

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

DR. (MRS.) B. AHIMIE

Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education,
University of Lagos

Abstract

Across the world, students in institutions of higher learning experience similar problems which may be academic, vocational, emotional, social, physiological, psychological or environmental. These problems have placed enough burden on students and may have been compounded by the current COVID-19 pandemic which invariably will affect their mental health and psychological well-being. This chapter examines the concept of mental health and psychological well-being. The scale of the problem among students in Universities in Nigeria and some other countries across the world is outlined. Innovations introduced to improve mental health and psychological well-being of students in higher institutions across the world before the COVID-19 are also examined. Suggestions are made as to how students with mental health problems can access help and how psychological wellbeing of students can be improved, especially during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key words: Mental health, Psychological well-being, University students, COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

Mental health and psychological well-being of all individuals are very important components of their lives. Mental health disorders are common occurrences all over the world and the strain of this disorder is estimated to reach 15% by 2020 (Suleiman, 2016). This percentage is likely to increase as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic. It is projected that prevalent mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety and substance abuse-related disorders will disable more people than complexities arising from other diseases, accidents and wars combined (Ngui, et al., 2010). The World Health Organization defined mental health as a state of well-being that enables people to realize their abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work effectively and successfully to make meaningful improvements in their communities (WHO, 2003). Physical and psychological health do not exist independently because psychological, physical and social functioning are

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

connected. The essence of a person's psychological health is determined by distinctive factors and experiences such as their family interconnection and situations, and the larger community in which they live (WHO, 2004). There is no generally acknowledged agreement among authors on the meaning of the terms "mental health" and "mental illness" and their use. While some authors use the terms interchangeably, others are of the opinion that they can be recognized as two independent, yet related issues (Leighton & Dogra, 2014).

The state of psychological well-being in individuals can be described as the absence of gloomy thoughts and predominance of, or development of positive thoughts. It also means the ability of people to have an active lifestyle; able to harmonize their feelings; have a clear approach or mindset towards life and life satisfaction; have favourable cordial relationship with others and strive towards personal development. Psychosocial well-being also includes the fulfilment of individuals' values, ambitions and demands, through the realization of their capabilities in their life situations (Journal of Forensic Psychology, 2020).

Rising depositions by researchers suggests that psychological well-being is associated with reduced illness and fatality risk, and may be strengthened with proportionately inexpensive mediations. However, circulation of these mediations remains limited, partly because of the insufficient attention that has been paid to distinct psychological well-being dimensions, which may have an impact on people's physical health outcomes (Trudel-Fitzgerald et al., 2019). The expression "psychological well-being" is used to describe an individual's emotional health and total functioning, which enables the individual experience a combination of pleasurable feeling and excellent performance of duties (Morin, 2020). Psychological well-being is also the personal experience of positive feelings or intellectual evaluation which includes lower activation effects such as peace of mind, or happiness, as well as higher refreshing results such as excited or delighted (Hernandez et al., 2017).

In Nigeria as far back as 2016, research studies revealed that an estimated 20% - 30% of the population are believed to suffer from mental disorders (Onyemelukwe, 2016). With a population of over 200 million, the above percentage can be expressed as serious and compelling. Regrettably, the consideration given to mental health disorders in Nigeria appears to be fleeting. The level of awareness of the Nigerian public on mental health issues is also understandably poor and the misconceptions regarding mental health have continued to flourish (Suleiman, 2016). The World Health Organization's (WHO) AIM report on

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

mental health system in Nigeria in 2006, revealed a considerable neglect of mental health issues in the country (WHO-AIMS, 2006).

Students in tertiary institutions across the world, especially in Nigeria are faced with diverse but similar problems. The problems may be physiological, psychological, academic, vocational, emotional, social and environmental. These problems may be either an offshoot of what has been experienced in adolescent years or as a result of environmental factors in tertiary institutions which has lately been compounded by the coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic. The majority of students in tertiary institutions fall within the youth population and improved mental health is crucial to the overall well-being of all individuals because it affects their environments, societies and countries.

