

## **A research abstract on mental health, psychiatry and wellbeing in Africa & developing countries**

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**M**ental health and well-being are usually perceived by individuals based on their cultural backgrounds in most Africa and developing countries. This perception also affects how individuals react to other diseases, symptoms and treatment. These factors form a cognitive schema that influences how patients with mental health make attributions. Mental illness is considered a silent epidemic throughout most parts of Africa. This problem is linked to various factors which can be both structural and systemic barriers including inadequate healthcare infrastructure, the insufficient number of mental health specialists, financial constraints and lack of access to all levels of care. Addressing the major issues related to mental health has been difficult due to a lack of resources and ineffective mental health policies. Most of the African governments and health care sectors have neglected mental health and its associated problems and have focused on communicable diseases like tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS. Stigma and discrimination have also led people with mental health challenges to shy away from seeking medical advice, hence making them unable to reach their maximum potential. This research aims to address the state of mental health, psychology and wellness in developing countries in Africa. It will also shed light on the challenges experienced that make it difficult to deal with mental health problems. The research comprises data and statistics from other works of research conducted in developing African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, etc. "Mental health is a state of mental well-being that allows people to cope with life's stresses, realize their abilities, learn and work effectively and contribute to their community". It is an essential component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, form relationships and shape how we see the world. Researchers, medical professionals, policy-making bodies and others have initiated measures to address the growing mental health crisis, not only in Africa but also globally. Most African countries have mental health policies mentioned in their general healthcare goals, but the implementation of these policies rarely happens. Research shows that almost half (44%) of developing African countries either don't approve or update these mental health policies, leading to the development of mental illnesses. One of the biggest challenges facing the implementation of these policies is the fact that some of these policies are not practical, hence making them unable to be implemented in all levels of care, especially in rural areas. By 2020 for example, the Nigerian Mental Health Services Delivery Policy had yet to be effected into law, since the nation became independent in 1960. This in return has made Nigerians.

### **Biography**

Immaculate Nagujja is currently working in the organization as a director at VFL Wolfsburg Uganda Supporters Foundation.

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