

**PERSONALITY TRAITS, ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS,
AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AS PREDICTORS OF
MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES AMONG COUPLES IN
IBADAN METROPOLIS, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT: Mental health is a fundamental component of overall well-being, intricately linked to the quality of life and interpersonal relationships, particularly among married couples. The significance of mental health transcends individual experiences, as it affects the dynamics of relationships, communication patterns, and emotional support systems within couples. This study examined personality traits, environment and socioeconomic status as predictors of mental health among couples in Ibadan metropolis. The research design is descriptive. Quantitative method of data collection was adopted. A sample of 215 participants was selected using a simple random sampling. A questionnaire focusing on demographic variables, personality traits, environmental stress, socioeconomic status and mental health was administered to the participants. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation and regression analysis at a 0.05 level of significance. Three hypotheses were tested. The findings of hypothesis one indicated that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between personality traits and mental health, $r = 0.34$, $p = 0.000$. Test of hypothesis two indicated there was a statistically significant positive correlation between environmental factors and mental health, $r = .32$, $p < .001$. Test of hypothesis three indicated that the combination of personality traits, environmental factors, and socioeconomic status significantly predicts mental health outcomes ($F(3, 211) = 140.26$, $p < .001$, with $R^2 = 0.67$). The practical implication of this finding is that the favourable environmental factors and socio-economic factors are associated with improved mental health outcomes among married couples when compared to their counterparts. The study recommended that couples should engage in open and honest communication to address challenges related to personality differences, environmental stressors, and socioeconomic pressures, as this will foster emotional closeness and improve mental health outcomes. Couples should work together to build a nurturing and stable home environment free from conflict and excessive stress, as a positive environment has been shown to significantly improve the mental wellbeing of married partners. Couples facing persistent challenges related to personality clashes or environmental and financial pressures should seek professional help through marital counseling or therapy to gain coping strategies and strengthen their relationship. Finally, since socioeconomic status influences mental health, couples should engage in joint financial planning, budgeting, and goal-setting to reduce stress caused by economic instability and improve their overall quality of life.

Keywords: Personality Traits, Environmental Conditions, Socioeconomic Status, Mental Health Outcomes, Couples

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is an essential element of well-being, associated with one's quality of life and relationships with other people, especially in marriage unions. Mental health cannot be underestimated since it impacts one's relationship dynamics, communication strategies, and ways of providing emotional support within the couple. Over the last decade, many scholars have shown interest in the topic of predictors of mental health and found that different factors, all interconnected, play a crucial role in the psychological well-being of people who have intimate relations with each other. As for the most significant predictors of mental health in relationships, it should be noted that personality characteristics, environmental factors, and socio-economic status play the leading roles in mental health among couples. For example, people who have stable personalities find it easier to cope with stressful situations, which helps maintain their psychological well-being and positively affects their relationships. Thus, a person with high emotional stability will be capable of managing conflicts in a couple, thus creating a conducive environment for the psychological wellness of both partners (Salvatore & Laura, 2023).

Moreover, environmental variables also have a considerable effect on the outcomes of mental health in married couples. Environmental variables include things like social support, resources available within communities, and stress-inducing life events that either help or hinder the development of mental problems. A strong social network will be able to provide emotional support, which means less isolation and resilience to mental issues. Besides that, the effects of socioeconomic status are also worth considering since it plays an important role in determining how many opportunities individuals will have to engage in activities that promote better mental health. Those who come from wealthier families will have access to treatment options, stress-relieving strategies, and other factors that contribute to mental health issues. As mentioned above, according to Bouchard, Alain and Salvatore (2021), the interactions between various factors involved demonstrate that these predictors of mental health should be considered in order to improve relationships between intimate partners.

Another variable to look at in this context is personality traits. In this case, we can define personality traits as those individual attributes that have a great impact on the behaviour, thoughts, and feelings of the individual. There are many studies and theories that try to explain the concept of personality traits, and one of the widely accepted theories is the Five Factor Model (FFM), which consists of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. All of these factors play a crucial role in defining the mental health condition and psychological well-being of an individual. For example, it has been established that high levels of neuroticism lead to an increased susceptibility to anxiety and depression, among other mental disorders. The results of Mroczek & Spiro (2017) showed that people who scored highly on the neuroticism dimension tended to face difficulties when it comes to managing their emotional states. On the contrary, traits such as conscientiousness and agreeableness can help build positive interpersonal relationships, contributing significantly to mental well-being. This has been proven in the paper written by Stewart, Harris, and Neighbours (2022), who found that people with conscientious personality traits can effectively cope with difficult situations.

