

INFLUENCE OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL VARIABLES ON PERCEPTION OF AGEING AMONG TEACHERS IN ANAMBRA AND AKWA-IBOM STATES, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Ageing comes with some indicators including decline in functions of the organs which take its toll virtually on every aspect of wellbeing of the ageing person particularly if this important and inevitable phase of life is not prepared for. Right perception of the concept of ageing is no doubt, the very first and perhaps, most important step towards healthy ageing. Positive perception of ageing by teachers will improve the standard of most ageing teachers and also put them in the right frame of mind as they age. The present study examined the Influence of Psycho-social Variables on Perception of Ageing among Teachers in Anambra and Akwa-Ibom states. Activity, Functionalist and Psycho-social theory of personality guided the study. The sample comprised four hundred and two teachers (402) in Anambra state and five hundred and three (503) teachers in Akwa-Ibom state selected through multi-stage sampling technique. Five research instruments namely Psycho-social Variables on Perception of Ageing Questionnaire (PSVPAQ); Brief Ageing Perception Questionnaire (B-APQ); Self-esteem Scale (SES); Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SRAS) and Emotional Adjustment Bank (EAB) were used to collect data. Seven hypotheses were tested. Descriptive statistics, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Independent t-test, Multiple Regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used for data analyses. The study confirmed that there was significant difference due to gender and state of origin in the perception of ageing. There was significant composite influence of societal roles, ageing stereotypes and socio-economic status on perception of ageing. Perception of ageing significantly influenced the self-esteem of teachers. It was recommended among others that there is need for welfare as well as awareness packages for teachers so as to have healthy perception of ageing and adequately prepare for such. Teachers' gratuity and pension should be paid as soon as they disengage from service to enable them move into other areas of interest.

Key Words: *Psycho-social Variables, Ageing, Perception, Personality.*

Background to the Study

Ageing and the ageing process are aspects of human experiences which begin the moment a person is born. Each day that passes makes a person one day older. The older a person becomes the nearer the person moves to that stage of life in which everything in the person's makeup and functions decline. Ageing is an important phase of life as it signals our gradual final exit from the planet earth. Ageing from this perspective is seen as ongoing, starting at conception and ending with death. It occupies the total life span, not merely the final stage of life. Kart and Kinney (2005) confirmed that without the knowledge and understanding of the entire life span, it may be difficult to understand the events of anyone's life phase. In this sense, ageing is studied to learn not only about the final phase of life, but also about youth and middle years as these stages determine to a large extent how people age and their perception of ageing.

According to Olajide and Ayantunji (2016), most people are frightened and not comfortable to hear that they are ageing or growing old. This is simply because it tends to suggest advancement in age, decline in the function of the organs of the body, and loss of flexibility, decline in hearing, vision and lessen of muscular strength, flexibility of the skin and blood vessels, appearance of wrinkles on the skin, etc. The negative

indicators which show decline in the functions of the body organs due to ageing affect many people psychologically and socially.

Every person perceives the world and approaches life challenges and events differently. Denga in Osuji and Nweze (2014) confirmed that two people could see a thing differently but each sees a reality that is unique to him or her and that is the reality that moderates his or her behaviour. Ajala (2006) recognized that though all human societies recognize the roles of the elderly in social relations but the perception of ageing, apart from being subjected to the wave of culture change, is not the same thing in all human cultures.

The body changes that signal ageing may be devastating and traumatic and this creates fear and anxiety over ageing and death, thereby making anxiety a psychological variable that influence perception of ageing. According to Wolitzky-Taylor, Castriotta, Lenze, Stanley and Craske (2010) anxiety disorders are among the most common clinical problems reported among ageing persons, and their detrimental effects in late life are comparable to those of depression.

Socioeconomic status (SES) is key in determining the quality of life of older people and it has been found to affect the psychological health of ageing persons (American Psychological Association, 2017). Teachers in Nigeria are not well paid which has placed them either at the middle or low socioeconomic status. Many of them find it very difficult to save out of their salaries and make meaningful investment that will sustain them when they retire. At mid-age, when coming close to the reality of disengaging from paid job, many face emotional trauma which affect not only their personal life but also their work.

