

Self-Efficacy as a Predictor of Secondary School Students' Social Adjustment in Anambra State

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Abstract: Within the school settings, students are constantly faced with numerous challenges which have been recognized as having some bearing on the way students adjust in schools socially. This study in essence investigated self-efficacy as predictor of secondary school students' social adjustment in Anambra state. Three research questions guided the study while one null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlational research design was used for this study. The population of the study comprise 40,161 SS1 and SS2 students' from which a sample of 2,400 students was selected using simple random sampling and disproportionate stratified random sampling techniques. Two sets of instruments, namely General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) and Social Adjustment Scale (SAS) were used for the study. The instruments are standardized questionnaires which have been previously validated by experts and used in conducting studies in Nigeria. The reliability of the instruments are as follows: The coefficient alpha is 0.87 for General Self-efficacy while the reliability coefficient for Social Adjustment Questionnaire (SAQ) is 0.93. Data collected were analyzed using range of aggregate scores and regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that self-efficacy significantly predicted the social adjustment of the secondary school students. It was recommended among others that school guidance counsellors should be equipped with necessary tools both material and intellectual to enable them render useful counselling services that would go a long way in helping to build the self-efficacy of students to make up in areas where they need help to adjust socially.

Keywords – Social adjustment, self-efficacy, secondary school, students, predict, Anambra State.

I. INTRODUCTION

Social adjustment of students is an issue of great concern to many, especially parents, teachers, counsellors and psychologists. This is based on the notion that the students social dimension deals with interpersonal or public interactions with other individuals. Hence, the students, especially those in the secondary school system of education are faced with social problems with attendant academic problems that seem to have become part and parcel of the schools. The conditions has become a worrisome phenomenon because of its tendency to affect their academic outputs and the likelihood that they may resort to anti-social behaviours like drug use and abuse, robbery, alcoholism, rape among others as a coping mechanism.

Today, many students, especially those at the secondary school level in Nigeria are perceived as being predisposed to many such social problems. This is coupled

with their usual academic problems that seem to have become part and parcel of a school process. The reason as Akpama (2013) noted could be traced to the idea that these students are many a time faced with problems such as neglect from parents or guardians, unstable homes, lack of proper home training, lack of love and care. These problems render the students, emotionally and socially imbalanced, thereby pushing them into further more problems like drug abuse, prostitution and other unwholesome behaviours which tend to affect the likelihood of their being socially adjusted.

The adjustment of a student in a simple term, means getting along with the members of the school and the community as best as each student can. Adjustment according to Nirmala (2011) is a harmony between a person and his environment, and the extent to which a person fits happily and harmoniously into the environment or culture in which he or she finds self without having friction with others and without being frustrated. It means the process and condition of being in harmony with the physical and social environment in which the individual live, which is signified by the near absence of stress and the ability to maintain good personal relationship with others.

Within the school settings, students are constantly faced with new challenges which include ever changing peer groups and different educational and behavioural expectations of different schools. These challenges according to Igbo, Nwaka, Mbagwu and Mezieobi (2016) have been recognized as having some bearing on the way students adjust in schools socially. This is probably because the ability of students to cope with certain standards, values, and norms of a community (home, school, and church) hinges on their ability to adjust socially in every given situation.

Social adjustment is the extent to which an individual maintains a cordial relationship with other people. For example, a child in secondary school adjusts to the other members of the family, to the peer group, to teachers, and to other member of the community in which the child lives. Social adjustment according to Rienties, Beausaert, Grohnert, Niemantsverdriet, and Kommers (2011), is how an individual maintains a congruent relationship with other people. Hence, in this study, social adjustment is an effort made by students to cope with the standards, values and needs of the social order in order to be accepted and become integrated into the community. It is measured in terms of good and poor. A child is poorly adjusted when he or she is unable to cope with

everyday social situations and personal relationships. On the other hand, a child with good adjustment is able to adapt to the environment or condition and fit to cope with everyday social situations and subjective interactions.

Students who are socially adjusted tend to achieve a balanced social relationship and operate within the acceptable social norms. They are therefore more likely to get along with people around them. For such students, social adjustment is seen as the process through which they become integrated into the community, build support networks and negotiate new freedoms afforded by the community and school life. Although adjusting to the school setting tend to come with many challenges.

One of the challenges that call for adjustment within the confines of students' social milieu is that of forming positive cordial relationship with others like peers and living harmoniously with them in this present complex society. As a consequence, achieving such a happy and harmonious life in the society tends to pose some challenges. Nevertheless, the successful handling of such challenges in the society could lead to good social adjustment, while improper handling of such challenges could equally lead to social maladjustment of individuals.

