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Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Self-Esteem, Anxiety and Academic Stress of the Gifted Children in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract- This study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-esteem, anxiety and academic stress of gifted children in Oyo State, Nigeria. Descriptive research design of ex-post-facto was used in the study. One hundred and twenty (120) gifted children were selected from public secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. The respondents were measured with five standardized scales including; (i) Self –esteem Scale (ii) Student Academic Stress Scale, (iii) Emotional intelligence Scale, (iv) Giftedness Scale and (v) State and Trait Anxiety Inventory. Three research Questions were raised and answered in the study. The data obtained were analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression analysis. The result showed that there was significant relationship among all the independent variables (emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety) and academic stress. There was joint contribution of emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state. Also there was relative contribution of emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state. In view of these findings, the study advocated that the students need to be trained on how to improve their self-esteem and emotional intelligence, ameliorate anxiety because these have significant influence on their academic stress in the school system. Recommendations were made on how the gifted learners could be assisted to reduce stress in their environment and academic work.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Giftedness is defined as high-IQ (usually, Full Scale IQ [FSIQ] above 130), is an adaptive advantage for problem-solving, and an ingredient of educational and professional achievement, but some authors suggest that it may also be a burden, leading to a series of difficulties in the emotional, behavioral and social domains. Indeed, it has previously been suggested that high intelligence is associated with a variety of negative emotional outcomes in children and adults, including depression and anxiety symptoms (Blaas, 2014; Harrison & Haneghan, 2011) attentional difficulties (Guénolé et al., 2015) and a range of relational difficulties (Cross & Cross, 2015). These results are frequently interpreted in light of Dąbrowski's theory

(Dąbrowski, 1972), which links high intelligence with over excitability. Following Dąbrowski, some authors have suggested that high intelligence children may lead to a feeling of being different and to problems of emotional and social adjustment (Piechowski, 2009). However, the scientific literature on this topic remains largely inconsistent.

This is particularly obvious in the case of anxiety. Even gifted children get anxious contrary to popular belief, that giftedness does not necessarily endow children with the confidence to sail through academic work without a worry. Many gifted children, adolescents and college students suffer from disabling anxiety that affects performance, achievement and self-esteem. Anxiety pops up at the most inopportune times, and can be completely unexpected, an occasional nuisance, or a chronic obstacle. Some authors have reported increased anxiety among gifted children (Harrison & Haneghan, 2011). However, most researchers found either no link (Chuderski, 2015; Guénolé et al., 2013) or a reduced anxiety level among the gifted (Shechtman & Silektor, 2012; Zeidner & Shani-Zinovich, 2011).

In a recent meta-analysis, Martin, Burns, and Schonlau (2010) concluded that symptoms of anxiety (as well as depression) were less frequent among gifted children and adolescents than among the non-gifted (Martinet al., 2010). They also identified two main limitations of previous studies: (1) variability in definitions of giftedness and (2) sampling biases. Definitions of giftedness vary widely from one study to another. Although the most widespread definition is based on a Full Scale IQ [FSIQ] score, many authors include creativity, school performance, leadership or any combination of these in their definition. A gifted child is then defined as one with either a verbal IQ or a performance IQ above 130, irrespective of the FSIQ. This definition prevents psychologists from discarding highly intelligent children with a specific learning disorder that would only impair one of the two scores.

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC; 2010) defined gifted students as those who demonstrate outstanding levels of aptitude (defined as an exceptional ability to reason and learn) or competence (documented performance or achievement in top 10% or rarer) in one or more domains. Domains

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include any structured area of activity with its own symbol system (e.g., mathematics, music, language) and/or set of sensorimotor skills (e.g., painting, dance, sports).

The American Psychological Association (2013) defined anxiety as an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes. People with anxiety disorders usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations out of worry. They may also have physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness or a rapid heartbeat. Anxiety has been “associated with an increased influence of the stimulus-driven attentional system and a decreased influence of the goal-directed attentional system” (Eysenck, Derakshan, Santos, & Calvo, 2007) in which “information processing is geared toward identifying potential threats and minimizing potential negative outcomes (Blanchette & Richards, 2010). If not effectively managed, the impact of anxiety can be significant.

