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Impact of Adjustments on Academic Performance among Senior Secondary School Students in Jere Local Government Area of Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the Impact of Adjustments on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Jere Local Government Area (LGA), Borno State, focusing on academic, social and emotional adjustments. Three (3) research questions were answered and 1 (one) hypothesis was tested in the study. Descriptive survey research design was used in the study. The target population for the study consists of all the 5,543 SS II and SS III senior secondary school students in Jere LGA. A sample of 500 students were selected using stratified simple random sampling technique in accordance with Krijcie and Morgan (1970). A researcher-developed questionnaire titled 'Students' Adjustments and Academic Performance Questionnaire (SAAPQ)' was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three (3) experts in the field of educational psychology from University of Maiduguri and Borno State University. The instrument was pilot tested on 50 students and the reliability was calculated through test-retest method and reliability index of .76 was obtained. The instrument consists of four (4) sections and Eighteen (18) items. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentage scores to assess the demographic information of students, descriptive statistics of (mean, standard deviation, frequency) to analyse the impact of adjustment on students' academic performance and t-test was used to assess the gender difference in adjustment and academic outcomes. The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance using the Statistical Package for Social Science. The findings of the study revealed that academic, social and emotional adjustments significantly impact the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State. Based on the findings, the study recommended that Ministry of Education and SUBEB should enhance counselling services, life skills education, teacher training on psychosocial support and adjustments and increased involvement from parents, communities and NGOs to foster better adjustment and academic success

Keywords: Adjustment, Academic Performance & Students

Introduction

Student adjustment is a critical factor that influences academic success at various educational levels, particularly in senior secondary schools where learners are expected to balance personal, social and academic demands. Adjustment is the psychological process through which individuals navigate or respond to the demands and challenges presented by their environment (Santrock, 2018). Bhakta (2016) described adjustment as a method of creating appropriate responses to both internal and external stimuli; it represents the connection between a person's needs and their environment. Adjustment occurs when individuals achieve a state of balance between their needs and their level of satisfaction. School adjustment involves the process of adapting to challenging circumstances in order to meet the academic requirements within the school setting. Various components contribute to school adjustment, including academic performance, satisfaction with school, engagement in school activities, and pro-social behaviours (Bhakta, 2016). For students, effective adjustment encompasses several domains including academic, social and emotional adaptation, which collectively impact their ability to perform well in school (Afolayan, 2019). In the context of Nigerian secondary education, several studies have highlighted the importance of adjustment as a determinant of academic performance. In Jere LGA, students face a variety of adjustment challenges due to social, economic and regional factors. Individuals who face difficulties in adjusting, whether



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emotionally, socially or psychologically may encounter role confusion, which can lead to diminished self-esteem, a lack of concentration and ultimately negative impacts on academic performance. This suggests that the levels of personal and social adjustment are key indicators of academic achievement among adolescents (Erikson, 1968). Abubakar and Babayo, (2021), pointed out that, Maiduguri Metropolis has been affected by social unrest and economic instability, factors that may further complicate students' adjustment processes and academic trajectories. According to Yusuf and Adigun (2017), students who are better adjusted tend to exhibit more confidence, motivation, and resilience, all of which contribute to higher academic achievement. Conversely, poor adjustment has been linked to absenteeism, low academic engagement, and poor grades (Okoli & Obasi, 2020). Lakhani, Jain, and Chandel (2017) asserted that not being able to adapt can result in mental health problems. When students are well-adjusted, they are likely to be motivated to excel in their school activities, which can lead to strong academic performance. A child's ability to adjust significantly influences their academic outcomes. Conversely, maladjustment can have a severely negative effect on both the students' personalities and their academic success (Lakhani, Jain & Chandel, 2017). Furthermore, Subhash and Sangita (2017), pointed out that poor adjustment leads to low academic achievement, behavioural problems, irrelevant educational aspirations and even school dropout.

Paramo, Vacas, and Soledad (2015) discovered that students with poor academic and school adjustment performed worse academically than their peers with intermediate or higher adjustment levels and earned lower grades than those with moderate or greater adjustment levels. The degree of adjustment among students significantly influences their academic success. Gaining insights into students' adjustment and their relationship with academic performance is crucial for creating targeted support systems and interventions. This research therefore, examine how academic, social and emotional adjustments affect the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA. By investigating this effect, the study aspires to enhance the existing knowledge that could guide educational policies and student support initiatives in regions impacted by conflict.