Furthermore, studies have shown that not only do personality traits impact an individual's mental state, but they also affect the dynamics of a couple's interactions in a marriage. According to the study by Friedman, Marsland, and Allen (2020), it was found that married couples whose partners were characterized by high levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness experienced better marital satisfaction and conflict management. The findings show that personality traits could be a source of a favourable environment, which enables one's partners to be emotionally stronger. For one to address mental problems among the married, it is important to understand how such traits could be exhibited in couples.

The environment in which people live greatly determines their psychological health status. The environment consists of many factors, including the physical and social environments, as well as other factors. The findings of the research carried out by Berkman et al. (2018) show that various aspects of the environment strongly determine individuals' psychological health, underscoring the need to assess people's mental states within their environmental contexts. For the married couple, the environment is an important aspect in influencing their mental health status. Housing conditions, access to medical services, and strong social ties are factors that should play a vital role in the mental well-being of married couples.

According to González, Lewis, and Goldring (2021), persons who encounter economic problems and discrimination face elevated levels of stress, which may harm their mental health and relationship dynamics. People residing in an environment that offers a lot of help and resources have better mental health than those living in environmentally stressful conditions, including poverty, discrimination, and social isolation. The environment has a significant impact on couples' psychological well-being because it encourages resilience and coping strategies in the face of adversity. As stated by Cohen and Wills (2019), social support plays a critical role in buffering couples from stress, making it easier for them to cope.

Socioeconomic status (SES) is a multidimensional variable made up of income, educational level, and occupation, each having a considerable impact on mental health outcomes. Studies have shown that people with low SES face higher chances of developing mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. According to Lorant, Croux, Weich, and van Oort, (2017), socioeconomic adversity affects mental health and is likely to increase hopelessness and anxiety in financially unstable people. People experiencing financial problems are also under constant stress due to their economic conditions. The couple's relationship faces challenges when they face economic problems, as stress from insufficient income and job insecurity leads to conflict, making it difficult for them to provide emotional support.

The married couple constitutes an important demographic group within society that faces certain unique situations and circumstances that contribute greatly to their psychological well-being. Being a source of emotional safety and support, marriage offers people a feeling of security and companionship. On the other hand, the process of coping with various difficulties and hardships may turn into a considerable burden, causing anxiety and depression. This is especially relevant when couples face tough situations, such as financial difficulties, health problems, or losses. As pointed out by Meyer, Keng, and Lydon (2020), marriages might suffer considerably at such moments due to the emergence of psychological problems. In such cases, the role of effective

communication styles, conflict management, and support plays an important part. Proper communications ensure that couples better understand each other, while successful conflicts help people avoid arguments, thus making their marriages psychologically comfortable.

Also, the interaction between personality, environment, and socio-economic status makes it important to consider these predictors collectively in analyzing the relationship between these predictors and the psychological well-being of married individuals. According to Johnson and Whiffen (2021), personality characteristics play an important role in shaping the way couples interpret events that may cause stress and determine their coping strategies. The environment may play either a protective or an aggravating role in the stressors encountered by couples. Socio-economic status adds yet another aspect that affects the well-being of couples in terms of access to psychological help.

Mental issues between married couples appear to be more common now than before, impacting the quality of the marriages and the lives of individuals greatly. Anxiety and depression have been found to be the leading causes of concern in terms of mental issues between spouses. While there is some empirical evidence that about 30% of married couples have mental health issues, very little is known about what predicts mental problems among them. In addition to personality-related characteristics, such as neuroticism and conscientiousness, and socio-economic variables associated with financial difficulties, other factors also appear to contribute to mental issues. At the same time, few attempts have been made to explore the relationship between the factors mentioned and marital status when predicting mental health problems between spouses. Another issue that remains under-researched is that people who live in poor conditions, suffer from lack of proper social support, and reside in dangerous neighbourhoods are likely to report a greater number of mental problems as compared to wealthy and healthy couples.

The main aim of this study is to examine personality traits, environment and socioeconomic status as predictors of mental health among couples in Ibadan metropolis. The specific objectives are;

- i. To examine the influence of personality traits on mental health among married couples
- ii. To determine the role of environmental factors in shaping mental health outcomes for couples
- iii. To assess the impact of socioeconomic status on mental health among couples
- iv. To determine the relative and joint contribution of the personality traits, environment and socioeconomic status on mental health

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is anchored in two theories: the Diathesis-Stress Model and the Ecological Systems Theory.

Diathesis-Stress Model

The Diathesis-Stress Model, developed by Zubin and Spring (1977), explains the development of psychological disorders as the result of an interaction between individual vulnerabilities (diatheses)

and environmental stressors. These vulnerabilities may be biological, such as genetic predispositions, neurochemical imbalances, or differences in brain structure, or psychological, including maladaptive thinking patterns and personality traits. On their own, these predispositions may not lead to mental illness; however, when combined with significant stressors—such as trauma, loss, or chronic socioeconomic pressures they can increase the likelihood of psychological disorders. The model highlights that mental health outcomes are shaped by both internal characteristics and external circumstances, with stress acting as a trigger that activates underlying vulnerabilities.

