



SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Peer Reviewed Book Chapter



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11

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT

By

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Abstract

Teaching is an emotionally demanding profession that requires teachers to manage stress, interpersonal relationships, and classroom challenges effectively. In Nigeria, many teachers experience emotional difficulties arising from heavy workloads, poor working conditions, inadequate support systems, and administrative pressures, which negatively affect their job performance and well-being. This chapter examines strategies for supporting teachers to improve emotional management in the workplace. Using a conceptual and analytical approach, the chapter discusses key support strategies including emotional intelligence training, stress management programmes, counselling services, supportive school leadership, improved working conditions, peer support systems, promotion of work–life balance, reflective practices, and positive school climate development. The chapter highlights that effective emotional support mechanisms can enhance teachers' emotional stability, reduce burnout, improve instructional delivery, and promote professional commitment. The chapter concludes that supporting teachers' emotional well-being is essential for improving educational quality and sustaining the teaching profession in Nigeria.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Teachers' Job Performance, Schools



1.0 Introduction

Teaching is a profession that demands not only intellectual competence and pedagogical skills but also a high level of emotional stability and self-management. In Nigeria, teachers operate in challenging environments characterised by heavy workloads, large class sizes, inadequate instructional resources, limited administrative support, and increasing societal expectations. These pressures often affect teachers' emotional well-being, leading to stress, frustration, emotional exhaustion, and, in some cases, negative attitudes toward learners and the profession. Poor emotional management among teachers has therefore emerged as a significant problem affecting teaching effectiveness, classroom climate, and overall educational quality in Nigeria.

Emotional intelligence, which involves the ability to recognise, understand, regulate, and appropriately express emotions, has become increasingly relevant in addressing this challenge. Teachers who lack effective emotional management skills may struggle to maintain positive relationships with students, colleagues, and school administrators, thereby undermining instructional delivery and classroom management. Conversely, emotionally intelligent teachers are better equipped to cope with work-related stress, handle classroom conflicts constructively, and sustain motivation and professionalism under difficult conditions.

This chapter focuses on emotional intelligence and teachers' job performance in Nigerian schools, with particular emphasis on strategies for effective emotional management. It examines the nature of emotional challenges faced by teachers, the consequences of poor emotional regulation on teaching and learning, and practical approaches that can help teachers develop emotional competence. By highlighting the role of emotional intelligence in professional practice, the chapter seeks to provide insights that can support teachers, school administrators, and policymakers in promoting healthier emotional environments and improving educational outcomes in Nigeria.

2.0 Conceptual Terms

2.1 Concept of Teachers' Job Performance

Teachers' job performance refers to the degree to which teachers effectively carry out their professional responsibilities in line with educational goals, school policies, and learners' needs. It reflects how well teachers apply their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and professional ethics to facilitate learning and support students' holistic development. Ogunode (2023) conceptualized teacher job performance as the implementation of teacher's assigned responsibilities in the school. Casting (2016) defined job performance as execution, conduct, compliance or conformity with stated decisions or directives issued by a super-ordinate or demanded by a job. Teachers' job performance refers to the execution of instructor's responsibilities and tasks in the educational



institutions (Josiah, Audu and Ogunode, 2023).. Teachers' job performance is the level by which the teachers accomplished their given functions and assignment in the schools (Ogunode 2023).

Teachers' job performance has been described as their level of involvement in the day to day running of school. It is referred to as the measure of teacher's level of effectiveness in relation to their expected responsibilities in their school. It is used to assess whether a teacher carries out his or her job well or not in terms of teaching, discipline, lesson plan, lesson delivery and commitment (Awodiji, 2018). This shows that performance of any job must be according to the pattern set performing such tasks. Teachers' job Performance in secondary schools is highly influenced by many factors such as motivation, qualifications, school climate, among others (Atiya & Palwasha, ND). Also, Bassey, Agbade & Ogunode (2023) and Ogunode and Josiah (2023) defined teacher job performance as the extent to which the teachers have attained the objectives of teaching in the schools. Teachers' job performance is the level at which the instructor has been able to execute the assigned functions in the school environment. The job performance of teachers is very important to the school because the success or failure of the teachers affects the school system. From the above, teacher job performance is the level of execution of official assignments within a timeframe in school.

