National Depression Report

2018

The National Depression Report

Joy, Inc.

For queries, email us at:
joy@joyinc.xyz

www.joyinc.xyz

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PREFACE

The pursuit of happiness lies at the core of human endeavours. People around the world aspire to lead happy and fulfilling lives free from fear and want. Hence, there is an obvious philosophical shift in attitudes regarding happiness and emotional wellbeing across the world. Nations' are now recognizing that progress should be about increasing human happiness and wellbeing, not just growing the economy. This was further underlined in 2011, when the United Nation (UN) General Assembly adopted a resolution which recognized happiness as a fundamental human goal and called for a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes the happiness and well-being of all peoples. The UN International Day of Happiness is celebrated on the 12th of July annually; recognizing the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives. Nigeria currently ranks 91 out of 156 countries in annual Sustainable Development Solutions Network's (SSDN) 2018 World Happiness Ranking moving up four places from its 2017 ranking. Largely, happiness is determined by the various features of social fabric available in different nations across the globe.

Depression, according to the World Health Organisation is the leading cause of disability in the world, with over 615 million people suffering from anxiety and depression. People dealing with depression, by most indication, are unable to innovate and collaborate optimally because of the challenges that come with it. At least 7 million Nigerians have previously been reported to suffer anxiety and depression – a considerably low figure based on our findings.

Against this background, Joy, Inc. – the benefit corporation building a generation of happier, flourishing Africans, is releasing the first National Depression Report.

The National Depression Report, curated in conjunction with NOIPolls and our research partners at Yale, includes results of a nationwide happiness and depression poll, internal detailed diagnostic surveys at The Joy Congress and up-to-date data on the state of the depression crisis in Nigeria.

The nation-wide public perception happiness and depression survey, conducted in partnership with NOIPolls, the number one for country specific public opinion polling and research organization in West Africa, was spread across all the 36 states in Nigeria including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The survey focused on gauging public perception of Nigerians regarding their happiness and experiences with some factors that may affect their state of happiness and depression. The national poll also assessed the perception of Nigerians on how they feel about their lives five years ago, currently and five years from now.

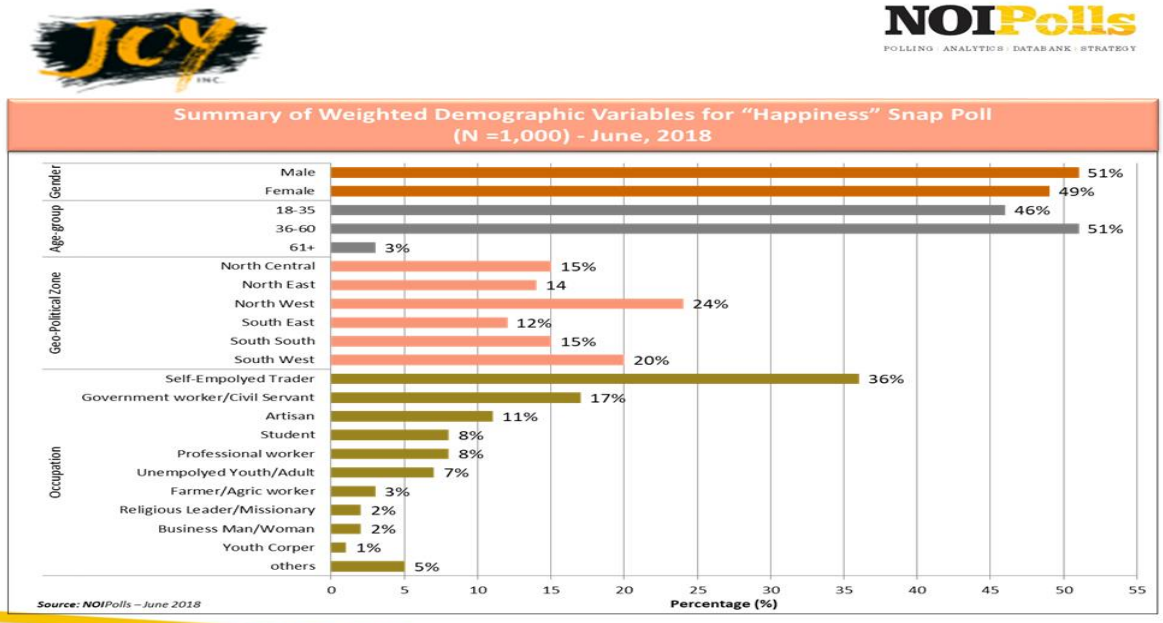
INTRODUCTION

The National Depression Report, curated in conjunction with NOIPolls and our partners at Yale, includes results of a nationwide happiness and depression poll, internal detailed diagnostic surveys at The Joy Masterclasses and up-to-date data on the state of the depression crisis in Nigeria.

We stay close to the research - and its empiricism – to promote human flourishing through evidence-informed decision making process. Leaders in private and public sphere sometimes find it challenging to make human-centered decisions without acknowledging the subjective well-being of citizens - based on how the citizen evaluate their individual lives relative to the environment.

Methodology

The nation-wide opinion poll was conducted by NOIPolls, while the internal detailed surveys of participants at The Joy Congress and Masterclasses were analysed in partnership with research partners at Yale.



1: Summary of demographic variables

All interviews were conducted by telephone, in five major Nigerian languages: English, Pidgin English, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo. All the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory were surveyed, with at least 1000 interviews. Survey state quotas were assigned and it was ensured that every state was proportionately represented in the sample.

Post-stratification gender and state weights were constructed and applied to the data to make it more representative of the population, allow for more accurate population totals of estimates and reduce non-response bias. The weights assigned were in proportion to the 2006 Nigerian population figures. The margin of error does not exceed plus or minus 3 per cent at the mid-range with a confidence level of 95 per cent. Prior to the fielding of the opinion poll, a pilot poll was conducted of 30 completed interviews across the survey states to test the completeness and appropriateness of the survey tool.

PART 1

State of happiness and depression in Nigeria

State of happiness and depression in Nigeria

With a ranking of 91 of the 166 countries surveyed in the 2018 World Happiness Report, Nigeria is the fifth happiest country in Africa. With a population of over 190 million people[1], and its economic stance as one of the largest economies in Africa, Nigeria is still an unhappy country.

The impact of emotions on well-being should not be underrated. Previous studies involving representative samples of 95 per cent of the world's population suggests that "emotions matter to health everywhere."[2] The emotion-health connection is not unique to certain countries, regions, or levels of economic development. The 2013 research involving individuals from 142 countries suggest that emotion matters for health around the globe and may in fact be more critical in less-developed and developing countries.

