

# Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence as Predictors of Psychological Wellbeing among Secondary School Students in Gboko Metropolis, Benue State-Nigeria

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## Abstract

“The study examined self-efficacy and emotional intelligence as predictors of psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis”. The research adopted ex-post-factor design and participants were selected using simple random sampling method. A total of 281 secondary school students participated in the research which consisted of 177 males and 104 females. The general self-efficacy scale, emotional intelligence scale and psychological well-being scale were used for data collection. Simple linear regression analyses were used to test the research hypotheses. The results indicated that self-efficacy and emotional intelligence predict psychological well-being. Based on these findings, it was recommended that the government, the school management, the parents and guardians should formulate policies that will enhance psychological well-being as well as guide the students not to involve in anything that will affect their psychological well-being.

## Key Words:

Self-efficacy, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-being, students

## Introduction

Psychological well-being is a complex and multi-dimensional concept that encompasses various aspects, including cheerfulness, optimism, playfulness, self-control, and freedom from frustration, anxiety, and loneliness (Dinner, 2006). It involves feelings of commitment, happiness, satisfaction with life and work, sense of achievement, utility, and belonging, with an absence of distress or worry (Bradburn, 2008). Psychological well-being can be defined as the quality of an individual's life, characterized by the presence

and frequency of positive emotions, and overall satisfaction with life (Dinner, 2006).

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs about their capabilities to produce desired outcomes and exercise control over events that affect their lives. It is a universal construct that influences behavior in specific domains and applies to individuals regardless of their background. Self-efficacy beliefs determine an individual's resilience to adversity, vulnerability to stress, and depression (Bandura et al., 2003). General self-efficacy reflects a broad and stable sense of personal competence to deal effectively with various stressful situations (Schwarzer, 1994; Scherer et al., 1982). Research has shown that general self-efficacy is related to physical and mental health (Wand & Liu, 2000).

Emotional intelligence is another variable that predicts psychological well-being. According to Mayer & Cole (2000), emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions. A student with high emotional intelligence is likely to possess qualities that contribute to psychological well-being, such as self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose, and personal growth.

Emotional intelligence is theoretically linked to various important life outcomes, including life satisfaction, quality relationships, and success in careers that involve emotional reasoning, such as creative fields, leadership, sales, and therapy (Burgess, 2001). Research findings have shown that emotional intelligence is moderately correlated with psychological well-being (Plmer et al., 2001).

## Statement of Problem

Globally, psychological well-being of human beings has become the major challenge in the

society, when people are not satisfied with life, when better physical health, mental and emotional state of human being is lacking, it then becomes a problem.

In Africa, Nigeria and Benue State in particular, the psychological well-being of students has not been a priority for most researchers. There have been many studies conducted on students but not much on psychological well-being of students. This has created a big service and information gap on psychological well-being experienced by students. Again, there is an identified gap as no research had been found that studied self-efficacy and emotional intelligence as predictors of psychological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis? It is against this background or gap that forms the motivation for the present study to fill the vacuum.

### Objective(s) of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate self-efficacy and emotional intelligence as predictors of psychological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis. The specific objectives include to:

- i. Examine self-efficacy as a predictor of psychological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis.
- ii. Examine emotional intelligence as a predictor of psychological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis.

### Research Questions

The research questions for the study are:

- i. To what extent does self-efficacy predict psychological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis.
- ii. To what extent does emotional intelligence predict psychological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis.

### Conceptual Review Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura, self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in their capacity to plan and execute actions necessary to handle future situations. In essence, self-efficacy is a person's faith in their ability to achieve success in a specific context. Bandura posited that these beliefs shape an individual's thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.

Bandura noted that people often set goals and identify things they want to change or achieve, but struggle to translate these plans into action.

He found that individuals with high self-efficacy tend to bounce back quickly from setbacks and disappointments, whereas those with low self-efficacy avoid challenging tasks, feel overwhelmed by difficult situations, and doubt their abilities.

Bandura identified mastery experiences as the most effective way to develop strong self-efficacy. Successfully completing tasks boosts our sense of self-efficacy, while struggling with tasks can undermine it. Observing others succeed is another key source of self-efficacy. Seeing people similar to ourselves achieve success through sustained effort can enhance our own confidence in our abilities, making us believe we can also succeed.

### Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a psychological concept that explains how emotions impact cognitive functions (Gabel et al, 2005). It has its roots in early research on emotions and social intelligence. Kerr (2005) defines emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize and understand emotions in oneself and others, and to use this awareness to guide thoughts and actions. Mayer & Salovey (2007) describe emotional intelligence as the capacity to perceive, understand and regulate emotions, promoting emotional and intellectual growth. A student with high emotional intelligence is likely to possess qualities that contribute to psychological well-being, such as self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose, and personal growth. Emotional intelligence is linked to various important life outcomes, including life satisfaction, quality relationships, and success in careers that involve emotional reasoning, such as creative fields, leadership, sales, and therapy (Mayer & Salovey, 2007).

### Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being encompasses feelings of commitment, happiness, life satisfaction, and a sense of achievement, utility, and belonging, with an absence of distress or worry (Bradburn, 2008). It is considered the ultimate goal of life and involves general emotional functioning, including positive affect, low negative affect, and high life satisfaction. Psychological well-being can be defined as the quality of an individual's life, characterized by the presence and frequency of positive emotions, the

absence of negative emotions, and overall satisfaction with life (Dinner, 2006).

According to Diener (2000), psychological well-being refers to optimal psychological functioning and experience. It is a state of mental health marked by positive qualities, such as adaptability and unity of personality. Psychological well-being is also described as a subjective report of one's mental state, encompassing feelings of health, satisfaction, and prosperity, reflecting overall quality of life and mood state (Cameli, 2009).

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are tested in the study.

- i. Self-efficacy will significantly predict psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis.
- ii. Emotional intelligence will significantly predict psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis.

### Methodology

#### Research Design

The "ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study". This was most suitable because, none of the variables were manipulated.

#### Setting

The setting for the study is Gboko metropolis. However, participants were drawn from 76 secondary schools in Gboko metropolis using simple random sampling.

#### Participants

Participants for the study comprised of 281 secondary school students in Gboko

metropolis. Out of the participants, 177 (62.98%) were males and 104 (37.01%) were females. The participants were selected

### Sample Size Determination

The available data from the Benue state ministry of education shows that, Gboko metropolis has a total of 95 secondary schools. Thus, to determine the sample size; 76 out of 95 secondary schools were first randomly selected in order to sample the participants. The researcher arrived at the 76 by using Krejcie & Morgan (1974) sample size determination table.

Furthermore, the available data showed that the sampled 76 schools have a total population of 950 students. Then, the researcher applied the Taro Yamana's formula to sample 281 participants to form the sample of the study. This is shown below in the formula: "n=N/1+N(e)<sup>2</sup>."

$$=950/1+950(0.05)^2 = 281$$

### Instruments

The study used a questionnaire as the instrument, comprising three scales: the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995), the Emotional Intelligence Scale (Salovey et al., 1995), and the Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

### Data Analysis

Simple Linear Regression was used to test self-efficacy and emotional intelligence, to know how each predict psychological well-being using SPSS version 20.

### Results

#### Inter-Variable Correlation

Variable	Means	SD	1	2
Psychological well-being	126.86	14.19		
Self-efficacy	19.73	6.97	-.180	-.135
Emotional intelligence	97.30	16.24	0.79	

$p < .01, p < .05$

Table 1 shows that, there is significant relationship between self-efficacy and psychological wellbeing ( $r=180, df = 275, p < .01$ ) and a significant relationship

between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy ( $r=.135, df = 275, p < .05$ ).

### Hypotheses Testing

**Hypothesis 1:** Self-efficacy will significantly predict psychological well-being among

secondary school students in Gboko metropolis. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression as shown in table II.

**Table 2:** Simple linear regression showing influence of self-efficacy on physiological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis.

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	df	β	t	sig
Constant	.180	0.32	9.209	1.275		53.072	.000
Self-efficacy					-.180	-3.035	.003

$p < .05, p < .001$

Table 2 shows that, there is a significant influence of self-efficacy on psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis ( $F(1,275) = 9.209, \beta = -.180, t = -3.035, p < .01$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted.

**Hypothesis 2:** Emotional intelligence will significantly predict psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis.

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	df	β	t	sig
Constant	.958	.917	3057.3	1.275		10.520	.000
Emotional intelligence					.958	55.293	.000

$p < .05, p < .001$

Table 3 shows that emotional intelligence predicted psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis ( $F(1,275) = 3057, \beta = .024, t = 337, p > .05$ ), therefore hypothesis 2 was accepted.

positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among executives.

**Discussion**

Hypothesis one stated that self-efficacy would significantly predict psychological well-being among students in Gboko metropolis. Simple linear regression analysis revealed a significant influence of self-efficacy on psychological well-being ( $F(1,275) = 9.209, \beta = -.180, t = 3.035, p < 0.01$ ), confirming the hypothesis. This means self-efficacy is a predictor of psychological well-being, supporting Alex's (2015) findings, which showed a strong relationship between self-efficacy and psychological well-being.

**Conclusion**

Psychological well-being encompasses feelings of commitment, happiness, life satisfaction, achievement, utility, belonging, and freedom from distress or worry. It also involves dimensions like cheerfulness, optimism, playfulness, self-control, and absence of frustration, anxiety, and loneliness. "The study concludes that self-efficacy and emotional intelligence are key predictors of psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis". Therefore, schools should prioritize developing these qualities in students. Training students in self-efficacy and emotional intelligence can help them cope with stressful situations, manage emotions, and promote psychological well-being.

Hypothesis two stated that emotional intelligence would significantly predict psychological well-being among secondary school students in Gboko metropolis. Simple linear regression analysis showed that emotional intelligence significantly predicted psychological well-being ( $F(1,275) = 3.057, \beta = 0.024, t = 0.337, p > 0.05$ ), accepting the hypothesis. This result aligns with Sakunthala's (2014) study, which found a

**Recommendation**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:  
i. Government and schools' management should formulate policies that will enhance the psychological well-being of students especially in Gboko metropolis.

ii) The parents and guardians should guide the secondary school students not to involve in anything that will affect their psychological well-being.

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