

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TRAINING ON SELF-EFFICACY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OWERRI METROPOLIS, IMO STATE

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Abstract

This study explored the effectiveness of emotional intelligence training on self-efficacy among secondary school students in Owerri Metropolis, Imo State. The study employed quasi-experimental research of non-randomized pre-test, post-test, control group design with 2x2 factorial matrix. Two research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. The subjects were in two experimental groups of one treatment group and one control group. The sample of the study consisted of 20 students' who failed in their 1st term examination, purposively drawn from a total population of 2,285 identified as having low self-efficacy using Student Self-Efficacy Identification Questionnaire (SSEIQ) which was the instrument used for data collection; in 2024/2025 academic session. Ten subjects in the treatment group were treated with emotional intelligence training techniques of analysis of emotional intelligence, self-regulation, motivation, self-awareness among others for four weeks of 40 minutes per session/week. The instrument used for data collection had 25-items (SAEIQ), validated by three research experts. Pr and Cronback Alpha methods were used to obtain the stability and internal consistency co-efficient of the instrument. The values obtained are 0.78 and 0.83 respectively. The control group did not receive the intervention. Data were collected in the two phases of pre-test and post-test periods. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that: There was low level of self-efficacy among secondary School students in Owerri Metropolis. Exposing subjects with low Self-efficacy to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) significantly enhanced their self-efficacy. Based on the results, conclusion, discussions and recommendations were made. It was recommended among others that school counsellors

who have students with low self-efficacy in their schools should proactively use Emotional Intelligence Training techniques to enhance their self-efficacy.

Keywords: Self-Efficacy, Emotional Intelligence Training and Secondary School Students.

Introduction

Secondary school students in Owerri Metropolis seem to have low level of motivation for school. This is because cursory observation reviews a high rate of inattentiveness of the students to schooling and school tasks. Many of them are seen roaming-about school roads and streets in diverse school uniforms even after 9 am daily, when they are supposed to be in classes receiving lessons. This behaviour of the students appears worrisome to many education stakeholders in Imo State, such as teachers, parents, school counsellors among others; as majority wonder if the students are not meant or not ready for school activities. Many others doubt the level of self-efficacy of the students

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task. For instance, someone with high self-efficacy might believe they can quit smoking, even if they've tried before. Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task (Onwudike, 2023). This concept was introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura as part of his Social Cognitive Theory. It influences how people think, feel, motivate themselves, and behave. High self-efficacy can lead to greater motivation and resilience, while low self-efficacy can result in self-doubt and avoidance of challenges, such as school tasks.

Self-efficacy has many types, one of which is Academic self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to perform well in school or learning tasks. Example is confidence in completing a science project successfully. Others include, social self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy, occupational/workplace self-efficacy among others. Social self-efficacy is confidence in one's ability to form and maintain interpersonal relationships. Example: Believing you can make friends in a new environment. Emotional Self-Efficacy which is the belief in the ability to manage negative emotions like stress or anger. Example: Staying calm during an argument and Occupational/Workplace Self-Efficacy here is the belief in one's ability to succeed in job-related tasks. Example: Confidence in delivering a successful presentation at work.

Self-efficacy have some significance as listed under (Onwudike, 2023):

High self-efficacy enhances motivation and persistence: It helps individuals bounce back from setbacks; Strong self-belief often leads to better performance; **It is** linked with lower anxiety and depression; Self-efficacy provides one with skills to improve. Such skills include: setting small, achievable goals and building on successes. Learn through role models or mentors. Use positive self-talk and visualization. Develop coping strategies for stress and failure.

Positive self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to succeed, offers numerous benefits for learners, including increased motivation, persistence, and better academic performance. However, it can also lead to over confidence and a reluctance to seek help when needed.

