INFLUENCE OF SELF-CONCEPT, AND LEARNING ADAPTABILITY ON MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KATSINA STATE

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Abstract
The study investigated the influence of self-concept and Learning Adaptability on Mental Health among Senior Secondary School Students in Katsina State. The study population consists of all SS 2 students in the twelve education zones of Katsina State. Four education zones were purposively selected from a total of twelve education zones in the state. Correlation design was used for the study. The data collected were analysed using inferential statistics, that is, regression and multivariate analysis. Data were collected from 383 students through a systematic random sampling method. Physical Self-Description Questionnaire-S and Learning and Adaptive Performance Questionnaire (LAPQ), and Mental Health Inventory were administered to each respondent of the sample. Analysis of the data was done using stepwise multiple regression analysis with the help of SPSS 20 version. The findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-concept and mental health among senior secondary students of Katsina State. There was a significant relationship between a healthy lifestyle and mental health among senior secondary students of Katsina State. There was a significant relationship between self-concept and mental health among senior secondary school students of Katsina State. It was recommended that Parents, teachers, and school counselors should collaborate to foster positive self-concept development among students through mentorship programs, self-esteem workshops, and individualized support, and school administrators should implement teaching strategies that accommodate diverse learning styles and provide academic support tailored to individual needs.

Keywords: Self-concept, Learning Adaptability, and Mental Health

Introduction
Mental health is a critical component of overall well-being and development, particularly among adolescents who are navigating significant social, emotional, and cognitive transitions. In senior secondary schools, students often face increased academic pressure, social challenges, and the demands of planning for their future, all of which can significantly impact their mental health. This period is particularly critical in area like Katsina State, Nigeria, where cultural, economic, and educational dynamics present unique challenges for young people. Understanding the factors that influence mental health in this population is essential for developing targeted interventions to support their well-being.

Self-concept, the way individuals perceive themselves, plays a foundational role in mental health. A positive self-concept can enhance self-esteem and resilience, while a negative self-concept may contribute to anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges (Rosenberg, 1979). For adolescents, developing a stable self-concept is vital as it influences their emotional regulation and coping mechanisms during stressful situations.

This study aims to examine the interplay between self-concept, healthy lifestyle, and learning

adaptability in influencing mental health among senior secondary school students in Katsina State. By understanding these relationships, educators, policymakers, and stakeholders can design more effective strategies to enhance mental health and promote holistic development among adolescents in the region.

Concept of Mental health

Mental health is a term used to describe either a level of cognitive or emotional wellbeing or an absence of a mental disorder. An individual is mentally healthy when he/she makes balance between all aspects of life - social, physical, spiritual and emotional. Hales and Hales (1995) in Azmi (2020). Defined mental health as-"the capacity to think rationally and logically, to cope with the transitions, stresses, traumas, and losses that occur in all lives, in ways that allow emotional stability and growth." In general, a mentally healthy individual feels comfortable about himself, i.e., she/he feel reasonably safe and sound. They neither underestimate nor overestimate their own ability, perceives reality as it is, responds to life challenges, establish and maintain close relationships, deal reasonably with others, pursue work that suits their talent and training and feel a sense of fulfilment that makes the efforts of daily living worthwhile. (Azmi, 2020).

Emotional disorders are common among adolescents. Anxiety disorders (which may involve panic or excessive worry) are the most prevalent in this age group and are more common among older than among younger adolescents. It is estimated that 4.4% of 10–14-year-olds and 5.5% of 15–19-year-olds experience an anxiety disorder *(1)*. Depression is estimated to occur among 1.4% of adolescents aged 10–14 years, and 3.5% of 15–19-year-olds *(1)*. Depression and anxiety share some of the same symptoms, including rapid and unexpected changes in mood. (WHO, 2024).

Self-concept

Self-concept refers to an individual's awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and encompasses attitudes, beliefs, and judgments about themselves. Traced back to philosophical ideas by René Descartes, the concept is particularly significant during adolescence when individuals deeply question their identity ("Who am I?") and strive for self-understanding (Joseph, 2023; Wehrle & Fasbender, 2019).

Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory highlights adolescence as a period of identity formation or confusion. A positive self-concept fosters emotional stability, optimism, adaptability, and motivation, helping adolescents navigate challenges and make suitable career choices. In contrast, a negative self-concept leads to low self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness, mental health issues, and academic struggles.

Factors contributing to low self-concept include irrational thoughts and feelings of inferiority (Anyamene & Nwosu, 2019). Conversely, a positive self-concept developed early in life equips individuals with the skills to confront challenges and achieve success (Herrera & Al-Lal, 2020). Ackerman (2021) emphasizes that self-concept evolves through self-evaluation, influencing all aspects of life. Overall, self-concept is dynamic, learned, and integral to personal growth and functioning.

Learning Adaptability

Learning adaptability is the ability to adjust and modify learning strategies in response to changing circumstances, emphasizing cognitive flexibility, emotional regulation, and resilience (Martin et al., 2013). It supports critical thinking, problem-solving, and emotional well-being, helping individuals manage academic stress and build self-confidence. Adolescents with strong adaptability skills are better equipped to handle setbacks, transitions, and failures, reducing the risk of anxiety and depression.

Adaptability also fosters positive interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers, serving as a buffer against mental health challenges (Martin et al., 2013; Saleem, 2013).

Adaptability is essential for aligning cognitive frameworks with environmental demands, influencing psychological well-being and academic performance (Jon, 2017). Saleem's (2013) research highlights academic difficulties caused by heavy workloads as a major adaptation challenge for secondary school students. Latiffah Latiff et al. (2014) found that younger students generally exhibit greater adaptability than older ones, demonstrating that effective learning adaptation is a crucial predictor for mitigating mental health risks linked to academic stress.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescents' mental health is influenced by multiple interrelated factors, including self-concept, healthy lifestyle practices, and learning adaptability. However, in Katsina State, research on how these factors interact to affect students' mental health is scarce. A negative self-concept, characterized by low self-esteem and poor self-image, has been linked to depression, anxiety, and poor academic performance. (WHO, 2022).

Furthermore, the ability to adapt to academic challenges, known as learning adaptability, is critical for students' success and well-being. Students with low adaptability often struggle with stress and are at higher risk of academic failure, which can further impact their mental health (Martin et al., 2013). In Katsina State, where educational systems may lack the resources to support students effectively, the absence of adaptability skills can leave students particularly vulnerable.

Despite the evident importance of these factors, there is insufficient research exploring their combined influence on the mental health of senior secondary school students in this region. Without this understanding, schools and policymakers may struggle to implement effective interventions. This study addresses this gap by investigating the relationship between self-concept, learning adaptability, and mental health among senior secondary school students in Katsina State, providing insights to guide strategies for enhancing adolescent well-being.

Objectives:
1. To examine the relationship between self-concept and mental health among secondary school students.
2. To investigate the relationship between learning adaptability and mental health.

Research Questions
1. What is the relationship between self-concept and mental health among secondary school students?
2. What role does learning adaptability play in shaping mental health outcomes?

Hypotheses
H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and mental health

H_{03}: Learning adaptability is not significantly correlated with mental health.

Methodology

Correlation design was used for the study, which described the Influence of Self-concept and Learning Adaptability on Mental Health among Senior Secondary School students in Katsina state. The population of the study consists of all SS 2 students in the twelve education zones in Katsina State. Four education zones were purposively selected from a total of twelve education zones in the state. The data collected were analysed using inferential statistics, that is, regression and multivariate analysis. Data were collected from 383 students through a systematic random sampling method. Self-Description Questionnaire (PSDQ-S).To assess self-concept of adolescents, 40-item short version of

the Self-Description Questionnaire (PSDQ-S), and the Learning and Adaptive Performance Questionnaire (LAPQ)developed by Marsh et al. (2005) was used. Each PSDQ-S item is a simple declarative statement. For measuring mental health, the Mental Health Inventory (MHI-18):to measure the mental health of adolescents. Veit and Ware (1983) MHI-18 scale. The MHI questionnaire has 18 items, all are scored on a Likert scale.

