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Dimensions of Psychological Wellbeing as Predictors of Stress  
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## Dimensions of Psychological Wellbeing as Predictors of Stress among Undergraduates

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between dimensions of psychological wellbeing and stress among undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

**Methodology:** the study utilized an Ex Post Facto research design with secondary data of one thousand (1000) respondents generated from the platform for psychological assessment of staff and students, developed by Centre for Counselling and Career Development of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Multiple regression analysis was used for analysis at .001, and .05 levels of significance.

**Findings:** From the purpose of the study and research questions, six hypotheses were postulated and tested. The findings indicated that hypotheses 1, 3, and 4 were rejected which means that autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life did not predict stress among undergraduates. Whereas, hypotheses 2, 5, and 6 were accepted indicating that positive relationship with others, personal growth, and self-acceptance predicted stress among undergraduates.

**Unique Contributions to Theory, Policy and Practice:** Since some dimension of psychological wellbeing (positive relationship with others, personal growth, and self-acceptance) were found to have a direct predictive relationship with stress among undergraduates, the theoretical framework is further validated; hence, the findings in this study could be used for further elaboration of the theoretical framework. Psychotherapist and counsellors would benefit from the findings, since assessment of students among other parameters should take the factors of interpersonal relationship into consideration. Also, psychotherapeutic regimens, directed at improving these domains of PWB will serve both therapeutic and prophylactic purposes.

**Keywords:** *Dimensions of Psychological Wellbeing, Stress, University Undergraduates*

## INTRODUCTION

Many university undergraduates are faced with lot of stressful stimuli which include academic tasks and challenges, and inability to meet up with their financial requirements in school. Many a times, financial difficulties drive some of them into some forms of criminal behaviours like selling of illicit drugs, low key prostitution (being in a sexual relationship that is not adding any value to their life just because of the monetary benefit), kidnapping, armed robbery, and cybercrime. Many students have also reported poor family relationship, disappointment with peer, and intrapersonal difficulties as among the factors that complicates their campus stress situations. As a result of these stressors, many undergraduates develop some maladaptive behaviour, as a form of coping strategies, and some could become vulnerable to negative peer influence, leading to high dropout among undergraduates. Hence, it is likely that studying and understanding the relationship between stress and psychological wellbeing will enable better appreciation of the method to deal with this condition, and improve psychological health of students.

WHO (2012) stated that mental health challenges is among the prominent challenges in public health, accounting for one third of the global disabilities. According to Asif et al. (2020), studies on mental health challenges showed that the high expectations placed on students in preparing them for the task of the future are stressful. Thus, could interact with other intra and or interpersonal factors in stimulating an overwhelming negative emotion in some students, leading to mental health problems and maladaptive behaviour observed among some university students (Asif et al., 2020). By implication, high exposure to stress that are beyond an organism's adaptive capacity, results to maladaptive reaction (distress), and such maladaptive reactions could either be psychological, physical or could be both, and its impact on the overall well-being of such individual could be devastating.

Stress according to Seaward, cited in Rois et al. (2021) is an individual's deficiency in circumventing or handling threatening situation which could be real or imaginary. The perceived threat could be emotional, mental, physical, or could be stimulus that threatens one's spiritual well-being, and could result to the individual's inability to adapt adequately. According to Cohen et al. (2016), stress is anything that poses a challenge or a risk to an individual's well-being, and could place such individual at risk of possible psychological disorder; such as, anxiety, depression, and insomnia. It can also result to maladaptive responses like, frustration, aggression, irritability, and can also lead to eating disorder.

Stress however is not completely pathological as there are stress that could lead to innovation. A minimal amount of stress could challenge an individual into looking for means of improving on their skills, finding better ways to be more productive, as well as pushing themselves into becoming a better version of themselves. Such stress is referred to as eustress. However, when the individual stretches themselves to their highest point of elasticity, it becomes harmful (Onuoha et al., 2024). At that point, it becomes distress (negative stress), and hampers productive outcome. It can also have negative physical and psychological implications on an individual. Furthermore, stress can be classified, based on its level of intensity as well as its duration. Example include:

1. **Acute stress:** This type of stress is usually intense but short lived, and the duration usually does not last long.
2. **Chronic stress:** This type of stress could be intense or mild but last for a long period of time.
3. **Eustress or positive stress:** This type of stress can be seen as productive stress; as its outcome is usually satisfying, and it is usually of short duration.
4. **Distress or negative stress:** This is the pathological stress. It is frustrating, and hampers productivity, as well as stimulates negative emotion. This type of stress is long-lived, and may result from dissonance between the expected tasks, and the skills, or capacity of the individual expected to perform the task.