Measuring happiness and well-being, however, is a bit different compared to measuring GDP and other financial indicators of progress humanity have embraced for so long. Rather than following metrics that may not be relatable to people, determining how happy a population is, is mostly by asking them how they evaluate their well-being, coupled with some other variables. The most common measure is by answering the question "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life these days?' with a scale to provide answers. Other variables that had been used for measuring happiness – especially for the global happiness survey published in the World Happiness Report – within a nation have been GDP per capital, social support, healthy life expectancy, social freedom, generosity and the absence of corruption[3].

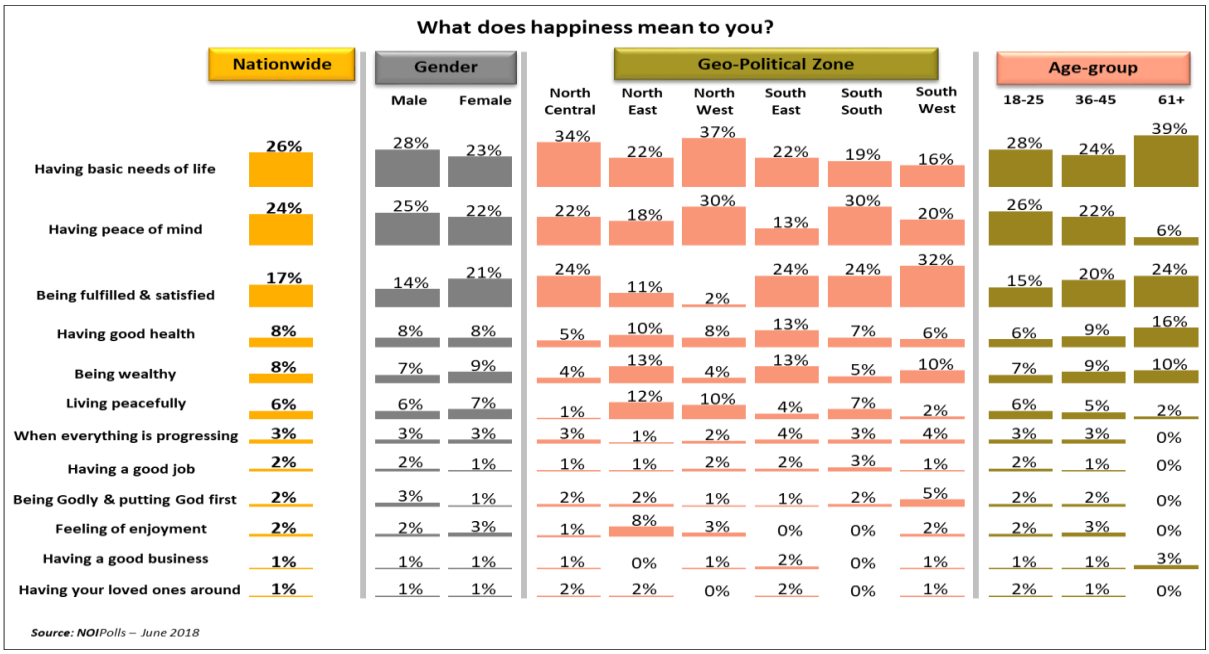
[1] According to the World Bank, while referencing the United Nations Population Division's World Population Prospects (2017 Revision), Nigeria had a population of 190,886,311 in 2017. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=NG

[2] See *"Is the Emotion-Health Connection a "First-World Problem"?"* by Sarah D. Pressman, Matthew W. Gallagher, and Shane J. Lopez. *Psychological Science*. Vol 24, Issue 4, pp. 544 - 549. Accessible at https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612457382

[3] See World Happiness Report

What Happiness means to Nigerians?

When asked the question 'What does happiness mean to you?', Nigerians defined happiness as several things, ranging from 'being fulfilled and satisfied', 'having the basic needs of life', 'having peace of mind', 'having good health' and 'good wealth', 'living peacefully', 'making progress', 'feeling of enjoyment' and 'having your loved ones around you', among other definitions. However, while 26 per cent of the respondents described happiness as having the basic needs of life, 24 per cent termed it as having peace of mind.



Of the 26 per cent that described happiness as having the basic needs of life, 28 per cent identified as male, while 23 per cent identified as female. Close enough are those who described happiness as having peace of mind, 25 per cent male and 22 per cent female.

Happiness has also been thought of as having satisfaction and meaning in your life; the 'propensity to feel positive emotions, the capacity to recover from negative emotions quickly, and holding a sense of purpose'[4]. Other researchers have focused on measuring happiness in terms of life satisfaction in adults and emotional wellbeing in children[5]. While happiness is important for personal well-being, it is important it leads to a state of flourishing.

We choose to define flourishing as "when people function at an optimal range emotionally, psychologically and socially primarily evidenced by positive emotions or a high positivity ratio and fully expressed by the five PERMA pillars, according to the well-being theory"[6]. The five PERMA pillars - postulated by positive psychology pioneer, Dr. Martin Seligman - are Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishments.

[4]See http://www.berkeleywellness.com/healthy-mind/mind-body/article/what-science-happiness

[5] Andrew E.Clark, Sarah Fleche, Richard Layard, Nattawah Powdthavee and George Ward concludes in The Origins of Happiness: The Science of Well-Being over the Life Course (2018). Princeton University Press. Prinston and Oxford.

