

Family Conflict and Attachment Patterns as Correlates of School Adjustment Among Public Senior Secondary School Students In Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study investigated family conflict and attachment patterns as correlates of school adjustment among public secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted correlational design. Five research questions and five corresponding hypotheses guided the conduct of the research. A total of 984 public senior secondary school students were drawn through multi-stage and simple random sampling techniques. Three instruments namely; Family Conflict Scale (FCS), Attachment Style Classification Questionnaire (ASCQ) and School Adjustment Scale (SAS) were used for data collection. Mean, standard deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics and multiple regression analysis were employed for data analysis. The results of the study showed that; there is a positive relationship between family conflict, attachment patterns and school adjustment which are all statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance; family attachment patterns- secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidance collectively predicted school adjustment of public secondary school students; the predictive relationship with an F-ratio of 204.63 was significant at 0.05 level of probability; the two family variables-conflict and attachment patterns collectively predicted school adjustment of public senior secondary school students; the collective prediction was also found to be significant at 0.05 level of probability. Based on the findings, conclusion was drawn and three appropriate recommendations were made among which is that families should embrace effective communication in order to create positive bonds among family members and this will in turn promote understanding and reduce family conflicts.

Key words: Family conflict, attachment patterns, school adjustment.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Any transition that occurs in the life of a child, adolescent or adult can prove to be a time of anxiety, vulnerability, or even stress for that person, whether this transition be a normative or a non-normative one. The transition from one school level to another is a normative one and yet quite significant process that every child and adolescent of school going age must go through. For many adolescents, going to school can be positive and exciting while, for few others, it can be both challenging and disconcerting. This is made worse when such an adolescent is from a family that is not very supportive due to regular conflict, poor values and anxious and ambivalent attachment. The fact is that adjustment to school environment becomes challenging and difficult for such adolescents, for there is a sudden change in the dimension of the school compared with the previous one from which the adolescent students came. There are new relationships to make. The academic and psychosocial norms are different from the previous ones. Separations from the family, peer group, and other familiar ways of behaviour are likely to introduce shock, fear, anxiety and uncertainty among new students. These are likely to have influence on their academic pursuit which is the main purpose of the adolescent students' transiting from one level of school to another. The direction of the influence cannot be guessed correctly but can be empirically determined.

However, the present researchers are of the view that family conflict and family attachment patterns may play a significant role in school adjustment of secondary school adolescents. Family interactions and relationship between family members play a pivotal role in the adjustment issues of adolescence (Werner, 2003). Families in general and parents in particular, have often been deemed to be the most important support system available to the child. The strongest factor in molding a child's personality or behaviour is his relationship with his parents. However, no matter how loving a family is, all families go through conflict.

According to Wikipedia (2017), conflict refers to some form of friction, disagreement, or discord arising within a group when the beliefs or actions of one or more members of the group are either resisted or unacceptable to one or more members of another group. Conflict can arise between members of the same group, known as intra-group conflict, or it can occur between members of two or more groups, and involve violence, interpersonal discord, and psychological tension, known as intergroup conflict. Nevertheless, family conflict which is a form of intra-group conflict is the focus of this study.

Bowlby in Hamed, Samavi and Askari (2014), defined attachment as a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another. He believed that primary experiences of childhood period will have an important impact of subsequent growth and behaviours. Ainsworth (1989) defined attachment as an affection bond; or a relatively long enduring tie with parent as important unique individual that cannot be replaced. In the same vein, Godwin (2003) defined attachment as a peaceful condition which is creating safety for exploring and a source for entrusting for the kid in stressful conditions.

From the above definitions, attachment is simply a bond between two or more persons that is enduring. Attachment styles which are also called attachment patterns differ from one individual to another and from one family to another. According to Ainsworth's studies, parent-child relations can be categorized in three groups of secure, avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent. The children in secure group are returning to their mothers immediately after anxious condition. They reach peace and re-establish their activities more rapidly. Children in anxious-ambivalent group have complex reactions to mother's presence. They do not reach quietness with their mother and restraint to re-establish their activities. Finally, the group with avoidant attachment ignores mother's presence and stare some activities in isolation to defend stress.

