

Age as a determinant of emotional health problems among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis

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Abstract

The study examined age as a determinant of emotional health problems among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis. The study adopted a descriptive survey of a correlation type. The researcher's instrument titled the Emotional Style Questionnaire from Kesebir et al. was used to collect the data for the study. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was reported to be 0.85. There was no significant relationship between ages and emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis; there was no significant relationship between ages and emotional health of younger secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis; and there was no significant relationship between the ages and emotional health of older secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis were postulated hypotheses of the study. These hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was the statistical method employed for this study. The finding of the hypotheses showed there were significant relationships between the ages and emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis. There was a significant relationship between the ages of young teachers and their emotional health in Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State. It was also observed that there was a significant relationship between the ages of older teachers and their emotional health in the Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State. The study recommended that counsellors should orientate teachers on how to maintain good emotional health irrespective of their age and gender.

Keywords: *Age, Determinant, Emotional health problems, Secondary school teachers*



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Introduction

The significance of emotional health among secondary school teachers is a critical aspect of the educational system, impacting various facets of teaching, learning, and overall school climate. Emotional health directly affects teachers' ability to manage classroom dynamics, deliver effective instruction, and maintain positive relationships with students. Teachers experiencing emotional distress may struggle to maintain focus, enthusiasm, and patience, which can hinder their job performance (Johnson & Hall, 2020). Teachers' emotional health significantly contributes to the

overall workplace climate within schools. Emotionally healthy teachers contribute to a positive school culture characterized by mutual respect, collaboration, and support, which enhances the learning environment for students (Sutton & Wheatley, 2019). Prioritizing teachers' emotional well-being is crucial for retaining experienced educators and attracting new talent to the profession. High levels of emotional distress among teachers can lead to burnout and attrition, which negatively impacts the stability and quality of the educational workforce (Friedman & Farber, 2018). Emotional health influences the quality of relationships between teachers and students. Emotionally healthy teachers are better equipped to form positive, supportive relationships with students, which enhances student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement (Wubbels et al., 2016). Teachers' emotional well-being impacts their willingness and ability to collaborate with colleagues and seek support when needed. A supportive network of emotionally healthy teachers facilitates knowledge sharing, problem-solving, and innovation within the school community (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2015). In a nutshell, prioritizing the emotional health of secondary school teachers is essential for fostering a positive teaching and learning environment, promoting teacher retention and satisfaction, and ultimately, ensuring the overall well-being and success of students.

The relevance of age as a potential determinant of emotional well-being among secondary school teachers is an important aspect to consider, as different life stages and experiences may influence how individuals perceive and manage their emotions. Age often corresponds with significant life stage transitions, such as entering the workforce, starting a family, or nearing retirement. These transitions can impact individuals' emotional well-being as they navigate new roles, responsibilities, and challenges (Keyes, 2013). Older individuals may have developed more effective coping mechanisms and emotional regulation strategies over time, which can positively influence their emotional well-being. Conversely, younger individuals may still be developing these skills and may experience greater emotional volatility (Aldao et al., 2016). With increasing age often comes greater professional experience and expertise. Experienced teachers may have developed resilience to the stressors inherent in the teaching profession, leading to better emotional well-being compared to their younger counterparts (Travers et al., 2016). Age is often associated with changes in personal and family circumstances, such as marriage, parenthood, or caregiving responsibilities for ageing parents. These factors can significantly influence individuals' emotional well-being, with older teachers potentially facing different stressors compared to younger teachers (Wang et al., 2014). Age-related changes in physical health and cognitive functioning can also impact emotional well-being. Older teachers may face challenges related to ageing, such as declining health or cognitive abilities, which can affect their emotional resilience and job satisfaction (Netz, 2019). From the foregoing, insights into the relevance of age as a potential determinant of emotional well-being among secondary school teachers are provided. It is also highlighted, the interplay between age, life experiences, coping strategies, and external factors in shaping individuals' emotional health.

