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Emotional Intelligence of Early Adolescent Students in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State: The Predicting Roles of Self-Efficacy and Locus of Control

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Abstract

The study assessed how the emotional intelligence of early adolescents in Obio-Akpor local government area, Rivers State is predicted by their self-efficacy and locus of control. Data from 395 out of 29,058 respondents were obtained using descriptive and correlational survey design following multi-stage sampling techniques. Four research questions and 3 null hypotheses guided the study. A structured questionnaire, emotional intelligence scale, Levenson's multidimensional Locus of Control Scale, and General Self-Efficacy Scale were instruments used for data collection. Cronbach alpha reliability index was used to calculate the reliability of the instruments and scores of 0.83, 0.89 and 0.83 were obtained respectively. The obtained data were analyzed in IBM SPSS version 23 using descriptive and inferential statistics at $p < 0.05$. The findings revealed that emotional intelligence and locus of control levels among adolescents were low respectively. A high self-efficacy status was however recorded among the respondents. Locus of control and self-efficacy predicted emotional intelligence by 35%. Being a male or a female was associated with emotional intelligence and self-efficacy in adolescents. In addition, being a border or day student was associated with the adolescents' emotional intelligence, locus of control, and self-efficacy. Emotional intelligence, locus of control, and self-efficacy differed based on the type of school the adolescents attend. Based on the findings, it was recommended that education programs targeted at enhancing the ability of adolescents to recognize and differentiate feelings should be organized by schools and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Locus of control, Self-efficacy, Adolescents, Students, River State

Introduction

Adolescence is the developmental stage between childhood and adulthood, between 10 and 19 years of age (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). According to WHO (2022), adolescence is the developmental stage that occurs between the ages of 10 and 19 and occurs between childhood and adulthood. It is here that the personality and social adjustment of the self emerge (Soriano-Sánchez & Sastre-Riba, 2022). Adolescence is characterized by a shift in the focus of the social worlds of the adolescents, so that they spend more time with, and gain much more emotional support from peers rather those family members. The focus of adolescents' social environments shifts during adolescence, and they begin to receive more emotional support and spend more time with their peers rather than their family members

The social worlds of adolescents change during adolescence, with a greater emphasis on peers than on family members. Peers become significant sources of emotional support and companionship. This may be attributed to their educational level. Most of the adolescents are seen in secondary schools. This is because secondary education is intended for those within the ages of 11 and 17 years. It serves as a connection between primary and tertiary education and thus, seen as a crucial part of a child's education. Some of these students are in boarding schools while some are day students who attend classes from home. Boarding and day schools are two categories of educational institutions that provide students with unique experiences. Students in boarding schools known as boarders live in the accommodation provided by the school in the premises, for the whole academic year. Day students on the other hand come from their homes to school. This study made use of secondary school students. This is because secondary schools make it possible to get a number of adolescents due to the high population of students in several schools. This therefore, offers a representative sample for this age group.

Generally, adolescents are able to explore a variety of new found freedoms, including many activities away from adult supervision. Adolescence has therefore been seen to be a very vulnerable age as the individual has to deal with the changing environment in social, emotional as well as physical areas. According to Zhao et al. (2019), the adolescent stage is characterised by the formation of the self-identity, personality configuration, and relational network. The adolescents exhibit extreme emotional instability throughout this stage, mainly in the closest settings, such as home and school, withdrawing inside themselves without stopping to express their feelings, making it difficult for him/her to adapt to new social responsibilities. This is because they encounter new experiences; unfamiliar situations often result in new and possibly intense positive and negative emotional reactions (Karibeeran & Shefali, 2019). It is, therefore, a sensitive period in the development of mental disorders (Sharp & Wall, 2017).

