



TEACHERS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ANXIETY AS DETERMINANTS OF TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

At the senior high school echelon, biology functions as a foundational scientific discipline undertaken by the vast majority of the student body. It acts as a mandatory prerequisite for advancing into specialized scientific vocations, including nursing, pharmacy, surgery, and general medicine. Despite the recognized importance of this subject, learner outcomes in standardized evaluations—specifically those administered by the National Examinations Council (NECO) and the West African Examinations Council (WAEC)—continue to fall drastically short of educational expectations. These persistent academic struggles suggest potential shortcomings in pedagogical efficacy, implying that instructors are inadequately equipping their classes for these critical external appraisals. Consequently, an empirical investigation is necessary to explore how instructional trepidation and emotional intelligence collectively shape educator productivity within Lagos State, effectively addressing both a demographic void and a noticeable scarcity of prior literature.

To conduct this inquiry, a correlational survey framework was deployed. The target demographic encompassed 800 professionals instructing biology within government-funded high schools across the Lagos region. From this extensive pool, a cohort of 350 instructors was isolated, guided by the sample size parameters established by Krejcie and Morgan in 1970. The participant selection process relied upon a multi-stage sampling methodology. Data acquisition was facilitated by three primary psychometric tools: the Teachers Job Performance Scale ($r = 0.632$), the Teaching Anxiety Scale II ($r = 0.802$), and the Emotional Intelligence Scale ($r = 0.867$). Analytical procedures involved multiple regression techniques alongside Pearson product-moment correlations, with all proposed hypotheses rigorously evaluated at a 0.05 significance threshold.

The analytical outputs indicated a lack of any substantial correlation between an educator's occupational execution and their level of emotional intelligence. Instead, the observed association was minimal and inversely proportional. Similarly, instructional apprehension



demonstrated no statistically meaningful linkage to workplace productivity. This specific dynamic was characterized as weak, albeit direct. Ultimately, neither instructional distress nor emotional intelligence emerged as significant predictive determinants of professional efficacy. The inquiry deduced that both independent variables yielded negligible associations with occupational success. Therefore, they should not be viewed as foundational components when formulating strategic interventions to elevate the professional standards of secondary educators within Lagos State.

Keywords: Biological Sciences, Emotional Acumen, Instructional Apprehension, Professional Efficacy

INTRODUCTION

Within the educational hierarchy of secondary schooling, biology stands prominently as a fundamental scientific pursuit engaged by nearly every learner. It is undeniably vital for individuals intending to pursue advanced qualifications in health-oriented disciplines such as nursing, pharmacy, surgery, and medicine. The Nigerian pedagogical framework dictates that this pivotal subject be delivered via two primary instructional modalities: practical applications and theoretical concepts. The hands-on facet is specifically engineered to cultivate the tangible competencies necessary for continuous, lifelong learning and practical utility outside the traditional classroom environment.

Despite concentrated instructional efforts, performance metrics in national assessments overseen by WAEC and NECO remain largely inadequate and concerning. Referencing recent chief examiner reports, WAEC acknowledged some marginal academic progress but strongly emphasized that examinees continue to face profound, systemic difficulties in mastering this scientific domain. Educational authorities attribute these dismal outcomes primarily to insufficient student engagement with laboratory exercises and a widespread failure to secure indispensable practical techniques. Among the myriad variables influencing academic triumph in biology—and indeed across other scholastic subjects—teacher-centric factors feature prominently.

Highlighting the educator's indispensable function, Darling-Hammond and colleagues emphasized that instructors bear the ultimate responsibility for actualizing curriculum goals, interpreting educational mandates, deploying instructional resources, and accurately measuring academic success. Consequently, a curriculum's theoretical promise remains utterly unfulfilled unless the professionals tasked with its delivery are extensively prepared and intimately integrated into its developmental phases. The current academic shortfalls can therefore be directly correlated to the occupational effectiveness of instructors operating within the academic sphere.