Statement of the Problem

Academic performance among senior secondary school students in Maiduguri Metropolis has become a growing concern for teachers, parents, school management and policymakers alike. Despite efforts to improve educational outcomes, a significant number of students continue to underperform, raising critical questions about the underlying factors influencing their academic success. One such factor, that is often overlooked, is the students' ability to adjust effectively to the complex demands of their academic and school environments. In a place like Maiduguri, marked by socio-political instability, displacement, and economic hardship due to insurgency, students are exposed to unique psychological and environmental stressors that can severely impact their adjustment processes. These challenges may manifest as poor academic motivation, difficulty in concentrating, strained peer relationships, or emotional distress, all of which can negatively affect academic performance. Yet, there remains a noticeable gap in empirical research examining how student adjustments-academic, social and emotional interact to influence academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State. While studies in other regions have linked student adjustment to academic outcomes, little is known about how these dynamics play out in conflict-affected areas like Jere. Without this understanding, interventions aimed at improving student performance may fail to address the root psychological and social barriers hindering academic success. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap by investigating how adjustments among senior secondary school students in Jere LGA impact their academic performance. The goal is to provide



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evidence-based insights that can guide educational stakeholders in designing targeted support strategies to help students thrive despite adverse conditions.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to determine the:

1. Impact of academic adjustment on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State.
2. Influence of social adjustment on academic performance senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State.
3. Effect of emotional adjustment on the academic performance senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State.
4. Gender differences in students' levels of adjustment and their academic outcomes senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State.

Research Questions

To guide the study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. How does academic adjustment influence the academic performance of students in senior secondary school in Jere LGA, Borno State?
2. How does social adjustment impact students' academic performance in senior secondary school in Jere LGA, Borno State?
3. What is the effect of emotional adjustment on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State?

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested in the study:

H₀₁: Is there significant gender difference on impact of adjustments on academic performance among the senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State?

Research Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey design. This design is appropriate because it enables the researcher to gather data on the current levels of student adjustment and academic performance, and to analyze the impacts of these variables without manipulating any conditions. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), survey among other things, gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing condition.

Population and Sample Size

The population for the study consists of all senior secondary school students in public secondary schools within Jere LGA, Borno State, the target population comprises of all the 5,543 SS II and SS III students in Jere LGA. This population is selected because they are at a critical stage of academic development and are likely to face varied adjustment challenges. The researcher randomly selected Eight (8) senior secondary schools in Jere LGA. The schools were first grouped into strata based on their geographical location within Jere LGA and then participants were randomly selected from each stratum. A sample of 500 students was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different classes and genders. The sample proportion is in accordance with Krijcie and Morgan (1970). The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Students' Adjustment and Academic Performance Questionnaire (SAAPQ)". The questionnaire was designed by the researcher and validated by three (3) experts in the field of educational psychology from the University of Maiduguri and Borno State University, to ensure face and content appropriateness. To obtain the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted using 50 students from a school outside the study sample. Test-retest was used to obtain a reliability



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coefficient of .76, which was considered acceptable. The instrument has four (4) sections and total items of 18. Section A: elicits information on students' demographic data (e.g., age, gender, class level), section B: elicits information on academic adjustment, section C was on social adjustment while section D elicits information on emotional adjustment. The items in Sections B–D rated on a 4-point modified Likert scale and the response modes were Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The researcher administered the questionnaire to the students in person with the help of two (2) trained research assistants. Prior consent was obtained from school authorities and students, and ethical considerations such as anonymity and confidentiality were strictly upheld. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count and percentage scores to assess the demographic information of students, descriptive statistics of (mean, standard deviation, frequency) to analyse the impact of adjustment on students' academic performance and t-test was used to assess the gender difference in adjustment and academic outcomes. The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Presentation of Results

Section A: Students Demographic Information

Table one: The Gender of the Participants

Gender	N	%
Male	250	50
Female	250	50
Total	500	100

Table one revealed that fifty (50%) of the participants were male while fifty (50%) were female.