Adjustment to social environment according to Kaljahi (2016) is one of the most critical activities emerging adults undertake that predicts academic success in school and beyond. The inability of students to adjust to the school environment, establish and maintain good relationship with people, participate positively in school activities such as group projects, and social activities such as other extra-curricular programmes of the school, could affect their becoming socially adjusted in school. This situation could portend serious problems for the school, and perhaps could be the reason researchers such as Burgoon, Meece and Granger (2012), Farmer, Irvin, Thompson, Hutchins, and Leung (2006), Wentzel (2013), have worked assiduously to as certain important factors that promote positive adjustment of individuals in school, especially at the secondary school level. Some important factors as noted by Wentzel include such elements as motivation, participation in school events and self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy is an important variable which could help in the social adjustment of students in school. Necessary emotional resources such as self-efficacious beliefs are essential for effective coping and possible adjustment in social settings. Self-efficacy is thus seen as an individual's personal judgment of an individual's capabilities in successfully carrying out a given task. Bhagat and Baliya (2016) viewed self-efficacy as one's belief in their ability to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Based on the importance of self-efficacy, many researches (example, Adeoye & Emeke, 2010; Baanu, Oyelekan & Olorundare, 2016) have centered on the concept, in order to understand the process of how

individuals perceive their abilities and capabilities. Adeoye & Emeke (2010) observed that in social situations such as the school, students with high self-efficacy are more likely to be socially adjusted in the school. This was adjudged based on the notion that students' with high self-efficacy has the belief that they have the capabilities to execute the courses of actions required in managing any given situation.

In the same way, secondary school students have varying perceptions of their ability to cope with the societal requirements and interpersonal demands of their educational life. Some of the students may believe in their ability to form successful friendship and interaction with fellow students, participate in group projects, and in social activities such as extra-curricular programmes of the school, while some other students may not believe that they possess the ability to actually participate in the social activities of the school. In other words, their self-efficacy belief would likely reflect their level of social confidence as well as their competence.

Consequently, a study according to Abel and Moyosola (2013), noted that success in the educational system is not only assessed by the skills and knowledge being imparted to students in the school but also by the efforts put in, to improve students beliefs about their capabilities which affects how they would approach the future. This is perhaps based on the idea that students, who develop a strong sense of self-efficacy, are likely to be better equipped to establish and maintain good interaction with people, cope with values and norms of the society, and get along with people around fairly well, because they believe in their abilities. Therefore, students' experience of difficulty in secondary schools may not necessarily be due to lack of cognitive ability but probably because they lack belief in their ability to produce desired result which may eventually lead to their inability to adjust within the school and the larger society.

Self-efficacy represents the learners ability to plan and practice the effective behaviour in order to achieve the desired result in a certain situation, to control the events and situations that affect his life, to issue the right self-expectations about his own ability to perform certain tasks and activities and to predict the extent of the efforts and perseverance needed for the work. It is on the basis of this assertion that this study is conceived, to investigate self-efficacy as possible predictor of secondary school students' social adjustment in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Students, especially those at the secondary school level of education globally are predisposed to numerous social adjustment concerns. A good number of the students in Anambra State public secondary schools seem unable to deal with the situation they find themselves. Some of the students gets involved in delinquent offences like truancy, fighting, refusing to participate in group projects in the school setting, pilfering and whole lots of other unwholesome behaviours.

Students' adjustment to those concerns in school is considered one of the main indicators of success in school as it is an indicator for the student's ability to face problems resulting from fulfilling high academic, social and emotional needs. Through achieving good social adjustment in school, the student will be able to form a good relationship with others in the school which would likely lead to enhanced academic achievement and better social adjustment. Although many aspects of students behaviour in Anambra State secondary schools may be interpreted in light of the students self-efficacy in relations to their social adjustment, scarcity of scholarly studies tackling this issues have not provided an enabling environment to empirically address the issue. This study in response to these needs investigated self-efficacy of secondary school students as possible predictor of their social adjustment in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate self-efficacy as predictor of social adjustment of secondary school students in Anambra State, Nigeria

Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. The self-efficacy distribution scores of secondary school students in Anambra State.
2. The social adjustment distribution scores of secondary school students in Anambra State?
3. How self-efficacy predicts the social adjustment of secondary school students.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be beneficial to students, teachers and the school guidance counsellors. The findings of the study, would enable students recognise the importance of social adjustment and encouraging them to build and maintain healthy relationships. The findings will be of great help to the counsellors in designing appropriate guidance and counselling programmes and services in school to guide and assist both the students and the teachers that are socially maladjusted or having challenge making adjustment to the social situation they found themselves.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the self-efficacy distribution scores of secondary school students in Anambra State?
2. What are the social adjustment distribution scores of secondary school students in Anambra State?
3. How does self-efficacy predict social adjustment of secondary school students in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

This null hypothesis testable at 0.05 level of significance will guide the study.