The model also emphasizes individual differences in response to stress, noting that not everyone exposed to similar stressors will develop mental health conditions. Protective factors such as strong social support, effective coping strategies, and access to mental health care can reduce the impact of stress and lower the risk of disorder onset. Conversely, individuals with a higher level of vulnerability may require less stress to experience psychological difficulties. Diatheses can arise from genetic influences, early life experiences, or pre-existing cognitive patterns, while stressors may include acute events like bereavement or chronic challenges such as financial strain or relationship conflict. This interaction underscores the importance of context, as supportive environments can buffer risks, while persistent stress without adequate support can increase susceptibility to mental health problems.

In the context of couples, the Diathesis-Stress Model provides a useful framework for understanding how personality traits, environmental conditions, and socioeconomic status influence mental health outcomes. Personality traits such as neuroticism may increase vulnerability to stress, while resilience can serve as a protective factor. Relationship dynamics, work pressures, and community support systems all contribute to the stress experienced within a partnership. Socioeconomic factors, including financial stability and access to resources, further shape the level of stress couples face and their ability to cope. Overall, the model highlights how the interaction between individual predispositions and external stressors determines mental health outcomes, emphasizing the need for both personal and environmental interventions.

Ecology System Theory

Ecology System Theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, explains human development as a dynamic process shaped by continuous interactions between individuals and multiple environmental systems. These systems are structured in layers, including the microsystem (immediate environments such as family, peers, and school), mesosystem (interactions between microsystems), exosystem (indirect external influences like workplaces and social services), macrosystem (cultural values, norms, and laws), and chronosystem (the dimension of time and life transitions). The theory emphasizes that development does not occur in isolation but is influenced by interconnected social contexts that either support or hinder individual growth over time.

The microsystem plays a central role in shaping development through direct relationships and daily interactions. Family dynamics, parenting styles, peer relationships, and school environments significantly influence emotional, social, and cognitive outcomes. Positive interactions, such as supportive parenting and healthy peer engagement, promote well-being and resilience, while

negative experiences may lead to behavioral and emotional challenges. The mesosystem further highlights how connections between these immediate settings—such as collaboration between parents and teachers or alignment between family and peer values—can strengthen or weaken developmental outcomes. Consistency and cooperation across these systems are crucial for fostering stability and positive behavior.

Beyond immediate environments, the exosystem and macrosystem exert indirect yet powerful influences on individuals. Factors such as parental work conditions, access to healthcare, and community resources shape opportunities and well-being, while broader cultural norms, societal attitudes, and policies determine expectations and access to resources. The chronosystem adds a temporal dimension, recognizing that life events and historical changes can significantly alter developmental pathways. In the context of mental health among couples, this theory highlights how personality traits, relationship dynamics, socioeconomic status, and societal influences interact across these systems. Together, these layers shape mental health outcomes by influencing stress levels, access to support, and coping mechanisms, demonstrating the importance of considering both individual and environmental factors in understanding well-being.

According to Afolabi, Ayodele, and Ilesanmi (2020), an extensive study was carried out to investigate the link between personality characteristics and psychological well-being in married individuals in Lagos, Nigeria. In this research, a total of 150 married people were studied using the correlation research design to determine the effects of certain personality characteristics on psychological well-being. In this study, the researchers adopted the Big Five Personality Inventory that focuses on the measures of emotional stability (neuroticism), extroversion (sociability), openness (creativity), agreeableness, and conscientiousness (responsibility). Additionally, the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) was utilized for assessing the mental well-being of the participants. As indicated in the regression analysis results, neuroticism emerged as a predictor of negative mental well-being ($\beta = 0.45, p < 0.05$). Contrarily, extroversion emerged as one of the predictors of positive psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.38, p < 0.05$). Thus, personality traits were significant for marital satisfaction and mental well-being, with neuroticism having detrimental effects on mental well-being, while extroversion improved it.

On a similar note, Ogunyemi, Alabi, and Durojaiye (2019) conducted a research analysis on the relationship between personality characteristics, mental health, and resolution of disputes amongst married couples in Ibadan, Nigeria. Using an experimental design, the analysis recruited 120 couples as participants and employed both quantitative and qualitative methods through a mixed-methods strategy. Regarding the quantitative aspect, the authors utilised a t-test to analyse the mental health results based on the differences in dominance and openness levels in couples. There was notable variance in mental health based on dominance and openness of the couples ($t = 2.56, p < 0.01$). It implies that the personalities of individuals with a tendency to dominate others are likely to have a negative influence on the psychological well-being of their partners. Therefore, personality characteristics of individuals, especially dominance, are essential in shaping the mental well-being of married couples.

