



## Level of Emotional Adjustment of Secondary School Students In The Federal Capital Territory

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**ABSTRACT :** This study investigated the level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. The study was a descriptive survey and the population comprised all senior secondary school students in both public and private schools in the FCT. A sample of 450 students made up of male and female students from both private and public schools were involved in the study. Patil (1989) 'Adolescent's Emotional Adjustment Inventory' was adopted by the researchers to collect relevant data. The data collected were analyzed by using percentage to analyze data on the research question while t-test and ANOVA were used to test the hypotheses. The results indicated that secondary school students had a low level of emotional adjustment. There were no significant difference in the level of students' emotional adjustment on the basis of gender or school type. However, a significant difference was found between public and private school students in their level of emotional adjustment. It was recommended that both public and private secondary school management and teachers should promote conducive psychological environment in their schools that will enhances emotional adjustment ability of the students.

**KEYWORDS:** Adjustment, Emotional Adjustment, Secondary School, Students

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### I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important psychological activities of human being is adjustment, because life is a process of adjustment. Adjustment is considered as an index of integration; a harmonious behaviour of individual by which other individuals of the society recognize the person as well adjusted. According to Gill (2014) adjustment is a process which starts from birth and continues till death. Adjustment could mean reactions to the demands and pressures of social environment imposed upon the individual. The demands may be external (social and educational) or internal (emotional) to which the individual has to react. Student adjustment is related to their arrival at a balanced state between their needs and satisfaction. Need of individuals are multidimensional. Students will have good adjustment in all the aspects of their life, if there is balance between their academic, intellectual, emotional social and other needs and their satisfaction. Emotional adjustment according to Sharma and Saini (2014) is the maintenance of emotional equilibrium in the face of internal and external stressor.

The environment of Nigerian educational Institution with its complex socio-emotional psychological and educational activities requires a lot of adjustment from the students. College students frequently have more complex problems today than they did some decades ago (Okorodudu and Okorodudu, 2013). Common stressors in College include greater academic demands, being on your own in a new environment, changes in social life, exposure to new people, ideas and temptation.

Education aims at human development. It pervades our life from cradle to grave. The general aim of education is to prepare an individual to lead life successfully. Education should enable us to overcome those problems and obstacle to which we might face in life. Nowadays, school education places more emphasis on the learning of knowledge rather than on students' frame of mind. Yet students feel nervous, anxious, frustrated, depressed and abased when teachers ignore their emotions. If students cannot receive timely guidance from school authorities, teachers or their parents or timely concern from their peers or siblings, then their unstable

emotions may result in behavioural problems (Awokiyesi, Makinde, Makinwa, Ayodele&Okonkwo, 2014). Some of the salient emotional problems specific to secondary school students are the feeling of inferiority, inability to think properly, worrying too much, feeling that life is not worth living, feeling anxious without apparent reason etc. (Kumaraswamy, 2013).

Secondary, school students being adolescents are prone look for recognition and privacy from others. They attach more importance to their friends rather than their parents and spend most of their time with friends. During adolescence, there is a desire to be grown-up but also a dislike of having to leave the security of childhood. As they search for their identities, they find themselves subject to peer pressures. There may be times when they could be inquisitive, eager to learn, but may feign boredom if such behaviour is more acceptable to peers. Intellectually they grapple with conceptual ideas but may still hold on to concrete thinking. Adolescents often begin to question authority and are unwilling to accept societal norms but still want to try to please their parents. Often they encounter conflicts in understanding themselves and meeting demands at both home and school. The indifferent behaviours in adolescents tend to create a bad impression in the minds of the parents and they in turn have reactive attitude to them. Adolescent learn many habits and behaviour at school. They see their teachers as models but are more influenced by peer pressure. Peer group induces the adolescent to engage in risky behaviours such as smoking, alcoholism, teasing and sexual experimentation. These behaviours are reflected in the form of excitement, nervousness and happiness. All these tend to create adjustment problems and have a negative effect on the mental health of secondary school students (Rajeswari&Eljo, 2013).