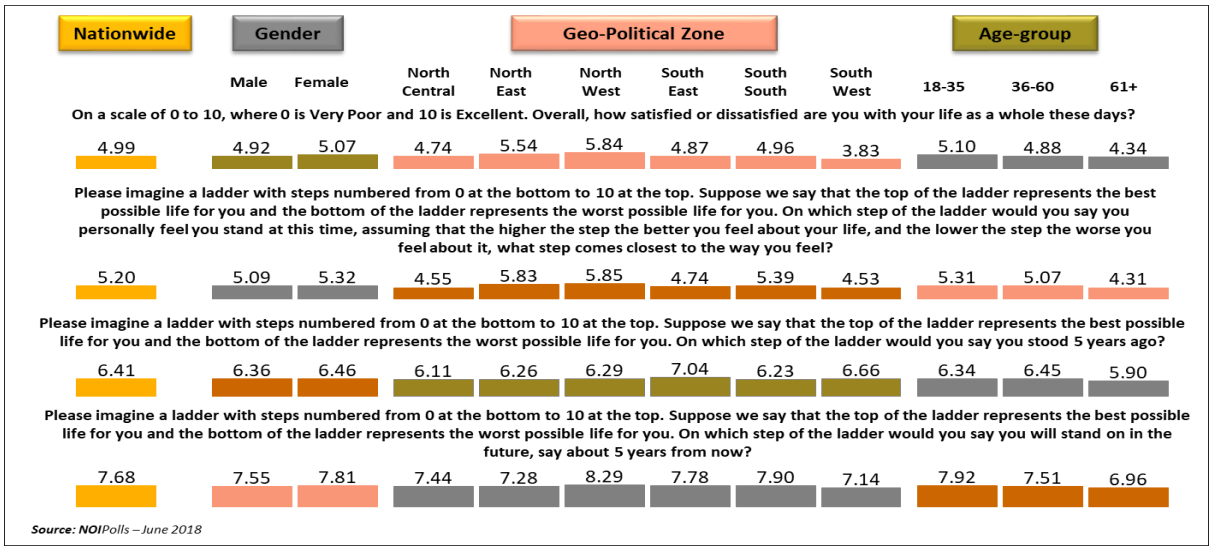
[6] Some explanation into this concept can be found in this research https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288265096_Positive_Relationship_Science_A_New_Frontier_for_Positive_Psychology

Life Satisfaction of Nigerians

The fundamental aim of human endeavour in the long-term is to create flourishing communities of people.

The national poll measured perception of life satisfaction of respondents currently, five years ago and what they think it will be in the next five years, using what is now known as the Cantril ladder. The Cantril ladder – originally known as the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Scale and has become the most acceptable measure of life evaluation and happiness globally – has a scale of 0-10 for respondents to answer this question, or its relative equivalent: *"Please imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom and ten at the top, the top of the ladder (10) represents the best possible life for you while the bottom of the ladder (0) represents the worst possible life for you, on which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?"*. Several Nigerians felt they were better five years ago (standing at 6.41) than they are currently.

When asked to answer this question, "On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is Very Poorly and 10 is Excellent, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life as a whole today", several Nigerians believed that they are averagely satisfied (4.99), with their life as a whole these days. However, Nigerians are hopeful that they would be better satisfied in life five years from now.



One of the most important standards for measuring well-being is human flourishing. This stresses the importance of redefining the metrics for measuring prosperity, well-being and human progress, by moving away from sole concentration on financial values to flourishing values.

Depression: the Nigerian Situation

The single biggest predictor of individual happiness is mental health. The number of people suffering from depression and/or anxiety disorders have increased by almost 50 per cent, from 416 million in 1990 to 615 million in 2013[7]. Over 60 million Nigerians had previously been estimated to have one form of mental disorder or the other with only about 20 per cent of persons in such category seen to have the obvious forms of it, which includes schizophrenia, and perhaps extreme case of drug or alcohol addiction[8]. However, in its 2017 Global Health Estimates of Depression and Other Common Mental Disorders report, the World Health Organisation estimates that 7,079,815 Nigerians suffer from depression[9] - a paltry number when compared to the recent nationwide depression and happiness survey.

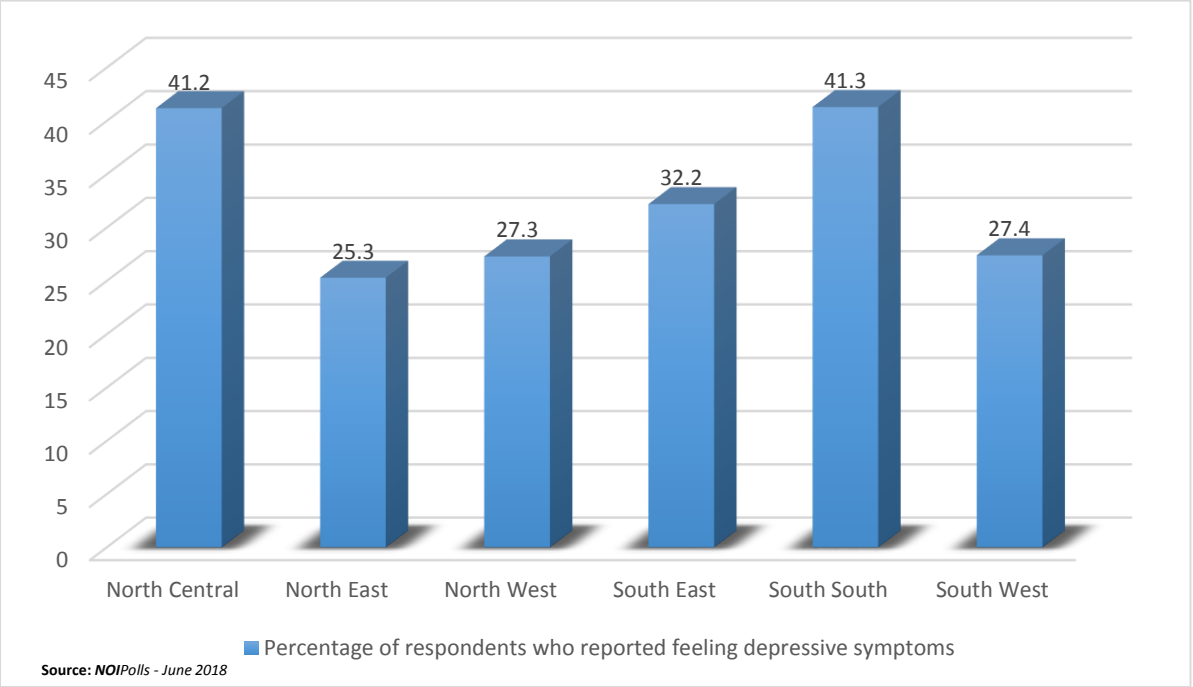
Result from our 2018 National Depression and Happiness Poll conducted by NOIPoll reveals that 31.6% of polled respondent experience depressive symptoms. 31.4% in this category are male, 31.8% are female.

Putting this in some perspective, 3 out of every 10 Nigerians reportedly experience depressive symptoms.