Students' Psychological Well-being and Mental Health Issues

Globally, there appears to be an increasing frequency and severity of mental health issues among students in tertiary institutions. The general and increasingly competitive nature of higher education has heightened regular academic pressures which contribute to mental health issues among students in tertiary institutions (Ratanasiripong et al., 2018). The American College Health Association (ACHA), students survey carried out between 2018 and 2019, identified depression, anxiety, suicide, eating disorders and addiction as the five common mental health challenges faced by students in tertiary institutions. These challenges are not peculiar to students in institutions of higher learning in the developed countries alone. They can also be noticed in students in higher institutions across the world. Mental health challenges are usually recognized in individuals when they display certain symptoms and signs as presented in table 1 below;

Table 1. Mental health challenges (symptoms and signs) usually recognized in individuals.

Health Challenges	Symptoms	Recognizing the signs
Depression	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes in physical well-being 2. Emotional changes 3. Changes in thought or thinking process 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Persistent feelings of sadness 5. Hopelessness 6. Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. General Anxiety Disorder 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Feelings of stress and apprehension 13. Shortness of breath 14. Irritability 15. Irregular heartbeat 16. Trouble concentrating 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Anxious or worrisome thoughts on daily basis 23. Plagued by fears others perceive as unfounded or irrational

**DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO
MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA**

<p>8. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder 9. Panic Disorder 10. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder 11. Social Anxiety Disorder</p>	<p>17. Muscle pain and tension 18. Fearfulness 19. Headaches 20. Sweating and dizziness 21. Frequent upset stomach or diarrhea</p>	<p>24. Avoid everyday social activities because they cause anxiety 25. Sudden increase in heartbeat, panic attacks 26. Interference within school work, social life or family</p>
<p>Suicide</p>	<p>27. Preexisting mental condition 28. Depression 29. Distorted thinking 30. Suicidal thoughts 31. Feeling completely overwhelmed and helpless from anxiety 32. Untreated mental illnesses</p>	<p>33. Mood changes 34. Behavioural changes 35. Feeling trapped 36. Feeling of being a burden to others 37. Lack of hope 38. Desire to end life</p>
<p>Eating Disorders</p>	<p>39. Unhealthy fixation on thinness, a distorted body image and fears of gaining weight which results in emaciation 40. Bulimia Nervosa 41. Binge Eating Disorder 42. Distorted or poor body image 43. Excessive exercise 44. Irregular heartbeats 45. Dehydration 46. Feeling like eating is out of control 47. Fear of eating in public 48. Constantly making excuses for eating habits 49. Kidney failure 50. Failure in the reproductive system 51. Stunted growth 52. Heart problems 53. Loss of menstruation</p>	<p>54. Skipping meals or only eating small portions 55. Uninterested in foods once loved 56. Limiting meals to foods very low in calories 57. Taking diet pills excessively or medication that suppresses hunger such as Adderall or Ritalin 58. Disappearing suddenly to the restroom after meals 59. Noticeably stained teeth 60. Use of mints after trips to the bathroom or perfume to mask the smell of vomit</p>

**DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO
MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA**

Addiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61. Slurred speech, bloodshot eyes or impaired coordination 62. Fear, anxiety or paranoia for no apparent reason 63. Tolerance for alcohol and drug use; needs to use more of the substance to obtain the same effects 64. Deterioration of physical appearance, such as weight loss or gain and changes in personal grooming habits 65. Prone to suspicious behaviours, frequently gets into fights or trouble with the law 66. Sudden change in friends, activities or hobbies 67. Sudden need for money or a financial crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68. Drinking to relieve stress or suppress issues 69. Drinking or drug use interfering with relationship with others 70. Withdrawn from activities or school work 71. Life of friends revolve around drug or alcohol use 72. Develop a change in personality 73. Unusual smell on breath body or clothing
------------------	--	--

Symptoms of these mental health challenges may be different from one person to another. The symptoms may also not necessarily mean that a person is depressed, anxious, has suicidal thoughts, has eating disorder or is an addict. However, occurrence of the symptoms of these challenges in a person consistently, may require the individual to seek assistance (American College Health Association, 2019).

