

**THE IMPACT OF PARENTS-STUDENT COMMUNICATION ON THE EMOTIONAL  
WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN EDO STATE.**

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## CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that this study was conducted by Sanusi Halimatu Aliu, of the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is wholeheartedly dedicated to Almighty Allah, whose grace, wisdom, and guidance have sustained me throughout the course of this study.

I also dedicate this research to my beloved parents, whose unwavering love, encouragement, and sacrifices have been the foundation of my academic pursuit.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the influence of parent-student communication on the emotional well-being of students in public universities in Edo State, Nigeria. The purpose was to determine how the frequency, quality, and styles of parent-student communication affect students' emotional well-being.. Four research questions and three hypotheses guided the study.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised all undergraduate students of the University of Benin, while the sample consisted of 300 and 400-level students drawn from all 15 faculties. A structured questionnaire titled The Impact of Parent-Student Communication and Emotional Well-Being Questionnaire (TIPSCEWQ) was used for data collection, which had a reliability coefficient of 0.825. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and one-sample t-tests to test the hypotheses.

Findings revealed that frequent, open, and supportive communication between parents and students significantly enhances emotional well-being, while harsh and authoritarian styles have negative effects. It was recommended that parents adopt supportive communication, maintain regular contact, and utilize digital media to strengthen relationships with their children

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the Study

University life is a critical developmental stage characterized by a sequence of emotional, academic, and social challenges. This transition for the majority of the students makes them away from home and responsible for new roles and responsibilities, increasing emotional vulnerability (Arnett, 2000). As they face these stressors, parent-student communication becomes more vital. Effective parent-student communication has been proven to facilitate psychological resilience, emotional self-regulation, and social adaptation (Kim et. al 2018). Therefore, the quality of communication between parents and their university-aged children can significantly determine the students' emotional well-being. The university experience is a developmental phase in the life of youth, typically preceded by high academic expectations, social problems, and emotional transitions. For public university students in Edo State, Nigeria, these changes might be greater due to movement from home, new study regimes, and limited daily contact with parents. Here, the quality and character of communication between parents and students may be a significant determinant of how the students cope with their emotional needs for dealing with university pressures.

Parent-student communication may play an important role in the emotional adjustment and overall well-being of young adults, particularly those undertaking tertiary education. Parent-student communication encompasses the quality, frequency, openness, and affective support shared in parent-student interactions. Positive and effective parent-student communication is likely to enhance emotional stability, resilience, and mental health among students. Healthy communication is characterized by openness, empathy, and consistency, while unhealthy communication is characterized by criticism, neglect, or over-control (Bernier et al. 2010). Healthy communication from parents can offer emotional support, aid in decision-making, and serve as a buffer for stress and mental health. Parent-student communication refers to the ongoing interaction such as

emotional, informational, or advisory between a parent and a student that may occur over calls, messages, face-to-face encounters, or any other medium. Such communication can make the student feel secure, guided, and supported, which are especially required during stressful and transitional phases (Kim et al., 2018).

The emotional well-being of the students, which refers to the psychological condition demonstrating positive thoughts, life satisfaction, and stress handling ability, encompassing a student's emotion management ability, stress coping skills, forming enriching relationships, and having a positive self-image. Emotional well-being is what the World Health Organization (2022) calls a component of mental health as well as requisite for academic and personal success. Highly emotionally well-adjusted students will be outstanding scholars, enjoy more self-esteem, and more healthy interpersonal relations (Fredrickson, 2001). Emotional well-being, is related to a student's ability to regulate emotions, develop supportive relationships, and cope academically as well as socially. World Health Organization (2022) mentions that emotional well-being is at the center of the whole mental well-being and includes areas like stability of emotions, life satisfaction, and an ability to cope with daily difficulties. For university students, sound emotional well-being may be associated with more enhanced academic performance, positive self-esteem, and social competence.

In the public universities in Edo State, students often face numerous difficulties like academic stress, financial constraint, adaptation to society, and skepticism towards their future profession. Calming, counselling, and emotional balancing between parents and students can be an effective role. However, communication breakdown may make students feel isolated, nervous, depressed, and do poorly at school. Due to the increasing interest in student mental health globally and in Nigeria, it is necessary to understand how communication with parents influences emotional well-being.

Empirical studies have shown that there is a positive correlation between parent-child communication and emotional well-being in teenagers and young adults. Kim et al. (2018) confirmed that excellent parental communication was a significant predictor of low levels of

depression and anxiety in college students. Datu (2013) also discovered that perceived parental support correlated with higher academic engagement and emotional stability in Filipino university students. In the Nigerian context, Glozah (2014) noted that parenting style and communication patterns predicted emotional adjustment of youth. There are diverse theoretical models directing the study of parent-student communication and emotional well-being. Attachment theory, for example, argues that quality of parent-child attachment affects emotional development and well-being. Social support theory similarly highlights supportive relationship roles in mediating emotional well-being

Edo State has three public universities (University of Benin; Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma; and Edo State University, Uzairue), the students are largely living away from home and utilize remote communication with family. Thus, their initial channel of parental communication is long-distance communication via calls, messaging sites, or visits. Unfortunately, not all students can have emotionally supportive communication with parents. Some may experience neglect, overcontrol, or emotional withholding, which can all negatively affect their mental health and academic performance (Yussuf, et. al 2013). Global and Nigerian data suggest that effective family communication explains enhanced adolescent and young adult emotional well-being (Fredrickson, 2001; Glozah, 2014). Where learners are facing scholarly pressures in the Nigerian university environment, displacement issues, as well as administrative anxiety, supportive emotional comfort, which is born out of effective communication by parents, may find itself at the forefront of building resilience and mental health.

Despite increasing psychological problems encountered by Nigerian university students, limited research has focused on how parent-student relationships affect emotional comfort within the Nigerian public university system, particularly in the case of Edo State. Existing literature has focused on universal predictors of student stress or peer relationships, with the effect of ongoing parental interaction not having been widely examined. This research, thus, aims to bridge this gap by examining the way the quality and frequency of parent-student communication affect students' emotional well-being in Edo State public universities.

## **Statement of the Problem**

In the best scenario, university students would maintain open, frequent, and encouraging communication with their parents. Parents would be aware of their children's academic and personal problems and provide advice and emotional guidance. These high-quality parent–student relationships would result in student well-being, for example, healthy family relationships have been proven to reduce student’s stress and loneliness. Ideally, parents and students must collaborate and strengthen the mental health and resilience of students.

Most students do not achieve this very high level of communication. For instance, In Nigeria, we are experiencing depression and anxiety among students at 26%. Yussuf, et al. (2013). We have no data in Nigeria concerning if the image of the parents could assist the student as needed. Physical distance, busy schedule, or parents' schedule might be reasons or even cultural custom that results in few contacts. Therefore, the majority of the students in Edo State would be suffering from emotional distress, low self esteem, poor academic performance, lack of motivation, learning and social distress in solitude to a large degree as there would be no emotional supportive parental influence in such a situation.

Interventions can be developed to promote parent–student communication. For example, universities can organize family orientation sessions or workshops where parents learn effective listening and supportive communication. Parent–student conversations can be conducted by counselling centers during campus activities. Technology can also be utilized: educating parents to utilize low-cost mobile or internet programs to communicate can act as a bridge. Evidence has shown that simply encouraging frequent parental contact can be a buffer factor for college students. In practice, interventions could be awareness campaigns or support services emphasizing parents' contribution to students' well-being.

Unless something is done regarding the issue of communication, students' mental health will be on a decline. Poor mental health can have disastrous social impacts: sad or worried students perform less well at school, are more likely to drop out of school, and struggle with building peer relationships. Research recognizes a lack of family support as linked to increased feelings of loneliness and social withdrawal among students.

Very little study, as much as it seems important, has been conducted investigating parent-student communication in Nigerian universities. Much of the parent involvement and student mental health literature is Western-based. This is an area where little or no research has been done in Nigeria, and more particularly in Edo State, on how communication between the students and their parents impacts student emotional well-being. Academic achievement or parent involvement has been looked at in previous studies, but not student emotional well-being. Because there is no local data, policymakers and teachers do not know how to assist the students. The gap is bridged by this research as it examines the impact of parent-student communication on students' emotional well-being in the public universities of Edo State.

## **Research Questions**

The following research question were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students?
2. What is the relationship between the quality of parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students?
3. What is the influence of parents-students communication styles on emotional well-being of tertiary institution students?
4. What strategies can be employed to facilitate better parent-student relationship?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and will be tested at 0.5 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between parent-student communication and emotional well-being of tertiary institution students.
2. There is no significant relationship between the quality of parent-student communication and emotional well-being of students.
3. There is no significant influence of parent-students communication styles on emotional well-being of tertiary institution students.