[7] Source: World Health Organisation; http://www.who.int/en/news-room/detail/13-04-2016-investing-in-treatment-for-depression-and-anxiety-leads-to-fourfold-return

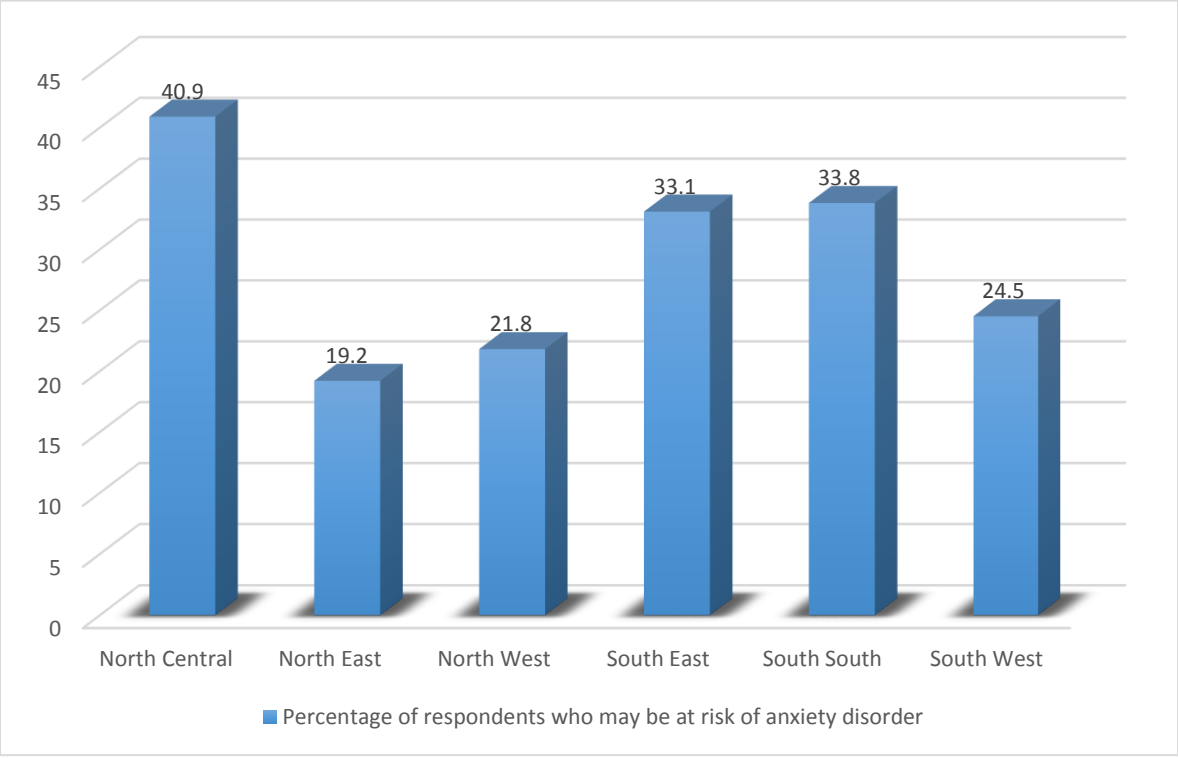
[8] https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2017/04/13/depression-a-misunderstood-mental-disorder-in-nigeria/

[9] Depression and Other Common Mental Disorders; Global Health Estimates http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/254610/WHO-MSD-MER-2017.2-eng.pdf



Source: ***NOI****Polls - June 2018*

As part of our findings, 27.8% of respondents across the country may be at risk of anxiety disorders – 28.3% are male while 27.3% are female. These results are based on their responses to the PHQ-2 survey to serve as a first step screening for depression, and the GAD-2 survey to provide a quick assessment of signs and symptoms of anxiety.



While the results of the national happiness and depression poll provide a quick assessment of depression, it does not serve as a diagnosis for clinical depression.

Until recently, the subject of mental health – especially the vulnerability that comes with depression, anxiety disorder and other depressive episodes – is most times culturally evaded, only to be discussed in whispers, signs languages and behind closed doors[10].

According to the Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative[11], people living with mental disorders still mostly report their cases when they are severely ill, and although Nigerians are slowly becoming more willing to talk about mental health, and innovative approaches to mental health awareness and service provision are beginning to spring up, it's still nowhere near what is optimal.

A previous research[12] conducted in 2010 with a clustered multi-stage sampling of households in 21 of Nigeria's 36 states had concluded that major depressive disorder is a risk factor for mental and physical comorbidity, including disability in Nigerians. This builds on another study that revealed that "of the 4984 people interviewed (response rate 79.9%), 12.1% had a lifetime rate of at least one DSM-IV disorder and 5.8% had 12-month disorders. Anxiety disorders were the most common (5.7% lifetime, 4.1% 12-month rates) but virtually no generalised anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorders were identified. Of the 23% who had seriously disabling disorders, only about 8% had received treatment in the preceding 12 months"[13].

[10] Bakare B (2014). Nigeria and the challenge of mental disorder. Daily Independent Nigeria. Available at: http://dailyindependentnig.com/2014/02/nigeria-and-challenge-ofmental-disorder/

[11] Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative (MANI) is Nigeria's largest youth run and youth focused mental health organization working to fight stigma and create an environment for people to seek care for their mental health without discrimination.

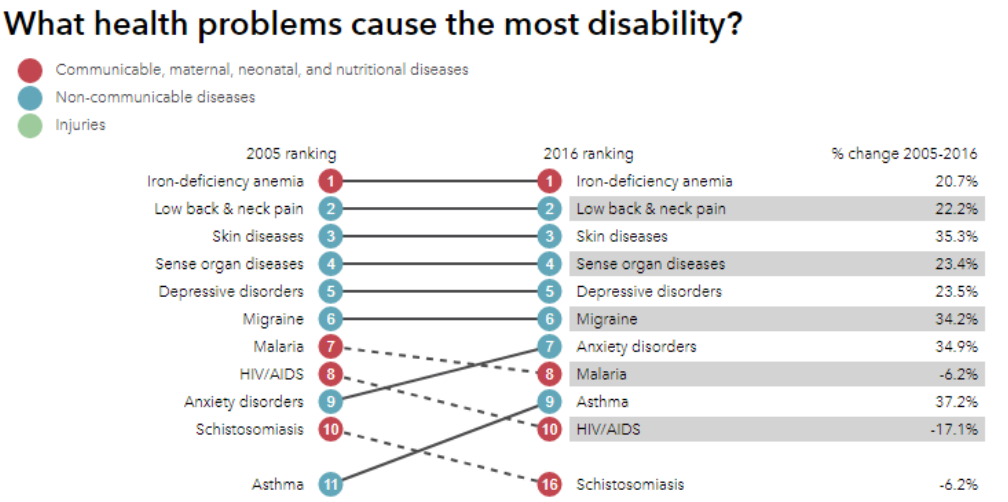
[12] Gureje, Oye et al (2010), Depression in adult Nigerians: Results from the Nigerian Survey of Mental Health and Well-being. Journal of Affective Disorders , Volume 120 , Issue 1 , 158 – 164 retrieved from https://www.jad-journal.com/article/S0165-0327(09)00183-9/fulltext

[13] Gureje, O, et al (2006), Lifetime and 12-month prevalence of mental disorders in the Nigerian

This demands some urgency.