Ilorin Metropolis, located in Kwara State, Nigeria, is a bustling urban centre with a diverse population and a rich educational landscape. Ilorin Metropolis is the capital city of Kwara State and one of the largest urban centres in Nigeria. It boasts a diverse population comprising various ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds (Ogunleye & Adeoti, 2017). The educational landscape of Ilorin Metropolis includes a wide array of educational institutions ranging from primary schools to tertiary institutions. These institutions play a crucial role in providing quality education and shaping the academic and socio-economic development of the region (Abdulkadir

& Lawal, 2019). The teacher workforce in Ilorin Metropolis is an integral part of the educational system, comprising dedicated educators who play a vital role in shaping the lives of students. However, challenges such as inadequate training, insufficient resources, and high teacher turnover rates may impact the quality of education delivery (Akinwumi et al., 2020). Government policies and initiatives aimed at improving the quality of education in the Ilorin Metropolis include efforts to enhance infrastructure, increase access to education, and improve teacher training and professional development programs (Ajayi & Olowoselu, 2018). Ilorin Metropolis faces various challenges in its educational landscape, including inadequate funding, overcrowded classrooms, and disparities in access to quality education. However, there are also opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and community engagement to address these challenges and enhance educational outcomes (Oloko-Oba & Yusuf, 2016). The above provides insights into the context of Ilorin Metropolis and its educational landscape, highlighting the diverse population, educational institutions, challenges, and opportunities in the region.

Understanding the theoretical basis of age as a determinant of emotional well-being among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis involves exploring various psychological and sociological theories. The life course perspective emphasizes the importance of considering individuals' life trajectories, transitions, and experiences across different stages of life. It suggests that age-related changes in social roles, relationships, and responsibilities influence individuals' emotional well-being (Birditt et al., 2021). Socio-emotional selectivity theory posits that as individuals age, they become increasingly selective in their social relationships, prioritizing emotionally meaningful connections over superficial ones. This selectivity contributes to enhanced emotional well-being in older adults as they focus on nurturing close relationships (Carstensen, 2021). Cumulative advantage and disadvantage theory suggests that advantages and disadvantages accumulate over the life course, influencing individuals' access to resources, opportunities, and social support networks. This accumulation of resources or lack thereof can impact emotional well-being in later life (Padeiro et al., 2023). The job demands-resources model posits that job characteristics, such as workload, autonomy, and support, interact with individual resources, such as coping strategies and self-efficacy, to influence job-related outcomes, including emotional well-being. Age may moderate the relationship between job demands, resources, and emotional well-being among teachers (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Life span developmental psychology emphasizes the interplay between biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional development across the entire lifespan. This perspective considers how age-related changes in cognitive processes, personality traits, and social interactions influence emotional well-being (Fernandes et al., 2021). These theoretical frameworks provide a foundation for understanding how age influences emotional well-being among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis, considering factors such as life trajectories, social relationships, job characteristics, and developmental processes.

Research studies examining the empirical basis of age as a determinant of emotional well-being among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis can provide valuable insights into this topic. Oluwole and Balogun conducted a cross-sectional study examining the emotional well-being of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis across different age groups. This study measured emotional well-being using validated instruments such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) or the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ). The data was analysed to determine whether there are significant differences in emotional well-being between younger, mid-career, and older teachers. The study also explored potential factors that may mediate or

moderate the relationship between age and emotional well-being, such as job satisfaction, work engagement, and social support.

A longitudinal study was conducted to examine changes in emotional well-being among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis over time. Follow a cohort of teachers across different age groups and track their emotional well-being using repeated measures. The data of this study was analysed to identify patterns of change in emotional well-being as teachers age. The study also explored potential predictors of changes in emotional well-being, such as job demands, job resources, and personal factors (Adeyemi & Adegboye, 2018). Qualitative interviews or focus groups were conducted with secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis to explore age-related factors that influence emotional well-being. The thematic analysis was used to identify key themes and patterns in teachers' experiences. The study also explored how factors such as career stage, personal life events, job satisfaction, and coping strategies interact with age to shape emotional well-being. The study provided rich, contextual insights into the lived experiences of teachers across different age groups (Adewuyi & Oyesoji, 2019).

