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PREDICTIVE POWER OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITY IN PORT-HARCOURT CITY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE

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Abstract: The study investigated on emotional intelligence as correlate of social adjustment among students with physical disability in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study adopted the correlational research design using a sample of 236 students with physical disability. An instrument titled Emotional Intelligence and Social Adjustment Inventory (EISAI) was used for data collection which was adequately assessed for reliability and validity. The Multiple regression coefficient was used for data collection, while ANOVA and t-test associated with multiple regression were used for analysis of data. The result obtained from the analysis showed that emotional intelligence had significant joint and independent predictive influence on the social adjustment of the students. On the basis of the result obtained, it was recommended that school counsellors organized programmes aimed at improving the social adjustment of the students.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, physical disability, social adjustment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans, irrespective of their disability status, have been known as beings of emotions. The wide range and depth of their emotions and the various manners in which they have deployed it for their survival in much of history has provided a veritable area of study for scholars from a similarly wide array of disciplines. While emotions have been studied from the earliest of formal scientific enquiry, attempts have often been limited to the investigations of physiological antecedent, with little or no consideration given to their adaptive contributions in social interactions and relationships. This position was considered inadequate and questioned with the introduction and conceptualization of emotional intelligence by scholars, especially during the last decade of the 20th century.

The construct of emotional intelligence has been implicated in optimal human development, be it physically and socially. Emotional intelligence is one of the most studied psychological construct during the last two decades (Nwanro, 2015), as such it has been applied to a wide array of domains including students' social adjustment (Bryant, 2007). One of the earliest definition of emotional intelligence was that given by Mayer and Salovey (1997) who stated that it is the ability to perceive, understand, regulate and use emotions productively in one's self and with others in a group. The definition offered by Goleman (2005), which was used in this study, sees emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize one's feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in us and in social relationship. Goleman's operational definition of emotional intelligence recognized five facets or dimensions of emotional intelligence: Self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relationship management.

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Self-awareness refers to the ability to access and identify ones inner feeling, preference, resources and intentions as it happens. *Self-management* is the capacity and ability to manage one's internal state of mind, impulses and resources. *Self-motivation* is the ability to generate and utilize emotional resources in pursuit of a goal. *Social awareness* is the ability to understand how other persons feel and think as well as understand complex social situations. Relationship management entails the ability to manage one's emotion and that of others in ways that facilitate harmonious and productive social relationship (Chukwu, 2016) However, considering the definition of emotional intelligence as involving both an understanding of the self as well as social situation, it can be deduced it is linked to social adjustment, especially students with obvious disabilities, such as physical disability.

The social nature of humans is almost a confirmed fact in the scientific literature and popular discourse. According to Huitt and Dawson (2011), humans are social in their very nature. Confirming this using an evolutionary perspective, Goleman (2005) and Dunbar (1998) asserted that the large brain size of humans was wired to adapt to the complex social environment that we have to navigate. Due to the central role social relationship plays in the life of humans, the subject has been a cornerstone of various academic disciplines including sociology and psychology. One aspect of human social relationship that has received significant attention in the scientific literature has been social adjustment. According to Huitt and Davidson (2011), it has been conceptualized and operationalized with such terms as social intelligence, social skills, social competence or social development. The variety of terms used synonymously with the construct is a reflection of the various academic disciplines and theoretical orientations of scholars interested in it.

According to Sax et al (2000) social adjustment is the process of successfully managing close relationship with peers and the degree of comfortability in meeting new people. Bierman (2004) defined social adjustment as the capacity to coordinate adaptive responses in a flexible manner in various interpersonal demands and to organize social behaviour in different social contexts in a manner beneficial to one's self and consistent with social norms and conventions. Santrock (2008) maintained that social adjustment refers to a continuous process by which a person changes his/her own behaviour in a social setting or tries to change the environment or bring about changes in both, to effect a satisfactory relationship with other individuals in the environment. Igbo, Nwaka, Mbagwu and Mezieobi (2016) opined that social adjustment involves the effort (deliberate or unconscious) that individuals make in meeting psychological/social/physiological demands depending on the situation one finds himself. Boutler (2002) opined that adjustment is a process by which a person modifies his/her behaviour based on environmental demands while also aiming to achieve social equilibrium.

Adopting a more holistic approach to social adjustment, Huitt and Dawson (2011) defined it as the process by which a person develops and apply knowledge, attitudes and skills in at least six components: (1) being aware of the social environment (2) managing impulses and acting appropriately in social contexts (3) communicating effectively (4) forming healthy and meaningful relationship (5) working well with others (6) resolving conflicts. On the basis of the definitions provided above, social adjustment in this study shall refers to the deliberate effort made by individuals to develop skills and competencies needed to function effectively in social group while acting in a socially appropriate manner. The central role of social adjustment has made it imperative that that it is critically investigated. Sadly, that has not been the case of students with physical disability in Nigeria, as their social adjustment has not be critically studied, which has led to a multiplicity of challenges for both the student and the society.