Research on anxiety and giftedness has presented conflicting findings. On one hand, qualitative research and clinical observations have suggested that gifted youth experience anxiety more acutely and with greater intensity based on their exceptional characteristics (Hébert, 2011; Mendaglio, 2007), and that the unique stressors related to the gifted experience make them more susceptible to anxiety (Moon, 2007; Silverman, 1993). For these youth, the interactions between their distinctive needs, demands, and anxiety require better understanding to create meaningful supports and effective treatment options, thereby enabling them to maximize their greatest potentials.

The issue of anxiety and high potential students is yet to be fully understood and research in this area has been limited. Anxiety creates a state of mental uneasiness or concern that causes physical and psychological discomfort (American Psychological Association [APA], 2013). Extreme anxiety has been found to disrupt cognitive flow impeding concentration, unsettling behaviour, and interfering with perception (Beilock & Gray, 2007; Bishop, 2007; Nieuwenhuys & Oudejans, 2011; Eysenck, Derakshan, Santos, & Calvo, 2007). Qualitative research and clinical observations have indicated that some high potential youth may experience anxiety differently and more intensely based on their unique characteristics (Hébert, 2011; Mendaglio, 2007). Quantitative examination has been less prevalent and suggested that high potential youth do not experience anxiety in greater numbers than the general population (Cross, Cassady, Dixon & Adams, 2008; Martin, Burns & Schonlau, 2010; Moon, 2007). Differentiating between unique characteristic and impairing anxiety high potential youth have a variety of unique social and emotional needs (Hébert, 2011; Mendaglio, 2007; Moon, 2007). These differences can

be a source of strength that enhance their motivation and task commitment or stress that impede their creative productivity and emotional well-being (Moon, 2007). Hébert (2011) examined the social and emotional experience of gifted youth and found that the school environment can be one experience that highlights asynchrony and exacerbates anxiety. Lack of challenge and meaningful stimulation, as well as a lack of understanding by school personnel about the unique needs and characteristics of the gifted child, can result in increased internal discord, a deficit of adequate supports for high ability students, and further aggravate stress and anxiety.

Keen intellect being seen as highly desirable, but too much intellectual or emotional intensity then evaluated negatively, and gifted students being seen as unique, but being different then judged as bad (Hébert, 2011). Silverman (1993) suggested that a synchronistic development and unique personality traits make some gifted students more susceptible to affective stressors associated with anxiety including: loneliness, feeling they need to hide pressures, perfectionism, and bullying from peers when they attempt to meet high expectations. Gifted children often have a greater awareness and perception of their environment and are more likely to actively question inconsistencies. Acute self-awareness can become debilitating. Roeper (2009) noted that gifted youth's ability to see the nuances, gray areas, exceptions, and complex interrelationships contributed to their sense of being out of sync with those around them. They can see through the hypocrisies and hidden agendas and are often more aware of a number of global concerns (Peterson et al., 2009). Mendaglio (2007) defined this as Heightened Multifaceted Sensitivity (HMS) characterized by “enhanced awareness of behavior, emotions, and cognitions pertaining to self or others”. When supported, it can lead to motivation towards personal growth; however, unmitigated, heightened self-criticism can lead to anxiety (Mendaglio, 2007).

There is a popular myth and a general misconception that gifted children are more adept at handling stressful situations and emotional unstable when compared to other children. People also tend to believe that gifted children are happier and better acclimated to their surroundings. Surprisingly, in many cases the opposite is true and even gifted children can face severe emotional disturbances in their life. For most gifted children, their childhood is one good mix of pleasure, thrill, enjoyment, contentment and rewards. In fact, such children derive maximum pleasure and enjoyment from life challenges as well as school work. However, it is the essence of childhood that is supposed to be more painful, challenging as well as stressful; it is a well known fact that gifted children may feel that they are left out from their peers because of their high expectations and hopes.

