



Psycho-Social Factors and School Adjustment Dynamics among Students in Selected Schools in Bamenda I and III Sub-Divisions

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ABSTRACT

Adjustment to school is a major life transition that not all emerging adults manage successfully. Although a multitude of factors influence students in school, the present study focuses on the relationship between psycho-social factors and adjustment among students in selected secondary schools in Bamenda I and III Sub Divisions in the North West Region of Cameroon. Specifically, the study examined how educational factors, emotional factors, students' self-concept and social support, influenced students' adjustment in school. The study used the cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected from a sample of 150 respondents. The subjects were selected using the convenience, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. A five-point Likert scale type questionnaire was used to collect data. The chi square test of independence was used to test the four hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that: Educational factors had a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students; Emotional factors had a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students; Self-concept had a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students; and there is a moderate correlation between social support and adjustment among secondary school students. From these premises, the study concluded that psychosocial factors are strongly related to students' adjustment in school. The study recommended that students should be aware of the negative consequences of maladjustment and as a result live at equilibrium in the environment. These findings have important theoretical and practical implications for school governance.

INTRODUCTION

This study addresses the role that psychological and social factors play in the student's ability to vary his/her behaviour in order to maintain a harmonious relationship with the school environment in Cameroon and Bamenda in particular. As such the Cameroon school system is composed of a wide variety of

students with different backgrounds with enormous challenges that require attention, such as feeling overwhelmed, eating disorders and remaining healthy, poverty or failing to handle money correctly, inappropriate networking, homesickness, not resolving relationship issues, bullying, violence, drugs, sex and pregnancy, poor results/not learning or reading enough, staying focus in class, poor sleep habits. For

a student to be willing to be in the school environment, he/she must be able to create a harmonious relationship between educational, social, emotional issues and the school environment. Most students drop out of school nowadays as a result of stress, drug abuse, early pregnancies, low self-esteem, academic overload, peer pressure and the inability to get appropriate help.

In this swiftly changing contemporary era, ground-breaking changes are taking place in different arenas, to handle or cope up with such, environment adjustment becomes indispensable. To keep pace with the mutable society, every person has to make changes in the self or his/her environment. When one does not keep pace with the changing time, he/she is flung back in the society. From the start of life (birth) to exit (death), the individual must effect appropriate adjustment with the environment in order to fit in (Dhillon, 2016). An individual's success or failure, harmony or disharmony, normal or abnormal life, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with circumstances depend upon his/her adaptability in given situations. Anyone who does not get suitable way out to his/her challenge may experience anxiety, resistance and ultimately a feeling of failure. Some people may accept the circumstances and feel satisfied while others take measures (using appropriate techniques) to work out solutions to the difficulty. This calls for the need for adjustment in order to fit in. This process (adjustment) requires the individual to vary his/her behaviours to maintain balance between his/her needs and environment.

Conceptualising Psycho-Social and School Adjustment Dynamics

The school as a formal agency of education is an important instrument geared towards nurturing the personal good of individuals and the collective good of the society of which these individuals form an integral part. Good (1959) typifies knowledge, understanding, competencies, practical know-hows and skills as well as active involvement in the community, geared towards a sense of achievement. Law No 98/004 of 14 April 1998 to lay down guidelines for education in Cameroon, states in its Section 4 that; "The general purpose of education shall be to train children for their intellectual, social, physical, civic and moral development and their smooth integration into society bearing in mind prevailing economic, socio-cultural, political and moral factors" (Law No 98/004 of 14 April 1998). This provision highlights government ardent desire for school adjustment to be achieved.

This means that for an individual to become a useful person to himself/herself and to society, appropriate education must be acquired which can only be guaranteed if the individual effectively adjusts to the learning environment. Students' willingness to take part and adjust in school programme could be influenced by the nature of the school environment and their experiences both inside and outside school.

Scholars have variedly given meaning to the concept of adjustment from several perspectives. Kulshrestha (1979), and Raju and Rahamtulla (2007a)

have referred to it as a process of maintaining harmonious relationships between a living organism and its environment. The term adjustment is often used as synonymous to accommodation and adaptation. Strictly speaking, the term signifies the results of equilibrium, which may be affected by either of these processes (Monroe, 1990). This term underscores a person's struggle to go along or survive in his or her social and physical environment. On his part, Good (1959) considers adjustment to mean the process of finding and adopting modes of behaviour appropriate to the environment or the changes in the environment. Also, adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs (Shaffer, 1961). To Kulshrestha (1979), adjustment is the process by which the individual attempts to deal with stress, tensions, conflicts etc., and meet his or her needs.

