



School adjustment patterns, locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State

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Abstract

The study investigated school adjustment patterns, locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. Four research questions and four corresponding null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted correlational research design. The sample comprised 1,500 SS I students, drawn through multistage sampling procedure using cluster and simple random sampling techniques. Three instruments titled "School Adjustment Patterns Scale" (SAPS), "Locus of Control Scale" (LCS) and "Educational Career Scale" (ECS) were used for data collection. Face and content validities of the instruments were ensured by experts. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of SAPS, LCS and ECS were computed to be 0.82, 0.69 and 0.79 respectively. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the research questions while probability values were used to test their corresponding hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. It was found that, there is significant high positive relationship between emotional adjustment, social adjustment, academic adjustment, locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State independently taken. Based on the findings, conclusion and recommendations were made.

Keywords: adjustment, school adjustment patterns, locus of control, educational career

Introduction

Education remains a powerful force for positive human and societal development. It is a process through which skills, knowledge and positive attitude are acquired and sustained by an individual for moral, social, physical, and mental development which enables him contribute positively to the growth of the society (Oporum, 2017) ^[14]. Amadi (2014) ^[2] explained that, education is a major career that determines the welfare of any individual in any given society. Meanwhile, career is a life-long activity extending beyond work activity (Dengei in Awujo & Ekechukwu, 2015) ^[3]. Awujo and Ekechukwu (2015) ^[3] stated that, career is the totality of meaningful experiences of an individual which include vocational and avocational involvements. Career is the series of experience an individual pass through in life especially, in a particular area of human endeavour. An individual career could be in teaching, nursing, politics etc. Educational career is an enterprise which aimed at providing the necessary opportunities for the inculcation of right values, literacy, attitude and skills in an individual for his moral, social and physical development in a positive direction (Nwagwu, 2013) ^[9]. Ahmed (2013) ^[11] defined educational career as the series of educational experience given to the child from cradle to old age which enables him or her to make useful and subsequent career decision in life. Educational career starts from the home where the socialization of the child begins and continue to the form school environment. Educational career focuses attention on the provision of comprehensive educational information, skills and knowledge for an individual's position growth, be it at the pre-primary, primary, secondary or tertiary levels of education. Obeni (2011) ^[11] opined that, adequate

educational career of a child cannot be over-emphasized because, it helps in proper goal achievement of an individual in life. according to Echebe (2017) ^[4], the role of guidance counselors, teachers, parents and other individuals in the society remains very essential in the achievement of educational career of a learner especially at the secondary school level. This is due to the influence of secondary education in subsequent preparation of an individuals' careers. On the other hands, variables such as school adjustment pattern, locus of control could have positive or negative influence on the educational career of a learner in school.

Adjustment is the individual's response to the physical, emotional, academic and social demands of self, other people, and the environment (Napoli, Kilbride & Tebbs in Kinanee, 2010) ^[6]. This means that, an individual can adjust in any environment, such as school, family/marriage, workplace, or even in a relationship or an academic programme (Kinanee, 2010) ^[6]. Adjustment could be seen as the ability of a learner to adapt to the general demands of his or her school environment. Patterns of school adjustment are various ways learners could adjust in the school environment for successful learning outcome and they include emotional, social and academic adjustment.

Emotional adjustment refers to a student's intrapsychological state and psychological well being. This type of adjustment is indicated by the level at which a student is experiencing psychological distress, and to what degree, such as the feeling of emotional reliance on other people. With a lower level of personal-emotional adjustment, students often rely more heavily on others for supports and experience mental distress. Experiencing negative life

events is also part of personal-emotional adjustment (Pascarella & Terenzin, 2005) ^[15]. Okwu (2012) ^[13] investigated the relationship between emotional adjustment and academic performance of secondary school students in Imo State. The study adopted correlational research design with a sample of 672 students. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used for the data analysis and, it was found that, there is significant high positive relationship between emotional adjustment and academic performance of students. Emotional adjustment play an important role in the academic success of learners. Cyril (2011) found in his study that emotional and social adjustment does not significantly predict academic achievement of learners in school. The study was carried in Imo State using a sample of 1,115 students. Instrument titled “Emotional and Academic Adjustment Scale” (EAAS) and Academic Achievement test in English language was used for the data collection. Pearson product moment correlation was used for the data analysis.