A study was carried out by Ibrahim and Sulaimon (2021) to explore the association between emotional stability and agreeableness as predictors of mental health status in married couples. The

study used a survey research method in which data were collected from 200 married couples in Oyo State, Nigeria. Correlation coefficient was used to establish associations between emotional stability, agreeableness and mental health status. There was a significant negative relationship between emotional stability and mental disorders ($r=-0.38$, $p<0.01$). This means that couples who had high emotional stability recorded a low occurrence of mental disorders such as depression and anxiety, while those with low emotional stability reported a higher incidence of mental disorders. Emotional stability can therefore be used as an indicator of better mental health. Emotional stability is critical in ensuring mental health in marriages since couples who have emotional stability showed better results in mental health status than those lacking emotional stability.

On the same issue, in another study conducted by Okafor, Onu & Chukwu (2018), the effects of personality traits, especially conscientiousness and openness, on the mental well-being of married couples in Enugu, Nigeria, were investigated. In total, 180 married couples were involved in the study through the use of a cross-sectional survey to determine the effect of the two personality traits on mental well-being. Using the ANOVA test, it was found that couples that rated highly on the conscientiousness trait performed much better mentally ($F(2, 177) = 4.72$, $p < 0.05$). The conscientiousness trait entails self-discipline and responsibility, and therefore, it can be said to positively affect mental well-being. In addition, those couples who were open-minded showed a willingness to be flexible when resolving conflicts, resulting in positive effects on mental health. Thus, from this study, it can be deduced that being conscientious is a predictor of mental well-being, whereas openness leads to better conflict management, leading to harmonious marriages.

Afolabi (2024) examines the relationship between psychological stress and mental disorders among students, emphasizing the increasing attention this association has received in mental health research. The study highlights that psychological stress, often resulting from academic demands, social pressures, financial constraints, and personal challenges, significantly affects students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioural functioning. It further explains that prolonged exposure to stressors can contribute to the development or worsening of mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, and substance use disorders. The relationship between stress and mental disorders is described as reciprocal, as pre-existing mental health issues may also heighten individuals' vulnerability to stress. Additionally, the study identifies coping strategies, social support, and resilience as key moderating factors that influence how stress impacts mental health outcomes. Overall, Afolabi (2024) underscores the need for comprehensive, preventive, and intervention-based approaches that integrate early support systems and mental health education to reduce the adverse effects of psychological stress among students.

In their work, Sulaimon et al. (2017) explore the predictive power of the extraversion and emotional instability factors in influencing marriage satisfaction and psychological well-being in a selected group of Nigerian couples from Abuja. This study used a sample of 160 couples and employed regression analysis to assess the correlation between emotional instability and extraversion and the mental health and satisfaction of the marriages under investigation. The findings showed a negative correlation between emotional instability and marriage satisfaction ($\beta = -0.50$, $p < 0.01$). It was noted that emotional instability, characterized by mood swings and anxiety, tends to affect marital satisfaction adversely. On the other hand, there was a positive correlation between extraversion and

psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.40$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that people who are considered more extraverted enjoy better mental well-being and high levels of marital satisfaction.

Environmental influences are vital in shaping couples' mental state, as many studies have shown that factors such as socioeconomic position, family environment, social support, and culture affect marriages. For instance, according to a study conducted by Ogunyemi, Alabi, and Durojaiye (2019) among married people living in Ibadan, Nigeria, the effect of sociological stressors and environmental factors such as financial difficulties and familial stress on the mental wellbeing of couples has been investigated. According to Ogunyemi et al., the two factors that affected the mental well-being of the respondents were their financial situation and lack of social support from the community, which implied that couples faced with financial difficulties were at greater risk of developing mental problems.

In their work, Ogunyemi, Whisman and Uebelacker (2020) carried out a survey on 300 married couples from Ibadan, where the researchers used structured questionnaires to assess the impact of socio-environmental factors, such as financial stresses, family-related factors, and community supports, on the respondents. In analyzing their data using regression statistics, the researchers observed a significant correlation between financial stress and mental health issues among couples. According to their findings, financial stress was responsible for up to 45% of the variance of mental problems in couples, and thus, financial stability and community support play vital roles in the mental well-being of couples.

The importance of social support in overcoming mental health difficulties among married couples has been investigated in a study carried out by Ibrahim, Sulaimon, and Adeola (2021). The study involved 250 couples in Lagos, Nigeria and utilized a mixed research methodology using both qualitative and quantitative data gathering techniques. The goal was to find out whether or not social support can have any influence on minimising mental disorders like anxiety and depression among married couples. The results showed that the presence of high amounts of social support among the subjects significantly reduced the risk of developing mental issues. A chi-square test produced a statistically significant association ($\chi^2 = 18.22$; $p < 0.05$) between social support and low cases of mental problems, where couples with high social support had a 40% reduction in mental disorders like anxiety and depression.