Adjustment therefore involves two crucial dynamics, i.e. the individual and the environment. Talking about the individual, attention is given to heredity, biological, psychological factors, as well as the quality of socialization given to him or her by the more knowledgeable others in his/her life. The environment would involve all the social factors. People generally leave their families and attend school, wherein they would be required to make a wide range of adjustments if they have to successfully cope in the new environment. Every member of the society encourages this needed effort for a successful integration of 'fitting in'. Broadly speaking, there are three areas where an individual needs to be adjusted to live balanced life. These are family home, school and society. Several studies have been reported in the area of social, educational, health and emotional adjustment of students of both sexes. Some studies relate adjustment with variables such as intelligence, achievement, age, sex, socio-economic status, needs, anxiety, and security. A few studies focus on the nature, causes, and extent of indiscipline among students. A review of the studies carried out in the field of adjustment as reported in the three surveys of educational research edited by Buch (1991) reveals that no systematic attempt has yet been made to develop a tool for the assessment of adjustment problems of students in school.

There have been several studies done within and outside Cameroon on the effects of home environment as well as the socio-economic status of parents on the academic achievement of students. On this, Doley (2018) concludes that the home environment definitely influences the academic achievement of the students. She considers that the brain of the child develops according to the quality and quantity of the stimuli the children receive from their parents since the home is the primary place of education. Research has found many factors that influence how well a student does in school and the amount of confidence the students have for themselves. However, adolescent hood is a transition period in which many changes take place. These changes include physical, social, psychological or emotional changes. During this stage there is the tendency to feel autonomous and the yearning to take

decisions on their own on issues concerning career, education and living. Sometimes it may seem indifferent to parents and thus these adolescents go closer and give more importance to friends. Friendship is an important factor in determining the nature of adolescents. This is because they spend more time talking and having fun with their friends. Sometimes this may lead to peer group influences such as smoking, alcohol and other risky behaviours. Furthermore, some students tend to deal with stress from internal and external factors that may lead to them not being able to create a harmonious relationship with the school environment. This often leads to the many dropouts due to lack of academic achievement or situations such as unwanted pregnancies our society is facing today.

Confronted with the pressures of adolescent hood, most students require assistance and support to enable them suitably deal with these forces through adjustment. They need someone trustworthy to follow them up and most importantly someone to confide in. This help and support is usually not available at home, as parents are busy with work and many teachers are usually hostile and not welcoming. With all these the students either seek refuge in their friends or submerge themselves in their challenges which may lead to low self-esteem and sometimes depression. With the changes in family life and indeed in societal makeup, schools are now finding it increasingly problematic to keep parents informed of and actively engaged in the day-to-day progress of their children (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005). Teachers and administrators are realizing that the support they once received in getting students to do their homework is not there, because the parents are not at home to insist that students complete their homework. As a result of the challenges faced by students, many of them engage in unhealthy risky behaviours such as: substance abuse, dangerous dieting, eating disorders, staying out all night, unprotected sexual activity, gang violence, handling weapons, bullying, shoplifting and stealing, scamming, occultism and pornography. Specific problems that can arise from such risky behaviours during adolescence include increased levels of stress, depression, anxiety, addiction, anorexia and substance dependence. This could have a negative incidence on their academic work and conduct. An in-depth insight into the psychological and social/environmental factors that impact school adjustment of young learners could be primordially crucial for the enhancement of school life.

Statement of the Problem

The increased dropout rate from secondary schools in Cameroon and Bamenda in particular calls for attention. More students increasingly find it difficult coping with the school environment and its challenges. With the academic demands becoming more intense, low self-esteem, emotional problems and sometimes the inability to get help from the right source, students may tend to feel frustrated and find it difficult to cope with the school environment. One would wonder

whether educational, emotional, social or the self-concept factor could be responsible for this.

As we know adolescence is a crucial period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is the stage wherein a young person undergoes physical, emotional, social, moral and spiritual changes. These changes are speedier and bring about lots of differences in their perception and attitude which is reflected in their behaviours. Adolescents most probably experience mixed feelings on fitting into the world which could lead to role confusion. In the school environment, this confusion and the struggle in finding their grounds oftentimes could create emotional challenges such as stress, unwanted pregnancies, relationship issues, inappropriate eating habits, feeling carried away, which affect their capacity to concentrate on school work. Given the primordial role of school adjustment it was crucial exploring the issues surrounding the psychosocial adjustment of learners with particular focus on the educational, emotional factors and social support.

Purpose of the Study

To investigate the psycho-social factors affecting the adjustment of secondary school students.

Research Objectives

Four objectives were formulated for the study

- To assess the influence of educational factors on the adjustment of secondary school students.
- To find out how emotional factors affect the adjustment of secondary school students.
- To establish how the self-concept affects adjustment among secondary school students.
- To examine the correlation between social support and adjustment among secondary school students.

