



**THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE VARIABLES (SELF-AWARENESS, SELF-REGULATION AND SELF-MOTIVATION) ON THE ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT OF FRESH STUDENTS OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: A CASE OF IMO STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Chijioke E. Ohuakanwa (Ph.D.)**

Department of Educational Foundations and Counselling, Imo State University, Owerri.

Email: [chijiokeohuakanwa@gmail.com](mailto:chijiokeohuakanwa@gmail.com)

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study investigated the extent to which the possession of certain basic emotional intelligence elements or potentials, such as self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation, enhance fresh Nigerian university students' academic adjustment with a case study of Imo State University, Owerri year one students. The study adopted a correlation design. Four research questions were posed and four hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study population was all 2021/2022 academic session students, males and females of the Imo State University. The study sample size was 400 students of 2021/2022 academic session, males and females, drawn from four faculties of Imo State University, using stratified and proportionate sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was a researcher constructed 4-point rating scale titled, "Emotional Intelligence Variables of Fresh Nigerian Students' Academic Adjustment Scale" (EIVFNUSAAS), with Cronbach  $r = 0.78$ . Data were analysed using 2-tailed Pearson  $t$ -test to answer the research questions while multiple regression statistics was used to test the hypotheses. Findings revealed strong positive relationships among variables as all the null hypotheses were significant. The results revealed self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation as basic elements of emotional intelligence which together go a long way to enhance academic adjustment of first year undergraduates. The results further indicated that self-awareness and self-motivation enhance, to a larger extent, academic adjustment as well as self-regulation. On the basis of the results, certain recommendations were made.*

**KEYWORDS:** Emotional Intelligence, Academic Adjustment, Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Self-Motivation.



## INTRODUCTION

In this study, the researcher conceptualises adjustment in terms of the ability of the individual students being able to comport themselves in a manner that they relate effectively with the environment they find themselves in order to produce results that are beneficial not only to themselves but also to the environment. Put differently, adjustment is the capacity of the student in the academic community to comfortably and harmoniously adopt a versatile and universal attitude that will enable them to attain a very beneficial relationship between them and the community of people in the environment. It is a process of life interaction that is positively productive without giving space for losing oneself in each or environment, especially in the university environment. In agreement with the above, Salami (2011) conceptualized adjustment as a continuous life process that makes an individual vary their behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between them and their environment. Equally in line with the views above, Kinanee (2010) described adjustment as a response of a person to the physical, psychological and social needs or demands of theirs, the other people and the environment. Hence, what this stands to reason is that an individual being has been endowed naturally with the capacity to acclimatize or adjust in the environment they find themselves and indeed with themselves. In other words, the individual person has the capacity to adapt in school, in the workplace, in the church, home and any other environment they may have to associate themselves and, above all, with themselves (Kinanee, 2011).

Adjustment, as highlighted by Salami (2011), has fundamentally four subscales. These are academic subscale, personal, emotional subscale, social and institutional attachment adjustment. The writer conceptualizes academic adjustment as the comportment and the ability the school-bound youths demonstrate so as to be able to satisfactorily or effectively fit into the academic institution, to the end that they would be able to achieve the academic benefits the institution/school provides.

In an attempt to put academic adjustment into perspective, Ohuakanwa, Omeje and Eskay (2012) maintained that academic adjustment is the ability of the student to apply into the academic rigours or demands of the school, with the intent and purpose of attaining the objectives of going to higher institution. They further posited that academic adjustment is the personal comportment and concerted commitment of the student to achieve the academic purposes that brought them to school (higher institution). It is important to note here that academic adjustment which is good will predispose a student to achieving optimal development in their dream career in life. Hence, it stands to reason that academic adjustment can be of two strands—good or poor academic adjustment. A well-adjusted student who stands tall in the attainment of academic excellence is characterised by his capacity to withstand extraneous variables in the environment that can stall their drive to achieve their academic activities. They exhibit zero tolerance attitudes towards any kind of distractors and distraction. They are open-minded to activities that can promote their desire to attain optimum performance. It is also vital to mention that a good adjusted student is highly resilient and always capable of demonstrating optimism in achieving success, despite all obstacles and challenges. On the other hand, the reverse is the case of a poorly adjusted student. In line with the above, Ohuakanwa et al. (2012) believe that poor academic adjustment manifests in a student's low or poor academic performance.