As remarked by Joy Kaufman, an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at the Yale University School of Medicine and Director of Evaluation Research at the Yale Consultation Center, after assessing preliminary surveys from The Joy Congress and masterclasses[14], "what is striking from the early data is the high number of participants who have previously experienced exposure to traumatic events and the high number of depression symptoms reported by participants."

Depression is the leading cause of disability across the world, and one of the top ten causes of years lived with disability (YLDs) in Nigeria[15]. Between the years 2015 and 2016, for instance, anxiety disorders and depression rose by 34.9 per cent and 23.4 per cent respectively, with the tendency of increasing as population increases.



Top 10 causes of years lived with disability (YLDs) in 2016 and percent change, 2005-2016, all ages, number

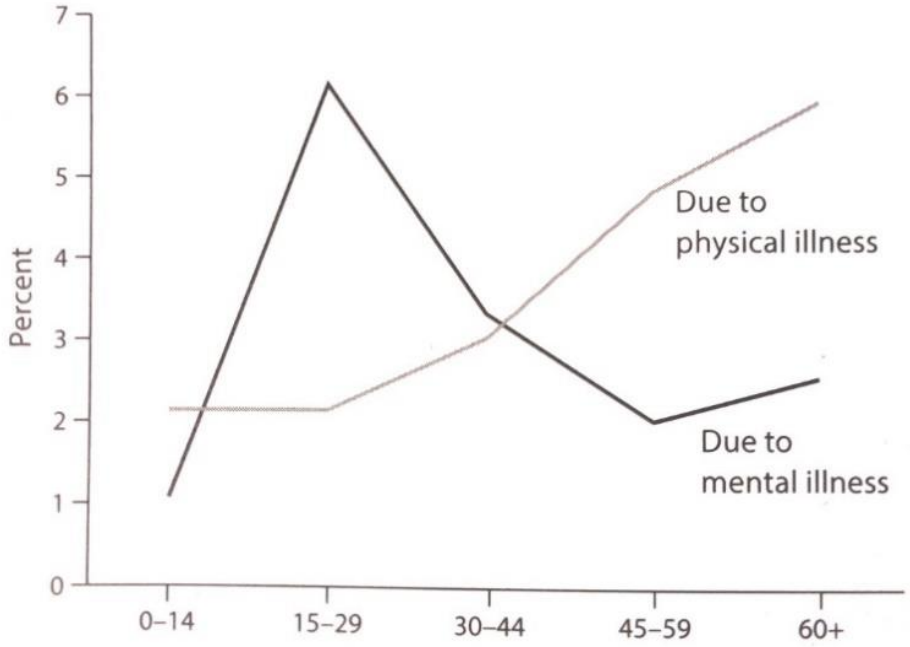
Source: IHME

Survey of Mental Health and Well-Being. The British Journal of Psychiatry https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16648534

[14] Details can be found in Part 2 of this report.

[15] Data can be accessed from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at http://www.healthdata.org/nigeria

As a follow-up, a standard analysis illustrated below strikingly shows the rate of morbidity due to both mental illnesses and physical illnesses[16].



Source: World Health Organisation

[16] Data showing the rate of morbidity in each age group in Western European Countries, including the United Kingdom produced by the World Health Organisation (2008)

While both physical and mental health are important for an enjoyable life, mental illness, according to a recent study,[17] explains more of the misery in the society than physical illness does, and more than either poverty or unemployment.

Suicide rates in Nigeria

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people – between ages 15 and 29 – globally. At least one person dies of suicide every 40 seconds, culminating into 800,000 deaths annually. Over 75 per cent – 79% – of suicides globally, as at 2016, occurred in low and middle-income countries[18]. For every act of suicide, an average of six other people are affected at the minimum[19]. The crude suicide mortality rate[20] for the Africa region ranks at 7.9 per 100,000 population, compared to the global rate of 10.6 per 100,000 population[21].

The rate in Nigeria however is 9.9 per 100,000 population, and affected more male (at 9.9/100,000 population) than female (at 9.2 per 100,000 population)[22]. The statistics may be higher when we consider that not all deaths are certified by a medical doctor, and when certified, suicide deaths may get registered under other causes due to the social stigma attached.

In spite of the large number, it may be worth noting that the rate of suicide on the African continent has experienced a decrease between 2010 and 2016, but had increased in North America[23].

[17] Andrew E.Clark, Sarah Fleche, Richard Layard, Nattawah Powdthavee and George Ward concludes in The Origins of Happiness: The Science of Well-Being over the Life Course (2018). Princeton University Press. Prinston and Oxford.
[18] World Health Organisation
[19] World Health Organization. Preventing Suicide: A resource for General Physicians. WHO, Geneva. 2000
[20] The suicide mortality rate is calculated by the World Health Organisation as the number of suicide deaths in a year, divided by the population and multiplied by 100,000.
[21] World Health Statistics Data Dashboard, accessible via http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.sdg.3-4-data-reg. The rate of male affected is at 9.9/100,000 population while female is at 9.2 per 100,000 population.
[22] Data accessible at http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.sdg.3-4-data-ctry?lang=en.
[23] This is based on the World Health Statistics by the World Health Organisation http://apps.who.int/gho/data/view.sdg.3-4-data-reg?lang=en

Embracing Reality and Moving Forward

Several countries in Africa are better resourced in regard to mental health personnel than Nigeria, according to the World Health Organisation. Countries such as South Africa, Egypt, and Kenya have more psychiatrists per 100,000 persons and also higher proportions of psychiatric beds. Many countries in Africa also give better official attention to mental health issues. More recent mental health legislations exist in several and mental health issues are specifically addressed by designated senior bureaucrats[24]. There are less than 150 psychiatrists in the country (around 1 per 1 million population) and very few neurologists, with many newly trained specialists leaving the country to work abroad, according to the Nigerian Ministry of Health. There are around 5 psychiatric nurses per 100,000 population and only very few other mental and neurological health professionals like clinical psychologists, social workers, neurophysiotherapists, and occupational therapists[25].