Gifted children own and master unique perceptions and feelings that are entirely different from those exhibited by other children. Gifted children tend to make their own connections with the surrounding world; gifted children possess traces of abstract thinking and highly sophisticated and polished methods of conclusions at a very early age. In reality, such perceptions are unique, powerful and special. The way and manner in which a gifted child grows and develops are entirely different than his or her peers. Because of their specialty, most of the gifted children are often isolated and they feel left out of the group. Gifted children tend to perform well with those children who are emotionally near and intellectually similar. In fact, gifted children need peers to feel better, safe and emotionally secure.

While the feeling of isolation is an added advantage to gifted children, sudden emotional loneliness and feelings of desolation may actually hinder their normal emotional development. On the flipside, gifted children can perform exceedingly well when they get enough encouragement by their parents, teachers and peers. People attribute very poor social skills with gifted children. In many cases, a gifted child may be completely impervious to his or her immediate social circle because of a blind screen erected in the process of emotional development. In other words, gifted children may feel their intellectual capacities are so strong and robust that they need not develop emotional intelligences.

The emotional intelligence has been defined as an ability to understand and comprehend the emotions in order for assessing thoughts, manners and to put them in a way that makes emotion and intelligent growth and elevation (Goleman, 1995). The concept of emotional intelligence gives a new depth to the man's intelligence, this intelligence is a tactical competency (personal performance), whilst the recognition intelligence is a strategic capability (long term capability). The emotional intelligence makes it possible to predict the achievement because it demonstrates how a person apply a knowledge in an immediately success. It is a form of social intelligence which is a suitable predictor in special areas such as job and educational performances. In the other word, it has an ability to control feelings and excitements by oneself and others (Hosseini, Mahmood & Jila, 2007).

Emotional intelligence points to the ability to recognize and differentiate feelings, excitements, meanings and concepts, the relations between them, to reason about them and to solve problems by them. Emotional intelligence includes the ability to receive emotions, and coordinate them to understand the information related to them, it also manage them. Another definition of the emotional intelligence is as follow: A series of unrecognizable abilities, powers and skills that have an effect on the ability to encounter wills,

necessities and environmental pressures successfully (Nabi, Ghasim, & Beirami, 2010).

Intelligence Quotient (IQ) in its best form causes only 20 percent of life successes and all 80 percent remaining depends on another factor and the human's fate in the most cases depends on the skills that link to the emotional intelligence to provide person adaptability with the environment and is a better predictor of success in university, work and home than the analytic intelligence. The other factor which is effective in academic advancement is self-esteem. It is personal self-satisfaction and his sense of being valuable (Khanjani, Ashrafyan, & Montaze, 2010).

Self-esteem means how people think about themselves, how much they like themselves and if they are satisfy of their performance, especially how they feel about society, education and family and to what extent their ideal self and actual self are close to each other. Most authorities believe that self-esteem is a central factor and a base to people social and emotional compatibility. This belief has been extended and it has a long history. At first, psychologists and socialists such as Parker, Summerfeldt, Hogan and Majeski (2004) insisted on the self-esteem positive importance. A collection of characteristics that a person uses to describe himself is known as a person "self-imagination". Self-esteem is defined as the extension of values which the information within self-imagination has for a person and it comes from person beliefs about all the attributes and features presented in him.

Self- imagination has a particular importance for mental health experts because the person imagination about his personality to high degree determines his image about environment, and these two elements plan his behaviour forms. Self- esteem is the rate of validity, approval, acceptance and worthiness that a person feels about himself. A sense of self –valuation and self –esteem is a basic need to mental relief and is a need on which our life satisfaction is depended extremely (Nabi, Ghasim, & Beirami, 2010). Self –esteem is defined as a value that has information within self –imagination to a person and it caused by a person beliefs about all attributes and characteristics within him. One of the most important concerns of masters, the university education authorities, and student parents is students' academic achievement and to prevent them from academic falling (Sheykhoh, Ali, Ebrahimi, Soghra & Farokhi, 2010). Contrary to the academic achievement is academic falling, various studies showed that it has a great influence on person's fate and it also exerts much cost on the family and society. In Nigeria, this issue is one of the main problems in educational system and great amount of national funds are lost annually and society's potential forces and capitals remain fruitless, which are just men forces.