Self-awareness in this paper connotes self-understanding. Put in another way, self-awareness simply stands to reason that an individual has total knowledge of who they are, their limitations,



ability, strengths and weaknesses. They have full grasp at any point in time of their comprehensive feeling of worth of self and the corresponding consequence thereof. It is the strong view of the researcher that self-awareness is the gatekeeper to another behavioural attitude or functioning of the individual's life activities. In the view of Goleman (2006), self-awareness refers to the ability of an individual to identify their internal states, preferences, resources and effects. According to the author, self-awareness also involves the ability of an individual to accurately engage in self-assessment. This means knowing one's emotional state and their effects. The individual at the same time should be able to manifest some level of self-confidence, which means being sure of their strengths and limitations. Agulanna and Nwachukwu (2017) chose to view self-awareness in relation to intrapersonal intelligence. The duo described this as the capacity the individual demonstrates by being able to adapt to the environment, themselves and the dynamic situations in and around subsequently. Critically looking at the above definitions, self-awareness could summarily be perceived in terms of the capacity of an individual to understand their authentic self. The individual in other words perceives themselves as realistic as possible. This paper also is set to examine another element of emotional intelligence that is speculated to foster fresh students' academic adjustment. This element in question is self-regulation.

In line with the above, Goleman (2006) maintained the opinion that self-regulation is the emotional maturity that is consistent in the ability of the individual to own up responsibility for their actions. Continuing, the author believes it is the ability of the individual to adapt to changes and the ability also to demonstrate appropriate understanding and response to neighbours' irrational or unreasonable emotions or behaviours. One component that is yet linked with self-regulation, which contributes essentially to the success of the individual both in and outside the school, is self-motivation.

The understanding of the term self-motivation will be enhanced by the clear meaning and knowledge of the word motivation. The term motivation is a psychological construct. It can be described as the active, energising drive that galvanizes an individual who is in need and desires to actualize the need to pursue and achieve the desired need. This drive enables the individual to be focused in the pursuit to achieve their dreams. Thus, an individual can be self-motivated in their drive to actualize their potential. In this study, self-motivation is considered as yet another emotional intelligence factor which builds up diligent skill, the skill of resilience, the ability and determination to be focused in the attainment of (desired) potentials. In this paper, self-motivation is conceptualized as an intrinsic drive to deal with situations within the individual's capacity and with strong conviction to achieve success or break through in endeavours. In this way, individuals who possess a high self-motivation level tend to organise constructive goals for themselves to guide the final actualisation of their potential. These goals are then vigorously pursued by their intrinsic values that result in breakthrough, without being in any manner of competition. In other words, the individual can set goals or targets for themselves and have the inner or intrinsic drive and conviction to achieve the targets set. This further means that what makes one individual unique in their behaviour from others is dependent on their behavioural patterns based on their motivational instinct or drive. Self-motivation could be seen from the viewpoint of Carl Rogers' (1977) person centred theory. In this theory, Carl Rogers believed in the ability of the individual to be consistent in self-actualising tendency principle.

Researchers at various points have attempted to confirm empirically to what extent these variables or components of emotional intelligence relate with other variables.



Ikpe, Ezeonwumelu, Okoro, Udofia and Akpan (2022) investigated emotional intelligence and academic adjustment of second year university students in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Correlational design was adopted for this study; a sample of 500 students were selected using Taro Yamane sampling formula. The instrument for the data collection was a questionnaire titled National Health Service Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (NHSEIQ) and Adjustment Scale (AAS). Using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistic, the results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic adjustment.

Iruloh and Ukaegbu (2018) investigated the extent to which emotional intelligence competencies predict academic adjustment of first year university students in River State, Nigeria. This study adopted correlation design by multiple predictions. The participants consisted of a sample of 382 first year students drawn by simple and proportional stratified random sampling method. Two instruments were used in this study for data collection—Mangal Emotional Intelligence Inventory and Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire. The data analysis was done using simple and multiple regression analysis. The results revealed that emotional competencies (self-awareness, relationship management, social-awareness and self-management) together statistically significantly predicted academic adjustment of first year students.