## **Purpose of the study**

The main aim of this study is to find out if parent-student communication influences the emotional well-being of tertiary students in Edo State. Precisely, the study is intended to find out:

- the relationship between parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary students in public universities in Edo State.
- if the quality of parent-student communication influence the emotional well-being of tertiary students in public universities in Edo State.
- if the difference in parents-students' communication styles influence students' emotional well-being
- strategies that can be employed to facilitate better parent-student relationship

## **Significance of the Study**

This study will have both academic and practical impacts. Outstanding beneficiaries are; parents, students, university administrators, counselors, policy makers, teachers, researchers, society and community.

Learning about how communication styles lead to well-being can enlighten families on how to better care for their members. Parents will understand how important it is to stay engaged with their children, while students will be more aware of how family relationships affect their emotional well-being.

Research may guide university counseling departments and student affairs divisions to include family communication skills in student well-being programs. Parental communication knowledge can influence students' orientation and support intervention design.

Nigeria's policy makers and teachers and Edo State can apply the findings to encourage parental involvement in tertiary institutions.

Researchers in the field of student mental health or family life will benefit from knowledge of an previously underrepresented group. The research fills a gap in the literature and can inform further research on the cultural influences on student well-being.

Finally, improved student mental health is beneficial to society at large. With an emphasis on parent involvement, the study can contribute towards healthier family dynamics and better school outcomes, beneficial to society at large.

### **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

The scope of this study focuses on parent-student communication on the emotional well-being of undergraduate students of the three state-owned universities in Edo State (University of Benin; Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma; and Edo State University, Uzairue).

The scope is delimited to University of Benin students. This is based on the practical reasons, including respondents' ease of access, limited time, and logistical constraints. The university of Benin, which is one of the largest and most culturally heterogeneous state public university, offers a representative sample of students from varied socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, rendering it good site for coming up with significant data. The study will endeavor to attain quality and depth in data collection and analysis.

## **Definition of Terms**

The following terms are operationally defined as used in the study:

**Emotional Distress:** Negative psychological conditions such as anxiety, depression, and heightened stress. These are indicators of poor emotional health and will be measured on standardized psychological instruments in this study.

**Emotional Well-Being:** Overall psychological and emotional well-being of a student. It is made up of positive mood (happiness and satisfaction), satisfaction with life, and coping with stress. High emotional well-being is reflective of low anxiety, depression, and distress. In mental health, the WHO operationally defined well-being as the capacity to "cope with the stresses of life" and be productive.

**Parent-Student Communication:** The exchange of information, encouragement, and advice between a parent(s) and his or her student. It is made up of frequency (how often they communicate), the medium (person to person, phone, social media), and what they talk about.

**Parental Involvement:** Active parent involvement in the child's life and learning . This includes supervision of activity and open channels of communication (in which parent-student communication is included).

**Public University:** State-supported and state-controlled degree-granting higher education institution (federal or state). Here, it is used specifically for the federal University of Benin and the two state universities (Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma and Edo State University, Uzairue

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- Theoretical frame work.
- Concept of communication.
- Concept of emotional well-being.
- Concept of parents-student communication.
- Parents- student communication on emotional well-being.
- Quality of parent-student communication and emotional well-being.
- Styles of parent-student communication and emotional well-being.

### Theoretical Framework

The study is hinged on Attachment theory by John Bowlby (1969):

Attachment Theory, developed by British child psychiatrist and psychoanalyst John Bowlby in 1969, is perhaps the most insightful of psychological theories used to explain the emotional attachment between individuals, most notably in the context of the family. Bowlby was of the view that early experiences with primary caregivers, most often parents, play an influential and long-lasting role in shaping one's emotional life, adaptation, and social relationship for life.

Attachment, as conceptualized by Bowlby, is a genetically predisposed system in which children are born with the innate inclination to form emotional bonds with their care-givers for survival. These bonds provide not only physical security but also emotional security, and they build the individual's working models of self and others in mind. Secure attachment forms when care-givers respond to a child's needs in a sensitive and predictable manner (Bowlby, 1969).

### Key Components of Attachment Theory:

1. **Secure Base:** Bowlby emphasized that a securely attached child sees the caregiver as a "secure base" from which to explore the world. Even though students are physically distant from parents in the university setting, quality and consistent communication serves this "secure base," allowing students to self-soothe emotions and react to stress.
2. **Internal Working Models:** Attachment experiences earlier in life result in internal mental models that guide the way individuals view themselves and their relationships. Students with a secure early attachment history will be more likely to view themselves as lovable and deserving of care and support and will be potentially more emotionally resilient in relation to academic and social pressures (Bretherton, 1992).
3. **Proximity Maintenance:** The demand to be in close proximity to attachment figures continues throughout adolescence and early adulthood, although in varying forms. For students in university, the demand is typically met through regular telephone calls, messages, or video chats with parents. The continuity of contact sustains emotional balance, especially in a new and challenging environment (Ainsworth, 1989).
4. **Separation Distress and Anxiety:** Individuals feel emotional distress upon separation from caregivers or lack of communication. University students with no established interaction with parents can feel lonely or abandoned and, consequently, have a negative impact on their emotional status.

### Patterns of Attachment and University Students

According to Bowlby's theory, there are several different types of attachment: secure, anxious, avoidant, and disorganized. These attachment patterns carry over into adolescence and adulthood and continue to shape behavior.

- Students with secure attachment will tend to have high self-esteem, better control of emotions, and effective coping mechanisms. They are likely to experience effortless, open communication with parents, which helps them deal with academic and social stress.
- Students with insecure attachment are more likely to be anxious, depressed, and socially withdrawn, particularly if their current communication with parents is strained or infrequent (Kobak, et al. 1988).

Armsden and Greenberg (1987) had also conducted a research on attachment between adolescents and parents, and they found that good parents-student attachment predicted higher emotional adjustment as well as psychological health among college students. The authors examined the impact of adolescent attachment to parents on their psychological and emotional adjustment. Using a sample of 179 adolescents and young adults, the study included high school and college students representing diverse educational backgrounds from across the United States to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of American adolescents. This study sought to explore the relationship between trust and communication along with alienation in parent-adolescent relationships and several indicators of mental health as well as emotional functioning.

In order to gather data, Armsden and Greenberg created a self-report measure called Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA), which assesses perceived quality of attachment to parents, peers, and other significant people. This instrument captured critical elements associated with attachment relations—emotional closeness, mutual understanding, isolation or rejection within relationships. The validity and reliability demonstrated by IPPA affirmed its usefulness in assessing important attachments.

Their findings showed that adolescents who maintained strong secure attachments to their parents reported positive developmental outcomes in emerging adulthood held similar attitudes toward

different domains coping strategies such as problem solving, acceptance, optimism accompanied with lower reports on avoidance and denial.

Attachment Theory is a viable theory of explanation to demonstrate the impact of parent-student communication on undergraduate students' emotional well-being in public universities in Edo State.

Here, the following applies:

1. Most students are encountering independent living for the first time and are exposed to varied stressors such as workload, identity formation, and peer pressure.
2. Those who continue to share warm, steady, and responsive communication with their parents are likely to exhibit symptoms of secure attachment, like emotional hardness, social competence, and reduced psychological distress.
3. Those who lack such communication tend to develop emotional isolation, anxiety, or even depression-like symptoms—states that negatively affect both their academic and personal life.

In Edo state, where family ties are culturally valued and even stretch over into adulthood, maintaining parent-student communication is essential. This hypothesis supports the assumption that when parents are available and communicative—even if only from a distance—students' emotional health is significantly benefited.

Therefore, Attachment Theory not only provides a framework with which to understand the emotional outcomes of parental contact but also emphasizes the significance of communication in relation to the promotion of emotional bonds that support students' welfare. Students who practice stable and empathetic communication with their parents are likely to experience lower levels of anxiety and greater resilience when faced with academic and social issues. However, students who have insecure attachment or ineffective parent communication may exhibit loneliness, self-doubt, or depression (Kobak, et al. 1988).

## **Concept of Communication**

Communication is popularly referred to as the blood of human relationships. It is a two-way communication process of information, feelings, and meanings among individuals in verbal and non-verbal messages. Adler and Proctor (2014) define communication as the process through which individuals use messages to construct meanings within and across contexts, cultures, channels, and media.

Beebe, and Ivy (2016) point out that communication is crucial in building a relationship, solving conflict, and conveying emotions. In the context of the present study, parents' and students' communication is the passing on of emotional support, encouragement, moral guidance, and problem-solving advice—elements central to the emotional well-being of a student.

Barnlund (2008) argues that interpersonal communication is not linear but transactional and characterized by mutual influence and shared meaning. This is particularly true in communication between students and their parents because both the parties become answerable for the emotional climate and success of their relationship. The emotional climate established through positive communication makes the students feel appreciated and psychologically supported.