Emotional Intelligence during adolescence is therefore crucial not only in avoiding problems in the adolescent himself but also for his future development (Huebner et al., 2013). Emotional intelligence develops somewhat in early adolescence. Salovey and Mayer in Davis and Humphrey (2014) defines emotional intelligence as a form of intelligence "that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thoughts and actions. According to Sorian et al. (2019), emotional intelligence (EI) is a psychological construct that is an individual competence. It refers to a person's ability to perceive, comprehend, and control their own emotions in order to correctly interpret those of others (González-Yubero et al., 2021). As Tejada-Gallardo et al. (2022) point out, it actually enables a constructive reaction to the various issues arising from one's own emotions or sensations in various social contexts, providing the individual with the chance to improve their situational awareness (Usán et al., 2020). In order to make decisions under pressure, avoid anxious or depressive states, and have a better understanding of one's own emotions and self-confidence, one needs to have emotional intelligence (EI), which is defined as the capacity that enables the "self" to manage, understand, select, and control its emotions as well as those of others (Azilah et al., 2020). In this study, emotional intelligence was operationalized as the ability of an individual to manage his/her emotions and

that of others in other to influence interaction with others

Self-efficacy is a protective element associated with mental health and psychological diseases that is essential to the cognitive appraisal process of stresses or difficulties (Bandura et al., 1999; Sandin et al., 2015; Schönfeld et al., 2016). Adolescents' developing sense of self-efficacy is a result of the reciprocal interactions between intrapersonal elements (behavioural, affective, and cognitive capacities) and external circumstances; as a result, self-efficacy shapes personal behavioural patterns and is influenced by the conditions of the environment. Self-efficacy is described as a positive or salutogenic psychological factor – one that potentially protects or buffers against negative psychological influences (Mikkelsen, 2020). A person who has strong self-efficacy feels competent to complete a task and receive feedback. If self-efficacy is low, the individual may not perform though he or she has the abilities. Self-efficacy, according to Cicognani (2011), improved psychological well-being and allowed the teenagers to handle little stressful situations. Studies have shown that high self-efficacy beliefs have positive effects on self-regulation strategies and on academic performance in educational settings (Huang, 2013; Putwain et al., 2013; Schunk & Meece, 2005).

The control that early adolescents attribute to themselves over a situation/external (locus of control) and the control they attribute to themselves (self-control/internal) have been proposed as aspects that can have an effect on internalizing problems in young people. Locus of control deals with students' personal belief that others control the consequences of their action. Students with an internal locus of control believe that they have direct control over the outcomes of their actions (Guijar & Ajaz, 2014). According to Joo et al. (2013), locus of control is a person's understanding of the fundamental reasons behind life's events. According to Mayer and Salovey (1997) locus of control is developed on a continuum, ranging from internal to external. Students at the internal end of this continuum are said to have a high locus of control while those at the external end refers to those with low locus of control. Perkins (2008) provided evidence in favour of the theory that individuals who possess an internal locus of control are less vulnerable to social influence.

The development of emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and locus of control can be influenced by gender roles and societal expectations. Men are usually encouraged to value reason, while women are urged to improve their emotional intelligence. While women may be driven to be more careful and nurturing, men are frequently encouraged to take risks and express themselves. Traditional gender roles also promote men's independence and self-reliance while socializing women to be more nurturing and interdependent in terms of locus of control. These support a number of studies that indicate that girls tend to be more emotionally intelligent than boys (Patel, 2017). Significant disparities were discovered by Mishra and Ranjan (2008), who reported that adolescent males had greater emotional intelligence scores than girls. On the other hand, Mokhlesi and Patil (2018) refute these assertions, stating that adolescents of both genders demonstrate comparable levels of emotional intelligence. Adolescents' self-efficacy has also been observed to vary by gender. Nonetheless, a large number of research on the variations in teenage self-efficacy by gender comes from outside the nation. Hence, further research in these areas within the study region is necessary, given the contradictory gender perspectives on emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and locus

of control in other studies and other nations. In addition, emotional intelligence has been negatively associated with stress, depression, and negative emotions. These are all elements that can lead to the generation of maladaptive behaviors (Trigeros et al., 2019). These maladaptive behaviours consequently impact the mental health of an individual. It has been reported that locus of control is related to mental health (Groth et al., 2019; Kesavayuth et al., 2019) and may be able to predict the likelihood of suicide (Loftis et al., 2019), and discipline problems (Kee, 2003). Little is known about the emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy of adolescents in developing countries such as Nigeria. This is the gap this study aims to fill focusing on the adolescents in Obio-Akpor local government area of Rivers State.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to examine the predicting role of locus of control and self-efficacy on the emotional intelligence of early adolescents. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. assess the respondents' locus of control level
2. ascertain the level of self-efficacy among the respondents.
3. determine the emotional intelligence status of the respondents.
4. determine the role of locus of control and self-efficacy in predicting the emotional intelligence of the respondents

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses guided the study

1. **$H_0$1**: there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents on emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy based on gender.
2. **$H_0$2:** there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents on emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy based on type of student.
3. **$H_0$3:** there is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents on emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy based on type of school.