Teachers' job performance is the extent they are committed to effective pedagogical delivery and exhibit uprightness and academic excellence in conducting academic activities (Uko, Umosen, & Caleb 2015). Ogunode (2023) conceptualized teacher job performance as the implementation of teacher's assigned responsibilities in the school. Teacher job performance is the extent to which the teachers are carrying out their official responsibilities in the schools (Ogunode, Olowonefa, & Ayoko 2023). Teacher job performance refer to the execution of instructor's responsibilities and tasks in the educational institutions (Josiah, Audu and Ogunode, 2023).. Teacher job performance is the level by which the teachers accomplished their given functions and assignment in the schools (Ogunode 2023).

Dimensions of Teachers' Job Performance

Instructional Delivery

This involves how effectively a teacher plans lessons, uses appropriate teaching methods, manages time, and presents subject content clearly. High-performing teachers use learner-centred strategies, instructional materials, and assessment techniques to enhance understanding and retention.



Classroom Management

Classroom management refers to a teacher's ability to create and maintain a conducive learning environment. It includes controlling disruptive behaviour, maintaining discipline, promoting mutual respect, and ensuring active student participation.

Assessment and Evaluation

Teachers' performance is also measured by how well they assess students' learning through tests, assignments, observations, and feedback. Effective assessment helps identify learners' strengths and weaknesses and guides instructional improvement.

Professional Commitment and Ethics

This includes punctuality, regular attendance, adherence to professional codes of conduct, dedication to duty, and continuous professional development. Teachers who are committed to their profession demonstrate responsibility and accountability.

Interpersonal Relationships

Teachers' job performance extends beyond the classroom to how they relate with students, colleagues, school administrators, and parents. Positive relationships contribute to teamwork, effective communication, and a supportive school climate.

Contribution to School Development

Teachers are expected to participate in extracurricular activities, committees, curriculum development, and community engagement. Active involvement enhances the overall effectiveness of the school.

2.3 Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (**EI**) refers to the ability to recognise, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively in oneself and in others. It plays a crucial role in how individuals cope with stress, relate with others, and make decisions. In the teaching profession, emotional intelligence is particularly important because teachers constantly interact with students and manage emotionally demanding situations. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a crucial aspect of human interaction and personal development, encompassing the ability to recognize, understand, and manage both our own emotions and those of others. It involves empathy, self-awareness, social skills, self-regulation, and motivation. Unlike intellectual intelligence, which focuses on cognitive abilities, EI emphasizes the emotional aspects of our lives (Okeke, & Okonkwo, 2019). Emotional intelligence is a variable that might affect job performance of teachers. In recent years, a growing



body of literature have highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence as a predictor for job performance, generally arguing that employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are likely to perform better (O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, Story, 2011).

Individuals with high emotional intelligence are adept at navigating social situations, forming strong relationships, and handling interpersonal conflicts effectively. They possess the capacity to perceive subtle emotional cues, allowing them to respond appropriately to the feelings and needs of others. Moreover, those with high EI are often more resilient in the face of adversity, as they can manage stress and regulate their emotions more effectively (Alhassan, 2019). Emotional intelligence is a set of skills relating to emotional and social nature, that influence people's perception and expression of themselves. (Lubbadeh, 2020). Emotional intelligence is important in the success of performing a job (Joseph and Newman, 2011). EI plays a pivotal role in various aspects of life, including personal relationships, leadership, and professional success. In the workplace, employees with high EI tend to be more productive, collaborative, and innovative. Leaders who possess emotional intelligence can inspire and motivate their teams, fostering a positive work environment and driving organizational success (Okeke, & Okonkwo, 2019).

According to popular models of emotional intelligence, especially Daniel Goleman's framework, emotional intelligence consists of several key components.

Components of Emotional Intelligence

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the ability to recognise one's own emotions and understand how they influence thoughts and behaviour. Teachers who are self-aware can identify feelings such as stress, anger, or frustration before these emotions negatively affect their teaching.

Self-Regulation (Emotional Control)

Self-regulation involves the ability to manage and control emotions in appropriate ways. Emotionally intelligent teachers can remain calm during classroom challenges, handle conflicts constructively, and avoid impulsive reactions.

Self-Motivation

This refers to the ability to remain focused, committed, and resilient despite difficulties. Teachers with high emotional intelligence are more likely to stay motivated, set professional goals, and maintain a positive attitude toward their work.

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. In teaching, empathy helps



teachers understand students' emotional needs, learning difficulties, and personal challenges, thereby promoting supportive teacher–student relationships.

Social Skills

Social skills involve effective communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, and relationship management. Teachers with strong social skills collaborate well with colleagues, communicate clearly with parents, and foster a positive classroom atmosphere.

