



**RESILIENCE, SOCIAL-SUPPORT, AGE AND PARENTAL-STATUS AS  
PREDICTORS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG PARENTS WITH  
VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN POST COVID-19 ERA IN NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study examines resilience, social-support, age and parental status as predictors of psychological well-being among parents with visually impaired children in post covid-19 era in Nigeria. 58 parents drawn from the School for the blind and within the community, participated in the study. Four hypotheses were stated and tested using the regression analysis and the independent t-test. Result confirms three out of the four hypotheses tested. Resilience and Social support, positively predicted psychological well-being among parents of children who are visually impaired ( $R = 0.657$ ,  $R^2 = 47\%$ ,  $F (35.525) = ; p < 0.001$ ). Also, surprisingly mothers score high on the psychological wellbeing scale than the fathers ( $t = (56) 3.521$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), Results also found a positive prediction of resilience, social support, age and parental status on psychological wellbeing ( $R = 0.546$ ,  $R^2 = 40\%$ ,  $F (30.345) p < 0.05$ ). However, age was not found to be significant in predicting psychological wellbeing among parents with visually impaired children. From the findings, it is recommended that social support is highly needed to assist parents of visually impaired children and should be rendered by all close to them. Their resilience also helps in building up their psychological wellbeing. Therefore, relevant authorities should facilitate programmes that will enhance resilience and encourage social support of Parents with visual impairment to enable them have a good psychological wellbeing*

**Key words:** *resilience, social support, psychological well-being, parents with visually impaired children, Parental status*

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## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in late 2019, disrupted daily life around the world, causing a variety of health, economic, and social issues. Parents of disabled children, particularly those with Visual Impairments (VI) are among those most affected. Nigeria, a country with a large population and diverse healthcare system, has encountered its fair share of challenges during this time. Parents with visually impaired children, who already have difficult caregiving responsibilities, have encountered increased pressures as a result of the pandemic and even in the post-pandemic era, which is aggravated by the country's current harsh economic circumstances. Understanding the drivers of Psychological Well-being (PWB) among these parents is critical in the post-COVID-19 era for developing effective support systems and interventions.

Raising a child with disability is more demanding for parents of such children; it is imperative to also focus attention to the psychological wellbeing of the parents, as much attention given to the affected child. Psychological wellbeing concerns a person's overall mental and emotional state. Being psychologically healthy indicates effective stress and negative

emotion management. Mills (2010) summarizes psychological well-being as the balance of positive and negative effects.

According to studies, by the end of the first year, a large proportion of mothers of children with visual impairment had elevated parenting stress, with nearly one-third reporting parenting stress in the clinical range (Elena et al. 2017). According to Gui et al., (2023), parents of visually impaired children are more agitated and distressed than parents of typical children with no visual impairment. The emotional distress might be long-lasting and have a substantial impact on their psychological well-being. Furthermore, because of the uncertainty and challenges connected with raising a visually impaired kid, parents of visually impaired children frequently suffer higher levels of stress and anxiety. Constant worry for their child's safety, education, and future can have a negative impact on their psychological well-being (Olsson & Hwang, 2018). As a result, improving parents' psychological well-being can improve the parent-child relationship. Parents who are emotionally stable and well-supported can give greater care and support for their visually impaired children,

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boosting their general development and well-being (Gallagher et al., 2019).

Resilience is a multidimensional topic that has received a lot of attention in psychology. It refers to an individual's ability to adapt, recover from hardship, and retain a good attitude in the face of adversity (Masten and Barnes, 2018). Resilience is critical in the capacity of parents of children with visual impairment to cope with the unique stressors associated with this sort of situation. Rutter (1987) defines resilience as being "concerned with individual variations in response to risk." Some people succumb to hardship and adversity, whilst others endure life's challenges." Furthermore, Grant et al. (2007) discovered that even while parents are aware of the stigma directed at them and their child, they avoid being affected by it by preserving a sense of integrity. It is critical that parents of children with developmental disabilities demonstrate resilience and maximize its protective power, since research has shown that low levels of resilience can lead to poor outcomes for the parents and the family as a whole. Choi and Yoo (2014) demonstrated that parents with lower levels of resilience reported higher levels of depression and stress.

