

# Improving Academic Adjustment Of Secondary School Students Through Emotional Literacy Training

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## Abstract

The effect of emotional literacy training on academic adjustment of junior secondary 2 (JS 2) students in Enugu State was explored in this study. The study was led by three particular study aims, three research questions, and three null hypotheses. The study was conducted using a quasi-experimental approach with a non-equivalent control group. The participants in this study were 23,780 JS2 students from Enugu State's co-educational public secondary institutions. A total of 161 JS2 pupils were selected through a multi-stage sampling approach, with 91 men and 70 females picked from four intact classes. The data for the study was gathered using the Students' Academic Adjustment Questionnaire (SAAQ). Five specialists from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka, validated the instrument: two from Educational Psychology, two from Measurement and Evaluation, and one from Adult Education. Using the Cronbach Alpha formula, an internal consistency reliability estimate of 0.82 was obtained. To answer the research objectives, the data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation, as well as analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that emotional literacy training had a significant impact on JS2 students' academic adjustment in Enugu State. Furthermore, the findings of the study revealed that gender had no bearing on the students' academic adjustment. The study also found that the treatment and gender interaction effect on pupils' academic adjustment was not significant. It was suggested that curriculum developers integrate emotional literacy training in the curriculum based on the findings of this study.

**Keywords:** Academic Adjustment, Emotional Literacy Training, Secondary School Students

## Introduction

Learners often find the transition from elementary to secondary school to be challenging. This is due to the fact that this period overlaps with the onset of puberty (ages 11-14) or early adolescence, which is stressful in and of itself. Adolescence marks the transition from parental emotional dependency to peer dependency. During the transition from primary to secondary school, the growing distance between parents and their children, as well as the rising prominence of friends, can be a source of tension and resentment, necessitating student adjustment (Adeniyi, Adediran & Okewole, 2014).

Adjustment refers to a person's overall adaptability to their surroundings and life's demands, such as how they interact with others and meet their needs, as well as their overall happiness (Zhou, & Lin, 2016). It enables a person to cope with their surroundings and face life's

problems. It discusses and analyzes how individuals adapt to themselves and their surroundings (Paramanik, Birbal, and Bhim) (2014). Every person must adjust to specific circumstances in their lives. As a result, adjustment can take many forms, including social, emotional, occupational, and academic adjustment. Academic adjustment is relevant to this research. It is the parts of a student's life that are crucial to the learning process, which explains the child's well-being while in school. Academic adjustment is important since it describes a child's well-being, according to Clarke (2020). Students' opinions or attitudes toward school, as well as their level of anxiety, are commonly used to assess how a child adjusts to school (Lakhani, Jain, & Chandel, 2017). Academic adjustment is defined in this study as a student's capacity to relate well with others, satisfy academic demands, remain attentive, participate in class activities, adhere to school expectations, and adapt to academic-appropriate behaviors.

A well-adjusted student exhibits certain behavioral patterns that must be consistent with social standards. These patterns include emotional equilibrium, warmth and understanding toward other pupils, a lack of tension, and decision-making freedom. A well-adjusted student is one who is not negatively affected by distractions such as disputes, emotions, and other factors, and whose personality development follows a healthy socialization path (Muazzam, 2017).

Academic maladjustment, on the other hand, is a student's failure to properly satisfy biological, psychological, social, and academic demands due to an imbalance between his or her personal needs and society's expectations (Khan, & Fatima, 2013). This inability might lead to internal tensions and retreat behaviors in the individual. As a result, according to Oliha and Audu (2010), the maladjusted student may become withdrawn, introverted, or disruptive, or be disturbed in other ways, all of which can lead to poor academic attainment. It's worth noting that there are indicators of academic maladjustment. The signals are always negative and emotional. To that aim, Khan and Fatima (2013) listed the following signs: disobedience of institutional rules, uncomfortable agitation, and a desire to conceal from other pupils, isolation, anxiety, aggressive behavior, sensitivity, and emotional disturbance. The issue of academic maladjustment among secondary school pupils has been pervasive in Nigerian secondary schools in general over the years (Adeyemo & Adeleye 2008). As a result, rising levels of student dissatisfaction, violence, cultism, poor student relationships, and poor academic achievement have been observed, all of which point to students' school maladjustment (Edinyang, Effiom, & Unimtiang, 2020; Uyanga, 2016). Secondary school students, particularly those from Government secondary school, Enugu, and Government Technical College, to name a few, were seen vandalizing properties as a result of being kicked out of their school gates for being late (Emelogu, Nwafor, Chigbu, & Oluikpe, 2021; Humphreys, & Crawford, 2014); Nwachukwu, 2013; Ugwoke, & Ugwuanyi, 2014).

