



The Influence of Gender and Parental Background on Emotional-Intelligence Among Senior Secondary School Students in Jigawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study determined the influence of gender and parental background on emotional intelligence among senior secondary school students in Jigawa state, Nigeria. Four research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and ex-post facto research design was employed to conduct it. The population of the study comprised all senior secondary school students in the State with a total number of 40980. A sample of three hundred and fifty-one (351) male and female students was systematically selected. Two instruments were used for data collection namely: The State Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIC) and the Parental Background Scales (PBS). Data collected was statistically analyzed by using descriptive statistics and t-test for independent sample in Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) at 0.05 level of significance. The major findings of the study indicated that female students were more emotionally intelligent than the males. However, no significant difference exists between students with a high socioeconomic parental background and students with a low parental background on emotional intelligence. A significant difference was also not found between male students from a high socioeconomic parental background and male students from low parental background on emotional intelligence. Additionally, there was no significant difference between female students from a high socioeconomic parental background and female students from a low parental background on emotional intelligence. Given the findings, it is recommended that the government should introduce emotional intelligence in the curricula at all levels of education. Teaching strategies related to emotional intelligence should include different learning styles, group discussions, peer teaching and so on, and instructors should share their personal experiences on how they dealt with emotion.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Socioeconomic Parental Background, Gender, Jigawa State

INTRODUCTION

Education remains the most outstanding development area in terms of priority in Jigawa State, Nigeria today. Jigawa State government's revolutionary approach to education has succeeded in mobilizing increased enrolment and mass attendance in schools. Parents and guardians of different background are leading increasing numbers of male and female children from home to various institutes of learning. Members of this group of guardians tends to have certain identities that depict their attitude toward educating their children; families of high socioeconomic background possess the means to support their children's readiness for school. Because of this, most children that belong to these groups

of families are likely to achieve academic and interpersonal success, because of the facilities that enhance their learning, socialization and learning resources such as textbooks, educational toys and games that are available to be used by these children either in the school or at home during their leisure time. In contrast, the majority of children from a low parental socioeconomic background do not have access to these facilities; they use their afterschool time for engagement in street hawking, apprenticeship, football and other sundry activities. A child that comes from the later type of parental background will be hindered from getting any educational aid to allow him/her to continue their education. The expensive prices of books and inadequate library facilities are the real burden to anybody that has a



child in school. Consequently, the families of low parental socioeconomic background face many challenges when it comes to providing optimum care and education for their children.

Children, in general, develop emotional intelligence during the first 15-16 years of life, which controls the message between emotions and thinking. According to Goleman (1995, as cited in Vela, 2003), emotionally intelligent children apparently perform better in academic tasks than those with a lower level of such intelligence. When children are low on emotional competencies, they consequently lack the ability to empathize, negotiate, and cooperate, and often cannot feel optimistic and hopeful about the future. This can have potentially negative consequences, first on their academic achievement, and second, on their interpersonal relationships. These two factors together can influence children's psychological development and can potentially lead to behavior problems, alienation, and perhaps aggression and violence in these children (Ghosn, 1999). Salovey and Mayer (1990) cautioned that emotional intelligence must be distinguished from what are generally considered general personality traits such as extroversion, or nonintellectual talents such as skills in sports- Emotional intelligence involves actual abilities that require considerable cognitive processing rather than merely highly valued ways of behaving. Based on the definitions of emotional intelligence, general intelligence which is referred to as IQ and emotional intelligence are separate competencies (Firestone, 2016). A person with a high IQ does not necessarily have high emotional intelligence. IQ offers little to explain the different achievements of people with generally equal promise, schooling, and opportunity. Similarly, academic intelligence in some cases has little to do with emotional intelligence and success in life.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) developed a model of emotional intelligence which consists of five domains:

- (i) The self-awareness domain, which is defined by observing oneself and recognizing a feeling as it happens.
- (ii) Managing emotions, which consists of handling feelings in an appropriate manner: Before one can handle a feeling in an appropriate manner, there must be a realization of the reasons for a particular feeling, and finding solutions to effectively deal with this feeling.
- (iii) Motivating self, which consists of channeling emotions in the service of a goal, possessing emotional self-control, delaying gratification, and stifling impulses.