According to Thoits (1986), social support are "functions performed for a distressed individual by significant others such as family members, friends, co-workers, relatives, and neighbors," this implies that that social support has multiple sources. Ekas et al., (2010), reports that social support has many benefits for parents of children with disabilities; it can help to reduce both depression and parenting stress. Their study participants who are parents of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder indicate that informal social support (support from partner, other family members, and friends) are particularly beneficial for psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, social support has been shown to operate as a buffer against stigma (Ali et al., 2012). In addition to support from family and friends, another key source of social support for parents of disabled children is other parents of disabled children. Koro-Ljungberg and Bussing (2009) discovered that engaging with families that also had ADHD children provided parents with social support and acceptance.

Many researchers have directed interest mainly on visually impaired persons, persons with other forms of disability; some studies gave attention to parents of children

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with developmental disorder such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD. However, not many studies focused mainly on psychological wellbeing of parents who have children with visually impaired children especially in Nigeria; thus, this study examines resilience, social-support, age and parental status as predictors of psychological well-being among parents with visually impaired children in post covid-19 era in Nigeria. Based on this, we therefore, postulate four (4) hypotheses to address this objective.

- (i) Resilience and social support will significantly predict psychological wellbeing among parents with visually impaired children
- (ii) There will be a significant difference between fathers and mothers in their report of psychological well-being
- (iii) The joint influence of resilience, social support, and age will significantly predict psychological well-being among the study population.
- (iv) There will be a significant difference in the report of psychological well-being based on age among the participants.

The result of this study will be relevant to health professionals, counselors, researchers and organizations in the field of visually impaired, to help direct their interest to parents who are mostly primary caregivers to children with visual impairment.

## METHOD

### Design

The ex-post-facto survey research design was adopted for the study. This was because the researchers were interested in finding out how Resilience, Social-Support, Age and Parental-Status Predicts Psychological Well-Being among Parents with Visually Impaired Children in Post Covid-19 Era in Nigeria

### Participants

A total of fifty-eight (58) parents of visually impaired children participated in the study. 18 of the participants were drawn from parents whose children are in known schools in Benin, Edo State while the remaining 40 parents were drawn from across Benin and Ekpoma in Edo State. The demographic characteristics of the participants fall into the following descriptions. Parental Status: fathers 29 (50%), mothers 29 (50%); Age: 27 – 65 years; Educational Status: tertiary 20

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(34.5%), secondary 16 (27.6%) and Others 22 (37.9%); Religion: Christian 44 (76. %), Islam 6 (10. %), ATR 8 (14%).

#### Measures

This study adopted the use of structured questionnaires for data gathering. The questionnaires consisted of four (4) sections namely the demographic variables, resilience, Social support and psychological wellbeing.

#### *Demographic Variables*

This section of the questionnaire elicited social demographic information about participants. Specifically, parental status (father or mother), age and educational status.

#### *Brief Resilience Scale*

The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) by Smith et al. (2008) was used to assess the perceived ability to bounce back or recover from stress. It is an 18 items scale with a 5-point Likert-type response format, and scores ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Items 2, 4, and 6 are reverse-coded. Examples of items in the BRS include: "It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event" and "It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens". Scores on the mean and

above indicates higher levels of perceived resilience. Smith et al. (2008) reported a Cronbach's alpha ranging from .80 to .91 across four samples. Oladipo and Idemudia (2015) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .87 in a Nigerian sample. However for this study a Cronbach's alpha of .78 was obtained.

#### *Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)*

The scale was developed by Zimet et al. (1988). It is a 12-item scale with the 7-point likert response format, ranging from very strongly disagree (1) to very strongly agree (7). The MSPSS provide assessment of three sources of support: Family support, Friends support and Significant Others support. It has been used to measure perceived social support across cultures (Canty-Mitchell & Zimet, 2000). Items 3, 4, 8 and 11 measure family support; items 6, 7, 9 and 12 measure friend support; and items 1, 2, 5 and 10 measures significant other support. Sample items on the scale include, "I get the emotional help and support I need from my family", "I can count on my friends when things go wrong", "There is a special person who is around when am in need". Zimet et al. (1988) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .82

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while Ifeagwazi, et al. (2014) obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .67 for the MSPSS. Igwesi-Chidobe et al. (2021) reported a Cronbach's alpha of .84, .87 and .89 for the friends, significant other and family subscales, respectively. For this study the over-all Cronbach's alpha is .81, while the significant others, family and friend support yielded a Cronbach alpha of 85, 82 and 73 respectively.