Some of the merits of Positive Self-Efficacy includes; Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to be motivated to learn and put in the effort required for academic success. They tend to persevere in the face of challenges and setbacks, viewing them as opportunities for learning rather than reasons to give up. Studies show a positive correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement, with students demonstrating higher self-efficacy often achieving better results. High self-efficacy can lead to lower stress levels and a reduced risk of developing anxiety or depression related to academic performance. Students with strong self-belief are more likely to engage with challenging tasks and enjoy the learning process.

Learners with high self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals for themselves, pushing their own boundaries and striving for improvement. While demerits of Positive Self-Efficacy (when it becomes excessive) are that students may become overly confident in their abilities, leading to a lack of preparation or a belief that they can succeed without putting sufficient effort. High self-efficacy can sometimes create a reluctance to ask for help when needed, even when struggling with a difficult concept or task. Over confident students might underestimate the difficulty of a task, leading to poor planning and execution. If students with high self-efficacy are constantly striving for perfection and pushing themselves too hard, they may be at risk of burnout. Students with inflated self-efficacy may be less receptive to constructive criticism or feedback, hindering their learning and development, especially as it relates their emotional intelligence

Goleman in Nwaoba (2024) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's emotions, as well as to influence the emotions of others in a constructive manner. Emotional intelligence helps individuals navigate social complexities, manage behavior, make personal decisions that achieve positive results, and build strong interpersonal connections.

Emotional intelligence has been linked to various positive outcomes, including better interpersonal relationships, improved mental health, and enhanced academic motivation among learners (Obi 2024). The researchers are interested in finding out how emotional intelligence could help enhance self-efficacy of secondary school students that could in turn result in high academic achievement among them.

Statement of the Problem

Majority of secondary school students in Owerri Township (Metropolis) engage in behaviours (truancy, lateness, loitering, absent in class lessons) that do not yield positive results in their academic achievements (outcome expectancy). and if this is allowed to continue, sooner or later majority of them will become school drop outs as a result of under-achievement (failure) and poor discipline among students will be the order of the day in the

schools. And when this happens, both the standard of education and economic development of the State are bound to be negatively affected against the utmost heart desires of well-meaning Imo State indigenes; hence education seems to be the hallmark of Imo State growth and development. In a study conducted in 2024 by Onwudike on influence of teachers' emotional intelligence on their self-efficacy in Imo State, the result indicated a significant improvement in the teachers' self-efficacy level. A similar study conducted by Ahunanya (2023) which investigated the impact of emotional intelligence on academic achievement and psychological well being among undergraduate students using survey design, the result showed positive psychological characteristics such as self-efficacy, motivation and resilience. Thus, the present researchers wanted to find out the extent emotional intelligent training techniques could enhance students' self-efficacy. The problem of this study therefore, put in a question form is: To what extent could EIT enhance students' academic self-efficacy in secondary schools in Owerri Metropolis of Imo State?

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) on academic Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students in Owerri Metropolis. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the mean level of academic Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students in Owerri Metropolis of Imo State.
2. Find out the mean score difference in the rate of improvement of academic Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students between those exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) and the Control Group at Post test period.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the mean level of academic Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students in Owerri Metropolis of Imo State?
2. What is the mean score difference in the rate of improvement of academic Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students between those exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) and the Control Group at Post test period?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significant.

HO₁: There is no significant difference in post-test efficacy mean score between students exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) and the Control Group.

Methodology

The study employed quasi experimental research of non-randomized pre-test, post-test, control group design with 2x2 factorial matrix. The participants were in two experimental groups of one treatment group and one control group. The subjects in the treatment group called self-efficacy group were exposed to EIT techniques of Analysis of target behaviour (self-efficacy), self-regulation, motivation and self-awareness. The treatment proper lasted for four weeks, amidst sessions for establishment of counselling initial issues and setting counselling goals. Subjects participated actively, asked and answered questions for clarification and brainstormed on the examples indicating desirable behaviours required in each of the techniques of EIT exposed to them. Subjects role played and rehearsed behaviours modeled by the counsellor. At the end of each session, they were given assignment/homework in which they were given feedback in the next sessions. Questioning, summarization, reflection, active listening, empathic understanding, discussion and explanation etc were employed in the cause of the training. The duration for each session was 40 minutes as shown in the format below.