Psychological Well-being and Mental Health Problems of Students across the World

Students in tertiary institutions across the world have similar experiences which affect their psychological well-being. They experience mental health conditions, which affect their psychological well-being in exactly the same way. However mental health services in universities around the world differ (Bhardwa, 2017).

A review of medical records of the Mental Wellness Clinic at a local university in China revealed a prevalence of anxiety, depression and sub-threshold psychosomatic symptoms among students (Lo et al., 2018). A study of factors that impact the mental health issues of university students in Japan revealed that depression, anxiety and stress among the majority of students are induced by the following factors; self-esteem, family economic status,

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

resiliency and number of years in school (Ratanasiripong et al., 2018). Research in India has identified the prevalence of suicide rate among students (Bhardwa, 2017). Students in institutions of higher learning in Australia are experiencing increased psychological distress as a result of academic and financial pressures, isolation, loneliness and poor self-care (Browne et al., 2017). The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG), identified the top five mental health problems (depression, anxiety, eating disorder, suicide and addiction) among their university students (SADAG, 2020).

In the United Kingdom, a recent survey revealed that nearly all higher education institutions offer counselling services to students. Across the United Kingdom, approximately 4% of university students are seen by counsellors each year for a wide range of emotional and psychological complications. Counsellors working in higher education offer their professional skills and also utilize their understanding of the link between psychological and academic hardship because their knowledge of the educational context and their integration with the wider institution. Counselling services do not take responsibility for the diagnosis or application of medication for serious mental illness. These services recognize the importance of being adequately knowledgeable enough to recognize the different forms of mental illness and to know when referral to medical and psychiatric services are necessary. The establishment of links to these services for consultation and referral has always been seen as a fundamental part of counselling services in higher educational institutions in the United Kingdom (Royal College of Psychiatrist, 2011).

In the United States of America, the latest research on college students' mental health and psychological wellbeing revealed that three out of ten students struggle with depression and more than one in four students' express issues with anxiety. More disturbing is the discovery that one in twenty students had devised a suicide plan in the last one year. College students' mental health and psychological well-being is a major source of concern for higher education administrators, faculty and staff. College counselling centers report being overwhelmed with request for services, while other faculty and staff report working with campus and local resources to assist students with their mental health concerns (American Council on Education, 2019).

In Nigeria, a study of the mental wellbeing among undergraduates in Eastern Nigeria revealed that, substance abuse, age and type of institution influenced academic stress (Sydney-Agbor et al., 2018). A study that investigated the relationship between academic demands and mental health of undergraduate students in full-time employment revealed that academic demands has a link with lower mental health of students (Onuoha &

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

Idemudia, 2020). Among the stresses common to medical school training in Nigeria, are contemporary social problems that arise due to income inequality, poverty, insecurity and political instability. These have a direct impact on students' mental health and wellbeing. The prevalence of psychiatric disorders among medical students in Nigeria is also discovered to be high (Esan et al, 2019). There is also a correlation between anxiety, depression and number of years spent in school by students with their psychological distress (Ogunsemi et al., 2013).

Stressors associated with psychological distress in the students include excessive school work, congested classrooms, strikes by faculty members, lack of laboratory equipment, family problems, insecurity, financial and health problems. Several identified stressors such as financial problems, academic pressures and their consequent effect on social life have adverse effects on the mental health of the students (Omigbodun et al., 2006). The prevalence of mental and infectious distress among the students was found to be high (Amawulu & Eniyekedidei, 2018). The University of Lagos counselling unit assists students facing problems associated with; adolescence developmental issues, academic problems, examination malpractices, substance abuse, sexual abuse, cyber-crimes and financial crises through a work-study programme for indigent students (Babatunde, 2009).