#### Psychological well-being

The Ryff & Keyes, (1995) Psychological well-being scale was used to test participants psychological well-being. It is 18-item scale, with the 7-point likert response format, ranging from very strongly disagree (1) to very strongly agree (7). The scale includes questions on self-acceptance, good relationships with others, independence, environmental mastery, life purpose, and personal development. The subscale items for autonomy are 15, 17, and 18. The subscale items for environmental mastery are 4, 8, and 9. Items 11, 12, and 14, assess personal growth. Items 6, 13, and 16 assess positive relations with others. Items 3, 7, and 10 assess Purpose in Life, while items 1, 2, and 5 assess self-acceptance. For this study, the Cronbach's

alpha of .68 was obtained for the whole scale, while autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 62, 58, 60, 70, 66, and 60 respectively.

#### Procedures

The researchers contacted the Principal as well as the head of the Special Unit of the only school with children living with disabilities in Benin City and explained the aim of the study, and request to be granted permission to administer questionnaire during Parents-Teachers association (PTA) meeting. This was granted after the nature of the research was explained and the questionnaire thoroughly scrutinized. For the parents whose children were not in school we use the snow ball sampling method to get the participants from the city of Benin and Ekpoma in Edo State. Two PhD students assisted the researcher in administering the questionnaires. It took six weeks to complete the questions from both locations. The 58 who participated in the study were those who gave their consent to be part of the study.

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### Results

**Table 1:** Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Independent and Joint Prediction of Psychological Wellbeing

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Beta	F Change	t	Sig	P
<b>Model 1</b>	<b>0.657</b>	<b>0.47</b>		<b>35.525</b>		<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Resilience			0.422		4.958	0.043	<0 .05
Social support			0.520		7.882	0.021	<0 .05
<b>Model 2</b>	<b>0.546</b>	<b>0.40</b>		<b>30.345</b>		<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Resilience			0.202		4.682	0.000	<0.001
Social Support			0.410		7.364	0.004	<0.05
Age			0.122		1.043	0.575	>0.05
Parental Satus*			0.216		3.541	0.024	<0.05

Note\* Parental Status (Father or mother)

Dependent Variable: Psychological Wellbeing

Results confirm three out of the four hypotheses tested. Resilience and Social support, positively predicted psychological well-being among parents of children who are visually impaired ( $R = 0.657$ ,  $R^2 = 47\%$ ,  $F [35.525] =$ ;  $P < 0.001$ ). This result indicated that resilience and social support jointly contributed 47 percent of the psychological well-being reported by parents with visually impaired children (result is presented on table 1). Results of

the hypothesis which started that resilience, social support, age and parental status will predict psychological well-being among parents with visually impaired was tested with the multiple regression and result shows that there was a joint contribution of all the tested variables on psychological well-being ( $R = 0.546$ ,  $R^2 = 40\%$ ,  $F [30.345] =$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). Jointly all the variables contributed 40 percent to the psychological well-being of parents. Resilience, social support and parental

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status (Father or Mother), also independently predicts psychological wellbeing. Age however did not independently predict psychological wellbeing (See results on Table 1).

**TABLE 2:** Result Showing Differences in Parental Status, and Age on Psychological Well-Being among Parents of Visually Impaired Children

Dependent Variable	Group	N	X	SD	df	t	P
Psychological Wellbeing	Fathers	29	4.869	5.324	56	3.521	<.05
	Mothers	29	7.246	3.853			
Psychological Wellbeing	27-44years	35	5.452	4.724	56	1.612	>.05
	45 and above	23	4.954	4.432			

We also try to find who among the parents will report high psychological well-being, and result of the independent t-test shows that the mothers reported high psychological well being than the fathers ( $t = 3.521$ ,  $df = 56$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), Result is as presented on table 2. The hypothesis which

stated that age will determine high psychological well-being among parents of visually impaired children, was not supported by the independent t-test conducted ( $t = 1.612$ ,  $df = 56$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ), Results are shown on table 2.