Researchers who have studied identity development have acknowledged that emotion is essential to acquiring a complete sense of self. Magolda (2001) addressed the connection between emotion and identity development, particularly in the intrapersonal dimension of self-authorship. Identity development is characterized by understanding one's own particular history, confidence, and the capacity for autonomy, connection and integrity. According to Magolda (2001) the greatest emotional crisis of College students is identity confusion, exacerbated by college experience itself in delaying occupational and ideological identity. Successful identity development will result in stable, favourable emotions and emotional processes, such as the capacity for intimacy, empathy and vocational industry. Students with a strong sense of personal identity should be able to seek career counselling in a field that they find interesting, to maintain integrity when faced with peer pressure and to seek out clubs, organizations and activities that are important to them personally. A student with a well-developed sense of self will not just know who they are but also be able to recognize and appreciate the diversity in those they encounter. Students with an under developed sense of identity will struggle with peer pressure and will not be able to find extra-curricular activities engaging since identity is also connected with career choice. Finding the extent of students' emotional adjustment has several practical implications to help improve students' success, satisfaction and retention.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this is to find out the level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students in the FCT. In addition the study is expected to:

- a. Find out emotional adjustment among secondary school students in relation to gender.
- b. Find out emotional adjustment among secondary school students in relation to class level.
- c. Investigate the difference between public and private secondary school students emotional adjustment.

### **Research questions**

1. What is the level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students in the FCT?

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference in the level of emotional adjustment among male and female secondary school students in the FCT.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students with particular reference to class level.
3. There is no significant difference between the emotional adjustment of private and

Public secondary school students in the FCT

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

This study is a descriptive survey research which involved a survey of level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students in the FCT.

The population comprised of all Senior Secondary School students in the FCT. There are sixty five [65] public and one hundred and twenty [120] private Senior Secondary Schools in the FCT. (Source: Education Resource Centre, Abuja).

Fifteen (15) schools, made up of five public and ten private Senior Secondary Schools were selected as sample for the study. This was done through a simple random sampling approach for public and private schools separately. A sample of 450 respondents was selected for the conduct of the study. This was done through a multi-stage approach involving both stratified and simple random techniques. This was to ensure that the sample cut across gender and class level.

The instrument for data collection was an adopted inventory developed by Patil (1989) called 'Adolescent's Emotional Adjustment Inventory'. The instrument was made up of two sections A & B. Section A elicited personal data, while Section B was made up of 33 items aimed at measuring emotional adjustment among adolescents. Sections B required the respondents to respond to the items on Yes or No basis. The reliability co-efficient under split half method is 0.82. The instrument was personally administered by the researchers and they also secured the assistance of some teachers to avoid instrument morality.

The instrument was scored on the basis of 1 for Yes and 0 for No. The inventory contains 33 items which made the highest possible score to be 33 and the lowest possible 0. To obtain the range for three levels, the possible score was divided by three to obtain the following range. 0-11= high, 12-22= medium and 23-33= low. The research question was analyzed by using simple percentage, while hypotheses one and three were tested by using t-test at 0.05 significant level. Analysis of Variance was applied to test hypothesis two.

### III. RESULTS

#### Research question

What is the level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students in the FCT?

**Table 1:** Frequency and Percentage analysis of emotional adjustment among students

s/n	Range	Level of Adjustment	Frequency	%
1	0 - 11	High	71	15.78
2	12 - 22	Medium	151	33.56
3	23 - 33	Low	228	50.67
		<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 1 indicates that 50.67% of the Secondary School students had low level of emotional adjustment ability, while 33.56% had a medium level of emotional adjustment. However, 15.78% had a high level of emotional adjustment, on the whole, it could be concluded that there is a low level of emotional adjustment among Secondary school Students.

#### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the level of emotional adjustment among male and female secondary school students in the FCT.

**Table 2:** t-value of emotional adjustment of male and female students

Group	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	t-value	critical t
Male	218	13.6	1.60	448	1.72	1.96
Female	232	13.4	1.45			

Table 2 signifies that the calculated t-value of 1.72 is less than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was therefore, upheld. This means there is no significant difference in the level of emotional adjustment of male and female students.

#### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students with particular reference to class level.

**Table:** ANOVA on students' emotional adjustment with respect to class level

Source of variation	Sum of squares (SS)	df	Mean squares (MS)	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio	Remark
Between	437.08	3	218.54	5.95	2.61	*Sig.
Within	38081.11	447	36.72			
Total	38518.19	450				

The ANOVA result in table 3 indicates that the calculated F-ratio of 5.95 greater than the critical F-ratio of 2.61 at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is a significant difference in the level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students with particular reference to class level. The stated null hypothesis was therefore, rejected.

### **Hypothesis 3**

There is no significant difference between the emotional adjustment of private and public secondary school students in the FCT

**Table 4:** t-value of emotional adjustment of students on school basis

Group	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	t-value	critical t
Private	150	13.4	0.62	448	1.59	1.96
Public	300	13.5	1.48			

Table 4 indicates that the calculated t-value of 1.59 is less than the critical value of 1.96, therefore, the hypothesis was upheld. This means that there is no significant difference in the level of emotional adjustment between public and private secondary School Students.