The majority of mental health services is provided by 10 regional psychiatric centres (this include the 7 federal neuropsychiatric hospitals) and psychiatric departments of teaching / specialist hospitals[26].

Beyond government clinical spaces, there are several other private hospitals and non-governmental organisations that deal with mental health issues. Some NGOs operating in this space include Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative (MANI)[27], She Writes Woman, The Centre for Mental Health Research and Initiative (CEMHRI)[28], Mental Health Foundation[29], and The Mandate Health Empowerment Initiative[30], among others.

Solving mental health challenges is an urgent imperative in the modern

[24] See Depression and Other Common Mental Disorders; Global Health Estimates http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/254610/WHO-MSD-MER-2017.2-eng.pdf

[25] Source: National Policy for Mental Health Services Delivery Nigeria (2013)

[26] *ibid*

[27] https://mentallyaware.org

[28] http://cemhri.org/

[29] http://mentalhealthnigeria.org/about-company/

[30] http://www.mhinnovation.net/organisations/mandate-health-empowerment-initiative

Nigerian society. From reviewing the national mental health policy and creating a viable legislative framework to meet global standards, Nigeria needs to be proactive in taking mental and emotional health seriously. What exist as of now – the National Policy for Mental Health Services Delivery[31] adopted in 2013[32], and the mental health bill meant to repeal the Lunacy Act of 1958 – is grossly insufficient.

There is the need for stakeholders – led by an effective public-private partnership – to increase prevention, treatment and recovery services within the country. The workforce focused on mental health need to be expanded to accommodate current realities.

Also important is the need to invest in public education that influences the culture. Perception of the average Nigerian about mental health and depression need to change to that which promote safe spaces for these conversations to be held, and for people to heal, devoid of judgement.

The need to invest in research initiatives cannot be overemphasised. Indigenous data about the state of mental health is paltry – one of the rationale for this report. Without the right data, it is challenging to provide evidence-based solutions and initiatives.

Though the impact of technology has been credited to the rise in depression and anxiety disorders in other parts of the world[33], there is the need to find alternative means to leverage emerging technologies – the constituents of the fourth industrial revolution – to proffer personalised solutions.

Nigeria and the rest of Africa can leapfrog and lead the next emotional revolution taking cues from Scandinavia and prioritising the redefinition of what it means to be human and to flourish.

[31] http://cheld.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/national_policy_for_mental_health_service_delivery__2013_.pdf

[32] The national policy was an upgrade of first mental health policy adopted in 1991, which placed provision of mental health services at the primary health care level, and had the following components: advocacy, promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

[33] Nesi, J. & Prinstein, M.J. J Abnorm Child Psychol (2015) 43: 1427. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10802-015-0020-0

Happiness and Growth: Policy Implications

Human suffering is real. The goal of policy initiatives should be to reduce misery while increasing the happiness of people.

Beyond inequality in income, the basic inequality in societies is between people of different levels of happiness, not just income[34].

It is not so much of a coincidence that some of the 'most-unhappy' countries in Africa, in spite of the growth in GDP per capita, are characterised by the presence of indicators that fuel misery – oppression, an absence of freedom, distrust, inequality and social dislocation.

In measuring the global happiness wellbeing of nations, the World Happiness Report had reported that beyond traditional variables like GDP per capita and healthy life expectancy, four variables covering different aspects of the social and institutional context – having someone to count on, generosity, freedom to make life choices and absence of corruption – are together responsible for more than half of the average difference[35] influencing each country's predicted score on the happiness index.

Mental health issues affect happiness and should a major concern both for policy and happiness. Several indicators conclusively show – taking cues from Scandinavia and the United Arabs Emirates – that when citizens are happier, it positively influences the quality of growth of the nation, helps them innovate, solve problems creatively and make the world a better place.

Mental Health and the Economy

The effect of mental illnesses on the economy is worth considering. An international economic study have projected that depression and anxiety disorders cost the global economy $1·15 trillion annually[36]. According to

[34] This was proposed by researchers in The Origins of Happiness

[35] World Happiness Report 2018

[36] Study by the World Health Organisation titled 'Scaling-up treatment of depression and anxiety: a global return on investment analysis', accessible at http://www.who.int/mental_health/advocacy/investment_paper_lancet_psychiatry_final.pdf

the study, more than 12 billion days of lost productivity (which is equivalent to more than 50 million years of work) are attributable to depression and anxiety disorders every year, at an estimated cost of US$925 billion, and a global cost per year of $1·15 trillion.

However, it's not all doom. Investment in solving mental health challenges have a positive effect both on productivity rate and national economic growth. Every dollar invested in treating depression and mental health disorders has been estimated to lead to a return of $4 in terms of the ability to work and thus contribute to the economy.

It had been concluded that the successful treatment of depression and anxiety disorders leads to improved opportunities for individuals and households to pursue their leisure interests, participate more in social and community activities, and carry out other roles that contribute to economic growth[37].

Happiness as a policy metric

Nations must start paying more attention – beyond tokenism – to happiness as both a means and an end of policy interventions.

There are examples from Scandinavian nations and the United Arab Emirates that can be consulted, and built on the foundation of African humanism[38].

While the creation of a Department of Happiness and Purpose Fulfilment by the Government of Imo State, Nigeria in December 2017 is commendable, the lack of a publicly available framework and plans of the 'ministry' made it look less of a policy direction.

[37] One of the findings by a 2016 Study by the World Health Organisation titled 'Scaling-up treatment of depression and anxiety: a global return on investment analysis', accessible at http://www.who.int/mental_health/advocacy/investment_paper_lancet_psychiatry_final.pdf

[38] Explained in terms of concepts like Ubuntu, Omoluabi among others.

Recommendation

For effective decision and policy making process, ensure that human happiness and wellbeing are major goals of governance. We recommend governments – and businesses – create systems that work from that understanding; systems that reward initiative targeted at improving the greatest happiness for the largest number of people. In this case, the measure of impact of initiatives and policies should be based on happiness[39].

The role of governments has to transcend from creating an environment purely for wealth creation, to creating an environment that facilitates the genuine well-being and flourishing of citizens and residents. Some research have shown that the quality of government is more important for the personal well-being of the population[40]

The educational system should be infiltrated with curricula that teaches happiness and resilience. Councillors in schools should be equipped with tools – what we refer to as emotional first aid materials – to detect symptoms of mental health challenges.

Corporate environments should create a happiness culture that embraces the human experience, and create silent rooms – a safe place for staffs to be still and find support. The rationale for the current work system may need to be revisited.

