

Assessing Influence of Demographic Factors on Psychological Wellbeing of Flood Victims in Makurdi Metropolis

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Assessing influence of demographic factors on psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis is presented. A total of 210 respondents were drawn from the population of Makurdi metropolis. The Ryff psychological wellbeing scale was used to analyse the data collected. The results revealed that there is no significant mean difference of sex on psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. Findings also revealed that religion has no significant influence on psychological wellbeing of flood victims in the metropolis. Finally, it was discovered that there is a significant joint influence of age, sex and religion on psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. Based on these findings, it was concluded that independently, age, sex and religion have not shown to good predictors of psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. Jointly however, these variables have shown to be potent predictors of psychological wellbeing among flood victims in the metropolis. Based on these, it was recommended that the need to factor in these variables anytime issues relating to the psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis is concerned.

Keywords: Influence, Demographic factors, Psychological wellbeing, Flood victims.

INTRODUCTION

In Africa, flood has often been the challenge confronting most countries over years as a result of various natural and human activities. For example, in 2009, several West African countries such as Nigeria, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Benin and Ghana were all affected by floods due to exceptionally heavy seasonal rainfalls. As a result, rivers such as the Niger, Benue, Volta, and Niger Rivers all broke their banks and invaded homes and farms. In 2012, flood disasters were ranked the second highest cause of death (28%) in Africa after epidemics (37%).

Climatic conditions in Nigeria can be grouped mainly into two; the wet season where there is significant precipitation during the rainy season from May to August and again in September to October. The dry period is experienced usually between November and May [1]. Over the years, the common causes of flooding in Nigeria are intense rainfall, run-offs which occur mainly during the raining season, and dam-burst.

When disasters strike, lives and properties are lost or destroyed. In the face of the cost that comes with disasters, the first thought is physical safety. However, the psychological issues among the victims such as post traumatic experiences like anxiety, stress, and depression among others are

rarely heard of or mentioned. Symptoms of disturbed sleep, fear, depression and exhaustion that the victims experience can be temporary or permanent.

The importance of psychological wellbeing to the individual in ensuring effective functioning and meaningful living cannot be overstated. Poor psychological wellbeing have been reported to be affected or influenced by adverse life conditions such as stress, poverty, loss of love ones, conflicts, natural disasters and so on and so forth. In Makurdi Local Government Area, incessant cases of flooding has over the years pose very serious negative consequences on individuals, families as well as society in general, resulting in loss of lives, property and the like.

Psychological wellbeing (PWB) has two important facets. The first of these refers to the extent to which people experience positive emotions and feelings of happiness. Sometimes this aspect of PWB is referred to as subjective wellbeing [2]. Subjective wellbeing is a necessary part of overall PWB but on its own it is not enough. The second aspect of psychological wellbeing (PWB) is purpose and meaning in life. What this brings home is that to really feel good we need to experience purpose and meaning, in addition to positive emotions. So, the two important ingredients in PWB 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. The term "Hedonic" wellbeing is normally used to refer to the subjective feelings of happiness and, the less well-known term, "Eudaimonic" wellbeing is used to refer to the purposeful aspect of PWB. The psychologist Carol Ryff has developed a very clear model that breaks down Eudaimonic wellbeing into six key parts.

The Six-factor Model of Psychological Well-being by Carol Ryff which determines six factors which contribute to an individual's psychological well-being, contentment, and happiness [3]. Psychological well-being consists of positive relationships with others, personal mastery, autonomy, a feeling of purpose and meaning in life, and personal growth and development [3]. Psychological well-being is attained by achieving a state of balance affected by both challenging and rewarding life events [4]. Ryff's model is not based on merely feeling happy, but is based on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, "where the goal of life is not feeling good, but is instead about living virtuously [3]. Six factors are considered key elements of psychological well-being: Self-acceptance, Personal growth, Purpose in life, Environmental mastery, Autonomy, and Positive relations with others.

