



Correlate of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement among Junior Secondary School Students with varied Socio-Economic Backgrounds in Kuje, Abuja

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Abstract

The main objective of the paper was to investigate the correlates of emotional intelligence and academic achievement among junior secondary school students with socio-economic backgrounds in Kuje, Abuja. A survey and correlational survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was one thousand three hundred and sixty one students from seven junior secondary schools. Three hundred and six students which comprised one hundred and sixty nine males and one hundred and thirty nine females were sampled through proportionate sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was State Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) with internal consistency of 0.89. The Socio-economic Status Inventory (SESI) was used to establish the participant's parent socio-economic status. The data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and t-test for independent sample. The findings of the study revealed that a significant relationship exist between students' emotional intelligence and their academic achievement. Also no significant difference in emotional intelligence was found between male and female students. The study also found that students from high socio-economic status were having a higher level of emotional intelligence than students from low socioeconomic status. It was concluded that emotional intelligence has implications on academic achievement, this means that students who are emotionally intelligent perform better academically in English language. Lastly, socio economic status of parents plays a vital role in the emotional intelligence and academic achievement of students in English language. It was recommended that curriculum developers should integrate emotional intelligence into school curriculum of secondary schools. Also, there should be emotional intelligence training for teachers and school administrators.

Keywords: Gender, socio-economic status, emotional intelligence, academic achievement.



Introduction

One concept that is receiving attention by educational psychologists and researchers in the present day is emotional intelligence. There is a wide belief that emotional and social competence is as important, or even more important, than traditional dimension of intellectual ability and personality (Tok & Morali, 2009). Emotional intelligence has proven to be a relevant construct in different domains of daily life, including mental and physical health, social functioning, and academic and workplace performance (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008; O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2010). Chamundeswari (2013) viewed emotional intelligence as an ability to recognize the meanings of emotions and their relationships and to reason and solve problem on the basis of them. It is therefore involved in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion-related feelings, understand the information of those emotions, and manage them.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to perceive, use, understand, manage, and handle emotions (Colman, 2014). He reported that people with high emotional intelligence can recognize their own emotions and those of others, use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately. Our thoughts influence how we feel and how we feel influences how we think. The connections between emotion and learning are bi-directional and complex.

Emotions are the relay stations between sensory input and thinking. When the input is interpreted positively, we are motivated to act and achieve a goal. When the input is interpreted negatively, we do not act and do not learn. While Intelligence Quotient (IQ) has long been used as a predictor of a student's success, as the world enters the 21st century, research shows that EI is a better predictor of success than the more traditional measures of cognitive intelligence (Colman, 2014). EI is one such factor which is instrumental in situations that call upon students to adjust successfully from one environment to another. Emotional intelligence skills are vital to human performance and the management of successful learning organizations.

Academic achievement as far as education is concerned is something connected to or which involves a lot of concentration and experiences in an organization which officially aims at encouraging and developing arts, skills, and knowledge. It can also be referred to as success in reaching a particular goal, status or standard especially by making effort for a long time. For one to achieve something especially on academic line that needs one's effort and skills, certain factors are responsible for that and this include: factors within the individual, classroom or environment, the home, community or society in general (Bossaert, Doumen, Buyse & Verschueren, 2011).

In Nigeria today, as in many other countries of the world, students' academic achievement is considered as a basic indicator for evaluating educational systems. It is one of the top priorities in schools. It is so important that parents, teachers, and society in general are much worried and apprehensive about the way to improve it.

Woolfolk (2010) describe socio-economic status as 'the relative standing in society based on income, power, background and prestige. Socio economic status is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation, neighborhood and political power .for each of these five factors the consideration of how fixed each one is also contributes to socio-economic status. Traditionally a student's SES has included, as components, parental educational attainment, parental occupational status, and household or family income, with appropriate adjustment for household or family composition.



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In the literature and in official reports SES is sometimes reported as a single variable, such as parental educational attainment level, and sometimes as a composite variable with several component variables put together. Parental occupations also play a significant role on their children's academic performance. That parents' occupation was next to parents' education in predicting academic achievement of children. Parents belong to the high ranking occupational status had better grades than their counterparts whose parents belonged to the low ranking occupational status (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

Kuje is one of the area council in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja that witnessed the concentration of people of different socio-economic status. The area comprised of people from high, medium and low socio-economic status. This group tends to have certain identities that depict their attitude towards educating their children. Families of high socio-economic status possess the means to support their children readiness for school. As a result of this most children that belong to high socio-economic status are likely to achieve success in school because of the availability of educational facilities that enhances their educational achievement. A child that comes from families of low socio-economic status will be handicapped from getting any economic aid that may allow him achieve success in education. The expensive price of books, exorbitant school fees and inadequate library facilities are the real burden to families of low socio-economic status. These families face many other challenges when it comes to providing optimum care and education for their children.