Self-esteem is not only a part of mental health, but also it associates with academic success. Many

researchers have found a relationship between positive self-esteem and high scores at school (Lalifaz & Abbas, 2008). Feelings and opinions about the abilities, competencies and own features determine self-esteem. Laport and Sevigny (2015) believe that having a good self-esteem means: to be aware of own strengths and weaknesses and to accept oneself with what is more personal and valuable. It means that taking own responsibilities confirms oneself by responding to the needs, setting the purposes and choosing ways to achieve those purposes. A good self-esteem can bring up personal uniformity and makes person to pay attention to the other people.

A person needs to grants values and respects to himself as a form of self-esteem and also he needs to be respected by others. Satisfying the self-esteem, one can ensure that he has competences, values and capabilities. This helps him to be deserved in all aspects of life and in the absence of self-esteem. He feels contempt, failure and hopelessness and he is not sure he can cope with them. Academic achievements depend on a set of complex elements, each require a body of research. Personal elements includes: purposes, motivation, methodology, intelligence, physical elements, behaviour and compatibility and mental or emotional conditions. All these elements play a role in academic achievement or failure (Laport & Sevigny, 2015). The mental and emotional conditions serve as the main element the role of exciting intelligence and demographic factors in self-esteem and social, family, exciting and physical compatibility of students in Tabriz showed that there is a positive correlation between the emotional intelligence and all five elements of self-esteem.

Two studies taking next to the self-esteem is self-study. Dolton, Marcenaro and Navarro (2001) analyzing a sample of 3,722 first and final year students from the University of Malaga, find that time allocated to lectures is between twice and four times as productive than time allocated to self-study. Bratti and Staffolani (2002) estimate an academic performance regression for first year undergraduate students of economics at the University. Even in cases such as the economic programs at Maastricht University, where students are officially required to attend up to 100% of all meetings, students have a backdoor option and can trade the attendance for an additional written assignment. They find evidence that once they control for time allocated to self-study, the positive and significant effect of lecture attendance for some courses disappears.

The scarce availability of literature addressing directly the relationship between the self- study and students' academic stress itself can be seen as a rational for further empirical studies that attempt to shed more light on this aspect. Moreover, what is generally omitted in the previous research is the impact the learning environment might have on the student time

allocation. In other words, studies investigating the impact of self study on educational outcomes without explicitly addressing the didactic teaching methods used, time allocation with respect to the learning environment.

The focus of the present study lies on the way in which self study transforms into academic achievement, departing from the existing literature in three aspects. First, the self study is analyzed for the whole group of undergraduate students in several fields of study at different universities. Furthermore, six different types of student time use are distinguished. Second, the relatively large sample size facilitates the estimation of the effect of self study for different subgroups, namely men and women, below and above-average ability students (measured by their final high school grade), and students of different fields of study.

Regarding that the emotional intelligence is the most recent transformation to understand the relationship between thinking and excitement and self – esteem is the person self- satisfaction and to feel being valuable ,it is hoped that considering this study results and outcomes there will be several methods to identify the effective factors in the emotional intelligence and self-esteem and also their barriers ,actions and behaviours can be formed intelligently to eliminate the higher educational system problems and help students to have a health life. Thus, this study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-esteem, anxiety and academic stress of gifted children in Oyo State, Nigeria.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Over the years, the investigations of the factors that influence academic stress of students have attracted the interest and concern of teachers, counsellors, psychologists, researchers and school administrators in Nigeria. This is because of the public outcries concerning the low standard of education in the country. However, there is significant debate in the higher education literature concerning the most effective way for students to manage academic stress and improve their learning processes. In view of this, the present study concentrates on relationship between emotional intelligence, self-esteem, anxiety and academic stress of gifted children in Oyo State, Nigeria.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-esteem, anxiety and academic stress of gifted children in Oyo State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study include to;

1. Determine the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety on academic stress of gifted children.

2. Find out the joint contribution of emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety on academic stress of gifted children.
3. Examine the relative contribution of emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety on academic stress of gifted children.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study.

1. What is the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety on academic stress of gifted children?
2. What is the joint contribution of emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety on academic stress of gifted children?
3. What is the relative contribution of emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety on academic stress of gifted children?