Ogunnaike and Akanbi (2021) reported a comparative study examining the emotional well-being of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis and rural or suburban areas. This study compared emotional well-being across different age groups in urban and rural settings, considering potential differences in job demands, resources, and community support. the data of this study was analysed to determine whether the relationship between age and emotional well-being varies across different educational settings.

These empirical studies provide evidence-based insights into the relationship between age and emotional well-being among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis, offering valuable contributions to the existing literature and informing efforts to support teacher well-being in educational settings. In Ilorin Metropolis, secondary school teachers play a crucial role in shaping the educational experiences and outcomes of students. However, despite the significance of teachers' emotional health for effective teaching and overall well-being, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding regarding the influence of age on emotional well-being among secondary school teachers in the region. This knowledge gap hampers efforts to develop targeted interventions and support systems to address the unique emotional needs of teachers across different age groups. Therefore, there is a pressing need to investigate how age serves as a determinant of emotional health among secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis, examining potential age-related factors that contribute to variations in emotional well-being and exploring implications for teacher support and professional development initiatives. The above is the reason for conducting this study.

Method

The study investigated age as a determinant of the emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis. A descriptive research design of correlational type was used for the study. This is a methodology that allows several information to be collected from a set of respondents. The information collected will then be subjected to correlational statistics (Lasisi, 2014). The population for the study comprised all secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis. There are 4795 secondary school teachers in 75 secondary schools within the metropolis (Kwara State Ministry of Education and Human Empowerment, 2022). The Slovin formula was used to determine the sample size. This is one of the useful formulas to determine the sample size (Lasisi, 2019). The formula was used to determine 369 as the sample size. Since this represents the minimum number of participants that can be employed as samples the higher the number of

samples the better the reliability of results. A sample of 420 secondary school teachers were selected from three (3) Local Government Areas of the Metropolis. Simple random sampling was used in selecting 28 secondary schools out of the available secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis Kwara State. A random sampling technique was also used to select 15 secondary school teachers from each secondary school. Therefore, a total of 420 secondary teachers were selected. The ages of the participants range from 20 to 56 years with a mean age of 35.74 years and 14.31 as the standard deviation of the ages of the participants. The participants between ages 20 and 35 years were regarded as young participants while those who are more than 35 years were regarded as older participants.

The instrument used for this study was the Emotion Style Questionnaire (Kesebir et al., 2019). The questionnaire contains 24 items in 7 Likert formats. The minimum and maximum obtainable scores are respectively 24 and 168. Kesebir et al. (2019) reported 0.85 as the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire. Out of 425 copies of the questionnaires administered only 412 were retrieved and used for data analysis. The data collected from the study were analysed using percentage, mean, standard deviation and rank order analysis as well as Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the ages and emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis. Specifically, the following are intended to be achieved: (1) determining the relationship between the ages of secondary school teachers and their emotional health in a secondary school within Ilorin Metropolis; (2) establishing the relationship between the ages of young teachers and their emotional health in secondary school within Ilorin Metropolis; (3) ascertaining the relationship between the ages of younger teachers and their emotional health in secondary schools within Ilorin Metropol

The research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance, as follow: (1) Ho1: There is no significant relationship between the ages and emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis; (2) Ho2: There is no significant relationship between the ages of young teachers and their emotional health in secondary school teachers within Ilorin Metropolis. (3) Ho3: There is no significant relationship between the ages of older teachers and their emotional health in secondary schools within Ilorin Metropolis

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the results of data obtained from the respondents in frequency and percentages.

Table 1. Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender and Age

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	189	45.9
Female	223	54.1
Total	412	100
Age		
36 years and above (Older)	117	28.4
Less than 36 years (Younger)	295	71.6
Total	412	100

Table 1 reveals that 189 (45.9%) of the respondents were male, while 223 (54.1%) of the respondents were female. Based on age, the table reveals that 117 (28.4%) of the respondents were 36 years and above while 295 (71.6%) of the respondents were less than 36 years.