Research Questions

Based on the research objectives the following research questions were derived:

- To what extent do educational factors affect adjustment of secondary school students?
- To what extent do emotional factors affect the adjustment of secondary school students?
- Does self-concept affect school adjustment among secondary school students?
- To what level is there correlation between social support and school adjustment among secondary school students?

Specific Research Hypotheses

- Educational factors do not have an effect on adjustment among secondary school students.

- Emotional factors do not have a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students.
- Self-concept has no significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students.
- Social support has no effect on adjustment among secondary school students.

Theoretical Framework

The Psycho-Social Development Theory (Erickson)

The main theory that inspired this study was the psychosocial development theory of Erik Erickson (McLeod, 2018) wherein he states that personality is influenced by society and develops through a series of psychosocial crises. Erickson's stages of psychosocial development are a comprehensive psychoanalytic theory that identifies a series of eight stages. In child development, there exist bipolar personality traits, the positive and the negative (Uba, Makinde, Adejumo & Aladejana, 2004). This implies that each stage in Erickson's theory is concerned with becoming competent in an area of life. If each stage in a child's life is handled adequately, the child will feel a sense of mastery, which Erickson referred to as ego strength or ego quality (Cherry, 2010). But if the stage is managed poorly, the child will emerge with a sense of inadequacy often termed personal inadequacies. This basically means that according to Erickson (1959), each stage of psychosocial development plays a major role in the development of child's personality and psychosocial skills. Erickson's theory also assumes that children or people in general do experience a conflict that serves as a turning point in their psychosocial development. In his view, these conflicts are centred on either developing a psychological quality (adjustment) or failing to develop that quality (maladjustment). During these times, the potential for normal personal growth is high, but so is also the potential for failure or maladjustments (Cherry, 2010).

The first stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Trust vs. Mistrust) occurs between birth and one year of age and is the most fundamental stage in life. Because an infant is unreservedly dependent, the development of trust is based on the dependability and quality of the child's caregivers. If a child successfully develops trust, he or she will feel safe and secure (adjusted) in the world (Uba, Makinde, Adejumo & Aladejana, 2004). Caregivers, who are inconsistent, emotionally unavailable, or rejecting, contribute to children's maladjustments as their behaviour often fosters feelings of mistrust in the children they care for. Failure to develop trust will result in fear (maladjustment) and a belief that the world is inconsistent and unpredictable. It is such child rearing practices that hygiene theorists describe as unhygienic environmental factors (Blair, Jones, & Simpson, 2010; Herbert, 1998).

The second stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Autonomy vs. Doubt) takes place during early childhood and is focused on children

developing a greater sense of personal control. Like Freud, Erickson believes that toilet training is a vital part of this process to prevent enuresis in children (Blair, Jones, & Simpson, 2010). However, Erickson's reasoning is quite different from that of Freud's in that he (Erickson) believes that learning to control one's body functions leads to a feeling of control and a sense of independence. Other important events at this stage include gaining more control over food choices, toy preferences, and clothing selection. Children who successfully complete this stage feel safe and confident (adjusted), while those who do not are left with a sense of inadequacy and self-doubt (maladjustment).

The third stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Initiative vs. guilt) takes place between the ages of 3 to 5 years. During this period the child experiences a desire to copy from the adults around him/her and take initiative in creating play situations. The child makes up stories with toys such as phones and tiny cars, playing out roles in a trial universe, experimenting with the blueprint for what he/she believes it means to be an adult. The child also begins to use that wonderful word for exploring the world—"WHY?" While Erickson was influenced by Freud, he downplays biological sexuality in favour of the psychosocial features of conflict between child and parents. Nevertheless, he emphasises that at this stage we commonly become involved in the classic "Oedipal struggle" and resolve this struggle through "social role identification." If we are frustrated over natural desires and goals, we may easily experience guilt. The most significant relationship is with the basic family.

The fourth stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Industry vs. Inferiority) takes place during the ages of 6 to 12 years which is the school age. During this stage, frequently called the Latency, children are capable of learning, creating and accomplishing numerous new skills and knowledge, thus developing a sense of industry. This is also a very social stage of development and if they experience unresolved feelings of inadequacy and inferiority among their peers, children could experience severe problems in terms of competence and self-esteem. As the world broadens, the child's most important rapport is with the school and environs. Parents are no longer the far-reaching authorities they formerly were, although they are still essential.

