



# NEUROTICISM AND INTROVERSION PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS AND ADOLESCENTS' SCHOOL SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT IN A SOCIAL INCLUSION IN NORTHERN EDUCATION ZONE OF CROSS RIVER STATE

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## ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to determine the influence of Neuroticism and introversion Personality Factors on Adolescents' School Social Adjustment in a social Inclusion Education, in Northern Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The sample for the study consists of one thousand and eighteen (1018) students who were randomly selected from senior secondary one classes (SS1) in nineteen (19) purposively selected schools out of the seventy-three (73) schools in the study area. The researcher adopted a causal comparative design also known as the ex-post facto, and data were collected using NEO-PI scale and school social adjustment questionnaire as the main instrument. To guide the study, two research questions were raised and two statement of hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 levels of significant using independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistic. The results from the analyzed data indicated that there is significant difference of neuroticism on early adolescent's school social adjustment. Sidak post hoc test was performed to show where the difference lies; also, introverts significantly differ from extroverts regarding their school social adjustment. In view of the above findings, it was concluded that Neuroticism factor is significantly related to adolescents' school social adjustment in the study area in an inclusive education. It was recommended among others, that the effort of teachers, parents, educational psychologist, guidance counselors and the government are needful in all secondary schools to help students overcome the problem of poor adjustments in schools. Word count: 240

**KEYWORDS:** Neuroticism, Introversion, School Social adjustment, Social inclusion

## INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is the cornerstone of a "transformational agenda, committed to addressing all forms of exclusive and marginalization, disparities and inequalities in access, participation and learning outcomes.

Inclusive education is committed to making necessary institutional policies to support the disadvantaged especially those with disabilities to ensure that the no one left behind policy of vision 2030 is achieved. Technically speaking inclusive education, therefore means educational practices which make provision for functional and effective

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learning and training for all learners within all settings most readily available to them. (Ataben & Sunday, 2021). As a United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Salamanca (1994) declaration summed up, "schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions."

The school is a social system with its authority, structure and program of activities. It has its own culture and acceptable conduct which may be different from the home culture. When the child first finds himself at school, he finds out that there are certain ways of life that are strange to him. Where such is the case, a state of disequilibrium is created to which he must strive to attain a balance. School social adjustment therefore, refers to the extent to which the child is able to interact with fellow children and teachers at school and his level of participation in activities as well as the ability to act within the set rule of conduct. The important thing about the children's perception of their school learning environment is that, what they get adjusted depends on how they perceive the school environment. Social adjustment incorporates components such as ability to interact with others, ability to adopt oneself to social activities and ability to cope with rules and regulations governing behaviour.

The socially adjusted person is one who is able to master challenges, able to interact with others including his peers and able to develop good moral standards, according to Anagbogu & Owor (2021) some students attribute their failure to school factors especially in Examination situations. An adjusted person is one who possesses such skill as would allow him to deal diplomatically with people (both friends and strangers) in such a manner, that they develop a positive attitude towards him which allows for his being accepted within the group. A well-adjusted child finds school life as an interesting and satisfying experience. He is the type of person who relates with other people in a way that provides for him pleasure, satisfaction and a sense of purpose in life and which indulges in fantasy, or day dreaming, he seeks it for what it is. Such a child would always have realistic goals and would not dwell too much on past glories or failures, rather he would live in the present and plan well for the future.

The reverse is the case for a socially maladjusted child whose predicament is rooted in emotional tension. At school, children make effort to get adapted to the school norms and values. They try to meet the social expectations in order to get

social approval. However, while some succeed in adjusting, some are not able to adjust opposing behavioural patterns of conformity and rebellion emanate from the need to identify either positively by acting like others or negatively by exhibiting deviant behaviour. Sometimes, the dilemma brings about psychological tension with consequence on behaviour. Generally, school social adjustment is relative, some children are better adjusted than some. What needs to be noted is that children's psychological health in school is dependent on their level of adjustment. An adjusted child is a psychologically healthy child, but it is the life events in school that really shape children's psychological health. (Ataben, & Sunday, 2021).