Furthermore, Laursen and Collins (2009) add that parent-child interaction completely changes at adolescence and early adulthood, from a directive to an equal respect and negotiation approach. Open and non-judgmental lines of communication during university years ensure emotional autonomy and psychological security.

Communication, specifically parents-students communication is key to affecting the emotional well-being of university students. It is in positive talks, caring words, emotional feedback, and availability that students feel a sense of emotional support, security, and belonging.

### Types of Communication

Several types of communication have been identified by researchers, differentiated according to channel, purpose, direction, and context. The most relevant types for the aim of this study are:

#### 1. Verbal Communication

This involves the use of oral or written language in passing information. Parent-student verbal communication is either through telephone calls, face-to-face conversation, mailing, or short message services. Verbal communication is important in passing needs, giving feedback, reassurance, and clarification of misunderstandings, according to Stewart (2012).

#### 2. Non-Verbal Communication

This is the transmission of messages without words, e.g., gestures, body language, eye movement, posture, and tone of voice. Burgoon et al. (2016) argue that non-verbal communication is likely to convey emotions more effectively than words. An example is the tone of a parent's voice when giving a call, which may convey warmth or concern, and this influences the way a student receives the message emotionally.

#### 3. Written Communication

With the progression of digital technology, written communication has now become one of the key mediums of interaction between parents and students. Texting, emails, social media dialogue, as well as handwritten letters, are forms of written communication that may be emotionally charged.

#### 4. Visual Communication

This includes the use of images, videos, emojis, and visual icons for communication. For example, sending motivational images or video calls with smiling faces by a parent will establish emotional bonds.

#### 5. Formal and Informal Communication

- The formal communication tends to be rooted in systematic formats, such as official advice or planned conversations.
- The informal communication includes casual conversations or spontaneous check-ins that tend to establish emotional bonds.

#### Barriers to Effective Communication

Good communication is not always easy. There are barriers as given below:

- Physical distance: Parents and children live in distant cities or villages.
- Emotional detachment: Lack of warmth or lack of emotional attachment weakens emotional relationships between parents and children.
- Technology: The unavailability of effective communication tools or the illiteracy in technology means not being able to reach each other.
- Cultural expectations: In many cultures, emotional matters are not discussed between parents and their children.

Chukwu and Adebisi (2022) conducted a study on the effect of the regularity of parent-student interaction on the emotional and psychological adjustment among students. The study utilized a sample of 300 undergraduate students which were obtained through stratified sampling in order to achieve representation from all faculties and levels of study. The variables including frequency of communication, emotional support, parental availability perception, and psychological well being were captured using a survey based structured interview.

Their findings noted that students who communicated with their parents frequently and consistently using different methods like phone calls, texts or WhatsApp, demonstrated better emotional stability compared to peers who communicated infrequently with parents. Such students reported reduced stress, anxiety, effective coping mechanisms as well as high satisfaction with university life. In their study conclusions, Chukwu and Adebisi stated that during this period characterised by increasing student independence, the regular communication between parents and children remains an important factor since it provides an emotional anchor needed.

Okeke and Oluwatosin's (2021) study conducted at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, examined how parental engagement shapes students' emotional resilience. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including surveys and interviews with 250 students, they discovered that parents who are emotionally supportive and communicative increased the likelihood of their children staying focused on achieving goals, academic burnout, and enjoying stronger peer relationships. The respondents underscored that parental participation—regardless of distance—significantly elevated their morale and sense of safety.

Together, these studies highlight how consistent and active parental engagement with their children improves emotional health, lowers stress levels, and aids university students in managing academic strain more effectively. It is clear that parent-student communication goes beyond just interactions to include the sentiment and emotional context within the conversation. In this regard, it is noteworthy within the Nigerian setting where numerous students live significant distances away from home and depend predominantly on technology to remain linked to relatives.

### **Concept of Emotional Well-Being**

Emotional well-being refers to the occurrence of positive affects, life satisfaction, and being able to manage negative affects and troubles of life. Ryff (1989) has characterized six dimensions of emotional well-being: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. All these are developed when one receives emotional validation and support through close relationships—particularly family.

Keyes (2002) finds that emotional well-being is a significant component of mental health, and it is a robust predictor of academic performance, social adjustment, and resilience among students. Fredrickson (2001) in broaden-and-build theory suggests that positive emotions broaden and build individuals' thought–action repertoires, allowing them to construct resilient personal resources such as resilience and optimism.

#### Indicators of Emotional Well-Being Among Students

Emotional well-being can manifest itself in many ways among undergraduate students:

1. **Positive Affect and Mood Stability:** Feeling positive emotions such as happiness, confidence, and calmness.
2. **Stress Management:** Ability to handle academic pressures, deadlines, and interpersonal strife.
3. **Self-Esteem:** Positive self. It's based on our opinions and beliefs about ourselves, which can feel difficult to change. We might also think of this as self-confidence.

Okonkwo and Hassan (2020) conducted a study on 500 undergraduates from the University of Benin and the University of Ibadan to study the connection between emotional well-being and academic achievement. Through the use of their self-created Emotional Well-being Inventory (EWBI) the researchers found that students who felt positive about their emotions tended to achieve better grade point averages (GPAs) and better social relationships and classroom participation. Students who declared themselves emotionally unwell showed greater tendencies to suffer

academic setbacks and isolate themselves from social contact while showing diminished classroom involvement. The research established that emotional well-being represents a fundamental aspect which determines students' success and ability to adjust during university life particularly in Nigerian education system.

In addition, Adeyemi and Fashola (2021) conducted a study on the impact of emotional regulation on students' academic motivation and mental stability at Obafemi Awolowo University. The authors collected data from 350 undergraduate students, which revealed a strong positive correlation between emotional resilience and students' abilities to alter their academic goal and re-engage in the excursion of educational success by regulating the academic stress and also finding motivation. Higher emotional well-being and positioned students were able to better set their goal and remain vigilant, committed, and optimistic. Emotionally distressed students indicated chronic fatigue, burned out, disengaged and showed a moderate level of depressive behaviours. These findings reiterated the work of Okonkwo and Hassan from the psychological perspective of success.

Collectively ,these studies demonstrate that emotional well-being is a fundamental predictor of student success rather than a background characteristic. In the high-stress context of Nigerian public universities, where students are frequently undergoing academic stress, financial pressures, and social stresses, emotional well-being seemed to serve as a protective factor. These studies also highlighted the importance of programs and support systems, including parent-student communication, that support emotional health and resilience.

### **Parent-Student Communication Concept**

Parent-student communication refers to a key aspect of family interaction that plays a central function in shaping the emotional health and psychological adjustment of students. According to Kim et al. (2018), it is characterized as openness, frequency, and emotional quality of parent-child

communication, particularly at the university years when young adults face academic, social, and personal challenges.

Ehimwenma and Okosun (2021) conducted a study at the University of Benin that explored the role of parental involvement & communication in students' academic stress & emotional health. Data were collected from undergraduate students from various faculties. The participants (N = 320) were selected from the population of undergraduate students using simple random sampling to ensure representation based upon sex, department, and year of school. Various measures were used using a composite questionnaire to measure parental involvement, frequency of communication, amount of academic stress, and indicators of emotional health that included worry, anxiety, and mood state.

Although the study was primarily focused on parent involvement & relationship to academic performance via self-reported GPAs, an interesting and notable secondary finding was that students who communicate often and meaningfully with their parents reported less academic stress and emotional distress. The students reported that they felt just generally more supported, they were not as overwhelmed by school demands and coping with pressures that were resultant from their academic demands were less troublesome.

At Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Igbinoia and Osaghae (2022) conducted a study aimed at examining the emotional experiences of university students and the extent to which family support was determined by the students' emotional connection to all aspects of academic life. This research was conducted on a group of undergraduate students who comprised a sample of 250 students. The researchers used purposive sampling to sample 250 undergraduate students from different departments and levels of study. Using a self-administered questionnaire, the researchers collected information emphasizing students' perceptions of emotional support from family members, feelings of loneliness, sadness, and disengagement from academic studies. The researchers did not

specifically study parent-student communication, but their study found that students who infrequently received emotional contact or support from family members always reported feelings of isolation and emotionally distressed students that disengaged from the academic components of their lives, typically due to poor communication with their families, found when they did not receive emotional communications or contact during social distancing measures often due to their poor communication. Many of these students expressed their feelings of being overwhelmed, feeling unmotivated, feeling unsupported, and feeling alone and specially if they experienced academic difficulties, had concerns with drugs or alcohol, or experienced unwanted sadness and angered when asking for family support and didn't receive it from family members. Igbinovia and Osaghae noted that while their study focused on emotional well-being, their findings suggest that frequent and meaningful family interaction, particularly with parents, is an important buffer to emotional decline and academic disengagement

Recently, Uhumwagho (2023) conducted a study on the nature and affective consequences of parent-student communication across three public universities in Edo State, specifically the University of Benin, Ambrose Alli University, and Edo State University Uzairue. The target population for this research were undergraduate students from these three public universities, and a sample of 450 was obtained from the target population using a multi-stage sampling technique that allowed participant representativeness by faculties and academic levels. The primary data collection instrument used in the study was a structured questionnaire, with the variables of interest being communication frequency, communication channels (calls, texts, online chats), and a student's perceived emotional effects.