1. Self-efficacy is not a significant predictor of social adjustment of secondary school students in Anambra State.

II. METHOD

The research design for this study is correlational research. This study was carried out in Anambra State. The State is one of the thirty-six states of Nigeria. It is located in the South-Eastern part of the six geopolitical zones in the country. The population comprised 40,161 SSI and SS2 senior secondary school students from the six education zones in Anambra State. The sample size for this study was 2,400 students. The sample size comprised five percent of the population which was selected through a multi stage sampling method.

Two research instrument namely; "General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES)" developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) and Social Adjustment Questionnaire (SAQ) developed by Weisman and Paykel (1974) was used for data collection. The two instruments used in the study are standardized questionnaires which have been previously validated by experts and used in conducting studies in across the globe, including Nigeria. Internal consistency reliability of the instruments was established using Cronbach Alpha statistical method. A coefficient alpha of 0.87 was obtained for General Self-efficacy Scale and 0.73 was obtained for Social Adjustment Scale.

Copies of the questionnaires were distributed personally to the respondents. The questionnaires was later retrieved, scored and then sent for analysis. Research questions 1 and 2 were answered using range of aggregate scores, research question 3 was answered using simple Regression Analysis while the null hypothesis was tested using Regression Analysis.

III. RESULTS

Data collected from the field for this study are presented in tables to highlight the findings as follows:

Research Question 1

What are the self-efficacy scores of secondary school students in Anambra State?

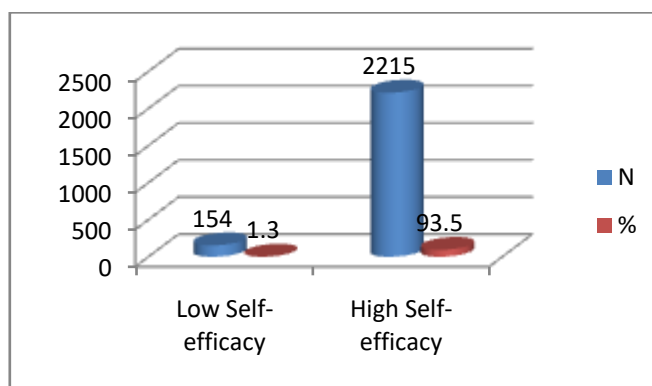


Figure 1: Range of distribution scores on students' self-efficacy in public secondary schools in Anambra State

Figure 1 reveals that 2215(93.5%) of the secondary school students with the scores ranging from 20 to 40 have high self-efficacy, while 154(6.5%) students who scored between 10 and 19 have low self-efficacy.

Research Question 2

What are the social adjustment distribution scores of secondary school students in Anambra State?

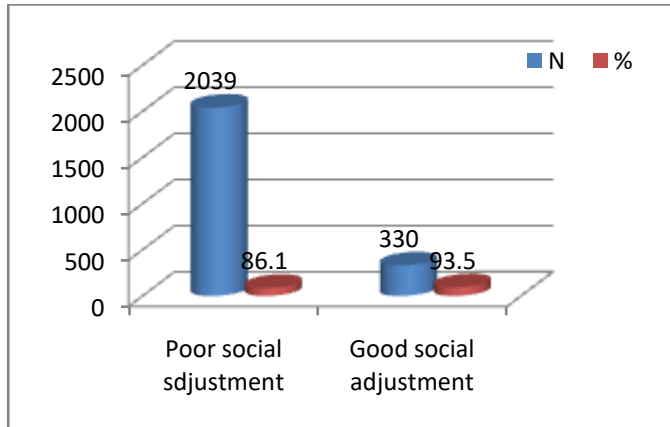


Figure 2: Range of distribution scores on students’ social adjustment in secondary schools in Anambra State

Figure 2 reveals that 330 (13.9%) of the secondary school students with the scores ranging from 70 to 112 have good social adjustment, while 2039(86.1%) of the students who scored between 28 and 69 have poor social adjustment.

Research Question 3

How does self-efficacy predict social adjustment of secondary school students in Anambra State?

