

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLNESS AND SELF-EFFICACY: EVIDENCE FROM NIGERIAN CIVIL SERVICE WORKERS

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Abstract

The study investigated self-efficacy and the Psychological wellbeing of civil servants in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. It adopted an ex-post facto design. Two research hypotheses guided the study. The population comprised 49,704 Civil Servants from 27 Ministries in the Federal Capital Territory. A sample of 354 Civil Servants was selected. A proportionately stratified random sampling technique ensured an adequate representation. Self-Efficacy and Psychological Wellbeing Questionnaire (EISPWQ) was used for data collection. The instrument had three clusters based on the variables. Data were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that self-efficacy significantly predicts the psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT based on gender. The study has shown that self-efficacy predicts the psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT. Also, self-efficacy moderated the relationship between depression and the psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT. Hence, employers should be aware of their staff self-efficacy as it relates to their psychological wellbeing. Civil servants should use their self-worth to motivate themselves.

Keywords: *Self-efficacy, prediction psychological wellbeing*

INTRODUCTION

The civil servants are the engine room of the economy of the nation. Without civil servants, the workings and operations of government would not be very smooth. Therefore, there is a need for proper care and servicing of this integral sector. The welfare of every worker is so important since they are the engine room of the economy. Civil servants have a lot of needs to satisfy daily. The needs include domestic and organizational, which can adversely affect their psychological health. Psychological wellbeing is important in the life of every human being. Psychological distress, the other side of psychological wellbeing can be a problem among civil servants. Psychological wellbeing is a level of mental illness or an absence of mental health among individuals (Morgan & Farsides, 2009). It is the psychological state of someone who is functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioral adjustment. From the perspective of positive psychology, psychological wellness may include an ability to enjoy life and create a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. Psychological wellbeing includes subjective wellbeing perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence, and self-actualization of intellectual and emotional potential (WHO, 2014). The wellbeing of an individual is encompassed in the realization of abilities to cope with life stresses, productive work, and contribution to the community (Morgan & Farsides, 2009). Psychological wellbeing is a complete state of physical, mental,

and social comfort and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (Nelis, Kotsou, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Weytens & Dupuis, 2011). Psychological wellbeing refers to cognitive or emotional health. It is all about how people feel, think, and behave. It also means an absence of a mental disorder (Friedman & Kern, 2014). It can affect daily life, relationship, and physical health and includes an ability to enjoy life, to attain a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2012). Psychological wellbeing can be an unstable continuum, where mental health may have different possible values (Lent, 2004). It is generally viewed as a positive attribute, even if the person does not diagnosed mental health condition. This definition of psychological wellbeing highlights emotional wellbeing, the capacity to live a creative life, and the flexibility to deal with life's inevitable challenges. Psychological wellbeing is the successful performance of a mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and providing the ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity. The term mental illness is a form of psychological abnormality collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders and health conditions characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior associated with distress or impaired functioning (Di Fabio & Kenny, 2015). A victim of psychological distress may struggle with psychological wellbeing and may experience stress, depression, anxiety, relationship problems, grief, addiction or learning disabilities, mood disorders, and other mental illnesses of varying degrees (Keyes, Shmotkin & Ryff, 2002). Psychological distress is the opposite of psychological wellbeing. Psychological distress is an illness that affects emotions, thoughts, or behaviours, which is out of keeping with their cultural beliefs and personality, producing a negative effect on their lives or the lives of their family infirmity (Nelis, Kotsou, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Weytens & Dupuis, 2011). Scientists defined health simply as the absence of disease or illness. It connotes that a worker, irrespective of the nature of the job, should be healthy. Employees in an organization have to deal with tasks, duties, and responsibilities. Employees are to possess competencies and intelligence to accomplish their objectives and organizational objectives. Intelligence in this context refers to the capacity of an individual to understand basics principle, truths, and facts, acquire knowledge and apply it to practical situations. With the evolution of the concept of selfworth, self-efficacy has become one of the more influential concepts as it affects the practical application of knowledge in any given situation. It demonstrates the ability to monitor feelings and emotions, discriminate and use the information to guide thinking and action. Research in this field has uncovered many relationships between emotional intelligence and different human behavior (Judge & Bono, 2001). This study also unravels how self-efficacy could predict the psychological health of civil servants in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Self-efficacy affects every area of human endeavour. Determining the belief a person holds regarding power to affect situations strongly influences the power; a person has to face challenges competently and the choices a person is most likely to make. These effects are particularly apparent and compelling concerning behaviours affecting health (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). People avoid tasks when selfefficacy is low but undertake tasks when self-efficacy is high. When self-efficacy is significantly beyond actual ability, it leads to an over-estimation of the ability to complete tasks. When self-efficacy is lower than ability, it discourages