The period of undergraduate studies is highly demanding and requires some amount of intellectual, and emotional stress on an undergraduate, then in any other stages of education (Saleem & Mahmood, 2013). According to Rodgers and Tennison (2009), this stage in an individual's life is associated with lots of challenges, and expectations; with propensity of resulting to either social, emotional, or physical difficulties. As such, could trigger maladaptive behaviours like: depressive symptoms, anxiety, phobia, and could even lead to suicidal ideation or behaviour.

Stress (distress) among university undergraduates is a global phenomenon with negative implications on the overall well-being of many undergraduates; and its global prevalence is significantly high. Asif et al. (2020) reported the prevalence of stress, anxiety and depression among Pakistan university undergraduates as 84.4% for stress, 88.4% for anxiety, and 75% for depression. Suleyman and Zewdu (2018) reported the prevalence of stress among Ambo University undergraduates in Ethiopia as 24.5%. Ezeh et al. (2016) reported the prevalence of stress across different faculties and departments in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria as 72.5% for nursing undergraduates, human physiology 68.9%, human anatomy 64%, and medical students 62.4%. They further distinguished the prevalence between genders, and reported the prevalence of stress among female undergraduates as 75.3% and 61.4% for males. Yusoff et al. (2010) reported the prevalence of stress symptoms among Sains University medical students in Malaysia as 29.6%. Ko et al. (1999) reported the prevalence of stress among undergraduates in Singapore, studying law and those studying medicine as 47.2% and 57% respectively. From the above prevalence on stress symptoms among university undergraduates, it is obvious that significant number of undergraduate's experience stress, specially, in Nigeria, but the world over.

Psychological well-being as a variable in this study could be referred to as an individual's subjective experience of positive state of the mind, soul and body. It involves the feeling of pleasure, a sense of purpose in life as well as sense of satisfaction about one's life. Psychological well-being covers diverse aspects of an individual's emotional and mental well-being, that include positive relationships with others, ones' growth and development, positive self-esteem, self-acceptance, and a sense of being in charge of one's life (Dhanabhakym & Sarath, 2023). Psychological well-being means an individual's state of mind which enables them to develop their full potentials, as well as be able to cope with normal stressors of everyday life (WHO, 2021).

Diaz et al., cited in Morales-Rodríguez et al. (2020) viewed psychological well-being as resulting from a positive life style, and is a vital factor in a student's ability to successfully adapt to the expectations of university life. According to Cañero et al. (2019), the period of undergraduate studies requires some level of adjustment to a new life style, community, learning context, and adapting to high academic pressure. Thus, a student's ability to adjust as well as function adequately, must be determined by their psychological well-being.