Improving the Mental Health and Psychological Well-Being of Students

While it appears that little progress has been made in the provision of mental health services for university students; in reality, universities around the world have introduced and are still introducing more innovative ways to help students identify and understand mental health symptoms. There are many resources available to assist students experiencing mental health challenges. Access to mental health services are being improved in ways that make students feel more comfortable; for example;

In the United Kingdom, the University of Derby takes a comprehensive approach to address mental health. Well-being education has been introduced into the syllabus and their seminars on how to improve psychological health. These services are fashioned to meet the unique needs of each student. The university invites students with mental health conditions and learning disabilities to pre-entry events that permit them to move into campus early so that they get used to living on campus and make friends. This is to prevent them from being overwhelmed during the hustle and bustle of the fresher's week.

In the United States of America, the Penn State University supports the center for Collegiate Mental Health. This center gathered data from more than 400 college and counselling centres to help update a countrywide database on students' mental health. The centre for Collegiate Mental health is located at the counselling and psychological services at Penn State University. A series of services have been put in place by the university to

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

assist students in coping with their mental health. One of such services is the De-Stress Zone, enhanced with iPod stations that play numerous calming, stress minimizing and mindfulness musical pieces (Bhardwa, 2017).

In South Africa, the University of the Western Cape has a pilot online programme to assist students who avoid accessing counselling because they are reluctant to speak to a counsellor face to face. Research conducted among university students in South Africa revealed that there was 110 percent smartphone coverage with students (some students had two phones). The university resolved to experiment with a phone service to motivate students to access services, and to take on those students who avoided face-to-face support. A phone app (application) and desktop computer programme was developed for students to send messages to university staff about any mental health problems they were experiencing. The staff then assist the students to pass on their anxieties and worries to healthcare professionals when required. This has gone a long way in assisting shy students to cross the shyness barrier (Bhardwa, 2017).

The Manipal University in India is tackling the stigma of mental health through the establishment of a confidential Students Support Centre. This centre is in a separate building to enable students go directly to the centre to ask for immediate help. The centre is a representation of counselling and wellness centres at the best universities in the world. The Student Support Centre at Manipal University is among very few such services in India. Professional psychologists are employed to advise students. This is not a common occurrence in Indian Universities; where regular faculty staff do the extra work of advising students or casual staff are employed to do the work (Bhardwa, 2017).

The Monash University in Australia provides education programmes to empower students with devices to support their peers with mental health issues. One of these training programmes is Safe-Talk, which is a half-day workshop to help people become more attentive to a person who is manifesting signs of self-destruction. The training educates people on how to observe and react to situations where thoughts of suicide might be present; to render efficient help and to be able to act swiftly to connect that person with someone trained in suicide intervention. Monash University students are also encouraged to attend a two-day mental health first-aid training workshop. At the end of which they are equipped with skills to enable them support and assist each other in the early stages of mental health concerns. They are able to recognize the signs and symptoms of these problems and help in the most effective ways to get help and where such help is available. These training programmes are made available to all students (Bhardwa, 2017).

In addition to the counselling centre, the management of the University of Lagos in 2018 constituted a twenty-member committee of professional counsellors to provide counselling

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

services for staff and students in the university community, to assist in improving students and staff wellbeing and mental health problems. The committee is chaired by a professor of counselling psychology. The terms of reference of the committee is to accomplish the following;

1. Broaden the scope of counselling services across the Faculties/Departments in the University of Lagos.
2. Complement the counselling services rendered at the counselling centre.
3. Counsel students and members of staff with relationship challenges, break-ups, self-esteem, substance abuse and work/academic related stress.
4. Assist the students in overcoming poor academic performance, career challenges, sexual harassment, cultism and suicidal thoughts.
5. Lessen the emotional and psychological feelings of staff and students experiencing depression.

To accomplish the above, additional counselling services were extended to the following designated locations on campus; Faculty of Education Counselling clinic in the Department of Educational Foundations; St Thomas Moore Catholic Church, Chapel of Christ our Light (Protestant Chapel), University of Lagos Mosque and the College of Medicine, University of Lagos, Idiaraba (University of Lagos Counselling unit, 2018). This is to give a wider coverage of counselling in the university. It also helps in providing options for students and staff who might need some form of privacy when seeking counselling.