Methodology

***Study Design*:** The study adopted a descriptive and correlational survey research design. The descriptive design was used to examine the current situation in a given place and to check the extent to which current practices meet the required standard (Uzoagulu, 2008). The correlational design was used to determine the relationships among variables. Aihie (2018) used it in his study on self-efficacy and emotional intelligence among Nigerian adolescents in single-sex and co-educational secondary schools. Therefore, the design was considered fit for this study.

***Study Population*:** The study population consisted of all the early adolescent (10-13 years) students in Obio Akpor local government area of Rivers State. Adolescents in junior secondary schools were used. This comprises a total population of 29,058 adolescents (Universal Basic Education Commission Rivers State, 2022).

***Sampling Technique/Sample Size Determination*:** The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique which included the following stages:

Stage one: This involved cluster sampling of the schools into private and public clusters.

Stage two: Simple random sampling by balloting without replacement was used to select 10% of schools in each cluster. This gave a total of seven schools from private cluster, and 3 schools from public cluster. This gave a total of 10 secondary schools.

Stage three: The sample size for the study was calculated using the formula by Yamane (1967) below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N (e)^2}$$

Where N = total population under study (early adolescents in junior secondary schools in Obio-Akpor L.G.A)

n= sample size

e= margin error (0.05)

$$n = \frac{29058}{1 + 29058 (0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{29058}{73.645}$$

n= 394.56 395 respondents

The sample size was further increased by 5% to account for non-response or recording error.

5% of 395 = 19.8 = 20

Sample size = 395 + 20 = 415 respondents

Stage four: Proportionate sampling was used to determine the number of adolescents in each of the selected schools that was used for the study. This was done by proportionately distributing the sample size in each of the selected schools.

Final Stage: All the students present on the day of the visit were given a questionnaire to fill out

Informed Consent: The school heads and the teachers were informed about the study and their approval was obtained. A written consent was also obtained from the respondents that were part of the study, after explaining to them the study protocol. Students who gave their consent were recruited for the study. Confidentiality of all the information collected was assured.

***Instrument for Data Collection*:** three standardized instruments were used for data collection. They include Levenson's Locus of Control Scale, the General Self-Efficacy Scale and the Emotional Intelligence Scale.

The respondents' Locus of Control was assessed using Levenson's (1973) Internal, Powerful Others, and Chance (IPC) locus of control Scale. This assessed the multiple dimensions within the internal and external sides (powerful others and chance) of the Locus of Control continuum using 24 items. The IPC scale distinguishes between three factors: **I**nternality, **P**owerful Others, and **C**hance. The items were scored using a 6-point Likert scale which ranged from Strongly Disagree (-3) to Strongly Agree (+3). Some of the items include: "To a great extent my life is controlled by accident happenings" (Item 2), "I have often found that what is going to happen will happen" (Item 10). High ratings on either the Powerful Others scale or the Chance scale indicate a strong external locus of control. An individual could score high or low on all three dimensions. Higher scores on the Internal Locus of Control scale indicates that one has a strong internal locus of control. An internal locus of control can be helpful for successful behavior change. High ratings on either the Powerful Others scale or the Chance scale indicate a strong external locus of control. If one rates high on the Powerful Others scale, the person typically believe that their fate is controlled by external forces such as government, authority figures, groups etc.

The General Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES) developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) was used to assess students' self-efficacy. The scale is a 10-item scale that assesses self-efficacy based on personality disposition. The items were measured on a 4-point Likert scaling model with options ranging from 1= Not at all true, to 4 = Exactly true. Some of the items include: "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough" (Item 1), and "I can remain calm when facing added difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities" (Item 7).