- (iv) Empathy, which is defined as expressing sensitivity to others' feelings and concerns, and understanding their perspective.
- (v) Handling relationships, which is defined as dealing with other's emotions, social competence, and social skills.

Furthermore, Salovey and Mayer (1990) believe that emotional intelligence derives from four basic elements. The four basic elements are: the ability to accurately perceive, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access or generate feelings on demand when they can facilitate understanding of oneself or another person; the ability to understand emotions and the knowledge that derives from them; the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

In relation to emotional intelligence, Gardner (1983) developed the theory of multiple intelligences in which he identified among a range of intelligences two forms that are directly associated with emotional intelligence: Interpersonal intelligence, which is the ability to understand others and intrapersonal intelligence, which is the capacity to develop a model of one-self and to use that model to effectively deal with everyday life. Gardner's definition of intelligence is the ability to solve problems or to construct things that are valued by a culture. Goleman (1998), on the other hand, had developed the Emotional Competence Framework model that is organized around personal and social competencies. Personal competence is defined as how people manage emotions, and has five major areas: Self-Awareness, which is knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions; self-regulation, which is managing one's internal states, impulses, and resources; motivation, which is emotional tendencies that guide or help us to reach our goals; empathy, which is an awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns; and social skills, which are adeptness at inducing desirable responses from others. Weisenger (1998) defined emotional intelligence as "the intelligent use of emotions: one intentionally makes one's own emotions work for one by using them to help guide one's behavior and thinking in ways that enhance one's results" (p. 1). Weisenger further stated that emotional intelligence uses both intrapersonal (helping-yourself) and interpersonal (helping others) skills and maintained that "With high self-awareness, one is able to monitor yourself, observe yourself in action, to influence your actions so that they work to benefit you" (1998; p.4). Managing one's emotions means understanding them and using that understanding to deal with a situation productively. Another important factor in emotional intelligence is self-motivation. When one is self-motivated, one is able to begin a task, stick with it, and complete it despite any obstacles that may be faced during the process. Another



important skill is communication, which establishes a connection with another individual that forges a relationship. Interpersonal skills are essential for relating well to others and making a connection with them, in order to exchange meaningful and appropriate information.

With the significance of emotional intelligence established above, it is important to understand the influence of certain factors on emotional intelligence. For example, the influences of gender and parental background on emotional intelligence were proposed by Vela (2003) and Salovey and Mayer (1993) both as an important addition to the landscape of human individual differences and as a key determinant of real life outcomes. This, as a result, is one of the reasons that motivated the researchers to carry out this investigation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The school environment is one of the most complex social organizations involving teachers of different academic and social backgrounds and students of different ages, personality manifestations, levels of intelligence, gender and parental backgrounds as well as any other distinction that a mind can think of. The complexity is not only in differentiating characters but also in the role of teachers in imparting knowledge and discipline through teaching, learning and the socialization process. Understanding emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and use this information to guide one's thinking and actions, should form the core objective of any education system.

Emotional intelligence influences the types of social interactions displayed by students in the classroom, and as a result, influences their level of school adjustment. People who are sensitive to the needs of others, who are artistic and have a conciliatory and cooperative approach in their interpersonal relationships and uphold respect for social norms, achieve a higher performance. This indicates, in our view, that to get a good result at school, it is not only necessary to demonstrate certain cognitive abilities but it's also very important to exhibit certain social behaviors.

Teachers and other educators are faced with daunting challenges to demystify the mystery behind the process by which students respond to stimuli. On the head or the tail of the coin, teachers come across students either male or female, from either high or low parental socioeconomic backgrounds, among them who effectively understand and express themselves, understand and relate well with others, and above all successfully cope with daily demands, challenges and pressures- and this is called emotional intelligence. Other

students, whose characters and response initiatives strongly oppose or contradict the former, are expected to be relatively deficient in emotional intelligence. To further expatiate, the challenges that this researcher unilaterally confronts is to find out what does parental background have to do with students' response process and whether nature determines emotional intelligence as it does gender? In other words, is emotional intelligence nurtured by students' parental background or is it natural, regardless of gender and or parental background?

