

## **Roles of Teachers in the Promotion of Mental Health among Secondary School Students in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria.**

\*Soyingbe A.A<sup>1</sup>, Ogunyanwo O.O<sup>1</sup>, Onadipe, T.O<sup>2</sup>.,  
Adetoyi, H.E<sup>1</sup>, and Adetayo O.P.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Environmental Health Sciences Ogun State  
College of Health Technology, Ilese-Ijebu*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Health Information Management Ogun State  
College of Health Technology, Ilese-Ijebu*

**ABSTRACT:** *This study examined the roles of teachers in the promotion of mental health among Secondary Schools Students in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria. It specifically examined the influence of students' socioeconomic and religious background, physical environment and what are expected of teachers to do in order to promote and maintain optimal mental health among students. Four hypotheses were tested in respect of this study. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select 120 samples from the ten Secondary Schools in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area that were randomly selected. Personal interview and structured questionnaire were used in collecting data. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and inferential statistics of chi-square analysis. The results show that respondents' socioeconomic status and religious backgrounds, physical environment and teachers expected roles significantly influenced students' development of optimal mental health. The researchers vehemently recommended among other, that children should be reared in a stimulating physical environment and by loving, caring and dedicated parents for the development of optimal mental health, also that moral instructions, close good supervision at all times, good leadership traits and good administration are crucial roles of teachers and school authorities respectively which must not be jeopardized for the maintenance and promotion of mental health among secondary school students in our locality.*

**Keywords:** *Mental-Health, Secondary-School, Teachers, Socio-economic, Environment.*

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Mental Health refers to the capacity of an individual, a group and the environment to interact with one another in ways that promote the feeling of well-being. This entails the optimal development and use of mental abilities (thinking, reasoning, understanding, feeling and behaviour) required for normal level of functioning. According to World Health Organization (WHO), Mental Health is defined as a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Mental Health denotes a state of optimal development and functioning of the individual allowing the realization of aspiration and satisfaction of needs as well as the ability to change or cope with the environment (Michael, et al 1996).

Mental Health is an expression of emotions and signifies a successful adaptation to a range of demand. From perspectives of the discipline of positive psychology resilience. Abayomi (1993) mental health is all about the way human beings are able to adjust to various factors in their environment so that they still maintain a good mental state or social psychological well-being. It includes among others, how children adjust to school life, how adults adjust to job situations, marital life, community involvement activities, etc. Infact, mental health is concerned with how people adjust to all life events, whether good or bad.

Hence to some extent, many people who live normally in the communities are mentally disabled but they still live their normal life because culturally, socially and clinically, they are not yet defined as being mentally disabled. Mental health is a relative term. What we accept as being a normal mental state in our culture may turn out to be abnormal in another culture or another society. (Michael, et al 1996) in their contribution on the study of mental health, it was deduced that departure of individual from the state of happiness and satisfaction under certain environmental, social and emotional influences is refers to as Mental Disorder.

Mental Disorder can be defined as an illness with psychological or behavioural manifestation and/or impairment in functional due to social, psychological, genetic, physical or biological disturbances. The disorder is not limited to relations between the person and society. The illness is characterized by symptoms and/or impairment of functioning (Michael, et al 1996).

Health Promotion refers to that efforts put together scientifically to enhance the moving of health status forward better than it was as to enhance a healthy living and prolongment of lives. It means and involves the process whereby activities are incorporated into the life style of individual, families or community as to bring about an improvement or development in the health status of individual, family or community at large. WHO (2005) defined Health Promotion as “the process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improve their health”. The attainment of health promotion cannot be achieved without a prior knowledge of health, thus Health Education is the art and science that deals with the impaction of new knowledge, idea, notion about health matters to individual(s), families or community with appropriate language and technology in a way that it would be understood and influence their previous habits, behaviour, practices and make a modification towards health practice in them.