Low and Nelson (2006) claimed that Emotional Quotient is crucial to a student's personal health and college success. In their study, results revealed that students with emotional intelligence skills are better able to cope with demanding and complex college experience and when individuals are able to lead their life successfully in the academy, they can focus on their learning and perform very well academically. Based on the obtained result, for any increase in students' emotional intelligence, there will be the same increase in their academic achievement. The present study intends to investigate if there is a relationship between student's emotional intelligence and their academic achievement.

Another study conducted by Rode, Mooney, Arthaud-Day, Near, Baldwin T, Rubin & Bommer (2007) predicted that emotional intelligence was related to academic performance for two reasons. First, academic performance involves a great deal of ambiguity. Second, majority of academic work is self-directed, requiring high levels of self-management. Therefore, individuals with high emotional intelligence would perform better academically. Several other studies show that a positive relationship exists between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. The present study will go further and investigate if academic achievement is influenced by the role of gender and emotional intelligence.

Ahmed (2010) on his study on parental socio-economic status and academic achievement among secondary school student in Kano municipal finds that the socio-economic status of parents ranging from parental level of education and occupation tends to exert a significant role in determining the academic achievement of students. Families of low socio-economic status place top priority on housing, food, clothing and healthcare. Educational toys, games and books appear to be luxuries and parents may not have the time, energy or knowledge to find innovative and less expensive ways to foster, young children development. He concluded that the higher the person's social class the higher their educational attainment and performance in school is likely to be. The children of high parental socio-economic status are more likely to stay on in the school



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and perform academically better, since they are likely to drive favourable environmental factor. Families with high socio-economic status have often more success in preparing their young children to school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development. The present study will look at the influence of gender, socio-economic status and emotional intelligence on students' academic achievement.

Subramanyam and Screenivaas (2008) on their part studied academic achievement and emotional intelligence of secondary school children and found that there was no significant difference with regard to the impact of gender on emotional intelligence and academic achievement. The present study looked at the role of gender, socio-economic status and emotional intelligence on students' academic achievement.

However, in trying to contrast gender, socio-economic status on emotional intelligence there is tendency to have variation in their performance in school because emotional intelligence has been proposed both as an important addition to the landscape of human individual differences and as a key determinant of real life outcome. In order for government and educators to better meet the demands and challenges of today's public education system, the development of emotional skills should be incorporated into the school curriculum to produce healthy, responsible, and productive students. This is one of the reasons that motivated the researchers to carry out a study on influence of gender, socio economic status and emotional intelligence on academic achievement among junior secondary school students in kuje area council

Educational evaluators especially teachers give more emphasis on students' abilities in assessing their academic achievement with intelligence. They believed that students with higher intelligence are likely to have better academic performance. This belief is related to the fact that many research conducted showed significant correlation between academic achievement and intelligence. But despite all that, variations still exist even among the students with higher intelligence in their academic achievements. This made researchers to think about another variable that may be responsible for this variation beside intelligence. It has now, however, been established that though an individual may have the intellectual potential to succeed at institutions of higher education, he/she may experience difficulty in dealing with emotional issues, have poor relationships, and be ineffective in his/her decision making.

In order for educators to build high-achieving, productive and health students there must be a balance in the cognitive and emotional domains of learning. If emotional intelligence skills are developed, strengthened and enhanced, student may demonstrate increased level of personal academic career achievement. Junior Secondary Schools should consider emotional intelligence skills as nontraditional variables of intelligence to assist to the student success.

In Kuje area council Abuja, not much attention has been focused on exploring EI in the school system and in the teaching of English language. Many teachers, educationists, schools and students in kuje have little or no idea of emotional intelligence and its effects on learning. This is evident in the lack of literature on this subject particularly in kuje. The consideration of factors affecting success in junior secondary schools in Nigeria often neglects the role of non-cognitive variables including emotional intelligence (EI). Hence, there arises a need to re-conduct and to re-examine influence of gender, socio economic status and emotional intelligence on academic achievement among junior secondary school students in Kuje area council, Abuja.



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Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among junior secondary school students in Kuje Area Council.
2. To find out the differences in emotional intelligence between male and female junior secondary school students in Kuje Area Council.
3. To find out the differences in emotional intelligence between students from high socio-economic status and students from Low socio-economic status in Kuje Area Council.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among junior secondary school students in Kuje Area Council.
2. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between male and female junior secondary school students in Kuje Area Council
3. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between students from high socio-economic status and students from Low socio-economic status in Kuje Area Council.