IV. METHOD

a) Research Design

The descriptive survey design of ex-post-facto type was used in the study. This approach does not involve the manipulation of variables in the study. It is therefore, after the fact study. It neither adds to nor subtracts from the existing fact. However, it is carefully observe and record information as it naturally occurred at the time the study was conducted.

b) Population

The population for the study comprised all gifted children in secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria.

c) Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for this study comprises of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents, the researchers targeted this audience at Oyo State. The respondents were gathered from four secondary schools. Purposive sampling method was adopted in selecting respondents for this study after screened for giftedness. The study adopted purposive sampling in the sense that only students who were adjudged gifted after screening were selected for the study. On the whole, total numbers of respondents were one hundred and twenty (120).

d) Instrumentation

The following five instruments were utilized to collect information in this study

e) Emotional Intelligence Scale

Emotional Intelligence scale developed by Law and Wong (2002) was adapted to measure the emotional intelligence based on self-report responses to 16 items tapping the appraisal and expression of emotion in self and others, and utilization of emotion in solving academic problems. Participants responded by indicating their agreement to each of the 16 items using

a five point rating scale ranging from 1 (Not much at all), 2 (Not much), 3 (Not sure), 4 (very much), 5 (very, very much). The instrument had an internal consistency alpha of .91. When re-validated for use in this study a Cronbach alpha value of .89 was obtained.

f) Self-Esteem Scale

In an attempt to measure self esteem of the students, the Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (1965) was used. This instrument consists of ten (10) short questions. Responses were anchored on four rating points (Strongly Agree = 3, Agree = 2, Disagree = 1 and Strongly disagree = 0) and had an internal consistency alpha of .75. Items with asterisk are reversed. The score of the items are summed up. The higher the score, the higher the self –esteem. The reliability of Rosenberg's Self esteem Scale has been found with test-retest correlations in the range of .82 to .88 and Cronbach's alpha for various samples in the range of .77. For the purpose of this study the scale was revalidated and yielded a cronbach alpha value of .75

g) The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)

Another instrument used to elicit information in this study was the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) is a commonly used measure of trait and state anxiety (Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, & Jacobs, 1983). It can be used in clinical settings to diagnose anxiety and to distinguish it from depressive syndromes. It also is often used in research as an indicator of caregiver distress. Form Y, its most popular version, has 20 items for assessing trait anxiety and 20 for state anxiety. State anxiety items include: "I am tense; I am worried" and "I feel calm; I feel secure." Trait anxiety items include: "I worry too much over something that really doesn't matter" and "I am content; I am a steady person." All items are rated on a 4-point scale (e.g., from "Almost Never" to "Almost Always"). Higher scores indicate greater anxiety. Internal consistency coefficients for the scale have ranged from .86 to .95; test-retest reliability coefficients have ranged from .65 to .75 over a 2-month interval (Spielberger et al., 1983). Test-retest coefficients for this measure in the present study ranged from .76 to .87. A pilot study was carried out to assure the validity of this scale, the result obtained was .81 using Cronbach alpha coefficient. Considerable evidence attests to the construct and concurrent validity of the scale (Spielberger, 1989). Gifted learners with high scores in this instrument were the respondents of this study.

h) Student Academic Stress Scale

Student Academic Stress Scale developed by Busari (2011) was used as a measure of academic stress of participants. It has two parts with part 'A' consisting of the demographic data such as age, sex, marital status etc. It is a (66) items scale with responses anchored base on the five likert rating points of (5=

very much like me, 4= like me, 3=sometimes like me ,2=unlike me ,1=very much unlike me).High score in any of the sub- section indicates high level of academic stress. As indicated by author, the instrument has a Cronbach's Alpha of .78.

i) Giftedness Scale

Two giftedness scales were utilized in this study. They are; Gifted Screening Test and Pearson Gifted Rating Scale. The gifted screening test was developed by Tali Shenfield in collaboration with the department of psychology, university of California, Los Angeles. It was developed to determine a formal gifted assessment for children. It consists of 45 items that assess specific traits common in highly gifted students. Pearson Gifted Rating Scale was use to measure level of giftedness in students so identified. Cronbach alpha value of .79 was obtained when the scale was subjected to re- validation.

j) Procedure for Data Collection

The instruments were administered to the respondent on the day approved by the school

authorities for the exercise. The researcher screened the students with Gifted Screening Test while Pearson Gifted Rating Scale was use in eliciting information from the respondents. The researcher was assisted by research assistants in administration and collection of the instruments. In each of the selected school, the administration and collection of instruments were done on the same day of administration. On the whole, data collection lasted for three weeks.

k) Method of Data Analysis

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to analyze the data collected.

