

**EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCES AS CORRELATES OF
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF UNDERGRADUATES IN AMBROSE ALLI UNIVERSITY,
EKPOMA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA**

BY

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Abstract

The study examined emotional intelligence, social intelligence and spiritual intelligence as correlates of academic achievement of undergraduates in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. Three hypotheses were tested in the study. The correlational research design was used. The population covered all the 27,388 regular students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma in the 2020/2021 academic session. The proportional sampling technique was used to select 1% of the total number of students across each of the faculties in the institution. Three foreign scales - Emotional, Social and Spiritual intelligence Scales were adapted in the study. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique was used to test the three research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that emotional, social and spiritual intelligence and students' academic achievement were correlated among the students. It was recommended that a balanced combination of emotional and spiritual mind training among undergraduates should be encouraged by university administrator and educators to facilitate the identification, recognition and development of learners' emotional and spiritual intelligence which in turn could help promote academic success.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Social intelligence, Spiritual intelligence and Achievement

Introduction

Universities are institutions established to impact positively on the society and individuals who constitute that society and beyond. Educational Institutions assist the society to overcome problems, as well as, assist the communities by undertaking relevant services that can transform them to desirable developmental standards. University education constitutes a vital engine for economic, socio-political and all round development of any country. Specifically, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) in the National Policy on Education (NPE, Section 8 Paragraph 59), affirmed that the universities as tertiary institutions in Nigeria are expected to attain among others, the following goals: a) contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training; b) development of the proper values for the survival of the individuals society; c) develop the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments; d) acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individual to be self-reliant and useful members of the society; e) promote and encourage scholarship and community service; f) forge and cement national unity; g) and promote national and international understanding and interaction.

In pursuance of the stated goals, Section 8 Paragraph 60 of the NPE (FRN, 2013) enjoined the universities to teach, undertake research and development, as well as generate and disseminate knowledge. In an attempt to realize these goals and in compliance with the directives given to them in the National Policy on Education, by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) the universities operate in such a manner as to allow for students' engagement in academic and non-academic activities. While the academic activities essentially form the curriculum content, the non-academic activities which are ordinarily referred to as extra-curricular activities include; students' engagement in sports, religious and other social activities including those connected with the social media. It is to be noted that the universities allow students to get engaged in religious and social activities apparently with the belief that such engagement could assist the students in pursuit of the academics in the universities. Abiona, Fakoya and Adeogun (2014) submitted that the entry standards of the students and adequate delivery of the curricular contents are the main and important factors which are required as predictors of students' achievements in the schools. However,

some others maintained that non-academic and related factors also play important role in students' achievement. By implication, the foregoing opinions suggest that, the views about students' achievement to the effect that only academic and related activities are the determinants or predictors may not be correct.

Students' academic achievement refers to the learning outcomes of a student on a subject or group of subjects after a period of class instructions. It is the degree of a learner's accomplishment in his studies. It is commonly measured by reflecting on the students' scores on various subjects over a period of teaching. In relation to learners in secondary schools, it could be measured as the aggregate of a learners' continuous assessment based on their scores on various subjects in their first, second and promotional examinations. However, in higher institutions of learning, including the universities, students' achievement could be described in two fundamental categories namely: academic achievement which is measured and expressed using grade point average or cumulative grade point average. The academic achievement of students as measured by their grade point average or cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is often prepared at the end of the session or programme to reflect the total units passed in the programme. Unfortunately, many Nigerian students are exposed to several problems which make it difficult for them to attain high academic achievement. Apart from the inadequate funding in education, low quality and high cost of schooling, there are many other problems encountered by university students that pose negative implications on their academic pursuit. These problems are not only traceable to factors within their schools, their home environment, their teachers, their parent but could also be attributed to their intelligence.

Generally, the term of intelligence has been known and adopted since ancient times, both in natural language and classical or scientific literature. It denotes the power and function of the mind to establish and to make connections between connections: it is what inter-legere suggests, by combining two meanings - one of distinguishing between and one of connecting (collecting, putting all together). In recent times, nobody argues anymore the fact that there is a rational, emotional and, more recently, a spiritual intelligence. Spiritual intelligence is the intelligence that makes us ask ourselves fundamental, existential questions and overcome the boundaries we were used to. The psychologists that discovered this type of intelligence say that its development guarantees the psychic health. They show that spiritual intelligence has nothing to do with the religious phenomenon. However, it only represents a way of bringing together, in a scientific framework, the concepts that Asian philosophies and others have known and developed for millennia (Du, Mazdarani, and Ghasemian, 2013).