growth and skill development. Research shows that the optimum level of self-efficacy is slightly above ability. In this situation, people are most encouraged to tackle challenging tasks and gain experience. High self-efficacy can affect motivation in both positive and negative ways. In general, people with high self-efficacy are more likely to make efforts to complete a task, and to persist longer in those efforts, than those with low self-efficacy. The stronger the self-efficacy or mastery expectations from public servants, the more active their efforts are. However, those with low self-efficacy sometimes experience an incentive to learn more about an unfamiliar subject whereas those with high self-efficacy may not prepare for a task. A negative effect of low self-efficacy is that it can lead to learned helplessness. Low self-efficacy can lead to learned helplessness, which would not make a difference in the success of the tasks. Self-efficacy enhances civil servants' accomplishments and personal wellbeing in many ways. Civil servants with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks and challenge to be mastered rather than as threats. Such efficacious outlooks foster intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities. Civil servants may set challenging goals and maintain commitments to them. They may heighten and sustain their efforts in the face of failure. Civil servants are most likely to quickly recover their sense of self-efficacy after failures or setbacks and attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skills, which are acquirable. They may approach threatening situations with the hope of assurance that they can exercise control over them. Such an efficacious outlook may produce personal accomplishments, reduces stress, and lowers vulnerability to depression (Luszczynska & Schwarzer, 2005). Khashab, Khashab, Mohammadi, Zarabipour and Malekpour (2015) carried out a study on the prediction of dimensions of psychological wellbeing based on self-efficacy and spirituality using the investigation into a causal model. The study adopts a correlational design. A sample of 300 participants was selected from the whole entrants to Shiraz University of Medical Sciences and Shiraz University in India using a random cluster sampling. The tools of this study were the Spiritual Scale of Ironson, the Internal and External Orientations of Allport and Ross, the Self-efficacy Orientation of Betson and Showinerd, and the Psychological Wellbeing Scale. Data were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation and path analysis. The result revealed that self-efficacy orientation, and in a direct way, spirituality predicted psychological wellbeing, and self-efficacy orientation was the only mediator in the relationship between spirituality and psychological health. Hanjani, Dastres, Mirshekari and Moniri (2016) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and psychological wellbeing in the staff of addiction treatment centers in Tehran City, India. The study adopts a correlational design. The result showed that self-efficacy has a significant relationship with growth and development, autonomy, and meaningful connections, while the relationship between self-satisfaction, spirituality, and joy was insignificant. The ability to find meaning and purpose in life and pursue their orientations is in contrast to happiness and comfort. The review and the present study used psychological wellbeing as a variable; this study used self-efficacy in predicting psychological health. Onuoha and Bada (2016) examined spirituality, self-efficacy, age, and gender as predictors of psychological wellbeing among flood survivors in Southwest Nigeria. The study adopts a descriptive survey design. Data were collected using standardized scales that measured psychological wellbeing, spirituality, and self-efficacy. The results

showed that spirituality, self-efficacy, age, and gender significantly influenced psychological wellbeing. The independent contributions revealed that spirituality contributed to psychological wellbeing. The result showed that self-efficacy, age, and gender had no significant contributions to psychological wellbeing. The review study and the present study used psychological wellbeing as a variable, but this study used self-efficacy in predicting psychological wellbeing. On the whole, self-efficacy influences the psychological wellbeing of civil servants in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. This influence depends on task complexity. Every day, workers in the FCT leave their houses and travel distances to get to their offices. Workers in the FCT are subject to domestic and official problems that may affect their psychological health. This study investigates the relationship between daily problems to self-efficacy and how it can predict the psychological wellbeing of civil servants in the Federal Capital Territory. It observed that civil servants in Federal Capital Territory have a lot of psychological setbacks due to stress trying to meet up with their daily demands. Some civil servants are involved in domestic and workplace challenges that can affect their psychological wellbeing. The daily stress could be from family, co-civil servants, and superiors resulting in low self-efficacy. There are so many reasons to be concerned about the psychological wellbeing of public servants. Civil servants' psychological wellbeing can lead to higher productivity as a result of comfort and rest of mind. Civil servants' psychological wellbeing can also boost their physical health leading to higher productivity. Civil servants in the Federal Capital Territory are involved in many roles in society. Some are in morning and night duties; serve as the mother and father in their families, thereby making the work so tedious for them to cope with. Poor self-efficacy of civil servants in the FCT with their superiors and colleagues in their organizations may contribute to psychological distress for the public servants. The inability to carry out the activities may cause psychological distress, which affects productivity. It is why the researcher decided to carry out this study in Abuja, Nigeria to provide statistical evidence on self-efficacy as a predictor of psychological wellbeing among civil servants.