The first of the identified big five was neuroticism. It refers to affect and emotional control. Neuroticism is the extent of the individual's degree of emotional stability encompassing extent of anxiety, moodiness, irritability and sadness. To that extent, a low level of neuroticism indicates emotional stability while high level indicates emotional instability with associated depressed mood, irritability all of which incline the individual toward being reactive and sensitive to environmental stimuli. The researcher is postulating that the child's social adjustment in school is associated with his level of neuroticism and introversion. The speculation is that; a high level of neuroticism inclines one toward social maladjustment. In the context of the study, it means that the higher a child's level of neuroticism and introversion, the less will he/she be able to relate well with other students and teachers, participate in co-curricular activities, engage well in daily school learning activities or cope with school rules and regulations. The rationale for the position is that since high neuroticism and introversion inclines one toward emotional instability, depressed mood, isolation, withdrawal tendency, anxiety and irritability; a child who is high in it may be ill-equipped for effective social role playing like exhibition of warmth in relationship or adjusting to social events or activities.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of the neuroticism and introversion\extroversion on adolescents' school social adjustment in the Northern Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

**Research questions**

Research question was answered in the study;

1. To what extent does Neuroticism influence adolescents' school social adjustment?
2. To what extent does introversion differ from extroversion regarding their school social adjustment?

**Statement of hypotheses**

The null hypotheses were tested in the study.

1. Neuroticism does not significantly influence early adolescents' school social adjustment
2. There is no significant influence of introversion regarding their school social adjustment

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Bracket and Mayer, (2003) declared that emotional disturbances affect social relations. The emotionally disturbed person has greater difficulties in maintaining social relationships, emotional instability, maladjustment to reality, lower self-repaid and self-acceptance. They are of the opinion that, children who have difficulty regulating emotional reactions or impulsive behavior, because they are temperamentally over reactive or lack emotional skills, are likely to experience difficulties in adapting to school, work, and social environments. They carried out a large number of studies with children and further suggest that the capacity to decode, understand, and regulate emotions is associated with social and emotional adaptation. Among college students, emotional abilities are positively associated with the quality of social interactions. Evaluations of school-based interventions emphasizing the development of emotional competencies also suggest that emotional learning contributes to social and academic adjustment.

Anderson (2007) also found out that in adolescents, neuroticism has also been positively associated with delinquency and diagnoses of conduct disorder and substance use disorders). An adolescent emotional state, that is, his emotional stability or instability can affect his ability to cope with different emotional trauma that comes his way, at school, home, or in the society. A child who is nervous, tensed and moody will be more upset within different part of the world, students whose emotional behaviours do not conform to the standard set by the society and academic institution concerned are said to have behaviour problems.

Iheanacho (2002) opines that emotion influence students' adjustment and selection of information from their environment, and their consequent display of behaviour for him, adjusted and happy students tend to be more attentive to their studies than sad students. Venting emotions also are reactions originating from internal physiological changes with the help of the sympathetic neurons system and the endocrine secretions. He reports also that good academic performance is enhanced by the learner's emotional state. More so, Iheanacho (2007) carried out a study to find out the effect of positive and negative emotionality on children academic achievement. He restricted his study to the emotionality that is not prolong beyond the divination of an examination 60 children aged 5 to 8 years constituted the sample. He taught them for two weeks after when he assigned them into three groups, using stratified random sampling. The groups which differed in emotionality include those in the interesting condition and the anxiety-pack condition, which constituted the exemplary groups. The third was the control group; Iheanacho found that the negative emotionality condition performed significantly worst.

Owuh (2011) investigate the relationship between extraversion-introversion, neuroticism and school adjustment in Government Secondary School Anambra State. The research adopted a descriptive correlational survey method. The sample consists of 260 students drawn from six schools. Eysenck personality inventory and school adjustment questionnaire were used to collect data. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analysed data. The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between extraverted and introverted students and their relationships with peers, attitude to classroom and school activities. The result also revealed that significant relationship exists between neurotic students and their relationship with school activities.

Janowsky, Morter and Tancer, (2000) are of the opinion that When individuals have fears of being evaluated negatively, they will often do everything in their power to avoid social situations where they may face evaluation due to a concern of being embarrassed. It is impossible for them to avoid these interactions altogether and this avoidance causes an immense amount of stress for some individuals. Those who have an intense fear of social interaction often take on characteristics of introverts. Furthermore, many patients who are being treated for social phobias are found to be introverted. The question then

becomes: was it the introversion that caused the social phobia or vice versa?

