



TEACHERS’ OPINION ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, CHILD-CENTERED TEACHING, AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE CARE OF LEARNING-DISABLED PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN OBIO-AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: This research work was conducted to ascertain the opinion of teachers on academic achievement analysis, child-centered teaching and emotional intelligence for the care of learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of River State. The study was instrument used for data collection was titled “Child-Centered Teaching Strategies and Emotional Intelligence Inventory (CCTSEII) which was validated by experts. Reliability of the instrument using Cronbach alpha technique yielded a value of 0.79 which suggest that the instrument possessed suitable level of reliability. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Result from the study showed that learning disabilities had a negative impact on the academic achievement of primary school pupils in Obio-Akpor Local Governmental Area of Rivers State. The result further showed that children –centered practices such as questions sand tasks that stimulate learners’ thinking beyond note memorization, as well as integration of emotional intelligence in the teaching and learning process can significantly improve the academic achievement of pupils with learning disabilities, especially dyslexia

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence has become a major topic of interest in scientific circles as in the lay public . Emotional intelligence is described as having the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, not to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action. Emotional intelligence is described as that dimension of intelligence responsible for our ability to manage ourselves and our relationships with others. It is believed that emotional intelligence is a factor that is useful in understanding and predicting one’s performance at school and work (Zeidner, Richard, & Matthews, 2002). Meanwhile, educators and policy makers have become increasingly aware of the significance of providing students with educational opportunities that enhance their emotional development

(Ggraczyk, Weissberg, & Payton, 2000). Emotional processes are an important area of focus for students with learning disabilities, specifically in reading (Pellitter,2006).

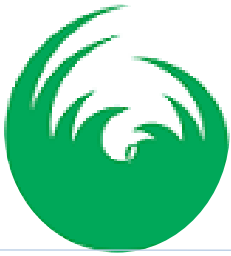
Over the past decades, it has been revealed that both researchers and practitioners in the field of specific learning disabilities have debated over an appropriate definition as well as the diagnostic criteria. Although there are many definitions of learning disabilities, for the purpose of this study, the educational model of learning disabilities enacted by the Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was used. According to IDEA (2004), the “learning disabilities” means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which manifests itself in the imperfect ability to listen,

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think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculation. This term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term “specific learning disabilities” does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of visual, hearing, motor disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disturbances, or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

According to Goleman (1995), the elements of emotional intelligence are crucial abilities for effective living. When looking at the constructs of emotional intelligence and its emotional comprehension is a complex process which refers to (a) extracting information in a reading passage, (b) using higher-order thinking skills, which includes drawing inference and conclusions and inferring the author’s purpose, mood, and tone, (c) using metacognitive knowledge to predict outcomes, and (d) summarizing and clarifying content (Robertson, 2001).

The importance of emotional intelligence in learning cannot be overemphasized, especially as it relates with learning. Emotions influence cognition by providing the energy that drives, organizes, amplifies, and attenuates all thinking and reasoning. Likewise, it is believed that cognition helps us to understand our emotions by providing the words, contexts, and reasons for the emotions one feels. Emotions are also described as internal feelings, which may be negative or the emotion one feels. Emotions are also described as internal feelings, which may be negative or positive, and that these emotions are the underlying force for all thinking (Zambo Brem, 2004). It is suggested that negative emotions can disrupt thinking and learning, affect motivation, and influence how we perceive and react to life, in turn determining how content and successful we are.

Research has shown that while emotions affect the learning functioning of students. It is also has serious implications for those with learning disabilities. According to Gorman (1999), research demonstrates that student with learning disabilities experience emotional distress related to their difficulties. Students with learning disabilities tend to have higher levels of emotional concerns, such as depression, anxiety, loneliness, and low-self esteem, than do their