Purpose of the Study

The general objective of this study is to investigate if self-efficacy can predict the psychological well-being of civil servants in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine if self-efficacy can predict the psychological well-being of civil servants in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
2. Determine if self-efficacy can predict the psychological well-being of civil servants in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja based on gender.

Research Hypotheses

To guide the researchers in the conduct of the study, the following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. Self-efficacy cannot significantly predict the psychological well-being of civil servants in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
2. Self-efficacy cannot significantly predict the psychological well-being of civil servants in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja based on gender.

METHOD

This study employs an ex-post facto design. It is conducted in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The FCT has many industries and serves as the headquarters of many Government establishments. The population consisted of all 51,724 Civil Servants from 27 Ministries in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (Establishment and Records, of each of the Ministry & IPPIS Platform, 2022). The sample consisted of 454 Civil Servants from 27 randomly selected Ministries in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. A Proportionately stratified random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample. This was done to ensure that the relative proportion of the Civil Servants in the Ministries involved in the study was its relative contribution. The instrument for data collection for this study was Self- the efficacy and Psychological Wellbeing Questionnaire” (SEPWQ). The questionnaire is divided into two clusters (A & B). Cluster A contains 10 items soliciting information on selfefficacy, while cluster B has 34 items soliciting information on psychological wellbeing. It was structured on a four-point rating scale with response modes of Strongly Agreed = 4, Agreed = 3, Disagree= 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1. Since the instrument was adapted from a different environment, it is ideal to revalidate it. It was re-validated by three experts, two from Guidance and Counselling and one expert from Test and Measurement, all from the Department of Education Foundations and General Studies, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi. Their comments were considered in the final draft of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered to 30 Civil Servants in Federal Parastatals in the Kaduna Local Government Area of Kaduna State, which was not part of the study but had similar characteristics to that of the study sample to establish the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the items. The reliability coefficient obtained from the respondents in each cluster was 0.85 and 0.89, while the overall reliability index of the instrument was 0.80 and this revealed that the instrument was reliable for the study (Nworgu, 2015). The researchers administered the questionnaire with the help of five research assistants from sampled areas under study. These assistants were instructed on the mode of administration and retrieval of the questionnaire. The researchers and research assistants collected the instrument from the respondents immediately after the completion The mean and standard deviations were used to analyse the data. Multiple Regression statistics were used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. A benchmark of 2.50 was established. An item with a mean rating of 2.50 and above was regarded as agreeing while those with a mean rating below 2.50 was regarded as being in disagreement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Mean and standard Deviation of self-efficacy as a predictor of psychological well-being of civil servants in FCT

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1	I can solve difficult problems if I try hard enough	2.97	.90	Agreed

2	If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want	3.06	.92	Agreed
3	It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals	3.21	.81	Agreed
4	I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	3.09	.91	Agreed
5	Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	2.48	.90	Not Agreed
6	I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	2.97	.92	Agreed
7	I remain calm when facing difficulties because I rely on my coping abilities	3.01	.93	Agreed
8	When I am confronted with a problem, I can find several solutions	3.56	.53	Agreed
9	If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution	2.75	.85	Agreed
10	I can handle whatever comes my way	3.23	.78	Agreed
	Cluster mean	3.03	.84	Agreed

Table 1 revealed that item 5 fell below the benchmark sets for the prediction level at 2.50. The remaining 9 items were above the prediction level of 2.50 with a range of 2.75 and 3.56. The analysis reveals that self-efficacy positively predicts the psychological wellbeing of Civil Servants in FCT.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of self-efficacy as a predictor of psychological well-being of workers in FCT base on gender

S/N	Items	Male (N = 199)			Female (N = 198)		
		Mean	SD	Dec	Mean	SD	Dec
1	I can solve difficult problems if I try hard enough	3.11	.91	Agreed	3.00	.86	Agreed
2	If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want	2.94	.93	Agreed	3.10	.88	Agreed
3	It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals	3.02	.96	Agreed	3.23	.77	Agreed