The fifth stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Identity vs. Role confusion) takes place during adolescence (12 to 18 years). Up until this fifth stage, development depends on what is done to a person. At this point, development now depends largely upon what an individual does. An adolescent must struggle to discover and find his or her own identity, while negotiating and struggling with social interactions and "fitting in", as well as developing a sense of morality and right from wrong. Some attempt to delay entrance to adulthood and withdraw from the responsibilities (moratorium) that comes with adulthood. Unproductive persons with this stage tend to experience role confusion and upheavals.

Adolescents begin to develop a strong affiliation and devotion to ideals, causes, and friends.

The sixth stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Intimacy vs. Isolation) occurs during early adulthood (18 to 35 years). At the young adult stage, people tend to seek company and love. Some also begin to "settle down" and start families. Young adults seek deep intimacy and satisfying relationships, but if unsuccessful, isolation may occur. Noteworthy relationships at this stage are with marital partners and friends.

The seventh stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Generativity vs. Stagnation) occurs during middle adulthood between the ages of 35 to 55. Career and work are the key things at this stage, along with family. Middle adulthood is also the time when people can take on greater responsibilities and control. At this stage, effort is made to establish stability and Erikson's idea of generativity (attempting to produce something) makes a difference to society. Inactivity and meaninglessness are common fears during this phase. Additionally, major life transitions can occur during this period. For example, children leave the household, careers can alter, and so on. Some may struggle with finding purpose. Major relationships are those within the family, workplace, local church and other communities.

The last stage of Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (Integrity vs. Despair) occurs during late adulthood between the ages of 55 or 65 to Death. Erikson believed that much of life is preparing for the middle adulthood stage and the last

stage involves much reflection. As older adults, some can look back with a feeling of integrity — that is, contentment and fulfilment, having led a meaningful life and valuable contribution to society. Others may have a sense of despair during this stage, reflecting upon their experiences and failures. They may fear death as they struggle to find a purpose to their lives and wondering what the point of life is all about.

The focus here is on the adolescence stage of Erickson's theory. This is because the study is centred on secondary school students of which most Cameroonian secondary school students are adolescents. This phase of life is impressively influenced by independence and self-consciousness as the adolescent begins to ask questions like "Who am I and who can I be?" They are usually concerned about how they appear to others and the ability to adjust to school or occupational identity is generally primordial.

Adolescents are also likely to experience mixed feelings on how they could fit into the world which may at times result to role confusion. Thus in the school setting this confusion and the battle to find their grounds can sometimes make them experience emotional problems such as stress, which affect their ability to focus in school. As such most depend on their peers for support instead of their parents or teachers. Educators can do much to help children feel accepted, loved and significant when at school (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2007; Weldon, 2000).

Conceptually, figure one illustrates significant relationships between the psychosocial variables and adjustment.

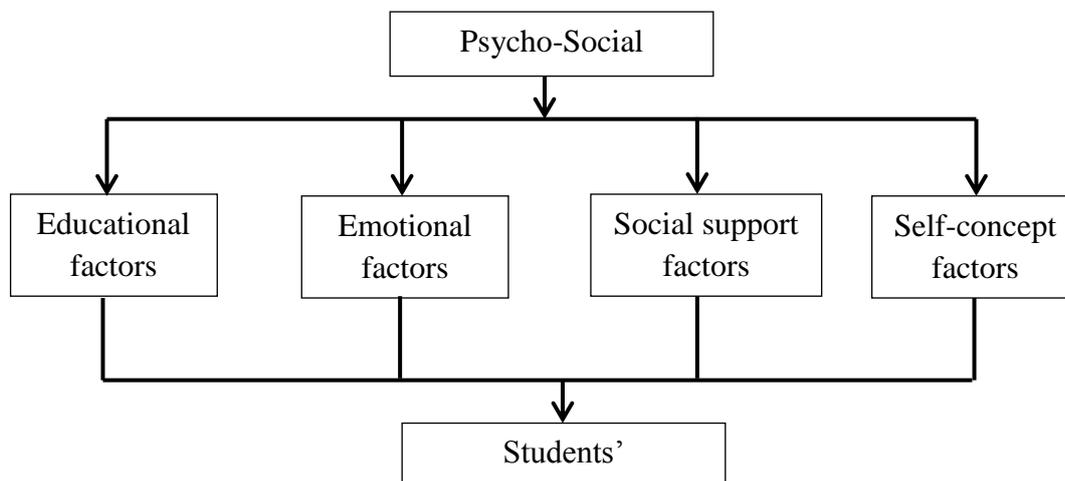


Figure 1: Conceptual Diagram showing Relationship between Psychosocial Variables and Adjustment to the School Environment