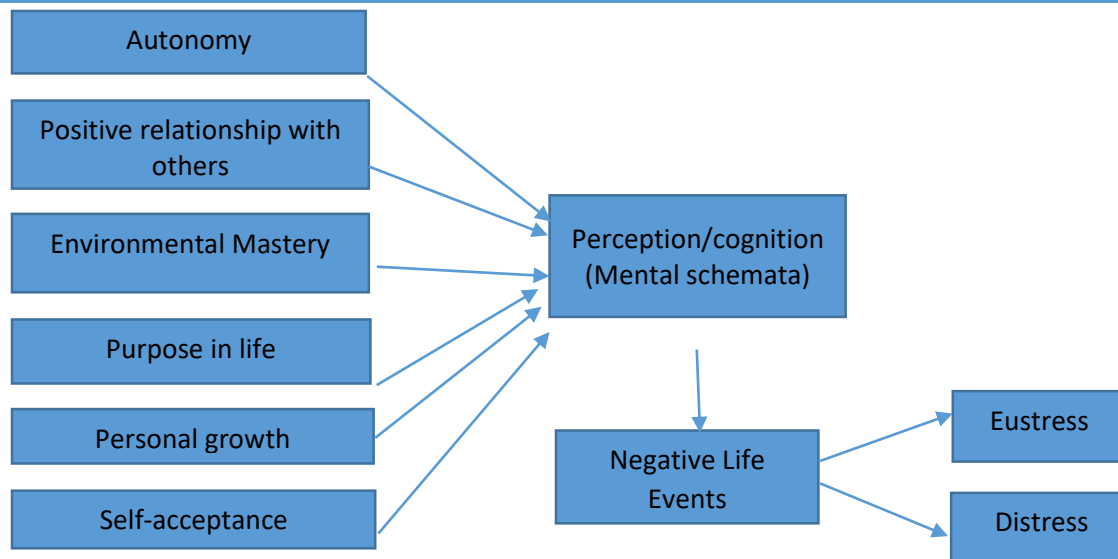
Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) viewed psychological well-being as resulting from dimensions which included: positive emotion as well as engaging in meaningful activities. They opined that individuals that always have positive emotions as well as being constantly active in meaningful activities are likely going to enjoy higher levels of psychological well-being. Seligman (2002) popularized positive psychology. According to Seligman, psychological well-being is the union between enjoyment and sense of fulfilment. Thus implied that, psychological well-being is characterized by positive emotions, such as, happiness, having a sense of purpose or finding meaning in life, but does not mean an absence of unpleasant situations (Seligman, 2002). Moreover, APA, cited in Obi-Nwosu et al. (2019) viewed well-being as a state of one's happiness, low distress level, contentment, as well as optimal quality of life.

Major focus of positive psychology has been on improving human's happiness. Hence, many scholars have developed concepts on positive psychology, which influenced Ryff's (1989) six dimensional approach. Earlier works in this regards include: Erikson (1959), titled psychosocial development; Allport (1961)'s work on the mature personality; Rogers (1961)'s work on the fully functioning individual; as well as the need for self-actualization by (Maslow, 1968). Ryff (1989) conceptualized the six dimensions of psychological well-being (PWB); which comprised the following: self-acceptance, positive relationship with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Currently, Ryff's six dimensional approach to psychological well-being is universally accepted and is frequently researched on. According to Abbott et al. (2010), Ryff's PWB has been adapted in numerous versions; thus, have been broadly researched in different settings as well as populations.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Theoretically, this study anchored on Transactional Theory of stress and coping by Lazarus (1966) which postulated stress as involving a dynamic process of transaction between an individual's cognitive, psychological and physiological mechanism, and his or her complex environment. Thus, for an individual to feel the negative impact of a stimulus as stressful, the outcome of the transaction must be negative. So to say, psychological well-being, which focuses on the enhancement of one' happiness as well as satisfaction can influence the outcome of such transaction. Thus, insulating such individual from feeling, or interpreting such stimulus as threatening. Even when facing stressful stimulus (stressors), the dimensions of psychological wellbeing an undergraduate possesses, could bargain a fair transaction that could inhibit, or reduce such stimulus stress potency through rationalization.

### **Conceptual Framework**



The conceptual framework of this study simply means that an undergraduates' perception of self from these six dimensions of well-being will determine how he or she interprets life event. Thus, his or her interpretation will determine the emotional reaction to such event; either as positive (eustress) or as negative (distress).

### Statement of the Problem

Undergraduate period is associated with many stressors which could be psychological, physical, or social. In many occasions, financial difficulty overwhelms some undergraduates to the extent that some of them enter or stay in abusive relationship which in the long run complicates their stress situation. To many others, the transition as well as changes in life styles associated with the university community, pressure from courses and assignments, as well as many other needed academic activities could be highly demanding, and could stimulate some form of stress.

Many undergraduates develop one maladaptive behaviour or another, in search for the best way to cope with school stress. Some get into psychoactive substance abuse, which they mistakenly take to be easing their stress, while many others might end up dropping out of school. To some, it may become so unbearably overwhelming to the extent that suicidal ideation and attempt, seem to them as the best escape (Onuoha et al., 2024).