4	I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	3.19	.84	Agreed	3.11	.87	Agreed
5	Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	3.06	.94	Agreed	2.53	.89	Agreed
6	I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	2.42	.92	Not Agreed	2.98	.89	Agreed
7	I remain calm when facing difficulties because I rely on my coping abilities	2.90	.94	Agreed	3.05	.90	Agreed
8	When I am confronted with a problem, I can find several solutions	2.96	.96	Agreed	3.54	.49	Agreed
9	If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution	3.57	.57	Agreed	2.69	.89	Agreed
10	I can handle whatever comes my way	2.81	.81	Agreed	3.13	.88	Agreed
	Cluster mean	2.67	.87	Agreed	3.03	.84	Agreed

Table 2 revealed that item 6 fell below the benchmark sets for the prediction level at 2.50 for male civil servants. The remaining 9 items were above the prediction level of 2.50 with a range of between 2.81 to 3.57 for the male civil servants. All 10 items in the female category were above the prediction level of 2.50 with a range between 2.53 and 3.54. The analysis reveals that self-efficacy positively predicts the psychological wellbeing of Civil Servants in FCT based on gender. There is a stronger prediction in the case of female civil servants than male civil servants.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of psychological wellbeing and self-efficacy

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Regression	3067.791	1	3067.791	22.946	.000	S
Residual	52810.879	352	133.698			
Total	55878.670	353				

$\alpha = 0.05$, S = Significant

The result in Table 3 shows the regression analysis of the significant predictors of psychological well-being by self-efficacy of civil servants in FCT. It shows that an Fratio of 22.946 with an associated exact probability value of 0.00 was obtained. This probability value of 0.00 is less than the 0.05 level of significance set by the researcher. A null hypothesis that self-efficacy cannot significantly predict the

psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT is, therefore, rejected. Inference drawn is that there is a significant prediction of psychological well-being by self-efficacy of civil servants in FCT.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of psychological wellbeing and self-efficacy based on gender

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Regression	16464.370	2	8232.185	74.687	.000	S
Residual	21383.052		110.222			
Total	37847.421	175				

$\alpha = 0.05$, S = Significant

Table 4 shows the regression analysis of the significant predictors of psychological well-being by self-efficacy of civil servants in FCT based on gender. It shows that an F-ratio of 74.687 with an associated exact probability value of 0.00 was obtained. The exact probability value of 0.00 is less than the 0.05 level of significance set by the researcher. The null hypothesis that self-efficacy cannot significantly predict the psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT based on gender is therefore rejected.

Inference drawn is that there is a significant prediction of psychological wellbeing by self-efficacy of civil servants in FCT based on gender.

Self-efficacy significantly predicts the psychological wellbeing of Civil

Servants in Abuja. This result agreed with the findings of Khashab, Khashab, Mohammadi, Zarabipour, and Malekpour (2015) who revealed that self-efficacy orientation, and in a direct way, spirituality predicted psychological well-being; and the self-efficacy orientation was the only strong mediator in the relationship between spirituality and psychological well-being. Spirituality and self-efficacy were significant determinants of mental health, and they had more shares in psychological well-being. The study also agrees with the findings of Hanjani, Dastres, Mirshekari, and Moniri (2016) whose results showed that Self-efficacy has a significant relationship with growth and development, autonomy, and meaningful connections while the relationship between self-satisfaction, spirituality, joy was insignificant. The study negates the findings of Onuoha and Bada (2016), whose results showed that self-efficacy, age, and gender had no significant contributions to psychological well-being. The result may be due to workers awareness of how psychological wellbeing and self-efficacy in Abuja. Gender and self-efficacy predict Psychological Wellbeing with female contributing $0.351 = 35\%$ and male having $.028 = 2.8\%$. It indicates that female worker self-efficacy predict Psychological Wellbeing more than their male counterparts; this result agrees with the finding of Onuoha and Bada (2016) that spirituality, self-efficacy, age, and gender significantly influenced psychological well-being.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated self-efficacy and the Psychological wellbeing of civil servants in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The result revealed that Self-Efficacy Significantly predicts psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT, Self-Efficacy significantly predicts the psychological well-being of civil servants in FCT based on gender. Employers should be aware of their staff self-efficacy as it relate to their

psychological wellbeing, help their staff to manage their self-efficacy and civil servants on their parts should use their self-worth to motivate themselves. Conclusion, the study has shown that self-efficacy predicts psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT. Also self-efficacy moderated the relationship between depression and psychological wellbeing of civil servants in FCT.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Employers should be aware of their staff self-worth as it relates to their psychological wellbeing
2. Employers should help their staff to manage their self-worth
3. Civil servants should use their self-worth to motivate themselves
4. Engage the services of counselors with the cooperation of organization managements, should design appropriate intervention strategies to enhance selfefficacy factors related to workers.

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