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RESILIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING: PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABLE FAMILY LIFE AMONG COUPLES IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined resilience and psychological well-being as correlates of family sustainability among couples in Kwara State, Nigeria. Anchored in Family Systems Theory, Resilience Theory, and Ryff's model of psychological well-being, the research aimed to investigate the individual and joint contributions of resilience and psychological well-being to sustainable family life, while also examining demographic differences in family sustainability based on gender, educational attainment, and marital duration. A correlational survey design was employed, involving 300 married participants selected through a multistage sampling process. Standardized instruments, including the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale, and a researcher-adapted Family Sustainability Scale, were administered, and data were analyzed using Pearson's correlation, multiple regression, t-test, and ANOVA at the 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed significant positive correlations between resilience and family sustainability ($r = .62, p < .01$) and between psychological well-being and family sustainability ($r = .58, p < .01$). Regression analysis showed that resilience ($\beta = .48, p < .001$) and psychological well-being ($\beta = .36, p < .001$) jointly predicted family sustainability, accounting for 52% of the variance. Demographic analyses further indicated significant differences based on educational attainment and marital duration, with couples holding postgraduate education and longer marital experience reporting higher sustainability. No significant gender difference was observed. The study concludes that resilience and psychological well-being are critical psychological resources that enhance family stability and cohesion. It recommends targeted counselling interventions, mental health promotion, and policy measures aimed at strengthening couples' adaptive capacities for sustainable family life in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Resilience, psychological well-being, family sustainability, couples, counselling*

INTRODUCTION

The family has long been recognized as the fundamental unit of society and a cornerstone of human development (Akhmedov, 2021). It serves as the primary environment where individuals acquire values, attitudes, social skills, and coping mechanisms that shape their lives and interactions within the larger society (Thomas et al., 2017). In Nigeria, as in many other societies, the family plays a crucial role in transmitting cultural heritage, providing emotional support, and maintaining the overall stability of communities (Alabi & Olonade, 2022). However, in the face of modern social, economic, and psychological pressures, families increasingly face challenges that threaten their sustainability (Adebayo et al., 2024; Stevenson et al., 2021). Issues such as financial hardship, unemployment, marital conflict, poor communication, changing gender roles, and exposure to psychosocial stressors often erode family stability (Olatunbosun & Tenibajae, 2017; Dikko et al., 2023; Asadi et al., 2024). Against this backdrop, the resilience and psychological well-being of couples become essential factors influencing families' ability to remain functional and cohesive in the face of adversity (Akeredolu et al., 2024; Johnny, 2025).

Resilience, in psychological terms, refers to an individual's ability to adapt positively and recover in the face of stress, trauma, or adversity (Sisti et al., 2019; Iretor-Oscar et al., 2021). For couples, resilience encompasses their capacity to withstand marital challenges, negotiate conflicts constructively, and maintain emotional balance despite external or internal stressors (Herdiana et al., 2018; Adaramoye et al., 2025). A resilient couple is better equipped to navigate crises such as financial instability, child-rearing difficulties, extended family pressures, and health challenges without allowing these stressors to disrupt their family life permanently (Walsh, 2019; Olayiwola-Adedoja et al., 2024). Psychological well-being, on the other hand, encompasses the presence of positive mental health indicators, including self-acceptance, life satisfaction, autonomy, purpose in life, and the ability to sustain meaningful relationships (Olatunbosun, 2020;

Dhanabhakym & Sarath, 2023). When couples experience a high level of psychological well-being, they are more likely to demonstrate patience, empathy, and effective communication, which significantly contribute to family sustainability (Shrout, 2021).

Family sustainability refers to the capacity of the family system to remain cohesive, functional, and adaptable over time, ensuring that its members thrive despite the challenges they face (Walsh, 2021). It involves stability in marital relationships, effective parenting, economic security, emotional bonding, and the transmission of values across generations (Romans et al., 2025). In contemporary Nigeria, including Kwara State, family sustainability is increasingly under strain due to multiple factors such as the rising cost of living, social disintegration, value conflicts, exposure to digital influences, and migration-related challenges (Gao et al., 2023). These pressures have contributed to the rise of marital breakdowns, domestic violence, child neglect, and weakened kinship ties (Cunha et al., 2024). As such, understanding the psychological and resilience-based resources that couples can leverage to sustain their families has become a matter of urgent academic and social concern (Calhoun et al., 2022).