peers without learning disabilities. Elias (2004) suggests that these students sit in regular education classes feeling confused about what is being presented and often times have emotions of anger for a variety reasons. Abrams (1986) suggests that constant failure and frustration may lead to strong feelings of inferiority, which in turn may intensify the initial learning deficiency (p.189). It is for this reason that it is important for teachers to integrate aspect of emotional intelligence training in the teaching and learning process. As such, the current study seeks to investigate on teachers’ opinion on academic achievement analysis, child-centered teaching and emotional intelligence for the care of the learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Academic Achievement Analysis; The concept of academic achievement is seen as the learning outcome of a particular knowledge acquired. Academic achievement as noted by Gipps(1990) is probably most often defined in terms of levels los standard in basic knowledge and skills and are therefore related to test scores and exam results. Academic Achievement refers to the quality of performance in terms of test and class exercise with academic content. In other words, it is the attainment of a given standard of excellence or qualified standard of academic performance i.e. the extent or the degree of success an individual has in his/her studies. The evaluation of academic achievement in schools can be done in various ways such as taking tests both oral and written, home-works, performing presentations, and participating in group discussions and other class activities. Pupils are also appraised by the level of achievement on “standardized tests recommended for specific ages Bell, 2010).

In the past, Teachers’ observation was used to measure academic achievement of students but today’s method of assessment has recent inventions which are fairer than those used in the past.

For instance, grading system was first used in the United States but were originally critiqued based on the heightened prejudice Some teachers appreciated varying features of learning than others, and while some



standardization were endeavored to ensure a fairer system, despite this, the problem persisted. Currently, variations have been implemented to disgrace with students' and researches into finding alternative methods of measuring achievement is still ongoing.

Child-Centered Teaching: The term child-centered learning refers to a wide variety of educational programs, learning experiences, instructional approaches, and academic-support strategies that are intended to address the distinct learning needs, interest, aspirations, or cultural backgrounds of individual pupil and groups of students. To accomplish this goal, schools, teachers, guidance counselors, and other educational specialists may employ a wide variety of educational methods, from modifying assignments and instructional strategies in the classroom to entirely resigning the ways in which students are grouped and taught in a school.

The term *child-centered teaching* most likely arose in response to educational decisions that did not fully consider what students needed to know or what methods would be most effective in facilitating learning for individual students or groups of students. For example, many traditional approaches to schooling could be considered "school-centered," rather than pupil-centered, because schools are often organized and managed in ways that work well for organizational operations, but that might not reflect the most effective ways to educate student.

Emotional Intelligence: While emotional intelligence has a long history, it only emerged into the classroom when Daniel Goleman published the book *Emotional Intelligence* (Goleman, 1995). Goleman (1995) proposes that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in determining one's success in life. Since then, research has been conducted in the field of emotional intelligence.

Studies have covered such areas as identifying methods for measuring emotional intelligence, determining the importance of emotional intelligence skills to one's effectiveness, and applying and integrating emotional intelligence in a variety of settings, including school rooms (Weissinger, 1998). As such there has been various definitions of emotional intelligence which are briefly presented below.

Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity for recognizing one's own feelings and those of others for motivating oneself, and for managing emotions well in our relationships. It describes abilities distinct from, but complementary to, academic intelligence, the purely cognitive capacities measured by IQ. Although a comprehensive theory of emotional intelligence was provided by Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 189) and another pioneering model of emotional intelligence was proposed in the 1980s by Reuven Bar-on (1988), other theorists have proposed variations on the same idea. Goleman has adopted Salovey and Mayer's model into a version for understanding how these talents matter in the work life. Goleman's (1995) adaptation includes the following five basic emotional and social competencies.

- **Self-awareness:** knowing what we are feeling at the moment, and using those preferences to guide our decision making; having a realistic assessment of our own abilities and well grounded sense of self-confidence.
- **Self-regulation:** handling our emotions so that they facilitate rather than interfere with the task at hand; being conscientious and delaying gratification to pursue goal; recovering well from emotional distress.
- **Motivation:** using our deepest preference to move and guide us towards our goals, to help us make initiative and strive to improve, and to preserve in the face of setback and frustrations.
- **Empathy:** sensing what people are feeling, being able to take their perspective, and cultivating rapport and attunement with a broad diversity of people. Empathy also refers to the identification with the state of another person.
- **Social Skills:** handling emotions in relationships well and accurately reading social situations and networks; interacting smoothly: using these skills to persuade and lead, negotiate and settle disputes, for cooperation and teamwork.

In line with the above assertion, emotional intelligence shall be defined within this study as the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions, the ability to access and /or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.