Nations should move further from the concentration on financial metrics solely and Introduce happiness and human flourishing metrics for measuring policy impact and societal progress.

[39] There have been previous calls by other happiness expert to measure policy analysis based on point-years of happiness per dollar resulting from the policy initiative, except 'where the traditional methods of measurements truly work'.

[40] See more about this in works by Helliwell J.F, including that by Helliwell, J.F., H. Huang, S. Grover and S. Wang (2014) *Good Governance and National Well-Being: What are the Linkages?*, OECD Working Papers on Public Governance No. 25. OECD.

PART 2

Our Interventions at Joy, Inc.

Description of our Interventions

We are committed to creating teaching and media products/intervention that help shape the culture about human flourishing, and help build a generation of happier Africans.

The Joy Masterclass, which has been taught in 6 cities across 4 countries across Africa, Europe and North America, is an intense 8-hour session administered for individuals, teams and leaders that weave the confluence of thinking and research about happiness, human flourishing and resilience - across Psychology, Economics, Divinity and Philosophy - into practical lessons, habits and tools that help participants transform their thinking, attitudes and actions.

Apart from the Joy Masterclass, we host the annual The Joy Congress, an immersive full-day experience that creates an atmosphere of community, taking the heart and essence of the Joy Masterclass and translate it into a magical festival for thousands of people across race, gender, faiths, status and education. The transformative experience at the congress has been referred to by participants as a 'slice of heaven on earth'.

Research Methodology

An important aspect of our work at Joy, Inc. is the fact that we place a premium on research and knowledge creation. Our interventions are the result of years of research work in the field of happiness and human flourishing, it is important to us that we deploy knowledge in the best ways possible – through stories, teaching and media products etc – to help our audience transcend adversity and lead joyful lives. This is where our internal surveys come in, for each of our masterclasses and the larger congress, we've designed a survey tool in collaboration with our research partners at Yale.

This tool serves three pivotal functions:

1. It helps us understand the demography of our attendees;
2. It provides us with information on the general wellbeing of our attendees;
3. It provides us with feedback on the impact of our work and the interventions that resonate best with our audience.

As we continue this work, we aim to strengthen our research activity and contribute to the body of knowledge on mental health, emotional health and wellbeing with African centred understanding of these issues and their role in the everyday life of the people we serve.

Joy Congress 2017 Baseline Survey Results

The 2017 Joy Congress was an event that drew people from all works of life to spend a full day focusing squarely on issues relating to their mental health and well-being. Attendees were surveyed as part of our internal research exercise to help us better understand our audience.

Results from the 2017 Joy Congress baseline survey reveal that about 28% of participants showed symptoms of depression. This results highlights the urgency of the problem and the need to address these issues in a timely manner. We also observed that 80% of respondents to the survey say religion (defined in terms of relationship with a church or mosque) is very important, as 42% attend religious gatherings (Church/Mosque) more than once per week. This is slightly above the global average of 68% of adults in the world that agree that 'religion is important to their daily lives'[41].

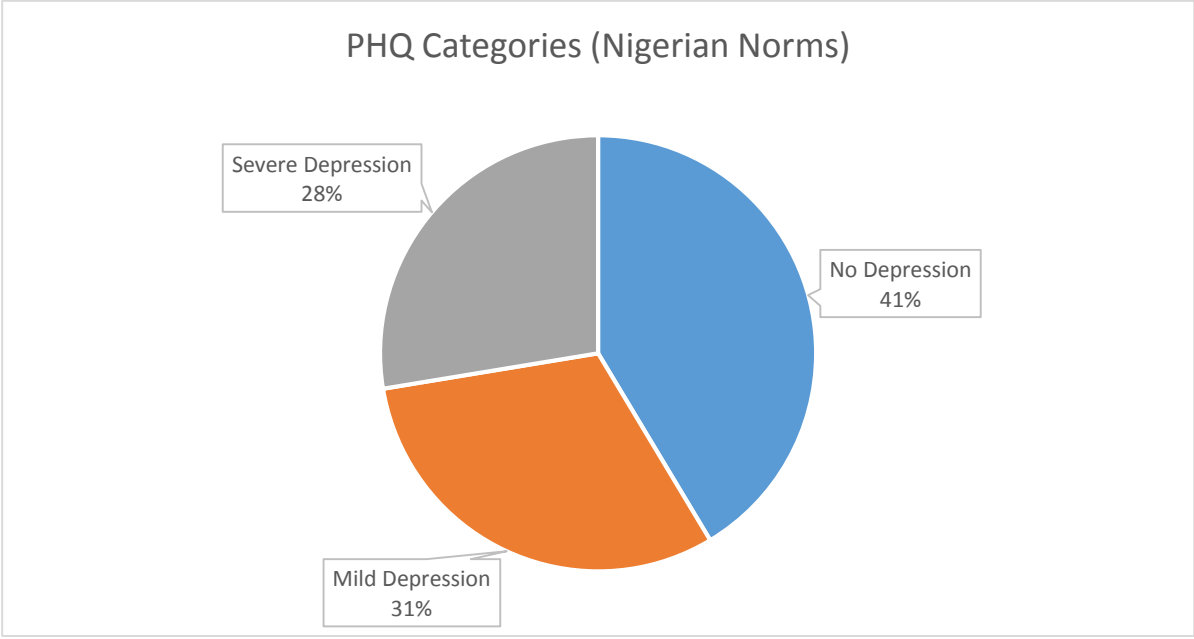
Analysis of some previous researches had shown some correlation between religiosity (or spirituality, as some others will prefer to call it) and wellbeing; greater religiosity, for instance, is mildly associated with

[41] The Gallup poll on this was reported in Diener, E., L. Tay and D.G. Myers (2011). "The Religion Paradox: If Religion Makes People Happy, Why Are So Many Dropping Out?" Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 101 (6): 1278-90.doi: 10.1037/a0024402

fewer depressive symptoms[42]. These results point us both to the problem and possible solutions. The religiosity of our audience shows us that religious places of worship can be great partners as we aim to draw the attention of people to the need to pay more attention to their mental health and wellbeing.