Session	Counsellor's activities	Subjects activities	Duration
1.	Initial counselling issues egs roles and expectations.	Active participation and listening	40 mins
2.	Analysis of self-efficacy	Active listening, asking questions and noting down points discussed	40 nins
3.	Self-regulation techniques of EIT	Payed raped attention, gave examples and ask questions	40 nins
4.	Motivation techniques of EIT	Participated in the discussions, observed and role played modeled motivation techniques	40 mins
5	Self-awareness technique of EIT	Listened attentively, asked questions for clarification and summarized the skills in the techniques and responded to the post-test	40 mins

The control group received no intervention for it served as a-wait list group. The experiment took place in two co-educational secondary schools in Owerri Metropolis. The first school was the treatment group while the second school was the control group that received no treatment. Each group was made up of ten subjects. The sample of the study consisted of 20 students' who failed in their 1st term examination drawn from a total population of 2,285 identified as under achievers using "Students' Academic Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SASEQ)" in 2024/2025 academic session. These comprised 10 subjects each for emotional intelligence training and control groups respectively. The study equally adopted purposive sampling techniques. The instrument used for data collection was a 25-item questionnaire titled 'Students' Academic Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SASEQ)' and designed on a four point rating scale of VHE, HE, LE and VLE with the real limits of the

numbers 3.59–4.00 (VHE), 3.00–3.49 (HE), 2.00–2.49 (LE), and 1.00–1.49 (VLE) respectively. The instrument was validated by three research experts from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to ascertain the stability of SASEQ and an index of 0.78 was obtained. Test of reliability for the internal consistency of the instrument was measured using Cronbach Alpha and the result indicated index value of 0.83 for the SASEQ treatment. The intervention group received emotional intelligence training while the control group did not receive any intervention. Data were collected in the two phases of pre-test and post-test periods. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance

The data in Table 1 indicate the mean ratings and standard deviation of academic self-efficacy among Secondary School Students in Owerri Metropolis of Imo State on the Students' Academic Self-efficacy. The data show that the Secondary School Students in the treatment group had mean academic self-efficacy score of 1.49 with standard deviation of 0.65. The secondary school students in the control group had mean academic self-efficacy score of 1.47 with standard deviation of 0.66. This gave a mean difference of 0.02 in favour of the participants in the treatment group with cluster academic self-efficacy mean score of 1.48 with standard deviation of 0.66. These results indicate that there was low academic self-efficacy among secondary school students with academic self-efficacy of 1.48 as against the benchmark in the Students' Academic Self-efficacy Questionnaire (SASEQ) used in identifying secondary school students who have academic self-efficacy behaviour which was below 2.50. The standard deviation of the two groups ranged between 0.65 and 0.66; indicating that the respondents were not too far from the mean and from one another in their responses, adding further validity to the mean.

Research Question 2: What is the mean score difference in the rate of improvement of self-efficacy between students exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) and the Control Group at Post test period?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on Difference in the Rate of Improvement of Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students between those exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) and the Control Group at Post-test Period

Source		Pre-test		Post-test		Mean increase	Mean Diff.
Groups	N	SD		SD			
SST	10	1.47	0.65	3.88	0.19	2.41	
							2.42
Control	10	1.49	0.66	1.50	0.67	0.01	

Data in Table 2 showed that the subjects having low self-efficacy and were exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) had a pre-test mean score of 1.47 with a standard deviation of 0.65 and a post-test mean score of 3.88 with a standard deviation of 1.19. Similarly, the subject having low self-efficacy and were in the control group recorded pre-test mean score of 1.49 with a standard deviation of 0.66 and a post-test mean score of 1.50 with a standard deviation of 0.67. The table further showed that the subjects having low self-efficacy and were exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) had mean increase of 2.41 while their counterparts in the control group had only 0.01 increase. The mean increase difference between the Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) group and the control group was 2.42; which implied that the subjects having low self-efficacy and were exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) had more increase in mean on their level of self-efficacy than their counter parts in the control group. The standard deviation of the two groups ranged between 0.19 and 0.67. The results, therefore, suggested that the use of Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) increase academic self-efficacy of secondary school students.