Recently, researchers have found a relationship and some differences between genders, intelligence, and the role of emotional intelligence in academic achievement and productivity, job performance, and others (Vela, 2003; Ahmad, 2009). The debate on the nurture- nature controversy leads other researchers to investigate intelligence including emotional intelligence and the extent to which it is attributable to parental background of either parent or students. In light of this, this research investigated the influence of gender and parental socioeconomic background on emotional intelligence among senior secondary school students in Jigawa State; since, several researchers have linked poor students' academic performance with poor emotional intelligence and have identified among other things, parental socioeconomic background and gender differences as factors affecting emotional intelligence.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using ex-post facto design i.e. the causal and non-experimental type of educational research with a sample of 351 students drawn from a population of 40,980 senior secondary school students in Jigawa State, using systematic sampling techniques. Two instruments (i) State Emotional Intelligence Scale (Appendix A) adopted from Datti (2009) and (ii) Parental Background Scale (Appendix B) adopted from Nkono, (2010) were used. The scales have demonstrated a high internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.87 to 0.90 (Shutte 1998). Petrides and Furnham (2000) pointed that the scales have adequate face validity, as well as construct, predictive and discriminative validities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Determine the influence of gender on emotional intelligence among senior secondary school students in Jigawa State.
2. Find out the difference in emotional intelligence between students from high parental socioeconomic background on one hand and students from low parental socioeconomic background on the other.



- Determine the difference in emotional intelligence between male students in specific from a high parental socioeconomic background and students from a low parental socioeconomic background.

RESULTS

With respect to the influence of gender on emotional intelligence among senior secondary school students in Jigawa State, Table I below displays the yielded results from the implementation of the Emotional Intelligence Scale.

Table 1. Independent sample t-test of emotional intelligence

Variables	N	X	SD	df	t-value	P-value
Male	219	115.99	14.578	336	6.889	0.05
Female	119	130.07	22.902			

f a Table footnote. (Table footnote)

From the above table, calculated t (which is 6.889) is greater than t critical which is 1.96 at 336 df and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between male and female senior secondary school students in Jigawa State is rejected. This means therefore that there is a significant difference between male and female students in emotional intelligence among senior secondary students in Jigawa State. An observation of the descriptive statistics shows that the difference is in favor of the females.

As for the differences in emotional intelligence between male students from high parental socioeconomic background and students from low parental socioeconomic background, Table 2 below displays the yielded results from the implementation of the independent sample t-test for students from high and low parental background on emotional intelligence.

Table 2. Independent sample t-test for students from high and low parental background on emotional intelligence

Variables	Level	N	X	SD	df	t-value	p-value
Parental background	Low	184	116.28	14.401	217	0.676	0.05
	High	35	14.46	15.606			

From the above table, the calculated t (which is 0.676) is less than t-critical 1.96, at 217 df and 0.05 level of significance using the two-tailed test. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between male students from high and low parental socioeconomic background in Jigawa State is accepted. This means that,

there is no significant difference between male students from low and high parental socioeconomic background on emotional intelligence.

As for the differences in emotional intelligence between male students in specific from high parental socioeconomic background and male students from low parental socioeconomic background, Table 3 below displays the yielded results from the implementation of the Parental Socioeconomic Background Scale.

Table 3. Independent sample t-test for male students' parental background and on emotional intelligence.

Variables	Level	N	X	SD	df	t-value	P-value
parental background	High	280	120.74	18.289	338	0.423	0.05
	Low	58	121.91	22.988			

From the above table, calculated t (which is 0.423) is less than the critical value which is 1.96 at 336 df and 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between students from high parental background and students from low parental background on emotional intelligence is accepted. This means that, there is no significant difference between male students from high parental socioeconomic background and students from low parental background on emotional intelligence. Therefore, parental socioeconomic background is not a significant factor in determining students' emotional intelligence.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

As predicted in hypothesis one, the analysis has shown that there is a significant difference between male and females senior secondary school students, as females have been shown to be better than males in emotional issues. This agrees with Armstrong and Baron (2005), who pointed that women are more aware of their emotions, demonstrate more empathy relate better interpersonally, and are more socially responsible than men. Sutarso (1996) found from the study on the effect of gender and grade point average (GPA) on emotional intelligence quotient (EQ), a significant multivariate effect of gender on three factors of (EQ) and showed that female students had higher scores on the compassion and self-awareness factors of emotional intelligence than their male counterparts. The general picture of female superiority in emotional intelligence was demonstrated by other researchers such as Firestone (2016), Berman, (2008), Stoberg (2001), Hargie, Mayer and Morano (2003). Most of these studies have pointed to cultural factors and parenting practices which result in greater



exposure to emotions and richer emotional information for girls than for boys, as being responsible for emotional intelligence among females.