3.0 Result and Discussion on strategies to support teachers to improving their emotional intelligence Management

Effective emotional management is essential for teachers' well-being, job performance, classroom effectiveness, and professional longevity. Given the emotional demands of teaching—such as workload pressure, classroom discipline challenges, administrative expectations, and limited resources there is a need for deliberate strategies to support teachers in managing their emotions positively. The following strategies outline institutional, professional, and personal approaches to improving teachers' emotional competence.

Emotional Intelligence Training and Professional Development

One of the most effective strategies for improving teachers' emotional management is the integration of emotional intelligence training into professional development programmes. Workshops and seminars can help teachers develop skills such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social communication. Through structured training, teachers learn how to recognise emotional triggers, manage stress responses, and apply constructive coping mechanisms in emotionally demanding situations. Continuous professional development ensures that emotional competence becomes part of teachers' professional identity, not just an optional skill.

Stress Management and Coping Skills Programmes

Teachers should be supported through stress management programmes that address both psychological and physical well-being. These programmes may include relaxation techniques, time management skills, mindfulness practices, and problem-solving strategies. Teaching stress management skills enables teachers to handle workload pressure, student misbehaviour, and administrative demands without emotional breakdowns. When teachers are equipped with effective coping strategies, they are less likely to experience burnout, emotional exhaustion, or frustration.



Provision of Counselling and Psychological Support Services

Access to professional counselling and mental health support is crucial for helping teachers manage emotional challenges. Schools and educational authorities should establish guidance and counselling units where teachers can confidentially discuss work-related stress, emotional difficulties, or personal concerns. Professional counselling helps teachers process emotions, develop emotional resilience, and adopt healthier perspectives toward workplace challenges. This support system promotes emotional stability and enhances teachers' capacity to remain effective in their roles.

Supportive School Leadership and Administrative Practices

School leadership plays a critical role in shaping teachers' emotional well-being. Supportive, empathetic, and transparent leadership practices can significantly reduce emotional stress among teachers. Administrators should foster open communication, involve teachers in decision-making, provide constructive feedback, and recognise teachers' efforts. When teachers feel valued and supported, they are more likely to manage their emotions positively and maintain professional commitment.

Improvement of Working Conditions and Welfare

Poor working conditions are major contributors to emotional stress among teachers. Adequate provision of teaching materials, manageable class sizes, fair workload distribution, and timely payment of salaries and allowances are essential for emotional well-being. Improved welfare policies reduce frustration and anxiety, enabling teachers to focus on teaching rather than personal or financial challenges. Emotional management is more achievable when basic professional and economic needs are met.

Peer Support and Mentoring Programmes

Peer support systems and mentoring relationships provide teachers with emotional and professional support. Through mentoring, experienced teachers can guide less experienced colleagues on coping with classroom challenges, managing emotions, and maintaining professionalism. Collaborative environments encourage shared experiences, reduce feelings of isolation, and promote emotional understanding. Peer support fosters a sense of belonging, which is essential for emotional stability.

Promotion of Work–Life Balance

Teachers should be encouraged to maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life. Schools can support this by avoiding excessive workloads, respecting personal time, and



promoting flexible work arrangements where possible. A healthy work–life balance reduces emotional fatigue and improves teachers' capacity to manage stress. Teachers who have adequate time for rest, family, and personal interests are more emotionally resilient and productive.

Incorporation of Emotional Well-Being into Teacher Education Programmes

Teacher training institutions should integrate emotional intelligence, stress management, and psychological well-being into pre-service teacher education curricula. This ensures that teachers enter the profession with foundational emotional management skills. Early exposure to emotional competence training prepares teachers for the realities of the classroom and reduces emotional shocks associated with professional practice.

Use of Reflective Practices

Reflective practices such as journaling, peer reflection sessions, and self-evaluation help teachers understand their emotional experiences and behavioural responses. Reflection encourages self-awareness and continuous emotional improvement. By reflecting on classroom experiences, teachers can identify emotional triggers and develop more effective emotional responses over time.

Creating a Positive School Climate

A positive school climate characterised by mutual respect, collaboration, and emotional safety supports teachers' emotional well-being. Schools should promote respectful interactions, conflict resolution mechanisms, and inclusive policies. A healthy school climate reduces emotional tension and supports positive emotional expression, benefiting both teachers and students.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter has examined various strategies for supporting teachers to improve emotional management in their professional practice. The discussion reveals that teachers' emotional well-being is a critical factor influencing classroom effectiveness, interpersonal relationships, and overall job performance. Emotional challenges such as stress, frustration, and burnout, if not properly managed, can undermine teaching quality and negatively affect students' learning experiences.