Self-esteem is a generalized evaluation of the self and it can strongly influence thoughts, modes and behaviour. Low self-esteem may hold one back from succeeding at work because one does not believe in him/herself to be capable of success. By contrast, having a healthy self-esteem can help a person achieve success because such a person navigates life with positive, assertive attitude and believe he/she can accomplish stated goals.

Furthermore, ageing is a highly individualized and complex process, yet it continues to be stereotyped due to cultural and societal imposed standards. Stereotypes of ageing include assumptions and generalizations about how people at or over a certain age should behave, and what they are likely to experience, without regard for individual differences or unique circumstances. Examples are: old people have poor health with diminishing mental ability, unattractiveness, sexless, unhappy, have negative personality traits, lonely, behave like children, forgetful and boring. These beliefs are gradually internalized and consequently they influence individual perceptions of their own ageing.

Discrimination also exist between men and women in matters concerning education, health, employment and general societal roles making gender and state of origin a plausible related variables that may influence ageing views.

Statement of the Problem

The inevitability of ageing and the fear of dying have haunted human being and it has been a human dream to retard ageing and defy death. Ageing by its nature may breed anxiety which involves fear and worries about the future of the individual as a result of near or cessation in active working life, fear of death and losing loved ones. Ageing may come with either happiness over accomplishments or pain and sorrow over unfulfilled dreams, negligence and failures which may lead to aggression, depression, anxiety and in extreme

case suicide. Others include dysfunctional family matters as well as psychological or behaviour disorders such as depression, hypertension, identity crisis, alcoholism, loneliness, fast ageing & ill-health occasioned at times by loss of good accommodation among others. Many teachers have low standard of living before and after retirement, this has brought untold hardship and suffering as a result of their inability to pay life sustaining bills. This financial incapacitation and the way the society underrates teachers have affected many of them negatively. This has created low self-esteem, reduced self-worth, depression, aggression, lack of dedication to duty, low social network and other challenges.

Many works have been carried out on the effects of positive and negative perception of ageing, but there is gap in research on psycho-social variables that influence perception of ageing. Therefore this study sets out to investigate the influence of psycho-social variables on perception of ageing among teachers in Anambra and Akwa-Ibom states, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided this research work:-

1. there will be no significant difference based on gender and state of origin in the perception of ageing among teachers.
2. there will be no significant difference due to state of origin in ageing stereotypes among teachers.
3. there will be no significant composite influence of societal roles, ageing stereotypes and socio-economic status on perception of ageing among teachers in Anambra and Akwa-Ibom states.
4. perception of ageing will have no significant influence on the emotional adjustment of teachers in Akwa-Ibom and Anambra states.
5. perception of ageing will not significantly influence the self-esteem of teachers in Anambra and Akwa-Ibom states.
6. positive perceptions of ageing will not significantly impact the health status of teachers in Akwa-Ibom and Anambra states
7. there will be no significant differences in ageing anxiety among teachers based on their gender and state of origin.

Methodology

This was a descriptive study which adopted a survey research design. This design was found suitable as the research work involved cross cultural studies that requires large population.

Population of the study

The target population for this study comprised all secondary school teachers in Anambra and Akwa-Ibom States.

Sample and Sampling Procedures

Multi stage sampling process was used to select four hundred and two (402) teachers in Anambra and five hundred and three (503) teachers in Akwa-Ibom state for this study.

One senatorial district out of the three senatorial districts in the two states were selected respectively by simple random sampling. Five (5) senior secondary schools from each of the seven local government areas in Anambra central senatorial district were selected using lucky dip process. Also using the same process four secondary schools (4) from each local government areas in Ikot-Ekpene senatorial district were selected.

Stratified random sampling process was used to select teachers who are between ages 45-59 years from each of the schools randomly selected.

Instrumentation

The following research instruments were used to obtain data for the study:

1. Brief-Ageing Perception Questionnaire (B-APQ)

B-Ageing Perception Questionnaire by Sexton, King-Kallimanis, Morgan & McGee (2014). It is a 17 item instrument graded on a four point Likert scale.

