

**PARENTAL ATTACHMENT AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AS  
CORRELATES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS IN  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

The study investigated parental-child and emotional competence as correlates of psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two null hypotheses. The design was correlation research design. The population of the study comprised all the 27,386 (13,331 male and 14,055 female) JSS1 students in the 275 public junior secondary schools. The sample size comprised 441 (226 male and 215 female) students (JSSI). The multistage sampling approach with the help of cluster, simple and proportionate stratified random sampling techniques were used to arrive at the sample size. Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) by Vescoveli, Albieri and Ruinihas, Inventory on Parent Attachment (IPA) by Armsden and Greenberg as well as Emotional Competence Scale (ECS) were used for data collection. Face, content and construct validities were ensured by experts in the relevant areas. The Cronbach alpha was used to establish the reliability coefficient of ECS, PWBS and IP A were 0.86, 0.87 and 0.78 respectively. Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. It was found that Parental attachment and emotional competence have a positive significant high relationship with psychological well-being of the students in Rivers State. it was recommended among others that parents should ensure that they develop strong bond and affinity of relationship in their family life style. Also, parents should always desire and seek for parenting skills through reading of materials and counselling sections in the churches, Mosques among others.

**Keywords:** Parental-Child, Emotional Competence and Psychological Well-Being Of Students

## **Introduction**

Psychological well-being consists striking a balance between one's disposition and that of others, environment and that of the activities occupying the individual. The psychological well-being of an individual is often exemplified in the intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships that exist in one's life. Psychological well-being is seen as the near absence of emotional challenges and difficulties. Psychological well-being may not be in disconnect with the types of practices and emotional competence that the students experience in their various families. The desire of every person is to be physically, mentally, spiritually and emotionally healthy. When there is no emotional stability, there is bound to be psychological disturbances. Psychological well-being is an all-round development of the person. Psychological well-being connotes the inner tranquility that is felt by an individual. Psychological well-being implies the simple notion of a person's welfare, happiness, advantages, interests, utility, and quality of life (Burris, Brechting, Salsman and Carlson 2009). One with psychological well-being is a good interplay in relationship between welfare, happiness, advantages, interests, utility and quality of life. Quality of life is as a well developed psychological well-being. Well-being and adjustment to

college was associated with incoming college student's individuation from parents (Yelle, Kenyon, and Koerner, 2009). Well-being is associated with the type of relationship between the parents and the children. The personal relationship between an individual and other people may likely lead to emotional development or underdevelopment. Operationally, psychological well-being is the state of good mind of the students, health relationship with self and others and as well as the surrounding environmental. Types of psychological well-being are: hedonic and Eudaimonic.

1. The term "Hedonic" well-being is normally used to refer to the subjective feelings of happiness. It comprises of two components, an affective component (high positive affect and low negative affect) and a cognitive component (satisfaction with life). It is proposed that an individual experiences happiness when positive affect and satisfaction with life are both high (Carruthers & Hood, in Robertson, 2018).
2. The less well-known term, "Eudaimonic" well-being is used to refer to the purposeful aspect of PWB. The psychologist Carol Ryff has developed a very clear model that breaks down Eudaimonic well-being

into six key types of psychological well-being.

The Eudaimonic well-being is clouded with self acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relationship, personal growth, purpose in life and autonomy while Hedonic well-being is characterized with happiness, subjectivity and positive outcomes. The psychological well-being is all encompassing with Eudaimonic and Hedonic well-being positively interacting. It is worthy of emphasis that psychological well-being is characterized with self acceptance, self regulation, environmental mastery, positive relationship, personal growth, purpose in life, autonomy, happiness, subjectivity and positive emotions. Grossly, psychological well-being is all about positive emotions and relations with self and other interacting variables.

Attachment is basically seen as a form of long-term or short-term interpersonal relationship that exists between human beings. Attachment is a form of secure relationship that goes on between the children and their caregivers. Cherry (2017) stated that attachment styles are characterized by different ways of interacting and behaving in relationships. Attachment is a special emotional relationship that involves an exchange of comfort, care, and pleasure (Cherry, 2017).