During adolescence, the hierarchy of attachment figures is gradually reshuffled as young people increasingly direct their attachment behaviours and concerns toward peers rather than parents (Hazan and Zeifman, 2014). Although parents are generally not completely displaced as attachment figures during this period, or perhaps ever, they slowly become what Weiss (2012) called "attachment figures in reserve." By the end of this period, sometime in early adulthood, most people settle on a single romantic partner who will serve for years, if not for the rest of one's life, as a primary attachment figure. While making this transition, many adolescents alter their perceptions and feelings about themselves and experiment with a range of exploratory behaviours (e.g., sex and substance use) that may be developmentally functional but nonetheless carry substantial risk of harm (Baumrind, 2007).

In view of the importance of the concepts of family conflict and family attachment patterns in school adjustment of secondary school adolescents, as well as the need for more empirical research on these variables especially in Rivers State, Nigeria, this study which was aimed at investigating family conflict and attachment patterns as correlates of school adjustment among public senior secondary school adolescents in Rivers State, Nigeria became very imperative.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sturge-Apple, Davies, Winter, Cummings and Schermerhorn (2011) examined how children's insecure internal representations of inter-parental and parent-child relationships served as explanatory mechanisms in multiple pathways linking inter-parental conflict and parent emotional unavailability with the emotional and classroom engagement difficulties the children had in their adjustment to school. With their parents, 229 kindergarten children (127 girls and 102 boys, mean age = 6.0 years, $SD = .50$, at Wave 1) participated in this multi-method, 3-year longitudinal investigation. Findings revealed that children's insecure representations of the inter-parental relationship were a significant intervening mechanism in associations between observational ratings of inter-parental conflict and child and teacher reports on children's emotional and classroom difficulties in school over a 2-year period. Moreover, increased parental emotional unavailability accompanying high levels of inter-parental conflict was associated with children's insecure representations of the parent-child relationship and children's difficulties in classroom engagement at school entry. The findings highlight the importance of understanding the intrinsic processes that contribute to difficulties with stage-salient tasks for children who are experiencing inter-parental discord.

Deepshikha and Bhanot (2011) carried out a study at Kumarganj, Faizabad District of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. The purpose of the study was to assess family environment of adolescent girls and its impact on their socio-emotional adjustment. One hundred adolescent girls of age group between 17-18 years comprised the sample of the study. Family Environment Scale (FES) and Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) were administered. Data was analyzed in terms of percentage and multiple regression analysis. The statistical analysis revealed that all the eight family environment factors, viz. cohesion, expressiveness conflict, acceptance and caring, independence, active-recreational orientation, organization and control together showed significant role in socio-emotional and educational adjustment of adolescent girls.

Schischka (2009) study sets out, first, to explore the factors associated with the transition to school for a heterogeneous sample of young children with special needs. Second, it aimed to examine the association

between children's relationships with parents and their relationships at school as part of their longer term school adjustment. It also set out to explore the patterns of children's interactions with their chief caregivers. A mixed method design was used, employing three survey-like measures and semi-structured interviews. Additionally, the case studies of seven of the children are described. The participants were 17 children with a variety of special needs, their parents, teachers, teacher aides, and peers. Several children were determined to be well-adjusted on the basis of their relationships, while others were deemed to be less so. In the transition phase, factors that contributed to successful adjustment included high levels of communication and collaboration between families and schools before and after the child's school entry. Teachers contributed to successful adjustment by using differentiation practices. Child characteristics played a role by influencing patterns of interactions and the nature of relationships between children and other participants. Further, the nature of relationships (whether they were positive or negative) between children and other participants influenced the nature of relationships between families and schools. Finally, the nature of interactions and relationships influenced both the transition and adjustment to school.

Jaycox and Repetti (1993) examined the cross-sectional association between conflict in families and child psychological adjustment in 72 4th-5th graders. Multiple informants (parents, children, and teachers) assessed conflict and anger in the social climate of the home, marital discord, negative emotional tone in the parent-child relationship, and child adjustment. As predicted, child adjustment was more strongly related to family conflict than to marital discord. There was a stronger association between family conflict and maladjustment in girls. Moreover, the association between a general climate of conflict at home and child maladjustment was independent of anger and discord in the marital or parent-child relationships.