2. Self Esteem Scale (SES)

The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale was developed by Rosenberg (1965) to measure self- esteem. It is a 10 item questionnaire with items answered on a four point scale.

3. Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS)

The Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS) by Zung (1971). The SAS is a 20-item self-reported assessment device built to measure anxiety levels. Each item is scored on a Likert-type scale.

4. Emotional Adjustment Bank

Emotional Adjustment Bank (EAB) by Aguado, Rubio, Hontangas & Hernandez (2005). The instrument has 28-items measures with a six point scale ranging from totally agree to totally disagree.

Validity of Instrument

Apart from the fact that some of the instruments used for this study were adopted or adapted from known experts in the field of psychometrics, all the instruments were further submitted to experts in University of Lagos to ensure content validity of the instruments.

Reliability of Instrument

The Test re-test reliability method was used in each case to determine the reliability of the instrument. The reliability co-efficient which ranged from 0.75 to 0.9 from each of the instruments.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from this study was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Hypotheses 1 and 7 were analysed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Hypothesis 2 was analyzed using independent t-test, hypothesis 3 was analyzed with multiple regression, and hypotheses 4, 5 and 6 were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Ageing Perception of Teachers According to State and Gender

Descriptive Statistics				
State	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Anambra	Male	41.9605	8.85203	76
	Female	43.5798	8.67524	326
	Total	43.2736	8.72093	402
Akwa- Ibom	Male	42.0127	4.65085	158
	Female	41.0783	4.90339	345
	Total	41.3718	4.84038	503
Total	Male	41.9957	6.30859	234
	Female	42.2936	7.10047	671
	Total	42.2166	6.90225	905

Table 3. Two-Way Analysis of Variance for Differential Perception of Teachers Ageing by State and Gender

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1064.382 ^a	3	354.794	7.611	.000	.025
Intercept	1117213.390	1	1117213.390	23965.079	.000	.964
State	235.704	1	235.704	5.056	.025	.006
Gender	18.426	1	18.426	.395	.530	.000
State * Gender	256.197	1	256.197	5.496	.019	.006
Error	42003.170	901	46.618			
Total	1655994.000	905				
Corrected Total	43067.551	904				

a. R Squared = .025 (Adjusted R Squared = .021)

Table 4: Pairwise Comparison for the Difference in Ageing Perception Due to State

(I) State	(J) State	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Anambra	Akwa-Ibom	1.225*	.545	.025	.156	2.294
Akwa-Ibom	Anambra	-1.225*	.545	.025	-2.294	-.156

Based on estimated marginal means
 *. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
 b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

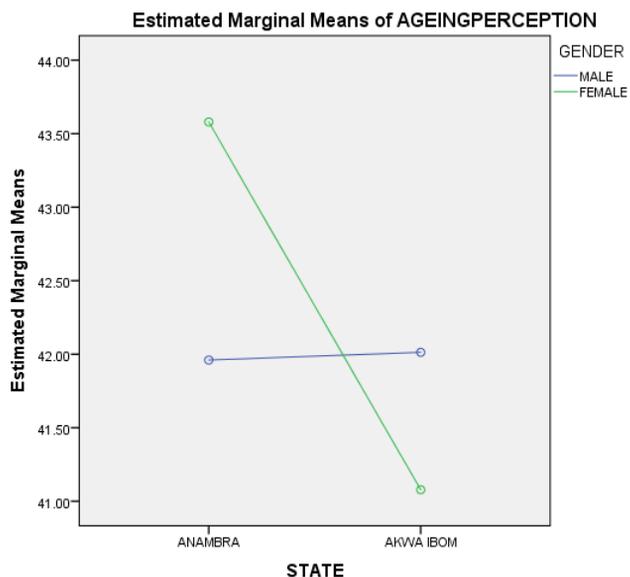


Figure 1. Difference between mean scores of male and female teachers on ageing perception in Anambra and Akwa Ibom State.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Ageing Stereotypes in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

Group Statistics					
	State	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Stereotype	Anambra	402	27.2413	4.42775	.22084
	Akwa- Ibom	503	28.7296	4.52158	.20161

