

# Home Background and Self-Concept of High Achieving Students with Emotional Disorder in Ibadan, Nigeria

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## Abstract

Home environment and self-concept influence child development in many ways. This is particularly critical for high achieving students who because of their uniqueness suffer social isolation and rejection among their peers in school and at home. The knowledge of self is necessary for overcoming emotional issues. This study focused on home background and self-concept of high achieving students in Ibadan, Oyo State. The study adopted survey design of the expo facto type. Three research questions were raised. Simple random sampling was used to select 250 participants for the study. Simple percentage, t-test and multiple regression analysis were conducted on the data collected. It was found that self-concept and parenting styles relate with emotional adjustment. Even though socioeconomic background does not predict emotional adjustment, the researcher found that the combination of the three predictor variables yielded very strong emotional adjustment of the participants. Parenting styles is the most significant predictor of emotional adjustment of the participants. The need for parents to imbibe good parenting styles, the need for school to organize periodic talks to enhance students' self-concept, the essence of counselling for high achieving students and better societal attitude towards high achieving students were advocated.

**Key word:** Emotional adjustment, family background, high achieving students, parenting style, socio-economic status

## Introduction

High achieving students are cognitively ready for academic challenges. They demonstrate exceptional skills and ability in varied areas. It has effect on the cognitive, social and emotional development of individuals. Generally, it is accepted that a high achieving child would have the potential to perform at a level that is significantly beyond that of the majority of other children who are of the same age, in one or more skill areas such as language, problem solving, physical or interpersonal skills. However, high achieving students are vulnerable because of their unique characteristics that place them at a higher risk for specific social and emotional problems (Neihart, 1999; Tannenbaum, 1997). They are more sensitive to interpersonal conflicts and experience greater degrees of alienation and stress than do their peers, as a result of their cognitive capacities (Neihart, 1999). Their adjustment to these challenges has not been investigated as expected. While the impact of family background variables such as socioeconomic status, parenting styles and self-concept on learning are documented (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008; Tuoyo, 2007; Kitano & Kirby, 1986; Clark, 1983), their role on emotional adjustment of high achieving students is hardly.

The parenting styles also play major role in the psychosocial development of a child. Parenting style that foster self-expression and affection between parents and children creates good environment for the children emotional adjustment. As noted by Radina and Cooney (2000), the quality of the relationships between parents and their children is critical to emotional adjustment. The family environments that are healthy in general are likely to imbue the child with adjustment capacity. A dysfunctional home life may drive the child to seek a home away from home, with positive or negative outcomes. Mass (1992) reported that the location of upbringing is a salient factor influencing ones self-concept and emotional adjustment.

The term self-concept refers to the ordered set of attitudes and perceptions that an individual holds about his/ herself (Wolffe, (2000); Woolfolk, (2001); Tuttel & Tuttel, (2004). Self-concept is defined as the value that an individual places on his or her own characteristics, qualities, abilities, and actions (Woolfolk, (2001). Self-concept unlike family background is an external factor that influences child's development. The way an individual perceives himself, influences the way he behaves in the process of interacting with his physical and social environment. People with high self-concept identify with people, are friendly and non-suspicious or critical when they relate with people either at home or in school.

Self-concept is an important concept which has to do with understanding human behaviour. Self-concept level of an individual could therefore determine how he perceives and solve a given problem. People with low self-concept and

associated weak will-power make poor learners and finally end up as school drop-outs and truants. On the other hand, people with high self-concept make best learners and adjust to issues better, and achieve better success (Okoye, 1987). It is may be said that the root of self-concept lies in family experiences.

There is therefore the need to investigate and document the role of self-concept and family background on the emotional adjustment of high achieving students in our secondary schools with a view to bringing about better adjusted students. As a result of this, the researcher is interested in investigating the influence of self-concept and family background on emotional adjustment of high-achieving students in selected secondary schools in Ibadan.

### **Justification**

This study will be of immense benefit to parents, teachers, school administrators, and government at all levels. Parents will be able to provide accepting and warm home atmosphere for their high achieving students to thrive. Parents of high achieving students will be more aware of the need to encourage siblings of high achieving student to accept and relate with the child rather than reject him/her. Teachers of high achieving students will be exposed to the impact of emotional and social problems of high achieving students and the role they can cooperatively play along with the students' parents such as encouraging social interaction among all students in the classroom and de-emphasizing segregation and isolation among all categories of students. School administrators will be able to fashion out programmes that can enhance emotional adjustment of high ability students.