The 33-item Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) by Schutte, et al. (1998) was used to elicit information on the emotional intelligence of the respondents. It includes statements that appraise the expression of

emotions in self and others, emotional perception, regulating of self and others as well as emotional utilization. The participants rated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

***Validation and Reliability of the Instrument*:** The various questionnaires were pilot-tested among 20 students in a secondary school in Rumuola. Cronbach alpha reliability scores of 0.83, 0.89, and 0.82 were obtained for the emotional intelligence scale, locus of control scale, and general self-efficacy scale respectively.

***Method of Data Collection*:** Four hundred copies of the questionnaires were printed and hand-distributed to the adolescents in their classrooms by the researcher and the trained assistants. The respondents were given sufficient time to fill out the questionnaires. The questionnaires were collected same day to increase the chances of return. All (100%) the distributed copies of the questionnaire were retrieved.

***Data and Statistical Analysis*:** The data from the questionnaire was coded and input into the Statistical Product for Service Solution (IBM-SPSS) version 23.0. Descriptive results were presented in frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Student's T-test was used to determine the difference among variables. Linear regression was used to determine the role of emotional intelligence and locus of control on the self-efficacy of the adolescents. The significance level was accepted at $P \leq 0.05$. For the emotional intelligence scale, the total score was calculated by finding the sum of the points for all the items and ranged from 33 to 165. Higher total scores indicated high emotional intelligence while lower total scores indicated low emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 1998). The mean EI score is 124; scores below 111 or above 137 are considered unusually low or high (Malouf, 2014). For this study, scores from 33 – 99 were considered low whereas scores from 100 – 165 were considered high. For the general self-efficacy scale, total score was calculated by finding the sum of the items. The total score ranges between 10 and 40, with a higher score indicating higher self-efficacy. Scores from 10 to 24 were considered low while scores within 25 and 40 were considered high. For the locus of control, the total score was obtained for each factor. The score for the total LOC ranged between 28 and 144. Scores ranging from 28 to 84 were categorized as low LOC while scores from 85 to 144 were categorized as high LOC. For each category, the scores ranged between 0 and 48 with a high rating indicating a strong locus of control. Scores between 8 to 28 were categorized as low for each category while scores between 29 to 48 were categorized as high.

Results

Table 1 shows the level of locus control of the respondents. From the Table, a greater percentage (50.7%) of the respondents had a low internal locus of control while 49.3% had a high internal locus of control. More than half (69.5%) had a low locus of control powerful others and 30.5% had a high locus of control powerful others. The majority (58%) had a low locus of control chance while 42% had a high locus of control chance. This implies that the respondents had both low internal control and low external control (which comprised of powerful others and chance).

Table 1: Level of locus of control of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Internal Locus of Control		
Low Internal Locus of Control	203	50.7
High Internal Locus of Control	197	49.3
External Locus of Control		
Powerful Others		
Low Locus of Control Powerful Others	278	69.5
High Locus of Control Powerful Others	122	30.5
Chance		
Low Locus of Control Chance	232	58.0
High Locus of Control Chance	168	**42.0**

Table 2 shows the level of self-efficacy of the respondents. From the table, a higher percentage (58.8%) had high self-efficacy while a lower percentage (40.8%) had low self-efficacy. Based on the categories of self-efficacy, the majority (66.5%) had high emotional appraisal while a few (33.5%) had low emotional appraisal. About 59% had high emotional control while 41.5% had low emotional control. In the aspect of the negative outlook, more than half (53.8%) had a high negative outlook while 46.3% had a low negative outlook. A high percentage (69.5%) had high emotional utilization while the rest (28.2%) had low score. About 60% showed high optimism and only 26.8% showed low optimism. A greater percentage (68.3%) had high social skills while the least (20.8%), had low social skills. More than half (70.8%) had high emotional regulation while 19.3% had low emotional regulation. More than half (69.3%) had high emotional awareness while 21.0% had low emotional awareness. High (56.0%) non-verbal interpretation was seen among the respondents and a little (30.3%) among the rest.