Social adjustment refers to the students’ ability to establish and manage the interpersonal and social demands which are part of the school experience. Social demands may include participating in school social activities, launching peer relationship and adapting to a new social norm. Peers play an important role in supporting and challenging each other to succeed in a school environment Echebe (2018) ^[5]. The better their social adjustment, the easier it is for students to blend in with the group, feel less social distress and exhibit less social avoidance (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) ^[15].

Okereke (2010) ^[12] in his study found that social and academic adjustment are significant correlates of academic performance of secondary school students. The study used a sample of 204 students in Delta State and was guided with four research questions and four corresponding hypotheses. Pearson product moment correlation was adopted for the data analysis. Meanwhile, academic adjustment simple refers to how successful students are accomplishing various educational tasks and such as changes in classroom climate, different learning styles, increased reading and writing in school. Academic adjustment looks at the individual’s various coping mechanism especially, his or her education demands such as reading, writing in the classroom, achievement regulation and evaluation of learning outcome (Oporum, 2017) ^[14]. Pascarella and Terenzini (2006) explained that, students with better academic adjustment have the ability to complete the requirements and demands of their classes in a timely manner and have better academic performance. Nnanna (2014) ^[8] also found in his study that, academic adjustment does not significantly predict academic well-being of learners in school.

The concept of locus of control was developed in 1966 by an American psychologist known as Julian B. Rotter. Locus of control refers to the extent to which people perceive outcomes as internally controlled by their own efforts and actions or as externally controlled by chance or outside forces (Myers, 2004). Nwankow (2007) explained that, it is a personality trait that governs individuals to attribute their actions, usually failures or successes, to their internal or external factors. Ability and personal efforts are examples of internal factors, while task difficulty, luck and people in the environment are examples of external factors which individuals can attribute their failures or success. Amadi (2014) ^[2] found in his study that, locus of control have significant relationship with academic performance of

learners in school.

How one perceives learning outcomes and attributes responsibility to them influences self-concept and motivation to succeed.

Statement of the Problem

The success of learners in school remains very important to teachers, parents, government and other significant individuals in the society. However, the researchers have observed with dismay as teachers in recent times that, most secondary school students in Rivers State are not performing well in their educational career in school; despite all the effort by government and other private agencies in the provision of necessary human and non-human resources for enhancement of learners educational career in school. This situation is on the increase on a yearly basis and is affecting the upward educational growth of learners after their secondary education in the area.

Poor adjustment of learners in school and inappropriate attribution of the causes of learning outcome such as their success or failure by learners, could be contributing to the poor educational career of learners in school.

The problem of this study therefore, was to examine if there is any relationship between school adjustment patterns, locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between school adjustment patterns, locus of control and educational career of secondary schools students in Rivers State. The objectives are to:

1. Find out the relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. Determine the relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. Ascertain the relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
4. Determine the relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study.

1. What is the relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?
4. What is the relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 Alpha level of significance guided the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
4. There is no significant relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all the 19,726 SSI students in senior public secondary school in Rivers State. A sample of 1,500 SS I students were drawn through multistage sampling approach using cluster sampling and simple random sampling techniques. Three instruments titled “School Adjustment Pattern Scale” (SAPS), “Locus of Control Scale” (LCS) and “Educational Career Scale” (ECS) were used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts in measurement and evaluation based on face and content validities. The reliability of the instruments were established using Cronbach Alpha reliability method and the reliability coefficients of the SAPS was 0.82, LCS 0.69 and ECS was 0.79 respectively. The researchers personally administered the copies of the instruments to the sampled students with the help of three research assistants in each school (teachers) who were properly guided about the administration of the instruments. The completed copies of the instruments were collected immediately after its administration. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the research questions, for the test of their corresponding hypotheses, the significant probability value was subjected to critical value of 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results

Results of this study are presented as shown below:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Computation on the Relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State

Category	N	R	P-value	Alpha level	Remarks
Emotional adjustment	1500	0.84	0.009	0.05	Significant
Educational career					

