) contributed to the psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment when combined together. The table shows a coefficient of multiple correlations (R) of 0.928 and a multiple R square of 0.861. This means that 85.4% (Adj.  $R^2=0.854$ ) of the variance in the Psychological well-being is accounted for by the independent variables when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at  $p<0.05$  using the F- ratio at the degree of freedom (df- 3/66). The table also showed that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded a F-ratio of 135.891. The above is significant at 0.05 level.

**Relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variables (Test of significance of the regression coefficients)**

Variable	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		Sig.	Remark
	(B)	Std. Error	Beta	T		
Model						
Constant	.705	3.586	-	.197	.845	-
Personality	.505	.054	.496	9.377	.000	$P<0.05$ (Sig.)
Parental Involvement	.308	.084	.205	4.093	.026	$P<0.05$ (Sig.)
Social Support	1.386	.114	.622	12.161	.000	$P<0.05$ (Sig.)

The table reveals that there was a significant relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights. Using the standardised regression coefficient to determine the relative contributions of the independent variables, Social Support ( $\beta=0.622$ ,  $t=12.161$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) indicates most potent contributor, followed by Personality ( $\beta=0.496$ ,  $t=9.377$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and Parental Involvement ( $\beta=0.205$ ,  $t=4.093$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). It implies that there a significant relative contribution of the independent variables (personality, parental involvement and social support) and the dependent variable (Psychological well being of students with hearing impairment).

## Discussion

The finding of the study showed that there is significant relationship between personality, parental involvement and social support on psychological wellbeing of students with hearing impairment. This finding however supports the findings of Mazzucchelli and Pircell (2015) that the well-being of students with hearing impairment experience high levels of psychological well-being due to personal factor and external factors from their environment. In other word, psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment is the outcome of favourable life circumstances. Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade (2005) reported that the well-being of students with hearing impairment are attributed to personal and environmental factors.

The study revealed that there was a significant composite contribution of the independent variables (personality, parental involvement, social support) to psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment. This finding therefore supports the finding of Cooper, Lyndsay and Nye (2000) who reported that the involvement of parents in taking care of their children in terms of helping them with their assignment correlates positively with the well-being of students. This indicates that parental involvement is a strong contributing factor to students' well-being. The findings of this study does not however agree with that of Jeynes (2003) who found that parental involvement in decision making does not directly influence the psychological well-being of the wards. The study also agreed with (Isaiah, 2011) who reported that personality and social support from the home predicted psychological adjustment of students with hearing impairment.

The study found out that there is significant relative contribution of personality, parental involvement and social support to the psychological well-being of students with hearing impairment. The present study is an indication to the results findings of Catie and Cecilia (2016), that friend, parents and the community, among others, play a more influential role during young adulthood than during adolescence in the psychological development of students. According to Amett (2000), young adults spend more time with their peers and depend less on family emotionally and financially. Furthermore, the present findings correlates with a study by Wentzel (1998) who found out that social support provide motivational influence on well-being students with hearing impairment. This study is supported by the findings by Quomma and Greenberg (1994) who found that social and parental supports are vital ingredients for psychological well-being of students.

## **Conclusion**

The study established that personality, parental involvement and social support are potent factors on psychological wellbeing of students with hearing impairment. The teachers and Parents should ensure that the environment is friendly for them (students with hearing impairment) so that they can adjust favourably to their environment. In addition, all hands must be on deck to ensure that the psychological wellbeing of students with hearing impairment is guaranteed, so that they can contribute their quotas to the development of their society. this will also ensure their sense of belonging.

## **Recommendations**

The findings of the study have shown that personality, parental involvement, and social support correlate strongly with psychological well-being among students with hearing impairment. Based on this result therefore, the following recommendations are made;

1. Parents of students with hearing impairment should be strongly committed to the psychological growth of their children, by showing them love.
2. School administrators should also communicate the needs, present state and progress of each student to their parents. This will give the parents opportunity to encourage and provide the needed assistance to their children where necessary so that students can maximise their potentials.

3. Students with hearing impairment should do everything possible to be happy and interact well with environment. This will in no small way boost their psychological well-being.

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