Within the Nigerian context, most students with physical disabilities, who are supposed to be in schools, are often seen on the street begging for alms. Most of these children may be students before now, but due to societal disposition towards them, they felt that school was not an option for them. Worse still, these children may grow up as adults whose only means of survival is begging using their disability status as an alibi. These children stay under rain and sun to carry out their trade with the approval of their parents, under the watch of government and the scorn of the society. Some of these children have been used for ritual purposes while others have been subjected to various forms of sexual and physical abuse. For those who remain in school, they are often timid, withdrawn and uninterested in school. To help these students to be interested in, and motivated towards school and schooling, it is pertinent to understand their social adjustment, and possible factors which could predict it. It is the position of these researchers that if an empirical understanding of the social adjustment of students it can be established, evidence-based interventions can be implemented which can enable them benefit maximally from the school system.

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Teachers would understand from this study some challenges of those with disabilities and would be in a better position to encourage and promote classroom teaching styles that facilitates social adjustment. In addition, teachers would find this study useful as it would show them some critical role they can play in reducing attrition among students with disability. Through this study, social welfare officers will be able to understand specific factors that influence the social development of students, especially those with disabilities and make scientifically informed effort to assist them become functional members of society. School counselors would find this study useful as this study will produce additional evidence on the factor that influence social adjustment among students with disabilities generally and those with physical disabilities specifically, as well as take productive measures in making them better students and useful utilizes to the society.

Usually when people give birth to a child with physical disabilities, it is usually attribute to spiritual or diabolical factors. This study will highlight the need for seeing children with disabilities as normal individuals who yearns for social relationship. As such this study will help the religious leaders see the need for them to encourage their followers to be receptive to students and people with disability as this can improve their social adjustment.

Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence have been described as the bedrock of optimal human development (Akinboye, 2002). Various definition of the construct has been provided. Vanrooy and Viswesvaran (2005) viewed emotional intelligence as the set of abilities, both verbal and non-verbal, that enable a person to generate, recognize, express, understand and evaluate their own, and others' emotions in order to guide thinking and action in order to successfully cope with environmental demands and pressures. Akinboye (2002) defined emotional intelligence as interrelated emotional competencies that determines how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others, relate with them and cope with daily demands. Chadha (2009) viewed emotional intelligence as the ability of an individual to appropriately and successfully respond to a vast variety of stimuli being elicited from the inner self and the immediate environment.

Other scholars such as Mishra and Mohapetra (2011) added that there are three parameters of emotional intelligence which are emotional competency, emotional maturity and emotional sensitivity. Emotional competency indicates one's ability and capacity to effectively respond to emotional stimuli elicited by various situations such as having high selfesteem and optimism etc. Emotional maturity is reflected in behavioral pattern displayed while dealing with the self 'and immediate environment. It involves the ability and capacity to effectively evaluate emotions of one's' self and others, balancing state of heart and mind, adaptability and flexibility etc. Emotional sensitivity means the characteristics of being particularly sensitive and judging the threshold for various types of stimulations, evoking sensations, feelings and emotions. Emotional sensitivity indicates one's ability and capacity to effectively understand intensity of emotional arousal (Egbule, 2009).

For Mayer and Salovey in Egbule (2009), emotional intelligence can be considered the cognitive ability to monitor one's own and others' feeling and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action. For Eriega (2010) emotional intelligence refers to a combination of skills such as empathy, self-control and self-awareness. He further argued that people who excel in various dimension of life tend to be those who are emotionally intelligent.

Furthermore, Bar-On in Singh (2008) defines emotional intelligence as comprising "an arrays of non-cognitive capacities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures. While Egbule (2009) sees emotional intelligence as the ability to validly reason with emotions and to use emotions to enhance thought. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to promote emotional and intellectual growth. To Shakuntala and Santoch (2011), emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationship to reason and solve problems on the basis of them. Emotional intelligence is involved in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion related feelings, understand the information of those emotions and manage them. It is a part of human personality, and personality provides the context in which emotional intelligence operation. Salovey and Mayer in Wong, Wong and Law (2007) added that emotional intelligence is the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions to discriminate them and utilize this information to guide one's thinking and action. This explains that emotional intelligence involves knowing when to

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express and control emotions, being sensitive to the feeling of others, having the social skills which allow people to develop strong working relationships, sharing one's vision with others and understanding the vision of others. Goleman (2004) added that many elements contribute to emotional intelligence. A list of some of the most important elements and skills he identified are as follows:

Empathy: The ability to accurately perceive emotions in others and sense what they are feeling.

Managing Emotion: An ability to manage ones' own emotions and those of others.