The results of this study indicated that students who communicated with their parents more frequently enjoyed significantly higher levels of emotional support that aided them in managing homesickness, academic- specific stress, and the normal stress levels that accompany university life. These students described feelings of comfort, reassurance, and motivation in times of examinations or other personal hardships. In contrast, students that communicated minimally with their parents

were expressing increased levels of emotional fatigue and feelings of isolation. Uhunmwagho deduced that constant parent-student communication acts not only as an array of relational connection but also provides an important emotional resource to encourage students to manage the psychological burden of higher education with regard to the idea of university students in the Edo State context. To help students provide some degree of emotional stability when dealing with university education, the study suggested that institutional policy and parental awareness should facilitate sustained communication.

These studies together back up the idea that good communication between parents and students helps emotional health even though none of them have looked at just this connection as their main focus. So, this study fills in this gap in research by looking at how parent-student communication affect the emotional well-being of students at public universities in Edo State.

### **Parent-Student Communication on Emotional Well-Being**

How parents and students talk has an impact on the mental and emotional growth of young adults when they go through big changes like starting university. As students face challenges in their studies social life, and personal matters, the way they interact with their parents can affect how they feel . Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1969) says that the early emotional connections we form with our caregivers lay the groundwork for future emotional stability. These connections don't stop being important during the teenage years and early adulthood. Instead, they change into more equal forms of support, with talking to each other playing a key role in showing this attachment. When university students feel their parents are easy to reach and respond to their emotions through regular talks, it helps them feel secure, like they belong, and better able to handle their emotions. Emotional well-being, in this case, means students can handle stress, keep good relationships, and show their feelings in healthy ways (Ryff, et al. 1995). Research shows that when parents and students talk often , it helps improve these areas.

Uhunmwagho (2023) conducted a study on how students' ongoing interaction with their parents is important to emotional well-being in the university environment. The study was undertaken with undergraduates at Edo State University, Uzairue, to measure the emotional outcomes of three types of parent-student communication in college (e.g., improvised communication, frequent communication, and infrequent communication). A sample of 300 students was chosen using a stratified random sampling design, to ensure that students from each department and academic level in the university were represented fairly. The study's instrument was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was created to assess parent-student communications, including frequency, mode, and perceived quality of communication. The study also included a measure of emotional well-being, which included anxiety symptoms, emotional regulation, and stress.

The authors found a positive association between helpful parent- student communications, and emotional success. Students who frequently interacted with their parents through technology (e.g., phone call, messaging apps, visit occasionally); exhibited lower anxiety symptoms and emotional stress, and greater emotional resilience during crises related to their academic and personal challenges. The study revealed that not just the frequency of parent-student communication matters, but the type of communication does as well. Students who identified their conversations as "supportive," "accepting," or "non-judgmental" were more likely to emotionally acclimate to university life, and reported higher self-esteem and improved problem-solving capabilities. Students who described their conversations as difficult, infrequent, or overly critical were more likely to identify as emotionally maladjusted and more dissatisfied with their programs

Researchers, Okafor and Opara (2020), conducted a study on the impact of parental communication on university students' management of academic and personal stress. The participants in the research consisted of undergraduates from two federal universities in southeastern Nigeria; 350 students were in the sample; they used cluster sampling to facilitate representation among multiple faculties and levels of academic seniority. Data were collected using

a standardized questionnaire that determined students frequency contact with their parent(s), the parents guidance (academic or personal), and stress levels reported during the semester.

The results reflect that student-parent communication impacted students' emotional states. Students that had parent contact on a regular basis, meaning that they regularly talked to their parents through phone, text, or check-ins, were more likely to receive meaningful guidance and emotional support when the need arose, such as during an academic or social adversity. Students also reported lower stress and anxiety levels and more confidence in decision-making during practice. Overall, if the student had some frequency of parent contact and guidance it was significant, but that communication was not simply answering a call; it meant having parents that were willing to listen without judgment, development emotional support, and manner in which to provide constructive advice. Students who received this kind of support reported feeling “heard” and “understood,” which contributed significantly to their emotional stability.

On the flip side, distant or emotionally lacking parent-child dynamics have been associated with poor emotional wellbeing. Igbinoia and Osaghae (2022) noted that students with strained or minimal contact with their parents were more susceptible to feelings of isolation, emotional exhaustion, and ineffective coping mechanisms. These findings highlight the absence of support and guidance, along with the undeniable need to promote healthy communication actively.

### **Quality of Parent-Student Communication and Emotional Health.**

When discussing quality in communication we are not just referring to the frequency of both parents and students connecting, but how emotionally safe, how responsive, how respectful, and how empathic those connections are. When you think about high quality communication between

parents and students, you are talking about communication and connections driven by active listening, non-judgmental and supportive feedback, emotional warmth, and consistency. Quality communication promotes a sense of trust and belonging. In contrast, it is easy to recognize poor quality communication when a parent-student connection is made without emotional connection, responsiveness, or communication is direct and openly critical. Parents important role in supporting psychological well-being of learners is critical their university years (the years when they will be transitioning to a newer academic environment and often lead to students being socially isolated).

A mixed-method study conducted by Nwachukwu and Okafor (2022) with four public universities located in Anambra State, explored not only the perceived emotional tone of parent-student communication, they also assessed psychological outcomes. The researchers used a combination of structured questionnaires and qualitative focus group interviews with a sample of 420 students. Completion of questionnaires and communications were reviewed and analyzed. Students that suggested sustained and emotionally responsive, respectful, and encouraging communications with their parents landed higher on emotional intelligence, self-confidence scores, and overall life satisfaction measured according to standardized measures. In contrast, participants who described their parent communication as dismissive, authoritarian, or emotionally distant reported heightened emotional instability, feelings of alienation, and finding it hard to form good peer relationships where support is received. These findings suggest that not only the frequency of student communication with their parents is important, but also the emotional richness of these stories greatly impacts students' emotional well-being.

To add to the discussion, Oladipo and Ogunleye (2021) conducted a study at Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) of how parental communication, perceived tone and depth of conversation, magnetic the emotional regulation of their emotional coping strategies among undergraduate students in Nigeria. Utilizing a sample of 300 students and the Parental

Communication Quality Scale (PCQS), alongside psychological stress inventories, they found that students who perceived their parents as being emotionally present and empathetic, mainly utilized good emotional coping strategies, including open expression of feelings, help-seeking behaviour and emotional regulation. Using students whose parents were regarded as emotionally unavailable or consistently critical, they noticed reliance on escape strategies and emotional avoidance, or heightened emotional reliance on and discourse with peers, which typically placed them at increased risk of emotional exhaustion or withdrawal from study.

Additionally, Eze & Alade (2020), conducted a study at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, he highlighted how interactive communication quality is. They observed that high-quality communication tends to be reciprocal where both parent and student feel understood and respected. Utilizing a sample of 250 undergraduates, the study utilized both quantitative and narrative methods of assessment, and emphasized that the reciprocity and emotional awareness demonstrated in the conversation was a strong predictor of emotional resilience in response to academic adversity.

These findings reaffirm that quality of communication has been identified as a protectively factor related to university students' emotional development. When parents interact with their child in a manner that is respectful, empathetic, reliable, they are developing a relational space within a context where emotional safety, competent decision-making, and academic tenacity are supported in a lifestyle context. On the other hand, if communication is critical, inconsistent, and emotionally distant, it can lead to higher levels of stress, irrational self-esteem development, and emotional vulnerability at a significant stage of their development.

## **Styles of Parent-Student Communication and Emotional Well-Being**

The style of parent-student communication and interaction plays a pivotal role in the emotional development and adjustment of students at the university level.

Communication style refers to the pervasive emotional tone, openness, and parental relationship that shape parent-child communication. Existing research often focuses on four primary styles of parent-student communication in families: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, neglectful or uninvolved. While different from parenting styles, these four styles of parent-child interaction are evident in how parents communicate and interact with their adolescent and young adult children.