Table 1 revealed that the r-value is 0.84 which depicts a high positive relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. In order to test the null hypothesis, the significant probability value of 0.009 was subjected to the critical probability value of 0.05. The null hypothesis is

rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation computation on the relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State

Category	N	R	P-value	Alpha level	Remarks
social adjustment	1500	0.79	0.004	0.05	Significant
Educational career					

Table 2 show that the r-value is 0.79 which depicts a high positive relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. In order to test the null hypothesis, the significant probability value of 0.004 was subjected to the critical probability value of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Computation on the Relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State

Category	N	R	P-value	Alpha level	Remarks
Academic adjustment	1500	0.87	0.007	0.05	Significant
Educational career					

Table 3 indicates that the r-value is 0.87 which depicts a high positive relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. In order to test the null hypothesis, the significant probability value of 0.007 was subjected to the critical probability value of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Computation on the Relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State

Category	N	R	P-value	Alpha level	Remarks
Locus of control	1500	0.71	0.008	0.05	Significant
Educational career					

Table 4 revealed that the r-value is 0.71 which depicts a high positive relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. In order to test the null hypothesis, the significant probability value of 0.008 was subjected to the critical probability value of 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that, there is significant relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Summary of Findings

The following were the summary of the findings of the study.

1. There is significant high positive relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. There is significant high positive relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
3. There is significant high positive relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.
4. There is significant high positive relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings were based on the summary of findings of the study.

There is significant high positive relationship between emotional adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. This means that, as the scores of emotional adjustment is increasing, the scores of educational career was also increasing. This result also implies that, good emotional wellbeing of learners in school affects their learning activities positively. This finding is in agreement with that of Okwu (2012) ^[13] who found that, there is significant high positive relationship between emotional adjustment and academic performance of students. However, the finding is not supported by that of Cyril (2011) who found that emotional adjustment does not significantly predict academic achievement of learners in school. The difference in this present finding and that of Cyril (2011) could be due to the different sample size and area the studies were carried out.

There is significant high positive relationship between social adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. This means that, as the scores of social adjustment is, increasing, the scores of educational career was also increasing. This result also implies that, adequate social adjustment of learners is required for their optional learning outcome in school. This finding is in agreement with that of Okereke (2010) ^[12] who found that, there is significant correlates of social adjustment and academic performance of secondary school students. This finding is not in agreement with that of Cyril (2011) who found that social adjustment does not significantly predict academic achievement of secondary school students.

There is significant relationship between academic adjustment and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. This means that, as the scores of academic adjustment is increasing the scores of educational career was also increasing. This implies that, academic adjustment in school is a vital tool for educational growth of

a learner. This finding is supported by that of Okereke (2010) ^[12] who found that academic adjustment is a correlates of academic performance of secondary school students. This finding is not in agreement with the finding of Nnanna (2014) ^[8] who found that academic adjustment does not significantly predict academic well-being of learners in school.

There is significant relationship between locus of control and educational career of secondary school students in Rivers State. This means that, as the scores of locus of control is increasing, the scores of educational career was also increasing. This also implies that, the way learners attribute the causes of their success or failure in any given learning-out influences their task accomplishment and subsequent performance in school. This finding is in agreement with that of Amadi (2014) ^[2] who found that locus of control have significant relationship with academic performance of learners in school. However, this finding is not in agreement with that of Okwu (2012) ^[13] who found that, there is no significant relationship between locus of control and task performance of students.

Conclusion

The following conclusion were made based on the findings of this study.

It was concluded that emotional adjustment, social adjustment, academic adjustment and locus of control play an important role in the educational career of learners in school.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Guidance-counselors in secondary schools should intensify efforts on the ways of helping learners adjust adequately in school. This could be done through constant organization of orientation and career day programmes for secondary school students.
2. Teachers should always make teaching and learning more learners centered. This will positively enhance and sustain their interest in school.
3. Guidance-counselors should always emphasize on the need for learners to always take responsibility of any learning-out especially, during any group or individual academic counseling.
4. Government should increase its effort on the provision of human and non-human resources in schools. This will help in learners' adjustment and, enhance adequate teaching and learning in school.

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