Table two: Class Level of the Participants

Class Level	N	%
SS II	240	48
SS III	260	52
Total	500	100

Table two showed that forty eight percents (48%) participants were in senior secondary school two (SSII) while fifty-two (52%) were in senior secondary school three (SSIII).

Table three: School Types

Type of School:	N	%
Day	200	40
Boarding	300	60
Total	500	100

Table three indicated school types, forty (40%) of the participants were from day secondary school while sixty (60%) were from boarding secondary schools.

Research Question One: How does academic adjustment influence the academic performance of students in senior secondary school in Jere LGA, Borno State?

Table 4: Influence of Academic Adjustment on Students Academic Performance

S/N.	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	I find it easy to concentrate in class	500	2.16	1.20	Rejected
2.	I complete and submit my assignments on time	500	2.68	1.25	Accepted



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3.	I plan and manage my study time effectively	500	2.51	1.21	Accepted
4.	I understand what is taught in most of my subjects	500	1.93	1.13	Rejected
5.	I find it easy to understand my teachers' explanations	500	2.64	1.18	Accepted
6.	I attend all my classes regularly and punctually	500	2.72	1.24	Accepted

Tabled 4 showed the participants responses on academic adjustment on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno state. The result indicated that attending all classes regularly and punctually ranked highest among the impact of academic adjustment on students' academic performance, this was followed by completing and submitting assignment on time. While understanding what is taught in most of teaching subjects ranked the least.

Research Question Two: How does social adjustment impact students' academic performance in senior secondary school in Jere LGA, Borno State?

Table 5: Impact of Social Adjustment on Students Academic Performance

S/N.	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	I find it easy to make new friends at school	500	2.53	1.13	Accepted
2.	I feel comfortable interacting with my classmates	500	2.72	1.82	Accepted
3.	I actively participate in group activities and discussions	500	2.58	1.16	Accepted
4.	I have a good relationship with my teachers	500	2.38	1.14	Rejected
5.	I feel accepted by my peers	500	2.52	1.15	Accepted
6.	My social relationships help me perform better academically	500	2.56	1.20	Accepted

Results presented in table 5 showed that social adjustment has significant impact on students' academic performance. This is due to the fact that all items with the exception of item 4, which stated that 'students have good relationship with teachers' have mean scores above the cut-off mark of 2.50.

Research Question Three: What is the effect of emotional adjustment on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State?

Table 6: Impact of Emotional Adjustment on Students Academic Performance

S/N.	Item	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	I often feel anxious about my academic performance	500	2.53	1.21	Accepted
2.	I often feel overwhelmed by school work	500	2.67	1.29	Accepted
3.	I am able to control my emotions when I face challenges at school.	500	2.62	1.14	Rejected
4.	I feel confident in my ability to succeed in class activities	500	2.64	1.18	Accepted
5.	I feel emotionally balanced even during exams	500	2.74	1.15	Accepted
6.	I can manage academic stress without becoming overwhelmed	500	2.54	1.24	Rejected

Result in table 6 revealed the impact of emotional adjustment on students' academic performance. The result indicated that all items were accepted because their mean scores are above the cut-off



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mark of 2.50. This implies that, emotional adjustment has positive impact on students' academic performance.

H₀₁. Are there significant gender differences on impact of adjustment on academic performance among the senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State?

Table 7: t-test Scores of Gender Difference on Impact of Adjustments on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Jere LGA, Borno State

	Gender	N	Mean	Std Dev.	df	t	P-Value	Decision
	Male	250	2.6640	1.07131				
Impact of Adjustment on Academic Performance					498	2.096	.037	Accept H ₀ P>.005
	Female	250	2.4600	1.10512				

Table 7 showed that the P-value .037 is greater than 0.05 level of significance with 498 degree of freedom, hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, this showed that, there is no significant difference in impact of adjustments on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State.

Discussion of Findings

The research examined how academic, social and emotional adjustment affects the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State. The results of the research indicated that academic adjustment significantly impacts students' academic achievements positively in Jere LGA. Students who demonstrated effective time management, complete tasks assigned to them by their teacher, understand teachers' instructions and attend class regularly and punctually performed better academically. This aligns with recent research by Akintunde et al. (2023), who reported that students' ability to adjust academically predicts higher academic achievement, particularly in under-resourced or conflict-affected areas such as northeastern Nigeria. The study is also consistent with the findings of Okon et al. (2022), who reported that academic adjustment serves as a predictive factor for student performance in Nigerian secondary schools, especially in regions affected by socio-political instability. This implies that, in Jere LGA, where schools were affected by security challenges, students who maintain academic discipline and focus tend to perform more than their peers.