In another study, Adeyemo (2015) examined the use of emotional intelligence to facilitate adjustment of university freshmen in Nigeria. The study adopted a pre-test, post-test control group quasi-experimental design. The participants for the study were two hundred (200) fresh university students randomly drawn from two faculties in a Nigerian university. The sample involved 110 male participants and 90 female participants. The study made use of three instruments meant to assess adjustment: SACQ (Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire) academic self-efficacy, CASES (College Academic Self-Efficacy Scale) and EIQ (Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire) of the participants. The tool of analysis adopted in this study was Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). The result indicated that emotional intelligence was effective in enhancing adjustment of fresh university students.

Again, Abdullah, Elias, Uli and Mahyuddin (2010) in their study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and university adjustment and academic achievement. The participants were 250 first year students undergoing various undergraduate programmes in Malaysian public universities. Findings revealed that for the period of one semester, students' overall adjustment and academic achievement were significantly predicted by their emotional intelligence. Ozabachi (2006) conducted a study which determined the relationship between emotional intelligence and family environment in terms of the cooperation that exists in the family. Analysis of the data was done using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. The findings indicated a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and family cooperation.

In yet another study, Salami (2011) investigated the contribution of psychological and social factors to the prediction of adjustment to college. The respondents were randomly selected for the study. The study adopted the regression analysis and the result revealed that emotional intelligence predicted adjustment among first year college of education students. Nevertheless, none of these empirical studies reviewed above was carried out in this study area, nor were the emotional intelligence variables, which are the thrust of this study, focused on.

### **Statement of Problem**



As many students gain admission and prepare to accept their provisional admission into Nigerian universities, there is no doubt that they are confronted with huge concerns. These concerns may range from thinking about the high capital intensiveness of education in the country to going to face a totally different educational culture from the culture they were used to at the secondary level of education. It is obvious that university education is not the same as the secondary school level. Very soon, the fresh student is going to realise that though the rules are there, they are left alone to direct themselves with nobody following them for any kind of instruction. They discover that their entire success or failure in school depends on themselves. At a time, they are given orientation, which is aimed at exposing them to certain fundamental realities that can help them adjust to the complex cultural set up of higher education in the university. Unfortunately, the reality before the fresh students is the fact that the orientation alone and all the information content cannot help them for adequate adjustment needed for academic attainment. Thus, speculatively, this study tries to investigate the extent to which the possession of certain emotional intelligent factors (self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation) could be associated with the fresh students' academic adjustment in Nigerian Universities using Imo State University as a case study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation and academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. The extent of the relationship between self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.
2. The extent of the relationship between self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.
3. The extent of the relationship between self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.
4. The extent of the relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation, and academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the extent of the relationship between self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri?
2. What is the extent of the relationship between self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri?
3. What is the extent of the relationship between self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri?
4. What is the composite and relative extent of the relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation, and academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University?



## Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following research hypotheses, tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between the levels of self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.

**Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between the levels of self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.

**Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between the level of self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlation research design. The study investigated the influence of self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation on academic adjustment of fresh undergraduate students in Imo State University. The research population included all the fresh students (undergraduates) of the 2021/2022 session of Imo State University, Owerri. The sample size for the study involved four hundred (400) first year undergraduates of the University. Stratified and proportional random sampling techniques were adopted to draw the participants in the 2021/2022 academic session. The study involved two hundred (200) male and two hundred (200) female students. The participants were selected from four faculties (Law, Environmental Sciences, Management Sciences and Social Sciences) of the Imo State University, Owerri.

The instrument used for the data collection was a researcher designed 4-point rating scale titled “Emotional Intelligence Variables of Fresh Nigerian Students’ Academic Adjustment Scale” (EIVFNUSAAS). The researcher adopted the multiple regression analysis to analyse the data. The instrument has two sections: A and B. Section A seeks to elicit the biographic data (gender and age) while Section B contains items used to gather data on respondents’ perception on the major variables investigated in the study. The item response format was a 4-point rating scale of: Very Great Extent (VGE) = 4, Great Extent (GE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2, Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1.

The instrument went through five experts in order to achieve face validity, while its reliability coefficient of  $r = 0.78$  was realized by the use of Cronbach alpha statistics. Three research questions and four hypotheses were posed for this study.

Data were analyzed using the 2-tailed t-test ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) for research questions, and to analyse the hypotheses, Pearson Moment Correlation t-test (corrected version) was used.



## RESULTS

### Demographic Variables of the Respondents

**Table 4.1.2: Respondents' Gender**

|        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Male   | 200       | 50.0    | 50.0          | 50.0               |
| Female | 200       | 50.0    | 50.0          | 100.0              |
| Total  | 400       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

The table above shows the respondents' gender. It was observed that 50.0% of the respondents were females while the remaining 50.0% were males. This implies that females and males have equal chances of being part of the study.