Table 2: Level of Self-Efficacy of the Respondents

Variables	*f*	%
Emotional Appraisal		
Low Emotional Appraisal	134	33.5
High Emotional Appraisal	266	66.5
Emotional Control		
Low Emotional Control	166	41.5
High Emotional Control	234	58.5
Negative Outlook		
Low Negative Outlook	185	46.3
High Negative Outlook	215	53.8
Emotional Utilization		
Low Emotional Utilization	113	28.2
High Emotional Utilization	278	69.5
Optimism		
Low Optimism	107	26.8
High Optimism	239	59.8
Social Skills		
Low Social Skills	83	20.8
High Social Skills	273	68.3
Emotional Regulation		
Low Emotional Regulation	77	19.3
High Emotional Regulation	283	70.8
Emotional Awareness		
Low Emotional Awareness	84	21.0
High Emotional Awareness	277	69.3
Non-Verbal Interpretation		
Low Non-Verbal Interpretation	121	30.3
High Non-Verbal Interpretation	224	56.0
Self-Efficacy		
Low Self-Efficacy	163	40.8
High Self-Efficacy	235	58.8

Figure 1 shows the level of emotional intelligence of the respondents. From the data, half (50.1%) of them showed low emotional intelligence while 49.9% of them had high emotional intelligence.

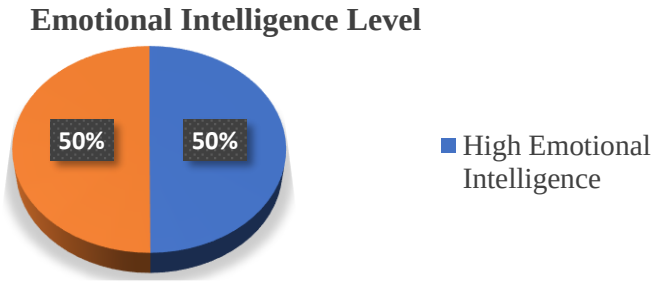

Figure 1: The level of emotional intelligence of the respondents

Table 3 shows how emotional intelligence is predicted by locus of control and self-efficacy of adolescents. Overall, the regression was significant, F (2, 397) = 107.75, p < 0.5, R = .35. Both locus of control (B = .46, t (2) = 8.20, p < .05) and Self efficacy (B = .17, t (397) = p < 0.5) were significant. The study showed a large effect size R^2 =.35. This indicates that locus of control and self-efficacy accounted for 35% of the variance in the respondents' emotional intelligence scores.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis of emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy of the adolescents

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Sig.
Constant	24.334	5.799	4.196	0.000
Locus of control	0.416	0.051	8.194	0.000
Self-efficacy	0.486	0.162	3.003	0.003
R-squared	0.352	F-statistic	107.745	
Adjusted R-squared	0.349	Sum squared residual	96830.531	
Std. Error of estimate	15.617			

Hypothesis 1: There are no significant differences in the mean scores of the male and female students on emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy

Table 4 revealed that the mean emotional intelligence score of the female (103.24±20.12) was significantly different from those of the male (99.14±17.99), p<0.05. The self-efficacy of the male students (25.74±6.21) was significantly different from those of the females (27.06±7.07), p<0.05. However, the mean locus of control score of the males (80.37±20.84) was not significantly different from those of the females (84.45±21.88), p>0.05. Furthermore, the males had higher emotional intelligence and self-efficacy than the females. This indicates that the null hypothesis is upheld for emotional intelligence and self-efficacy but rejected for Locus of control. It can therefore be inferred that the emotional intelligence and self-efficacy of the early adolescents varied by gender.

Table 4: Mean difference in emotional intelligence, locus of control, and self-efficacy based on gender

Variables	Gender	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value	Degree of freedom
Emotional Intelligence	Male	167	99.14	17.99	-2.094	0.037	398
	Female	233	103.24	20.12			
Locus of Control	Male	167	80.37	20.84	-1.87	0.06	398
	Female	233	84.45	21.88			
Self-Efficacy	Male	167	25.74	6.21	-1.92	0.05	398
	Female	233	27.06	7.07			

Hypothesis 2: There are no significant differences in the mean emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy scores of the students in day and boarding schools.

Table 5 revealed that the mean emotional intelligence score of the Day students (103.80±18.99) was significantly different from those of the boarders (87.29±15.14), p>0.05. The mean locus of control score of the day students (84.62±21.37) varied from those of the boarders (71.00±18.70) p > 0.05. Furthermore, the self-efficacy of the Day students (27.12±6.68) was significantly different from those of the boarders (22.65±5.86) p > 0.05. The boarder students had higher emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy than the day students. This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. It can therefore be inferred that the emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy of the respondents varies by the type of student.