Figure one describes the relationship between the independent variables, their sub variables and the individual in his/her environment. The individual (student) who needs to achieve a proper balance with his/her environment is faced with psycho-social predictors such as emotional factors, social support, educational factors and self-concept. These psycho-social predictors of adjustment manifest in the various forms demonstrated in the figure such as stress, peer

pressure, academic overload and issues of self-esteem. The variables are seen to be interdependent as they complement each other in various forms. It is seen that lack of emotional adjustment through stress and peer pressure may cause the student not to adjust academically (academic overload) and vice versa. Once the student is unable to seek help from teachers, counsellors, friends and family, low self-esteem sets in as the student believes that he/she would be unable to

attain academic achievement and in some cases students may drop out of school.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional survey research design was used whereby information was collected from different cohorts of a relatively large group of students from the population used in the study. This enabled the researcher to discover the various factors that impaired students' adjustment in school.

Population of Study

The population of this study constituted all the students of selected Government Bilingual High Schools within Bamenda I and III Sub Divisions, namely, Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Bamendakwe, Government Bilingual High School Atiela and Government Bilingual High School Bayelle. The target population comprised adolescents because they were the subject of study for this research. Students of forms 3, forms 4 and lower sixth were selected for the study because it is at this age that most children are at the peak of adolescence and likely to be confronted with adjustment concerns. The sample comprised of 150 students.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Table 1: Distribution of Sample

School	Target population	Accessible population	Sample
G.B.H.S. Bamendakwe	730	213	70
G.B.H.S. Atiela	650	150	50
G.B.H.S. Bayelle	500	91	30
Total	1,880	454	150

Table one shows the distribution of the sample from the various schools chosen for the study. The table shows the target population of study of the three selected schools and the accessible population. A sample of 150 students was drawn from the accessible population.

Research Instrument

The main instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire adopted from the Students' Adjustment Questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised various statements designed in a way that students could easily read and understand each item.

Procedure

While at the school, permission was given by the principal for the questionnaire to be administered. The instrument was administered directly to the respondents who were guided on how to complete the questionnaire items. The students took the test in

The sample comprised of 150 secondary school students selected from Form 3, Form 4 and Lower Sixth classes of the sampled schools. The researcher chose the schools and sample based on the convenience, purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Convenience sampling was used to choose schools. This convenience sampling was chosen for purposes of accessibility given the socio-political crisis currently rocking the region. Purposive sampling on the other hand was used to choose only bilingual government secondary schools because they had a wide variety of students from various backgrounds considered to have behavioural patterns which could easily be submitted under study. The simple random sampling technique was used to determine the number of students to form the sample. To realize this, pieces of paper were cut and numbered according to the required number (1-150). Several pieces of paper were cut and left blank. They were all put inside a pocket and shuffled, and students of each class were asked to pick each a piece of paper from the pocket. Those who picked numbered papers were considered for the study. The students were all given the option to be part of the sample or opt out. None opted out.

silence and asked questions where they found difficulties.

Method of Data Analysis

The collected data were reviewed, coded and entered into statistical software for analysis. The package that was used to analyse the data was the statistical package for social Sciences (SPSS). This software was used to get the mean, percentages and other measures that gave the results of the study. The chi-square test of independence was used to test the hypotheses of the study. Each hypothesis was examined by coding the frequency of the responses of members of the sample. Theoretical frequencies were then calculated using the formula.

$$E = fr \times fc$$

Where E = theoretical or observed frequencies
fr = frequency of rows
fc = frequency of columns

n = Total number of observations of all the contingency frequencies was squared for each observation and the sum of these squared frequencies was the chi-square (X^2) of independence whose formula was:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where X^2 = Chi-square

O = Observed frequency

E = Expected frequency

The critical value of chi-square was checked at 0.05 level of significance (α) and with varying degrees of freedom.

The degree of freedom was obtained using the formula $df = (r - 1)(c - 1)$

Where df = degree of freedom, r = total number of rows and c = total number of columns.

The chi-square test was used in testing all the four hypotheses used in the study. The calculated value was compared to the critical value of chi-square for the appropriate sampling distribution (as the level of significance). When the calculated value of the chi-square exceeded the critical value, the null hypothesis (H_0) was retained. The reverse was true where the critical value exceeded the calculated value of the chi-square.

Ethical Consideration

Prior to approaching the participating students, permission was sought and granted by the competent school officials. The students in the various schools were minors and as such parental consent was gotten from the school authorities who exercised custody over them during school hours. Students were told the reason for which they were participating in the exercise and also that their opinions were not to be used for any other purpose than that of the study. Their basic human rights were taken into consideration by giving them freedom to choose to participate in the exercise or opt out. This raised their enthusiasm to take part and none opted out.