Concept of learning Disability

The concept of learning disability has been variously defined from the educational, political, social and work force perspectives. One of the most widespread definitions of learning disability has been that provided by Valuing People (2001) in which learning disability was defined as a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with; a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social function) which started before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development.

This definition is broadly consistent with that used in the current version of the World Health Organization's International Classification of Disease (ICD-10), although this does use the outdated and (to many) offensive term 'mental retardation'. The term learning disability was introduced to replace the term 'mental handicap'.

The term "learning disability" and learning difficulties have been used interchangeably. According to Tambulwa (2009), learning difficulties and learning disabilities are two terms that are difficult to distinguish; some scholars argued that both have the same meaning and can therefore be used interchangeably, while some argued that learning disability is a generic term which encompasses learning problems including disability. Crowl, Karninsky & Podell (1997) assert that, this implies that learning disability could become a disability when it is diagnosed to be a severe disorder. They further posited that, the degree of the learning condition makes the difference. Further arguments by other authorities point to the fact that learning is a non-categorical definition, including all these who have difficulties learning one or more of the basic academic skills.

On the other hand, learning disability is a categorical definition based on diagnosis. Strydom (2009) opined that learning disability is an all-embracing term for children with any type of learning problem or disorders. The preference by the United States of America to use the term learning disability is only for the convenience of clarification. Strydom, is of the opinion that, the United States of America classified children with learning disability on two grounds, one, that the learning problem is

presumed to be due strictly to some Neurological dysfunction and not by external factors. Secondly, a child is classified as a learning disabled when he has been properly diagnosed and the result shows discrepancy between a child's potential and his achievement.

The most widely accepted definition of learning disabilities was given by the American National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities NJCLD) in Abekhale and Okpenge (2009) as a genetic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to the dysfunction of the central nervous system. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g. sensory impairment, psychogenic factors) it is not the direct result of these conditions or influences.

The definition, so far are all presumptions because the actual causation of learning difficulties is yet to be determined, since the assumption that learning difficulties have a neurological connections or that they result from a dysfunction of the central nervous system is yet to be empirically proved. Whatever be the case, teachers and counsellors have a stake in the identification and remediation of children with learning difficulties which can be clearly identified based on certain characteristics.

Characteristics of Problems Associated With Learning Disabilities.

Following the definition that has just been presented however, it seems possible to identify the following as part of the problems confronting the learning disabled child. These are:

1. Difficulty in listening comprehension which involves an inability to receive oral language effectively.
2. Unusual difficulty in making or learning oral speech, which involves inability to express oneself in oral language.
3. Written language disabilities demonstrated in an unusual difficulty in learning to read and write.



4. Unusual difficulty in visual-motor co-ordination which involves the problem of learning how to make one's hands and feet work together with what the eyes see.

5. Problems of inattention which involves two kinds of difficulties: difficulty in selecting attention and difficulty in sustaining attention.

6. Disabilities in authentic skills/concepts, which involve unusual difficulties in computational skills, symbolic language expression, understanding of spatial relationships, effective development, arithmetic concepts, seriation and conservation abilities and the ability to associate written numerals or figures with the quantities they represent (Nwoye, 1988).

How to Identify a Child with Learning Disability.

In order to identify children with learning disability, Denga (2009:34) posited the following methods:

- **The use of Checklist:** Checklist can be constructed by the teacher and used to identify and assess the child with learning disability. The checklist contains the child's name, his class, the sex, approximate age and the various items against which the extent of learning disability can be checked.

- **Observation:** Observation by teachers, counsellors and special educators is very important initial activity. It is tied up with the checklist because a teacher or counsellor can more confidentially check what he has observed rather depend on secondary source. If possible visits can be paid to the parents home to find out what the child does at home. Observation calls for a team effort.

- **Use of Tests:** If standard psychological tests are available, they could be used to ascertain the extent of learning difficulty. These tests can be obtained from experts on tests construction or from the Faculty of Education nearest to the school.

- **Face to Face Interviews with the Children Suspected to have Learning disability:** The teacher can ask the child to tell a story, to read a passage, to narrate about his achievements and his relationship with other children. During this face to face discussion, several problems can be identified for treatment. Assessment may be done both in mother tongue and in English. A child can

be asked to write short passage from a book so that the ear-hand coordination can be assessed.