The study also showed that social adjustment is a crucial factor in impacting on academic performance of students. The findings indicated that students who were able to form new friends, interact with their peers in school, participate in group activities and build positive relationships with their classmates showed better academic performance. The study by Musa & Nwoke (2022) found a direct link between social integration and academic engagement among secondary school students in northeastern Nigeria. In conflict-affected areas like Borno State, social support networks among students can serve as buffers against external stressors, leading to improved concentration and motivation in academic tasks. Umar & Ibrahim (2023), also confirmed that peer group influence in Nigerian secondary schools significantly affects study habits, especially where parental involvement is minimal due to displacement or poverty. The study further aligns with the findings of Musa & Ibrahim (2021), who emphasized that social connectedness improves students' sense of belonging and participation in academic activities, even in conflict-affected areas. The results of the research indicated that emotional adjustment has a considerable effect on academic achievement. Students who exhibited self-confidence, emotional stability, self-discipline, and stress management



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skills tended to perform better academically compared to their classmates who lacked these traits. This observation aligns with the work of Bello & Zubairu (2024), who highlighted that emotional turbulence, including stress caused by trauma from conflict situations, can greatly influence students' academic success. In Jere LGA, students who received psychosocial support, Social and Emotional Learning or had coping mechanisms in place showed higher academic performance compared to their counterparts. According to Bello & Adamu (2023), students with emotional adjustment difficulties often exhibit poor academic concentration, low motivation and behavioural problems, which negatively impact academic performance. The findings of the study indicated that academic, social and emotional adjustments significantly impact the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA, Borno State. The result showed that there is no significant difference in the impact of adjustments on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Jere LGA. This finding is in agreement with Akomolafe and Olorunfemi (2017), who found that although male and female students exhibited differences in adjustment behaviours, these differences did not translate into significance difference in their academic performance.

Conclusion

The study on the Impact of Adjustments on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Jere LGA, Borno State has revealed that adjustments in academic, social and emotional aspects are vital and interrelated factors affecting students' success in academics. The research found that students who can effectively handle their academic responsibilities, cultivate and sustain healthy social connections and manage their emotional reactions tend to achieve greater academic success, even in a difficult and conflict-impacted area like Jere LGA. Considering the specific circumstances of Jere LGA, which is affected by conflict, insecurity, and displacement, the ability of students to adapt successfully in the academic, social and emotional spheres is essential for their highest performance levels. The study validates that enhancing students' adaptability in these areas results in improved academic performance and greater educational resilience. The results also highlighted the importance of schools, government and community stakeholders in implementing comprehensive educational strategies that promote resilience and adjustments across all facets of student development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Ministry of Education and SUBEB should strengthen Guidance and Counselling Services in schools to support students' emotional and social adjustment. These Counsellors should offer regular sessions on stress management, emotional intelligence and trauma recovery, especially for students affected by conflict and displacement.
2. Educational authorities and policy makers should integrate structured life skills and adjustment programs into the school curriculum. These should cover time management, effective communication, goal setting, and coping mechanisms to improve both academic and social functioning.
3. Government through SUBEB and Ministry of Education should enhance teacher training on Life Skills, Psychosocial Support and Adjustment Programs in Jere LGA and should receive ongoing training in recognizing and responding to students' academic, social and emotional challenges. This will help them provide more responsive classroom management and foster a more inclusive learning environment.



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4. Schools should work closely with parents and community leaders to raise awareness about the importance of academic, emotional and social support for students. In areas affected by conflict, community involvement can bridge the gap created by broken family structures.
5. School administrators should establish systems to monitor students' adjustment and track academic performance regularly. Early identification of students with adjustment difficulties will allow timely preventive and curative intervention and support in schools.
6. Government and NGO should develop programs that support vulnerable students by providing educational materials, psychosocial support, scholarships, and school feeding initiatives to ease burdens on students and families.

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