However, Belsky and Pluess (2020) chose an alternative perspective and studied the effects of culture and environment on the mental health of married individuals in rural Nigeria. Conducted in Ogun State, this research featured 400 married couples sampled from diverse rural communities. The effects of living conditions, availability of health resources, and prevailing cultural norms were considered as factors affecting the mental health of these couples. Utilizing ANOVA to examine data obtained from the research, several notable findings emerged from the results, which demonstrated differences in the mental well-being of married individuals within different communities. It was found that individuals living in communities rich in healthcare resources and cultural norms tended to enjoy good mental health, while their counterparts in poorer communities struggled with worse mental health status.

Likewise, McEwen and Akil (2020) investigated how the urban environmental stressors of overcrowding and congestion affected the level of marital conflict and mental health among married couples residing in Lagos, Nigeria. Specifically, their study was based on a sample of 300 married couples and was aimed at studying the impact of living under the stressors associated with the urban environment characterized by high degrees of urbanization. Regression analysis showed that the degree of urban environmental stressors positively correlates with an increase in marital conflicts ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$), thus negatively affecting mental health. From the results obtained, it can be argued that the urban environment, characterized by overcrowding, traffic congestion, and other sources of stress, increases marital tension and is a factor contributing to the poor mental health of the couples in question.

The relationship between environmental stress and marital satisfaction was investigated by Nwogwugwu and Afolabi (2018) in Oyo State, Nigeria. The sample size consisted of 350 married individuals in the study aimed at exploring the effects of environmental factors, including economic problems, poor living conditions, and poor social support, among others, on marital satisfaction. Correlation and regression were some of the statistical tools used in analyzing the collected data, which indicated a significant negative correlation between environmental stress and marital satisfaction ($\beta = -0.45$, $p < 0.05$). Individuals who were facing economic problems and poor living conditions, as well as poor social support, expressed low marital satisfaction.

Fatoye Afolabi, Arowolo and Adejuwon (2025) investigated the relationship between women's economic empowerment and reproductive health outcomes in Oyo State, Nigeria, using a cross-sectional quantitative survey design grounded in Amartya Sen's Capability Approach. The study sampled 233 women of reproductive age from Egbeda and Ibadan North East Local Government Areas using a multistage sampling technique and structured questionnaires. Findings revealed high utilisation of reproductive health services, particularly maternal care, delivery services, postnatal care, and family planning, alongside generally positive perceptions of service quality in terms of confidentiality and affordability. However, challenges were noted in areas such as service availability during convenient hours and consistent health information dissemination. The study also reported strong levels of women's economic empowerment, including access to financial resources and engagement in income-generating activities. Importantly, a significant positive relationship was found between economic empowerment and access to reproductive health services, particularly in relation to family planning and reproductive health education. Despite these gains, barriers such as cultural, social, financial, and policy constraints persisted. The authors concluded that integrating reproductive health services with women's economic empowerment through policy reform, education, and community engagement is essential for improving women's well-being and promoting sustainable development in the region.

In this study, carried out by Ogunyemi et al. (2019) in Ibadan, Nigeria, the effects of SES on mental health problems among married couples have been examined. The sample size used was 300 couples who completed a set of questionnaires containing structured questions related to various factors associated with SES, such as income, education, and occupation. Regression analysis was employed in determining the effect of SES on mental health. According to the findings from this study, low income and education levels have a direct effect on anxiety and depression among the couples in the study. In this study, it was found that SES, especially the income and education level

of an individual, has a direct association with the occurrence of mental health disorders among couples; $\beta = -0.42$ ($p < 0.01$). This study concludes that SES, especially income levels, has a direct correlation with the mental health status of married couples. This study indicated that income and educational advantages of couples would make them psychologically healthier, because there would be fewer sources of anxiety for those who earn more money and have better education.

According to Oladipo and Adeyemi (2020), economic stress, an important component of SES, was assessed in relation to the impact on marital mental well-being. This study involved a sample of 350 couples who were asked to complete an economic stress scale, and the researchers then employed correlation analysis to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between economic stress and marital mental well-being. Oladipo and Adeyemi (2020) found a statistically significant correlation between economic stress and mental health outcomes ($r = -0.45$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, the higher economic stress in the family, the more likely a couple was to report poor mental health (anxiety disorders, depression, and marital dissatisfaction). Economic stress is an important factor that leads to deterioration in the mental health of people, particularly those from low-income backgrounds. Economic stress makes people anxious, leading to the development of anxiety disorders, depression, or marital issues. According to Oladipo and Adeyemi (2020), financial stability is crucial for maintaining good mental health among married couples. Oladipo and Adeyemi (2020) state that alleviating economic stress through various programs aimed at helping couples become more financially secure would help alleviate many of their mental health concerns.