Types of Learning Difficulties

Deficits in any area of information processing can manifest in a variety of learning difficulties. However the umbrella term learning difficulties is used to cover a wide variety of learning difficulties. Many people use it synonymously with dyslexia (a difficulty with words), but it is now generally accepted that dyslexia is only one of a group of difficulties that may include others to be discussed as presented by iwundu (2004):

Dyslexia or Reading Difficulty: This is the most common learning disability. It is often referred to as dyslexia which is a language based disorder of institutional origin characterized by difficulties in single word decoding, reflecting insufficient psychological processing including problems in acquiring reading, writing and spelling (Kenyon 2003:6). Kenyon further mentioned that dyslexia can rise from mild to severe difficulty. It is assumed that this disorder has a hereditary connotation because it is often seen a run in families. A reading difficulty can affect any part of the reading process, including difficulty with accurate and/or fluent word recognition, word decoding, reading rate, prosody (oral reading with expression), and reading comprehension. According to Wikipedia (2019), before the term "dyslexia" came to prominence, this learning disability used to be known as "word blindness". The common indicators of reading difficulty include: difficulty with phonemic awareness (the ability to break up words into their component sounds and difficulty with matching combinations to specific sounds) (sound-symbol correspondence). Strydom (2009), identified severe signs of and symptoms of reading difficulty, amongst which are the following:

- i. Reading slowly and painfully
- ii. Experiencing decoding errors especially with the order of letters
- iii. Showing wide disparity between listening and reading comprehension of some text.
- iv. Having trouble with Spelling
- v. Exhibiting difficulty recalling known words
- vi. Laying difficulty with written language



vii. Substituting one small sight word for another like a, I, he, the, there, was.

TYPES OF DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia can be classified into two broad types based on the origin. According to this classification, dyslexia can be classified into developmental and acquired. Acquired dyslexia refers to dyslexia that has its origin due to sickness or ill health. On the other hand, developmental dyslexia has no known origin but is assumed to have started from birth. Another classification of dyslexia is based on the types of deficit. In this approach, there are three broad types namely phonological, surface and deep.

Phonological Dyslexia: Phonological dyslexia is extreme difficulty reading that is a result of phonological impairment, meaning the ability to manipulate the basic sounds of language. The individual sounds of language become sticky, unable to be broken apart and manipulated easily.

Surface Dyslexia: Surface dyslexia is a condition in which there is difficulty with whole word recognition and spelling, especially when the words have irregular spelling-sound correspondences. Lastly, deep dyslexia is an acquired form of dyslexia, meaning it arrives later in life and does not usually result from genetic, hereditary (developmental) causes. It represents a loss of existing capacity to read, often because of head trauma or stroke that affects the left side of the brain.

Rapid Naming Dyslexia: This is characterized by difficulty quickly naming things such as numbers, letters, and colors on sight. It can take longer for them to name them in a row, which could be related to processing speed. Another aspect of RND is that it can impact reading skills, causing children to say the wrong word or create a placeholder if they can't retrieve the missed word. These children tend to fall behind in reading because it takes them longer to comprehend and retrieve language.

Visual Dyslexia: Symptoms often include trouble reading and remembering what has been seen on a page. That's because of all types of dyslexia, Visual Dyslexia affects visual processing, meaning the brain doesn't receive the full picture of what the eyes are seeing. This can have severe implications for learning to form letters and also

mastering spelling, a process in which remembering the correct letter sequences in words is key.

Double Deficit Dyslexia: This is considered the most difficult form of dyslexia. It is attributed to the existence of phonological processing problems and rapid naming deficit. The double deficit theory of dyslexia posits that Rapid Naming deficit and Phonological deficit are responsible for most reading difficulties.