Several variables have shown to be linked to psychological well-being, but of interest to this study are demographic variables such as age, sex, and religion.

Age is defined as the length of time that a person has lived or a thing has existed [5]. It can be approached or understood from different perspectives, such as psychological, biological, and chronological and so on. Studies have found links between variations in age and various forms of behaviors among different populations. Apart from age, sex is also thought to have had influence on psychological well-being [6]. Sex is seen as the biological state of being male or female [6].

Religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or gods. It is a particular system of faith and worship, or a pursuit or interest followed with great devotion [6]. Religion has been thought to underlie all aspects of human behaviours, and adjudged as a critical aspect of one's self-concept and adjustment to life situations and issues [7].

As indicated earlier, flood victims in Makurdi metropolis are usually exposed to adverse life circumstances occasioned by loss of basic life sustenance and maintenance accessories such as food, shelter, security and a host of other such factors. Most of them are kept in camps where they stay away from the comfort of their homes, while government and other philanthropic organizations and individuals dash in donations to help them cope. This situation no doubt comes with several health and psychological challenges, and it is based on this that this study sets to examine influence of demographic variables such as (age, sex, and religion) on psychological well-being of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Research Questions

This study provides answers to the following research questions:

- (i) What is the influence of age on psychological well-being of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis?
- (ii) To what extent will sex difference influence psychological well-being among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis?
- (iii) What is the influence of religion on psychological well-being of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis?
- (iv) Makurdi metropolis?
- (v) What is the joint influence of age, sex and religion on psychological well-being of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis?

Design

This study adopts the ex-post facto design. The choice of this design is informed by the fact that the researcher is not manipulating any of the variables, and is only interested in the outcome after the facts.

Setting

The setting for this study will be Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. This is one of the Local Government Areas that had had series of flooding cases over the years, and the study will be restricted to areas that are most hit by flooding.

Participants

Participants for this study will include a sample of 210 respondents drawn from the population of inhabitants of Makurdi Local Government Area who have been affected by flooding for several years.

Sampling

The purposeful sampling procedure will be used in selecting participants for this study. By this method, participants will be selected based on availability and willingness to participate in the study. Purposeful sampling is preferred because randomization will be difficult, considering the area of the study and the nature of participants involved.

Instruments

The Ryff Psychological Wellbeing Scale will be used in data collection for this study. The Ryff Psychological Wellbeing Scale was developed [5] and measures six aspects of psychological wellbeing. The scale has 56-items that are scored based on a five-point likert scale response format ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The scale has test-retest reliability coefficients over a six week period of 0.81-0.88.

Procedure

To administer the copies of questionnaire for this study, the researcher will receive an introductory letter from the Head of Department of Psychology. The letter of introduction will be presented to the District Heads of the affected communities, and a list of those affected by flooding, and who were residing in camps provided by the government will be obtained from the District Heads, Kindred Heads, or Clan Heads as the case may be, after which they will be identified and administered the questionnaire. Research assistants will be engaged to translate or interpret the items on the questionnaire to the respondents who may have difficulty in reading and writing. The questionnaire will be retrieved after completion and taken for analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used in analyzing the data that will generated from the administration of questionnaire. Specifically, simple linear regression will be used in testing hypotheses one and three, independent t-test will be used in testing hypothesis two, while multiple linear regression will be used in testing hypothesis four. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 will be used in carrying out the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1 stated that there will be a significant difference of age on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. The hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the result obtained is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Independent t-test showing difference of age on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis.

Age	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Younger	121	17.442	9.304	164	1.838	.231
Older	89	15.371	5.912			

The result presented in Table 1 indicates that there was no significant age difference on psychological wellbeing among younger and older flood victims in Makurdi metropolis [$t(164)=1.838, p>.05$]. Based on this finding, hypothesis one was rejected.