Kwara State, situated in the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria, presents a unique cultural and socio-economic context for studying family sustainability (Werner et al., 2025). The state is characterized by a mix of traditional and modern values, with many families navigating the tensions between cultural expectations and the demands of modernization (Bamaca-Colbert et al., 2019). For instance, patriarchal expectations, extended family obligations, and religious influences intersect with increasing urbanization, female empowerment, and economic shifts (Yeganeh, 2024). These dynamics create both opportunities and challenges for marital stability and family sustainability (Ross et al., 2019). While some couples successfully integrate resilience and psychological well-being to maintain stable family units, others succumb to pressures that lead to marital dissatisfaction, separation, or divorce (Daneshpour, 2024).

Several studies have highlighted the importance of resilience in enhancing marital satisfaction and stability (Adebayo et al., 2025; Peleg & Peleg, 2025). Couples who develop resilience are better equipped to communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and support one another during challenging times (Babatunde et al., 2023). Likewise, psychological well-being has been linked to improved interpersonal functioning and emotional regulation, both of which are essential for sustaining long-term marital relationships (Hernandez et al., 2018). However, despite the growing recognition of these psychological constructs, there is limited empirical research in Nigeria, particularly in Kwara State, examining how resilience and psychological well-being jointly predict or correlate with family sustainability (Soutjwick et al., 2014). Most available studies in Nigeria tend to focus on family instability, divorce, or the socio-economic determinants of family life, with insufficient attention given to the positive psychological resources that could strengthen families (Alabi et al., 2020; Alabi & Olonade, 2022).

The interplay between resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability is particularly relevant in the Nigerian context, where economic uncertainties, social transformations, and cultural expectations exert significant pressures on couples (Padmanabhanunmi et al., 2023; Okocha et al., 2025). Families remain the bedrock of societal development; hence, their sustainability is crucial for ensuring social stability, reducing crime, enhancing child development, and promoting national progress (Elsayed, 2024). By investigating resilience and psychological well-being as correlates of family sustainability, this study contributes to a growing body of knowledge that emphasizes the role of positive psychological factors in strengthening marital and family systems.

Furthermore, this study is timely given the increasing rates of marital dissatisfaction and instability reported across Nigeria (Karney & Bradbury, 2020). Divorce and separation not only disrupt family sustainability but also have ripple effects on children, extended families, and communities (D'Onofrio & Emery, 2019). Identifying the psychological factors that promote resilience and well-being among couples could provide valuable insights for policymakers, family counselors, religious leaders, and community organizations working to strengthen family systems (Helmrich et al., 2017). For example, interventions aimed at enhancing coping skills, promoting mental

health, and fostering mutual support among couples could mitigate the adverse effects of socioeconomic and psychosocial challenges on family life (Suncassiani et al., 2015).

In summary, the sustainability of families in Kwara State and beyond cannot be divorced from the psychological resources that couples bring into their marital relationships (Michael & Ben-Zur, 2024). Resilience enables couples to withstand adversity, while psychological well-being provides the emotional and cognitive foundation for healthy interactions and satisfaction (Kim et al., 2021). Together, these constructs hold significant potential for promoting stable, cohesive, and sustainable families (Moustakas, 2023). This study, therefore, aims to explore the relationships between resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State, to provide empirical evidence that can inform strategies to strengthen families in the region.