Table 5: Mean difference in the emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy based on the type of students

Variables	Type of student	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value	Degree of freedom
Emotional	Day student	345	103.80	18.99	6.14	0.00	398
Intelligence	Boarder	55	87.29	15.14			
Locus of Control	Day student	345	84.62	21.37	4.46	0.00	398
	Boarder	55	71.00	18.70			
Self-Efficacy	Day student	345	27.12	6.68	4.68	0.00	398
	Boarder	55	22.65	5.86			

Hypothesis 3: There are no significant differences in the mean scores of the students in public and private schools on emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy.

Table 7 revealed that the mean emotional intelligence score of those in public schools (92.18±18.06) was significantly different from those in Private (102.51±19.24) p>0.05. The mean locus of control score of the public schools (74.26±24.38) varied from those in Private (83.64±21.04), p>0.05. Similarly, the self-efficacy of those in public (24.00±7.21) was significantly different from those in private (26.776.65), p>0.05. The public schools had more emotional intelligence, locus of control and self -efficacy than the private schools. The implication is that the null hypothesis was rejected. This leads to the conclusion that the type of school influences the emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy, experienced by the early

adolescent in Obio-Akpor in Port Harcourt, River State.

Table 7: Mean difference in the emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy based on type of school

Variables	Type of school	Frequency	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value	Degree of freedom
Emotional Intelligence	Public	38	92.18	18.06	3.33	0.02	46.27
	Private	362	102.51	19.24			
Locus of Control	Public	38	74.26	24.38	2.28	0.02	42.98
	Private	362	83.64	21.04			
Self-Efficacy	Public	38	24.00	7.21	2.27	0.02	43.87
	Private	362	26.77	6.65			

Discussion

The study examined the predicting role of locus of control and self-efficacy on the emotional intelligence of early adolescents. The findings of this study revealed an even distribution of high and low emotional intelligence among the respondents. This implies that as much proportion of the adolescents in the study area had the potential to master and regulate their emotions as those who did not. The 50% prevalence of low emotional intelligence observed in this study is lower than the 78% found by Aniemeka et al. (2020) among adolescents in Ogun state Nigeria. Emotional intelligence is a skill that can be learned and developed over time. It could be acquired in schools or the living environment. Adolescents are often exposed to various social vices and negative experiences during interaction with their peers and the society in which they live. Some researchers opined that adolescents born in this millennium have grown up seeing crises and terror acts that impact their emotions (Ugoani, 2015; Ugoani & Ewuzie, 2013). How they process these negative experiences might influence their level of emotional intelligence. Ejikeme (2012) also believes that the incessant religious, ethnic, and political conflicts in Nigeria reflect the poor emotional intelligence evident among young people.

The study highlighted the various categories of locus of control of the respondents. From the findings, a greater percentage had low internal locus of control as well as low external locus of control. This is evident as more than half reported low locus of control powerful others and low locus of control chance. This implies that the respondents neither believed that the consequences of their action on their life is controlled by themselves (internal) nor by external factors (such as powerful others or chance). That is to say that they typically do not try to master their environment nor feel helpless because they perceive that outcomes in life are outside their own control. This suggests that they may have been some confounding factors such as self-esteem and mental health, which may have influenced the result. These have been shown to influence locus of control (Alizadeh et al., 2005).

Favourable view of oneself and one's abilities as an internal asset appear also to be valuable in helping young adolescent to avoid emotional difficulties (Baudura, 2011; Buhrmester, 2012). From the findings of the study, higher percentage had high level of self-efficacy. Based on the categories of self-efficacy, majority had high emotional appraisal, emotional control, negative outlook, emotional utilization, optimism,

social skills, emotional regulation, emotional awareness and high non- verbal interpretation. The study revealed that locus of control and self-efficacy were significant predictors of emotional intelligence. This is not surprising because self-efficacy is a protective factor that is integral to the process of cognitive appraisal of stressors or challenges (Sandin et al., 2015; Schönfeld et al., 2016). Furthermore, with high self-efficacy one feels confident to perform particular task and get reinforcement. The activities people choose to engage in, the amount of effort they put forth, their persistence in the face of adversity, and the complexity of the goals they set are all influenced by their self-efficacy.