Table 1: Regression analysis of secondary school students’ self-efficacy as a predictor of their Social adjustment

Variable	r	R ²	R ² change	B	BETA	% var. added
Self-Efficacy	0.224	0.050	0.050	0.296	0.224	5.00

Table 1 showed that there was a low positive linear relationship between the Self-efficacy and social adjustment which was confirmed with a Pearson’s correlation coefficient of 0.224. It further reveals that self-efficacy of school students in Anambra State had R² change of 0.050. It also shows that self-efficacy had the predictive power of 5.00 percent for secondary school students’ social adjustment.

Testing the Null Hypotheses

Self-efficacy does not significantly predict social adjustment of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Table 2: Regression Analysis Test of Significance of Secondary School Students’ Self-Efficacy as a Predictor of Their Social Adjustment

Variable	r	R ²	R ² change	B	BETA	% var. added	Crit. P value	Cal.Pvalue	Cal. t	df	Remark
Extraversion	0.224	0.050	0.050	0.296	0.224	5.00	0.05	0.000	10.425	2367	S

Table 2 reveals that self-efficacy of school students in Anambra State had R² change of 0.050. It also shows that self-efficacy had the predictive power of 5.00 percent for secondary school students’ social adjustment. More so, at 1df numerator, 2367df denominator and 0.05 level of significance, the calculated t value is 10.425 with has probability value of 0.000 which is less than the critical P value of 0.05. Therefore the 6th null hypothesis is not rejected. This indicates that self-efficacy does significantly predict secondary school students’ social adjustment in Anambra State.

IV. DISCUSSION

Findings of this study are discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Secondary school students’ self-efficacy
- Secondary school students’ social adjustment
- Self-Efficacy as predictor of social adjustment

Secondary school students’ self-efficacy

Findings of the study revealed that most of the secondary school students in Anambra State have high self-efficacy. This finding shows that secondary school students in Anambra State believe in their innate ability to achieve goals.

This implies that they are likely to exert sufficient effort that, if well executed, leads to successful outcomes. The finding is in line with Adeoye and Emeke (2010) and Baanu, Oyelekan and Olorundare (2016) whose studies respectively indicated high self-efficacy of Nigeria students. These studies show that the optimum level of self-efficacy is slightly above ability; in this situation, students are likely to be most encouraged to tackle challenging tasks and gain experience.

Secondary school students’ social adjustment

The result of the study indicates that, most of the secondary school students have poor social adjustment. This finding implies that secondary school students function poorly in their immediate environment, participation in social activities and their satisfaction with various social aspects of the school experience. This finding is in line with the findings of Azuji (2015) whose study showed that majority of students surveyed were not socially adjusted. Azuji’s study examined the social adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State, Nigeria who possibly share the same characteristics with the participants of the current study. What the finding portends for this study is that the psychological process through which the students cope with the demand and challenges of everyday

life may be greatly hampered and could lead to other maladaptive behaviours among students.

Self-Efficacy as predictor of social adjustment

Findings of the study revealed that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of secondary school students' social adjustment. This finding of the study show that self-efficacy emerged as an important contributor to social adjustment of students. This finding is consistent with the previous studies such as Bitá and Parisa (2016) and Habibah, Nooren, and Rahil (2010) whose studeies revealed that self-efficacy is a significant contributor to social adjustment of students. Habibah, Nooren, and Rahil (2010) found that students with high self-efficacy have the potential to be socially adjusted and succeed in school. The reason for this finding could be attributed to the notion that students with high self-efficacy are more likely to be highly motivated and would believe that they would succeed in the end, whereas those with low self-efficacy were found to likely limit the extent to which they participate in an endeavour and are more apt to give up at the instance of any difficulty. The finding thus is an empirical evidence of the predictive ability of students' self-efficacy in foretelling their social adjustment in school. The finding clearly suggests that higher self-efficacy were important in predicting the relative difficulty or ease experienced by students in adapting to the cultural and educational challenges of their schools.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the study concludes that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of social adjustment among secondary school students in Anambra state.

Implication of the Study

Based on the findings of this study, one important implication of the study is that education authorities may see the need for school guidance counsellors to be equipped with necessary tools both material and intellectual to enable them render useful counselling services that would go a long way in helping to build and maintain the self-efficacy of students. This may also suggest to the school guidance counsellors that they have a duty to give quality time to students on issues regarding their social adjustment during counselling sessions.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. School guidance counsellors should be equipped with necessary tools both material and intellectual to enable them render useful counselling services that would go a long way in helping to build the self-efficacy of students, so that students can make up in areas where they need help to adjust socially.
2. School guidance counsellors should work towards ensuring that the high self-efficacy of secondary school students in Anambra state is maintained.

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