Hypothesis 2 stated that there will be significant sex difference on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. The hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent t-test showing sex difference on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Males	108	19.532	11.332	154	1.951	.152
Females	102	18.421	7.932			

The result in Table 2 show that there is no significant mean difference of sex on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis [$t(154)=1.951, p>.05$]. Based on this finding, hypothesis two was rejected, indicating that being male or female does not make any difference in terms of psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis.

Hypothesis 3 stated that religion will significantly influence psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. The hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression and the result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Simple linear regression showing the influence of religion on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis.

Predictors	R	R ²	df	F	p	β	T	p
Constant	.451	.203	5,341	10.242	.102		4.904	.000
Christianity						-.107	-1.082	.003
Islam						-.101	-2.448	.020
Others						-.517	-7.058	.000

The result in Table 3 shows that religion has no significant influence on psychological wellbeing among flood victim in Makurdi metropolis [$R=.451$, $R^2=.203$, $F(5,341) = 10.242$, $p>.05$]. On the independent contributions of religion to psychological wellbeing, the result shows that Christianity had significant negative influence ($\beta=-.107$, $t= -1.082$, $p<.05$), as well as Islam ($\beta=-.101$, $t=-2.448$, $p<.05$), and other religions ($\beta=-.517$, $t=-7.058$, $p<.05$). Based on these findings, hypothesis three was rejected.

Hypothesis 4 stated that there will be significant joint influence of age, sex, and religion on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression and the findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Multiple regression showing the joint influence of age, sex, and religion of psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis.

Predictors	R	R ²	df	F	p	β	T	p
Constant	.241	.058	5,341	10.242	.003		4.904	.000
Age						.107	1.082	.003
Sex						.101	2.448	.020
Religion						.517	7.058	.000

The result presented in Table 4 show that there is a significant joint influence of age, sex and religion on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis [$R = .241$; $R^2 = .058$; $F(5,341) = 10.242$; $p < .05$]. The result further revealed that age, sex and religion jointly accounted for 5.8% of the total variance in psychological wellbeing among the flood victims. On independent basis, the result indicated that religion ($\beta = .517$, $t = 7.058$, $p < .05$) made the highest contribution followed by age ($\beta = .107$, $t = 1.082$, $p < .05$), and sex ($\beta = .101$, $t = 2.448$, $p > .05$) in influencing psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. Based on this finding, hypothesis four was confirmed.

Hypothesis one stated that there will be there will be significant age difference in psychological wellbeing among flood victim in Makurdi metropolis. The hypothesis was tested using independent t-test, and finding showed that there was no significant age difference in psychological wellbeing among the participants.

The reason for the finding of this hypothesis may be due to contextual circumstances, in which case, the previous studies were carried out in industrialized countries, with one being an

individualistic society, and the other having a more collectivistic orientation. The differences in social interactions, expectations and general relationships that exist in collectivistic and individualistic societies have been established, and this may be a reason for the results in such societies, and the changing demographic roles expectations across the globe may have accounted for the finding of the present study.

Hypothesis two tested sex difference in psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. No significant sex difference in psychological wellbeing was found among the participants.

Hypothesis three tested the influence of religion on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. Findings indicated that there was no significant influence of religion on psychological wellbeing among the flood victims. This finding disagree with that of [8-9] who found significant influence of religion on psychological wellbeing.

Hypothesis four tested the joint influence of age, sex and religion on psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. Findings showed that there was significant joint influence of age, sex and religion on psychological wellbeing among the study participants. The result also revealed that the variables jointly accounted for 5.8% of the total variance in psychological wellbeing among the flood victims. This result shows that even though independently the variables did not influence psychological wellbeing, jointly however, there was significant joint influence of age, sex, and religion on psychological wellbeing of flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. This indicate that together, these variables (age, sex, and religion) are potent predictors of psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that independently, age, sex and religion have not shown to be good predictors of psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis. Jointly however, these variables have shown to be potent predictors of psychological wellbeing among flood victims in Makurdi metropolis of Benue State.

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