The result of this study revealed that the mean emotional intelligence and self-efficacy scores of the respondents were significantly different and varied based on gender. The difference in the mean emotional intelligence and self-efficacy score of the respondents based on gender showed that males had more emotional intelligence and self-efficacy than the females. This is in line with the findings of Fallan and Opstad (2016) who revealed that female students have significantly lower self-efficacy than their male peers. Moreso, a study by Cespedes et al. (2020) revealed that males had higher self-efficacy than the females. A study by Kumar and Dullet (2022) which revealed that female adolescents have higher emotional intelligence than males, however, contradicts the findings of this study. This finding may be explained by the fact that both the male and female adolescents both experience the crises and terror acts prevalent in the country which have been linked to poor emotional intelligence. This study also revealed that the locus of control score of the respondents did not differ by gender. This supports the study by Chinedu and Nwizuzu, (2021), study which found both sexes equal in their locus of control. The findings of this present study contradict the result of a study conducted by Fatemi & Hoseiniyan (2016), which showed that locus of control was more internalized in male students than in female students.

The result of this study revealed that the mean emotional intelligence score, locus of control score and self-efficacy score of the respondents varied based on the type of student. The difference in the mean emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy score of the respondents based on the type of student showed that the boarder students had more emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy than the day students. This could be as a result of the training (such as hostel disciplinary measures which is applicable to only boarder students) given to the boarder students in school which the day students do not get. Boarding life promotes the development of students' self-awareness and increases their independence and self-discipline (Ma, 2012). The boarding environment increases the density of interactions between students, which tends to produce the contagion of negative emotions among peers (Li and Lin, 2019). According to Niknami et al. (2011) and Mander et al. (2014), it typically presents as interpersonal hypersensitivity combined with depression, anxiety, paranoia, and other negative feelings and psychiatric issues.

The result of this study revealed that the mean emotional intelligence score, locus of control score and self-efficacy score of the respondents were significantly different and also varied based on the type of school. The difference in the mean emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy score of the respondents based on the type of school showed that the private schools had more emotional intelligence, locus of control and self-efficacy than the public schools. This result is not out of place as most private schools create conducive environment and

provide the right resources needed for students to develop their emotional and social skills. More so, the private schools have the ability to provide individualized learning and support due to their better student-teacher ratio compared to public schools. This is supported by a study conducted by Alam (2018) who found that there is a significant difference between private and government school students on emotional intelligence, with private school students scoring higher. Furthermore, the finding is in line with the investigations carried out by Rani (2019); Nadeem and Nowsheen (2013); Bhat and Khan (2013); Khan and Ishfaq (2013) and Sing (2010) which revealed that there is a significant difference of emotional intelligence among adolescents with reference to socio-economic status and type of school (private/government). Those are private schools had better emotional intelligence than those in government school. Present finding, however, contradicted a study by Chinedu and Nwizuzu, (2021), which showed that locus of control is about the individual and not the school-type. Furthermore, it contradicts the finding of Fallan and Opstad (2016) who found a significant relationship in the self-efficacy of government and private students.

Conclusion

The respondents experienced low level of emotional intelligence, and locus of control. However, their self-efficacy was high. Locus of control and self-efficacy were significant predictors of emotional intelligence. Thus, locus of control and self-efficacy are good predictors of emotional intelligence among adolescent population. Emotional intelligence, locus of control, and self-efficacy scores of the female, day, and private school early adolescent students were higher than that of the male, boarder, and public early adolescent. This implies that there is gender variation as well as variations based on type of school and type of student, in the emotional intelligence, locus of control, and self-efficacy of adolescents.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Government and schools should provide valuable information for the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs for the development of Emotional intelligence, and for the promotion, prevention, and intervention of emotional problems in adolescence.
2. Post-primary school service commission should train, and initiate education programs related to locus of control for school guidance counsellors to acquire more skills and be empowered to solve the problems of low locus of control among male and female adolescents and also help strengthen their locus of control thereby enhancing their psychological well-being.
3. The Ministry of Education should support functional guidance and counseling services by providing and making funds available to research and improve rendering professional assistance to early adolescents with low locus of control.

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