Students' unfavorable responses frequently result in expulsion from school, and as a result, students may forego education as a form of retaliation. This line of reasoning was further supported by Nwobodo & Agusiobi (2018), who observed that many students drop out of school before completing their secondary school education in order to learn a trade, and that others enroll in a variety of apprenticeships that were not their original plan when they enrolled. Similarly, Ganai and Muhammad (2013) stated that, despite the importance of a secondary school education for increased earnings, meaningful employment, and subsequent quality of life, nearly one out of every four secondary school students leaves school before completing their secondary school education. 37,263 boys and 34,537 girls aged 12-14 (junior secondary school age) dropped out of school in Enugu State (Okoro, 2014).

Maladjustment concerns and secondary kids' misbehavior have posed severe issues in recent years, disheartening parents. The recent discovery of widespread cult participation among female students in junior secondary school classes in Enugu state has shocked and alarmed parents. After undergoing initiations that included gang rape and orgies, girls were initiated into numerous confraternities. They are members of numerous cults, including the Viron Queen Confraternity (Uyanga, 2016; Uzoka, & Njoku, 2015). This scenario has drawn the attention of education stakeholders, and many researchers are looking for solutions to these issues in order to restore discipline and good morals in the state's schools. Some feel it is due to social, emotional, and academic maladjustment, while others say it is due to pupils' failure to cope with academic difficulties at school as a result of school conditions. Governments at all levels have recently embarked on intensive advocacy and community mobilization to enhance enrolment and retention, but such efforts have yet to generate the expected results.

Despite the fact that the government, through school officials, provides orientation courses at the time of pupils' enrollment into secondary schools, the display of academic maladjustment behavior continues. This has resulted in a drop in secondary school academic performance. There is no denying that maladjustment causes poor academic achievement. It is one of the primary breeding grounds for behavioral issues. Maladjustment, according to Adhiambo, Odwar, and Mildred (2011), leads to poor academic performance, behavioural difficulties, conflicting educational aspirations, and, in some cases, school dropout.

The West African Examination Council (WAEC) revealed results from 2012 through 2016 that clearly show a decline in secondary school pupils' performance, with no improvement in 2016. (Bichi, Hafiz, & Abdullahi, 2017; Kenni, 2020; Onuka, & Durowoju, 2013; Yakubu, 2017). The percentage of candidates who received credits in five (5) or more topics, including English language and mathematics, increased from 38.81 percent in 2012 to 36.57 percent in 2013, 31.28 percent in 2014, 38.68 percent in 2015, and 53 percent in 2016. Furthermore, according to the 2014 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) statistics, the states with the greatest percentage pass are Anambra, Abia, and Edo. Enugu State could only manage sixth place. Unfortunately, from 2015 to 2018, Enugu state has regularly ranked ninth in the list of states' performance (WASSCE) (Agbaje, & Alake, 2014; Kpolovie, Ololube, & Ekwebelem, 2011; Oguguo, & Uboh, 2020; Utibe, & Agwagah, 2015). This demonstrates that there is an issue with the teaching-learning process in secondary schools in Enugu State, necessitating this study. According to Agbaje and Alake (2014), the capacity of an individual student to earn good grades and finally achieve the aims and objectives of his or her academic endeavors determines how well adjusted he or she is in academics. It was noted that while studies on the positive effect of emotional literacy training-related programs on academic adjustment of students outside of Nigeria have been conducted, none have been found that investigated the effect of emotional literacy training on academic adjustment of junior secondary 11 students in Enugu State, Nigeria. Emotional literacy training is the application of specific transactional exercises to increase one's awareness of emotion in themselves and others, as well as one's capacity to respect others and oneself while fostering honesty and the ability to take responsibility for one's actions (Steiner, 2016). Bracket and Kataluka claim that (2006). It is a program that teaches pupils self-awareness, empathy, and healthy communication in order to improve their social competence. The training also assists students in developing emotion-related skills by requiring them to complete exercises that teach the four basic emotional intelligence skills (i.e perception, use, understanding and management of emotion). It is defined in this study as

practice-based learning that aims to increase our awareness of our own and others' emotions, as well as our ability to interact with people in a healthy manner. There are five main competencies in emotional literacy training:

- Self-awareness. This entails being aware of one's own emotions. Some people are unable to identify feelings of love, shame, or pride, or to explain why these feelings are generated. Even when asked to characterize their emotions as subtle, powerful, or overwhelming, these same folks are unable to do so. If a person can't tell what feelings they have, why they have them, or how strong they are, they can't tell how much those sentiments are hurting them and people around them.
- Empathy that comes from the heart. Some people have a difficult time understanding why others feel the way they do. Some people cannot relate to another's circumstances or motivations? Empathy is the ability to "feel for other people, to feel their feelings in the same way that we feel our own." Some people simply have a hazy understanding of how others are feeling. People's emotions resonate with us when we are empathic. We have an instinctive notion of what those feelings are, how strong they are, and what brought them on. This ability is necessary for healthy human relationships.
- Developing emotional management skills. Some people lack emotional control. Knowing one's own and others' emotions is not enough to become emotionally literate. We must understand when and how emotional expression, or the lack thereof, affects others. We must learn to express positive emotions such as hope, love, and joy. We also need to know how to express unpleasant emotions like anger, fear, or guilt in a healthy and useful way, or how to postpone them until a more appropriate time.
- Healing emotional wounds. Some people have trouble apologizing and making apologies. We all make emotional blunders and hurt others because we are human, but we rarely correct our mistakes and prefer to "brush them under the rug." We must learn to recognize our mistakes and correct them. To accomplish this, we must accept responsibility, seek forgiveness, and make apologies. These duties are difficult, but if we don't complete them, our unrecognized errors will taint our relationships indefinitely.

When you put it all together, you acquire an ability known as "emotional interactivity," which is the capacity to predict reactions and respond appropriately. This means we'll be able to detect others' emotions and communicate successfully with them. Emotional literacy training has been shown to make kids more adaptable and capable (Megan-Fry, 2015). Students who show good emotional literacy are less likely to engage in risky behavior.

Students who receive emotional literacy training can benefit from a more stable, supportive, and productive learning environment, one that promotes healthy social connection, active involvement, and academic success. Violence, aggression against innocent individuals, assassinations, and kidnappings have become the order of the day in Nigeria. People are unconcerned with how others feel and think. Attitudes that promote disintegration can be seen at all levels. It is critical that future generations are educated at a young age what constitutes social cohesion, empathy, and peaceful coexistence. As a result, this research aims to close that gap.

The main purpose of the study therefore is to ascertain the effect of emotional literacy training on academic adjustment of junior secondary school students in Enugu state. Specifically, the study sought to examine;

1. The effect of emotional literacy training on academic adjustment of junior secondary 11 students in Enugu state.

2. The influence of gender on academic adjustment of Junior secondary 11 students in Enugu State
3. The interaction effect of Emotional literacy training and gender on academic adjustment of junior secondary 11 students in Enugu State

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 students exposed to emotional literacy training and those not exposed?
2. What are the mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 male and female students?
3. What is the interaction effect of treatment and gender on mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 students in Enugu State?

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 students exposed to emotional literacy training and those not exposed.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Gender has no significant influence on academic adjustment of junior secondary 11 students in Enugu State

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on academic adjustment of junior secondary 11 students in Enugu State

## **Method**

### **Design of the Study**

The study adopted a quasi-experimental research design. Specifically it is a non equivalent pretest-post-test control group design. According to Nworgu (2015), quasi –experimental control group design is a type of experimental design in which participants are not randomly assigned to treatment and control groups. The experimental group received emotional literacy Training while the control group was given counseling based on study habit. The rationale for the use of quasi-experimental design in this study is predicated on non randomization of the subjects since intact classes were used. This design has been adopted by Adene et al (2021), Ejimonye, Onuoha et al. (2020) Ejimonye et al. (2020), Njoku et al. (2020), Offordile et al (2021), Adonu et al. (2021), Odo et al. (2021).

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study consisted of all 2017/2018 co-educational junior secondary 11 students numbering 23780 (10676 males and 12834 females) in Enugu State. The interest of the researcher in junior secondary 11 students is based on the observation of the researcher that the period of this level of education also coincides with the onset of puberty which in itself is stressful to a developing child. Some researchers have testified that academically, as students make the transition into high school, much experience a decline in grades and attendance (Adeyemo, 2008). If a good foundation is laid at this level for the students, they could cope better with the challenges of life adjustment with great ease in the school environment and life in general.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample size for the study consisted of 161 junior secondary 11 students (male and female), drawn from four intact classes in four co-educational junior secondary schools in Enugu State. The researcher used 105 students in the experimental group and 56 in the control group. Multi-stage sampling procedure was employed in drawing the sample for the study.

