

**PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE ORIENTATIONS AND SOCIAL  
ADJUSTMENT OF STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES IN AKWA IBOM STATE,  
NIGERIA**

**BY**

**SAVIOUR C. EFFIONG, PH.D CANDIDATE  
&  
CORNELIUS C. OKORO, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, GUIDANCE AND  
COUNSELLING,  
UNIVERSITY OF UYO, NIGERIA.**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated the relationship between aspects of value orientation and social adjustment of students in universities in Akwa Ibom State. The ex-post facto survey research design was adopted for the study. Four Hypotheses were postulated and tested at .05 levels of significance. Researcher-made instrument, called Value Orientation Questionnaire (VOQ) with reliability index of .71 and a standardized Social Adjustment Scale (SAS) with reliability coefficient of .88 were used to elicit data from 653 subjects, randomly selected from the study population of 6,532 students of 200-level class in universities in Akwa Ibom State. Null Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient statistics. The results indicated significant relationships for hypotheses 1, while Hypothesis 2 revealed no significant relationship. The recommendations were among others, that parent, should inculcate proper values in their children through teaching them the right values, in order to ensure consolidation of desirable attitudes towards perfect social adjustment and academic success in school.*

**Key Words: Value orientation, Psychological value, economic value and social adjustment.**

**Introduction**

Education is globally recognized as a vehicle for social development and adjustment in the society. University education prepares individuals to adapt or adjust to the societal norms and values, that are needed to produce an egalitarian society. The university society in the eyes of the learner matters a great deal especially with regards to their functionality in such environment. School social environment is a setting of interpersonal interactions and relationships among members of the school system. School social adjustment refers to a state of life equilibrium students achieve between their personal, psychological, emotional, social needs and the demands of the school environmental features. School social adjustment is a concept that connotes students' ability to confidently interact with others, and other ability to adopt oneself to social activities and cope with the rules and regulations governing the school system (Isangedighi,

2007). The demonstration of the smooth interactions of these students with members of the school environment is recognized as a socially adjusted behaviour.

Mounting evidences indicate that most university students have not been properly adjusted in the school social environment. As such, most of them participate poorly in school activities such as coming to class late, failing to attend lectures, missing assignment deadlines, and finding it difficult to meet up with test and examinations submission dates. These behavioural occurrences by students seem to perturb their positive attitudes to learning, and resulted to uncontrollable carried-over of courses. Isangedighi (2007) expressed that a well adjusted student finds school life an interesting and satisfying experience. This entails that students who are well adjusted, would have the capacity to relate harmoniously with others in a way that would provide them pleasure, satisfaction and a sense of purpose in life. Though, students are recently observed to experience behaviour disequilibrium among them which tend to affect their social adjustment in school. Again, students in academic institutions of higher learning recently do not care about mutual understanding among peers. Most of them directly or indirectly insult and abuse their lecturers anyhow and get away with it. Perhaps most of them are fraternized with different cults groups, thereby gaining the audacity, sometimes to challenge and threaten their lecturers with ignominy during disagreement.

These detestable behaviours seem to alienate the school social environment. This is against the expectations of students to have learned the right type of values from school environment. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) enunciated these values ranging from honesty, hard work, diligence, humility, industry, respect for elders as well as constituted authorities, self-control, love towards fellow-men, regards for one another, dignity for humanity among many others. It is postulated that the repugnant behaviours of students recently may be traceable to the issue of value orientations. Value orientation refers to the life curriculum of etiquettes individuals uphold that is expected to match with the acceptable culture of the society. It could be articulated through several means to include psychological value, economic value, ethical value, moral value, academic value and social value orientations. Bassey (2009) identified value orientation as enduring orientations like honesty, self-respect and so on expressed through psychological values, ethical values, moral values, social values, and economic values.

Value orientation could be learned or conditioned as a set of rules that govern individual behaviours tendencies. Hence, Watson's and Pavlov's Classical Conditioning coupled with Bandura social learning frameworks can best explain the concept of value orientation as habit could be formed through classical conditioning and imitative learning. This implies that value could be inculcated in students or learned through conditioning and imitation as well as precarious means. Upadhyaya and Singh (2008) emphasized that fear, love and hatred towards the subjects are created through conditioning. Bandura (2001) explained that children's acquisitions of much complex behaviours are due to their exposure to competent models that display appropriate behaviour in solving problems and coping with their world.