Emotional intelligence (EI) is often delineated as one's tendency to distinguish, evaluate and handle emotional status of his own and others' to attain certain objectives (Choudary, 2020). Another definition of this important construct in human resource management, referred to EI as the designated ability to make use of the emotional condition of an individual, group or own-self to attain a certain goal or a set of goals or objectives (Fox & Spector, 2000). This concept could be reflected upon as the ability to appreciate the emotions and categorize their possible outcomes and finally through this knowledge attain expected goals (Choudary, 2020). Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002) identified a set of competencies that differentiate children with emotional intelligence. The competencies fall into four clusters such as self-awareness (understanding of own emotions, powers, weaknesses, needs and awareness of self-existence), self-management (managing own emotional behavior), social awareness (ability to understand emotions and needs of others and thus putting oneself into others' shoes) and relationship management (ability to establish relationships with other individuals and to ensure sustainability of such relationships, creating and managing a team) (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2019). According to them, the set of competencies that differentiate children with emotional intelligence could be influenced by personal characteristics such as gender and age of learners.

Discussing the dimensions and levels of emotional intelligence, Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2019) in submitted that there are varying levels of emotional intelligence associated with set of competencies that differentiate children with emotional intelligence. They argued from two extreme points that complete absence or possession of the four competencies is rare. Hence, while some students demonstrate the high possession of one or more competencies, some learners exhibit low levels of others; resulting in lower performance. This explains that a student - say a university undergraduate for instance, may be high in self-awareness and low in self-management, while another could exhibit high level of relationship management but be relatively low in one or more other competencies - self-awareness, self-management

and social awareness. Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2019) argued that emotional intelligence could be influenced by personal factors such as gender, age, and level of study of learners.

Gender is a personal factor or attribute that can be used to describe an individual. It is a sociological construct that refers to a wide range of biological, emotional mental, behavioural, and physical characteristics that can be attributed to “maleness” or “femaleness” of an individual. In the context of this study, it is restricted to the biological or sex classification of students into male and female undergraduates. Adigun, Onihunwa, Irunokhai, Sada and Adesina (2020), described gender as the range of physical, biological, mental and behavioural characteristics pertaining to and differentiating between the feminine and masculine (female and male) population.

Studies on emotional, social and spiritual intelligence among learners have been investigated (Farooq, 2020; Nayak, 2020). Farooq (2020) conducted a study on effect of emotional intelligence on academic performance in University of Karachi. The result of the study proved that the students scored high on emotional intelligence specifically in the areas of interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills, adaptability, general moods, and stress management skills. Nayak (2020) examined the influence of different demographic variables such as gender, age and cultural settings (urban and rural) on Emotional Intelligence (EI) among 240 students randomly selected from ten higher secondary schools of Odisha, a South–Eastern region of India. The ages of the first year and second year students ranges from 15 to 18 years. In the study, Emotional Intelligent Questionnaires were used to measure emotional intelligence of the participants. Data were analysed by using descriptive statistics, multifactorial analysis of variance, post- hoc tests, correlation analysis and factor analysis. The results revealed that girl adolescents have scored higher EI average than boys of the same age group and within the same cultural environment. The overall EI average of girls ($M=25.08$) was found to be higher than that of boys ($M=22.08$).

Sulaiman (2013) conducted his studies on SI among university students of Oman and findings of the study revealed that female students have higher EI average compared to male students. Result at the study indicated that social intelligence and self-efficacy had significant relationship with work attitude. Ademola, Akintunde and Yakasi (2020) investigated the extent to which the level of creativity and social intelligence influenced the level of academic achievement of Higher National Diploma HND business administration students of Polytechnics in the South Western States of Nigeria. It was also found that there was no significant difference between social intelligence along with other variables (academic achievement and creativity). Aremu, (2019) investigated the relationship among spiritual intelligence, parental involvement and academic achievement of 500 senior secondary school students in Ibadan, Nigeria. Similarly, there were significant positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and academic achievement; and between parental involvement and academic achievement. Seon-Young and Olszewski-Kubilius (2018) studied correlation between spiritual intelligence and academic giftedness of more than 200 gifted high school students who participated in an accelerative academic program or an enrichment leadership program through a university-based gifted5 institute. Results of this study indicate that total score of SI and its dimensions (Adaptability, Stress management, Intrapersonal ability and Interpersonal ability) are not correlated significantly with SAT (verbal), SAT (math) and combined score of SAT.