Purposive sampling technique was used in all the stages. First to draw one Education zone from the six Education Zones in the state. In the second stage, it was used to draw one intact class from the education zone selected. In the third stage, it was used in order to draw only co-educational schools because of the gender variable. This enabled the researcher to sample both male and female from the same school. And finally, it was also used to draw two secondary schools with the highest streams from each of the local government areas so as to get the large number needed. In each of the four schools (2 each from the two LGA- Ezeagu and Udi, in Udi educational zone), the researcher randomly sampled one intact class making four intact classes. These four selected intact classes were randomly assigned to experimental and control conditions with 50 students each in the experimental classes and 36 each in the control classes. The number in the control classes reduced drastically during the real experiment due to the fact that some students abandoned classes for the collection of cashew nuts during the second term when the experiment was carried out.

### **Instruments for Data Collection**

Students Academic Adjustment Questionnaire (SAAQ) was used for the study. Student's Academic Adjustment Questionnaire (SAAQ) developed by Jain. P (1972) was adapted by the researcher for the study. It is a four point scale meant to determine the level of academic adjustment of the students in post primary school setting. Section A; This section sought information on the demographic data (such as, gender) of the respondents while section B of the questionnaire consists of 22 items on academic adjustment of students to post primary school setting. The original instrument was used for pretest and later reshuffled and used for posttest. The language of the questionnaire was modified to the level of the students for easy comprehension.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at  $P < 0.05$  levels of significance.

### **Results**

**Research Question One:** What are the mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 students exposed to emotional literacy training and those not exposed?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of pretest and posttest academic adjustment scores of students**

Instructional Technique	N	Pre test		Posttest		Mean gain
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	
Emotional Literacy Training	105	70.16	5.93	73.27	6.12	3.11

Control Group	56	66.92	6.60	67.60	7.29	0.68
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Results in Table 1 show that the experimental group had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 70.16 with a standard deviation of 5.93 and a posttest mean of 73.27 with a standard deviation of 6.12. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the experimental group was 3.11. The control group had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 66.92 with a standard deviation of 6.60 and a posttest mean of 67.60 with a standard deviation of 7.29. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for control group was 0.68. However, for each of the groups, the posttest academic adjustment means were greater than the pretest academic adjustment means with the experimental group having the highest mean gain. This is an indication that students exposed to emotional literacy training had higher mean academic adjustment score than those of the control group.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 students exposed to emotional literacy training and those not exposed.

**Table 2: ANCOVA of the effect of emotional literacy training on academic adjustment of students**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Corrected Model	1326.329 <sup>a</sup>	4	331.582	7.760	.000	
Intercept	8116.302	1	8116.302	189.947	.000	
Pretest Aca Adj	57.349	1	57.349	1.342	.248	
Group	1225.853	1	1225.853	28.689	.000	S
Gender	38.630	1	38.630	.904	.343	NS
Group * Gender	15.419	1	15.419	.361	.549	NS
Error	6665.758	156	42.729			
Total	826566.000	161				
Corrected Total	7992.087	160				

The result in Table 2 shows that there is a significant difference in the mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 students exposed to emotional literacy training and those not exposed in favour of those exposed to emotional literacy training,  $F(1, 156) = 28.689$ ,  $p = 0.00$ . Since the associated probability value of 0.00 was less than 0.05 set as bench mark, the null hypothesis was rejected. Inference drawn therefore is that, there is a significant effect of emotional literacy training on academic adjustment of JS2 students in Enugu State.

**Research Question Two:** What are the mean academic adjustment scores of junior secondary 11 male and female students?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard deviation of pretest and posttest of the academic adjustment of male and female students**

Academic Adjustment Gender	N	Pre test		Posttest		Mean gain
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	

Male	91	69.63	6.52	70.61	7.03	0.98
Female	70	68.25	6.67	72.20	7.05	3.95

Results in Table 3 show that the male students had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 69.63 with a standard deviation of 6.52 and a posttest mean of 70.61 with a standard deviation of 7.03. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the male students was 0.98. The female students had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 68.25 with a standard deviation of 6.67 and a posttest mean of 72.20 with a standard deviation of 7.05. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the female students was 3.95. However, for each of the groups, the posttest academic adjustment means were greater than the pretest academic adjustment means with the female students having the highest mean gain.