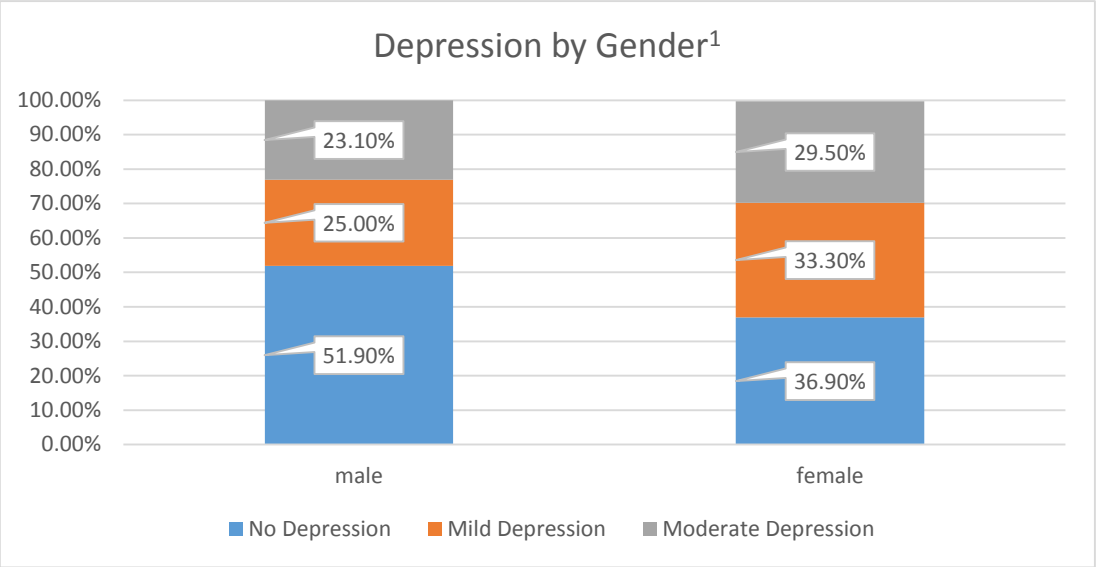
Data analysed reveal that 67% of attendees were female, while 33% were male. While 87% identify as heterosexual, 8% identify as homosexual and 3% identify as bisexual. 70% of attendees were employed full time, 15% employed part time, 12% were job hunting while 3% were unemployed.

As Yale Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Joy Kaufman noted after working on the baseline survey, "what is striking from the early data is the high number of participants who have previously experienced exposure to traumatic events and the high number of depression symptoms reported by participants".



[42]See Smith, T.B., M.E. McCullough, and J. Poll. (2003). "Religiousness and Depression: Evidence for a Main Effect and the Moderating Influence of Stressful Life Events". *Psychological Bulletin* 129:614-36

According to the World Health Organisation, 3.1% of the adult population in Nigeria have major depressive disorder. In contrast, 28% of respondents reported experiencing major depressive disorder.



[1]Not statistically different
Steen Happiness Index and PHQ

Correlations
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Commenting on the quality of research and intervention, Joy Kaufman who is also Director of Evaluation Research at the Yale Consultation Center notes that "As a university professor who evaluates community-based programs, I find Joy, Inc.'s commitment to collecting data regarding depression and happiness from young people in Nigeria to be commendable. In addition, Joy, Inc. is evaluating The [Joy] Masterclasses in other to assess participant's satisfaction with the classes, life stressors, changes in key outcomes such as depression and happiness and the aspects of the Masterclasses participants choose to continue to utilize. I look forward to my continued involvement with the Joy, Inc. team as we utilize the data to understand the impact of the masterclasses and use the data to continue to enhance the programs.

Future Plans [2018-2025]: Towards a happier and flourishing continent

Happiness, to us, is the new wave. We wield the conviction that in fully harnessing the power of emotions (with a focus on resilience and happiness research) in line with the current thinking across sociology, psychology, divinity and behavioural economics, Africa's new generation can possess the tools needed to leapfrog around the considerable obstacles that prevent its young people – estimated to be about 1 billion by 2050[43] – from achieving full potential and transforming nations.

This is not a day dream; though audacious, we see possibilities.

Preliminary theses centered within Africa on Botswana and Mauritius, and outside Africa on the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Bhutan had provided a foundational framework for how harnessing the power of emotions, against the background of evidence-based interventions, can help accelerate massive economic and social change.

Over the next 7 years, we outline 7 priorities, defining our role in building a happier and flourishing generation that transforms the future on the continent.

Our role is to:

Build and deploy research-driven popular cultural products – books, online, events, film and television - that popularize and mainstream the evidence from positive psychology, making it accessible across the continent.

Build and deploy teaching and training products to build capacity in people, organisations, social movements and governments, and then co-create frameworks to integrate and apply the research in long-term, sustainable programmes.

Create a network of Joy Clubs that harness the power of community and positive peer pressure to drive growth

[43] See https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/04/in-2050-africa-will-be-home-to-1-billion-young-people-and-theyll-need-educating

on the five key pillars of subjective well-being.

Work with our global research partners to facilitate the embedding of positive education through the PERMA and RULER curricula for pre-university students to do better at school while building mental resilience and widening capacity for “broaden and build” creativity.

Develop integrated technology platforms that enable individuals, organisations and nations track well-being, and take concrete actions to broaden and to build driven by the tracking and growth of well-being indices.

Build a high-profile network of actionable resources to deal with the growing global mental health burden, strengthen mental health interventions and build sustainable national strategy for subjective well-being. This includes the establishment of central and community resource centers.

Lead on research and data, and, from it, evidence-based advocacy about mental health and human flourishing, with subjective well-being as both a key goal of governance and a crucial tool for evaluation of public policy. We will nudge nations to adopt a more wholesome approach to nation building, by adopting more comprehensive measurements of human progress, beyond GDP, and then help them build frameworks for integrating and applying the research at scale.

Acknowledgement

Authors and researchers

Chude Jideonwo; Founder, Joy, Inc.

Damola Morenikeji; Research Associate, Joy, Inc.

Glory Apantaku, Central Working Committee, Joy, Inc. / Graduate Research Assistant, University of Columbia

Joy Kaufman; Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Yale School of Medicine

Organisations

NOIPolls

Mentally Aware Nigeria Initiative

She Writes Woman

About Joy, Inc.

Joy, Inc. [www.joyinc.xyz] is a benefit corporation building happier, flourishing Africans and mainstreaming the research / evidence on human flourishing and positive emotions to transform the culture, and build a generation focused on the greatest happiness for the greatest many.

Working with a global advisory board of researchers and psychologists from Yale, Fordham, Qatar and Yaba, Joy, Inc. has equipped young Africans across 6 cities in 4 countries and 3 continents with positive emotion skills and resources they need to be happy, resilient, transcend adversity, solve problems, find joy and flourish while nudging nations to take emotional and mental wellbeing seriously.