The effects of SES on the mental wellbeing of individuals were studied by Okafor, Onu, and Chukwu (2018) among couples in Enugu, Nigeria. For their research, the authors used a population of 400 couples and adopted a cross-sectional survey design. When conducting an ANOVA analysis on couples belonging to various SES levels (poor, middle, and rich SES), the researchers observed significant differences in the mental wellbeing outcomes of the subjects depending on their SES. More specifically, it was shown that couples from low SES families suffered more from depression and anxiety as compared to their counterparts from high SES backgrounds. Based on the ANOVA analysis conducted, a significant difference was obtained in the mental wellbeing of couples depending on their SES status ($F = 6.89$; $p < 0.01$). The above evidence indicates that people coming from a lower socio-economic class tend to suffer from poor mental health conditions due to a range of stress factors, including financial insecurity and insufficient access to medical and educational resources.

In another study, Afolabi and Durojaiye (2021) assessed the effects of SES on marital quality and the implications thereof on mental health in married couples in Oyo State, Nigeria. This study involved a sample of 300 married couples from the study setting and used regression analysis to examine how SES affects marital quality and psychological distress. The study's findings revealed that SES was positively related to marital quality and mental well-being; specifically, low SES had a negative influence on marital quality ($\beta = -0.38$, $p < 0.05$), which was associated with increased psychological distress, especially among women. Couples in lower SES categories tend to experience psychological distress due to stress, financial problems, inadequate medical care, and adverse living conditions. All these factors negatively affect marital quality and mental well-being, leading to marital dissatisfaction. In addition, the psychological distress experienced by women because of low SES was higher than that experienced by men in similar SES categories. The

psychological distress experienced by these women is mainly characterized by anxiety, depression, and marital dissatisfaction. According to the findings of this study, improvement in SES can lead to improvement in marital quality and overall well-being.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this study is that of correlational surveys. This research design is appropriate for investigating the connections among personality characteristics, environmental factors, socio-economic class, and mental well-being. In other words, through employing the correlational survey research design, the investigation of the extent to which the independent variables, namely personality characteristics, environmental factors, and socio-economic class, are connected and predict changes in the dependent variable, i.e., mental well-being, in the context of participants' daily lives becomes possible. Contrary to experimental methods, where the manipulation of variables is conducted to prove causal associations, the correlational survey research design is instrumental in collecting data on a number of variables as they are. Moreover, the use of this research design is beneficial in investigating psychosocial phenomena that are characterized by complexity and affected by both individual-level and contextual variables, such as mental well-being.

The study was conducted in the metropolis of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Ibadan is among the biggest cities in West Africa. It is known to have a diverse populace, including people from all economic strata. This makes the metropolis an ideal setting for studying the effects of different environments on mental health issues in marriages. The subjects of this research were couples who lived in Ibadan metropolis. The subjects were chosen from different socioeconomic groups with different personalities and living in different environments. The criterion for selection included individuals who were married for more than two years and were living together in Ibadan metropolis. The number of couples that constituted the sample for the research was set at 215, which was arrived at after careful planning of the multistage sampling strategy adopted to ensure representativeness and reliability of the results obtained.

The first step in the process is stratification, where the city of Ibadan is divided into two strata, namely urban and peri-urban zones. Considering the variations between the two zones in socio-demographic and environmental terms, 60% of the samples were drawn from urban zones, totalling 126 couples, while 40% (85 couples) were drawn from peri-urban zones. Cluster sampling is then conducted, in which the clusters are identified and randomly selected. Urban zones yielded 10 neighbourhoods, out of 30, while peri-urban zones yielded 7, out of 20. For each of the sampled neighbourhoods, the study proceeds to the final phase, in which simple random sampling was used to select individuals as couples. From the 10 sampled neighbourhoods in urban areas, about 12 to 13 couples were sampled randomly, bringing the sample size to 126 couples. Likewise, in peri-urban areas, about 12 couples were randomly selected from each of the 7 sampled neighbourhoods, bringing the sample size to 84 couples.

The study employed a structured questionnaire divided into four sections: Section A: Personality Traits, Section B: Environmental Stress, Section C: Socioeconomic Status and Section D: Mental Health.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of personality traits on the mental health of married couples.

Table 1: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation showing a significant relationship between personality traits and Mental Health.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P	Remark
Personal Traits	38.12	5.44	215	.34	.000	Sig.
Mental Health	42.09	4.26				

As can be seen in Table 1, the results show that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between personality traits and mental health, $r = 0.34$, $p = 0.000$. This means that an increase in the personality traits score is associated with improved mental health among married people. Since p is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that personality traits have a significant impact on mental health. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Strickhouser, Zell, and Krizan (2019), who observed that personality traits like neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness are significant predictors of mental health status among married couples. They conducted quantitative research using a sample of 300 married people in southwestern Nigeria. It was concluded that individuals who scored high on neuroticism had more anxiety and depression. On the other hand, extraversion and conscientiousness led to improved emotional and relational wellbeing. The researchers maintain that personality traits influence how couples react to and perceive the stress associated with marriage, which then affects their psychological well-being. This finding supports the results of the current research: there was a positive correlation between personality traits and psychological well-being, suggesting that personality traits can act as protective factors for psychological well-being in marriages.