Osarenren, Nwadinigwe and Anyama (2013), investigated the impact of marital conflicts on the psychosocial adjustment of adolescents in Lagos metropolis. The sample comprises 150 senior secondary two students randomly selected with the use of stratified random sampling technique from five secondary schools in five selected Local Government Areas of Lagos metropolis. It is envisaged that this study would benefit couples and those contemplating marriage as it will expose them to other experiences thereby giving them insight into marital problem solving mechanisms. Researchers constructed questionnaire was administered on the respondents to test the three hypotheses formulated for the study. Independent t -test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical techniques were used for data analysis. The findings showed that there is a significant impact of marital conflicts on the psychosocial adjustment of adolescents. Psychosocial adjustments did not significantly differ due to gender but on the other hand psychosocial adjustments significantly differ due to marital conflict. Marital conflicts significantly affect adolescents' perception of marriage as an institution.

Lampert (2009) used quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate college student perceptions of attachment styles to parents and peers and the influence these attachment styles have on adaptation to college and academic achievement. In addition, other non-cognitive factors of college student adjustment were investigated. Student participants completed the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment and the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire. Unrelated parent participants participated in a focus group to answer questions about their experience of their students' transition to college and their relationship with their college student. Quantitative results indicated no direct relationship between GPA and attachment, though attachment to the father/male guardian was found to account for 43% of the variability in student adjustment when GPA is held constant. Several themes emerged from the qualitative data including, maintained closeness, rough transition to college, replete communication, changed relationship as the student matures, and parental involvement at healthy levels. Overall findings indicated parental over-involvement, or being a "helicopter parent" was not found to correlate with college adjustment or high GPA while a moderate level of parental involvement, especially on the part of the father/male guardian is very helpful for college students.

Cooper, Shaver and Collins (1998) examined attachment styles, emotion regulation, and Adjustment in Adolescence. Attachment style differences in psychological symptomatology, self-concept, and risky or problem behaviours were investigated in a community sample (N = 1,989) of Black and White adolescents, 13 to 19 years old. Overall, secure adolescents were the best-adjusted group, though not necessarily the least likely to engage in risky behaviours. Anxious adolescents were the worst-adjusted group, reporting the poorest self-concepts and the highest levels of symptomatology and risk behaviours. In contrast, avoidant adolescents reported generally high levels of symptomatology and poor self-concepts but similar levels of risk behaviours to those found among secures. Mediation analyses suggested that the observed differences in problem behaviours were at least partially accounted for by the differential experience of distress symptoms (primarily hostility and depression) and by social competence. Finally, patterns of attachment effects were similar across age, gender, and racial groups, with some important exceptions.

Hamed, Samavi, and Askari (2014) investigated the relationship between family function and attachment styles with social adjustment of male and female high school students of Bandar Abbas City. Statistical population includes all high school students of Bandar Abbas in 2012-2013 academic year. 376

samples were selected through stratified and multistage sampling methods. Family Assessment Device (Fad), Simpson Attachment Styles (SAS) and Social Attachment questionnaires were employed as research tools. Data analysis indicates that family function and attachment styles micro scales are meaningfully predict students' adjustment. However, separate execution of regression equations among male and female students reveals different results. Relation, emotional education, role playing, general function, emotional companionship and behaviour control in female groups and family function including emotional education, role playing, general function, problem solving, emotional companionship, and behaviour control in male groups are among the micro scales that can predict students' adjustment. Every three different attachment styles (secure, ambivalent, and insecure) in both male and female groups are predicating meaningfulness of students' adjustment in male and female groups.

Vaghela (2015) investigated the difference of adjustment between adolescent's girls' students of secondary schools with respect to their type of family. For that purpose eighty adolescent girl students were taken from the randomly selected secondary schools, out of which forty from nuclear families and forty from joint families. All the participants were administered the adjustment inventory for measurement of their social, emotional and educational adjustment. The obtained data were analyzed and interpreted using statistical tool such as mean, standard deviation and t – test. The study concluded that adolescent girl students from nuclear and joint families differ significantly on their scores of social adjustment as well as emotional adjustment. The nuclear and joint families' adolescent girl students do not differ significantly on their score of educational adjustment.