**H02:** Gender has no significant influence on academic adjustment of students.

The result in Table 2 shows that there is no significant influence on academic adjustment of students,  $F(1,156) = 0.904$ ,  $p = 0.34$ . Since the associated probability value of 0.34 was greater than 0.05 set as bench mark, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Inference drawn therefore is that, there is no significant influence of gender on academic adjustment of students.

**Research Question Three:** What is the interaction effect of Emotional literacy training and gender on mean academic adjustment scores of JS2 students in Enugu State?

**Table 4: Mean and standard deviation for the interaction effect of treatment and gender on mean academic adjustment scores**

Instructional Technique	Gender	N	Pre test		Posttest		Mean gain
			$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	
Emotional Literacy Training	Male	58	71.03	5.63	72.43	5.74	1.40
	Female	47	69.08	6.17	74.32	6.46	5.24
Control group	Male	33	67.18	7.29	67.42	7.99	0.24
	Female	23	66.56	7.44	67.86	6.30	1.30

Results in Table 4 show that the male students given emotional literacy training had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 71.03 with a standard deviation of 5.63 and a posttest mean of 72.43 with a standard deviation of 5.74. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the male students was 1.40. The female students given emotional literacy training had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 69.08 with a standard deviation of 6.17 and a posttest mean of 74.32 with a standard deviation of 6.46. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the female students was 5.24. Results on Table 10 also show that male students in the control had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 67.18 with a standard deviation of 7.29 and a posttest mean of 67.42 with a standard deviation of 7.99. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the male students was 0.24. The female students taught using conventional method had a pretest academic adjustment mean of 66.56 with a standard deviation of 7.44 and a posttest mean of 67.86 with a standard deviation of 6.30. The difference between the pretest and posttest mean for the female students was 1.30. However, for each of the groups, the posttest academic adjustment means were greater than the pretest academic adjustment means with the female students having the highest mean gain in both experimental and control groups.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' academic adjustment.

Table 2 revealed that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' academic adjustment,  $F(1,156) = 0.361$ ,  $p = 0.549$ . This implies that the students' academic adjustment as a result of their exposure to the treatment conditions is not dependent on their gender.

## Discussion

Academic adjustment problems are major issues confronting students in the secondary schools around the world (Poulou, 2017). In Nigeria, the increasing number of students are presenting with adjustment problems as evident in secondary schools. Further, the growing distance between parents and their children, and the increasing importance of friends during the transition from primary to secondary education could be a source of conflict and anger; and this necessitates adjustment on the part of the students (Adeniyi, Adediran & Okewole, 2014). This study investigated the effect of emotional literacy training on academic adjustment, of JS2 students in Enugu State. The result of this study showed that emotional literacy training had positive effects on academic adjustment of JS2 students in Enugu State. Also it was evident from the findings of the study that gender was not a significant factor on the students' academic adjustment. The study also showed a significant interaction effect of the treatment and gender on the students' academic adjustment.

The finding of positive effects emotional literacy training on academic adjustment is in agreement with the findings of Knowler and Frederickson (2013) who investigated the effect of emotional literacy training on students identified with bullying behaviours. The results revealed positive changes in adjustment of students who participated in the emotional literacy training intervention. A related study by Coskun, and Oksuz (2019) showed that emotional literacy training increased the emotional intelligence performance of students in the experimental group over those in the control group.

During the eight weeks emotional literacy training, the students in the experimental group were allowed to contemplate on their emotions, categorize, label, express their emotions, and develop awareness of social skills through previously established interactions with each other. Therefore, if adjustment is an expression of social-emotional competency in long-term memory, students' adjustment skills can be developed through appropriate experiences in classrooms, such as emotional literacy training. Furthermore, students' adjustment can be reinforced and stabilized by appropriate experiences which are embedded on emotional literacy training. In ELT process, students undergo appropriate experiences through the classroom activities based on their interactions with each other. These appropriate and successful social-emotional experiences may be the first step in acquiring the good and strong personality and academic adjustment (Coskun, & Oksuz, 2019).