Presentation of Results and Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between self-concept and mental health among secondary school students?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and mental health.

Model summary					
	R	R2	Adjusted R2	SEE	
	0.21	0.043	0.043	13.33	
ANOVA					
Model	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Regression	1879.206	1	1879.206	10.772	0.002*
Residual	47480.195	238	177.690		
Total	49359.401	239			
Variable in the equation					
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-ratio	P
Constant	37.641	6.547		5.749	0.000*
Self-concept		.177	208	3.283	0.001*

Table 1: Showing the relationship between self-concept and mental health
* Significant at 0.05 confidence level.

Table 1: shows a statistically significant correlation between self-concept and mental health among students in Katsina State (r = 0.21; $\rho < 0.05$). The degree to which self-concept impacts mental health among the students is represented by R^2. The R^2 value of 0.043 suggests that self-concept accounts for a 0.043 influence on students' mental health.

There is a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between self-concept and mental health. Self-concept explains 4.3% of the variability in mental health, suggesting it plays a small but meaningful role in mental health outcomes.Both the overall model and the predictor variable (self-concept) are statistically significant, as indicated by the **p-**values (0.002 for the model and 0.001 for the coefficient).

Research Question 2: What is the relationship betweem learning adaptability and mental health?

Hypothesis 2: Learning adaptability is not significantly correlated with mental health.

Table 2: Showing the Relationship between learning adaptability and mental health.

Model summary					
	R	R2	Adjusted R2	SEE	
	0.164	0.043	0.043	13.552	
ANOVA					
Model	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Regression	495.790	1	495.790	2.700	0.000*
Residual	43709.610	238	183.690		
Total	**44205.400**	**239**			
Variable in the equation					
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-ratio	P
Constant	40.307	6.547		6.252	0.000*
Learning Adaptability	0.415	0.142	0.186	2.918	0.000*

* Significant at 0.05 confidence level.

The table 1 shows the R value of 0.164. This is the correlation coefficient, indicating a weak positive relationship between learning adaptability and mental health among secondary students of Katina state. R^2 (0.043): About 4.3% of the variance in mental health is explained by learning adaptability. Adjusted R^2 (0.043): Similar to R^2, it adjusts for the number of predictors in the model and indicates the same proportion of explained variance (4.3%).

There is a weak but statistically significant positive relationship between learning adaptability and mental health. While learning adaptability significantly predicts mental health, it only accounts for 4.3% of the variation in mental health outcomes. This suggests that while learning adaptability is a factor, other variables likely contribute more substantially to mental health.

Conclusion

The findings of this study show the relationships between self-concept, and learning adaptability, and mental health among senior secondary students in Katsina State. The results revealed a significant relationship between self-concept and mental health, indicating that students with a positive self-concept are more likely to maintain better mental health. This aligns with previous studies highlighting the role of self-concept as a determinant of personal success and mental well-being. Although a relationship between learning adaptability and mental health was observed, it was not as statistically robust as the other. However, the findings still emphasize the importance of learning adaptability in managing academic and life stressors, which indirectly supports mental health.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following Recommendations were made:

➤ Parents, teachers, and school counselors should collaborate to foster positive self-concept development among students through mentorship programs, self-esteem workshops, and individualized support.

➤ School administrators should incorporate activities that build confidence and self-awareness, helping students recognize their strengths and align their aspirations with their abilities.

➤ School administrators should implement teaching strategies that accommodate diverse learning

styles and provide academic support tailored to individual needs.

➢ Students should be trained in stress management and coping mechanisms to help them navigate academic and personal challenges effectively.

➢ Establish counseling units in schools with trained mental health professionals to offer support and early intervention for students struggling with mental health issues.

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