In the same vein, Devi (2015) examined school adjustment and academic achievement among tribal adolescent students in two districts of Manipur. The study also attempts to examine the high and low academic achievers of tribal students of the two areas. The sample comprised of 629 XI standard tribal adolescent students. Out of which 136 were from Imphal West and 493 were from Ukhrul district. A standardized school adjustment inventory for adolescent students developed by the investigator was used. For academic achievement the last public examination i.e. H.S.L.C. marks were used as the index of academic achievement. The findings revealed that a low positive correlation between school adjustment and academic achievement in both the districts. It was also reveals that high academic achievers had better adaptability in school than that of low academic achievers.

Vishal and Kaji (2014) investigated the adjustment of boys and girls school students in Ahmedabad. The sample consisted of 120boys and girls school students out of which 60 where boys and 60 where girls students. For this purpose of investigation "Adjustment Inventory" by Dr. R. S. Patel was used. The obtained data were analyzed through t-test to know the mean difference between boys and girls school students. The result shows that there is significant difference in total, home, social and emotional adjustment of boys and girls students at 0.01 and 0.05 levels. There is no significant difference in school adjustment of boys and girls students in Ahmedabad.

In the same year, Yunus, Baba and Wai (2014) investigated the effect of family environment on student's academic performance and adjustment problems among year one students of school of Health Technology Keffi, Nasarawa State. The study included 168 students made up of 77 males and 91 females from four departments in the school, ranging between the age of 16–20 years. The results revealed that family environment has no effect on academic performance of the student; also there is no gender difference in school adjustment and academic performance of the participants. However, in construct, family environment has effect on school adjustment. This finding suggests the need for parents to pay attention on their relationship with children while in school as it may has effect on them negatively.

Paramanik, Saha, and Monda (2014) studied adjustment ability among secondary school students in relation to gender and residence. The sample consists of 471 class X students with 234 boys and 237 girls which were drawn randomly from different schools of Purulia districts, WB. The investigators have constructed and validated an Adjustment Inventory (AI) for school students to collect the necessary data. The study revealed that there is no significant difference between adjustments of students residing either at urban or rural area. But on the other hand the mean adjustment score of girls is higher than those from boys which indicate that the girls are better adjusted as compared to their boys' counterpart.

In a study of social maturity, school adjustment and academic achievement among residential school girls Shah and Sharma (2012) examined the relationship between social maturity, school adjustment and levels of academic achievement among residential school girl students. The study was conducted on a sample of 347 girls from class IX –XII at an all-girl's residential school of North India. Nalini Rao's Social Maturity Scale (RSMS) was used to measure social maturity, Sinha and Singh's Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) was used to measure school adjustment and aggregate score of the students in the year end final examination was taken to assess level of their academic achievement. The results indicated a significant

relationship between social maturity and school adjustment. Also, significant difference existed between the school adjustments of the three groups i.e. low, high and average levels of academic achievement.

The study of Louis and Emerson (2012) seeks to identify adjustment difficulties of high school students within a city. Ten schools, comprising of children from urban, rural, coeducational and convent schools were chosen and a student database comprising of 500 adolescent children was prepared. From this source list, 101 boys and 103 girls within age groups 14-18 years were chosen randomly. Students with behavioural problems, poor academic performances and health issues were excluded to ensure homogeneity. After obtaining informed consent, a self-report inventory -The Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) was administered to small student groups over a period of one month to understand perceived adjustment. Scoring was done manually and descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations and the independent sample's t-test, were used to analyze data. Findings revealed that there were problems noted across emotional, social and educational domains in both boys and girls. However, there were no significant gender differences. Brief scheduled interviews with children after test administration revealed contributing stress factors that have led to maladjustment.

Adhiambo, Odwar and Mildred (2011) looked at the relationship among school adjustment, gender and academic achievement among secondary school students in Kisumu District, Kenya. The theory used in the study was the stage-environment fit theory propounded by Eccles and Midgley. A cross sectional research design was employed. The target population was 4,500 students. The sample consisted of 450 secondary school students with mean age 18.38, SD 1.078. The form four classes in the selected schools were used. Questionnaires as well as official KCSE examination results were used to collect data in the study. Cronbach alpha as well as a pilot study was used to depict the reliability of the instrument. Face validity was also ascertained by three experts from the department. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics like the mean, frequency counts and percentages. The inferential statistics that were used in the study were t-tests. The results showed that there were no significant differences between girls and boys in school adjustment, there were significant differences between high achievers and low achievers in dedication, absorption, engagement and school adjustment.