Moreover, earlier studies, such as (Adegoka, 2014; Suleman, 2018; Prasad and Ahmad, 2021; Reddy and Vijayan, 2023) investigated the relationship between stress (occupational stress) and psychological wellbeing. Nonetheless, they investigated psychological wellbeing as a single variable, ignoring the possible impact of its' individual sub-dimensions. Also, their studies focused on working class adults, excluding university undergraduate. Thus, making it a noteworthy research to investigate the relationship between dimensions of psychological wellbeing and stress among university undergraduates; so as to be able to proffer a tailored and empirically based solution to the problem, and to reduce the negative implications of stress on the overall effectiveness and wellbeing of undergraduates in general.

Hence, this study titled dimensions of psychological wellbeing as predictors of stress among undergraduates aimed at filling the observed gaps as well as adding novel literature to the body of knowledge in respect to the relationship between the dimensions of psychological wellbeing and stress among university undergraduates.

### **Hypotheses**

The following six hypotheses were postulated to guide this study:

1. Autonomy (AU) would negatively and significantly predict stress symptoms.
2. Positive relationship with others (PR) would negatively and significantly predict stress symptoms.
3. Environmental mastery (EM) would negatively and significantly predict stress symptoms.
4. Purpose in life (PL) would negatively and significantly predict stress symptoms.
5. Personal growth (PG) would negatively and significantly predict stress symptoms.
6. Self-acceptance (SA) would negatively and significantly predict stress symptoms.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research design**

This study utilized an Ex post facto research design, and multiple regression statistic was adopted as the statistical tool for the data analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

#### **Population**

One thousand (1000) undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, participated in the study. Though, the data (secondary), drawn from the platform for psychological assessment developed by Centre for Counselling and Career Development (CCCD) of the institution. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 35 years with mean age of 22.0 and standard deviation of 2.8. Among the 1000 respondents, 268(26.8) were males while 732(73.2) were females.

#### **Instruments for data collection**

Two instruments were used in this study for data collection; they include: Psychological well-being (PWB) by Ryff and Keyes (1995) and the Stress Sub Scale of Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS) developed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995).

#### **Stress Sub Scale of Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS)**

Stress was measured using the stress sub-scale of DASS which consist 7 items that measures an individual's stress symptoms level, using a 4-point Likert scale. Ranging from 0= did not apply to me at all to 3=Applied to me most of the time. Sample item for the stress sub-scale included: I just couldn't seem to get going. The authors reported the convergent validity of DASS anxiety with Beck's anxiety inventory (BAI), with high correlation of  $r=.81$  and DASS depression inventory with BDI as  $r=.74$ . Laranjera et al. (2023) reported the Cronbach's alphas

for the depression, anxiety and stress subscales and the full scale as .83, .76, .82 and .90, respectively

### **Psychological Well-being scale**

Psychological Wellbeing Scale developed by Ryff and Keyes (1995) is a 42-items worded to elicit psychological Wellbeing (PWB) measures based on six dimensions of wellbeing and happiness. They included: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance, using a 6-point Likert scale. Ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree. Each of the six dimensions consisted of seven items for each. The sample item for autonomy is, I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus. For environmental mastery is, in general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live. For personal growth, I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world. For positive relations with others, people would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others. For purpose in life; some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them; and for self-acceptance, I like most aspects of my personality. The scale has an internal consistency which varies between 0.87 and 0.96, and test-retest reliability coefficients ranging between 0.78 and 0.97 for the six subscales. Van-Dierendock, cited in Oshilaja et al. (2023), reported internal consistency with reliability coefficient of the sub-scales of PWB, ranging from 0.72 to 0.8, Onwukwe (2020) in a study, reported a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .89, while Uche et al. (2019) reported a reliability coefficient of .82 for PWB among undergraduates. Hence, it is considered both valid and reliable for the present study.

### **Validation and Reliability of the Instruments**

Issue of validity and reliability of instrument used in psychological research are dependent on the psychometrics properties of the instrument as established by the developers of the instruments, as well as their adaptation within the culture the researchers' are intending to use them. For the instruments used in this study, their individual psychometrics were reported under each of the instruments as well as its previous usage in the context of the culture of this present study. Hence, the instruments are valid and reliable to be used for data collection in this present study.