Corona Virus (COVID 19) Mental Health and Psychological Well-Being of Students

The Corona Virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an ailment caused by a strange coronavirus. It is currently referred to as “Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)”. It was earlier called 2019-nCov because it was first recognized in the middle of an upsurge of respiratory ailment cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. The illness was initially reported to the World Health Organization on the 31st of December, 2019. COVID-19 outbreak was declared as a global health emergency by the WHO on the 30th of January, 2020 and on the 11th of March, 2020 it was declared a worldwide pandemic (Cennimo, 2020) Globally, as of July 30, 2020, more than 17 million people have been infected with the virus, including more than 600,000 deaths. (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2020. In Nigeria, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) as of July 30, 2020, reported that more than 42,000 people have been infected with the virus, including more than 800 deaths (NCDC, 2020).

The Department of Mental Health Organization presented some considerations in a document it developed, to send a series of messages that can be used in communications,

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

to support mental and psychosocial well-being in different target groups during the coronavirus outbreak. The message which was for the general population include steps to be taken to improve personal mental health and psychological well-being. These steps include;

1. Display of empathy
2. Non stigmatization of infected persons
3. Minimize watching, reading or listening to news about COVID-19 that cause anxiety or distress
4. Self-protection by social distancing, use of hand sanitizers, constant washing of hands with soap and use of protective gears, for example, the face mask (WHO, 2020).

The social isolation measures put in place as a result of COVID-19 have had a profound impact on the psychological and mental well-being of individuals across society. Many of the anticipated consequences of isolation measures are on their own, key factors for mental health issues. These include; suicide, self-harm, substance misuse, domestic violence and child abuse. Social relationship is interconnected with psychological well-being, social freedom and employment. Restrictions of these actions can be extremely disturbing to those undergoing strict isolation (Alradhawi et al., 2020).

The enforcement of global lockdown as a result of the pandemic disrupted the day-to-day lives of the general public. It caused a remarkable contraction of the United Kingdom economy (Alradhawi et al., 2020) and world-wide economy, in addition to the shutting down of businesses, across the world. Increase in states of psychological distress such as anxiety and depression with regards to longer years of study, fears of infection and inadequate supplies of hand sanitizers; was recorded among undergraduate students in a University in China (Li et al., 2020). It is important to note that the anxiety create by COVID-19 can affect people in different ways, at the personal and communal levels which can contribute to mental health challenges for many. However, these issues tend to be under-addressed and overlooked in society. While it is of utmost importance to curb the spread to infections during an epidemic, past incidents suggest that mental and behavioural health interventions should be fully included in any plan of action to address public health issues (Otu et al., 2020).

Under normal conditions, there is a widespread increase in the levels of psychological distress and ensuing negative academic outcomes among college students. Physical distancing measures put into effect as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to higher education institutions moving on to an urgent online learning format. This may further worsen academic stressors for students. Students may experience lower interest in their studies, increased burden of learning individually, abandonment of daily routines and

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

possibly higher rates of students quitting school, as a result of these measures (Grubic et al., 2020). University students are not free from many of the worries faced by the general population. In addition, they face a set of distinctive challenges. For example, worries about how they can go on with their education remotely, and if their schoolwork or examination will suffer as a result of the pandemic (James, 2020).

Among University students in China, it was revealed that economic effects and effects on daily life, as well as delays in academic activities were connected with manifestation of anxiety (Cao et al., 2020). A survey was carried out on the general public in Kashmir, to better understand the psychological impact of COVID- 19 on their levels of anxiety, depression and stress in addition to the economic downfall upsetting the social life of people during the initial stage of the pandemic. The study revealed that the lockdown can result in many new problems such as psychological, social, economic and academic problems especially among university students (Bhat et al., 2020).

Common problems faced by students as shown in table 2 below include; Meeting institutional academic/sociocultural expectations: students in institutions of higher learning are expected to meet institutional academic/sociocultural expectations. Lecture and study hours are supposed to be maintained by students in order for them to excel in academics. Distractions may however arise when students join the wrong peer groups or take advantage of the freedom in the university environment. Financial demands are also other issues that students face; this includes; the cost of lecture/examination materials, transportation, accommodation/clothing and other necessities. All these demands can put a strain on students thereby affecting their mental health psychological wellbeing.