The chapter concludes that improving teachers' emotional management requires a holistic approach involving professional development, psychological support services, supportive school leadership, improved welfare, and a positive school climate. Emotional intelligence training, counselling services, peer mentoring, and work–life balance initiatives are particularly important in helping teachers develop resilience and emotional competence. When teachers are emotionally supported, they are better equipped to manage classroom challenges, maintain professionalism,



and contribute meaningfully to school development. Therefore, investing in teachers' emotional well-being is not only beneficial to teachers themselves but also essential for achieving sustainable educational development.

Based on the discussions in this chapter, the following recommendations are proposed:

1) Integration of Emotional Intelligence Training

Educational authorities should integrate emotional intelligence and emotional management training into both pre-service and in-service teacher development programmes.

2) Provision of Counselling and Psychological Support

Schools and education ministries should establish functional guidance and counselling units to provide confidential emotional and psychological support for teachers.

3) Supportive School Leadership Practices

School administrators should adopt empathetic and inclusive leadership styles that promote open communication, teacher participation in decision-making, and recognition of teachers' efforts.

4) Improvement of Teachers' Working Conditions

Governments and school owners should improve teachers' welfare, reduce excessive workloads, ensure timely payment of salaries, and provide adequate teaching resources.

5) Promotion of Peer Support and Mentoring

Schools should encourage peer mentoring and collaborative professional learning communities to provide emotional and professional support among teachers.

6) Encouragement of Work–Life Balance

Policies should be developed to help teachers balance professional responsibilities with personal and family life, thereby reducing emotional exhaustion.

7) Incorporation of Reflective Practices

Teachers should be encouraged to engage in reflective practices such as self-evaluation, journaling, and group reflection to enhance self-awareness and emotional regulation.

8) Creation of Positive School Climate

Schools should promote a positive, respectful, and inclusive school environment that supports emotional safety and well-being for teachers and students.



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Concluding Synthesis

This edited volume, *Sustainable Education in Africa*, presents a robust and multidimensional exploration of the evolving dynamics shaping educational systems across Nigeria and the broader African context. The contributions collectively interrogate critical issues such as digital transformation, artificial intelligence in educational planning, gender inclusivity, economic constraints, institutional effectiveness, and the intersection of education with national development priorities.

A synthesis of the chapters reveals that sustainable education in Africa is inherently complex and requires an integrated, systems-oriented approach. While technological advancements offer transformative potential for improving educational access, quality, and administration, their successful implementation is dependent on enabling environments characterized by adequate infrastructure, policy coherence, and human capacity development.

Furthermore, the persistence of structural barriers—including underfunding, inequality, insecurity, and governance challenges—continues to impede progress. The contributors consistently emphasize that achieving sustainability in education necessitates deliberate, inclusive, and context-sensitive policy interventions that address both systemic inefficiencies and emerging global trends.

Importantly, this volume reinforces the position of education as a strategic instrument for sustainable development, aligning with global development priorities while responding to local realities. The insights generated herein contribute meaningfully to scholarly discourse and provide actionable knowledge for stakeholders across the education sector.

Implications for Practice

Drawing from the collective contributions of this volume, several practical implications emerge for policymakers, educational leaders, and practitioners:

- **Policy and Governance:** Governments should prioritize coherent and forward-looking educational policies that integrate technology, inclusivity, and sustainability into national development agendas.
- **Investment in Infrastructure:** There is a critical need for sustained investment in digital infrastructure, learning facilities, and instructional resources to support modern educational delivery systems.
- **Capacity Building:** Continuous professional development for educators and administrators is essential, particularly in the areas of digital literacy, data-driven decision-making, and innovative pedagogy.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Educational interventions must intentionally address gender disparities, socio-economic inequalities, and access challenges affecting marginalized populations.
- **Research and Innovation:** Institutions should foster a culture of research and innovation to generate context-relevant solutions and inform evidence-based practices.
- **Collaboration:** Stronger partnerships among governments, private sector actors, development agencies, and academic institutions are necessary to drive sustainable educational transformation.

Editors' Note

The editors of this volume express profound appreciation to all contributing authors for their scholarly rigor, intellectual depth, and commitment to advancing knowledge in the field of education. The diversity of perspectives represented in this work reflects the complexity of educational challenges and opportunities within Africa.

We also acknowledge the invaluable contributions of peer reviewers, editorial board members, and institutional supporters whose efforts ensured the academic quality and integrity of this publication.

This volume is conceived not only as a scholarly resource but also as a catalyst for dialogue, policy reform, and practical innovation. It is our expectation that the ideas presented herein will inspire further research and contribute to the ongoing transformation of education systems across the continent.