Recently, the decline in academic achievement of undergraduates in universities in Nigeria has become a topical issue among educational planners, administrators, parents and even researchers (Ogbogu, 2014; Adeyemi & Adeyemi, 2014). Over the years, the demand for higher education in Nigeria has increased tremendously; however, it has been observed that this increase has not been accompanied with improvement in students' achievement in universities of learning. For instance, Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) reported that a large number of students in Niger State University, Minna were recently advised to withdraw due to low academic achievement, two undergraduates were expelled from the institution for poor academic achievement while some students were dismissed for various atrocities committed and failure to meet up with the minimum academic requirement after two academic sessions on probation.

Statement of the Problem

Among university undergraduates, it has been observed that many university undergraduates are often engaged at fellowship meeting on campus, others are involved in organizing Christian programmes on campus, attending on and off campus prayer programmes in churches or mosques in preparation for the semester. Many of the Christian undergraduate students in Edo State are so faithful in observing various

fellowship activities. These activities sometimes become intense prior to examinations as most students often spend the whole of their day in campus Christian fellowships, mosques, 'prayer gardens' and other religious arenas to seek the face of God for examination success (even when they have not been attending classes, writing tests and making adequate preparations for examinations due to religious engagements). Many of them form the habit of seeking God before, during and after examinations as 'sure paths' to academic success to the detriment of their study engagement.

Recent studies on spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence among students have been undertaken in Ibadan metropolis, Aremu (2019) and Lagos State (Nwadinigwe & Azuka-Obieke, 2019) and found gender differences on level of emotional intelligence. However, a knowledge gap exists on the survey of spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence as correlate of academic achievement of undergraduates in Edo State. In connection to the above, it has become pertinent to investigate the how various domains of intelligence and emotional intelligence as correlate of academic achievement of undergraduates in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Hypotheses

The research hypotheses formulated for this study are given below:

1. There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of male undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma
2. There is no significant relationship between social intelligence and academic achievement of female undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma?
3. There is no significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and academic achievement of male undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Methodology

The correlational research design using the survey method was adopted in this study to appraise emotional intelligence, social intelligence and spiritual intelligence as correlate of academic achievement of undergraduates in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. This research design has been considered appropriate to evaluate the sign, strength and significance of the correlation among the variables. The population covered all the 27,388 regular students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma in the 2020/2021 session. The proportional random sampling technique was used to select 1% of the total number of students across each of the faculties in the institution. Hence, 273 students were selected from at Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. This makes up a total of 273 students to make up the sample size. The size of sample is consistent with the argument of O'Sullivan, Rassel & Berner (2008) who noted that a proportionate sample size of 10% or even a sample as low as 1% is quite adequate if the sample is drawn from a set of homogenous groups or strata (which represents faculties in this study).

Three scales were used to measure the three intelligence quotients - The Spiritual Intelligence Scale (SIS) developed by Nasel (2004), The Social Intelligence Scale developed by Thingujam and Ram (2000) and Emotional intelligence scale developed by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998). All the scales had 5 to 7 point rating scales. During adaptation, the items rated on a five and seven point scale ranging from strongly agree (7), strongly agree (5) to Very strongly or Strongly disagree (1) with a neutral stem of neither disagree nor agree (3 or 4) were modified to a four point likert scale. The modification was arrived at by removing the neutral and extreme stems (neither disagree nor agree -3). Hence, all the items were rated on a four point likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) -4, Agreed (A) -3, Disagreed (D) -2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD) -1. The test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. This method was used to obtain responses from a total of 25 students drawn by random sample from selected public university outside the study area. The instrument were administered to them and re-administered after a few weeks to the same set of students. Their responses in the first and second test were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The result of the coefficient produced an r-value of 0.73 - 0.78 which shows that the scales were reliable. The researcher administered the instruments to students with the assistance of departmental executives (excos) in various faculties of the institution. Few minutes were given to volunteers to fill to questionnaire after which the instrument was collected immediately. This was to ensure that a sufficient amount of time was given to fill them and enhance the return rate. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique was used to test the three hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of male undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Table 1: Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement Academic Achievement of undergraduate students of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Variables	n	\bar{X}	S.D	Pearson r-coefficient	p-value	Remarks
Emotional Intelligence	273	2.54	.940	0.610 ^{*b}	0.000	Null hypothesis rejected (p<0.05)
Academic Achievement of Male		2.31	.537			