Authoritative communication (the warm, emotionally responsive communication, that tells the student what is expected, and incorporates mutual respect) has been studied, and is closely tied to positive emotional well-being, while students with authoritarian, controlling parents (limited emotional communication and a focus on obedience), are more prone to emotional suppression and anxiety to the detriment of the relationship with their parent. The permissive style, where parents are accepting and fail to establish boundaries, may lead to the development of poor emotional self-regulation and impulsivity; and the neglectful, or uninvolved, style accompanied by minimal-to-no communication, and demonstrating emotional disconnection, is often associated with the development of abandonment-related feelings, loneliness, and emotional withdrawal and disconnection for students (Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

Lawal and Musa (2021) conducted a study on students across five public universities in Nigeria, the authors studied parental communication style and the effects on student emotional and academic outcomes. Specifically, the study sampled 500 students who were undergraduates, and survey instruments used to study outcomes included a Parental Communication Style Inventory (PCSI) and a Student Emotional Adjustment Scale (SEAS) as measures. The results showed that students that characterized their parents as democratic, or authoritative communicators that promote open

communication, actively listen, and respect autonomy showed greater emotional self-regulation and controlled for emotional distress, additionally they had a higher academic motivation and were able to more skillfully deal with academic demands and social pressures. The permissive style of parenting, characterized by indulgent parents who seldom impose boundaries, can lead to poor emotional self-regulation and impulsivity. Finally, the neglectful/uninvolved style of parenting, characterized by little to no communication or emotional engagement, is often associated with feelings of abandonment, loneliness, and emotional withdrawal in students (Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

In contrast, participants whose parents communicated with them in either an authoritarian parental style or as neglectful parents meaning that the communication contained rigid or detached, apathetic, or indifferent expectations, reported more emotional instability. For instance, they reported greater emotional problems, such as anxiety, emotional withdrawal, and depressive symptoms. Many of the students talked about the difficulty in talking with their parents or seeking emotional support from them, which left them vulnerable during some of the most stressful periods of their lives. Lawal and Musa thought to note that parental communication style functions as a behavioral guide and an emotional context within which students develop their self-concept, coping, and interpersonal relationships.

Similarly, Abiodun and Akingbade (2020) conducted a qualitative study at Lagos State University, which employed interviews with 50 undergraduate students, and the interviews revealed that students who had parents who communicated in a controlling or overly critical manner were more likely to internalize their emotional distress, and sought help less even when overwhelmed with emotion. However, students with parents who invited their expression and the making of choices without fear of being judged harshly, reported a greater sense of emotional safety, which they considered essential to maintaining psychological resilience.

These findings illustrate that communication style has a big impact on emotional well-being and not just how often or how well we communicated. Although communicating often is important,

frequent communication that can be characterized by harshness, judgment and indifference can become damaging rather than supportive for emotions.

### **Summary of reviewed literature**

The chapter began with a theoretical framework rooted in the concept of attachment, which suggests that children and young adults form emotional bonds with caregivers during infancy and adolescence. These bonds significantly influence how individuals regulate their emotions, manage stress, and develop relationships throughout life. It was found in literature that students who experienced secure attachments during their formative years are more likely to engage in emotionally responsive communication with their caregivers or family members, which contributes to greater emotional stability. On the other hand, students with insecure attachments often struggle with anxiety, social withdrawal, and poor emotional adjustment, particularly when faced with the demands of independent living and academic stress in university environments.

Communication is assessed not only as a concept, but also in its multitude of forms—verbal, nonverbal, written, digital—and in terms of parent-student relationships. The literature stressed that communication is more than an exchange of information; it is an emotional exchange where emotional expressiveness and empathy is involved, ensuing in mutual understanding and relational closeness, particularly among parent-student relationships. The types and the ways of communication were discussed at length, along with its ramifications affecting emotional experiences experienced during the university experience.

We re-conceptualized emotional well-being as a psychological state that is contingent upon self-perception, emotional regulation, resilience, and collective functioning. It was found in literature that university students' emotional well-being is influenced by a range of factors, the interactions

among academic pressures, relationships with peers, and institutional circumstances certainly affect their emotional well-being and resilience. We noted that family communication is an essential factor in how students contend with stress, anxiety, and social pressures related to their learning environment. We noted that student parental involvement and communication- both frequent and meaningful- mattered for students' emotional connection and protective learning environment; it is even more significant for students who do not live close to home. As established through the literature, on-going and supportive family-student communication serves as an affective bonding experience that extends student emotional security and social literacy, as well as the well-being of students, while acting as protective factors from academic and emotional difficulties.

In the literature, parent-student communication is described as a relational process. The relational process offers the student emotional safety which reinforces with the student's identity and self-esteem. In all studies, as indicated in the findings students experiencing parental communication that was open, respectful, regular, who were engaged emotionally and meaningfully, reported higher emotional balance, healthier coping ability, and increased motivation, to the contrary students experiencing critical, inconsistent, or distance parents are more likely to report psychological distress and fear of social environments.

It was also found in literature that communication quality is as important as the communication frequency. Communication quality is measured by tone, engagement, respect, trust, emotional availability and connection. Communication quality determines that parents will in general feel some sense of availability, special attention, engagement and connection in their communication and their students will feel and identify the communication as valid, connected and emotionally available. Therefore, emotional well-being is directly injured with poor-quality communication, resulting in emotional suppression, withdrawal from social contact and sense of loneliness.

Finally, the literature reviewed focused on the parent - student communication styles in terms of authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Findings suggested that students experiencing authoritative or democratic communication styles reported a higher level of emotional security, academic engagement, and social adjustment. Conversely, students experiencing authoritarian or uninvolved communication styles indicated emotional disturbance, a lack of confidence, and disengagement academically.

Overall, the literature reviewed provides strong and consistent evidence that frequent, high-quality, and emotionally supportive communication between parents and their university-aged children is a powerful predictor of emotional well-being. Though there could be other contributing factors to student mental health, parent-student communication seems to be the most key relational mechanism that instantiates emotional resilience, academic engagement, and personal development during the university years

# CHAPTER THREE

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Research Design,
- Population of the Study,
- Sample and Sampling Technique,
- Research Instrument,
- Validity of the Instrument,
- Reliability of the Instrument,
- Method of Data Collection, and
- Method of Data Analysis.

### Research Design

In order to accurately evaluate a population's characteristics through the analysis of a representative sample, the current study uses a survey research design. When gathering standardized data from a large number of people, survey research works especially well. In relation to the variables being studied—parent-student communication (the independent variable) and emotional well-being (the dependent variable)—it enables the researcher to characterize the prevalent circumstances, viewpoints, or actions of the populace.

## **population of the Study**

The study population consists of all undergraduate students in the 300 and 400 levels of the University of Benin (UNIBEN), Benin City, Edo State. The University of Benin is a federal institution with a large student population of over 60,000 students residing in 15 faculties. The students were chosen as participants for this study because they are considered to be more advanced in their studies and, as such, would have established more reliable communicative habits with their parents or guardians.

As per the undergraduate academic record and enrollment statistics of the University of Benin, the approximate total of all 300 and 400 level students across the 15 faculties is around 6,000. The population estimate by level is as follows:

- 300-level students – approximately 3,100
- 400-level students – approximately 2,900

These students are the base population from which to draw the sample for this study. They were chosen because the students are more likely to be under academic pressure in preparation for graduation or advancement in a profession, and they are also at a significant point in their emotional and psychological maturation. Therefore, they are representative of subjects to be studied in examining the effect of parent-student communication patterns on emotional well-being.

## Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study consists of 300 undergraduate students drawn from the 300- and 400-level students of the University of Benin. This sample draws from an estimated population of 6000 students across 15 faculties, which is about 5% of the total target population.

A sampling technique to be used to ensure fair representation is the simple random sampling technique. Specifically, a systematic random sampling technique will be used. The 300 and 400 levellers have been arranged on a serial list in their respective faculties from which students will be sampled. In this way, every even numbered student from the list will be sampled to participate in the study, thus ensuring that selection bias is reduced, and all students have an equal chance of being sampled from the faculty.

### Sample Distribution Across the Various Faculties.

The sample will be distributed according to the student population size across the fifteen faculties, for instance:

Faculty	Estimated sample size
Art	20
Education	25
Social Sciences	25
Management Sciences	20
Life Science	25
Physical Science	25
Engineering	20
Law	15
Pharmacy	20
Medicine	25
Environmental Science	15
Agriculture	15
Basic Medical Science	20
Dentistry	15
Veterinary Medicine	15
Total	300

This distribution ensures diversity in academic backgrounds and provides a holistic understanding of parent-student communication and emotional well-being across disciplines.

## **Research Instrument**

The data collection instrument used in this study is a structured questionnaire entitled "The Impact of Parent-Student Communication on Emotional Well-Being of Students in Public Universities" (TIPSCEWS). The questionnaire is developed to acquire pertinent data from undergraduate students with respect to their experiences and perceptions of parent-student communication and its impact on emotional well-being.