Therefore, the roles of health education (teacher) in the promotion of Mental Health among students cannot be overemphasized. Ozo (1975) believed that teachers, parents and guardians are all aware that for learning to take place, the child must be free from aches and pain, must be originally sound, mentally alert, emotional stable, physically well-nourished and live in a sound and healthy environment. A very sound and healthy environment, in this context, does not refer to the physical surrounding of man but also to the teacher-student, student-student, parents-teacher and student-parent relationship. The learning capability of students depends grossly on the aforementioned necessities.

## **II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Does the socioeconomic status of the students influence or contribute to deviant behaviour in individual mental health deployment?
2. Does the religious background of the students influence their individual mental health development?
3. Does the physical environment in a school influence optimal mental health development of the students?
4. What are the expected roles of teachers in the promotion of optimal mental health development of the students?

### **Hypothesis**

The basic hypotheses that underline this study are as follow:

1. Socioeconomic background of the student is not significantly related to the development of their optimal mental health.
2. Religious background of the students is not significantly related to the development of their optimal mental health.
3. Physical environment of a school is not significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students.
4. Teacher’s roles in the promotion of mental health of the students are not significantly related to the development of the optimal mental health of the students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

1. To investigate the influence of socioeconomic background of respondents on the optimal mental health of the students.
2. To examine the influence of religious background of the respondents in the development of the optimal mental health of the students.
3. To determine the influence of physical environment of the respondents in the optimal mental health development of the students.
4. To find out the role of teachers in the promotion and development of mental health of the students.

## **III. METHODOLOGY**

The research method adopted for this study was a descriptive survey design. The estimated population for this study consisted of 1,000 persons, which consists of school principals, school health personnel, health education teachers, parents and students of the 10 selected secondary schools in Ijebu Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 120 samples from the target population used for the study (table 1).

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents used for the study.**

S/N	Population	Estimated Population	Selected Samples
1	Schools Principals	8	2
2	Medical Social Officers (School Health Personnel(s)	24	13
3	Health Education Teachers	20	15
4	Parents (Chairman and Secretaries of Schools PTA)	50	20
5	Students	898	70
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>120</b>

**Table 2; Chi-square analysis on the influence of socioeconomic background of the students on the development of optimal mental health.**

S/N	Item	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	X <sup>2</sup>
1	Deviant behaviour is more common in children from poor homes	53	44.2	49	40.8	11	9.2	7	5.8	
2	Unsettled home leads to children become heavy smokers and drunkards	60	50.0	33	27.5	12	10.0	15	12.5	
3	Students in public school display undesirable character than their counterparts in private schools	46	38.3	59	49.2	13	10.8	2	1.7	
4	Emergence of various social clubs in schools promotes bad behaviours	49	40.8	31	25.8	26	21.7	14	11.7	
5	Bad habits are developed in boarding houses	35	29.2	70	58.3	4	3.3	11	9.2	
6	Poor group influence a child's character	81	67.5	29	24.2	6	5.0	4	3.3	0.63

Calculated value of  $\chi^2 = 0.63$ ; Df = 15; P < = 0.05 alpha level; critical value = 24.99

The main instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into sections A and B; Section A deals with the demographic data of the respondents while Section B elicited information on the influence of religions, socioeconomic status, physical environment and expected roles of the teachers in the development of optimal mental health of the respondents.

**Hypothesis 1:** Socioeconomic background of the students is significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students.

The table (2) above reveals that 102 (85%) respondents agreed that deviant behaviours are more prominent in children from rich homes than children from poor homes. 93 (representing 77.5%) of the respondents agreed that an unsettled home leads to children becoming heavy smokers and drunkards. It also shows that 105 (87.5%) of the respondents agreed that children in public school display undesirable character than their counterparts in private schools. It also reveals that 80(66.7%) of the total respondents agreed that emergence of various unchecked social clubs in schools, promote bad behaviours. However, the table also reveals that 105 (87.5%) and 69 (57.5%) of the respondents agreed that bad habits are developed in boarding houses and that poor peer group influences a child's character respectively.

The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  of 0.63 is less than the critical value of 24.99 with degree of freedom 15 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The hypothesis therefore that socioeconomic background of the respondents is significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students is accepted. This implies that socioeconomic background is significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students.

**Hypothesis 2:** Religious background of the respondents is not significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students.