ETIOLOGY OF DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia tends to run in families, It appears to be linked to certain genes that affect how the brain processes reading and language, as well as risk factors in the environment. Some risk factors that have been shown to influence the possibility of dyslexia includes the following:

- A family history of dyslexia or other learning disabilities
- Premature birth or low birth weight
- Exposure during pregnancy to nicotine, drugs, alcohol or infection that may alter brain development in the fetus
- Individual differences in the parts of the brain that enable reading

SYMPTOMS OF DYSLEXIA

- Difficulty retrieving words even if they can describe the word
- Frequently substituting words or leaving out words
- Slow to respond orally
- Slower to finish writing or reading assignments
- Making up nonsense words in place of the real word
- Uses gestures or nonverbal vocalization in place of words

PROBLEMS OF DYSLEXIA

- **Trouble learning.** Because reading is a skill basic to most other school subjects, a child with dyslexia is at a disadvantage in most classes and may have trouble keeping up with peers.
- **Social problems.** Left untreated, dyslexia may lead to low self-esteem, behavior problems, anxiety,



aggression, and withdrawal from friends, parents and teachers,

- **Problems as adults.** The inability to read and comprehend can prevent a child from reaching his or her potential as the child grows up. This can have long-term educational, social and economic consequences.

RECOMMENDED PSYCHOTHERAPY

Various types of psycho-educational approaches have been proposed as treatment of dyslexia. Some of these approaches include

- **Multisensory Teaching:** This involves regular interaction between the teacher and the student and the simultaneous use of multiple senses including auditory, visual, and kinesthetic (touch). For example, a dyslexic learner is taught to see the letter A, say its name and sound and write it in the air — all at the same time. The use of multisensory input is thought to enhance memory storage and retrieval.
- **Structured and Cumulative learning:** This involves training students on language elements and rules by introducing the logical and understandable order words and their approach to learning. Students go back to the very beginning of their language learning, to lay a proper foundation. Beginning by reading and writing sounds in isolation (phonemes), then blending sounds into syllables and words. Elements of language—consonants, vowels, digraph blends, and diphthongs are introduced in an orderly fashion. Only later, learners proceed to advanced structural elements such as syllable types, roots, prefixes and suffixes.
- **Personalized and Flexible:** Teaching begins with recognizing the different needs of learners. Building a close teacher-student relationship with continuous feedback and positive reinforcement leading to success and self-confidence. Instructors ensure the learner is not simply recognizing a pattern and applying it without understanding. When confusion of a previously taught rule is discovered, it is re-taught from the beginning.

TAXONOMY OF PSYCHOLOGY OF READING

To effectively understand the reading problem experienced by students, it is imperative to understand the psychology

of reading among students. The psychology of reading among students involves a series of processes which includes word recognition, acquiring word reading skills, phonological awareness, and vocabulary development.

Word Recognition Process

Word recognition process has been a subject of considerable debate among researchers. Word recognition has been characterized as being conditioned by a range of lexical and semantic structures— some promoting bottom-up and others top-down processing—that interact with one another in the word recognition process. These advances notwithstanding, a central (perhaps the central) debate in word recognition is whether the pathway from the orthographic representation in print to lexical representation in memory is mediated by a phonological representation prior to recognition. Some evidence points to phonological mediation; for example, the categorization of a homophone like brake as part of a car, an obvious clue for break, occurs with some frequency.

Other evidence points to a direct access from print to lexical representation; for example, semantic categorization errors occur often for low frequency homophones, like peek, but rarely for high frequency homophones like break, implying that with greater exposure, access even for ambiguous words is direct and automatic. These sorts of ambiguous findings have led many scholars to posit various versions of a dual route model. Dual route models posit that readers go directly from print to lexical representation when words are highly familiar and unambiguous, but interpose a phonological representation on the way from print to lexical representation when words are unfamiliar and opaque. The movement in modern theories of expert word recognition is toward highly contextualized models of word recognition, models in which feedback between graphemic, phonemic, and lexical levels of analysis, implying dual if not more routes to meaning, are the order of the day.

Acquiring Word Reading Skills

There are numerous accounts of the ways in which students develop as word readers, most of them organized into



“stages” or “phases” in which certain approaches to reading words are statistically dominant over others. In order to read the words that appear before them in text, readers have several choices (Ehri, 2005), They can read a word by decoding—converting the constituent letters into sounds, blending the sounds together, and pronouncing the word. They can read a word by memory—calling up a trace of its form and pronunciation from memory, otherwise known as sight word reading. They can read a word by analogy— inferring its pronunciation because of its similarity to a known word (e.g., brother is like mother except at the beginning). Finally, they can predict its pronunciation by relying on contextual features such as clues in the text (this must be “bark” because the text mentions a clog) or pictures, at least in the earliest stories.

Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is the ability to recognize and manipulate the spoken parts of sentences and words. Examples include being able to identify words that rhyme, recognizing alliteration, segmenting a sentence into words, identifying the syllables in a word, and blending and segmenting onset-rimes. Research by Snow, Burns, & Griffith (1998) revealed that phonological awareness predicts later reading achievement.

Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary is, at least at a surface level, all about words and their meanings, but words, from the perspective of meaning, are only incidentally about words; they are better thought of as fundamentally conceptual entities. It is well-established, for example, that vocabulary knowledge is multidimensional and incrementally acquired through repeated exposure. That is, to know a word is to know more than its definition, and knowledge of a word’s definition alone is not sufficient to enhance reading comprehension. When children are exposed to words in different contexts through repeated encounters, each encounter provides new information about the word, such as contexts-of-use and aspects of the word’s meaning (Stahl & Stahl, 2004). Exposures over time and in varied contexts, then, allow for refinement and differentiation in word knowledge. In addition, repeated encounters seem to ensure that words

are known well enough to be accessed quickly during reading.

THESIS STATEMENT

Many students, despite the best academic effort of parents and teachers seems not to be performing well in schools. Especially at the primary school level, students continue to experience persistent difficulties which get them frustrated as their grades begin to continuously fail with the increasing difficulty they experience with school work. These difficulties if not attended to may cause the student to experience a catalogue of emotional and social problems; gradual loss of self-esteem and frustration leading to some juvenile delinquencies which can linger to adulthood. It has therefore become vital that teachers understand the factors which predispose students towards poor academic achievement, one of which is learning disabilities. It is therefore against this background that the current study seeks to survey teachers’ opinion on academic achievement analysis, child- centered teaching and emotional intelligence for the care of learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study is to ascertain teachers’ opinion on academic achievement analysis, child-centered teaching and emotional intelligence for the care of learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. In more specific context, the objectives of this study includes the following:

1. To ascertain the impact of learning disability on the academic achievement of primary school pupils in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. To ascertain some child-centered teaching strategies for the care of the learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. To investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and child-centered teaching strategies for the care of learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study is anchored on the Goleman’s (1995) theory of Emotional Intelligence. According to Goleman’s theory, emotional intelligence is a constellation of skills that help students succeed in schools. These skills when present improves academic performance and when absent leads to poor academic performance. These skills are broadly classified into five namely self—awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills.

The implication of this theory to the current study is that students with learning disabilities are likely to perform poorly because they also experience social and emotional challenges. Therefore schools that fail to broaden their definition of intelligence to include emotional development will ultimately shortchange students and limit their academic performance. Goleman therefore argued that educators should view emotional development not as another add-on or something to do in between activities or classes; rather, emotional development should be viewed as an opportunity for success in school. As posited by Ormsbee (2000), if schools are to be effective, they must change the way in which they deal with students and develop effective social and emotional competencies.

METHODOLOGY

The design for this study is the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive research design is that which seeks to describe the present state of an event, person or situation. This research design was adopted for this study because the researcher surveyed teachers’ opinion on academic

RESULT PRESENTATION

Table 1: Impact of learning disabilities on the academic achievement of primary school pupils

	ITEM	2	SD	Decision
1	Students regularly miss from class due to their learning disabilities	3.31	0.73	Agreed
2	Poor level of comprehension makes students answer questions wrongly	2.94	0.73	Agreed
3	Inattention during class activities	2.78	0.81	Agreed

achievement analysis, child-centered teaching and emotional intelligence for the care of learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, with specific focus on dyslexia. The population for this study comprised of all public primary school teachers. Convenience sampling technique was used due to logistics and time consideration for the study to select 80 teachers from secondary schools in Rivers State.