RESULTS

The importance of psychosocial factors when predicting student adjustment and school outcome cannot be overlooked. These variables which include help-seeking, self-esteem, perceived stress, test-anxiety, academic overload, self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, social support, emotional situation, financial status, are not the only factors having an influence / impact on students' success at school. The present study highlighted not only the central role of adjustment for students' academic success; but also how the academic, emotional, self-concept and social factors impact students' adjustment and success at school.

Research Question I: To what extent do educational factors affect adjustment of secondary school students?

Table 2: Respondents' Appreciation of Effect of Educational Factors

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I am definite about my reason for being in school.	140	5	5	0	0
2	I have well defined academic goals.	80	50	15	0	5
3	I consider the school certificate important.	130	15	0	0	5
4	I keep up to date with my academic work.	110	25	15	0	0
5	I am not motivated to study.	5	0	5	25	115
6	I attend classes regularly.	130	15	0	0	5
7	I find academic work difficult.	20	20	10	45	55
8	I am satisfied with my academic performance.	55	40	0	25	30
9	I have trouble concentrating when studying.	35	70	10	30	5
10	I am satisfied with teachers.	85	20	15	10	20
Mean average		79	26	7.5	13.5	24
Mean percentage (%)		52.7	17.3	5.0	9.0	16.0

Table two demonstrated that averagely, a very significant majority (70%) of respondents were of the opinion that educational factors affect the adjustment of secondary school students, while barely 25% were on the negative and 5% were indifferent. The analysis

revealed that academic factors (academic overload) affected adjustment of secondary school students.

Research Question II: To what extent do emotional factors affect the adjustment of secondary school students?

3: Respondents' Appreciation of Effect of Emotional Factors

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I always feel tensed and nervous.	30	55	15	35	15
2	I have taught about seeking psychological help recently.	95	15	0	15	25
3	I have trouble coping with school stress.	25	25	0	40	60
4	I feel tired a lot lately.	35	20	0	20	75
5	I get a lot of head ache.	20	20	10	50	50
6	I feel I am in good health.	85	40	5	5	15
Mean average		48.3	29.2	5.0	27.5	40.0
Mean percentage (%)		32.2	19.4	3.3	18.3	26.7

Table three clearly revealed that 51.6% of respondents affirmed that emotional factors (like stress and peer pressure) have an incident on the adjustment of secondary school students, while 45% disagreed and just 3.3% were neutral. Based on this analysis it is

clear that emotional factors significantly affect the adjustment of secondary school students.

Research Question III: Does self-concept affect school adjustment among secondary school students?

Table 4: Respondents' Appreciation of Effect of Self-Concept on School Adjustment

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I am happy with who I am.	115	5	10	5	15
2.	I have a lot of things to be proud of.	100	25	10	0	15
3.	I am sure I will be able to reach my goal.	120	25	0	0	5
4.	I feel like I am a failure.	10	5	10	10	115
5.	I can do better than others at school.	90	35	5	15	5
6.	I have a good understanding of the things I learn at school.	65	70	10	0	5
7.	My skills are weaker than others in this school.	15	15	20	20	80
Mean Average		73.6	25.7	9.3	7.1	34.3
Mean Percentage (%)		49.0	17.1	6.2	4.8	22.9

Table four revealed that a large majority (66.1%) of respondents held the view that the self-concept (self-esteem and background) affected school adjustment among secondary school students, while a lesser (27.7%) proportion was negative and a meagre 4.8% were neutral. This analysis point to the fact that the

self-concept significantly affects school adjustment among secondary school students.

Research Question IV: To what level is there correlation between social support and school adjustment among secondary school students?

Table 5: Respondents' Appreciation of Social Support

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I feel that there is not one to share most private worries and fears with.	70	10	0	5	65
2	When I need suggestions on how to deal with a personal; problem, I know someone I can turn to.	105	20	0	5	20
3	I don't often get invited to do things with others.	25	10	15	55	45
4	If a family crisis arise, it will be difficult to find someone who can give me good advice on how to handle it.	40	5	10	30	65
Mean average		60.0	11.3	6.3	23.8	48.8
Mean percentage (%)		40.0	7.5	4.2	15.8	32.5

Table five provided a discovery of 47.5% or respondents having the view that there was a correlation between social support (help-seeking) and school adjustment among secondary school students, while 48.3% held a negative opinion and 4.2% were neither affirmative nor negative as to whether there was a correlation between the two variables. The correlation was therefore average. Based on the

analysis of this finding, it was discovered that social support and school adjustment among secondary school students were not significantly related.

VERIFICATION OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Research Hypothesis I

Educational factors do not have an effect on adjustment among secondary school students.