An attachment may be defined as affectionate tie that one person or animal forms between himself and another specific one-a tie that binds them together in space and endures over time, the behavioral hallmark of attachment is seeking to gain and to maintain a certain degree of proximity to the object of attachment, which ranges from close physical contact under other circumstances (Greenberg & Ainsworth cited in Rehman & Younus, 2016). Children that are attached tend to show some signs to their attachment. Visible signs of attachment can be seen in the warm greetings the child gives his/her parents when they approach smiling broadly, stretching out his/her arms, and his/her active efforts at contact when picked up such as touching his/her parent's face, and snuggling close (Rehman & Younus, 2016). The main objects of child's attachment have the greatest power to calm him and to protect him from fear when he/she experiences a strange event or is in an unfamiliar situation (Mussen cited in Rehman & Younus, 2016). Attachment most of the times forms naturally by mere closeness with each other. This while it was reported that attachment between adolescence and parents develops naturally with time, as the children who developed a strong need to remain near their parents were the ones who were most likely to survive-both

physically and psychologically (Rehman&Younus, 2016).

Parental attachment has to do with the secure relationship that exists between the children and their parents. The parent could be the mother, father or both parents. Parental attachment has to do with the philosophy that determines the bodily closeness as well the touches that spring up in course of raising the child (Wikipedia, 2018). In the process of attachment, there are four notable attachment patterns that may be experienced. These four identified attachment patterns can affect the psychological development and well-being of individuals. These attachment patterns are secure, anxious-ambivalent, anxious-avoidant and disorganized/disoriented. Secure attachment pattern is seen on children who show some distress when their caregiver leaves but are able to compose themselves knowing that their caregiver will return (Wikipedia, 2018). Children with secure attachment feel protected by their caregivers, and they know that they can depend on them to return (Wikipedia, 2018). Children who have a secure attachment to their primary caregiver will grow to have higher self-esteem as well as better self-reliance. Additionally, these children tend to be more independent and have lower reported

instances of anxiety and depression. These children are also able to form better social relationships (Colin & Low, 1991). Secure attachment pattern is founded on a lot of trust and confidence on the caregiver. Cherry (2017, 2) submitted that: *children who are securely attached generally come visibly upset when their caregivers leave and are happy when their parents return. When frightened, these children will seek comfort from the parent or caregiver. Contact initiated by a parent is readily accepted by securely attached children and they greet the return of a parent with positive behavior. While these children can be comforted to some extent by other people in the absence of a parent or caregiver, they clearly prefer parents to strangers.*

Ambivalent attachment pattern is defined by children who become very distressed when their caregiver leaves, and they are not able to soothe or compose themselves (Wikipedia, 2018). These children cannot depend on their caregiver(s) to be there for them. Cherry (2017, 2) found that: *Children who are ambivalently attached tend to be extremely suspicious of strangers. These children display considerable distress when separated from a parent or caregiver, but do not seem reassured or comforted by the return of the parent. In some cases, the child might*

*passively reject the parent by refusing comfort, or may openly display direct aggression toward the parent.*

Avoidant attachment pattern is represented by children who avoid their caregiver, showing no distress when the caregiver leaves. These children react similarly to a stranger as they do with their caregiver (Wikipedia, 2018). This attachment is often associated with abusive situations. Children who are reprimanded for going to their caregiver will stop seeking help in the future. Cherry (2017:2) opined that: *Children with avoidant attachment styles tend to avoid parents and caregivers. This avoidance often becomes especially pronounced after a period of absence. These children might not reject attention from a parent, but neither do they seek out comfort or contact. Children with an avoidant attachment show no preference between a parent and a complete stranger. As adults, those with an avoidant attachment tend to have difficulty with intimacy and close relationships. These individuals do not invest much emotion in relationships and experience little distress when a relationship ends.*

Disoriented attachment is demonstrated by children who have no consistent way to manage their separation from and reunion with the attachment figure (Wikipedia, 2018). Sometimes these children appear to

be clinically depressed. These children are often present in studies of high-risk samples of severely maltreated babies, but they also appear in other samples (McLeod, 2009).