Value orientation served as a general indicator of the orientation of interests, needs, personal and life requirements as well as lifted the level of spiritual development (Jovkovska & Barakoska, 2014). Value orientation has been found to have an enduring influence on current social circumstances of individual value determination (Joksimovic & Janjekovic, 2008 cited by J Jovkovska & Barakoska, 2014). Jovkovska and Barakoska (2014) established that values are

oriented and adopted through social learning, under the influence of different agent of socialization and intentionally, as well as spontaneously contributing to individual life coping mechanisms. Thus, the home of individual has significant effect on value formation, although peers and mass-communication media contribute immensely (Effiong, 2012). Values do the function of all kinds of selective social behaviour (Kokovic & Lazar, 2004 as cited by Jovkovska & Barakoska, 2014). Value orientation; however, was found to represent individual hierarchical system of principles to determine the orientation of a person or the selectiveness of the individual's conduct (Ukpokuk, 2007).

A number of studies reported that there is a strong positive association between psychological value and academic achievement in students (Jacobson, 2012; Arnold, 1997; Margetts, 2002; Chen, 2010); and negative relationship between psychological adjustment and academic successes of students who passed O'level (Malik & Khalid, 2012; Nazli & Irfan, 2009). However, psychological adjustment may be possible due to proper home psychological value orientation (Malik & Khalid, 2012). This particular (psychological) value orientation creates opportunities for individual to be able to adjust in learning environment that could guarantee for academic achievement. This is most likely because psychological adjustment may mediate with the psychological value orientation to exert positive or negative influence on educational achievement.

Many researchers converged to show evidence that economic hardship, and poverty indirectly affects children's well-being, coupled with social adjustment pattern in school through parenting impacts on them (Conger, Conger, Huang & Glassman, 2000 cited by Mistry, Vandewater, Huston & Mcloyd, 2002; Mahmood & Iqbal, 2015). Students from low-income families are also more likely than those from more affluent families to suffer from such socio-emotional problems as anxiety, and depression, and such behavioural problems as peer conflict and conduct disorders (Bank, Forgratch, Patterson & Fetrow, 1993; Bolger, Patterson, Thompson & Kupersmidt, 1995; Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 1994; Mcloyd, Joyaratne, Ceballo & Borguez, 1994 as cited by Mistry, *et. al.*, 2002). These disorders may perhaps tend to reduce the effect in a stress-free financial environment and wealthy homes. The research by Harris (2007) found that the intra-personal and interpersonal attributes, attitudes and behaviours necessary to develop emotional and social leaderships within the school community are inevitably needed in the life of every student. That being the case, economic value plays significant role in adjustment pattern of students for their proper academic success. Yet, the end product of education shall be to produce a well balanced personality in people with economic strength for the betterment of the society (Jaikumar & Muthumanickam, 2010).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Students in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria and Akwa Ibom State in particular have been recognized to experience maladjustment in school social environment. These social adjustment problems are involved in the areas of academic works, interpersonal relationships with teachers and peers, as well as school norms and values. These demanding interactions create interpersonal laxities in them that tend to inhibit their ability to effectively adjust socially in school environment towards academic prosperity. Hence, this study inquires in form of question: What is the relationship between value orientation and social adjustment of students in the

universities in Akwa Ibom State? It is against this backdrop therefore that the researcher has the curiosity to investigate whether value orientations have any relationship with the social adjustment of students in the study area.

### **Purpose of the study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between value orientation and social adjustment of students. This study specifically sought to:

- 1) Investigate the relationship between psychological value orientation and social adjustment of students.
- 2) Investigate the relationship between economic value orientation and social adjustment of students.

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were postulated in order for this study to be focused and tested at .05 levels of significance:

- 1) There is no significant relationship between psychological value orientation and social adjustment of students.
- 2) There is no significant relationship between economic value orientation and social adjustment of students.

### **Research method**

#### **Research Design**

The ex-post facto survey research design was used for this study. Social adjustment of students has been occurring in the universities in Akwa Ibom State before the researchers got there to observe its effects. The researchers examined the characteristics of the population of the subjects under study regarding the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable without having direct control over the experimental conditions (independent variables). Udoh and Emeh (2005) claimed that the ex-post facto research design was suitable when the causes of the concept were studied after they had affected another variable, and the researchers had no direct control over the experimental conditions.