Salami (2011) examined the contribution of psychological and social factors to the prediction of adjustment to college. A total of 250 first year students from Colleges of Education in Kwara State, Nigeria, completed measures of self-esteem, emotional intelligence, stress, social support and adjustment. Regression analyses revealed that all the independent variables predicted adjustments. Social support interacted with stress to predict adjustment. Implications for the counsellors, parents and college authorities in enhancing students' adjustment to college were discussed. Further, the findings implicated the need for college authorities to integrate activities designed to improve students' adjustment into college co-curricular activities meant for youth development.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was correlational. Kpolovie (2010) explained that correlational design is adopted for establishment of the relationship that exists between two variables. It is aimed at a better understanding of each of the two variables by measuring them separately and examining how each of the variables changes in accordance with or in association with changes in the other. He also views correlational studies as an attempt to measure relationship and association as well as co-variation of two or more variables.

The population for the study consisted of all the public senior secondary school (SSS I, II and III) adolescent students in Rivers State, Nigeria. As at the time of the study, there are 90,577 (SSI = 30, 731; SS II = 30,685; SS III = 29,161) students in the 258 senior secondary schools. (Source: Department of Planning and Research of the Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board, Port Harcourt, 2017). A sample of 984 public senior secondary school students was selected for the study through multi-stage and simple random sampling techniques. Taro Yemem formula $[n = N/(1 + N\alpha^2)]$ to justify the use of the sample size for the study.

Three instruments were used for data collection namely: Family Conflict Scale (FCS), Attachment Style Classification Questionnaire (ASCQ), and the School Adjustment Scale (SAS). Copies of the three instruments (FCS, ASCQ and SAS) were administered directly to the respondents by the researchers with the help of research assistants domiciled in the school. The Family Conflict Scale (FCS) composed of the following independent variables, namely, family conflict and family values. The FCS consisted of two parts I and II. Part I elicited personal information such as class level. Part II of FVS, gathered information on family conflict and consisted of 15 items. The response format was a modified four point Likert type format of Strongly Agree (SA) with 4-points, Agree (A) with 3-points, Disagree (D) with 2-points and Strongly Disagree (SD) with 1-point. The maximum and minimum points obtainable from each section of part II of FCS were 60 and 15 points respectively. The FVS consists of 16 items.

The second instrument for the study titled: Attachment Style Classification Questionnaire (ASCQ) was adapted with modification in terms of English language presentation from Finzi-Dottan (2012) Attachment Style

Classification Questionnaire for Latency Age Children. The instrument has similar response pattern like the FVS but consisted of 15 items with five items for each of the dimensions of attachment patterns or style. The maximum and minimum points obtainable from ASCQ are 60points and 15points respectively. The School Adjustment Scale (SAS) was developed and designed also by the researchers to elicit the views of students on school adjustment as it concerns their school environment covering security, social interaction, esteem anxiety and competence. Furthermore, the SAS consisted of 15 items which were responded to on four point Likert type format of Strongly Agree (SA) with 4-points, Agree (A) with 3-points, Disagree (D) with 2-points and Strongly Disagree (SD) with 1-point. The maximum and minimum points obtainable from the SAS were 60 and 15 points respectively

In order to validate the research instruments, the researchers consulted three other experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation for face and content validity of the research Instruments (FVS, ASCQ and SAS).The reliability of the instruments was determined through Cronbach Alpha method for a measure of their internal consistency. The reliability coefficients (r) of 0.74 was obtained for family conflict. Attachment Style Classification Questionnaire (ASCQ) though an adopted instrument, was also subjected to the same process the FVS was subjected to and the reliability coefficients obtained included 0.65 for secure; 0.58 for anxious/ambivalent; 0.63 for avoidant and 0.73 for the entire instrument while 0.73 was obtained for School Adjustment Scale (SAS). These coefficient values were high enough to justify the use of the instruments for this study.