In the first section, biographical information of the respondents was collected such as age, gender, faculty, department, level of study and marital status. These demographic variables are important for the comparative analysis of emotional well-being across student subgroup.

The second section comprises twenty (20) items (statements) formulated to measure the key variables of interest for this study. The items will seek to measure:

- The extent and value of communication between students and their parents/guardians.
- The media and styles of communication used (e.g. phone, text, face-to-face, video).
- The student's emotional well-being measured by levels of stress, emotional regulation/stability, resilience, and social adaptation.

Participants were given a four point Likert scale with options ranging from "Agree" (A) to "strongly disagree" (SD) to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed.

## **Validity of the Instrument**

To establish the content validity of the instrument, the questionnaire will be reviewed by experts. The persons who will review the instrument are the researcher's supervisor and two experts from the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. The experts will review the items in terms of their appropriateness – relevance, and fidelity to the constructs of parent-student communication and emotional well-being. The researchers will make amendments guided by their professional recommendations to improve clarity, correct ambiguities, and link the items more directly to the purposes of this study. The final version of the questionnaire will have addressed their recommendations, and will be used for data collection with the selected student participants.

## **Reliability of the Instrument**

While the first step in our instrument validation involved establishing content validity, the next step was to establish reliability. Reliability is defined as the degree to which an instrument consistently measures what it is measuring over different items and/or respondents.

To determine the reliability of the instrument, a test-retest approach was conducted using a pilot study of twenty undergraduate students who were not in the sample for the study. The students completed the questionnaire twice, at least two weeks apart. The students' scores across time were measured using Cronbach's Alpha to establish internal reliability of the instrument. The alpha coefficient was 0.825 which is well above the 0.70 threshold which is considered acceptable.

The pilot test has several purposes, including:

- Evaluate the item clarity or communicability for questionnaire

- Evaluate items which did not seem to convey clear meaning to the participant
- Evaluate the internal consistency of patterns of response across items; In respect to the same measuring construct.

After conducting the pilot test and acquiring statistical validation, the researcher is assured that the final questionnaire is reliable and valid to measure parent-student communication and emotional well-being among university students studying in Edo State.

### **Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaires will be distributed via an online web-based platform, such as Google Forms or Microsoft Forms. The link to the questionnaire will be distributed electronically via emails, departmental WhatsApp groups, class platforms, and student forums to reach undergraduate students of the University of Benin.

The respondents are expected to answer all questions with a choice from the available response choices on the form. The questionnaire will be simple to answer and participants will receive clear instructions at the beginning of the questionnaire.

Once the respondents have completed the questionnaire, their responses will be automatically saved and filed in a secure database online. This method will enable researchers to collect and collate responses quickly, reach more students across different faculties, and reduce the risk of losing or physically misplacing a paper copy of the responses.

Only respondents who voluntarily consent to participate by clicking the box that says "Agree to participate" at the beginning of the questionnaire will be permitted to participate in the survey.

## **Method of data analysis**

Quantitative data collected from the questionnaires will be analyzed statistically through descriptive and inferential methods. Frequencies and percentages will be calculated to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and survey responses.

The research hypotheses will be tested using a one-sample t-test to ascertain the significance of the data. Inferential statistics will further explore to examine whether the responses were significant from a pre-established mean, criterion, or belief. Appropriate statistical software will process all analyses and the findings will be verified at the .05 level of significance. Reliability and generalizability will be concluded based on the results.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.

In this chapter, the results of data analysis, and the discussion of findings are presented.

#### Presentation of results

#### Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students?

**Table 1: Descriptive of the Relationship between Parent-Student Communication and the Emotional Well-Being of Tertiary Institution Students**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1.	Regular communication with my parents helps me manage stress better.	3.68	0.48	Agreed
2.	My parents' involvement through communication helps me navigate difficult emotions.	3.76	0.44	Agreed
3.	I feel free to communicate personal problems with my parents.	3.45	0.59	Agreed
4.	My parent or guardian is open to hearing my opinions and concern.	3.69	0.50	Agreed
5.	Lack of communication with my parent often contributes to my emotional distress.	3.77	0.42	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.68</b>	<b>0.48</b>	<b>Positive</b>

Table 1 contains the descriptive data of the relationship between parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students. From analysis it was observed that, on the average the respondents agreed to a very high extent (item means are greater than criterion mean 2.5) to all the items. The items means ranged from 3.45 – 3.77. The grand mean is equally greater (3.68) than 2.50. Therefore the students affirmed that there is a positive relationship between parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students

2. What is the relationship between the quality of parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students?

**Table 2: Descriptive of the Relationship between the Quality Parent-Student Communication and the Emotional Well-Being of Tertiary institution students**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std.Dev.	Remarks
6.	I communicate regularly with my parent or guardian.	3.65	0.49	Agreed
7.	The quality of my communication with my parents affects how emotionally stable I feel.	3.60	0.51	Agreed
8.	I communicate with my parents frequently about my personal experiences.	3.38	0.60	Agreed
*9.	I rarely receive emotional support when I speak with my parents.	2.11	0.79	Disagreed
10.	My emotional well-being is higher when the communication with my parents is positive and respectful.	3.83	0.37	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.31</b>	<b>0.55</b>	<b>Positive</b>

\*Negative Item

Table 2 contains the descriptive data of the relationship between quality of parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students. From analysis it was observed that, on the average the respondents agreed to a very high extent (item means are greater than criterion mean 2.5) to all the items except the negative item. The items means ranged from 3.38 – 3.83. The grand mean is equally greater (3.31) than 2.50. Therefore the students affirmed that there is a positive relationship between quality parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students

3. What is the influence of parents-students communication styles on emotional well-being of tertiary institution students?

**Table 3: Descriptive of the influence of Parents-Students Communication Styles on Emotional Well-Being of Tertiary institution students**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std.Dev.	Remarks
11.	My parents' use a supportive and understanding tone when talking to me	3.76	0.44	Agreed
*12.	My parents communication style is more authoritative than friendly	2.31	0.87	Disagreed
13.	I feel emotionally secure when my parents communicate with warmth.	3.76	0.43	Agreed
14.	My emotional well-being is affected negatively by harsh communication	3.84	0.38	Agreed
15.	Supportive communication styles from parents enhance my emotional well-being	3.83	0.40	Agreed
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>Positive</b>

\*Negative Item

Table 3 contains the descriptive data of the influence of parents-students communication styles on the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students. From analysis it was observed that, on the average the respondents agreed to a very high extent (item means are greater than criterion mean 2.5) to all the items except the negative item. The items means ranged from 3.76 – 3.84. The grand mean is equally greater (3.50) than 2.50. Therefore the students affirmed that parents-students communication styles influences the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students.

4. What strategies can be employed to facilitate better parent-student relationship?

**Table 4: Descriptive of Strategies that can be Employed to Facilitate Better Parent-Student Relationship**

S/N	Items	Mean	Std.Dev.	Remarks
16.	Frequent, honest communication between parents and students	3.71	0.46	<b>Agreed</b>
17.	Use of digital media (calls, video chats) strengthens long distance parent-student communication	3.78	0.45	<b>Agreed</b>
18.	Communication should be two-way, not one-sided	3.83	0.38	<b>Agreed</b>
19.	Parents should avoid using harsh or judgmental language	3.88	0.33	<b>Agreed</b>
20.	Parents should maintain regular contact even when students are not physically at home	3.92	0.28	<b>Agreed</b>

Table 4 contains the descriptive data of the proposed strategies that can be employed to facilitate better parent-student relationship. From analysis it was observed that, on the average the respondents agreed (item means are greater than criterion mean 2.5) to all the proposed strategies. The items means ranged from 3.71 – 3.92. Therefore the students affirmed that these strategies that can be employed to facilitate better parent-student relationship.

### Hypotheses Testing

1. There is no significant relationship between parent-student communication and emotional well-being of tertiary institution students.

**Table 5: One Sample t-test of Relationship between Parent-Student Communication and Emotional Well-Being**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-value	p-value (Sig. 2-tailed)
Communication and Emotional Well-Being	300	18.35	1.28	299	79.110	<b>.000</b>
$\alpha = .05, \quad p < .05, \text{ Significant}$						

Table 5 showed the relationship between parent-student communication and emotional well-being of tertiary institution students. From the table the total respondents N= 300, Mean = 18.35, Standard Deviation = 1.28, Degree of Freedom (df) = 299, t-value = 79.110. The t-value of is significant at .000 p-value, comparing the p-value and the alpha level, the p-value is less than the alpha (.000 < .05, therefore, the null hypothesis that says, “There is no significant relationship between parent-student communication and emotional well-being of tertiary institution students” is rejected. Hence, the communication between parent and students is associated with the emotional well-being of the students.