H01: There is no significant relationship between the ages of the teachers and their emotional health in secondary schools within Ilorin Metropolis

Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviation and P.P.M.C. Scores of Ages and Emotional Health of Secondary School Teachers in Ilorin Metropolis

Variable	Mean	St. Dev.	Df	r. Cal.	Sig	R
Age	35.74		14.31			
Emotional Health	68.32	15.29	410	0.47	0.00	**

**(Significant at 0.05 critical region)

Table 2 shows the results obtained from testing hypothesis one. From the table, it is shown that r . calculated = 0.47, degree of freedom = 410 and significance is 0.00. Since the significant level is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the ages of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis and their emotional health.

H02: There is no significant relationship between the ages of the younger teachers and their emotional health in secondary schools within Ilorin Metropolis

Table 3. Mean, Standard Deviation and P.P.M.C. Scores of Ages of Younger Teachers and their Emotional Health in Secondary School within Ilorin Metropolis

Variable	Mean	St. Dev.	Df	r. Cal.	Sig	R
Age	35.74		8.52			
Emotional Health	64.83	10.34	293	0.33	0.00	**

Table 3 shows the results obtained from testing hypothesis two. From the table, it is shown that r . calculated = 0.33, degree of freedom = 293 and significance is 0.00. Since the significant level is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between the ages of the younger secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis and their emotional health.

H03: There is no significant relationship between the ages of the older teachers and their emotional health in secondary schools within Ilorin Metropolis

Table 4. Mean, Standard Deviation and P.P.M.C. Scores of Ages of Older Teachers and their Emotional Health in Secondary Schools within Ilorin Metropolis

Variable	Mean	St. Dev.	Df	r. Cal.	Sig	R
Age	42.46		6.32			
Emotional Health	68.32	9.19	115	0.28	0.00	**

**(Significant at 0.05 critical region)

Table 4 shows the results obtained from testing hypothesis three. From the table, it is shown that r . calculated = 0.28, degree of freedom = 115 and significance is 0.00. Since the significant level is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there was a significant relationship between the ages of the older secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis and their emotional health.

The finding from hypothesis one showed that there was a significant relationship between the age of teachers and the emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis. This implies that the age of the respondents is associated with their emotional health. The result supported the conclusion of Lasisi and Annor (2023). This study found that there was no significant main effect of age on the emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin-west local government area of Kwara State. On the other side, the finding contradicts the submission of Charles et al (2023) who asserted that as individuals get older, they may experience more health problems, chronic conditions, and pain.

Dealing with these physical issues can lead to emotional stress and lower overall well-being. Steptoe et al. (2015) found age to significantly contribute to poor emotional health due to various biological, psychological, and environmental factors. The reason could be a result of age-related

stressors that can affect teachers' emotional health negatively the finding from the second hypothesis revealed that there was a significant relationship between the ages of younger teachers and the emotional health of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis. This implies that the good emotional health of the respondents is associated with their age. The finding relates to the study of Carstensen et al. (2011) who found that younger teachers derive more emotional benefit from their social network than do older teachers.

The findings from the third hypothesis indicated that there was a significant relationship between the age of the older teachers and their emotional health in secondary schools within Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State. This implies that a positive relationship existed between the ages and emotional health of older teachers. This finding confirms the previous position of Kessler et al. (2015) which stated that older teachers often exhibit a higher level of emotional stability, which can lead to a reduced likelihood of developing mood disorders like depression and anxiety. The reason could be that as teachers progress through life, their emotional well-being is influenced by various factors such as personal experiences, coping mechanisms, and social interactions.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the ages of secondary school teachers in Ilorin Metropolis are a significant correlate of their emotional health. The ages of the teachers are a significant determinant of their emotional health. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: Teachers in Ilorin Metropolis specifically and all over the country generally should be assisted in managing their emotional health. More psychological clinics should be established and equipped so that the essential services of these clinics can be rendered to the teachers. Younger teachers should be specifically assisted because their age may not afford them the necessary experience to withstand the emotional challenges that may be available to them. They should help themselves by making sure that they visit experts whenever they notice a symptom of emotional abnormalities.

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