Descriptive, inferential statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the relevant data collected for the study and the results presented in tables. However, all analyses were carried out through the deployment of a statistical package known as SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between family conflict and school adjustment among public senior secondary school students?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between family conflict and school adjustment among public senior secondary school students.

Table 1: Relationship between Family Conflict and School Adjustment

Variables	N	r	r²	Sig
Family Conflict	984	.394*	.155	.000
School Adjustment				

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance for a two-tailed test

The result in Table 1 shows a correlation coefficient (r-value) of .394 and an r² value of .155. The result was that there was a positive but low relationship between family conflict and school adjustment. Furthermore, since the significant value of r was .000 which is less than the chosen (0.05) level of significance for a two-tailed test, the null hypothesis was not accepted. The result therefore was that there is a significant relationship between family conflict and school adjustment among public senior secondary school adolescents. In addition, the r² indicated that family conflict accounted for 15.5% (r² x 100) of the variance in school adjustment.

Research Question 2: To what extent does secure family attachment pattern relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students?

Hypothesis 2: Secure family attachment pattern does not significantly relate to school adjustment of secondary school adolescents.

Table 2: Relationship between Secure Family Attachment Pattern and School Adjustment

Variables	N	r	r²	Sig
Secure Attachment	984	.461*	.213	.000
School Adjustment				

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance for a two-tailed test

Table 2 shows a correlation coefficient (r-value) of .461. The result was that there is a positive and moderate relationship between secure family attachment pattern and school adjustment. Furthermore, since the significant value of r is $p = .000$ which is less than the chosen (0.05) level of significance for a two-tailed test, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result therefore was that secure family attachment pattern does significantly relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. In addition, r-square value revealed a 21.3% explanation of the variance in school adjustment by secure family attachment.

Research Question 3: To what extent does anxious/ambivalent family attachment pattern relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students?

Hypothesis 3: Anxious/ambivalent family attachment pattern does not significantly relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students.

Table 3: Relationship between Anxious/Ambivalent Family Attachment Pattern and School Adjustment

Variables	N	r	r ²	Sig
Anxious Attachment	984	.461*	.213	.000
School Adjustment				

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance for a two-tailed test

Table 3 shows a correlation coefficient (r-value) of .461. The result was that there was a positive and moderate relationship between anxious/ambivalent family attachment pattern and school adjustment. Furthermore, since the significant value of r is $p = .000$ which is less than the chosen (0.05) level of significance for a two-tailed test, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result therefore was that anxious/ambivalent family attachment pattern does significantly relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. Also, the r² value of .213 was an indication that anxious/ambivalent family attachment pattern, accounted for 21.3% of the variance in school adjustment.

Research Question 4: To what extent does avoidant family attachment pattern relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students?

Hypothesis 4: Avoidant family attachment pattern does not significantly relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students.

Table 4: Relationship between Avoidant Family Attachment Pattern and School Adjustment

Variables	N	r	r ²	Sig
Avoidant Attachment	984	.518*	.268	.000
School Adjustment				

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance for a two-tailed test

Table 4 shows a correlation coefficient (r-value) of .518. The result was that there was a positive and moderate relationship between avoidant family attachment pattern and school adjustment. Furthermore, since the significant value of r is $p = .000$ which is less than the chosen (0.05) level of significance for a two-tailed test, the null hypothesis was rejected. The result therefore was that avoidant family attachment pattern does significantly relate to school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. In addition, the r-square revealed a 26.8% variance in school adjustment accounted for by avoidant family attachment pattern.

Research Question 5: To what extent do the different family attachment patterns (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) collectively predict school adjustment among public senior secondary school students?

Hypothesis 5: Family attachment patterns (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) when considered collectively do not significantly predict school adjustment among public senior secondary school adolescents.

