

# Emotional Adjustment and Academic Performance of Public Senior School Students in North Central Nigeria

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## Abstract

*In this study, the relationship between emotional adjustment and academic performance of public senior school students in north central Nigeria was investigated. One research question was raised and answered and one hypothesis formulated and tested. Three research instruments, namely, Psychosocial Adjustment Questionnaire (PAQ), Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT) and English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) were for data collection. The PAQ, MAT and ELAT were administered to 383 students drawn from 16 schools across North-Central States of Nigeria. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation to answer research question on the basis of the values of  $r$  (coefficient of correlation). Any correlation coefficient value below 0.50 was considered low while those above 0.50 was considered high. The hypothesis on the other hand, was tested at 0.05 level of significance by comparing the  $p$ -value (probability values) of Pearson's product moment correlation obtained from SPSS application with the significance level at 0.05. Results reveal that there is significant relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary schools in north central Nigeria. It was therefore recommended among others based on the present findings of the study, that parents be sensitized on the need to liaise with school counselors and teachers the strategies that will enable their wards adjust emotionally in school so that they can learn better in school.*

**Keywords:** Emotional adjustment, Academic performance, Students, Public, Senior secondary, School.

## Introduction

Behavioural problems among school students have certainly been a very old phenomenon. It has been observed long before now as an issue that has seriously affected the successes of a large number of

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students in schools despite many control responses put in place (McNeely, Nonnemaker and Blum, 2012). It is viewed as part of anti-social behaviour that brought a lot of untold setbacks for students in their educational achievements (Jessor, Graves, Hanson, and Jessor, 2018). Behavioural problem is defined as social problem that is undesirable to the social and legal norms of conventional society and its institutions of authority and usually elicits some form of control response (Research, 2018). These responses are sets of rules, instructions, or plans put in place to govern behavior of students. Behaviour problems among secondary school students are of concern to educators, counselors, stakeholders, and psychologists. Behavioural problem among secondary students has been well documented as a significant barrier to optimal education which many researchers have shown that such behaviour cuts across classes and gender all over. Behavioural problem is also term as emotional and behavioural adjustment of students. Meaning that some problems exhibited by students are caused out of stressful and depressing situations, leading to unhealthy behaviours (Baker, 2015). Furthermore, behavioural problem is noted to be inherent within the learning environment of a students. These inherent problems amongst the secondary school students which if not curbed, may negatively make students to have poor adjustment psychologically, emotionally and socially, leading to having a negative impact on students' which might then reveal the growing gap to poor academic failure.

Moreover, emotional adjustment which is a psychosocial index, refers to an individual's adaptation in emotional relationships within and with other people, both inside and outside the school, as reflected in the individual's attitudes and behaviour. According to Parker (2016), emotional adjustment is the behavioural process that individuals acquire for balance to enable them solve life emotional problems. In life, everyone needs to be emotionally stable inwardly and physically for them to function and perform any given task so as to bring out the best of an individual, but if one is unable to have a stable emotion, refusing to accept other hand of friendship, then there is the tendency that such a student might achieve poorly in their education. Santrock (2018) maintained that emotional adjustment refers to a continuous process by which a person tries to adjust his own emotions to suit his environment, in the face of his need for adaptation. Sharma (2016) defined emotional adjustment as "the emotional reaction to the demands and pressures of the social environment imposed upon the individual". Meaning that the physical outlook of an individual is as a result of the inner outburst either negatively or positively. It is a process of altering one's emotions to achieve a harmonious relationship with one's environment.

Numerous investigations have suggested that there is a positive relationship between higher level of emotional adjustment and excellent academic success among students. The extensive body of research advocates that capabilities of emotional adjustment contribute to excellent performance of students. In addition, emotional adjustment seems to have a substantial positive influence on academic achievement. Goleman (2018) and Goleman (2015) further posited that emotional adjustment is considerable predictor of academic success. Similarly, Baron (2017) also perceives that the ability of a student to emotionally adjust and tackle personal issues of life are essential ingredients of academic success. Emotionally

adjusted learners are committed, excited and eager and this determines their academic progress. Goleman (2015) expresses the emotional intelligence and adjustment represents 80% of all learning while cognitive capabilities represent about 20%. Although it is a strong claim, it needs to be adequately investigated in order to determine the degree to which emotional adjustment correlates to academic achievement.