Table 2: Common Mental Health Problem among University Students before the COVID 19 pandemic.

Students in Universities	Academic Demands	Environmental Demands
General demands and expectations	74. Meeting Institutional expectations 75. Maintaining lecture and study hours 76. Getting text books and other lecture materials	77. Socio cultural demands 78. Influence of University environment 79. Peer influence 80. Cost of text books, lecture materials, accommodation, transportation and other necessities.

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

Table 3: issues that compounded the mental health and psychological well-being of university students in Nigeria.

Students in Universities	Academic Demands	Environmental Demands
General demands and expectations	81. Closure of institutions 82. Loss of academic sessions 83. Anxiety about longer years in school 84. Anxiety about online lectures and examinations 85. Lack of devices to meet new academic demands	86. Loss of employment 87. Loss of individual and parental income 88. Reduced finances 89. Lower living conditions 90. Lack of access to health care facilities

In addition to problems faced by students before the COVID 19, pandemic, Table 3 above outlined other issues that might compound the mental health and psychological well-being of university students in Nigeria. The COVID 19 pandemic has brought additional problems to the lives of all citizens across the world including students, especially those in the public/government owned universities. The closure of all institutions has increased student's anxiety about longer years in school and loss of academic sessions. Finances have been reduced as family income has been seriously depleted as a result of loss of employment by parents/guardians and students who before now were able to do part-time jobs in addition to their academics. Access to healthcare facilities have been affected as a result of the fear of contacting the COVID-19 virus. The greatest anxiety for students is the proposed introduction of online lectures or the dual mode of lectures (physical classroom and online lectures). How to access devices for online lectures is a major cause of anxiety by students (especially the indigent students).

Conclusion

The chapter has revealed that the problems affecting the mental health and psychological well-being of students across the world are similar. Different countries have been responding and trying to find ways of addressing these problems even before the COVID 19 pandemic and it appears that more efforts are still being made to assist students going through mental health issues. However, the fact remains that this aspect of the lives of students are still being overlooked or downplayed. Considering the fact that the current situation across the world (the Corona Virus pandemic) appears to have increase the levels of anxiety, distress and financial pressure in households across the world. A lot still needs to be done to improve the mental health and psychological well-being of the general population and in particular, that of university students who represent the future generation.

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

This is to prevent the likelihood of unhealthy repercussions as a result of poor mental health and psychological well-being of people.

Suggestions

Globally, universities have already put in place and are still working on various innovations to address mental health issues and psychological well-being of their students. There should be further improvement on what is being done. Since it is for the benefit of everyone, the following suggestions are made:

1. Institutions should ensure that students have free helplines to quickly bring to the notice of professionals, any noticeable signs of mental distress on their peers or environment.
2. Institutions should also ensure that students are aware of services provided by mental health professionals/experts (Counselling Psychologists), who are the core staff in providing interventions to anyone undergoing mental health challenges.
3. Health care delivery sector should post mental health professionals to all major and minor (primary) health care delivery sectors and work settings throughout the country.
4. It is important for professional counsellors and psychologists as the key mental health care providers to update their skills from time to time, to improve their competencies in the use of interventions that can bring relief to clients.
5. This theory required that healthcare workers understand the concept of positive psychology and provide health developing mediations for people in hospitals and community settings, to enable them focus on the relationship among stress, protective factors and psychological well-being (PWB).
6. The goals of Hedonic philosophy are to build a person's life with a considerable amount of positive effects such as happiness, enjoyment and satisfaction; and to reduce negative effects. The focus of Eudaimonic philosophy is on people living their lives to the fullest potential and for them to achieve self-actualization.
7. To have a motivation to live, have helpful connections with others and master their environment. This should be of immense benefit to clients.
8. Researchers should as a matter of urgency, continue further studies as a result of the current situation which has affected all people globally. The changes taking place have revealed that steps must be taken to adjust to the new normal.
9. The study on mental health should impacts on the young people to adhere to physical distancing rules; as well as measuring rates of anxiety and depression.