## **IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The study revealed that there is a low level of emotional adjustment among secondary school students. This is in line with Rajeswari and Eljo (2013) and Devi and Ramachandran (2013) findings which indicated a low level emotional adjustment among adolescent students, and women students respectively. This result may not be unconnected with the psychological environment of the school system in the present socio-economic condition in the country. This has also affected the teachers, parents and school management.

The result of the study also indicated that no significant difference exist between male and female students level of emotional adjustment. This is in line with Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2013) findings which established no significant difference in the emotional adjustment patterns of the male and female adolescents in the secondary schools. However, the researchers observed that the set of students in the present study differ from that of the Okorodudus. While the present study involved senior secondary students, the Okorodudus' study involved junior secondary school student. One would have expected the male students to demonstrate a higher level of emotional adjustment than their female counterparts. This result has confirmed that adolescents in general react to emotional situation in similar ways regardless of gender, since emotional disposition is the consequence of frustration of needs or goals. The result of the study has established that a significant difference exist between the level of emotional adjustment of secondary school students with particular reference to class level. This result could be attributed to the fact that a higher level of adjustment is expected as one is more acquainted with the environment. Therefore, SS III students are expected to adjust better emotionally than SS I students. This result is similar to the findings of Devi and Ramachandran (2013) study which indicated a significant difference among the Arts and science, Engineering and Education women students in their emotional adjustment.

Finally, the study could not establish any significant difference between public and private secondary school students level of emotional adjustment. This means that the environment has little impact on students' level of emotional adjustment. Hence, Eke (2004) believe that the major influence on psychological development is genetic predisposition and not necessary only on the basis of environmental influence alone. Therefore, Eke (2004) claimed that genetic constitution has enormous effect on the emotional potentials of the individual. The environment only builds on the genetic dispositions.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of this study, it is concluded that secondary school students in the FCT have low level of emotional adjustment, and there is no significant difference in their emotional adjustment on the basis of gender and school type, except for class level. However, in today's educational system, students' emotional adjustment behaviour dominates almost all activities. Therefore, there is a need for good adjustment to enhance students' success and give them a sense of pride and self-satisfaction.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Emotional adjustment is essential for students' success and psychological equilibrium. The following recommendations are made based on the findings:

- Both public and private secondary school management and teachers should promote conducive psychological environment in their schools that will enhances emotional adjustment ability of the students.
- The school counselors should take up the challenge of low emotional adjustment of the students by organizing seminars, symposia, talk-show and orientation that will enhance emotional adjustment of the students.
- Teachers should foster good relationship between them and the students to enhance emotional adjustment of the students.
- Co-curricular activities, sports, exhibition, music and dance should be provided and students encouraged to actively engage in them to promote emotional adjustment among secondary school students.

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**ADOLESCENT’S EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT INVENTORY (English Version)**

School: .....

Age.....Class: SS I ( ) SS II ( ) SS III ( )

Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

**Instruction**

Through this inventory, an attempt has been made to study your emotional adjustment. If you agree with the content of statement or question then put a cross (x) mark in the bracket below the column of ‘Yes’ and if you disagree then put a mark ‘x’ below the column of ‘No’. You have to answer all questions. Please try to finish the work as early as possible.

**Statements**

S/n	Items	Yes	No
1	I get nervous while talking with other people		
2	I am too much sensible		
3	I feel myself lonely		
4	I am unable to understand myself		
5	I get excited very easily		
6	I am unable to control own temperament		
7	I am suspicious by nature		
8	I think seriously even small thing		
9	Usually I get fear of accident		
10	I am unable to get good sleep		
11	I easily get angry due to not forget the past		
12	I am unable to improve my own temperament		
13	I waste most of time in day dreaming		
14	Usually I feel anxious due to my weak health		
15	I am afraid by new environment		
16	I get frightened when I am alone at night in my house		
17	Even the idea of failure dreads me.		
18	I hate opposite sex members		

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19	I feel fear to meet Doctor even at the time if sickness		
20	Often I feel sad.		
21	I am often excited while talking with people		
22	I get nervous in front of my problem		
23	My eyes get wet on seeing the difficulties of others		
24	I do not feel pleasure in mixing up with the friends		
25	I am jealous on seeing the progress of others		
26	I feel very much frightened even in minor frightful places		
27	I get angry when work is not done according to my wish		
28	I feel nervous even over my minor problems or responsibilities		
29	I feel nervous during examination days		
30	I am excited at the simplest joke.		
31	Often I get upset		
32	I easily get irritated when people tense me.		
33	Even minor oppositions, troubles me.		

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