V. RESULTS

RQ 1: What is the relationship between emotional intelligence, self- esteem and self- study and academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state?

Table 1 : Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Self- Esteem , Anxiety and Academic Stress

Variables	1	2	3	4
Academic Stress	1			
Emotional Intelligence	.387	1		
Self- Esteem	.279	.308	1	1
Anxiety	.189	.167	.168	.417
Mean	29.0765	38.5753	25.4311	19.319
Std. Deviation	6.46	7.3312	5.1915	4.1432

Table 1 shows significant relationships among all the independent variables (emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety) on academic stress. The result as presented in table 1 shows that emotional intelligence, self- esteem, anxiety have significant relationships with

academic stress of the gifted students at .05 level of significant.

RQ 2: What is the joint effect of emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state?

Table 2 : Joint Contribution of Emotional Intelligence, Self- Esteem and Anxiety on Academic Stress among Gifted Students

R = .47 R ² = .23 ADJR ² = .21 STD. Error Estimate = 6.93					
Source Of Variation	Df	Sum Of Square	Means Squares	F.Ratio	P
Regression	3	2156.68	539.17	13.17	0.000
Residual	115	5700.55	49.57		
Total	119	7857.23			

The result presented in table 2, indicated that there was joint contribution of emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state. This shows that 21% of the total variance of academic stress as revealed by this study

accounted for by the combination of the three predictive variables studied. The table also indicates that the analysis of variance of multiple regression data produced an F-ratio value significant at 0.05 level F (4,115) =13.17; <0.05.

RQ 3: What is the relative effect of emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo State

Table 3 : Relative Contribution of Academic Stress among Gifted Students

	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t-ratio	Sig
Predictor	P	SEB	BETA		
Emotional Intelligence	.27	.05	.32	4.49	.00
Self- Esteem	.22	.06	.21	2.53	.02
Anxiety	.19	.06	.18	2.40	.02

The result presented in table 3, revealed that there was relative contribution of emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state. In terms of magnitude of contribution, emotional intelligence made the most significant contribution (Beta= .32; t= 4.49; p<0.05) to the prediction. Other variables made significant contributions in the following order: self-esteem (Beta= .21; t= 2.53; p<0.05) and anxiety (Beta= .18; t= 2.40; p<0.05).

VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

There was significant relationship among all the independent variables (emotional intelligence, self-esteem and anxiety) and academic stress. This result is not surprising considering the fact that many gifted youngsters have a heightened sensitivity to their surroundings, to events, to ideas, and to expectations. Some experience their own high expectations for achievement as a relentless pressure to excel. Constant striving to live up to self-expectations--or those of others-- to be first, best, or both can be very stressful. With every new course, new teacher, or new school questions arise about achievement and performance, since every new situation carries with it the frightening risk of being mediocre. Striving becomes even more stressful when unrealistic or unclear expectations are imposed by adults or peers. The pressure to excel, accompanied by other concerns such as feeling different, self-doubt (the "imposter" syndrome), and the need to prove their giftedness can drain the energy of gifted students and result in additional stress. This corroborates the finding of Parker, Summerfeldt, Hogan and Majeski (2004) when they insisted on the self-esteem positive importance. A collection of characteristics that a person uses to describe himself is known as a person "self-imagination" according to them. Self-esteem is defined as the extension of values which the information within self-imagination has for a person and it comes from person beliefs about all the attributes and features presented in him. They also assert that self- imagination has a particular importance for mental health experts because the person imagination about his personality to high degree

determines his image about environment, and these two elements plan his behaviour forms. Self- esteem is the rate of validity, approval, acceptance and worthiness that a person feels about him/herself. A sense of self – valuation and self –esteem is a basic need to mental relief and is a need on which individual life satisfaction is depended extremely (Nabi, Ghasim, & Beirami, 2010).