#### **Area of the Study**

Akwa Ibom State is the research area of this study, created 23rd September 1987. The State has 500,000 inhabitants, located in the coastal-southern part of Nigeria; occupies the landmass of 7,245.925 square kilometers of Nigeria's wealth basin; lying between Latitudes 4°30'N and 5°33'N North of Equator and Longitudes 7°30'E and 8°25'E of East of the Greenwich Meridian with the population of 4,805,451 people (2006 Census Figure). There are two universities in Akwa Ibom State – one State University and one Federal University. The state university is called Akwa Ibom State University while the federal university is known as University of Uyo. The Akwa Ibom State University is located at Ikot Akpaden in Mkpato Local Government Area while University of Uyo is at Uyo Metropolis – the State Capital of Akwa Ibom State. Akwa Ibom State University was established in 2002 as a University of Science and Technology before it was converted to a conventional university in 2009. The State

University (AKSU) runs two distinct campuses (main campus at Ikot Akpaden and the satellite campus at Oruk Anam), with 7 faculties and 12 departments. The University of Uyo (UNIUYO) as a Federal University was established in 1991 formerly called the University of Cross River State (UNICROSS). Presently, the University of Uyo runs in two different locations of Uyo, the main campus at Nsukara Offot and the town campus at Ikpa Road, all in Uyo Local Government Area. The university has 12 faculties with 81 departments.

### **Population of the Study**

The population for this study was all the 6,532 level 200 students elicited from AKSU and UNIUYO. AKSU had 1,852 students (Admission Unit, Akwa Ibom State University, Ikot Akpaden, Mkpatt Enin – 2014/2015 Session); and UNIUYO had 4,680 students (Admission Unit, University of Uyo, Uyo – 2014/2015 Session), respectively.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The total sample for this study consisted of 653 students (276 males and 377 females) representing 10 percent of the study population. The Multistage sampling (stratified and simple random sampling) techniques was adopted to select a representative sample.

### **Research Instrument**

The researchers specifically used two sets of instruments for data collection in this study. The first set of instruments named “Value Orientations Questionnaire (VOQ) was a researcher-made instrument. The second instrument called Social Adjustment Scale was developed by Sydmons (1972) as cited by Abdullahi (1992), was adapted for this study. Value orientation questionnaire constructs such as ethical value, psychological value and economic value with five items each. Ethical value had five items (I believe in keeping rules, I hate misconduct); psychological value had five items (I value my self-respect at all times) and economic value also had five items (I hate giving free service to people). Social Adjustment instruments was adapted to suit the objective of this study using five items as in “I relate well with other students”, “School norms make me to caution myself”. Both instruments were measured on a 4-points Likerts scale type with the weight of 4 – 1, from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

### **Validity and reliability of Instruments**

The contents and face validities of the researchers’ constructed instrument for this study was ascertained by 3 experts in Educational Psychology, and measurement and evaluation. Two experts in educational psychology and one in measurement and evaluation properly scrutinized and rigorously edited the instrument with 98 percent agreement of measurement. Sydmons (1972) as cited by Abdullahi (1992) validated Social Adjustment Scale and reported an internal consistency using Split-half of Spearman Brown coefficient with .91

Despite the fact that many people have used part of the instrument in the past, the researchers’ pilot tested both instruments. To determine the reliability of these instruments, internal consistency approach was adopted through administration of pilot test on 30 subjects in the Faculty of Education of Obong University, Etim Ekpo Local Government Area. The scores collected were subjected to Cronbach coefficient alpha for the determination of the reliability

indices that were ranged from .71 to .88. These observed high indices of reliabilities coefficient empowered the researcher to believe that the instruments are reliable and can effectively measure the variables in the study area.

**Methods of Data Analysis**

This study used Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) for data analysis of Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. The analysis of hypothesis 4 used Multiple Regression statistics. The data analysis was done hypothesis by hypothesis. However, all the hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

**Testing of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant relationship between psychological value orientation and social adjustment of students.

**Table 1:**

**Results of the Pearson Product Moment correlation between psychological value orientation and students’ social adjustment in universities in Akwa ibom State**

N = 653

S/No	Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rxy	p-val
1	Psychological value orientation	18.844	2.987		
				.077	.050
2.	Students’ social adjustment	14.885	3.433		

Correlation is not significant at the 0.05 level, df = 651 (2-tailed).