Methodology

The study adopted the correlational survey research design. This design is appropriate for the research because it is focused on finding the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. The population of this study comprised 1361 (JSS III) junior secondary school students from seven junior secondary schools in Kuje area council, Abuja according to the data obtained from the Educational Secretariat FCT- Abuja, Kuje zonal office. The population consists of 786 (58%) male and 579 (42%) female from different socio economic background, varying intellectual abilities and cutting across diverse cultural and religious background. The distribution of the population based on location and gender is shown in the table below;

For any population that is 1361, it is recommended to use a sample of 306 using the table of population and sample size developed by Research Advisor (2006).

The junior secondary schools that was used by the researcher are government own schools, which has student from different educational and occupational background. The sample of this study which comprised 306 JSS III students drawn across seven junior secondary schools in Kuje Area Council Abuja and the gender distribution breakdown are shown in the tables below.

Table 1. Breakdown of Sample Size

SN	Name of School	Location	No. of JSS 3 Students	Sample Size
1	JSS	PEGI	252	57
2	JSS	TUKPECH	135	30
3	JSS	SHADADI	117	26
4	JSS	KAYARDA	184	41
5	JSS	PASALI	214	48
6	JSS	CHUKUKU	98	20
7	JSS	KUJE	361	84
Total			1361	306

A proportionate stratified sampling technique was used in the conduct of this study. With proportionate stratification, the sample size of each stratum is proportionate to the population size of the stratum. This means that each stratum has the same sampling fraction.



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The advantage of using a proportionate stratified sampling is that the estimate obtained from the sample is more accurate since it ensures all strata are represented in the sample (Awotunde and Ugodulunwa, 2004).

The instrument for the data collection was the State of Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) adopted from Ahmad, Bangash and Khan (2009) as developed by Shuttle, Haggerty, Golden and Donheim (1998) which assessed emotional intelligence based on self-report responses to 33 items tapping the appraisal and expression of emotion in self and others. Section A of the questionnaire measured demographic variables of the respondents which include, school, class, age and gender of the respondents. In addition to utilizations of emotions in solving problems, participants 'response indicated their extent of agreement with each of the statement, using the Likert scale of Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Undecided (3), Disagree (4) and Strongly Disagree (5). The scoring procedure was such that these responses were reversed scored during the coding of the responses: "Strongly Agree (SA)" were reverse coded 5; that of "Agree (A)" were reverse coded 4; that of "Undecided (UD)" remained 3; that of "Disagreed (D)" were reverse coded 2; and lastly, that of "Strongly Disagree (SD)" were reverse coded 1. Each respondent's (student) total score on the Emotional Intelligence Scale was derived by summing the values on statements responded to. A higher score reflects high emotional intelligence and a low score reflect low emotional intelligence.

Another instrument used for data collection was the Socio Economic Status Inventory (SESI) developed by the researchers to ascertain the socio economic status of the students.

In the case of academic achievement, the scores in English language in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) conducted by National Examination Council (NECO) in 2016 of the students were used. The scores were collected from the school's examination officer.

The instrument adopted from Ahmad, Bangash and Khan (2009) followed due procedures to establish the validity of the instrument. Two experts from Educational psychology made critical suggestions and recommendations. The corrections given by the experts were effected and hence the content validity of the instrument was established.

The findings of the validation process provided strong support for reliability and validity of the instrument. Concerning the reliability evidence, a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.89 revealed that the EQ-I subscales and total scores have good internal consistency and thus, the EQ-I has demonstrated more than adequate reliability. Records on academic performance which was BECE 2016 English result was collected from the schools' examination officers. For the purpose of this research, students were grouped as belonging to high socio economic status or low socio economic status based on the type of house they live in (whether it is being owned by the parents or rented), the educational attainment of their parents, and occupation; and the means of transportation for the family. Participants having parents with a degree, personal house, who are civil servants and having a vehicle were categorized as being in a high socio-economic status. Participants having parents who live in rented apartments, with maximum of senior secondary school certificates; who are petty traders and/peasant farmers, possessing bicycle as means of transportation were categorized as being in low socio-economic status.

Inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test hypotheses one; while t-test for independent sample was used to test hypotheses two and three. Data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 22. The stated null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.



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Results

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among junior secondary school students in Kuje Area council.