There was joint contribution of emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state. This shows that 21% of the total variance of academic stress as revealed by this study accounted for by the combination of the three predictive variables studied. This is in agreement with the finding of Laport and Sevigny (2015) who believe that having a good self-esteem means: to be aware of own strengths and weaknesses and to accept oneself with what is more personal and valuable. It means that taking own responsibilities confirms oneself by responding to the needs, setting the purposes and choosing ways to achieve those purposes. It follows that a high self-esteem can bring up personal uniformity and makes person to pay attention to the other people.

There was relative contribution of emotional intelligence, self- esteem and anxiety on academic stress among gifted students in Oyo state. In terms of magnitude of contribution, emotional intelligence made the most significant contribution to the prediction. This was followed by self-esteem and anxiety in that order. It means that during the early years, school may be easy, with minimum effort required for success. If students are not challenged, they conclude that "giftedness" means instant learning, comprehension, and mastery, and that outstanding achievement follows naturally. As years pass, however, schoolwork becomes more difficult. Some students discover that they must work harder to earn top grades and that they have not developed productive study habits. Many suspect they are no longer gifted, and their sense of self-worth is undermined. Stress can hamper the very abilities that make these students gifted. Stress clouds thinking, reduces concentration, and impairs decision making. It leads to forgetfulness and a loss of ability to focus keenly on a task, and it makes students overly sensitive to criticism. Under these conditions, they perform less

well and are more upset by their failures. In support of this finding Laport and Sevigny (2015) found that academic achievements depend on a set of complex elements, each require a body of research. According to them personal elements includes: purposes, motivation, methodology, intelligence, physical elements, behaviour and compatibility and mental or emotional conditions, all these elements play a role in academic achievement or failure. It follows therefore that the mental and emotional conditions serve as the main element the role of exciting intelligence and demographic factors in self-esteem and social, family, exciting and physical compatibility of students showed that there is a positive correlation between the emotional intelligence and self-esteem.

The result also reveals significant relationship between anxiety and academic stress among the gifted learners. This implies that some high potential adolescents may experience anxiety differently and more intensely based on their unique characteristics. Gifted students need intellectual challenge. Boring, monotonous busy-work is very stressful for individuals who prefer thinking and reasoning activities. Boredom may result in anger, resentment, or, in some cases, setting personal goals for achievement and success that significantly exceed those of parents or school. Some gifted students value independence and leadership, yet the separation they feel from their peers results in loneliness and fewer opportunities to relieve stress. Finding a peer group can be difficult, particularly for adolescents. Some experience a conflict between belonging to a group and using their extraordinary abilities. This finding corroborates that of Hébert (2011) who examined the social and emotional experience of gifted youth and found that the school environment can be one experience that highlights asynchrony and exacerbates anxiety. Lack of challenge and meaningful stimulation, as well as a lack of understanding by school personnel about the unique needs and characteristics of the gifted child, can result in increased internal discord, a deficit of adequate supports for high ability students, and further aggravate stress and anxiety. Again Silverman (1993) suggested that a synchronistic development and unique personality traits make some gifted students more susceptible to affective stressors associated with anxiety including: loneliness, feeling they need to hide pressures, perfectionism, and bullying from peers when they attempt to meet high expectations. Gifted children often have a greater awareness and perception of their environment and are more likely to actively question inconsistencies. It follows therefore that it is important for educators and mental health providers to better understand the unique attributes of gifted youth, how they are affected by stress and anxiety, and effective stress management skills to assist them when needed. It is observed that gifted youth have a variety of unique academic, social, and emotional needs. These

differences can be a source of strength that enhances their motivation and task commitment or stress and anxiety that impedes their creative productivity and emotional well-being.