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant relationship between economic value orientation and social adjustment of students in universities in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 2: Results of the Pearson Product Moment correlation between economic value orientation and students’ social adjustment in universities in Akwa Ibom State. N = 653

S/No	Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rxy	p-val
1	Economic value orientation	12.361	3.152		
				.468	.000
2.	Students’ social adjustment	14.885	3.433		

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, df = 651 (2-tailed).

**Result and Interpretation**

The result in Table 1 showed no significant relationship between psychological value orientation and social adjustment of students. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient value ( $r_{xy}$ ) = 0.077, df = 651;  $p < .01$  level of significance. This result indicated that, the calculated f – value is less than the critical p-value at 651 degrees of freedom with 2-tailed test. This result indicates that hypothesis 1 is upheld. This implies that there is no significant

relationship between psychological value orientation and students' social adjustment in the study area.

The result in Table 2 showed significant relationship between economic value orientation and social adjustment of students. The calculated correlated value ( $r_{xy}$ ) = .468,  $df = 651$ ;  $p < .01$  level of significance. This result indicated that, the calculated  $f$  – value is greater than the critical  $p$ -value, 651 degrees of freedom with 2-tailed test was observed. Hence, the hypothesis 2 is rejected. This meaning that there is a significant relationship between economic value orientation and social adjustment of students in the study area.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Hypothesis 1 showed no significant relationship between psychological value orientation and social adjustment of students in the study area. The statistics used for the analysis was Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is upheld. The result of this study is in contention with Malik and Khalid (2012) that reported psychological adjustment due to proper home psychological value orientation. This is because, individuals may be psychologically imbued with good values and cannot be adequately adjusted in school social environment resulting from being influenced by peer relations in the school. Teachers-students and students-teachers relationships may possibly negatively affects students adjustment to school environmental features of the school. This particular (psychological) value orientation can creates opportunities for individual to be able to adjust in learning environment and that could as well, guarantee for academic achievement. This results contradicted Effiong (2012) assertion that psychological adjustment may mediate with the psychological value orientation to produced social balance among students at educational learning situation.

Hypothesis 2 showed significant relationship between economic value orientation and social adjustment of students in the area. Hence, Hypothesis 2 is rejected. This implies that economical value orientation has significant relationship with social adjustment of students in universities in Akwa Ibom State. It is postulated that economic value orientation could mediate students' interest regarding money making, by being involved in paid services and rewarding business relationships with business conscious men as well as being attracted to top businessmen in the society. That is to say, students who believe in economic value orientation anticipate making good money when they finish school. They also believe through their certificate from schooling, they would make good money through ventures and good jobs. The result of this study is in agreement with the consensus of evidence that economic hardship, and poverty indirectly affects students' well-being and social adjustment pattern in school (Conger, Conger, Huang & Glassman, 2000 cited by Mistry, Vandewater, Huston & Mcloyd, 2002; Mahmood & Iqbal, 2015). It is postulated that economic value orientation could associate students' interest with money making, by being involved in paid services, business relationships with business conscious men as well as being attracted to top businessmen in the society.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The result of this study has revealed that ethical and economical value orientations have significant positive relationships with social adjustment of students in universities in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Psychological value orientation has been observed to have no significant

relationship with the social adjustment of students. This complex of results may be due to lack of recognition of the effect of psychological value orientation on social wellbeing of the students in the learning situation. Besides, many researchers in the review of related literature in this study observed that the value orientation generally is associated good social behaviours of students in the study area. Some agreed that the psychological and economical value orientations correlate with students' academic achievement motivation. Hence, from the standpoint of this research results, it is resolved that value orientations variables have positive relationship with academic success of students through proper social adjustment.

However, this study is recommended among others that; value orientation patterns should be treated with proper attention towards inculcating the right value to the students before they are set for tertiary institutions of higher learning. This is because university education is the type of education that prepares students for lifelong adjustment processes in the society for self-reliance and qualitative life independence. Therefore, parents should inculcate proper values in their children for proper consolidation of their perfect social adjustment in school. This is most likely because without proper value orientation, students find it difficult to fit into university norms and values. Hence, students would regards university environment as being troubling and frustrating, that would be inimical to their academic successes. In addition, when students are not socially adjusted, the benefit of schooling may not be achieved, and may result to drop-out, academic setback, and antisocial tendencies.



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