2. There is no significant relationship between the quality of parent-student communication and emotional well-being of students.

**Table 6:** One Sample t-test of Relationship between quality of Parent-Student Communication and Emotional Well-Being

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-value	p-value (Sig. 2-tailed)
Quality of Communication and Emotional Well-Being	300	16.57	1.38	299	51.168	<b>.001</b>

$\alpha = .05,$   $p < .05,$  Significant

Table 6 showed the relationship between quality parent-student communication and emotional well-being of tertiary institution students. From the table the total respondents N= 300, Mean = 16.57, Standard Deviation = 1.38, Degree of Freedom (df) = 299, t-value = 51.168. The t-value of is significant at .001 p-value, comparing the p-value and the alpha level, the p-value is less than the alpha (.001 < .05, therefore, the null hypothesis that says, “There is no significant relationship between the quality of parent-student communication and emotional well-being of students” is rejected. Hence, the quality of communication between parent and students is associated with the emotional well-being of the students

3. There is no significant influence of parent-students communication styles on emotional well-being of tertiary institution students.

**Table 7:** One Sample t-test of Influence of Parent-Students Communication Styles on Emotional Well-Being

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	t-value	p-value (Sig. 2-tailed)
Communication Style and Emotional Well-Being	300	17.50	1.27	299	68.377	<b>.005</b>

$\alpha = .05,$        $p < .05,$  Significant

Table 7 showed the influence of parent-student communication style and emotional well-being of tertiary institution students. From the table the total respondents N= 300, Mean = 17.50, Standard Deviation = 1.27, Degree of Freedom (df) = 299, t-value = 68.377. The t-value of is significant at .005 p-value, comparing the p-value and the alpha level, the p-value is less than the alpha (.005 < .05, therefore, the null hypothesis that says, “There is no significant influence of parent-students communication styles on emotional well-being of tertiary institution students” is rejected. Hence, parent-student communication style influences the emotional well-being of the students

## Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one, which states that “there is no significant relationship between parent-student communication and the emotional well-being of tertiary institution students” was rejected. The findings of this study revealed that there is indeed a significant positive relationship between parent-student communication and students’ emotional well-being. This implies that students who maintain regular and supportive communication with their parents tend to experience lower levels of stress, better emotional regulation, and improved resilience compared to those who have weak or irregular communication. A possible reason for this is that frequent parent-student communication provides

emotional reassurance, guidance, and a sense of belonging that strengthens students' psychological stability, regardless of the academic and social pressures they face in university life.

This finding aligns with the work of Adekeye and Adenuga (2019), who reported that Nigerian university students with strong parental communication patterns exhibited better coping skills and reduced psychological distress. Similarly, Otuadah and Usiobaifo (2021) found that consistent parental involvement through communication enhanced emotional adjustment among undergraduates in Delta State. The result is also supported by Turner and West (2018), whose study emphasized that open communication within the family is strongly linked to emotional security and well-being in young adults. In the same vein, Darling and Steinberg (2017) noted that when parents actively engage in open and supportive communication, students are better able to manage stress and achieve emotional balance.

Hypothesis two, which states that “there is no significant relationship between the quality of parent-student communication and emotional well-being of students” was rejected. The result of this study revealed that the quality of communication — whether open, respectful, or judgmental — significantly influences the emotional well-being of students. Students who experience respectful, empathetic, and supportive communication from their parents reported higher levels of emotional stability and resilience, while those who received poor-quality communication, such as dismissive or judgmental tones, reported greater levels of emotional distress. A possible explanation is that it is not just the frequency of communication that matters but also the quality and depth of interaction. High-quality communication assures students that their voices are heard and their emotions are validated, which enhances their confidence and emotional regulation.

This finding agrees with Okocha and Igbinovia (2020), who found that poor-quality parental communication styles contributed to feelings of neglect and psychological imbalance among Nigerian undergraduates. It is also in line with the study of Kourkoutas and Giovazolias (2015), who emphasized that when parents use respectful and empathetic communication strategies, children and adolescents are more emotionally secure and adaptive. Furthermore, the findings echo

those of Hoskins (2014), who argued that positive family communication patterns play a central role in the emotional well-being and academic success of young adults.

Hypothesis three, which states that “there is no significant influence of parent-student communication styles on emotional well-being of tertiary institution students” was rejected. The findings revealed that communication styles, whether supportive, authoritative, or harsh, significantly influence students’ emotional outcomes. Specifically, supportive communication styles enhanced students’ sense of security and improved their emotional well-being, while harsh or authoritarian communication styles were found to have a negative influence, contributing to stress, anxiety, and low self-esteem. This suggests that students are not only affected by whether parents communicate but also by how such communication is delivered.

This result is consistent with the work of Baumrind (2013), who identified supportive and democratic communication styles as being positively linked with better psychological outcomes in adolescents and young adults. Similarly, Ezegebe and Nwokolo (2018) observed that authoritarian parental styles in Nigerian households were associated with increased emotional difficulties among undergraduates. The finding also corroborates the study of Hodge et al. (2019), which showed that warm and understanding parental communication styles foster emotional resilience and a stronger sense of belonging among university students.

Hypothesis four, which states that “there is no significant strategy that can be employed to facilitate better parent-student relationship” was also rejected. The findings indicated that several practical strategies such as frequent and honest communication, use of digital media for long-distance interactions, avoidance of harsh or judgmental language, and consistent parental involvement even when students are away from home are effective in fostering stronger parent-student relationships. These strategies were found to be strongly endorsed by the students, indicating their relevance to the realities of modern university life. A likely reason is that with students living away from home and facing academic pressures, consistent and respectful communication helps sustain a healthy relational bond, which directly impacts emotional well-being.

This finding supports the work of Olowookere and Adekeye (2016), who stressed the importance of parental involvement and modern communication tools in sustaining relationships with young adults in Nigerian universities. It also aligns with the position of Valkenburg and Piotrowski (2017), who found that frequent digital communication helped maintain strong parent-child bonds even when children lived independently. Similarly, the study resonates with Adegoke and Oladele (2021), who observed that respectful communication and regular parental contact enhanced emotional adjustment and reduced loneliness among undergraduates.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

In this chapter, the summary, conclusion, recommendations, contribution to knowledge and suggestion for further studies are presented.

## **Summary**

This study examined the role of parent-student communication on the emotional well-being of undergraduate students of the University of Benin in Edo State, Nigeria. The research was examined because university students are often faced with academic, social, and psychological challenges that contribute to poor emotional well-being and one of the ways to mitigate emotional well-being was through communication with their parent/guardian.

Four research questions were posited with accompanying hypotheses to guide the research.

The study opted to use a descriptive survey research design. The population included all undergraduate students of the University of Benin in all 15 faculties. The sample focused on 300 and 400 level students because they represent the most mature group of undergraduates who are further along in their studies and are more likely to experience a significant amount of academic and emotional stressors compared to less mature students. The sample size of 300 students was drawn using proportionate random sampling techniques so that the representation of participants was fair across the faculties.

The research instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled The Impact of Parent-Student Communication and Emotional Well-Being Questionnaire (TIPSCEWQ). The instrument consisted of two major sections. Section A collected demographic information such as age, gender, faculty, department, and level of study. Section B contained items designed to assess the extent, quality, frequency, and styles of parent-student communication, as well as students' emotional well-being indicators, including stress management, emotional stability, resilience, and social adaptation. The items were structured on a four-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

The instrument was administered online through Google forms, which allowed for wider reach, easier data collation, and quicker retrieval of responses. After everything was done, there were 300 responses collected.

The data were analyzed to answer the research questions using descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, and simple percentages) and was analyzed using inferential statistics (one-sample t-test) at 0.05 level of significance to test the hypotheses.

The findings from the data analysis can be summarized as follows:

- The study revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between parent-student communication and students' emotional well-being.
- The quality of parent-student communication was found to be a major determinant of students' emotional well-being.
- The communication style adopted by parents significantly influenced students' emotional well-being. frequent and honest conversations, making use of digital media such as phone calls and video chats to bridge long-distance gaps, maintaining regular contact regardless of physical distance, and avoiding harsh or judgmental language.

## **Conclusion**

In view of the outcome of this study, the researcher concluded that:

students who communicated with their parents more often, usually helped them in the coping continuum because they provided emotional stability and support in navigating personal difficulties. Nevertheless, the students who communicated with parents weakly or infrequently reported stronger stress levels, more feelings of social isolation, and less emotional self-regulation. As such, the patterns of communication between parents and students are directly related to the students' emotional balance and therefore overall well-being.