**Table 3: Chi- square analysis of the influence of students' religious Background on the development of optimal mental health.**

S/N	Item	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	X <sup>2</sup>
1	Religious belief assist character formation	73	60.8	38	31.7	7	5.8	2	1.7	
2	Children from good religious background mostly exhibit excellent behavior	80	66.7	23	19.2	5	4.2	12	10.0	
3	Children in missionary schools suffer more from mental problems	10	8.3	11	9.2	47	39.2	52	43.3	41.0

Calculated value of  $\chi^2 = 41.0$ ; Df = 6; P < = 0.05 alpha level; critical value = 12.59

Carefully examination of table (3) above it reveals that majority of the respondents 111 (92.5%) agreed that religious belief assists character formation. It further shows that 80 (66.7%) and 23 (19.2%) of the total respondents were strongly agreed and agreed respectively that children from good religious background mostly exhibit excellent behaviour. More so, 99 (82.5%) of the total respondent disagreed that children in missionary schools suffer more from mental problems.

The calculated  $\chi^2$  value of 41.0 is greater than the critical value of 12.59 with the degree of freedom 6 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis that says religious background of the respondents is not significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students is rejected. This signifies that the religious background of the respondents is significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students.

**Hypothesis 3:** School physical environment is not significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of students.

**Table 4: Chi-square analysis on the influence of school physical environment on the development of optimal mental health of the students.**

S/N	Item	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	$\chi^2$
1	Students in the school environment where cigarette and alcohol are readily accessible suffer from mental illness	57	47.5	44	36.7	16	13.3	3	2.5	
2	Good administration and curriculum planning does not reduce deviant behaviour	13	10.8	44	36.7	17	14.2	46	38.3	
3	The maladjusted students are given special attention in my school	39	32.5	43	35.8	17	14.2	21	17.5	
4	A child's school have adverse influence on his/her behaviour	72	60.0	29	24.2	4	3.3	15	12.5	19.87

Calculated value of  $\chi^2 = 19.87$ ; Df = 9; P < = 0.05 alpha level; critical value = 16.92

A careful examination of table (4) above shows that the majority of the respondents agreed that students who are in the school environment where cigarette and alcohol are readily accessible suffer from mental illness with 101 (84.2%) of the total respondents. Also, reveals that 63 (52.5%) of the respondents disagree that good administration and curriculum planning does not reduce deviant behaviour. It further reveals that 82 (68.3%) of the respondents agreed that maladjusted students are given special attention in my school. However, 101 (84.2%) of the total respondents agreed that a child school have adverse influence on his/her behaviour.

The calculated  $\chi^2$  19.87 is greater than critical value of 16.92 with degree of freedom of 12 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis of optimal mental health of the students is rejected. This means that school physical environment of the respondents is significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students.

**Hypothesis 4:** Teachers' role in the promotion of mental health of the respondents is not significantly related to the development of optimal mental of the students.

**Table 5: Chi-square analysis on the influence of teachers' roles in the promotion of optimal mental health of the students.**

S/N	Item	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	$\chi^2$
1	Strict teachers develop maladjusted school children through fear	22	18.3	51	42.5	40	33.3	7	5.8	
2	Poor teacher-student relationship includes undesirable behaviour in children	68	56.7	25	20.8	13	10.8	14	11.6	
3	Consistent teachers absence of class gives room to formation of undesirable character in children	76	63.3	33	27.5	6	5.00	5	4.2	
4	Teachers should closely observe their pupils/students during school hours	47	39.2	61	50.8	5	4.20	7	5.8	
5	Inadequate facilities and equipments encourages indiscipline in school children	86	71.7	31	25.8	2	1.70	1	0.8	
6	Uncontrolled examination malpractices, forgery, hoolliganism, results to a criminality in youths.	55	45.8	48	40.0	17	14.2	0	0.0	
7	Inadequate health personnel for proper approval program leads to mental illness among children	51	42.5	42	35.0	21	17.5	6	5.0	
8	The strenuous teaching tune and sudden tests or examination results into anxiety, stress and frustration in students	61	50.8	43	35.8	12	10.0	4	3.3	74.55