Data collection for the study was done using an instrument developed by the researcher titled Child-Centered Teaching Strategies and Emotional Intelligence Inventory (CCTSEII) The instrument was constructed using a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) which was scored 4, 3, 2, and 1 point(s) respectively. The instrument had 15 items in total. Validation of the instrument was done by subjecting the instrument to expert judgment. The instruments was given to one expert each in Educational Psychology and Measurement and Evaluation. Their contributions were integrated into the final version of the instruments before administration. Reliability of the instrument was done using the Cronbach Alpha method. The instrument was administered to 20 teachers who were not part of the target sample in Khana Local Government Area After analysis, alpha coefficient of 0.79 was obtained for the CCTSEII. This indicated that the instruments possessed suitable level of reliability. For data analysis, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The results obtained are presented in Tables below.



4	Delay in completion of assigned texts	3.05	0.66	Agreed
5	Inability to contribute to class assignments and texts	3.18	0.71	Agreed
	Grand Mean	3.05	0.73	Agreed

According to the results on Table 1, teachers’ opinion on the impact of learning disability includes that students regularly miss from class due to their learning disabilities (mean = 3.31, SD = 0.73), poor level of comprehension makes students answer questions wrongly (mean = 2.94, SD = 0.73), inattention during class activities (mean 2.78, SD 0.81), delay in completion of assigned texts (mean =

3.05, SD = 0.66) and lastly inability to contribute to class assignments and texts (mean 3.18, SD = 0.71). On the whole a grand mean of 3.05 was obtained which suggests that teachers agreed that learning disabilities had a significant negative impact on the academic achievement of pupils in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 2: Child-centered teaching strategies for the care of learning disabled primary school children

	ITEM	X	SD	Decision
6	Including relevant materials and activities that are personally relevant to learners	2.87	1.08	Agreed
7	Providing learners with increasing responsibility for the learning process	2.99	1.00	Agreed
8	Provide questions and tasks that stimulate learners’ thinking beyond rote memorization	3.04	0.95	Agreed
9	Include peer learning and peer teaching as part of the instructional method.	3.05	1.00	Agreed
10	Manage time in flexible ways to match learner needs.	3.01	0.98	Agreed
	Grand Mean	2.99	1.02	Agreed

Regarding teachers’ opinion on the various student-centered teaching strategies for helping those with learning disability, the result showed that some of the agreed strategies were to include relevant materials and activities that are personally relevant to learners, providing learners with increasing responsibility for the learning process, provide questions and tasks that stimulate learners’ thinking beyond rote memorization, include peer learning

and peer teaching as part of the instructional method, and manage time inflexible ways to match learner needs. From the grand mean value of 2.99, it therefore suggests that adopted children-centered teaching strategies can improve the academic *achievement* of students with learning disabilities in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 3: Teachers’ opinion on the relationship between emotional intelligence and child-centered teaching strategies for the care of learning disabled primary school children

	Relationship between emotional intelligence and child- centred teaching strategies		SD	Decision
11	Emotional intelligence enable teachers to work with students of different background, including those with learning disabilities	2.59	1.02	
12	Teachers with emotional intelligence are empathetic towards students with learning disabilities	2.80	1.02	



13	Social skills enable teachers to identify students who need help with their learning disabilities.	3.20	0.84	
14	With emotional intelligence, teachers can help students navigate their unique challenges	3.00	0.93	
15	Emotional intelligence is an important skill to help both students with and without learning disabilities	2.12	1.03	
Grand Mean		2.68	0.96	

According to the result shown in Table 3 on the relationship between emotional intelligence and child-centered teaching strategies for the care of learning disabled children in primary schools, the result revealed that it was agreed that emotional intelligence enable teachers to work with students of different background, including those with learning disabilities, as well as it equip teachers to be empathetic towards students with learning disabilities. In addition, it was the teachers' opinion that social skills enable teachers easily identify those who need help with their academic challenges. From the grand mean of 2.68, it therefore indicates that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and child-centered teaching strategies for the care of learning disabled children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to ascertain the opinion of teachers on academic achievement analysis, child child-centered teaching and emotional intelligence for the care of learning disabled primary school children in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. Based on the outcome of the study, it was revealed that learning disabilities, especially dyslexia, had a negative impact on the academic achievement of primary school pupils in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. However it was shown that with the adoption of child-centered teaching strategies, pupils can be helped to develop improved academic achievement. Furthermore, the teachers agreed with being emotionally intelligent is a panacea for students with learning disabilities to be assisted.

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