### **Ethical Consideration**

In order to ensure that the ethical requirement of the Centre was maintained, personal information that may breach the confidentiality clause of the Centre were excluded. Hence, only age and gender were the demographic variables utilized in this study.

### **Procedure**

Approval was sought and obtained by the researcher to utilize the data on the database of Centre for Counselling and Career Development (CCCD) of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. After which 1000 responses of undergraduates were pulled from data bank on



Psychological wellbeing (PWB) and depression, anxiety and stress (DASS), and was coded for analysis. However, the data were treated as secondary data.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Summary table of the mean and standard deviation: A descriptive Statistics.**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
AGE	1000	22.0180	2.75632
AU	1000	30.5650	4.88443
EM	1000	28.0190	3.91330
PG	1000	32.2040	4.66048
PR	1000	28.4030	5.41127
PL	1000	33.7670	4.85966
SA	1000	29.9200	5.45448
Valid N (listwise)	1000		

Table 1 shows the total number, mean scores, and standard deviations of respondents on the study variables.

**Table 2: Multiple regression analysis predicting Stress from: AU, PR, EM, PL, PG and SA**

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Model 1	.074	.074	1	998	80.30				
PG						-.273	.024	-8.961	.000
Model 2	.174	.169	6	993	32.86				
AU						-.058	.027	-1.631	.103
PR						-.205	.023	-6.017	.000
EM						-.053	.034	-1.458	.145
PL						-.056	.029	-1.455	.146
SA						-.121	.026	-3.068	.002

Table 2 explain the models of the equation. In model one, personal growth (PG) was entered in the first model of the equation and it accounted for a total of 27.3% variance in predicting stress at ( $R^2=.074$ ,  $\beta = -.273$ ,  $t = -8.963$ ,  $P < .001$ ). Hence, the fifth hypothesis of the study which stated that personal growth would negative and significantly predict stress among undergraduates was accepted.

In model 2: These dimensions of PWB (AU, SA, PR, EM and PL) were entered in the second model of the equation and their inclusion accounted for 16.9% variance in predicting stress among undergraduates (Adjusted  $R^2=.169$ ,  $F(6,993) = 32.86$ ,  $P < .001$ ). However, among these variables, only personal relationship with others (PR) and self-acceptance (SA) were observed to have a negative significant predictive effect on stress. Hence, the second hypotheses that stated that positive relationship with others (PR) would negatively and significantly predict stress among undergraduates was accepted at ( $\beta = -.205$ ,  $t = -6.017$ ,  $P < .001$ ). Also, the sixth hypothesis which stated that self-acceptance (SA) would negatively and significantly predict stress among undergraduates was accepted at ( $\beta = -.121$ ,  $t = -3.068$ ,  $P < .05$ ). Furthermore, hypothesis number one, three and four were rejected. Thus, the first hypothesis which stated that autonomy (AU) would negatively and significantly predict stress symptoms among undergraduates, was rejected at ( $\beta = -.058$ ,  $t = -1.631$ ,  $P > .05$ ); hypothesis three which stated that environmental mastery (EM) would negative and significantly predict stress symptoms among undergraduates was also rejected at ( $\beta = -.053$ ,  $t = -1.458$ ,  $P > .05$ ). Lastly, hypothesis four which stated that purpose in life (PL) would negative and significantly predict stress symptoms among undergraduates was rejected at ( $\beta = -.056$ ,  $t = -1.455$ ,  $P > .05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

This study examined the dimensions of psychological wellbeing as predictors of stress among university undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria. From the analysis, it was observed that the first hypothesis of the study was rejected. Thus, indicating that autonomy does not predict stress of undergraduates.

This observation is in dissonance with the findings of Adegoka (2014) that examined the effects of occupational stress on psychological well-being of police employees. The author found that work-stress, frustration and depression had a significant effect on psychological wellbeing of police employees in Ibadan metropolis. The reason for the disagreement between the study of Adegoka (2014) and this present study could be because of the differences in the study design. The present study examined the dimensions of psychological wellbeing as an independent variable so as to find out how each of the dimensions of PWB predicts stress symptoms while that of Adegoka (2014) investigated psychological wellbeing as a dependent variable. Also, the differences in the study population of both study could also be a factor that accounted for the differences. For instance, participants in Adegoka (2014)'s study were police officers while the respondents in this present study were university undergraduates.