Calculated value of  $\chi^2 = 74.55$ ; Df = 21; P < = 0.05 alpha level; critical value =32.67

Carefully examination of table (5) above, it reveals that majority of the respondents agreed that strict teachers develops maladjusted school children through fear with 106 (88.3%). Also shows that 93 (77.5%) of the total respondents agreed that poor teachers relationship induces undesirable behaviour in children. More so, it reveals that 109 (90.8%) of the respondents agreed that consistent teachers absence in the class gives room to formation of undesirable character in children. Likewise, the table 4-8 show that 108 (90%), 117 (97.5%) of the total respondents respectively agreed that, lack of teachers' observation of pupils/student, inadequate, facilities and equipment, uncontrolled examination malpractices and various misconduct, inadequate health personnel and strenuous social activities lead to mental illness in school children.

The calculated chi-square value of 74.55 is greater than the critical value 32.67 with degree of freedom 21 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis "4" that says teachers' role in the promotion of mental health of the respondents is significantly related to the development of the optimal mental health of the students is rejected. This indicates that teacher's role in the promotion of mental health of the respondents is significantly related to the development of the optimal mental health of the students.

#### **Summary of Findings**

The following are the major findings of the study

- (i) The socioeconomic background of students is significantly related to the development of their optimal mental health.
- (ii) Religious background of the students is significantly related to the development of their optimal mental health.
- (iii) School physical environment of the respondents is significantly related to development of optimal mental health of the students.
- (iv) Teacher's role in the promotion of mental health of the respondents is significantly related to the development of the optimal mental health of the students.

#### **IV. DISCUSSION**

The first major finding of this paper is that socio-economic background of the respondents is significantly related to the optimal mental health of the Secondary School Students in Ijebu-Ode local Government Area. This is in accordance with the finding of Abayomi (1993) who opined the serious socioeconomic problem such as abject poverty, loss of job, loss of valuable properties etc. has a great negative impact on the optimal mental health development.

The second major finding is that religions background of the respondents is significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students. This result endorses the view of some other scholars who observed that we do our patient a disservice if we restrict their distress a clinical condition. This also agreed with (Laoye 1981; Ozo (1975) and Green (1990) who in their researches described mental health as more than the absence of mental illness, but as the emotional and spiritual resilience which enable us to enjoy life.

The third major finding states that school physical environment is significantly related to the development of optimal mental health of the students. This is in accordance with the finding of Abayomi (1993), "The environment in which child is reared is very important in the development of the mental health of such child. Children who are reared in a stimulating environment and by loving and dedicated parents are more like going to be happy and emotionally stable than children who suffered from parents' neglect".

The fourth major finding states that teacher's role in the promotion of optimal mental health of the respondents is significantly related to the development of the optimal mental health of the students. This finding agreed with (Laoye, 1981; Ozo, 1975 and Green 1990) for the health of the child rests on the parents, but the school is in a strategic position to contribute effectively to the health of every school age child. The school can only fortify and supplement the parent's effort.

#### **V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Having elicited the constraints hindering the attainment of mental health among Secondary School Students in our society therefore must be prevented and curtailed. However, the following were recommended.

- (i) Children should be reared in a stimulating environment and by loving and dedicated parents as this goes a long way in the maintenance and promotion of mental health of such children.
- (ii) Good interpersonal relationship with one's neighbours or classmates promotes good mental health, whereas hostility among neighbours (classmates) breeds poor mental health.
- (iii) Religion or moral instruction should be made compulsory for pupils/students at elementary and secondary school levels of Nigerian education system for sound mental health development of the students.
- (iv) Poor peer groups influence each other' children should be mindful of kind of friends they move or play with in the school.

- (v) Health education teachers should impart adequate scientific knowledge on their students, and also ensure that the general well being of such student(s) is not jeopardized.
- (vi) School authority should ensure that they provide good administration, leadership traits, good supervision, conducive learning environment and good curriculum planning.
- (vii) The school authority should try to control and constantly check-mate the emergence and membership of social clubs in the school premises.

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