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

References

- Alradhawi, M., Shubber, N., Sheppard, J., & Ali, Y. (2020). Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental well-being amongst individuals in society – A letter to the editor on “The socio-economic implications of the coronavirus and COVID-19 pandemic: A review”. *International Journal of Surgery* 78 (2020) 147-148. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7198428/>.
- American College Health Association (ACHA) (2019). *The Top Mental Health Challenges Facing Students*. <https://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/top-5-mental-health-problems-facing-collegestudents/>.
- American Council on Education: Higher Education Today (2019). *College Students mental Health and Well-Being*. <https://www.higheredtoday.org/policy-research/student-support-success/college-student-mental-health-well/>.
- Babatunde, A. (2009). *Guidance and Counselling Unit in the University of Lagos*. <https://greenthesis.wordpress.com/2012/10/23/guidance-and-counselling-unit-in-the-university-of-lagos/>.
- Bhardwa, S. (2017). *What do Student Mental Health Services look like around the world* <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/studentblogs/what-do-student-mental-health-services-look-around-world>.
- Bhat, B. A., Khan, S., Manzoor, S., Niyaz, A., Tak, H. J., Anees, S.U.M., Gull, S., & Ahmad, I. (2020). A Study on Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on Psychological Health, Economy and Social Life of People in Kashmir. *International Journal of Science and Healthcare Research* 5(2), 36-46 <https://ijshr.com>IJSHR005>.
- Browne, V., Munro, J., & Cass, J. (2017). The Mental Health of Australian University Students. *Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Students Services Association*. 50, 51-62. <https://janzssa.scholasticcahq.com>>.
- Cao, W., Fang, Z., Guoqiang, H., Han, M., Xu, X., Dong, J., & Zheng J. (2020). The psychological impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on college students in China. *Psychiatry Research* 287,112934. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.112934>
- Cennimo, D. J. (2020). *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)*. <https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/2500114-overview#a1>.

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

- Esan, O., Esan, A., Folasire, A., & Oluwajulugbe, P. (2019). Mental health and wellbeing of medical students in Nigeria: a systematic review. *International Review of Psychiatry* 31 (7 – 8) 661-672. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540261.2019.1677220>.
- European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) (2020). *COVID-19 situation update worldwide, as of July 30, 2020*. <https://www.ecdc.european/en/geographical-distribution-2019-ncov-cases>.
- Grubic, N., Badovinac, S., & Johri, A. M. (2020). Student mental health in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. A call for further research and immediate solutions. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764020925108>.
- Harding, T., Lopez, V., & Klainin-Yobas, P. (2019). Predictors of Psychological Well-Being among Higher Education Students. *Psychology*, 10, 578-594. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych2019.104037>.
- Hernandez, R., Bassett, S. M., Boughton, S. W., Schuette, S. A., Shiu, E. W. & Mosko Witz, J. T. (2017). *Psychological Well-Being and Physical Health: Associations, Mechanisms and Future Directions*. [Journals.sagepub.com>doi>abs](https://www.sagepub.com/doi/abs).
- James, F. (2020). *Protecting the mental health of your students during the current global crisis*. <https://www.qs.com/protecting-the-mental-health-of-your-students-during-the-current-global-crisis/>.
- Journal of Forensic Psychology* (2020). *Psychological Wellbeing*. <https://www.longdom.org>scholarly>.
- Leighton, S., & Dogra, N. (2014). *Defining Mental Health and Mental Illness*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255657987>.
- Li, H. Y., Cao, H., Leung, D. Y. P. & Mak, Y. W. (2020). The Psychological Impacts of a COVID-19 Outbreak on College Students in China: A Longitudinal Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 2020 (17), 3933. <https://www.mdpi.com>pdf>.
- Lo, S. M., Wong, H. C., Lam, C. Y. (2020) Common Mental health Challenges in a University Context in Hong Kong: a study based on a Review of Medical Records. *Applied Research in Quality of Life* 15, 207-218. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-018-9673-5>.