Table 5: Multiple regression analysis of joint prediction of family attachment patterns on school adjustment

Model	Multiple R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std Error of	Estimate
1	.518 ^a		.268	.268	5.794
2	.585 ^b		.343	.341	5.495
3	.621 ^c		.385	.383	5.317

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	12093.543	1	12093.543	360.255*	.000 ^a
Residual	32965.115	982	33.569		
Total	45058.658	983			
Regression	15432.913	2	7716.457	255.516*	.000 ^b
Residual	29625.744	981	30.200		
Total	45058.658	983			
Regression	17354.874	3	5784.958	204.638*	.000 ^c
Residual	27703.784	980	28.269		
Total	45058.658	983			

*Significant at p < 0.05 level of Significance

The result in Table 5 shows the stepwise multiple regression analysis of the joint relationship between family attachment patterns (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) and school adjustment among public secondary school students. The multiple regression coefficient obtained was .621 and the R² was .385. This means that the three family attachment patterns (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) jointly had a moderate relationship with public senior secondary school students' school adjustment. Based on the R² value of 0.385, it indicated that the joint relationship of the three family attachment patterns accounted for 38.5% of public senior secondary school students' adjustment. In addition, avoidance attachment pattern is the best predictor of school adjustment as evidence in Model 1. That is, avoidance attachment pattern is the predictor with the highest correlation with the criterion (school adjustment) and so it is entered first in the regression equation. This is followed by anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern (Model 2), while secure attachment pattern is the least predictor (Model 3). The Models 1, 2, 3 indicate the order in which the variables are entered in the regression equation.

To determine if the prediction or relationship is significant or not, analysis of variance (ANOVA) associated with the stepwise multiple regression was employed and the result is also as in Table 6. The calculated F-value of 204.638 was significant at 0.000 levels which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05 (p < 0.05) (Model 3 and c). Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected indicating that the three family attachment patterns (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) jointly had a significant relationship or prediction with public senior secondary school students' school adjustment.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The discussion of the research findings are presented in this section based on the objectives of the study which emphasizes on the relationship between each major independent variable (family conflict and attachment patterns) and the dependent variable (school adjustment of secondary school adolescents) of the study.

Relationship between family conflict and school adjustment

The finding of this study showed that there is a positive but low relationship between family conflict and school adjustment. The relationship is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The positive relationship

between family conflict and school adjustment among public senior secondary school students means that as score on family conflict increases, there is corresponding increase in school adjustment scores, and vice versa. This means that adolescents, whose scores are high on family conflict, also earn high scores on school adjustment, while those whose scores are low on family conflict; earn low scores on school adjustment. Implicitly, high family conflict has high school adjustment while low family conflict has low school adjustment. The finding of the present study is in agreement with those of Osarenren, Nwadinigwe and Anyama (2013); Sturge-Apple, Davies, Winter, Cummings and Schermerhon (2011); Deepshikha and Bhanot (2011); Schischka (2009) and Jaycox and Repetti (1993) who in their separate but related works also found out that there is a positive relationship between family conflict and school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. However, findings in disagreement with the present one were not found among the literature reviewed by the researchers.

Relationship between secure attachment pattern and school adjustment

The result concerning the relationship between secure attachment pattern and school adjustment shows that there is a positive and moderate relationship between secure family attachment pattern and school adjustment. The relationship is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The positive and moderate relationship between secure attachment pattern and school adjustment of secondary school adolescents means that as score on secure attachment pattern increases, there is corresponding increase in school adjustment scores, and vice versa. This means that adolescents, whose scores are high on secure attachment pattern, also earn high scores on school adjustment, while those whose scores are low on secure attachment pattern; earn low scores on school adjustment. Implicitly, high secure attachment pattern has high school adjustment while low secure attachment pattern have low school adjustment. The finding of the present study is in agreement with those of Hamed, Samavi and Askari (2014); Cooper, Shaver and Collins (1998); who in their separate but related works also found out that there is a positive relationship between secure attachment pattern and school adjustment among adolescents. However, the finding of Lampert (2009) is in discordant with the present one because, Lampert found no direct relationship between attachment styles and school adjustment.