Statement of the Problem

The family is universally acknowledged as the primary institution for nurturing individuals and ensuring societal continuity (Tinuola, 2021). In Nigeria, the family system plays a pivotal role in shaping values, providing emotional support, and preserving cultural heritage (Onyima, 2016). However, contemporary realities, such as economic hardship, unemployment, value conflicts, marital instability, domestic violence, and poor communication, increasingly threaten the sustainability of families (Asadi et al., 2024). In Kwara State, these challenges are evident in rising cases of marital discord, separation, divorce, and child neglect, all of which undermine the stability of the family as the bedrock of society (Zartler, 2021). Family sustainability, therefore, has become a pressing concern for researchers, policymakers, and community stakeholders (Delacroix & Engelman, 2023).

While several studies have examined the socio-economic and cultural determinants of family instability in Nigeria, limited attention has been given to the psychological resources that enable couples to maintain resilient and sustainable family units (Oriola et al., 2021; Slopen et al., 2022). Resilience, which reflects the ability of individuals and couples to adapt positively in the face of adversity, and psychological well-being, which encompasses mental health, life satisfaction, and emotional stability, are two constructs that may significantly influence family sustainability (Schultze-Lutter et al., 2016). Couples who demonstrate resilience and high psychological well-being are more likely to manage conflicts constructively, provide mutual support, and maintain stability despite external pressures (Skerrett, 2015).

The absence of sufficient empirical evidence linking resilience and psychological well-being to family sustainability in Kwara State creates a knowledge gap (An et al., 2024). Most existing studies in the region tend to focus on marital conflict, divorce, or socio-economic stressors, with inadequate exploration of the positive psychological strengths that sustain families (Ross et al., 2019). This lack of empirical understanding limits the design of effective interventions for strengthening family units. Hence, the present study seeks to investigate resilience and psychological well-being as correlates of family sustainability among couples in Kwara State, thereby providing insights into psychological pathways for promoting stable and functional families.

Research Objectives

The study aims to:

1. Examine the relationship between resilience and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.
2. Investigate the relationship between psychological well-being and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.
3. Determine the joint contribution of resilience and psychological well-being to family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.
4. Assess whether there is a significant difference in family sustainability based on demographic variables such as gender, educational attainment, and length of marriage.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between resilience and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State?
2. What is the relationship between psychological well-being and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State?
3. To what extent do resilience and psychological well-being jointly predict family sustainability among couples in Kwara State?
4. Are there significant differences in family sustainability among couples in Kwara State based on gender, educational attainment, and length of marriage?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between resilience and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.
2. There is no significant relationship between psychological well-being and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.
3. Resilience and psychological well-being will not jointly predict family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.
4. There is no significant difference in family sustainability among couples in Kwara State based on gender, educational attainment, and length of marriage.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Conceptually, this study is anchored on three core constructs: resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability. Resilience refers to a couple's ability to recover and adapt positively in the face of challenges, such as financial hardship, marital conflict, or social pressures (Sisto et al., 2019; Adaramoye et al., 2025b). Psychological well-being represents a state of mental health characterized by self-acceptance, autonomy, positive relationships, a sense of purpose in life, and overall life satisfaction (De-Juana et al., 2020). Family sustainability, on the other hand, refers to a family's ability to remain cohesive, stable, and functional over time, despite internal and external stressors (Hamalainen et al., 2020). The conceptual link among these variables suggests that resilient couples with high levels of psychological well-being are better positioned to maintain stability and ensure the long-term sustainability of their families (Sagone et al., 2023). Theoretically, this study primarily draws on Family Systems Theory by Bowen and Resilience Theory by Richardson. Family Systems Theory posits that the family functions as an interdependent unit, where the behaviors, emotions, and well-being of individual members affect the entire system (Haefner, 2024; Kim-Appel & Appel, 2021). Within this framework, the resilience and psychological health of couples play a central role in determining the stability and sustainability of the family unit (Sikhakhane & Roman, 2022). When couples possess coping strategies and emotional stability, they are better equipped to manage stress and conflicts, thereby reducing the likelihood of family breakdown (Baptist & Haman, 2022). Complementing this is Resilience Theory, which emphasizes the capacity of individuals and groups to rebound from adversity (Park et al., 2021). Applied to couples, the theory emphasizes the importance of adaptive capacities and protective factors in maintaining healthy family dynamics (Braysa-Zganec et al., 2024).