Understanding Emotions: The ability to know what causes various emotions, what they mean and how they affect behaviour.

Using Emotions: The ability to use feelings to enhance thinking and decision making.

In another dimension, Salovey and Mayer in Wong et al (2007) and Mehrabian (2007) identified two major components of emotional intelligence which are intrapersonal and interpersonal. Intrapersonal ' competency refers to understand one's emotions. Intrapersonal competency is subdivided into the following:

Self-awareness: is the ability to identify one's own internal states, preferences, resources and intuition. It involves recognizing one's emotions and their effects, accurate self-assessment which involves knowing one's emotions and their effects and self-confidence which refers to a strong sense of strength and limit (Eriega, 2013).

Self-Management: is the ability to manage one's internal states, impulses and resources. According to Wu & Stemler (2008) it is the ability to regulate distressing effects like anxiety and anger and to inhibit emotional impulsivity. Self-management involves self-control (keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check), trustworthiness (maintaining a standard of honesty and integrity, being sincere and faithful), consciousness (taking responsibility for personal performance), adaptability (flexibility in handling change or being fitted in with comforting in any environment or situation) and innovation (being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information).

Self-Motivation: Is the ability to be effectively tuned to associative network arranged in a hierarchy of strength and importance in the individual which determines what goals one seeks. Inherent in motivation are achievement drive (striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence) commitment (aligning with the goals of the group or organization), initiative (readiness to act upon opportunities and ability to do well when chance is giving and optimism-persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setback (Riggio, 2008).

Social Awareness: This is the ability to read non-verbal cues for negative emotions particularly anger and fear and to judge the trustworthiness of other people. Social awareness helps to handle relationship effectively. Social awareness is synonymous with high job performance. It includes empathy (awareness of others feelings, needs and concerns, sensing others' feelings and perspectives and taking active interest in their concerns), service orientation (anticipating, recognizing and meeting others' and organizational awareness-reading a group's emotional currents and power relationship (Becker, 2003).

Relationship Management or Social Skill: refer to one's ability to manage and control one's emotions. It is a prerequisite to managing relationship with others_{v#}Effective management induces positive response from others, relationship management consists of the following **Influencing:** Wielding effective tactics for persuasion; **Communication:** Listening openly and sending convincing message; **Conflict Management:** Negotiating and resolving conflict of disagreements; **Leadership:** Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups; **Building Bonds:** Nurturing Instrumental relationships; **Change Catalyst:** Initiating or managing change; **Collaboration and Cooperation:** Working with others towards share goals; **Team Capacities:** Creating group synergy in pursing collective goals.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study includes to:

1. Investigate how emotional intelligence components (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relationship management) jointly predict social adjustment of students with physical disabilities in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area.

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2. Investigate the independent contributions of emotional intelligence components (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relationship management) on social adjustment of students with physical disabilities in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area of Port Harcourt.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions

1. To what extent does emotional intelligence component jointly predict social adjustment among students with physical disabilities in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area of Rivers State?

2. To what extent does each emotional intelligence components (self- awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relationship management) independently predict social adjustment of students with physical disabilities in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis

1. The combined influence of emotional intelligence components do not significantly predict the social adjustment of students with physical disabilities in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area

2. Emotional intelligence components does not independently have significant prediction in the social adjustment of students with physical disabilities in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area of Rivers State.

2. METHOD

Design: The predictive correlational research design was used in this study since data on physically challenged children reported emotional intelligence were collated used to predict their social adjustment. A sample of 237 students with physical disability in Port Harcourt Metropolis was chosen for this study using the purposive sampling technique. This sampling technique was adopted for the study because the researcher did not have access to the specific number of students with physical disabilities in the area under investigation.

Instrumentation: For data collection is a non-cognitive, multivariate instrument titled Emotional Intelligence and Social Adjustment Inventory (EISAI). The instrument was divided into two sections labeled A to B. Section A of the instrument was aimed at collecting demographic information from the respondents such as their gender, age, family type etc. Section B is a 20-item questionnaire developed to assess students' emotional intelligence. This section contains both positive and negative items. This section is constructed in a modified 4-point likert scale of Strongly Agree (A), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD), scored as 4 points, 3 points, 2 points and 1 point respectively for positive items. For negative items, scoring in this section will be done as follows, SA - 1 point, A - 2 points, D - 3 points and D - 4 points. The maximum and minimum score obtainable for each emotional intelligence component is 20 and 5 respectively. The instrument was adapted from Chukwu (2016). Section C of the instrument is a 20-item scale developed to assess the social adjustment of the respondents. This section of the instrument was adapted from Jyomatare (2016). This section was constructed on a four point likert scale of Always applies to me, Sometimes applies to me, Seldom applies to me, Never applies to me scored as 4, 3, 2, and 1 point respectively. For the section on emotional intelligence, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients of 0.71, 0.91, 0.80 and 0.69 were obtained for self- awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management respectively. Finally, the section on social adjustment yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.69 which indicated that the instrument possessed ample reliability for use.