Table 2. Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and students' academic performance

Variables	M	SD	r	P	N
Emotional Intelligence	99.18	7.90	.334	.000	306
Academic Performance	63.86	9.22			

* $P < .05$. ** $P < .01$

From Table 2, the correlation value of .334 shows that a moderate positive relationship exist between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of junior Secondary School Students in Kuje area council. The P-value of .000 shows that the relationship between the two variables is significant. The relationship is significant at $P=.000$, $P < .05$. Therefore, based on the obtained result, the null hypotheses that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement among junior secondary school students was rejected. The study revealed that a significant relationship exist between students' emotional intelligence and their academic achievement.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between JSS3 male and female students on emotional intelligence in Kuje Area council

Table 3. t-test for differences in Emotional Intelligence by Gender

Variables	N	Mean	S D	t-value	df	p-value
Male Students	169	98.69	9.24	-1.02	304	.305
Female Students	137	99.78	9.19			

From table 3, the result revealed that the mean score on emotional intelligence for male students ($M = 98.69$, $SD = 9.24$) is not significantly different from that of the mean score on emotional intelligence of female students ($M = 99.78$, $SD = 9.19$) at t-value ($t = -1.02$, $df = 304$, $P = .305$). Thus, our P-value .305 is $> .05$. Therefore, based on the obtained result, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between male and female students on emotional intelligence was accepted. The study revealed that no significant difference exist in emotional intelligence between male and female junior secondary school students in Kuje area council.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between jss3 students from high socio-economic status and students from low socio-economic status on in Kuje.



Table 4. t-test for differences in Emotional Intelligence by socio-economic status.

Variables	N	Mean	S D	t-value	df	p-value
High SES	148	101.51	9.54	4.39	304	.000
Low SES	158	97.00	8.37			

From table 4, the result revealed that the mean score on emotional intelligence for students from high socio-economic status ($M=101.51$, $SD=9.54$) is significantly different from that of the mean score of students from low socio-economic status ($M=97.00$, $SD=8.37$) at t-value ($t=4.39$, $df=304$, $P=.000$). Thus, our P value .000 is $< .05$. Therefore, based on the obtained result, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between students from high socio-economic status and students from low socio-economic status on emotional intelligence was rejected. The study found that students from high socio-economic status were having a higher level of emotional intelligence than students from low socio-economic status.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study revealed that a significant relationship exist between students emotional intelligence and their academic achievement. Based on the obtained result, for any increase in students' emotional intelligence, there will be the same increase in their academic achievement. The study revealed that a significant relationship exist between students emotional intelligence and their academic achievement. The finding was in line with the study of Low and Nelson (2006) that students with emotional intelligence skills are better able to cope with demanding and complex college experience. The finding equally corresponds with the work of Rode, Mooney, Arthaud-Day, Near, Baldwin, Rubin and Bommer (2007) that, individuals with high emotional intelligence would perform better academically. Therefore, emotional intelligence of the students had significant effect on their academic achievement

The study also revealed that no statistically significant difference exist in emotional intelligence between male and female junior secondary school students in Kuje area council. This shows that neither male nor female junior secondary school students were having a significantly higher emotional intelligence.. The study revealed that no significant difference exist in emotional intelligence between male and female junior secondary school students in Kuje area council. This finding corresponded with the study of Subramanyam and Screenivaas (2008) whose work revealed that no significant gender difference exists on emotional intelligence. This means that an individual's gender does not matter in the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of students in English language.

The study found that students from high socio-economic status were having a higher level of emotional intelligence than students from low socio-economic status in Kuje area council. The finding shows that students from high socio-economic status were having a high level of emotional intelligence than students from low socio-economic status. This is because students from high socio economic status have an enabling and favourable environment that makes them perform better academically compared to the students from low socio economic background. The study found that students from high socio-economic status were having a higher level of emotional intelligence than students from low socio-economic status. This finding was in line with the work of Ahmed (2010) that the higher the person's social class the higher their educational attainment and performance in school is likely to be. The children of high parental socio-economic status are more likely to stay on in the school and perform academically better, since they are likely to drive favourable environmental factor.



Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that emotional intelligence correlates with students' academic success. This means that students who are emotionally intelligent perform better academically. Also, the study established that there is a significant difference between emotional intelligence and gender, although its contribution to the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement was not determined. Findings from the study also suggested that socio-economic status of parents plays a vital role in the emotional intelligence and academic achievement of students as students from high socio-economic status have a high level of emotional intelligence than those from low socio-economic status.

Recommendations

Recommendations arising from the result of this study are;

1. The general administration of the school should put emotional intelligence development of students into consideration in their school activities and planning.
2. Teachers, psychologists, researchers as well as curriculum planners need to develop a greater awareness and understanding of the concept of emotional intelligence which is a variable that predicts the academic performance of both male and female students.
3. The need to incorporate Emotional Intelligence curriculum into secondary school programmes to help students from low socio-economic status to increase their level of emotional awareness and intelligence.

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