Table 6. Independent Samples Test for Difference due to State of Origin in Ageing Stereotypes among Teachers.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Stereotype	Equal variances assumed	2.215	.137	-4.966	903	.000	-1.48833	.29972	-2.07656	-.90009
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.977	866.930	.000	-1.48833	.29902	-2.07522	-.90144

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of Societal Roles, Ageing Stereotypes and Socio-economic Status on perception of Ageing in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Ageing perception	42.2166	6.90225	905
Stereotype	28.0685	4.53840	905
Socio-Economic Status	23.7403	4.41513	905
Societal Roles	22.6652	5.75068	905

Table 8. Multiple Regression for the Contribution of Ageing Stereotype, Socio-economic Status and Societal Roles to the Prediction of Ageing Perception in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	26.032	1.964		13.256	.000
	Stereotype	.038	.047	.025	.816	.415
	Socio-economic status	.265	.051	.169	5.210	.000
	Societal roles	.389	.039	.324	9.928	.000

Table 9. Composite Relationship of Societal Roles, Stereotypes and Socio-Economic Status with Ageing Perception

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.411 ^a	.169	.166	6.30252

Table 10. ANOVA for the Influence of Societal Roles, Ageing Stereotype and Socio-Economic Status on Perception of Ageing

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7278.220	3	2426.073	61.077	.000 ^b
	Residual	35789.331	901	39.722		
	Total	43067.551	904			

Table 11. Descriptive Statistics of Teachers on Perception of Ageing and Emotional Adjustment in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Ageing Perception	42.2166	6.90225	905
Emotional Adjustment	26.9503	6.23194	905

Table 12. Influence of Ageing Perception on Emotional Adjustment of Teachers in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

		AGEING PERCEPTION	EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT
Perception of Ageing	Pearson Correlation	1	.529
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	905	905
Emotional Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	.529	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	905	905

Table 13. Descriptive Statistics of Teachers on Perception of Ageing and Self-Esteem in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Ageing Perception	42.2166	6.90225	905
Self-Esteem	27.0077	5.92626	905

Table 14. Influence of Perception of Ageing on Self-Esteem of Teachers in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

		Perception of Ageing	Self-esteem
Perception of Ageing	Pearson Correlation	1	.528
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	905	905
Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	.528	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	905	905

Table 15. Descriptive Statistics of Teachers on Ageing Perception and Health Status in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Perception of Ageing	42.2166	6.90225	905
Health Status	26.4464	4.82706	905

Table 15 shows that the mean score of teachers' ageing perception and health among teachers in Anambra and Akwa Ibom states were 42.2166 and 26.4464 respectively.

Table 16. Influence of Perception of Ageing on Health Status of Teachers in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

		Perception of Ageing	Health Status
Perception of Ageing	Pearson Correlation	1	.418
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	905	905
Health Status	Pearson Correlation	.418	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	905	905

Table 17. Descriptive Statistics of Ageing Anxiety of Teachers according to State and Gender

State	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Anambra	Male	40.0000	15.67333	76
	Female	39.1380	12.45580	326
	Total	39.3010	13.10732	402
Akwa-Ibom	Male	44.3608	10.52702	158
	Female	47.6928	12.19553	345
	Total	46.6461	11.78873	503
Total	Male	42.9444	12.56712	234
	Female	43.5365	13.03571	671
	Total	43.3834	12.91188	905

Table 18. Two-Way Analysis of Variance for Teachers Ageing Anxiety by State and Gender

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	13303.294 ^a	3	4434.431	29.077	.000	.088	87.231	1.000
Intercept	1151396.537	1	1151396.537	7549.803	.000	.893	7549.803	1.000
State	6553.618	1	6553.618	42.973	.000	.046	42.973	1.000
Gender	239.698	1	239.698	1.572	.210	.002	1.572	.240
State * Gender	691.048	1	691.048	4.531	.034	.005	4.531	.566
Error	137408.657	901	152.507					
Total	1854032.000	905						
Corrected Total	150711.951	904						

a. R Squared = .088 (Adjusted R Squared = .085)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