### **Statement of the Problem**

High achieving students face problem emanating from their interaction with their environment as a result of their superior cognitive ability. This unique nature always put them at risk of isolation from peers, teachers and parents. This situation affects their total development including academic achievement, self-concept, self-esteem and total development. Being rejected by siblings and peers poses a great danger to emotional development of any child. Without proper understanding of how family background and self-concept relate with emotional adjustment, high achieving students may be at risk of underachievement and school drop-out.

Since children stay more at home than elsewhere, it is important to understand the role which family background of high achieving students can play in their emotional adjustment. There is also the need to understand the influence of self-concept on the emotional adjustment of high achieving students. This will help to appreciate the contribution of socio-economic variables to emotional adjustment and such information can be used to assist parents and teachers in counseling.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of self-concept and family background on the emotional adjustment of high achieving students in Ibadan.

Other specific objectives of the study are to:

- ( ) find out the impact of parenting style on emotional adjustment of high achieving students;
- (i) probe into the effect of socioeconomic background on emotional adjustment of high achieving students;
- (ii) examine the influence of self-concept on emotional adjustment of high achieving students and
- (iii) establish how the independent variables exert the greatest influence on emotional adjustment of high achieving students.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were stated to guide the study:

- Is there any significant relationship between each of the independent variables (Parenting styles, Socio-economic background and Self-concept) and the dependent variable (Emotional adjustment of high achieving students)?
- What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (Parenting styles, Socio- economic background and Self-concept) to the dependent variable (Emotional adjustment of high achieving students)?
- What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (Parenting styles, Socio economic background and Self-concept) to the dependent variable (Emotional adjustment of high achieving students)?

### **Methodology**

The population of this study comprised of two hundred and fifty high achieving students in 10 senior secondary schools in Ibadan, Nigeria. It covered ten senior secondary schools in Ibadan, Oyo State. The schools are: St Louis Grammar school, Mokola, Immanuel College, Samonda, Methodist Grammar school, Bodija, Mount Olivet Grammar school and Oba Akinbiyi

Grammar school, Bishop Onabanjo High school, Ijokodo High school, Ikolaba Grammar School, Oba Akinyele Memorial High school and St. Patricks Grammar school. This study adopted the research design of the expo-facto.

Simple random sampling was used to 250 high achieving students from 10 senior secondary schools in Ibadan, with 25 high achieving students were picked from each of the selected schools. Three instruments were used to collect data in this study. They are Home Environment Inventory by Mishra, Multi-Dimensional Self-Concept Scale developed by Bruce (2012) and Emotional Adjustment Bank (EAB) by Aguado, Rubio, Hontangas, and Hernández (2005).

Home Environment Inventory is a 27-item inventory designed by Mishra (1983). The instrument taps into different dimensions of the home such as social interaction with parents and sibling, the physical environment of the home and parental influence on children. The instruments use 5-likert scales ranging from Never (1) to Mostly (5) from which the respondents are to select the option that best describes his/her home in relation to each question items. Mishra (1983) reports internal consistency co-efficient of 0.85 for HEI.

The Multi-dimensional Self-Concept Scale (MSCS) is a 28-item instrument designed by Bruce (2012). The instrument uses 7-likert scale ranging from Not concerned (1) to Very Often (7).The instrument measures major aspects of self-concept dimensions such as self-awareness, self-perception and self-image. Bruce (2012) reported a Cronbach alpha of > 0.9 for MSCS.

The Emotional Adjustment Bank is a 28-item instrument designed by Aguado, Rubio, Hontangas, and Hernández (2005). All of them have a graded response option from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (Strongly disagree). The EAB was designed through a combination of several strategies. Using a long-existed personality instrument, the authors of EAB used the definitive composition and factorial techniques to establish the Emotional Adjustment Bank (EAB). The EAB which was designed to assess the emotional adjustment of adolescents has an internal consistency of 0.71.

Simple percentage, multiple regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

### Result of the findings

**Research Question 1:** Is there any significant relationship between each of the independent variables (parenting styles, socioeconomic background and self concept) and the dependent variable (emotional adjustment) of high achieving students?