**Research Question One:** What is the extent of the relationship between self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri?

**Table 1: Correlation of self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates**

|                     | Academic adjustment | Self- awareness | Rmks  |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Academic adjustment |                     |                 |       |
| Pearson Correlation | 1                   | .128**          | Sign. |
| Sig. (2-tailed)     |                     | .002            |       |
| N                   | 400                 | 1.000           |       |
| Mean                | 26.10               | 25.48           |       |
| SD                  | 7.391               | 2.683           |       |

Significant at 0.05 alpha level

The table above shows the relationship between self-awareness and academic adjustment among 400 fresh undergraduates in Imo State University. The mean rating of students' academic adjustment is  $\bar{x} = 26.10$  with standard deviation of 7.391, slightly higher than the mean rating of students' self-awareness of  $\bar{x} = 25.48$  and  $SD = 2.683$  respectively, with  $P = 0.002 < 0.005$  level of significance. A positive relationship exists between the variables ( $r = 0.128^{**}$ ) and the relationship observed was also significant. The t-test (2-tailed analysis of Variants) (ANOVA) shows that the academic adjustment and self-awareness of the undergraduates are positively significant and related. Thus, the table above shows that self-awareness can influence academic adjustment and vice versa. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between students' self-awareness and their academic adjustment.



**Research Question Two:** What is the extent of the relationship between self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri?

**Table 2: Correlation of self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates**

|                     | Academic Adjustment | Self-Regulation | Rmks  |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Academic Adjustment |                     |                 |       |
| Pearson Correlation | 1                   | .211**          | Sign. |
| Sig. (2-tailed)     |                     | .001            |       |
| N                   | 400                 | 1.000           |       |
| Mean                | 26.10               | 27.94           |       |
| SD                  | 7.391               | 3.598           |       |

Significant at 0.05 alpha level

The table above shows the t-test (2-tailed Analysis of Variance) (ANOVA) results of the relationship between self-regulation and academic adjustment among 400 fresh undergraduates in Imo State University. The mean rating of students' academic adjustment is  $\bar{x} = 26.10$  with standard deviation of 7.391, slightly higher than the mean rating of students' self-regulation:  $\bar{x} = 27.94$  and  $SD = 3.598$  respectively, with  $P = 0.001 < 0.005$  level of significance. A positive relationship exists between the variables ( $r = 0.211^{**}$ ) and the relationship observed was also significant. A general overview shows that the academic adjustment and self-regulation of the undergraduates are positively significant and related. Thus, the table above shows that self-regulation can influence academic adjustment and vice versa. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between students' self-regulation and their academic adjustment.

**Research Question Three:** What is the extent of the relationship between self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri?

**Table 3: Correlation of the relationship between self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates**

|                     | Academic Adjustment | Self-Motivation | Rmks. |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Academic Adjustment |                     |                 |       |
| Pearson Correlation | 1                   | .3051**         | Sign. |
| Sig. (2-tailed)     |                     | .000            |       |
| N                   | 400                 | 1.000           |       |
| Mean                | 26.10               | 38.22           |       |
| SD                  | 7.391               | 6.321           |       |

Significant at 0.05 alpha level

The table above shows the relationship between self-motivation and academic adjustment among 400 fresh undergraduates in Imo State University. The mean rating of students'





academic adjustment is  $\bar{x} = 26.10$  with standard deviation of 7.391, lower than the mean rating of students' self-motivation:  $\bar{x} = 38.22$  and  $SD = 6.321$  respectively, with  $P = 0.000 < \text{than } 0.005$  level of significance. A positive relationship exists between the variables ( $r = 0.3051^{**}$ ) and the relationship observed was also significant. A general overview by the t-test (2-tailed Analysis of Variance) (ANOVA) results shows that the academic adjustment and self-motivation of the undergraduates are positively significant and related. Thus, the table above shows that self-motivation can influence academic adjustment and vice versa. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between students' self-motivation and their academic adjustment.

**Research Question Four:** What is the composite and relative extent of relationship between self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation, and academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University?