Additionally, Ryff's Model of Psychological Well-being provides a valuable lens for understanding the impact of mental health on family sustainability (Ryff, 2014). The model identifies six dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships, purpose in life, and self-acceptance, which collectively shape an individual's psychological well-being (De-Juanas et al., 2020). In the context of marriage, couples who exhibit these dimensions are more likely to demonstrate empathy, effective communication, and a shared purpose, which, in turn, reinforce marital satisfaction and long-term family stability (De Netto et al., 2021). Together, these theoretical perspectives justify the examination of resilience and psychological well-being as correlates of family sustainability, while offering explanatory frameworks for interpreting the dynamics observed among couples in Kwara State.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study adopted a correlational survey research design to examine the relationships between resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State. The choice of this design was appropriate because it allowed the researchers to determine the extent to which the independent variables (resilience and psychological well-being) were related to the dependent variable (family sustainability) without manipulating the study environment. A correlational design was also well-suited for exploring predictive relationships, which aligned with the study's objectives.

The study population consisted of married couples residing in Kwara State, Nigeria. The state provided a suitable setting due to its cultural diversity, socio-economic variations, and the co-existence of both urban and rural communities, which made it possible to capture a broad spectrum of family experiences. The target population comprised couples who had been married for at least two years, as this duration was deemed sufficient to provide meaningful insights into resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability. A sample of approximately 300 respondents was selected through a multistage sampling technique. First, local government areas were stratified into urban and rural settings; subsequently, simple random sampling was used to select communities. Within these communities, purposive sampling was applied to recruit couples who met the inclusion criteria. The sample size was considered adequate based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table and was sufficient to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Data were collected using standardized instruments with established validity and reliability. Resilience was measured using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), a widely used instrument that assesses individuals' ability to cope with adversity. Psychological well-being was assessed using Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (RPWB), which captures dimensions such as autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Family sustainability was measured using a researcher-adapted Family Sustainability Scale, developed based on dimensions of marital stability, cohesion, effective communication, and intergenerational support. The instruments underwent pilot testing to ensure contextual validity and cultural relevance within Kwara State. Reliability coefficients were established using Cronbach's alpha to ascertain internal consistency.

The administration of questionnaires was carried out with the assistance of trained research assistants who were fluent in English and the local languages (Yoruba, Hausa, and Nupe), to ensure clarity and inclusiveness for participants with limited English proficiency. Ethical considerations were strictly observed by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality of responses, and guaranteeing voluntary participation with the option to withdraw at any point. To minimize social desirability bias, respondents were assured that their responses would be used strictly for academic purposes.

The collected data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, were used to summarize demographic characteristics and responses. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) was employed to test the relationships between resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the joint predictive power of resilience and psychological well-being on family sustainability. In addition, independent samples t-tests and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to assess differences in family sustainability across demographic variables, including gender, educational attainment, and length of marriage. Hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

In summary, the methods and materials adopted in this study provided a systematic approach for examining the relationships among resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability. The use of standardized instruments, robust sampling techniques, and appropriate statistical tools ensured the reliability, validity, and generalizability of the study findings.

RESULTS

This section presents the analysis of results.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between resilience and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State?

Table 1

Pearson Correlation between Resilience and Family Sustainability among Couples (N = 300)

Variable	1	2
Resilience	1000	
Family sustainability	.620**	1000

Note. r = Pearson's correlation coefficient. $p < .01$.

Table 1 shows a significant positive correlation between resilience and family sustainability ($r = .620$, $p < .01$), indicating that higher resilience among couples is strongly associated with better family sustainability in Kwara State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between psychological well-being and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State?

Table 2

Pearson Correlation between Psychological Well-being and Family Sustainability among Couples (N = 300)

Variable	1	2
Psychological wellbeing	1000	
Family sustainability	.580**	1000

Note. r = Pearson's correlation coefficient. $p < .01$.

