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## EDITORIAL

### Children, Young and Adult People's Mental Health in School Environment

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This special collection was necessitated due to the prevalence of mental health issues in the school environment. Research around this thematic issue was limited to those who talked about the mental health issues of children, young and adult people in the school environment. Specifically, the participants of any of such research were limited to children between the ages of 0 to 9 years, in-school adolescents of ages 12-16 years, university undergraduate and postgraduate students, teachers in primary and post-primary schools and university workers. The subthemes advertised for this collection were promoting mental health among schooling children, in-school adolescents, and the working population in the university, primary schools and post-primary schools. Three manuscripts were finally submitted for this special collection and their findings were empirically reported. The conclusions drawn from the findings of the manuscripts are that career anxiety correlates significantly with suicidal tendencies, while the intervention strategies for managing mental health issues in school include the use of rational-emotive behavior therapy (REBT).

Mental health issues in the school environment have been observed across the globe in recent times. These issues affect children, young and adult school leavers, as well as their teachers. Children may experience difficulties as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic on their mental health due to the fact that the risk of emotional distress, spousal violence and abuse, and social isolation rises with school closings and home confinement [1]. These factors also affect the disruption of sleep-wake cycles, eating patterns, exercise schedules, and access to health care. Scalable school mental health programs (SMHPs) can address children's mental health issues brought on by the COVID-19 epidemic. On the other hand, adolescence is a time when developing mental health and substance use issues is particularly risky [2]. The work of Kessler *et al.* [2] reported that three-quarters of chronic mental problems (including substance use disorders) occur before the age of 25,

and half occur before the age of 14. Also, the work of Reavely *et al.* [2] reported that anxiety (15.4%), depression (6.3%), and substance use disorders (12.7%) are the conditions that affect young people in Australia between the ages of 16 and 24 more frequently than any other conditions.

The work of Nwokolo *et al.* [3] reported that there is a prevalence of test anxiety in a Nigerian classroom context, and most cases of text anxiety are not easily identified at educational institutions. Additionally, it has been noted in the research that every 10 respondents in Nigeria displayed extreme occupational stress [4]. Through adulthood, longitudinal studies show a high correlation between academic success and mental health indicators, although the underlying mechanisms are not well understood [5]. It was found that mental health problem begins from the adolescence stage and coincides with the crucial stage of the person's development, thereby laying the foundations for future and intergeneration health [6]. According to the works of Maliks *et al.* and Darabi *et al.*, academics now experience occupational stress due to the significant changes in the academic environment over the past two decades [7].

According to research in the literature, university teachers in Nigeria deal with a lot of work in the course of their daily academic duties, which causes them a lot of mental health problems [8]. Thus, it was noted that the mental health of adolescents affects their educational and intersocial relationships [6]. It is currently unknown in human medicine that school-related factors put people at risk for mental health issues and these aspects enable kids and teenagers to grow up with good mental health. To more accurately define contributing factors, safeguard people from negative mental health impacts, and identify healthcare needs, research is needed, especially on already afflicted children and adolescents [9]. The majority of children in Nigeria are susceptible to mental health issues as a result of inadequate nutrition and medical care [10]. Despite the reports of the prevalence of mental health issues in the school environment, there is a dearth of research on adequate intervention for managing mental health problems in the school environment. It was based

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on this premise that this collection sought to find out the nature of the mental health issues in the school environment and the possible interventions.

Thus, three manuscripts were submitted to this collection.

The first manuscript sought the prevalence of suicidal behavioural experiences in the University: Implications for childhood development. The findings revealed that university students do not commit suicide, claims the research. It also demonstrated how unusual having suicidal thoughts is. In response to their experiences with suicide behavior, male and female students at postsecondary institutions responded indistinguishably differently based on their gender. There are no obvious gender-based disparities in the mean responses of male and female students at postsecondary institutions regarding the frequency of suicide incidents. The findings suggest that information on suicide education and prevention should be offered in schools.

The second manuscript explored the effect of rational-emotive behavior therapy (REBT) on work stress management among primary school teachers. After receiving therapy, it was discovered that the work stress of primary school teachers who had been subjected to REBT intervention had decreased significantly ( $p < .05$ ). Therefore, REBT intervention had a significant impact on primary school teachers' ability to control their work-related stress [11]. Therefore, it was advised that primary school instructors employ the REBT intervention as a workplace stress management technique.

The third manuscript investigated the link between career anxiety and suicidal tendencies among university undergraduates. The findings showed that greater suicidal tendencies, including feelings of disgust for life and attraction to death, as well as suicide ideation, were substantially connected with high levels of career anxiety. Reduced suicidal tendencies, as indicated by a stronger attitude toward attraction to life and repulsion to death, were linked to lower levels of job anxiety. The researcher concluded that students with problematic career anxiety are more likely to express a pessimistic outlook on life, which heightens suicidal ideation. As a result, job anxiety may lead a person to actively think about or consider suicide.

The issue of mental health problems in the school environment has been empirically surveyed and found to be prevalent at both lower and higher levels of education. Such issues include suicidal tendencies, career anxiety, test anxiety, depression, and work stress, among others. It is worth noting that career anxiety correlates significantly with suicidal tendencies. Among the intervention strategies for managing

mental health issues in school, REBT has been proven to be significantly effective. Thus, school management should try and adopt the use of REBT and other cognitive behavior therapy interventions in the management of mental health problems in the school environment.

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