Professional efficacy in this context refers to the diligent execution of prescribed responsibilities; an educator achieves greatness solely when their pupils demonstrate elevated levels of mastery and consistent academic triumph. Further clarifying this concept, prominent researchers define professional output as the degree to which personnel fulfill their occupational duties relative to meticulously established benchmarks. In the realm of pedagogy, contemporary research identifies several indicators of proficient output, encompassing adept time management, robust interpersonal capabilities (such as empathy, optimism, and attentive listening), effective classroom control, meticulous syllabus implementation, rigorous lesson planning, and superior instructional delivery.



Evaluating an educator's professional standing requires a multifaceted approach, as superior teaching extends far beyond mere classroom satisfaction or exceptional rhetorical skills. Effective professionals must also excel in ancillary duties, including fostering parental and administrative communication, stimulating learner engagement, upholding classroom discipline, and demonstrating exceptional temporal organization.

Extant literature heavily suggests that professional success is modulated by a variety of elements, notably emotional acumen. Additionally, occupational distress and anxiety are heavily cited as highly influential variables. Emotional intelligence (EI) serves as a central focal point of this investigation. It is conceptually framed as the inherent capability to identify, understand, and harness emotions to facilitate cognitive processes and foster personal evolution. This psychological paradigm is gathering substantial momentum across diverse sectors of human activity. As a result, extensive scholarship has investigated the complex interplay between EI and various performance or satisfaction metrics within both academic and corporate environments. EI has consistently emerged as a crucial determinant of achievement, particularly in vocations that demand intense interpersonal engagement, such as the teaching profession. Modern scholarly pursuits continue to probe exactly how emotional savvy correlates with worker productivity and broader organizational effectiveness.

The final variable under scrutiny is instructional anxiety, an intricate psychological state shaped by an array of contextual, professional, and personal dimensions. Theorists argue that this specific form of distress is not an enduring personality trait, but rather a temporary condition resulting from a learned cognitive link between the act of teaching and feelings of deep unease. This phenomenon is heavily correlated with tenure, appearing most frequently in recent hires or pre-service candidates, where it can precipitate detrimental task-avoidance behaviors. Inexperienced educators, often battling a deficit of coping mechanisms and professional assurance, are particularly susceptible to this affliction. Furthermore, the intensity of this psychological burden fluctuates significantly based on environmental settings, accumulated experience, age, and gender. Given these complex dynamics, bridging the existing demographic and literary gap requires a rigorous examination of how emotional intelligence and instructional apprehension jointly dictate the occupational success of biology teachers situated in Lagos State.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This academic endeavor aimed to evaluate the predictive capacity of instructional apprehension and emotional acumen concerning the professional output of high school educators in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, the research detailed the following aims:

- To analyze the relational bond between educators' occupational execution and their intrinsic emotional intelligence.
- To evaluate the exact degree of connection linking professional productivity with teaching-induced anxiety.
- To establish how effectively emotional savvy and workplace distress predict overall professional performance.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

- **Hypothesis 1:** Emotional intelligence maintains no statistically valid correlation with professional productivity.



- **Hypothesis 2:** Instructional distress exhibits no significant statistical association with occupational success.
- **Hypothesis 3:** The dual factors of teaching anxiety and emotional intelligence do not function as meaningful predictors of an educator's workplace output.

METHODOLOGY

A correlational survey architecture was utilized to ascertain the magnitude of connection among the selected constructs. This specific design facilitates the evaluation of how one or multiple independent factors might forecast a dependent outcome. The intended research base comprised 800 professionals instructing biology in government-backed secondary institutions throughout the Lagos State region. Applying the sampling formula proposed by Krejcie and Morgan in 1970, a representative group of 350 instructors was successfully established. These participants were systematically chosen via a rigorous multi-stage sampling methodology.