Buck (1991) saw competence as the new growth of the subject of activity formed in the process of the activity, expressing knowledge, abilities, and personal qualities allowing solving successfully the problems making essence of this activity. Emotional competence is the effective and efficient management of one's emotion and that of others. It is that particular skills that enables two different individuals to be able to manage their different feelings. One with emotional competence is seen managing his/her feelings, temperament and belongingness. Psychology Today (2013) saw emotional intelligence as that type of emotion that allows one to handle the ups and downs of a relationship. Emotional competence allows two individuals to carry out construct argument. Cherland (2004) opined that emotional competence is the functional capacity wherein a human can reach his/her goals after an emotion-eliciting encounter. When a set of skills are organized in order to properly handle emotions, it shows emotional competence. Cherland (2004) submitted that emotional competence is based on eight skills such

as: *Awareness of one's own emotions, ability to discern and understand other's emotions, ability to use vocabulary of emotion and expression, capacity for empathic involvement, ability to differentiate subjective emotional experience from external emotion expression, adaptive coping with aversive emotions and distressing circumstances, awareness of emotional communication within relationships, and capacity for emotional self-efficacy (p:14).*

Emotional competence helps two or more people to build a strong and dependable relationship where rankles and chaos can be settled or managed for the best interest of the relationship. Patrick and Florence (2012) saw emotional competence as a group of generic skills. Emotional competence helps the adolescents/youths to be able to discriminate, screen and adjust to acceptable emotional expectations.

Adolescents that have acquired and developed emotional competence will hardly venture into issues that will bring about emotional disturbances and distresses. Law and Lee (2011) reported that a major component of life skill training is the promotion of emotional competence. Mayer, Salovey and Caruzo, (2004) opined that emotional competence is the ability to process information

containing emotions: to define value of emotions, their connections with each other, to use emotional information as a basis for thinking and decision-making.

Tolegenova, Tunguskova, Naurzalina, Zhubanazarova, Baimoldina and Zina (2015:200) reported that the components of emotional Competence are: *An ability to clarify your own emotions and emotions of other people, ability to express, operate and control emotions; self-confidence, a self-assessment, self-updating, social responsibility, empathy, establishment of the relations, adaptability, emotional stability, optimism, openness, aspiration to achievements, initiative, emotional literacy, settlement of the conflicts, rendering influence, social competence happiness, flexibility, optimism, self-esteem, independence, openness to the emotional experiences, a reflection, emotional thinking, social intelligence.*

### **Statement of the Problem**

Quality of life is what all and sundry is yelling and clamoring for in their daily living. Scholars have reported that family issues are the major origin of student instability in the school. The case of students in Rivers State may not be an exception. The researcher's personal contact with the students has shown that most them exhibit erratic behaviour at a



slightest provocation. The quality of psychological well-being one possesses is to a great extent a reflection of the experience on emotional issues. It is revealing by some authors that the emotional status of students has been abused either by their parents or their teachers. Empirically, researchers have reported that students who suffer from emotional problems may find it difficult concentrating in the teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

This scenario is particularly critical because these sets of students who are emotionally disturbed may be absent minded and exhibit low attention and concentration. Lack of emotional well-being of the students may lead to gross poor academic performance in the school. They may also be suffering from interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship. Psychological well-being may be having a link with students' parental family variables and their surrounding environment. The question is, to what extent do family variables and emotional competence predict psychological well-being of secondary school students in secondary schools in Rivers State.

## **Objectives**

The following objectives guided the study;

1. find out the relationship between parental attachment and psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. ascertain the extent emotional competence predicts psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the relationship between parental attachment and psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does emotional competence predict psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State?

## **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses guided the study;

1. There is no significant relationship between parental attachment and psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Emotional competence does not significantly predict psychological

well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted correlational and ex-post facto research designs. The population of the study comprised all the 27,386 (13,331 male and 14,055 female) JSS1 students in the 275 public junior secondary schools in the 3 senatorial zones of Rivers West, East, and South spread across the 23 Local Government Areas. The sample size of the study comprised 441 (226 male and 215 female) public Junior Secondary Schools one Students (JSSI). The multistage sampling approach with the help of cluster, simple and proportionate stratified random sampling techniques were used to arrive at the sample size. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw two Local Government Areas from each of the three senatorial zones. Moreover, two schools were randomly drawn from each of the six Local Government Areas making a total of twelve schools with 3,652 (1,871 males 1,781 females) students. Finally, 12% using stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 441 (226 males and 215 females) students from the twelve schools that was originally drawn from the six Local Government Areas. An adapted instrument titled Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB) by Vescoveli,

Albieri and Ruini developed in 2014 was used for data collection. Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS) by Vescoveli, Albieri and Ruinihas, Inventory on Parent Attachment (IPA) by Armsden and Greenberg and Emotional Competence Scale (ECS) were used for data collection. Face, content and construct validities were ensured by experts in test construction and development. The factor analysis statistics was used to establish the construct validity of the Psychological Well-being Scale, Parent Attachment Scale and Emotional Competence Scale (ECS). The construct validity was done on 60 students who were not part of the sample but were in the population of the study. The coefficients for the three instruments 0.30, 0.71 and 0.81 showing that the instruments posses construct validity. Nworgu as cited in Nwankwo (2013) opined that items with factor loading of 0.30 and above is selected as a good measure of the construct under study.