HO₁: There is no significant mean score difference in the rate of improvement of academic Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students between those exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) and the Control Group at Post-test period

Table 3: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) on Difference in the Rate of Improvement of Self-Efficacy among Secondary School Students between those exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) and the Control Group at Post-test Period

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	284.759 ^a	2	142.380	21.605	.000
Intercept	7.393	1	7.393	1.003	.010
Pretest	233.682	1	233.682	31.703	.000
Treatment	20.918	1	20.918	2.838	.002
Error	125.315	17	7.371		
Total	6805.000	20			
Corrected Total	2400.074	19			

a R Squared = .608 (Adjusted R squared = .792).

The calculated f-value of 2.838 in respect of the treatment as main effect of Emotional Intelligence Training (SST) on mean rate of self-efficacy scores was higher than f-critical of

1.96 with degree of freedom of 2 and 17 at 0.05 level of significance. The results in the Table 3 showed that Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) as a factor in the study had a significant effect on the rate of enhancing of self-efficacy of the subjects. This implied that exposing subjects with low self-efficacy to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) significantly enhanced their self-efficacy. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant mean score difference in the rate of enhancing of self-efficacy between those in the Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) group and control at post-test period was rejected. Thus, there was significant mean score difference in enhancing self-efficacy between those in Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) group and control group at post-test period.

Discussion

The findings of this study showed that *there low level of* self-efficacy among secondary School students in Owerri Metropolis, Imo State. This result is not impossible based on the assumptions of engagement theory on which this study was based, which posits that students who are not emotionally interested in schooling and academic task tend to have low self-efficacy. And their mean self-efficacy was 1.48 as against the benchmark of Students' Academic Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SASEQ) used in identifying secondary School students who had low self-efficacy which now as below 2.50 in Owerri Metropolis, Imo State. The finding of this study is in line with the findings of You science (2024) and Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health (2024) which enumerated certain factors that determine the degree to which students successfully engage in academic activities. Thus the psychological and environmental factors such as motivation; referring to intrinsic motivation to learn and negative self-worth, Learning style, prior academic experience which refers to positive or negative experiences in previous academic tasks could said to be responsible for the students' low academic self-efficacy evident by their mean self-efficacy score of 1.48 that is below the benchmark

Another findings of this study showed that exposing the students with low self-efficacy to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) significantly enhanced their self-efficacy. This is evident from the result that showed that secondary School students with low self-efficacy exposed to Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) had higher increase in their self-efficacy than those in the control group at post-test period. The findings of this study is in line with the findings of the study by CICMH (2024) which reported that the effectiveness of Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) in good self-efficacy; which can help students to reduced is satisfaction, avoid boredom, increased motivation to participate in school related activities and improve their achievement level. In other words, when students participate deeply in study activities, dedicate time and put in more efforts, it is possible to result in to learning success, achievement and improved self-efficacy.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, there was low rate of self-efficacy among secondary School students in Owerri Metropolis, Imo State before treatment with EIT. The study also revealed that Emotional Intelligence Training was effective in improving the self-efficacy

among secondary the school students exposed to EIT.

Recommendations

School counsellors should be enabled by the school authorities to attain more workshops on the proactive acquisition of the skills of Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) for enhancing students' low self-efficacy in schools.

Teachers and parents should be encouraged through PTA to bereferring students with signs of low self-efficacy to professional school counsellors who will engage the students in Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) to enhance their academic self-efficacy.

The effectiveness of Emotional Intelligence Training (EIT) in enhancing academic self-efficacy among students should be wildly disseminated by the researcher ensuring the publication of the findings of the study.

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