**Table 1: Inter-correlation among the Dependent and Independent Variables**

	N	SD	Emotional Adjustment	Parenting Styles	Socioeconomic Background	Self-concept
Emotional Adjustment	250	4.74	1	0.58	0.19*	0.69
Parenting Styles	250	3.97	0.58	1	0.79	0.76
Socioeconomic Background	250	3.74	0.19*	0.79	1	0.13*
Self-concept	250	4.98	0.69	0.76	0.32*	1

\*Not Significant

It can be seen from Table 1 above that that self-concept ( $r=0.69$ ) and parenting styles ( $r=0.58$ ) have significant positive correlation with emotional adjustment of the participants while the correlation between socioeconomic background and emotional adjustment of the participants insignificant ( $r=0.19$ ). Also, correlation exists among the variables i.e. parenting styles correlates significantly with socioeconomic background ( $r=0.79$ ), parenting styles and self-concept ( $r=0.76$ ). There is insignificant relationship between socioeconomic background and self-concept ( $r=0.13$ ) of the participants.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (parenting styles, socioeconomic background and self-concept) to the dependent variable (emotional adjustment) of high achieving students?

**Table 2: Relative Effect of Each Predictor on the Outcome Variable**

Predictors	Non-standardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T-Ratio	P
	B	SEB	Beta		
Parenting Styles	1.21	-.451	.67	7.932	<.05
Socioeconomic Background	-1.34	-.245	.09	.78	<.05*
Self-concept	1.27	-.531	.64	7.091	<0.05

\* Not Significant

Table 2 shows the relative contribution of each of the independent variables (parenting styles, socioeconomic background and self-concept) to the dependent variable (emotional adjustment). As shown in the table, parenting style is the most significant predictor of emotional adjustment of the participants (T-ratio=7.932), followed by self-concept (T-ratio=7.091). Socioeconomic background does not have any significant contribution to emotional adjustment of the respondents (T-ratio=.78).

**Research Question 3:** What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (parenting styles, socioeconomic background and self-concept) to the dependent variable (emotional adjustment of high achieving students)?

**Table 3:**  
**Joint Contribution of the Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable**

R	R Square		Adjusted R Square		Standard Error of Estimate
0.74	0.5476		0.55		3.3942
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Difference		Sig.
Regression	134.316	3	44.772	4.712	0.05
Residual	912.213	96	9.502		
Total	1046.529	99			

As shown from Table 3, the independent variables (parenting styles, socioeconomic background and self-concept) have strong combined influence on the dependent variable. The three independent variables when put together yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions (R) of 0.74 and a multiple correlation square of 0.5476. This shows that 54.7% of the total variance in emotional adjustment of the participants is accounted for by the combination of the three independent variables (parenting styles, socioeconomic background and self-concept). The table further indicates that the analysis of variance of the multiple regression data yielded an F-ratio value of 4.712 at 0.05 level i.e. (F (3, 145) = 4.712; p<0.05).

### Discussion of Findings

It was found that self-concept and parenting styles correlates positively with emotional adjustment of the participants. This is because an understanding of oneself makes one to be aware of his emotion, his strengths and weaknesses. On the other hand, the influence of parents on children development is widely documented in literature. This present finding corroborate that of Buhs and Ladd (2001) who found that the way relate with their children correlated significantly with children's perception of their competencies, strengths as well as weaknesses and children's academic achievement. Moreover, Epstein (1987) had earlier established that a correlation exist between parenting styles and the thought a child has about his ability and that self-concept and parenting styles predicts how well such a child will adjust to emotions. The researcher however found that socioeconomic background does not correlate with emotional adjustment of the participants. This opposes the position of Pehlivan (2010) and Karasakaloğlu and Saracaloglu (2009) in their separate researches that socioeconomic background plays an important role in the adjustment of individuals to emotional issues.

High positive correlation exists between parenting styles and socioeconomic background; parenting styles and self-concept while there is low but positive correlation between socioeconomic background and self-concept. This is because parenting styles and socioeconomic background are two major factors within the home which dictate a child's development in all facets such as academic and emotional. Parents who are open, attentive and who support their children are more likely to foster emotional adjustment of their children. This is because emotion develops as individuals interact with others around them. This is in contrast to the finding of Cakır, Sahin and Sahin (2000) who established that the socio-economic level does not have any relationship with the student's academic self-concept.

Parenting styles was found to be the most significant predictor of emotional adjustment, followed by self-concept while socioeconomic background did not have any significant contribution to emotional adjustment of the participants. These findings provide explanation as to how parental disposition, styles and attitude can dictate how a child adjusts to emotion. A

significantly positive relationship of protectiveness, conformity, reward, and nurturance component of home environment can affect the child in all aspects including academic and emotional adjustment.