Asendorpf and Wilpers, (1998) carried out a research on an 18-month study of 132 German university students from the beginning of their first year of college found significant effects of three of the Big Five personality factors on their social relationships. Students scoring high in extraversion made more friends during the 18-month period and were more likely to fall in love than students low in extraversion. Those high in agreeableness experienced less conflict with acquaintances of the opposite sex, and those high in conscientiousness were more likely to maintain contact with parents and siblings. The factor of openness showed no significant effect on social relationships. Although little research has been done to examine the effect of personality type, specifically introversion-extraversion, on fear of negative evaluation, it appears that those who are introverted experience a greater fear of negative evaluation than those who tend to thrive in a social setting (Cowden, 2005). The social interactions of these individuals are often hindered due to their fears (Larsen & Buss, 2002). It is a basic human desire to avoid rejection and search for approval, and those who are introverted doubt that they have the ability to make successful impressions on others (Leary & Buckley, 2000)

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design that was used in this study is the causal comparative design also known as the ex-post facto. The population of the study consisted of all public senior secondary school one (SSI) students in Northern Education Zone of Cross River State.

The sampling technique used for subject selection was the stratified random sampling

technique. First the Northern Education zone was stratified on the basis of the Local Government Areas. In each of the L.G.A, 25 percent of the secondary schools were randomly selected for the study. At the school level, the simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 60 percent of the SS1 students for the study. The sample of this study comprised 1,018 SSI students. These consisted of students who fall within the range of 12 and above found in SSI. They were basically male and female.

A research instrument titled students NEO-PI Scale and School Social Adjustment questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire had three sections (sections A, B and C). Section A elicited from the respondents, demographic data such as name of school, class, age and gender. Section B consists of scale that measures respondents' NEO-PI personality factors and sections C and D consists of scale that measures respondents' school social adjustment. The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and evaluation who vetted the items developed. The reliability estimate of the instrument was established through Test-retest reliability method. The reliability coefficient ranges from 0.76 to 0.81 which is considered high.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

The data collected for this study was analyzed using independent t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA). In each of the hypothesis tested, the independent and dependent variable were identified and data was transformed to fit the appropriate statistical requirement. The results are presented in tables and interpreted at .05 level of significance.

Hypothesis one

**TABLE 1:** Descriptive statistics of the influence of Neuroticism on school social adjustment

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD
Adjustment to rules & regulation	Low	240	15.88	4.65
	Moderate	638	17.57	3.77
	High	122	18.48	3.12
	Total	1000	17.27	4.02
Adjustment to academic culture	Low	240	11.43	3.92
	Moderate	638	12.56	3.38
	High	122	12.52	3.51
	Total	1000	12.28	3.56
Adjustment co-curricular activities.	Low	240	11.66	4.14
	Moderate	638	12.84	4.07
	High	122	12.97	4.17
	Total	1000	12.57	4.13
Adjustment to student-student relationship	Low	240	12.40	4.56
	Moderate	638	13.50	3.49
	High	122	13.80	3.58
	Total	1000	13.27	3.82
Adjustment to student-teacher relationship	Low	240	11.34	4.52
	Moderate	638	12.39	3.86
	High	122	12.44	3.66
	Total	1000	12.14	4.03
Overall school social adjustment	Low	240	70.20	16.71
	Moderate	638	68.85	12.11
	High	122	62.70	10.85
	Total	1000	67.54	13.50

**TABLE 2:** Result of ANOVA for influence of Neuroticism on school social adjustment

Source of variance		SS	DF	MS	F-ratio	SIG.
Rules & regulations	Between groups	703.741	2	351.87	22.716	.000
	Within groups	15443.18	997	15.490		
	Total	16146.92	999			
Academic culture	Between groups	228.156	2	114.07	9.117	.000
	Within groups	12474.75	997	12.512		
	Total	12702.91	999			
Co-curricular activities	Between groups	266.346	2	133.17	7.906	.000
	Within groups	16794.17	997	16.845		
	Total	17060.52	999			
Students-student relationship	Between groups	247.67	2	123.83	8.611	.000
	Within groups	1438.96	997	14.382		
	Total	14586.63	999			
Teachers-student relationship	Between groups	205.191	2	102.59	6.376	.002
	Within groups	16043.36	997	16.092		
	Total	16248.55	999			
Overall School Social Adjustment	Between groups	7580.835	2	3790.4	21.657	.000
	Within groups	174497.34	997	175.02		
	Total	182078.15	999			

\*significant at 0.05 level of significance

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data. The result is presented in table 1 and 2. The results of the one-way analysis of variance for hypothesis one is presented in Table 1. As shown in table 1, each of the calculated F-value is greater than the critical F-value of 3.00 at 2 and 997 degrees of freedom, at 0.05 level of significance. With these results, the null hypothesis that neuroticism does not significantly influence early adolescents' school social adjustment is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis accepted. This implies that neuroticism has a significant influence on students' adjustment to rules and regulations ( $F = 22.716$ ,  $p < .05$ ); adjustment to academic culture ( $F = 9.117$ ,  $p < .05$ ); adjustment to extracurricular activities ( $F = 7.906$ ,  $p < .05$ ); adjustment to students-student relationship ( $F = 8.611$ ,  $p < .05$ );

adjustment to teacher student relationship ( $F = 6.376$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and also for overall school social adjustment ( $F = 21.657$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