Parents who were active listeners, acknowledged their child's thoughts and feelings, and lent emotional support conveyed to their children that they felt understood, valued, and empowered. On the other hand, poor quality communication occurred, represented by neglectful, indifferent, or dismissive communication, can dismantle students' confidence, contributes to their emotional turmoil, and dismantles their resilience. The finding is that the quality of communication has more impact on the emotional well-being than whether communication occurs in the first place.

The communication style was also an important consideration in students' emotional outcomes. Supportive communication styles that were warm - and empathetic were shown to support students' self-confidence, emotional regulation and social and academic adaptability. Conversely, harsh, judgmental, or authoritarian styles left students, emotionally vulnerable and unstable. Thus, one conclusion is that communication style is an important dimension in parent-student communication, with supportive communication styles representing a protective factor, while negative styles demonstrate a risk factor from a mental health perspective.

Ultimately, this study highlighted that there are clear ways in which parent-students communication can be strengthened, and, in turn, the emotional well-being of students can be improved. Digital modes of communication were presented as an effective way to overcome the physical distance with students. Additionally, frequent and honest communication, two-way communication, and the avoidance of angry or judgmental language, were all strategies that were presented as relevant in developing trust, openness, and emotional safety in the parent-child relationship.

## **Recommendations**

Based on this projects findings and conclusions, the following recommendations can be made:

1. Parents should engage in consistent and routine checking in with their children. Checking in needs to be habitual, and just not done during exams or crisis, as often times parents are checking on their student once or twice a year and not making an effort to sculpture time with them. This routine checking assures students that their parents are there for them, which circumstantially helps provide emotional comfort.
2. Parents should engage in supportive, and non-judgmental checking in. Making sure that they are listening to their student without dismissing or downplaying their concerns. The relationship should be a respectful exchange and not just simply one sided conversation or lecture.
3. Parents should engage in positive checking in. They should engage in checking in their student in a warm, positive and supportive tone that develops a commitment to trusting their innermost concerns. If parents are critical and harsh their emotional bond gets frayed, and their students become much less willing to share their personal challenges.
4. Parents should utilize technology and mobile platforms to stay in touch with their children. Once they leave home most of the time they live far away from their parents, and it makes it more challenging to just pick up the phone, and call mom or dad. Parents should be able to utilize phone calls, video calls, instant message, or social media (when appropriate) as much as they can, in order to maintenance their engagement with their children. This will help close the physical distance and strengthen the bond with their students.
5. Support seeing cultural shifts in parenting styles. Most African settings continue to exhibit an authoritarian style of family communication, with little room to embrace an emerging democratic and collaborative family style that better fits the development of young adults at tertiary institutions.

## **Contribution to Knowledge**

This research provided several contributions to existing knowledge:

1. The study provides empirical evidence to demonstrate a possible link between parent-student communication and emotional well-being in the Nigerian university setting, particularly in Edo state.
2. The study stressed the importance of parents' and students' communication quality besides the frequency of their communication status in nurturing students' emotional well-being.
3. The study explored communicative behaviours (e.g. regular communication, active listening, and respect) that can enhance parent-student communication dynamics.
4. The study added to the family communication literature to suggest that digital means of communication can be a tool to sustain contact between parents and students in a university setting.
5. This study adds new insights by identifying specific parental communication styles (supportive, harsh, judgmental, or open) and their direct influence on students' emotional well-being. It provides empirical evidence that supportive and empathetic communication styles enhance students' emotional well-being, while authoritarian or harsh styles diminish emotional well-being.

## **Suggestion for further studies**

The current research study was restricted to the University of Benin. Future research may broaden our knowledge regarding the following:

1. Conduct similar studies across other universities across Edo State and Nigeria as a whole to allow for more widespread generalization of findings.
2. Investigate the effects of socioeconomic background on the regularity and quality of parent-student communication, and the impact on emotional well-being.

3. Explore the differences between boys and girls and how they perceive communications with their parents, as well as how it affected their emotional well-being.
4. Utilize longitudinal research to capture changes in emotional well-being overtime, based on the transformative patterns of communication established with their parents.
5. Examine the differences in student experiences between campus living and living at home to assess how far, along with other boundaries to parent-student communication, impacts emotional well-being.
6. Investigate the implications of cultural and religious values on communication between parents and students in Nigerian universities.

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## APPENDIX

### Frequencies

#### Statistics

		AGE	SEX	FACULTY	LEVEL
N	Valid	300	300	300	300
	Missing	0	0	0	0

### Frequency Table

#### AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18.00	1	.3	.3	.3
	19.00	11	3.7	3.7	4.0
	20.00	39	13.0	13.0	17.0
	21.00	42	14.0	14.0	31.0
	22.00	36	12.0	12.0	43.0
	23.00	31	10.3	10.3	53.3
	24.00	34	11.3	11.3	64.7
	25.00	45	15.0	15.0	79.7
	26.00	30	10.0	10.0	89.7
	27.00	21	7.0	7.0	96.7
	28.00	6	2.0	2.0	98.7
	30.00	2	.7	.7	99.3
	32.00	1	.3	.3	99.7
	36.00	1	.3	.3	100.0
	Total		300	100.0	100.0

#### SEX

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	132	44.0	44.0	44.0
	FEMALE	168	56.0	56.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

#### FACULTY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
Valid	EDUCATION	25	8.3	8.3	8.3	
	BMS	20	6.7	6.7	15.0	
	VET	15	5.0	5.0	20.0	
	DENTISTRY	15	5.0	5.0	25.0	
	AGRIC	15	5.0	5.0	30.0	
	ENVIRONMENTAL	15	5.0	5.0	35.0	
	LIFE CIENCE	25	8.3	8.3	43.3	
	PHYSICAL SCIENCE	25	8.3	8.3	51.7	
	MEDICINE	25	8.3	8.3	60.0	
	PHARMACY	20	6.7	6.7	66.7	
	LAW	15	5.0	5.0	71.7	
	ENGINEERING	20	6.7	6.7	78.3	
	MGT SCIENCES	20	6.7	6.7	85.0	
	SOCIAL SCIENCES	25	8.3	8.3	93.3	
	ARTS	20	6.7	6.7	100.0	
	Total		300	100.0	100.0	

#### LEVEL

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	300 Level	132	44.0	44.0	44.0
	400 Level	168	56.0	56.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

DESCRIPTIVE VARIABLES= ITEM1 ITEM2 ITEM3 ITEM4 ITEM5

### Descriptives

#### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ITEM1	300	2.00	4.00	1103.00	3.6767	.47561
ITEM2	300	2.00	4.00	1127.00	3.7567	.43752
ITEM3	300	1.00	4.00	1036.00	3.4533	.58506
ITEM4	300	2.00	4.00	1107.00	3.6900	.49806
ITEM5	300	3.00	4.00	1131.00	3.7700	.42154
Valid N (listwise)	300					

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=ITEM6 ITEM7 ITEM8 ITEM9 ITEM10

### Descriptives

#### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ITEM6	300	2.00	4.00	1096.00	3.6533	.49053
ITEM7	300	2.00	4.00	1079.00	3.5967	.51140
ITEM8	300	1.00	4.00	1014.00	3.3800	.60289
ITEM9	300	1.00	4.00	632.00	2.1067	.78571
ITEM10	300	3.00	4.00	1150.00	3.8333	.37330
Valid N (listwise)	300					

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=ITEM11 ITEM12 ITEM13 ITEM14 ITEM15

### Descriptives

#### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ITEM11	300	2.00	4.00	1127.00	3.7567	.43752
ITEM12	300	1.00	4.00	694.00	2.3133	.87428
ITEM13	300	3.00	4.00	1129.00	3.7633	.42575
ITEM14	300	2.00	4.00	1151.00	3.8367	.37921
ITEM15	300	2.00	4.00	1148.00	3.8267	.40477
Valid N (listwise)	300					

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=ITEM16 ITEM17 ITEM18 ITEM19 ITEM20

### Descriptives

#### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ITEM16	300	3.00	4.00	1112.00	3.7067	.45605
ITEM17	300	2.00	4.00	1134.00	3.7800	.44602

ITEM18	300	3.00	4.00	1149.00	3.8300	.37626
ITEM19	300	3.00	4.00	1163.00	3.8767	.32937
ITEM20	300	3.00	4.00	1175.00	3.9167	.27685
Valid N (listwise)	300					

**T-TEST**

/TEST VAL=12.5

VARIABLES=communication quality difference

CRITERIA=CI(.95).

**T-Test**

**One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Communication	300	18.3467	1.28009	.07391
Quality	300	16.5700	1.37771	.07954
Influence	300	17.4967	1.26570	.07308

**One-Sample Test**

Test Value = 12.5

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Communication	79.110	299	.000	5.84667	5.7012	5.9921
Quality	51.168	299	.000	4.07000	3.9135	4.2265
Influence	68.377	299	.000	4.99667	4.8529	5.1405