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

- Morin, A. (2020). *How to Improve Your Psychological Well-Being: Your emotional health is key to a happy life*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/im...>
- Ngui, E. M., Khasakhala, L., Ndeti, D. & Roberts L. W. (2010). Mental disorders health inequalities and ethics: A global perspective. *Int Rev. Psychiatry* 22, 235-244.
- Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) (2020). *Protecting the health of Nigerians*. <https://mobile.twitter.com/ncdcgov?lang=en>.
- Ogunsemi, O. O., Afe, T., Odunsan, O., Oguntona, S. A., Adefuye, B. O., & Oyelekan, A. A. (2013). *Psychological well-being of medical students in a state university, Nigeria*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/296636443>.
- Omigbodun, O., Odukogbe, A. T., Omigbodun, A., & Yusuf, B. O. (2006). Stressors and psychological symptoms in students of medicine and allied health professions in Nigeria. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 41(5), 415 – 421. <https://doi:10.1007/s00127-006-0037-3>.
- Onuoha, C. U., & Idemudia, E. S. (2020). Academic demands and mental health among undergraduate students in full-time employment: The moderating role or perceived social support. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 30(2), 89-95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14330237.2020.1712805>.
- Onyemelukwe, C. (2016). Stigma and mental health in Nigeria: Some suggestions for law reform. *Journal of Law Policy Glob* 55, 63-68.
- Otu, A., Charles, C. H. & Yaya, S. (2020). Mental health and psychosocial well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic: the invisible elephant in the room. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems* 14, 38 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-020-00371-w>.
- Ratanasiripong, P., China, T., & Toyama, S. (2018). Mental Health and Well-Being of University Students in Okinawa. *Education Research International* 2018 (423 1836), 1 – 7. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2018/4231836>.
- Royal College of Psychiatrists, London (2011). *Mental health of students in higher education. Approved Report by Central Executive Committee: January 2011. Due*

DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE TEACHING CONTINUITY PLANS TO MOVE CLASSROOMS ONLINE AT COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA

for review: 2016. *College Report CR166*. September 2011. <https://www.rcpsy.ch.ac.uk>.

Suleiman, D. E. (2016). Mental health disorders in Nigeria. A highly neglected disease. *Ann Nigerian Med.* 10, 47-48 <http://www.anmjourn.com/text.asp?2016/10/2/47/206214>.

Sydney-Agbor, N., Ebeh, R., & Onyeonu, M. (2018). Mental Wellbeing among Undergraduates in Eastern Nigeria: A Function of Academic Stress, Substance abuse and age. *International Journal of Health and Psychology Research*, 6(2), 36-43 www.eajournals.org/uploads.

The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG). (2020). *Top 5 Mental Health Problems Facing Students*. http://www.sadag.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=articles&id=2363:top-5-mental-health-problems-facing-students&catid=48&Item=132.

Trudel-Fitzgerald, C., Millstein, R. A., Von Hippel, C., Howe, C. J., Tomasso, L. P., Wagner, G. R. & VanderWeele, T. J. (2019). Psychological well-being as part of the public health debate? Insight into dimensions interventions and policy. *BMC Public Health* 19(1712) 1 – 11. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-8029-x>.

University of Lagos Counselling Unit. (2018). *University wide Counselling for Students and Staff*. https://unilag.edu.ng/?page_id=3803.

WHO (World Health Organization) (2004). *Promoting Mental Health: Concepts, Emerging Evidence, Practice*: Summary Report. Geneva WHO.

WHO (World Health Organization) (2003). *Investing in Mental Health. Geneva the A publication of Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence, Non-communicable Diseases and mental Health*. www.who.int/investing_mnh

WHO (World Health Organization) (2006). *WHO-AIMS. Ministry of Health: Reports on Mental Health System in Nigeria*. Ministry of Health and WHO. <https://www.mindbank.info/item/1303>.

WHO (2020). *Mental health and psychological considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak*. <https://www.who.int/docs>.