The internal consistency method with the help of Cronbach alpha statistics was used to establish the reliability coefficients of Emotional Competence Scale reliability coefficient, Psychological Well-being Scale and Inventory of Parent Attachment were 0.86, 0.87 and 0.78 respectively. Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.



## Results

### Research Question One

What is the relationship between parental attachment and psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State?

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between parental attachment and psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between Parental Attachment and psychological well-being**

Variables	n	R	Sig.	Decision
Parental attachment	441	0.84	0.01	Significant positive relationship
Psychological well-being				

Data on table 1 revealed that the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.84. This implies that parental attachment has a positive high relationship with psychological well-being of the students in Rivers State. The null hypothesis showed a significant

relationship when the calculated probability value of 0.01 is subjected to critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, there is significant relationship between parental attachment and psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State

## Research Question two

What is the relationship between emotional competence and psychological well-being of students' in secondary schools in Rivers State?

## Hypothesis two

Emotional competence does not significantly relate to psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.

### **Table 2: Pearson Moment Product Moment correlation between emotional competence and psychological well-being**

Emotional competence does not significantly relate to psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to the research question while the null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 alpha level.

### **Table 2: Pearson Moment Product Moment correlation between emotional competence and psychological well-being**

Variables	n	R	Sig.	Decision
Emotional competence	441	0.77	0.00	Significant positive relationship
Psychological well-being				

Data on table 2 revealed that the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient was calculated to be 0.77. This implies that parental emotional competence has a positive high relationship with psychological well-being of the students in Rivers State. The null hypothesis showed a significant relationship when the calculated probability value of 0.00 is subjected to critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between parental emotional

and psychological well-being of students in secondary schools in Rivers State

## Summary of Findings

The findings of this study were summarized as shown below:

1. Parental attachment has a positive significant high relationship with psychological well-being of the students in Rivers State.
2. Parental emotional competence has a significant positive high relationship

with psychological well-being of the students in Rivers State.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study were discussed as shown below:

#### **Parental Attachment and Psychological Well-being of Students**

Parental attachment has a positive significant high relationship with psychological well-being of the students in Rivers State. Emotional development is very important in the early years of the child upbringing. If the child's emotional is not properly developed to a reasonable extent, the child may suffer from emotional torture and abuse all along if proper counseling is not done. The finding of this study that parental attachment enhances students' psychological development is not surprising to the researcher's expectation because proper parenting attachment will definitely lead to emotional development and bond. The family is a unit of development and socialization. This means that every initial and early development in the life of the child must be traceable to the type of relationship that exists between the parents and their children.

This finding is in line with Francis (2018) who found that parental and peer

attachment were negatively associated with total psychological difficulties, externalizing problems and internalizing problems, while parental and school attachment were positively associated with life satisfaction. There is no doubt that proper parental and child association will lead to greater psychosocial behaviours. The students do not differ in their psychological well-being when equal care is distributed across them. Still on the same development, Raja, McGee and Stanton (1992) found that attachment to parents did not significantly differ between students especially males and females. In buttress on the finding of this study was the report by Love and Murdock (2004) who found that attachment was a significant predictor of well-being. On the contrary, Indumathy and Ashwini (2017) submitted that there is a significant correlation between parental care, control and psychological well-being of their children. There is no gain saying that parental attachment is a significant predictor of psychological well-being of the students in secondary schools in Rivers.