The results agree with the findings of Iheanacho (2002) who pointed out that emotions influence student's adjustment and selection of information from their environment and their consequent display of behaviour. For him adjusted and happy students tend to be more attentive to their studies than sad students. He reports also that good academic performance is enhanced by the learner's emotional state. The result also agreed with the results of previous studies carried out by Bracket and Mayer, (2003) they found out that emotional disturbances affect social relations. According to them, emotionally disturbed person has greater difficulties in maintaining social relationships.

Hypothesis two

**TABLE 3:** Independent t-test Analysis: Influence of introversion-extroversion on adolescents' school social adjustment

School social ADJ	Grouping variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig.
ADJ rules and regulations	Introverts	569	17.06	4.19	1.93	.053
	Extroverts	431	17.56	3.76		
	Total	1000				
ADJ Academic culture	Introverts	569	11.69	3.64	6.164	.000*
	Extroverts	431	13.07	3.30		
	Total	1000				
ADJ extracurricular activities	Introverts	569	11.99	4.06	5.174	.000*
	Extroverts	431	13.34	4.10		
	Total	1000				
ADJ stud-student relationship	Introverts	569	12.80	3.88	4.471	.000*
	Extroverts	431	13.88	3.65		
	Total	1000				
ADJ stud-teacher relationship	Introverts	569	11.74	4.16	3.68	.000*
	Extroverts	431	12.68	3.78		
	Total	1000				
overall school social ADJ	Introversion	569	65.28	14.25	6.200	.000*
	Extraversion	431	70.52	11.80		
	Total	1000				

\*significant at 0.05 level; df = 998

Introverts do not significantly differ from extroverts regarding their school social adjustment. The independent variable in this hypothesis is personality type and it's categorized two groups (introversion and extraversion), while the dependent variable is adolescents' school social adjustment. To test the hypothesis, independent t-test was used to analyze the data. The results of the independent t-test analysis as presented in Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value for adjustment to school academic culture, (t=6.164); co-curricular activities, (t=5.174); student-student relationship,(4.471); student – teacher,(t=3.68) and overall school social adjustment(t=6.20) are each greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 998 degree of freedom, at 0.05 level of significance The calculated t-value for adjustment to rules and regulation is however; lower than the critical t-value of 1.96. With these results, the null hypothesis that extroverts do not significantly differ from

introverts in respect of school social adjustment is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This implies that extraversion-introversion has a significant influence on students' adjustment to school rules and regulations. The results also show that in each aspect of school social adjustment, the mean score of extroverts is higher than that of the introverts. This means that extroverts are better than introverts in almost all aspects of school social adjustment. This result is supported by the findings of Asendorf and Wilpers (1998) who carry out a study Big five, negative evaluation and social adjustment and specifically find out that those who were introverted experience a greater fear of negative evaluation than those who tend to thrive in a social setting (Cowden, 2005).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the above findings, the researcher arrived at the conclusions that Neuroticism and introversion have significant influences on adolescents' school social adjustment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study findings and the conclusions reached in this research, the following recommendations are made:

1. School should introduce some forms of intervention program aimed at helping those who are highly neurotic tone down those unhealthy and unbecoming pattern of behaviours associated with them.
2. School guidance counsellors and psychologists should introduce in schools diagnostic and intervention based strategic measures aimed at helping school administrators and teachers to have a fair knowledge of their adolescents students who are excessively introverted. By so doing, they will be able to help students who are at the extremes of introversion to adjust and be well adapted socially.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

1. In order to develop adequate social adjustment among the introverted and neurotic in the classroom, counsellors should ensure that they are able to work together most effectively, understanding their personalities, abilities and needs, and also provide an environment and activities which will help to enhance their self-esteem.
2. Counsellors should create programmes to enable the schools make a way of helping students recognize their place as social contributors through cooperative learning and help-seeking behaviour.
3. Schools should introduce some forms of intervention programmes aimed at helping those who are highly neurotic tone down those unhealthy and unbecoming pattern of behaviours associated with them.
4. School guidance counsellors and psychologists should introduce in schools' diagnostic and intervention based strategic measures aimed at helping school administrators and teachers to have a fair knowledge of their adolescent's students who are excessively introverted. By so doing, they will be able to help students who are at the extremes of introversion to adjust and be well adapted socially

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