**Table 4: Regression summary and ANOVA contribution of all the predictor variables (self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation) on academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University**

**Multiple R = .416<sup>a</sup>, R. Square = .379, Adjusted R Square = .358 Standard Error = 5.244**

**Analysis of Variance**

| Source of Variance | SS        | Df  | MS      | F    | Sig.              | Remark      |
|--------------------|-----------|-----|---------|------|-------------------|-------------|
| Regression         | 2641.011  | 3   | 880.337 | 3.08 | .002 <sup>b</sup> | Significant |
| Residual           | 55934.065 | 196 | 285.779 |      |                   |             |
| Total              | 58575.076 | 199 |         |      |                   |             |

Table 4 shows the model summary of the regression analysis. The "R" column represents the value of *R*, the Multiple Correlation Coefficient. *R* is considered to be one measure of the quality of the prediction of the dependent variable, in this case, academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University. A value of 0.416 from this research study indicates a good level of prediction.

The "R Square"  $R^2$  value, also called the Coefficient of Determination, is the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. (Technically, it is the proportion of variation accounted for by the regression model above and beyond the mean model.) The value of 0.358 shows that all the independent variables in this study explained 35.8% of the variability of the dependent variable. This means that 35.8% of the total variance in the academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University is accounted for by self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation.

The table above shows that the independent variables (self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation) statistically and significantly predict the dependent variable (i.e., academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University) for the model [ $F_{(3,196)} = 3.08, p < .05$ ]. This shows that the regression models are good fits of the data; this means that the relationship is linear and therefore all the three specified models significantly predict the dependent variable (i.e., academic adjustment of fresh undergraduates in Imo State University).



## Hypotheses

**Hypotheses One:** There is no significant relationship between the levels of self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.

**Table 5: Relationship between levels of self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates**

| Variables                                      | N   | R      | P    | Sig  |
|--|-----|--------|------|------|
| Levels of self- awareness                      | 400 |        |      |      |
| Academic Adjustment among Fresh Undergraduates | 400 | .128** | .002 | Sign |

The table above shows the relationship that exists between self-awareness and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduate students of Imo State University. The correlation indicates that the coefficient of students' self-awareness and students' academic adjustment is significant at  $p < .05$ . A positive relationship exists between the variables ( $r = 0.128^{**}$ ) and the relationship observed was also significant. The table shows that self-awareness has a strong relationship with their academic adjustment. This, therefore, implies that students' self-awareness and academic adjustment influence the level of achievement of fresh undergraduates of Imo State University.

**Hypotheses Two:** There is no significant relationship between the levels of self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.

**Table 5: Relationship between levels of self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates**

| Variables                                      | N   | R      | P    | Sig  |
|--|-----|--------|------|------|
| Levels of Self-Regulation                      | 400 |        |      |      |
| Academic Adjustment among Fresh Undergraduates | 400 | .211** | .000 | Sign |

The table above shows the relationship that exists between self-regulation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduate students of Imo State University. The correlation indicates that the coefficient of students' self-regulation and students' academic adjustment is significant at  $p < .05$ . A positive relationship exists between the variables ( $r = 0.211^{**}$ ) and the relationship observed was also significant. A general overview shows that self-regulation has a strong relationship with their academic adjustment. Therefore, the hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between self-regulation and academic adjustment of undergraduate students of Imo State University, is rejected. This, therefore, implies that students' self-regulation and academic adjustment influence the level of achievement of undergraduates.



**Hypotheses Three:** There is no significant relationship between the level of self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates in Imo State University, Owerri.

**Table 6: Relationship between level of self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduates**

| Variables                                      | N   | R       | P    | Sig  |
|--|-----|---------|------|------|
| Level of Self-Motivation                       | 400 | .3051** | .000 | Sign |
| Academic Adjustment among Fresh Undergraduates | 400 |         |      |      |

The table above shows the relationship that exists between self-motivation and academic adjustment among fresh undergraduate students of Imo State University. The correlation indicates that the coefficient of students' self-motivation and students' academic adjustment is significant at  $p < .05$ . A positive relationship exists between the variables ( $r = 0.3051^{**}$ ) and the relationship observed was also significant. The table shows that self-motivation has a strong relationship with their academic adjustment. This, therefore, implies that students' self-motivation and academic adjustment influence the level of achievement of fresh undergraduates of Imo state University.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### Relationship between Self-Awareness and Academic Adjustment