The findings of the present study are in line with the findings of Kale (1982), Litovsky and Dusek (1985), Panwar (1986), Lau (1995) and Lau and Kwok (2000). Dinah (2004) indicated that there is a significant relationship between home environment and the self-concept. Kaur (2009) found adolescent's emotional self-concept was to be affected by religion, supervision at home (parent or guardian) and the number of siblings in the family. Also, Song and Hattie (1984) in a sample of Korean adolescents found that self-concept is a mediating variable between home environment and emotional adjustment. However, the present study revealed significantly negative correlation of socioeconomic background component of home environment with emotional adjustment among high achieving students. Thus the interaction of a child with his parents also determines to a large extent the child's self-esteem.

The three independent variables namely parenting styles, socioeconomic background and self-concepts when put together have significant influence on emotional adjustment of the participants. This research finding corroborates that of Maccoby and Martin (1983) and Steinberg (2001) who in their separate research found that parenting styles, individual self-concept as well as socio-economic background have strong impact on academic, social and all-round development of a child. Parents have a profound influence on whether a home provides intellectual stimulation, physical and psychological safety, an appropriate degree of structure and supportive relationships. Children with more opportunities at home to build academic skills tend to be better on emotional adjustment mainly because of warmth and encouragement. This finding is however not surprising for obvious and clear reason. Going by the earlier research findings above, a combination of the three independent variables expectedly must have greater and significant impact on the independent variable.

### **Conclusion**

Home background variables which are investigated in this study (socioeconomic background and parenting styles) and self-concept when combined are strong predictors of emotional adjustment among high achieving students. Parenting patterns dictates how a child will adjust to emotional situations. Parents are the first teachers and guide to any child. The kind of relationship that exists between a child and his parents goes a long way to determine not only the emotional adjustment of the child but also in all ramifications. This becomes particularly relevant to high achieving students who are vulnerable to emotional problems such as thinking about what others feel about them and how they can be accepted among the people at home and in school. Parenting styles that facilitate intimacy of the child with parents will foster emotional adjustment of high achieving students as students can share their emotions with their parents, seek succor and leverage on their parental support to overcome emotional challenges.

Self-concept is another factor that was studied. This consciousness of a child about his strength is an internal factor that will assist the child in understanding his strength and weakness. For high achieving students who may suffer isolation and social problem in the course of his relationship with mates, understanding his self-concept allow such a child to adjust better to such situations This is also necessary for the child to worry less about his difficulty with mates and peers and concentrate on his strength.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the findings in this research, the following recommendations are imperative.

Parents should imbibe and adopt parenting styles that are capable of strengthening child/ parent bond and trust. Such a child can feel accepted, safe and secure to seek succor, counseling and encouragement from his/her parents and they should provide their wards with home environment that is psychologically safe, non-discriminating and loving for their children to feel accepted in order to seek assistance at home. There is the need to create awareness among parents on the emotional difficulty which high achieving students often confront. This can be achieved through seminars for parents on the emotional needs of high achieving students. Schools can collaborate with parents in this regard. By this, high achieving students will be able to benefit maximally from interaction with parents at home.

Schools should therefore organize periodic talks, conferences and seminars to boost the self-concept of high achieving students. High achieving students could be made to understand how their self-concept affects their emotion and the need to develop better self-concept. Schools should offer counseling service to all high achieving students. Student-counselor relationship can be brought to bear to solve emotional problems confronting high achieving students. Counselors can use their professional expertise to encourage high achieving students on issues regarding emotional adjustment.

Teachers should be involved in the task of assisting high achieving students to overcome emotional problems. Teachers have direct dealings with high achieving students. Teachers should be exposed to ideas, methods and strategies which they can use to assist high achieving students to overcome their emotional problems. Teachers can be made to imbibe such strategies via workshop. School administrators should design programme that can help to enhance students' self-concept. This can be achieved by organizing seminars and talks sensitizing high achieving students on the need to go along

with others, adjust to social challenges and relate well with others. Such talks will enable high achieving students to understand themselves better and to be more aware of the social challenges they are vulnerable to.

Education policy makers should make self-concept part of the school curriculum and ensure equality in schools resources, and upgrade educators to equip them with skills to enhance learners' self-concepts and confidence. Equally, the family lays the psychological, moral and spiritual foundation in the overall development of the child. Thus, intellectual skills can be developed and enhanced if parents can show concern about their children by providing their academic needs and give the needed moral support.

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