For the fact that life is filled with eventualities, the ability to work on one's emotions appropriately is essential to understanding of other human's emotions around him so that it can help him or her adjustment appropriately. To this end, the present study posits to investigate emotional adjustment and academic performance of public senior school students in north central Nigeria.

### **Research Question**

The following research question guided the study

1. What is the relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in North Central, Nigeria?

### **Hypothesis**

The following null hypothesis was formulated and was tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in North Central, Nigeria.

### **Research Methods**

This study adopted the correlation research design. Data were collected using a structured questionnaires titled Psychosocial Adjustment Questionnaire (PAQ), Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT) and English Language Achievement Test (ELAT). The PAQ, MAT and ELAT were administered to 383 students drawn from 16 schools across North-Central States of Nigeria using simple random sampling technique of lucky dip.

Pearson product moment correlation was used to answer research question on the basis of the values of  $r$  (coefficient of correlation). Any correlation coefficient value below 0.50 was considered low while those above 0.50 was considered high. The hypothesis was however tested at 0.05 level of significance by comparing the  $p$ -value (probability values) of Pearson's product moment correlation obtained from SPSS application with the significance level at 0.05. For hypothesis whose  $p$ -values is less than 0.05, is either rejected or accepted when it is greater than 0.05.

## Results and Discussion

**Research Question 1:** what is relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in North Central Zone, Nigeria?

Table 1. Calculated r-value of Pearson's Product Moment on the Level of Relationship between Emotional Adjustment and Academic Achievement of Public Senior Secondary School students in North Central Zone, Nigeria

S/N	Variables	N	R	Remarks
1	Emotional Adjustment	383	-0.112	Negatively weak Relationship
2	Academic Achievement	383		

Table 1 shows the level of relationship between emotional adjustment and students' academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in North Central Zone, Nigeria. Results show that calculated r values is given as -0.112. This value is below the benchmark value of 0.50. Hence, there is a negatively low relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in North Central Zone, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in North Central Zone, Nigeria.

Table 2. Calculated P-values of Pearson's Product Moment on the Significance of Relationship between Emotional Adjustment and Academic Achievement of Public Senior Secondary School students in North Central Zone, Nigeria

S/N	Variables	N	R	p-value	Decision	Conclusion
1	Emotional Adjustment	383	-0.112	0.029	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
2	Academic Achievement	383				

Table 2 shows the significance of relationship between social adjustment and students; academic achievement of public senior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria. Results show that calculated p-value is given as 0.029. This value is below the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, hypothesis

five is rejected indicating there is a significant relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary schools in North Central Zone, Nigeria.

## Discussion of Results

The finding from hypothesis one reveal that there is a significant relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary schools in North Central States, Nigeria. Goleman (2018) and Goleman (2015) further posited that emotional adjustment is considerable predictor of academic success. Similarly, Baron (2017) also perceives that the ability of a student to emotionally adjust and tackle personal issues of life are essential ingredients of academic success. Emotionally adjusted learners are committed, excited and eager and this determines their academic progress. Goleman (2015) expresses the emotional intelligence and adjustment represents 80% of all learning while cognitive capabilities represent about 20%. Although it is a strong claim, it needs to be adequately investigated in order to determine the degree to which emotional adjustment correlates to academic achievement. Goleman (2018) and Goleman (2015) further posited that emotional adjustment is considerable predictor of academic success. Similarly, Baron (2017) also perceives that the ability of a student to emotionally adjust and tackle personal issues of life are essential ingredients of academic success. Emotionally adjusted learners are committed, excited and eager and this determines their academic progress. Goleman (2015) expresses that emotional adjustment represents 80% of all learning while cognitive capabilities represent about 20%. Although it is a strong claim but yet it needs to be adequately investigated in order to determine the degree to which emotional adjustment correlates to academic achievement.

## Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between emotional adjustment and academic performance of public senior school students in north central Nigeria. Results reveal that there is a significant relationship between emotional adjustment and academic achievement of public senior secondary schools in north central Nigeria. The implies that emotional adjustment enhance students' commitment and eagerness to their academic endeavours. Based on the results of this study, it was therefore recommended among others that parents be sensitized on the need to liaise with school counselors and teachers the strategies that will enable their wards adjust emotionally in school so that they can learn better in school.

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