Data acquisition was executed using three validated survey instruments: the Teachers Job Performance Scale (TJPS), the Teaching Anxiety Scale II (TCHAS2), and the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS). The EIS, thoughtfully modified from Mehta and Singh's 2013 framework, is a five-point Likert survey explicitly designed to extract data regarding the emotional capabilities of the respondents. Adopted from Parsons' foundational 1973 research, the TCHAS2 encompasses a comprehensive 25 prompts. Its primary function is to gauge the specific stress levels experienced by the instructors in a classroom setting. Finally, the TJPS, initially crafted by Hanif and Pervez in 2004, is a 25-question evaluation tool offering four distinct response categories. It was specifically tailored to quantify the occupational efficacy of the teaching staff.

To confirm instrument reliability, a pilot test was conducted on a separate, distinct cohort of 40 biology educators. Subsequent Cronbach's alpha computations yielded highly acceptable reliability scores of 0.867, 0.802, and 0.632 for the EIS, TCHAS2, and TJPS, respectively. Final data evaluation relied on multiple regression techniques and Pearson product-moment correlations, with all statistical suppositions rigorously scrutinized at a 0.05 alpha level of significance.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: No substantial statistical link exists connecting an instructor's emotional intellect with their professional delivery.

Table 1: Correlational analysis linking Job Performance to educators' emotional intelligence

Variables	N	R	P
Self-motivation * Job Performance	350	-0	0.35

The initial table outlines the dynamic between professional execution and emotional acumen. The empirical data reveals an absolute absence of any meaningful statistical correlation between these two variables ($n = 350$, $r = -0.020$, $p > 0.05$). Consequently, the null assumption is resolutely maintained; furthermore, the connection that does exist is characterized as both weak and inversely proportional ($r = -0.020$).

Hypothesis 2: No meaningful statistical correlation connects an educator's instructional distress with their workplace efficiency.



Table 2: Correlational analysis linking Job Performance to teaching anxiety

Variables	N	R	P
Self-motivation * Job Performance	350	0.07	0.11

The second table details the interaction between occupational success and instructional distress. The evidence confirms that no significant relationship is present ($n = 350$, $r = 0.065$, $p > 0.05$). The null hypothesis is therefore upheld, with the recorded relationship being classified as direct but ultimately negligible ($r = 0.065$).

Hypothesis 3: Workplace performance is not significantly predicted by the combined influence of teaching apprehension and emotional intelligence.

Table 3: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	407.133	2	203.567	0.8	0.45
Residual	88763.255	347	255.802		
Total	89170.389	349			

$R = 0.068$; $R^2 = 0.05$

The third table illustrates the joint predictive capability of distress and emotional acumen regarding educator output. The findings unequivocally demonstrate a non-significant result ($R = 0.068$, $F(2, 347) = 0.796$, $P > 0.05$). This clearly indicates that instructional anxiety and emotional intelligence fail to operate as substantial drivers of professional efficacy. The null proposition is comfortably retained, and with an R^2 value of 0.05, it is evident that these twin variables account for a mere 5% of the total variance in occupational performance.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Relationship between Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

The analytical data uncovered an explicit absence of any significant linkage between an educator's occupational productivity and their internal emotional capacities. Additionally, the metrics highlighted a negative and surprisingly weak connection between the two constructs. This inverse dynamic heavily implies that emotional intelligence offered a detrimental and highly limited contribution to the workplace success of educators operating within the scrutinized region.

Such a stark outcome directly challenges the pervasive academic belief that emotionally adept professionals automatically excel in pedagogical delivery, relationship building, and classroom behavioral management. This discrepancy might stem from the harsh reality that, within Lagos State's educational infrastructure, success is overwhelmingly dictated by overwhelming external forces—such as crushing teaching burdens, administrative coercion, bursting student populations, lacking monetary incentives, and massive infrastructural deficits—rather than internal emotional traits. It remains entirely plausible that highly emotionally intelligent personnel find their true effectiveness stifled by these adverse institutional climates.