#### **Parental Emotional Competence and Psychological Well-being of Students**

Parental emotional competence has a significant positive high relationship with psychological well-being of the students in

Rivers State. The possible reason while there was a positive relationship between emotional competence and psychological well-being stemmed from the fact that proper skill acquisition in the management of one's emotion and that of other family members will bring about enhanced harmonious relationship capable of promoting emotional growth and development. This finding is never at variant with the finding of Ciarrochi and Scott (2007) who reported that emotional competence predicted well-being of people. Similarly, Ciarrochi and Scott (2007) found that ineffective problem orientation predicted increases in anxiety and stress, and decreases in positive affect. Ciarrochi and Scott (2007) difficulty identifying and describing emotions predicted increase in anxiety and decrease in positive affect. Ciarrochi and Scott (2007) each emotional competence variable predicted unique variance after controlling for other significant variables. Agwu (2017) found that emotional competence has a high positive relationship with emotional stability in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Evans (2018) found that emotional competence predicted students' emotional well-being to a great extent in secondary schools in Imo State.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that parent-child attachment and parental emotional competence significantly influenced students' psychological well-being.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The parents should ensure that they develop strong bond and affinity of relationship in their family life style.
2. Parents should develop parenting skills through reading of materials and counselling sections in the churches, Mosques among others.

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## **MATHEMATICAL ABILITIES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ACQUISITION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS IN PHYSICS**

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated Mathematical abilities of secondary school students and acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. Sixty physics senior secondary school students were purposively sampled from a population of nine hundred students. Quasi-experimental pre-test post-test design was used for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select three schools from the target population. The instruments for this study are Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Test (ESAT) and Mathematical Ability Test (MAT). The reliability indices are 0.74 and 0.90, using Cronbach Alpha and Kuder-Richardson formula (K-R-21) respectively. Two experimental and one control group with each group taught with a different instructional methods. Data obtained were analysed using mean and percentage for the research questions while  $3 \times 3$  Multivariate Analysis of Covariance was used to test the hypotheses. The results show that students with high, average and low Mathematical abilities gained most in the acquisition of measurement, manipulative and finger dexterity skills in the construction of potentiometer when taught with Demonstration strategy. However, there is no significant difference in the effect of the teaching strategies on students of high, average and low mathematical abilities in their acquisition of measurement, manipulative and finger dexterity skills in the construction of potentiometer. It was therefore recommended that students should be encouraged to improve their mathematical ability since this is a key to the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in physics. While students-centred interactive strategy should be employed by teachers during teaching and learning.*

### **Introduction**

The core subject for technology advancement in any country hinges on Mathematics and Physics. These two are interrelated and inseparable and that is while Adesoji (2008) opined that the

relationship between mathematics and physics are so interwoven and this is expressed in the physical sciences which displays mathematical equations. Also, Tzanakis (2001) posited that mathematics and physics have always been closely interwoven in the process such that

mathematics methods are used in physics, and also act as a tool for expressing, handling and developing concept and theories. Mathematics however, makes use of physics concept and mode of thinking. Imoko and Anyaphy (2011), emphasized that a good mathematical knowledge of any students can be a key to the development of entrepreneurial skill which is the foundation for national development.

The knowledge of Mathematics is needed in the construction and calibration of potentiometera physics apparatus. The construction and calibration of any scientific equipment involves deliberate and conscious effect with high potency for calculation. Therefore it is necessary to involve high learning of activities that allow students to articulate, visualize, imagine, manipulate and synthesize any problem. Abakpa and Igwue (2013) noted that Mathematics is the bases for scientific discoveries and inventions which is very important in entrepreneurship. As entrepreneurship is the process in which an entrepreneur undertakes to establish an enterprise (Adekunle, 2012).

Jeffrey (2011) emphasized that the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and geometry taught to children is very important in the construction of electrical equipment. This suggests that students' understanding of

mathematical concept will greatly influence their application of it in problem solving. A lot of teaching methods have been advocated for in the teaching and learning of entrepreneurship. Methods considered in this study are demonstration, guided –inquiry and cooperative strategies. Awotua-Efebo (2001) noted that demonstration method is most suited for modelling correct technique and better procedure for doing something. While Akinbobola and Afolabi (2009), emphasized that a good demonstration exercise helps students to understand the lesson very clearly as it involves the combination of sense of sight, hearing and touching. Onwioduokit (2014) argued that guided inquiry promotes critical thinking and creative abilities on entrepreneurs. Schwarz, Bransford and Sears (2005) observed with cooperative strategy, two students working together can gain knowledge in learning even though, the students entered the peer learning situation with low levels of competence.

The skills to be acquired are measurement, manipulative and finger dexterity skills. On the relationship between teaching strategies and mathematical abilities, Obafemi and Ogunkunle, 2014 studied the mathematical abilities of secondary school physics students and performance in sound