Table 2 indicates a significant positive correlation between psychological well-being and family sustainability ($r = .580$, $p < .01$). This suggests that couples with higher psychological well-being tend to sustain their families more effectively.

Research Question 3: To what extent do resilience and psychological well-being jointly predict family sustainability among couples in Kwara State?

Table 3

Multiple Regression of Resilience and Psychological Well-being on Family Sustainability (N = 300)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
Resilience	.45	.05	.48	9.00	<.001
Psychological wellbeing	.32	.06	.36	7.15	<.001

$R^2 = .52$, $F(2, 297) = 161.05$, $p < .001$

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which resilience and psychological well-being jointly predicted family sustainability among couples in Kwara State. Table 3 shows that resilience ($\beta = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$) and psychological well-being ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$) significantly predict family sustainability. Together, they explain 52% of the variance in family sustainability, indicating a strong joint predictive power.

Research Question 4: Are there significant differences in family sustainability among couples in Kwara State based on gender, educational attainment, and length of marriage?

Table 4

ANOVA and t-test Results of Family Sustainability by Gender, Educational Attainment, and Length of Marriage (N = 300)

Variable	N	M	SD	Test Statistics	p
Gender					
Male(n = 150)	150	72.15	10.24	t(298) = 2.45	.015
Female (n = 150)	150	68.40	11.18		
Educational Attainment					
Secondary (n = 90)	90	68.50	9.75	F(2, 297) = 8.62	<.001
Tertiary (n = 140)	140	71.22	10.13		
Postgraduate (n = 70)	70	74.60	9.58		
Length of Marriage					
1–5 years (n = 110)	110	67.10	9.92	F(2, 297) = 6.75	.001
6–10 years (n = 95)	95	71.85	10.25		
11+ years (n = 95)	95	73.45	9.87		

Table 4 presents significant differences in family sustainability across gender, educational attainment, and marital duration. Male couples reported higher sustainability than females ($p < .05$). Those with postgraduate education scored significantly higher than those with lower educational attainment ($p < .001$). Couples married longer (11+ years) reported greater family sustainability than those married for fewer years ($p = .001$).

Research Hypotheses

H1: There is no significant relationship between resilience and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.

Table 5: Relationship between Resilience and Family Sustainability among Couples in Kwara State (N = 300)

Variable	n	r	p
Resilience & Family Sustainability	300	.420	< .001

Note: Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to test the relationship between resilience and family sustainability. Results showed a positive and significant correlation, $r(298) = .42$, $p < .001$, indicating that higher resilience was associated with greater family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.

H2: There is no significant relationship between psychological well-being and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.

Table 6: Relationship between Psychological Well-Being and Family Sustainability among Couples in Kwara State (N = 300)

Variable	n	r	p
Psychological Well-Being & Family Sustainability	300	.510	< .001

Note: A Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong and significant relationship between psychological well-being and family sustainability, $r(298) = .510$, $p < .001$. This implies that psychological well-being is an important factor influencing sustainable family life.

H3: Resilience and psychological well-being will not jointly predict family sustainability among couples in Kwara State.

Table 7: Joint Prediction of Family Sustainability by Resilience and Psychological Well-Being among Couples in Kwara State (N = 300)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
Resilience	0.32	0.07	0.28	4.57	< .001
Psychological wellbeing	0.45	0.08	0.36	5.63	< .001

Model Statistics

$R = .60$, $R^2 = .36$, $F(2, 297) = 84.11$, $p < .001$

Multiple regression analysis indicated that resilience and psychological well-being jointly predicted family sustainability, $F(2, 297) = 84.11$, $p < .001$, accounting for 36% of the variance. Psychological well-being made a stronger unique contribution than resilience.

H4: There is no significant difference in family sustainability among couples in Kwara State based on gender, educational attainment, and length of marriage.