Therefore, teachers can design and employ emotional-literacy activities to compose positive classroom adjustment and decrease behavioural problems among students. On the other hand, school staffs, school workers aiming to increase socio-emotional learning and adjustment may develop school-based emotional literacy activities and carry out school-wide intervention to establish better school climate and produce well-adjusted students. Emotional literacy training gives the students the ability to recognize, understand, and appropriately express their emotions, especially with regards to school adjustment. When students have not had the opportunity to

learn emotional literacy skills they may fall short regarding adherence to the norms expected in schools, thereby having disciplinary issues, which directly impacts their future development (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2020; Hughes, 2012; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Emotional literacy training equips the students with the skills necessary for pro-social lifestyle that improve adjustment in and outside the schools (Cristóvão, Candeias, & Verdasca, 2020; Schonert-Reichl, 2017). Although secondary school curriculum in the area of study covers most academic knowledge, it falls short of providing for formal character and social-emotional education, which are necessary skills for all students for building careers and blending into the community and work experiences (Fink & Geller, 2013). Emotional literacy education has long been overlooked in schools and is needed to support successful citizens in a global 21st century society (Cristóvão, Candeias, & Verdasca, 2020; Fink & Geller, 2013).

Finally, the outcomes of this study also showed that gender was not a significant factor on the students' academic adjustment in the present study and there was a significant interaction effect of the treatment and gender on the students' academic adjustment. These findings support that of Páramo, Tinajero, & Rodríguez, (2015) who investigated the Levels of adjustment to college, gender and academic achievement in first-year Spanish students. Outcomes of the study indicated that though gender had no significant effect on first-year academic achievement, female and male students differed with respect to the effects of adjustment on their academic achievement; no significant effect was observed for institutional adjustment in male students. A related study by Ghazvini, and Khajehpour, (2011) found that gender differences in the cognitive-motivational functioning of boys and girls in the academic environment, with the girls have a more adaptive approach to learning tasks.

This contrary finding from Ghazvini, and Khajehpour, (2011) may suggest that the outcome of the present study, where non significant gender difference was found in students' academic adjustment was due to the emotional literacy training which was administered to the students. Another study in Kenya (Winga, Agak, & Ayere, 2011) showed that there were no significant differences between girls and boys in school adjustment, strengthening the outcome of the present study. Lawole, and Adesokan, (2021) indicated that there was a significant difference in the academic adjustment of male and female students studying Education courses at Kwara State University, Nigeria. This indicates that the gender gap in students' academic adjustment can be closed using emotional literacy training.

## **Conclusions**

Emotional literacy training was found to be effective in enhancing students' academic adjustment of JS2 students in Enugu State. From the findings of the study, one can conclude that students' academic adjustment can be enhanced by incorporating Emotional literacy training into the teaching and learning of junior secondary schools in Enugu State. From the findings of this study therefore, the following conclusions are drawn;

1. Emotional literacy training significantly enhanced students' academic adjustment.
2. Gender did not significantly influence students' academic adjustment
3. There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' academic adjustment

## **Limitations of the Study**

The generalizations drawn from this study are subject to the following limitations.

1. Conducting the research during second term of the academic year limited the number of students in the area of study. Some students that pay their fees abandoned the school for the collection of cashew nuts to pay their fees
2. If it were possible, the researcher would have done the training herself. This is because the counselors that did the training may not have strictly followed the researchers' instruction in the delivery.
3. There may be elements of faking by the students in responding to the questionnaires which the researcher may not easily have prevented the students.

### **Educational Implications**

The study has educational implication for students, teachers and curriculum planners. The findings of this study have implication for students , with the teaching of emotional literacy in schools, students' academic adjustment will be enhanced. This gives them greater opportunity to be responsible over their emotions, equips the students with necessary skills and competencies needed for living and making meaningful contribution to the development of the society. The study has shown that emotional literacy training does not show any significant difference in the academic adjustment of male and female students. Moreover, the results do not suggest interaction effect between treatment and gender on the aforementioned variables. The implication is that emotional literacy training will not only help to arrest the problem of males being regarded as higher achievers but will also encourage participation of both male and female students in the training.

The findings of this study have implication for teachers particularly those teaching JS2 students. The implication of this study border in the use of innovative strategies to improve variables that boost academic success which is the goal of education. Effective teaching of Emotional literacy will result to excellent achievement of educational goals. The study revealed that students exposed to emotional literacy training had their academic adjustment enhanced. The implication is that emotional literacy training should be adopted in teaching in order to enhance the above named variable and success in education

Since the efficacy of emotional literacy has been established through the findings of this study, it has implications for curriculum planners. Emotional literacy training must be emphasized as a teaching strategy in teaching junior secondary students in Enugu State.

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