Data Collection and Analysis: Copies of the two instruments were administered directly to the respondents by the researcher, with the help of two research assistant, after receiving permission from the principal or the school head. The instruments were then collected on the spot after it has been completed by the students. The research questions were answered using multiple regression coefficients and beta values associated with multiple regression, while ANOVA and t-test associated with multiple regression were used for testing the corresponding null hypotheses where applicable.

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3. RESULT

Table 1: Joint prediction of emotional intelligence components on social adjustment of students with physical disabilities

MODEL SUMMARY									
Model	R = 0.391	R-Squared $= 0.153$		Adjusted R-Squared = 0.134					
ANOVA									
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig				
Regression	2896.445	5	579.289	8.255	.0000				
Residual	16070.338	229	70.176		P<0.05				
Total	18966.783	235							

An observation of the values shown in table 1, indicates that when the joint prediction of emotional intelligence on social adjustment of students with physical disabilities was conducted, an R value of 0.391 was obtained with an R^2 value of 0.153 and an adjusted R^2 of 0.134. On the basis of the adjusted R-Squared, it can be seen that 13.4% variation in the social adjustment of students with physical disabilities can be attributed to the joint contribution of emotional intelligence.

Furthermore, the result of the ANOVA associated with multiple regression showed that an F value of 8.255 was gotten with an associated p-value of 0.000 at 5 and 235 degrees of freedom. From this result obtained, it can be seen that emotional intelligence had a significant joint predictive power on the social adjustment of youths with physical disability in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Table 2: Beta values associated with multiple regression of emotional intelligence on social adjustment

Coefficients ^a										
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.				
		В	Std. Error	Beta						
	(Constant)	43.860	7.345		5.971	.000				
1	Self-awreness	.178	.157	.070	1.140	.256				
	Self-management	783	.172	279	-4.554	.000				
	Self-Motivation	.358	.125	.179	2.860	.005				
	Social Awareness	.253	.115	.140	2.212	.028				
	Relationship Management	.217	.119	.113	1.824	.069				

a. Dependent Variable: Social Adjustment

On the basis of the standardized beta coefficients shown in table 2, it can be seen that self-awareness had a beta value of 0.070 with an associated t-value of 1.140 and a p-value of 0.256. This result showed that self-awareness had a low positive but significant independent prediction on social adjustment of students with disability.

Regarding self-management, it was shown had a beta value of -0.278 with an associated t-value of -4.554 and a p-value of 0.000. This result showed that self-management had a low negative but significant independent prediction on social adjustment of students with disability. On its own, the result showed that self-motivation had a standardized beta value of 0.179, with a t-value of 2.860 and an associated p-value 0.000. This result indicates that self-management does not have any significant impact on social adjustment. For social awareness, the result showed that it did not have any significant independent prediction on the social adjustment of students with physical disabilities as the standardized beta coefficient obtained which was 0.140 and a t-value of 2.212 with a p-value of 0.028. Finally, the result for relationship management showed that the standardized coefficient value obtained was 0.113 with a t-value of 1.824 and a significant value of 0.069 which was not significant.

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4. DISCUSSION

The result from the study showed that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of the social adjustment among students with physical disabilities in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The result is expected and not surprising because the researchers believes that emotional intelligence enables people to understand themselves and their environment including other students in the school. Furthermore, students who have a high level of emotional intelligence are more likely to exhibit better social relationship with their teachers, which facilitate a better level of social adjustment. The result from this study is similar to that obtained by Igbo et al (2016) who found out that emotional intelligence correlates positively with social and academic adjustment of first year university student in Nigeria. Also the result by Punia and Sangwan (2011) found out that emotional intelligence is a significant determinant of school adjustment among secondary school students in India.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the result obtained, the conclusion drawn from this study is that emotional intelligence of students with physical disability has a critical role to play in shaping their social adjustment. However, not all component of emotional intelligence has equal predictive power on the social adjustment of student with physical disabilities. On the basis of this results, the following recommendations were made:

1. Students, irrespective of their disability status, should be provided with counselling trainings and workshops that will facilitate the improvement of their emotional intelligence.

2. Educational psychologist and guidance counsellors should provide emotional intelligence trainings, to enable parents and teachers understand the impact of their teaching and rearing style in order to facilitate improvement in the emotional intelligence of their children.

3. Special intervention programmes should be developed and implemented by the government targeted at monitoring the emotional and social development of students, especially those with disability.

4. Students with physical disability should be encouraged to speak out regarding their social challenges in schools. This should be a concerted effort by parents, teachers and administrators, as it can improve on their ability to communicate their joys and limitations.

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