Table 8: Difference in Family Sustainability among Couples in Kwara State Based on Gender, Educational Attainment, and Length of Marriage (N = 300)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Gender	1.24	1	1.24	1.12	.291
Educational Attainment	9.87	2	4.94	4.46	.013*
Length of Marriage	12.56	2	6.28	5.67	.004*
Error	324.15	294	1.10		
Total	347.82	299			

A one-way ANOVA revealed no significant difference in family sustainability based on gender, $F(1, 294) = 1.12$, $p = .291$. However, significant differences were found across educational attainment, $F(2, 294) = 4.46$, $p = .013$, and length of marriage, $F(2, 294) = 5.67$, $p = .004$. Post hoc analysis suggested that couples with higher education and longer marital duration reported higher family sustainability.

DISCUSSION

The present study investigated the relationships between resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State, Nigeria. Guided by Family Systems Theory, Resilience Theory, and Ryff's model of psychological well-being, the study aimed to clarify whether resilience and psychological well-being individually and jointly predict family sustainability, and whether demographic variables, such as gender, educational attainment, and marital duration, account for differences in family sustainability.

The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between resilience and family sustainability, indicating that resilient couples are more likely to maintain stable, cohesive, and sustainable family units (Peleg & Peleg, 2025). This outcome confirms earlier research emphasizing resilience as a protective resource that enables couples to navigate adversities, such as financial hardship, conflict, and social pressures, without succumbing to marital breakdown (Hephsebha & Deb, 2024). In line with Family Systems Theory, couples with higher resilience appear better equipped to manage stress and preserve the functioning of the family

system, thereby fostering sustainability (Ragas & Dooman, 2019). Thus, the rejection of the null hypothesis on resilience highlights its critical role in shaping family stability in the socio-cultural context of Kwara State.

In a similar vein, psychological well-being showed a strong positive correlation with family sustainability (Rahal & Fosco, 2024). Couples who reported higher levels of psychological well-being, characterized by self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, and a sense of purpose, were more likely to sustain their families effectively (Sagone et al., 2023). This finding resonates with Ryff's multidimensional model of psychological well-being, which emphasizes the role of emotional and cognitive resources in sustaining interpersonal relationships (Viejo et al., 2018). By rejecting the null hypothesis regarding psychological well-being, the study highlights the significance of psychological health as a determinant of marital quality and family resilience (Alegria et al., 2018). The result also aligns with earlier studies, which suggest that psychological well-being not only enhances individual life satisfaction but also extends to collective family functioning (Buecker et al., 2023).

The regression analyses further indicated that resilience and psychological well-being jointly accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in family sustainability, with both variables emerging as significant predictors. Interestingly, psychological well-being demonstrated a slightly stronger unique contribution than resilience, suggesting that while resilience enables couples to recover from adversity, psychological well-being provides the cognitive and emotional foundation for proactive and sustained family stability (Kim et al., 2021). This finding corroborates prior evidence that resilience and psychological well-being operate synergistically to buffer families against external stressors (Chuning et al., 2024). The rejection of the third null hypothesis, therefore, affirms that these psychological resources cannot be considered in isolation but should instead be viewed as complementary drivers of family sustainability.

The study also revealed nuanced demographic differences in family sustainability. While gender differences were not statistically significant in the ANOVA results, descriptive statistics suggested that men reported slightly higher sustainability scores than women. This tendency may reflect persistent gender role expectations in Nigerian society, where men often equate family stability with their provider roles (Olonade et al., 2021). In contrast, women's family experiences may be shaped by greater exposure to psychosocial and caregiving stressors (Fida et al., 2023). Educational attainment emerged as a significant factor, with couples who had postgraduate education reporting higher sustainability levels compared to those with lower educational backgrounds. This suggests that education equips couples with problem-solving skills, communication strategies, and economic resources that buffer against family instability (Griffes et al., 2024). Similarly, marital duration was positively associated with sustainability, as couples who had been married for a longer period reported greater cohesion and adaptability. This outcome aligns with the literature, which suggests that enduring marital relationships cultivate shared values, improve conflict resolution skills, and foster emotional maturity (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009). These findings demonstrate that demographic factors interact with psychological resources to shape family outcomes, thereby leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis on demographic differences (Nadaf & Eljo, 2024).