These conclusions stand in direct opposition to Wang's 2022 research, which posited that robust emotional intelligence favorably impacts student triumphs, educator confidence, and deep professional dedication. They also conflict heavily with the 2024 findings of Lu and Chen, who



reported that emotional acumen elevates professional delivery via superior collegial interactions and workplace harmony. Furthermore, the results diverge from Doğru's comprehensive 2022 meta-analysis, which previously verified a highly beneficial correlation between performance and emotional capabilities across multiple professional sectors. Conversely, the current evidence aligns seamlessly with the 2015 assertions of Joseph and his associates. They astutely contended that the nexus linking job execution to emotional intelligence often degrades into sheer insignificance when factored alongside broader, more pressing dispositional and structural variables.

Relationship between Teachers' Teaching Anxiety and Job Performance

The rigorous investigation verified that an instructor's occupational success is not meaningfully tied to their level of teaching-related distress. The empirical data illuminated a weak, albeit direct, association between these core elements. This intricately suggests that while apprehension shared a minor positive link with workplace output, it did not act as a primary determinant of pedagogical effectiveness or success.

This specific positive correlation hints that mild anxiety might actually serve as a psychological catalyst, prompting certain professionals to approach their daily duties with heightened vigilance and intense preparation. Under specific circumstances, minor trepidation can spur educators to invest greater energy into learner outcomes, behavioral oversight, and rigorous syllabus planning, primarily to sidestep negative evaluations or the sting of academic failure. However, the overwhelming statistical weakness of the relationship firmly confirms that this distress ultimately provided a negligible boost to overall execution.

This discovery fundamentally contradicts Kyriacou's 2001 assertions, which theorized that professional zeal and instructional efficacy are severely undermined by workplace stress and persistent apprehension. It equally challenges a massive body of literature arguing that persistent unease fuels diminished output, psychological exhaustion, and eventual professional burnout. Nonetheless, the results perfectly corroborate alternative theories proposing that when kept safely in check, modest stress levels can actually foster enhanced dedication, gravity, and cognitive sharpness regarding professional mandates.

Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Teaching Anxiety as Determinants of Job Performance

The quantitative analysis firmly established that the combined forces of instructional distress and emotional intellect did not meaningfully dictate professional outcomes. The data clarified that these two elements collectively explained a minuscule **5%** of the performance variance, heavily implying that the remaining **95%** is governed by extraneous factors excluded from this specific inquiry.

This explicitly denotes that while unease and emotional intelligence are widely recognized psychological facets of the modern teaching experience. They offered virtually no explanatory power regarding the actual, on-the-ground productivity and professional success of high school instructors in Lagos State. The negligible variance percentage firmly posits that operational success is likely swayed by separate, highly impactful occupational dynamics not evaluated in this study.

These outcomes echo the 2023 findings of Medina-Garrido and peers, who concluded that professional execution is far more reliant on structural support systems and holistic worker welfare than on solitary, isolated psychological traits. Similarly, contemporary academic consensus emphasizes that professional competency is a complex product of intricate interactions among



environmental, emotional, societal, and systemic factors, rather than simple anxiety or emotional acumen in isolation.

CONCLUSION

This extensive academic endeavor scrutinized the predictive strength of instructional apprehension and emotional capabilities concerning the professional output of high school educators operating in Lagos State, Nigeria. Based on the rigorously compiled evidence, neither psychological variable established a significant statistical bond with occupational efficacy. Ultimately, they should be entirely disregarded as fundamental catalysts when designing educational interventions aimed at elevating the professional delivery of secondary level instructors within this specific demographic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the empirical findings and subsequent conclusions, the following highly actionable strategies are proposed:

- Secondary institutions must urgently fortify their internal counseling frameworks to better support personnel navigating the emotional hurdles, stress, and unique anxieties inherent in pedagogical careers.
- Educational stakeholders and administrative bodies should actively cultivate nurturing institutional climates that prioritize robust collegial networks, transparent dialogue, and unified collaboration among teaching staff and management.
- Instructors must be consistently incentivized to embrace proactive stress-management mechanisms—such as ongoing skills development, relaxation exercises, collegial mentoring, and strict temporal organization—to effectively mitigate the negative impacts of institutional demands and instructional unease.

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Authors' contributions

All authors read and approved the final manuscript.



Data availability

No datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable. This study did not involve human or animal subjects.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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