The finding in this present study is also in dissonance with that of Suleman et al. (2018) who investigated the relationship between perceived occupational stress and psychological

wellbeing among secondary school heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and found a strong negative correlation between perceived occupational stress, and psychological well-being. This means that as perceived occupational stress increases, psychological well-being decreases and as psychological wellbeing increases, occupational stress decreases. However, in this present study, the first hypothesis (autonomy) which is an aspect of psychological wellbeing did not predict stress. So to say, the independent variable autonomy was not found to have a direct impact on stress of university undergraduates. By implication, an increase or decreases in autonomy will not lead to direct increase or decrease in stress of university undergraduate. The observed discrepancy between the present study and that of Suleman et al. (2018) could be as a result of some possible factors like cultural variation between the study populations, as well as the differences in their developmental stages. For instance, the participants in Suleman et al. (2018)'s study were school heads while the respondents in this present study were undergraduates that are still in the university. Furthermore, Suleman et al. (2018) treated psychological wellbeing also as one variable, while this present study focused on the individual dimensions of psychological wellbeing.

The second hypotheses of this study was accepted which indicated that positive relationship with others is among the factors that impacts the stress of university undergraduates. By implication, the observation in the second hypotheses of this present study shows that as an undergraduate cultivates the habit of having a positive relationship with others, it reduces the level of the students stress because of the negative significant predictive relationship observed in this study. It could be stated that as an undergraduates positive relationship with others increases, stress the stress of such student decreases.

This finding is in consonance with the finding of Poormahmood et al. (2017) which investigated the relationships between psychological wellbeing, happiness and perceived occupational stress among primary school teachers in Iran, and found a negative correlation between positive relationship with others and occupational stress among primary school teachers. Prasad and Ahmad (2021) also found that occupational stress and psychological wellbeing are negatively correlated with each other. Inasmuch as there is similarity between the finding of Prasad and Ahmad (2021), and the present study, they also treated psychological wellbeing as one variable while this present study treated the individual dimensions of psychological wellbeing.

Furthermore, Reddy and Vijayan (2023) found a negative correlation between psychological wellbeing and occupational stress. Their finding implies that as psychological wellbeing increases, occupational stress among Blue Collar Workers decreases. This finding is in consonance with the finding in this study which found that as personal relationship with others increases, stress decreases. However, Reddy and Vijayan (2023)'s study population differ from the study population of this present study. Their participant were working class (Blue Collar Workers) while the participants in this present study were university undergraduates. Also, like most other researchers, Reddy and Vijayan (2023) treated psychological wellbeing as one variable while this present study focused on the dimensions of psychological wellbeing.

The third hypotheses of this study was rejected which means that environmental mastery is not among the factors that directly impact stress symptoms among university undergraduate. By implication, an increase or decrease in environmental mastery does not directly lead to an increase or decrease in the stress of university undergraduates. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no study that examine dimensions of psychological wellbeing (environmental mastery) on stress. However, the finding of this study is in dissonance with the observation of Suleman et al. (2018) that examined the relationship between perceived occupational stress and psychological wellbeing among secondary school heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The findings in this study showed that there is a strong negative correlation between perceived occupational stress and psychological wellbeing. Thus, Suleman et al. (2018) observed that as psychological wellbeing increases, stress decreases but this present study found no association between environmental mastery which is an aspect of psychological wellbeing and stress.

Nonetheless, there are possible factors that could account for the incongruity between this present study and the finding of Suleman et al. (2018). One of the factors is the study participants. Suleman et al (2018), conducted a study involving secondary school head while this present study participants were university undergraduates. Furthermore, another factor that could have led to the observed differences is the cultural variation of the study participants. The study of Suleman et al. (2018) was conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, while the present study was carried out in Nigeria. Also, the differences in the research design could as well resulted to the different outcome. For instance, Suleman et al. (2018) studied psychological wellbeing as a single variable while this present study investigated the relationship between dimensions of psychological wellbeing and stress.