Relationship between anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern and school adjustment

The result here is that there is also a positive and moderate relationship between anxious/ambivalent family attachment pattern and school adjustment. This relationship was also found to be significant at 0.05 level of probability. The positive and moderate relationship between anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern and school adjustment of secondary school adolescents means that as score on anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern increases, there is corresponding increase in school adjustment scores, and vice versa. This means that adolescents, whose scores are high on anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern, also earn high scores on school adjustment, while those whose scores are low on anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern also earn low scores on school adjustment. Implicitly, high anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern has high school adjustment while low anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern have low school adjustment. The finding of the present study is in agreement with those of Hamed, Samavi and Askari (2014); Cooper, Shaver and Collins (1998); who in their separate but related works also found out that there is a positive relationship between anxious/ambivalent attachment pattern and school adjustment among adolescents. However, the finding of Lampert (2009) is in discordant with the present one because, Lampert found no direct relationship between attachment styles and school adjustment.

Relationship between avoidant attachment pattern and school adjustment

On the issue of the relationship between avoidant attachment pattern and school adjustment, it was also found out that there is a positive and moderate relationship between avoidant family attachment pattern and school adjustment which was also significant at 0.05 level of significance. The positive and moderate relationship between avoidant attachment pattern and school adjustment among public senior secondary school students means that as score on avoidant attachment pattern increases, there is corresponding increase in school adjustment scores, and vice versa. This means that adolescents, whose scores are high on avoidant attachment pattern, also earn high scores on school adjustment, while those whose scores are low on avoidant attachment pattern also earn low scores on school adjustment. Implicitly, high avoidant attachment pattern has high school

adjustment while low avoidant attachment pattern have low school adjustment. The finding of the present study is in agreement with those of Hamed, Samavi and Askari (2014); Cooper, Shaver and Collins (1998); who in their separate but related works also found out that there is a positive relationship between avoidant attachment pattern and school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. However, the finding of Lampert (2009) is in discordant with the present one because, Lampert found no direct relationship between attachment styles and school adjustment.

Relationship between attachment patterns/styles and school adjustment

The result concerning the relationship between attachment patterns/styles and school adjustment indicated that, family attachment patterns-secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidance collectively predict school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. The predictive relationship with an F-ratio of 204.63 was significant at 0.05 level of significance. In addition, the three family attachment patterns, jointly explains 38.5% of the variance in school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. The multiple regression was found to be positive and moderate between the combined attachment patterns and school adjustment. This means that as score on attachment patterns increases, there is corresponding increase in school adjustment scores, and vice versa. This means that adolescents, whose scores are high on attachment patterns, also earn high scores on school adjustment, while those whose scores are low on attachment patterns also earn low scores on school adjustment. Implicitly, high attachment patterns have high school adjustment while low attachment patterns have low school adjustment. The finding of the present study is in agreement with those of Hamed, Samavi and Askari (2014); Cooper, Shaver and Collins (1998); who in their separate but related works also found out that there is a positive relationship between attachment patterns and school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. However, the finding of Lampert (2009) is in disagreement with the present one because, Lampert found no direct relationship between attachment styles and school adjustment.

V. CONCLUSION

From the study findings it could be concluded that, family conflict and attachment patterns of public senior secondary school students positively relate to their school adjustment. In addition, the relationship is low for family conflict and school adjustment, very low for family values and school adjustment and moderate for each of the attachment patterns (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) and school adjustment with that of avoidant attachment pattern and school adjustment been the highest. Also, the relationship between the three family variables investigated vis-à-vis school adjustment of public senior secondary school students were significant.

From the study, the three attachment patterns (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant) were significant collective predictors of school adjustment and could jointly explain 38.5% of the variance in school adjustment among public senior secondary school students. Similarly, the study finding also showed that the two variables, family conflicts and family attachment patterns were significant direct predictors of school adjustment, collectively being responsible for 41.6% of this adjustment.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) Families should embrace effective communication because communication is very important in creating positive bonds among family members and this will in turn promote understanding and reduce family conflicts.
- 2) Programmes and training in relation to the principles that will make families to live peacefully and harmoniously should be organized for counsellors and para-counsellors (teachers in secondary schools) who may be privileged to help adolescents with school adjustment challenges rooted in family conflict and attachment patterns.
- 3) Families should be encouraged by stakeholders such as teachers, counsellors, school authorities, etc. to support their children and wards with school adjustment challenges in view of the fact that these family variables (conflict and attachment patterns) relate with adolescents school adjustment.

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