VII. CONCLUSION

Base on the findings of this study, persistent academic stress of Nigerian gifted and talented children need not to continue indefinitely. It is a common believe that the gifted children do not go through academic stress, this study has shown that they have their own area of intellectual stress. There is hope that with the improvement of some factors (e.g. emotional intelligence, self-esteem and self-study among others) the situation can be changed for the better. The study discovered that emotional intelligence, self-esteem and self-study influence the academic stress of students in the school. By and large, emotional intelligence, self-esteem and self-study have great influence on the students' academic stress. Academic stress is mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even unawareness to the possibility of such failure. Students have to face many academic demands, for example, school examination, answering questions in the class, showing progress in school subjects. Understanding what the teacher is teaching, competing with other class mates, fulfilling teachers and parents academic expectations. These demands may tax or exceed available resources of the students. As a consequence, they can be under stress, since the demand is related to achievement of academic goals.

a) *Recommendation for Reduction of Stress on Gifted Students*

The teachers should help each gifted student understand and cope with his or her intellectual, social, and emotional needs during each stage of development.

In some ways, the needs of gifted students mirror those of more typical children. Giftedness, however, adds a special dimension to self-understanding and self-acceptance. If gifted youngsters are to develop into self-fulfilled adults, the following differential needs must be addressed: (a) the need to understand the ways in which they are different from others and the ways in which they are the same; (b) the need to accept their abilities, talents, and limitations; (c) the need to develop social skills; (d) the need to feel understood and accepted by others; and (e) the need to develop an understanding of the distinction between "pursuit of excellence" and "pursuit of perfection."

The stakeholders should help each gifted student develop a realistic and accurate self-concept

Giftedness does not mean instant mastery or winning awards. Parents and teachers need to set realistic expectations for efforts and achievements and

help the student choose appropriate goals. It is important to recognize and appreciate efforts and improvement. On the other hand, giftedness permits people to learn and use information in unusual ways. Given parental support and encouragement, personal motivation, and opportunities to learn and apply their knowledge, gifted students may enjoy the process of creating new ideas, especially if they believe that it is all right to think differently than age-mates.

The teachers and parents should help each gifted student be a whole person

Gifted youngsters are children first and gifted second. While their learning styles may be special, they are individuals with emotions, likes and dislikes, and unique personalities. They will not wake up one day and be "not gifted." They should not feel responsible for solving world problems, nor does the world owe them tribute. It is up to each student to make life meaningful. Understanding these realistic limits to the bounty of giftedness can reduce stress on confused students. Gifted students have strong emotions that give personal meaning to each experience. Emotions should be recognized, understood, and used as a valid basis for appropriate behaviors.

Parents and teachers should show acceptance and encouragement

Encourage students to work purposefully, thoughtfully, and thoroughly and do the best they can. It is not necessary to excel in every situation. Help them develop priorities to decide which tasks require the best efforts and which require simply "good enough." Accept and reward efforts and the process of working on tasks. Sincere effort is valuable in itself and deserves reinforcement. The means may be more deserving of merit than the ends. Efforts are within the gifted students' control; the outcomes (high grades, prizes, honors, etc.) are not. Show love and acceptance, regardless of the outcome. These youngsters need to be cherished as individuals, not simply for their accomplishments. They must know that they can go home and be loved-- and continue to love themselves-- even when they do not finish first or best.

Encouraging flexibility and appropriate behavior Curiosity is frequently mentioned as a characteristic of gifted learners. Many individuals agree that gifted students seem to question rules automatically. Concerned adults can reduce stress on gifted students by helping them distinguish between hard-and-fast rules that should be followed and those that can safely be questioned or altered and helping them understand why rules sometimes change from time to time. Many people recognize that new ideas come from reshaping and discarding old notions of right and wrong and want students to be inquiring, creative, and resourceful thinkers. But society, schools, teachers, and academic subjects have rules. In our society, flagrant rule breakers

may be penalized and shut out of opportunities for further growth and enrichment. Our students will become better thinkers by learning that rules are man-made guides to behavior, not perfect or divine, but they are to be learned, understood, and followed appropriately in certain situations. For instance, not every student will like every teacher, but showing respect is appropriate behavior even if the student privately thinks otherwise. Wise adults can model problem-solving methods that result in workable solutions and help gifted students learn when and how to use their novel perceptions, creativity, and independent thoughts appropriately and effectively.

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