Table 19. Pairwise Comparison for the Difference in Ageing Anxiety Due to State

(I) State	(J) State	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Anambra	Akwa- Ibom	-6.458*	.985	.000	-8.391	-4.524
Akwa-Ibom	Anambra	6.458*	.985	.000	4.524	8.391

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

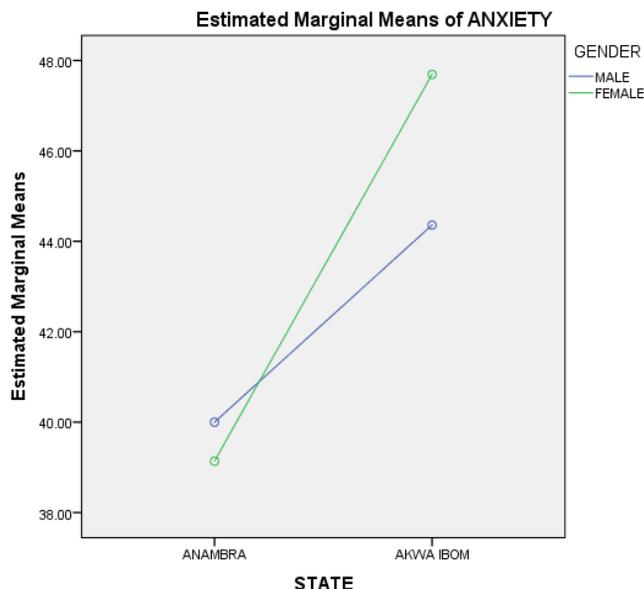


Figure 2. Difference between mean scores of male and female teachers on ageing anxiety in Anambra and Akwa Ibom States

Discussion of Findings

The result on table 3 indicated that there was significant difference in perception of ageing by teachers’ based on their state of origin and gender. This finding is supported by Ajala (2006) who recognized that though all human societies recognize the roles of the elderly in social relations, but perception of ageing apart from being subjected to the wave of culture change, is not the same in all human cultures. It was also shown on table 6 that there was significant difference due to state of origin in ageing stereotypes among teacher in the two states. This finding is supported by Dionigi (2015) who asserted that stereotypes of ageing are social constructs that are culturally and historically situated, as well as individually interpreted.

The result of the multiple regression on table 8 showed that there was significant composite influence of societal roles, ageing stereotypes and socio-economic status on perception of ageing among teachers in the two states. The result on table 12 showed that perception of ageing had significant influence on emotional adjustment of teachers in the two states. This finding was in line with Carstensen et.al (2011); Diener and Chan (2011).

Table 14 showed that perception of ageing had significant influence on the self-esteem of teachers in the two states. In supporting this finding, Laura-Maria, Mariano & Newton (2003) posited that ageing comes with a variety of losses from physical to social functions. The result of the analysis on table 16 showed that positive perception of ageing had significant impact on the health status of teachers in the two states. Finally, table 18 showed that there was significant difference due to gender and state of origin in the ageing anxiety among teachers in the two states. The result of this finding was supported by Abrahson & Silverstein 2006; Rashmi & Archang 2006.

Conclusion

The fact that ageing is an inevitable experience in the lives of all beings, notwithstanding, the phenomenon of ageing is sometimes carelessly used to mean inactivity or the absence of youthfulness in most cultures. This is because just as the society perceives the elderly in this light, the elderly also sometimes, do not have a healthy self-perception of their growing age and its embedded characteristics. The present study identified the predictors of perception of ageing as socio-economic status, societal roles, health status, State of origin, self-esteem and stereotypes. However, societal roles and socio-economic status are more important predictors of perception of ageing than ageing stereotypes. It was equally discovered that state of origin and gender are important variables in predicting perception of ageing. Gender, cultural values and state of origin were equally shown to determine the level of ageing anxiety in Anambra and Akwa-Ibom states, although the level differs in the two states. Perception, moreover, is an important predictor of positive and active ageing.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made

1. Government and all other stakeholders should give periodical training to teachers' right from earlier ages like 40 years, on how to develop positive perception of ageing.
2. Serving teachers should be encouraged and possibly supported to prepare the ground for setting up of a Small and Medium Scale Enterprise (SMSE) of their interest to keep them engaged after government service.

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