Table 6: Test Statistics for Hypothesis I

	Hypothesis I
Chi-Square	68.933 ^a
Df	19
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.5.

Table six demonstrates that the chi square calculated value was read at 68.933 with a degree of freedom of 19. The asymptotic significance was 0.000. This value was found to be significantly less than the p-value of 0.05, indication therefore according to the rule that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate retained. This led to the conclusion that educational factors had an effect on adjustment among secondary school students. The value for the Contingency Coefficient (CC) was calculated at 0.560, implying therefore that the relationship between the educational factors and adjustment among secondary school students was positive and moderate in nature.

Research Hypothesis II

Emotional factors do not have a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students.

Table 7: Test Statistics for Hypothesis II

	Hypothesis II
Chi-Square	54.000 ^a
Df	16
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 8.8.

Table seven reveals that the chi square calculated value was read at 54.000 with a degree of freedom of 16. The asymptotic significance was 0.000, this value was found to be significantly less than the p-value of 0.05. Therefore, according to the rule the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate retained. This led to the conclusion that emotional factors had an effect on adjustment among secondary school students. The value for the Contingency Coefficient (CC) was calculated at 0.514, implying therefore that the relationship between the emotional factors and adjustment among secondary school students was positive and moderate in nature.

Research Hypothesis III

Self-concept has no significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students.

Table 8: Test Statistics for Hypothesis III

	Hypothesis III
Chi-Square	44.027 ^a
Df	16
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 8.8.

Table eight shows that the chi square calculated value was read at 44.027 with a degree of freedom of 16. The asymptotic significance was 0.000; this value was found to be significantly less than the p-value of 0.05. This, according to the rule that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate retained, led to the conclusion that self-concept had a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students. The value for the Contingency Coefficient (CC) was calculated at 0.486, implying therefore that the relationship between the self-concept and adjustment among secondary school students was positive and moderate in nature.

Research Hypothesis IV

Social support has no effect on adjustment among secondary school students.

Table 9: Test Statistics for Hypothesis IV

	Hypothesis IV
Chi-Square	58.000 ^a
df	12
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 11.5.

Table nine shows that the chi square calculated value was read at 58.000 with a degree of freedom of 12. The asymptotic significance was 0.000, this value was found to be significantly less than the p-value of 0.05. Therefore, according to the rule the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate retained. This led to the conclusion that social support has a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students. The value for the Contingency Coefficient (CC) was calculated at 0.528, implying therefore that the relationship between the social support and adjustment among secondary school students had positive effect and moderate in nature.

DISCUSSIONS

Educational Factors and their Effect on Students' Adjustment

Research question one sought to know the extent to which educational factors affect adjustment of students in secondary school. Ten questionnaire items were generated all targeting the different educational factors that affect students' adjustment in school. The findings revealed that, students were very positive for their

reasons for being in school, they also had well defined goals, as well as considered that their school certificate was very important. A good number of the students indicated that they were motivated to study, as they attend classes regularly and found academic work normal. Also, they were very satisfied with their teachers as well as their academic performance but that they had trouble concentrating in class.

A crucial revelation here was that educational factors significantly influenced students' adjustment in school. This finding was similar to that of Boyer (1987) who asserted that the transition from home to school could be a stressful experience and a challenging time for learners. It also corresponded with Backhaus (2009), who found that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds were less adjusted academically, personally, emotionally and were less attached to the school and were most likely to drop out. This view also matched with that of Kantanis (2000) who argued that students would face extreme difficulties at school if they did not adjust to the social and academic demands of school life. Poor student adjustment to the demands and requirements of secondary school life could also impact on the psychological and physical health of the students.

Emotional Factors and their Effect on Students' Adjustment

The second research question sought to know the degree to which emotional factors affected students' adjustment in school. To verify this phenomenon, six questionnaire items were raised each targeting a different emotional aspect that could affect students in school. The findings revealed that on the average, students always felt nervous and had been thinking about seeking psychological help recently. A good number of them had trouble coping with school stress and get a lot of headache. Just a few felt tired in school lately but had the feeling that they were in good health. From the test of the second research hypothesis, it was discovered that emotional factors were also crucial in affecting students' adjustment in school. This finding was in line with the studies of Criss, Pettit, Bates, Dodge, and Lapp (2002) as well as that of Ladd and Burgess (2001) who affirmed that children seem to be better adjusted overall when they were accepted by peers and had one or more close, supportive friendships. This meant therefore that children needed emotional stability to be well adjusted in school. To verify this, a good number of students had trouble coping with school stress and majority thought of seeking psychological help.