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## DISCUSSION

This study examined resilience, social-support, age and parental-Status as predictors of psychological well-being among parents with visually impaired children. Statistical analysis revealed that resilience and social support significantly predict psychological well-being of parents with visually impaired children. This finding has support from the study of Grant et al. (2007) that discovered that even while parents are aware of the stigma directed at them and their child, they avoid being affected by it by preserving a sense of integrity. Also finding support for this result is the findings of Gallagher et al., (2019) which found that, parents who are emotionally stable and well-supported can give greater care and support for their visually impaired children, boosting their general development and well-being. The findings of Ekas et al., (2010), and Ali et al., (2012) supported the findings of this study, as all in their findings reported that social support has many benefits for parents of children with disabilities; that informal social support (support from partner, other family members, and friends) are particularly beneficial for psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, their findings reported that social support has been shown to operate as a buffer against stigma and in

addition to support from family and friends, another key source of social support for parents of disabled children is other parents of disabled children. Koro-Ljungberg and Bussing (2009) discovered that engaging with families that also had ADHD children provided parents with social support and acceptance.

Resilience, Social support, age and Parental status were found to predict psychological wellbeing positively. Age and parental status when added to resilience and social support showed a significant positive prediction on psychological wellbeing. The result of the third hypothesis was surprising, as the findings indicated that mothers reported significant psychological well-being than fathers. We had expected that mothers who mostly are the custodian of children in Nigeria, whether with disability or normal will report low psychological well-being than men. One of the main reason this is so is that the financial, physical and emotional burden tends to reset on the shoulder of the fathers in Edo State. However, previous studies demonstrated that the well-being of motherhood did not differ from that of fatherhood, with some research even noting that mothers might derive lower well-being from parenthood than do fathers (Keizer et al., 2010; Nelson et al., 2013). The findings

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in the present study found the opposite. But finds support in the study of Imhonde, Ohakwe and Olubugu (2020). The study which examined Locus of control and social demographic variables as predictors of eudaimonic wellbeing among visually impaired persons, found that of all the variables tested on the visually impaired individuals, only sex of the visually impaired individuals predicted eudaimonic wellbeing among the demographic variables tested. The present finding also negate the social role theory, which states that, when children are young and in need of care, mothers tend to undertake more care responsibilities and their jobs, and overall well-being may be therefore negatively affected (Budig & England, 2001). On the contrary, when fathers are taking care of the children, their responsibilities mainly focus on playing with their children in leisure time, and their jobs and overall well-being are hardly affected (Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean, & Hofferth, 2001). Thus, compared with mothers, fathers may report more happiness and joy during parenthood (Nelson et al., 2013). However, once children are grown up and independent from the original family, mothers will be released from the burden of parenting, and their well-being could be increased accordingly (Umberson

et al., 2010). These authors all worked with mothers and fathers of normal children. This may serve as another reason for the surprise findings, as the study was with parents with visually impaired children.

The last hypothesis was not confirmed as age was not found to significantly predict psychological wellbeing among parents with visually impaired children. This finding was in contrast with that of Nakazato and Shimonaka, (1989), which found that parent age significantly predicted parents' well-being. However, the finding finds support in the work of Yu, Zhang, Zhang, Zhang, Guo, Jin, and Chen, (2019) which found that the effect of parent age on well-being was not significant in their Study 2, though relatively significant in their study 1. In order for them to explore the reason for this discrepancy, they analyzed a sub-data of the World Values from China and found that the correlation between age and well-being was not significant ( $r = -.03$ ,  $N = 1,314$ ,  $p = .27$ ), and this result was consistent with the result of Study 2. They therefore reported that the relationship between age and well-being might vary from culture to culture and was not significant in China. Similarly, from our study age was not a good predictor of psychological wellbeing among parents of visually impaired children in Edo State.

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## Conclusion

The study investigates the predictive influence of psychological-wellbeing on parents with visually impaired children. Research into psychological wellbeing of the parents of visually challenged children seems to be at an early stage Nigeria. Nevertheless, the wellbeing of the parents is important in its own right, and there is suggestive evidence that positive psychological wellbeing is relevant to physical health, psychological functioning, quality of life and life satisfaction of parents with visual and physically challenged children. Governments, NGOs, Health care systems, and the society should be concerned not only with illness and disability, but with supporting methods of improving positive psychological

wellbeing among parents and care givers of the visually and physically challenged. Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions are drawn. Resilience, social support, age and parental support jointly predict psychological well-being amongst parents with visually impaired children. Mothers were found to significantly report high psychological well-being than fathers. However age did not independently predict psychological well-being.

## Limitations

Despite the scientific means employed in this research, our major limitation was getting participants to partake in the study.

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