Two different aspects of childcare practice in Hausa society -these are Hausa speaking people who are predominantly Muslims and constitutes 98% of Jigawa State indigene- may result in equality between the two genders. Gender role stereotype, a practice in which girls are raised in a more restrictive environment and kept under close supervision of mothers and home managers, and are thus expected to cultivate soft traits such as compassion, patience, loyalty, and empathy may result in stimulating the development of their emotional competence. On the other hand, male child preference, (prevalent practices in Hausa societies where most parents prefer boys over girls) may result in greater attachment and bonding between parents and male children, particularly in childhood. This may possibly foster the enfoldment of the emotional skills of boys. Thus, these different aspects of childrearing practices may possibly result in equal advantage between girls and boys and lead to parallel developments of similar levels of emotional intelligence in males and females. Still, there are some factors such as education, SES, and personal experiences in life that may account for the inequality of emotional intelligence between males and females.

Additionally, the study discovered that there is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between students from low and high socioeconomic parental background. This is supported by the studies of Tell and Teller (2003), Campbell (1995), and Sheldon and Epstein (2001). In these studies, it was consistently reported that there is no significant difference between parental background and emotional intelligence. Similarly, significant differences were not found in emotional intelligence between male students from low and high socioeconomic parental background. It was also discovered that parental background is not a significant factor in determining female students' emotional intelligence.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from this study that female senior secondary students in Jigawa State, Nigeria are significantly more in emotionally intelligent than males. The difference between males and females in general intelligence was indicated in the studies of Goleman (1995), Mayer (2003), and others; and it is now coupled with the findings of this present study on emotional intelligence in specific, especially with respect to girls being more emotionally intelligent than boys. As for parental socioeconomic background, whether high or low, it was not found to have a significant effect on

emotional intelligence among senior secondary school students in Jigawa State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this study's findings, therefore, the following recommendations can be made:

- The government of Jigawa State should introduce teaching of emotional intelligence into the curricula at all levels of education; since, emotional intelligence is a key determinant of real-life outcomes. With the collaboration of teachers and with good interpersonal relationships between teachers and students, on the one hand, and among students on the other hand, emotional intelligence becomes an important factor that could affect or be influenced by the quality of interactions.
- The government should also continue with efforts aimed at ensuring gender equity especially in education, through the establishment of gender-segregated schools, provision of scholarships, and provision of more training of male students with respect to childrearing practices, to create an equal advantage between boys and girls in aspects similar to the development of emotional intelligence.
- The role of guidance and counselling officers with respect to students with less educated parents should be amplified and is highly called for. Therefore, efforts should be oriented toward organizing seminars and training workshops on the importance of emotional intelligence as a predictor of successful academic achievement and employment, as well as positive physical health of the students. There is also a dire need for public efforts toward raising awareness about the importance of emotional intelligence, and this could be done through mass media programmes and public enlightenment campaigns.
- As emotional Intelligence involves a cluster of skills, including self- control, zeal, persistence, and self-regulation, every student must be taught the essentials of handling anger, managing conflicts, developing empathy, and controlling impulses. School must help children recognize and manage their emotions. Educators should model emotional intelligence in caring, respectful interactions with students. School should therefore design programmes that will assist students in developing interpersonal and emotional intelligence in order to develop



tolerance and acceptance of differences.

- Teachers can facilitate learning by modeling the behaviors they expect learners to demonstrate in school. For this reason, teachers should behave and share personal stories with students, in ways that communicate to them how they deal with different emotions. In addition to modeling, teachers can resort to teaching strategies that cater to different learning styles and that, thus, incorporate visual, sensory, auditory and interactive elements, in addition to relying on group discussion and simulations.