Self-Concept and its Effects on Students' Adjustment

The third research question, sought to find out whether self-concept affected students' adjustment in school. To this, seven questionnaire items were raised each targeting a different aspect of self-concept that could affect students' adjustment. It was discovered from the findings that almost all the students were happy with

who they were and had a lot of things to be proud of as well as being sure that they would attain their goals. Many of them did not have the feeling of failure as they believed that they had a good understanding of the things taught in school and they could not be failures. Generally, most of them acknowledged that their skills were not really weaker than those of others.

After research hypothesis III was tested, the findings revealed that students' self-concept had a significant effect on adjustment among secondary school students. This finding was in line with that of Barker, Wright and Gornick (1996) who noted that physically challenged persons were more frequently maladjusted than their physically normal counterparts and that the resultant child maladjustments could take such forms as being delinquent, unsocial or withdrawn, unhappy, depressed, fearful, shy, anxious, resentful, sensitive to all forms of criticism, nervous, over-critical of others, easily discouraged, throwing temper tantrums, domineering, dishonest, quarrelsome, cheating, tardy, inquisitive, slovenly in personal appearance, impertinent, defiant, stubborn, disobedient and gossiping. This finding was also in line with that reported by Blair, Jones and Simpson (2010) that more often than not a child who was hyperactive, restless and who sought attention through non-conformity or wise-cracking was merely striving in the classroom to attain the satisfaction of a need which he or she had been denied at home. It also tallied with the work of Uba, Makinde, Adejumo and Aladejana (2004) who claimed that children who came from homes where they were neither loved nor valued by their parents felt rejected and that such a treatment threatened their needs for affection and security and could leave them feeling helpless and lonely, consequently, a very poor self-concept.

Social Support and its Effects on Students' Adjustment

The fourth research objective aimed at finding out if social support correlated to adjustment of students in secondary school. To verify this, four questionnaire items were raised each on a different facet of social support. The findings showed that about half of the students felt that there was no one to share their most private worries and fears with, meaning that not all students took their worries for counselling. But when they needed suggestions on how to deal with personal problems, they rushed with it to a third person and that they often got invited to do things with the other. A good number of the respondents claimed that it was difficult for them to get someone to give them appropriate guidance on how to handle family crises.

The fourth research hypothesis which was tested proved that social support had equally an influence on students' adjustment in secondary school. Confirming this finding were the works of Bagwell, Newcomb, and Bukowski (1998) who held that general peer acceptance also predicted adjustment outcomes. Equally, Taylor (1999) perceived social support to the belief that assistance, help and support was

available from parents, family members, friends and significant others when required. He confirmed this by saying that adequate social support for students was instrumental in helping and supporting them in their transition from the home to school, as well as adjusting to the new demands, tasks, responsibilities and requirements of school life.

Implications of Findings

The outcomes of this study have repercussions for parents, students, teachers, and counsellors. For parents, this study is a pointer for them to watch out their children's behaviours, especially that which has to do with their educational welfare. The child's environment has a great influence on the way he/she behaves, thus parents have a prominent role here in providing the necessary needs of students so that these children can meet up and be well adjusted in the school milieu. Students could become aware of the importance of the necessity of being at equilibrium in school because there is need to be educationally, emotionally and socially balanced so as to enhance their academic pursuit. Resident school counsellors would also realize the salient role they could play in identifying maladjusted students and helping them to be appropriately adjusted in the school milieu. Pointing out the important role of the school counsellor, Idowu (1986) states clearly that "the counsellor in the school system is a person to whom students can open up and express their feelings of frustration by exposing what is bothering them".

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that psychosocial factors (educational, emotional, self-concept and social support) are responsible for students' adjustment within the school milieu. One of the major contributions of this work to the field of counselling is that it has identified counsellors as very important stakeholders that could be used to check, control and monitor factors of adjustment in school through counselling in school and the community at large.

Recommendations

- a) Parents should be careful with the values they impact in their children, and therefore take off some time to talk with their children on the essence of respecting societal, community and school norms and values.
- b) Students should always consult their parents and school counsellors if they face any challenges that could lead to maladjustment behaviours. Students should be aware of the negative consequences of maladjustment and as a result live at equilibrium in the environment. Students should also be encouraged to participate in co-curricular

activities in school through which they could express their inherent potential talents.

- c) Teachers should collaborate and cooperate with school counsellors by frequently making referrals of deviant cases to counsellors for appropriate diagnoses and counselling.
- d) School counsellors should multiply several opportunities to talk to both parents and students about the negative incidence of psychosocial factors on students' general wellbeing. Counsellors should encourage parents to openly discuss educational, social as well as personal problems with their children to enable them understand this and therefore desist from getting entangled with the negative behaviours which often cause maladjustments in school.

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