The fourth hypotheses of the study was rejected which means that purpose in life does not have a direct predictive impact on stress of university undergraduates. This implied that an increase or decrease in purpose in life, does not have a direct impact on stress of university undergraduate. The fourth hypotheses is as well in disagreement with the finding of Adegoka (2014) who examined the effects of occupational stress on psychological wellbeing of police employees. As well as that of Prasad and Ahmad (2021) that investigated Job stress and psychological well-being among +2 senior secondary school teachers of Madhubani district of Biha. Their findings indicated that psychological wellbeing has a negative correlation with stress. Which means that as psychological wellbeing increases, stress decreases.

However, the result of the fourth hypotheses indicated that purpose in life which is a sub dimension of psychological wellbeing has no direct predictive association with stress. This disagreement could be as a result of the differences in both the studies participants, and the design. Both Adegoka (2014) and Prasad and Ahmad (2021) treated psychological wellbeing as a variable, while this recent study examined the sub dimensions of psychological wellbeing.

The fifth hypotheses of the study was accepted. This means that personal growth negatively predicted stress among university undergraduates. By implication, as an undergraduate invest in his or her personal growth, the level of stress that such a person experience decreases.

Whereas, as their personal growth decreases, their stress level increases. This observation is in line with the finding of Poormahmood et al. (2017) that examined the relationships between psychological wellbeing, happiness and perceived occupational stress among primary school teachers in Iran, and found a significant negative correlation between occupational stress and an individual's development. Thus, implies that as an undergraduate develops his or herself, their level of stress reduces. Inversely, failure to develop one's self is directly associated with an increases in the amount of stress such a person will experience.

Furthermore, the acceptance of the fifth hypotheses is in line with the finding of Nwamadi and Ekechukwu (2020) who examined self-efficacy as a predictor of academic achievement among secondary school students of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State and found that self-efficacy predicted academic achievement. Thus, it can be inferred that as an undergraduate's self-efficacy increases, academic achievement increases.

The sixth hypothesis of this study was accepted which means that self-acceptance negatively predicted stress among university undergraduates. This implies that as an undergraduate's level of self-acceptance increases, his or her stress decreases. While deficit in an undergraduates' self-acceptance directly result to an increase in their stress level. The finding in this present study is in line with the finding of Poormahmood et al. (2017) that examine the relationship between psychological well-being, happiness and perceived occupational stress among primary school teachers in Iran and found that occupational stress is negatively correlated with life satisfaction. They also found a negative correlation between joy and stress symptom.

The implications of the finding of Poormahmood et al. (2017) is that as joy and life satisfaction increases, the level of an individual's stress decreases. Nwamadi and Ekechukwu (2020) also found that self-efficacy predicted academic achievement; which implied that as self-efficacy increases, academic achievement increases as well, while when one's self-efficacy decreases, academic achievement decreases. Thus, relating to the finding of the sixth hypotheses that found self-acceptance as having negative predicting effect on stress symptom among undergraduate student.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research examined dimensions of psychological wellbeing on stress symptoms among university undergraduates. From the purpose and objectives of the study, six hypotheses were proposed and tested using multiple regression analyses. The first, third and fourth hypothesis of the study were rejected which implies that autonomy, environmental mastery and purpose in life does not predict stress among undergraduates. Thus, the increase or decrease of this variables does not directly lead to an increase or decrease of stress of undergraduates.

Furthermore, it was observed that hypotheses two, five and six had a negative predictive relationship with stress of undergraduates. Which implies that as positive relationship with other, personal growth and self-acceptance increases, undergraduates' stress decreases.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the findings of this study, it was recommended among others, that there is need for a tailored intervention that can enhance the dimensions of psychological wellbeing that were found to be associated with stress of university undergraduates; so as to be able to assist undergraduates that are stressed. There is also need for school psychologist, and therapist working with Centre for Counselling and Career Development of other Universities in Nigeria, as well as other countries to adapt this empirical observations in their locality. So as to globally reduce the high rate of stress among university undergraduates. Furthermore, media stations and other stakeholders should advocate for these dimensions of psychological wellbeing (positive relationship with others, desire for personal growth as well as self-acceptance) to be inculcated in children as they grow up.

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