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

b denotes Pearson r- coefficient ± 0.40 - 0.69 =Moderate relationship

The data in Table 1 showed that the mean (\bar{X}) and the standard score (S.D) of the respondents (N=273) were 2.54 and 0.940 for emotional intelligence and 2.31 and 0.537 for academic achievement respectively while the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.610 was statistically significant (p<0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This indicated that there was a moderate, positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of academic achievement of undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between social intelligence and academic achievement of female undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Table 2: Relationship between social intelligence and academic achievement of undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Variables	N	\bar{X}	S.D	Pearson r-coefficient	p-value	Remarks
Social Intelligence	273	2.50	.881	.546 ^{*b}	0.000	Null hypothesis rejected (p<0.05)
Academic Achievement of Undergraduate		2.31	.537			

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

b denotes Pearson r- coefficient ± 0.40 - 0.69 =Moderate relationship

The data in Table 2 showed that the mean (\bar{X}) and the standard score (S.D) of the respondents (N=273) were 2.50 and .881 for Social intelligence and 2.31 and 0.537 for academic achievement of female respectively while the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.546 was statistically significant (p<0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This indicated that there was a moderate, positive and significant relationship between social intelligence and academic achievement of academic achievement of undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and academic achievement of male undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Table 3: Relationship between Spiritual Intelligence and Academic Achievement of Undergraduate Students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Variables	n	\bar{X}	S.D	Pearson r-coefficient	p-value	Remarks
Spiritual Intelligence	273	1.86	.902	.480 ^{*b}	0.000	Null hypothesis rejected (p<0.05)
Academic Achievement of Male		2.31	.537			

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

b denotes Pearson r- coefficient ± 0.40 - 0.69 =Moderate relationship

The data in Table 3 showed that the mean (\bar{X}) and the standard score (S.D) of the respondents (N=273) were 1.86 and .902 for spiritual intelligence and 2.31 and 0.537 for academic achievement of female respectively while the Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.480 was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This indicated that there was a moderate and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and academic achievement of undergraduate students in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.

Discussion

The result showed that emotional, intelligence and academic achievement of undergraduate students of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma are correlated. The result is in line with that of Farooq (2020) who found that the students scored high academic scores are correlated with their emotional intelligence. The result showed that social intelligence and academic achievement of undergraduate students of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma are correlated.

The result also agreed with that of Sulaiman (2013) who found that social intelligence, self-efficacy and academics are significantly correlated. The result supported that of Aremu, Tella and Tella (2019) who found that there was a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and academic achievement.

The result showed that spiritual intelligence and academic achievement of undergraduate students of Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma are correlated. The result supported that of Seon-Young and Olszewski-Kubilius (2018) who found that total score of SI and its dimensions (Adaptability, Stress management, Intrapersonal ability and Interpersonal ability) are not correlated significantly with SAT (verbal), SAT (math) and combined score of SAT. On the other hand, the result is not in line with that of Ademola, Akintunde and Yakasi (2020) who found that no significant relationship between social intelligence and academic achievement.

Conclusion

Based on result, it was concluded that emotional, social and spiritual intelligences and undergraduate students' academic achievement in Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma are correlated.

Recommendations

Arising from the findings, are the following recommendations:

- 1) A balanced combination of emotional and spiritual mind training among undergraduates should be encouraged by university administrator and educators to facilitate the identification, recognition and development of learners' emotional and spiritual intelligence which in turn could help promote academic success.
- 2) Curriculum experts should develop an affective instructional curriculum that incorporates emotional intelligence skills with the objective of enhancing personal and career success of students.
- 3) Guidance and counselling unit should be employed in all faculties to afford male students the opportunity of receiving information and orientation services about how to boost their social intelligence.

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