- Parents should realize that their interpersonal relationships with their children and their direct interest in their academics, could bring about better academic performance. Consequently, efforts should be made by parents to be positively involved in the academics of their children. In addition, both the home and the school need to cooperate in helping learners become well-adjusted emotionally, as this could lead them to better academic achievement and success.

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APPENDIX A

The State Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEI)

Adm No: Class: Gender:

Please read each of the following statement carefully and tick your level of agreement with each using the following rating scale.

S/N	Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Sometimes agree and sometimes disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
1.	I know when to speak about my personal problems to others					
2.	When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcome them.					
3.	I expect that I will do well on most things I try.					
4.	Other people find it easy to confide in me.					
5.	I find it hard to understand the non-verbal message of other people.					
6.	Some of the major events have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.					
7.	When my mood changes, I seen new possibilities.					
8.	Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living.					
9.	I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.					
10.	I expect good things to happen.					
11.	I like to share my emotion with others.					
12.	When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.					
13.	I arrange events other enjoy.					



14.	I seek out activities that make me happy.					
15.	I am aware of the non-verbal message I send to others.					
16.	I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.					
17.	When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.					
18.	By looking at their facial expressions, recognize the emotions people are experiencing.					
19.	I know why my emotion change					
20.	When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.					
21.	I have control over my emotion.					
22.	I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.					
23.	I motivate myself by imaging good outcome to task I take on.					
24.	I compliment others when they have done something well.					
25.	I am aware of the non-verbal messages other people send.					
26.	When another person tells me about an important even in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced the event myself.					
27.	When I feel change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.					
28.	When I am faced with a challenges, I give up because I believed I will fail.					
29.	I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.					
30.	I help other people feel better when they are down.					



31.	I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.					
32.	I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.					
33.	It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.					
	Total					

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL BACKGROUND SCALE (PBGs)

This scale is intended for research purposes; please feel free to respond to each of the following items as they apply to you. Your response will be confidentially treated.

Please tick (✓) the box below that closely describes your situation.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

- Admission number.....
- Gender (a) Male (b) Female

SECTION B:

In this section you are required to tick (✓) the appropriate response in the option/s of father and mother.

S/N	QUESTION	FATHER	MOTHER
1.	Parental western education level		
	a) Degree and above		
	b) NCE/OND		
	c) SSCE		
	d) Primary School/ Mass Education		
2.	Parental working status		
	a) Employed		
	b) Self employed		
	c) Pensioner		
	d) Unemployed		
3.	If Employed State current position or last position before retirement.		
	a) Senior staff		
	b) Junior staff		



	c) Part time/auxiliary		
	d) None		
4.	Parental academic area of specialization.		
	a) Science and technology		
	b) Art and social science.		
	c) Mass education.		
	d) None		
5.	Parental Qur'anic education level		
	a) Gangaran/Gwani		
	b) Alaramma		
	c) Gardi		
	d) None		
6.	Parental Islamic area of specialization		
	a) Tafsir, Hadith and Lugga (language)		
	b) Tasfsir and Hadith		
	c) Hadith and Jurisprudence		
	d) Qur'an and Hadith		
7.	Types of Qur'anic school attended		
	a) Qur'anic and Islamiyya School.		
	b) Qur'anic school		
	c) Islamiyya School		
	d) None		
8.	Parental Islamic education level		
	a) Sheikh		
	b) Ustaz		
	c) Malam/Malama		
	d) Dalib		
9.	My parent live in		
	a) Urban area		
	b) Sub-Urban area		
	c) Rural area		
	d) Village or Hamlet		



10.	Number of my parent's children		
	a) Very few (1-2)		
	b) Few (4-5)		
	c) Average (6-9)		
	d) Many (10 and above)		
11.	Available educational aids in the house		
	a) Computer/Satellite		
	b) Textbooks		
	c) Television		
	d) Radio		
12.	Means of transportation to school		
	a) Private car		
	b) Commercial vehicle		
	c) Bicycle		
	d) Tracking		
13.	Types of school you are attending		
	a) Private and public		
	b) Private school		
	c) Public school;		
	d) None		
14.	Extracurricular activities		
	a) Extra lessons		
	b) Games and sport		
	c) Play ground		
	d) None		