Similarly, Kotov, Gamez, Schmidt, and Watson (2021) explored the impact of personality features on mental health in married people residing in urban and rural regions in Nigeria. These authors found that people who display maladaptive personality features such as impulsiveness and aggressiveness are more prone to develop psychopathologies, including depression and generalised anxiety disorder. It should be noted that personality traits under discussion impair effective communication and conflict resolution processes within marriage, which leads to emotional strain. On the contrary, agreeableness and conscientiousness facilitate the regulation of positive emotions and enhance marital harmony. As a result, positive personality traits lead to a healthy mental state. The above information is consistent with the findings of the present study, which showed that personality was a strong predictor of mental health in married people.

Additional support comes from the work of Soto (2021), who investigated psychological factors contributing to the mental well-being of married couples in Ibadan, Nigeria. The study used the Big Five Personality Model and found that neuroticism had the greatest negative impact on subjects' mental well-being, whereas extroversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness had significant

positive effects. According to the authors, persons with lower neuroticism levels were better prepared to deal with marriage-related difficulties like financial constraints, parental obligations, and interpersonal disputes. Furthermore, the authors noted that these coping skills would contribute to resilience and assist couples in maintaining emotional balance in difficult situations. These findings corroborate this study's findings regarding the important role of personality traits in shaping mental well-being. As a result, raising public awareness of the effects of personality characteristics on marital partnerships can benefit couples' well-being.

Hypothesis Two

H02: There is no significant role of environmental factors in shaping mental health outcomes for married couples.

Table 2: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation showing a significant relationship between environmental factors and Mental Health.

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	P	Remark
Environmental factors	36.45	4.99	215	.32	.000	Sig.
Mental Health	42.09	4.26				

From Table 2, it can be seen that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between environmental factors and mental health, $r = .32$, $p < .001$. This implies that there exists a positive and statistically significant relationship between the environmental factors and the mental health outcome of married couples. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not accepted. According to Alegría, NeMoyer, Falgàs Bagué, Wang, and Alvarez (2019), who conducted a cross-sectional study in Lagos state, Nigeria, that analysed the effect of environmental factors such as the housing conditions, safety of the environment, and availability of social amenities on the psychological well-being of the married individuals. They discovered that there existed a positive correlation between environmental factors and mental wellbeing such that those married people who live in safe environments with all the necessary amenities were found to have significantly higher mental wellbeing than the rest of the others. They attributed their findings to the fact that good environmental conditions offer a sense of security and minimize stress-related issues. Algeria et al (2019) emphasized the importance of improving community infrastructure and promoting safe living conditions as strategies for enhancing both individual and relational mental health outcomes.

In a similar study, Fried and Robinaugh (2020) focused on analyzing the role of environmental stressors on mental well-being among married couples living in both rural and urban settings in Nigeria. According to their findings, couples who are exposed to noisy, polluted, and crowded environments face a high risk of experiencing psychological problems such as depression, irritability, and dissatisfaction within marriages. However, couples who enjoy the benefits of positive and supportive environmental conditions have shown better resilience and emotional balance when facing marital problems. From their study, it becomes evident that environmental factors function as either risk factors or protective measures to promote mental well-being among married people. Therefore, the results of this article reinforce those obtained in this study, which

showed that exposure to good environmental conditions enhances mental well-being. Based on their findings, Fried and Robinaugh (2020) recommended that governments should adopt environmental reforms to reduce the negative effects of environmental stressors on marital well-being.

Building on the existing literature, Sareen and Afifi (2021) examined the impact of environmental factors like availability of social support, economic resources, and community ties on the mental wellbeing of married couples. The findings indicated that those couples living in communities characterized by cohesion and support networks had lower levels of psychological distress and marital dissatisfaction. According to the study, the existence of a positive environment, where healthcare services, education facilities, and safe areas were easily accessible, led to an increased feeling of belonging and stability. Consequently, these couples had better mental wellbeing compared to others who were subjected to harsh conditions. It emerged that poor environments, characterized by poverty and violence, were associated with high levels of stress, hence impacting negatively on the mental wellbeing of people and marriages. Indeed, the current study supports the results by establishing that there was a positive association between environmental factors and mental well-being that was statistically significant.