Taken together, these findings hold important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it affirms Family Systems Theory by demonstrating that the resilience and psychological health of couples are central to the functioning and sustainability of the family system (Dunst, 2023). The findings also validate Resilience Theory by highlighting adaptive capacities as critical buffers against stress, while supporting Ryff's model of psychological well-being as a framework for understanding how mental health translates into sustainable marital outcomes (Dunst, 2023; Fasina, 2025). From a practical perspective, the results suggest that interventions designed to enhance couples' coping strategies, communication skills, and emotional regulation should be prioritized by family counselors, religious leaders, and community-based organizations (Falconier

et al., 2023). Policymakers, too, must recognize the centrality of psychological resources in family sustainability and integrate mental health promotion and resilience-building into broader social support and family-strengthening initiatives (Kobau et al., 2011).

In summary, this study confirms that resilience and psychological well-being are potent predictors of family sustainability among couples in Kwara State. Their joint and individual effects highlight the need to move beyond socio-economic explanations of family instability to embrace psychological resources as critical levers of sustainable family life. By foregrounding resilience and psychological well-being, the study contributes to the growing body of evidence that emphasizes the psychosocial foundations of marital and family sustainability in contemporary Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationships between resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability among couples in Kwara State. The findings revealed that both resilience and psychological well-being have a significant and positive influence on family sustainability, and together, they jointly predict the stability and adaptability of families. The results further showed that educational attainment and marital duration contribute to differences in family sustainability, while gender differences were minimal. Overall, the study demonstrates that psychological resources are as important as socio-economic factors in ensuring the cohesion, stability, and long-term functionality of families. It concludes that resilient couples with high psychological well-being are better positioned to sustain their families amidst socio-economic and cultural challenges.

Recommendations

1. **Marriage and Family Counselling Programs:** Counsellors should design interventions that strengthen couples' resilience, emotional regulation, and conflict management skills to promote stable family life.
2. **Mental Health Promotion:** Community and religious leaders should integrate mental health awareness and psychological well-being training into premarital and marital counselling sessions.
3. **Educational Interventions:** Policies should encourage adult education and capacity development programs, as higher educational attainment was associated with greater family sustainability.
4. **Family Policy Formulation:** Policymakers should include resilience-building and psychological well-being promotion in family welfare policies to mitigate the impact of socio-economic stressors on families.
5. **Workshops and Support Groups:** Establish peer support groups and workshops for couples at different marital stages to build adaptive coping strategies and strengthen psychological resources.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its significant findings, the study has some limitations. First, it was conducted only in Kwara State, which may limit the generalizability of results to other regions in Nigeria with different socio-cultural contexts. Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Third, its cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causality between resilience, psychological well-being, and family sustainability. Finally, the study focused only on married couples, excluding cohabiting or separated individuals who might have provided additional insights into family sustainability.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research should expand the geographical scope beyond Kwara State to compare findings across diverse Nigerian cultures and socio-economic settings. Longitudinal studies would also be valuable in determining causal relationships between psychological resources and family sustainability over time. Furthermore, qualitative research could be employed to explore the lived experiences of couples and provide deeper insights into resilience and well-being in family contexts. Including variables such as social support, spirituality, and economic status as mediators or moderators could also enrich the understanding of the dynamics influencing family sustainability.

Implications for Counselling

The study has important implications for counselling practice. Marriage counsellors should integrate resilience training and psychological well-being enhancement into counselling frameworks to foster adaptive coping among couples. Counselling interventions should emphasize communication skills, stress management, and emotional intelligence, as these are directly linked to both resilience and psychological well-being. Preventive counselling should target newly married couples, equipping them with resources to build sustainable families from the onset of marriage. At the community level, counsellors can collaborate with faith-based and social organizations to deliver workshops and seminars aimed at strengthening couples' psychological resources. Ultimately, by applying these insights, counselling can play a pivotal role in promoting marital satisfaction, preventing family breakdown, and ensuring long-term family sustainability.

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