In Research Question One, the result indicates that there is a significant relationship between students' self-awareness and their academic adjustment. The finding agrees with Salami (2011) who sees adjustment as a continuous life process. It also agrees with Weiten and Lloyeod (2006) who both believe that adjustment is a response to the psychological process by which people cope with everyday life demands. It also partially agrees with Ohuakanwa, Omeje and Eskay (2012) who maintained that academic adjustment is the ability of students to adapt with academic rigours, which requires self-awareness. However, it slightly agrees with Agulanna and Nwachukwu (2017) who both stated that self-awareness and self-adjustment are viewed in relation to interpersonal intelligence, while it disagrees with Goleman (2006) who sees self-awareness as the ability of an individual to identify their own personal internal states, preferences, resources and efforts only.

The result of Hypothesis One agrees with Ikpe, Ezeonwumelu, Okoro, Udofia and Akpan (2022) who investigated emotional intelligence and academic adjustment in relation to self-regulation, and Abdullah, Elias, Uli and Mahyuddin (2010) who also investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence, university adjustment and academic achievement of fresh university undergraduates. However, it slightly contradicts the finding of Kinanee (2010) who described adjustment as just a response of a person to physical, psychological and social needs.



## **Relationship between Self-Regulation and Academic Adjustment**

The result in Research Question two agrees with Goleman (2006) who maintains the opinion that self-regulation is the emotional maturity that is consistent in the ability of the individual to adapt to changes. However, the finding slightly disagrees with Salami (2011) and Ohuakanwa et al. (2012) who both stated that self-regulation is not only limited to the consistent ability to adapt to changes but also to demonstrate appropriate understanding and responses to neighbours' irrational behaviours, which fresh undergraduate students are likely to come across.

The result of Hypothesis Two supports the finding of Goleman (2006) who sees self-regulation as self-adjustment, being self-restrained, self-controlled or self-disciplined. It also agrees with Kinance (2011) and Salami (2011) who both perceived self-regulation and academic adjustment as vital tools for fresh university undergraduates, to enhance good academic performance.

## **Relationship between Self-Motivation and Academic Adjustment among Fresh University Students**

In Research Question Three, the result agrees partly with Carl Rogers' (1977) theory of self-motivation which relates self-motivation with one's ability to 'master motive' behind one's behaviour towards one's life achievement of goals or tasks. It also supports the findings of Adeyemo (2015) on the use of emotional intelligence to facilitate adjustment of university freshmen in Nigeria. However, it contradicts the findings of Iruloh and Ukaegbu (2018) who investigated the extent to which emotional intelligence competencies predict academic adjustment of fresh undergraduate students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

## **Relative and Composite Influence of Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation and Academic Adjustment of Fresh Undergraduates**

In Research Question Four, the result supports the theory of Carl Rogers (1977) of self-motivation, which states that motivation anchors on self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation, which has an implicit influence on learners' academic performance. The result also agrees with Ohuakanwa, Omeje and Esksey (2012) Salami (2011), Agulanna and Nwachukwu (2017), and Goleman (2006). This actually indicates that fresh university students' emotional intelligence goes alongside students' self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation which all compositely influence students' adjustment and invariably academic adjustment.

Again, the result of Hypothesis Three agrees with the previous works done by various researchers, such studies like Abdullah, Elias, Uli and Mahyuddin (2010), Adeyemo (2015), Iruloh and Ukaegbu (2018), Ikpe, Ezeonwumelu, Okoro, Udofia and Akpan (2022). It is important to note that emotional intelligence is one aspect of the individual being that has received less attention in the scheme of upbringing and training of the individual especially than cognitive intelligence training. In this study, there is the possibility that the results are due largely to the wealth and possession of emotional intelligence components.



## CONCLUSION

This study is an empirical confirmation that good wealth and possession of emotional intelligence skills is to university fresh or first year undergraduates a sine qua non for proper academic adjustment which results in enviable academic attainment. The study, as clearly evidenced by the findings due to data analysis, indicated that a good wealth and possession of emotional intelligence components (self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation) are positively significant to academic adjustment of first year undergraduates in universities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings of this study, it is hereby recommended that university authorities should introduce a programme that would encourage the creation of emotional intelligence skills during the first year of admission in the universities.

Universities should be encouraged to establish standard counselling centres with qualified counsellors employed. These counsellors will in turn have to deal with students, to help them imbibe coping strategies to develop emotional intelligence skills in order to help them manage their situations in school.

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