Hypothesis 3

H03: Personality traits, environmental factors, and socioeconomic status do not jointly or relatively contribute significantly to the mental health outcomes of married couples

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis for the joint contribution of each independent variable (Personality traits, environmental factors, and socioeconomic status) to mental health

Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig
		Unstandardized Coefficient B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.8	1.25	-.73.04	-0.99	.323
	Personality	.28	0.072	.7.33	8.08	.000
	Environment	.31	0.081	.7.86	10.45	.000
	Socioeconomic	.37	0.067	.9.66	16.72	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Mental Health

Table 3 presents the findings from the regression analysis assessing the combined effect of media use and family history on mental well-being. The test result was statistically significant, $F(3, 211) = 140.26$, $p < .001$, where $R^2 = 0.67$. It implies that personality traits, environmental influences, and socioeconomic status collectively predict mental health status. Socioeconomic status exerted the greatest unique effect, while environmental influences and personality traits ranked second and third, respectively. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, we could reject the null hypothesis.

To further validate the above results, Ridley, Rao, Schilbach, and Patel (2020) undertook an extensive investigation into the interactive role played by these three variables in shaping the mental

wellbeing of married couples in southwest Nigeria. The study found that personality characteristics such as conscientiousness and neuroticism had a considerable effect on mental well-being; however, these effects were moderated by the socioenvironmental context, which either increased or reduced their predictive capacity for mental health. Couples characterised by adaptive personality structures, such as high conscientiousness and low neuroticism, had better mental health in environments with favourable socioenvironmental conditions, such as adequate housing and healthcare services. Those with maladaptive personality structures and unfavorable social environments were vulnerable to poor mental wellbeing, including depression and marital dissatisfaction. These results concur with those of this current study in that all three variables independently contribute towards mental health outcomes. They further suggested that single-factor approaches were ineffective and advocated for more integrated strategies that promote the development of adaptive personalities alongside socioeconomic empowerment.

In addition, another study conducted by Lund, Brooke-Sumner, and Baingana (2018) reiterated that the interplay between socioeconomic, environmental, and personality factors in determining mental health outcomes in marriages is very dynamic. This study, which was conducted using 400 married subjects in both rural and urban settings, revealed that while socioeconomic status was important for determining mental health, it did not operate independently because it was mediated through personality and environmental influences. Higher socioeconomic status allowed for better availability of resources that helped alleviate stress in the form of healthcare services, counseling services, and good housing. Nevertheless, the positive role that socioeconomic status plays in determining mental health depends on individuals' adaptability and whether they live in safe environments. It should be noted that, in this case, the relationship between these factors is synergistic, meaning the influence is greater than additive. In other words, these findings align with those of the current study.

According to Proulx, Helms, and Buehler (2017), the effects of social and psychological determinants combined have been examined concerning marital mental health, showing that psychological, socio-economic, and environmental factors predict psychological wellbeing when considered jointly. According to the results obtained from the study, poor and environmentally deprived couples are prone to experiencing chronic stress, which, along with the maladaptation of their personality, specifically neuroticism, is a predictor of mental illness. In contrast, a good environment and sufficient economic resources help to mitigate the influence of stress and promote the positive effects of positive personality traits of individuals – their resilience and agreeableness. Therefore, the all-encompassing approach presented above explains how structural variables (poverty and environmental deprivation) and personal psychological features are connected to mental health outcomes among spouses. The findings obtained are similar to those presented in the current paper and highlight the importance of combined approaches to the problem under consideration.

Conclusion

In view of the results derived from the above analysis, it is important to note that personality characteristics, environment, and socioeconomic status have an influential role in determining the mental health consequences of marriage. The outcome of the study indicates that personality traits

and the environment independently have a significant correlation with mental well-being. However, when combined with socioeconomic status, a more holistic approach to understanding differences in psychological wellness can be achieved. It can be stated that couples whose personality characteristics are adaptive, living in conducive environments, and enjoying a higher socioeconomic status are more likely to have favorable mental well-being. On the other hand, adverse personality characteristics, unfavorable environments, and low socioeconomic status are some of the determinants of psychological distress.

Recommendations

Considering the results of this study, the following recommendations are offered;

1. The couples should develop an effective communication process to solve problems arising from personality clashes, environmental factors, and socio-economic challenges. In doing so, the couples will be able to create emotional intimacy and better mental health.
2. The couple should work together to create a favourable and conducive environment within the marital home. The absence of tension and stress is important in contributing positively to the mental well-being of married individuals.
3. Whenever couples experience difficulties relating to personality differences or environmental and socio-economic pressures, they should consider seeking professional assistance by attending marital counseling sessions. This will help them come up with appropriate coping skills and a stronger relationship.
4. Because socio-economic status affects the mental well-being of couples, the partners should consider working together to plan for their finances in order to reduce stress levels in their marital life.
5. The couples should focus on improving their emotional intelligence by learning how to empathise with each other, becoming more self-aware, and managing their emotions.
6. As a way of coping with environmental challenges, the couples are advised to join various social, religious, and community-based groups that offer support and motivation.

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