

Parent-Child Attachment as A Correlate of Social Skills and Academic Self-Efficacy

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Abstract

Background: Parent-child attachment is the deep and enduring bond between an infant and his or her caregiver, expressing in attachment behaviours.

Objective: To ascertain the relationship between parent-child attachment, social skills and academic self-efficacy among university undergraduates in the South-east, Nigeria.

Methods: A mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative methods) research design was used. An interview schedule and a well-structured questionnaire were administered to a sample of 292 undergraduates. Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 25 was used for data analysis. Multi-stage sampling techniques were used to draw 292 undergraduates using the following instruments: parent-child attachment questionnaire (14), academic self-efficacy scale (23) and social skills questionnaire (28). The reliability of the instruments was established to ascertain the internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha which yielded 0.82, 0.77 and 0.89 respectively. Copies of the questionnaires were administered to the respondents by the researchers with the help of research assistants. The data collected from research objectives were analysed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient statistics (r) mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses were tested using probability value and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

Results: The result reveals that parent-child attachment has a positive high relationship with self-efficacy ($r=.623$) and social skills ($r=.776$). Gender of students is not a significant moderator of their relationship between social skills and parent-child attachment (gender- $F_{2, 289}=2.036$, $p=.132 >.05$ & $F_{2, 289}=1.178$, $p=.309 >.05$). Students' gender is not a significant moderator of their relationship between self-efficacy and parent-child attachment (gender- $F_{2, 289}=1.669$, $p=.190 >.05$ & $F_{2, 289}=1.378$, $p=.254 >.05$).

Conclusion: Parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) is positively related with self-efficacy and social skills, and gender of students is not a significant moderator of their relationship between social skills, self-efficacy and parent-child attachment.

Keyword: Academic self-efficacy, social skills, gender and parent-child attachment

Introduction

Adolescence is characterized by risky and turbulent period of "storm and stress" as they transit from childhood to adulthood which may result in conflict with parents and authority figures, mood disruptions, and risk-taking behaviours (Wack, 2020). Adolescents experience a lot of changes in their physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being, as well as rising expectations from their families and society. (Hazen, Schlozman & Beresin, 2008). Undoubtedly, there are behavioural principles and skills needed by the adolescents in the socialization processes and interaction with others. These include, getting along with others, making and keeping friends, developing healthy relationships, protecting them and generally being able to interact with society harmoniously. These social skills give them acceptance by their peers and help them build stronger relationships.

Social skills could be viewed as the ability to relate cordially with others in a given social setting. According to Liberman & Kopelowicz (2005), social skills are the ability to express feelings or to communicate interest and desires to others. Good social skills are critical to successful functioning in life. These skills enable one to know what to say, how to make good choices, and how to behave in diverse situations. These skills include anger management, recognizing/understanding others' point of view, social problem solving, peer negotiation, conflict management, peer resistance skills, active listening, effective communication, increased acceptance and tolerance of diverse groups (Prezi, 2021). The various types of social skills needed include communication, cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, engagement and self-control (Gresham & Elliot, 2008). Adolescents could model these behaviours from their parents which may help them to build an internal moral compass, and make good choices in thinking and behaviour, but if the adolescents fail to learn these skills properly from their parents at the initial stage of life, they may develop poor social skills. Poor social skills among University Undergraduates, especially at the adolescent stage, have continued to be a source of worry to researchers in South Africa and Nigeria. In South Africa for instance, Merino, Jooste & Vermeulen (2019) in their study, developed an intervention for strengthening the social skills and confidence in academic ability among undergraduate students. Classroom teachers have long recognized the importance of social and behavior skills, viewing cooperation, self-control, and other social skills as critical to achieving academic and behavioral success). Educational leaders, teachers, school counselors, social workers and school psychologist have recorded poor academic performance because they lack proper social skills (inattentiveness and unprepared during instructional periods, aggressive behavior toward classmates and educational staff, inability to engage cooperative learning and disruptive behaviour in classroom) which affected their academic skills (studying skills, problem-solving skills, critical and decision-making skills, mastery and performance skills, task management skills) (Calvin, 2009). Researchers' personal observation shows that the undergraduates exhibit anti-social skills and behaviours such as- bullying, aggression, indecent dressing, examination malpractice, rebelliousness, poor inter-personal relationship with peers, parents, lecturers and school administrators. Some parents use wrong utterances which are very unhealthy and demeaning behaviour modification tactics/corrective measures which could have negative impact on their self-esteem and academic self-efficacy.

This apparent lack of social skills which can be detrimental to students' academic achievement, motivated the researchers to embark on this study. The purpose is to understand how these behaviours could be remediated. Governments' efforts in the establishment of guidance and counselling units in Nigerian schools and remand homes among others, to curb these unruly and anti-social behaviours is still lacking (Augoye, 2021). It was also reported that the importance of counselling in secondary schools is seriously overlooked but it is a vital component in helping to modify students' behaviours during their adolescence and teenage years (Augoye, 2021). Since development is dynamic, the issue of poor social skills, as observed among undergraduate students in Nigeria, has been a major concern to the researchers and other stakeholders, as students' poor social skills could consequently lead to low self-esteem and low academic self-efficacy.

Academic self-efficacy relates to the student's confidence in the ability to succeed academically (Korgan, Durdella, & Stevens, 2013). High academic self-efficacy is an optimal level of confidence an individual exhibits in an event of frustrating situations and threatening circumstances. Students with high academic self-efficacy seem to perceive problems as challenges to be surmounted instead of threats to be anxious about or afraid of. They also appear to view failures as a result of a lack of requisite knowledge or aptitude, and they increase their efforts in case of failure to achieve the set goals. On the other hand, low academic self-efficacy is a minimal level of confidence that deters a person from facing academic situation considered to be threatening or challenging (Rosen, Glennie, Dalton, Lennon, & Bozick, 2010). The records of low academic self-efficacy among University Undergraduates in Nigeria as a whole and in Public Universities in South-East, Nigeria has posed a serious challenge to the education sector, as it is detrimental to full maximization of their potential and abilities. Research on the influence of self-efficacy and academic motivation in South African context is limited but it was hypothesized that high levels of self-efficacy and academic motivation can help channel students' efforts in relation to academic achievement and success (Mbatha, 2015). According to Mbatha (2015), although self-efficacy and academic motivation have been researched extensively internationally, the same cannot be said about the South African context. It was, however, established that low academic self-efficacy of students could be traceable to the insecure and poor parent-child attachment.

Parent-child attachment is the emotional bond between a child and caregiver, which emerges over time from a history of parent-child interactions (Carlson, Sampson, & Scroufe, 2003). It is the deep and enduring bond between an infant and his caregiver, expressing in attachment behaviours such as smiling, vocalizing, crying and frowning. An individual who is securely attached has proven by experience that the parents are available, supportive and responsible and that they are assured of safety, pleasure, consoling, and comfort (Undheim & Drugli, 2012).

According to BabySparks (2019), there are four types of attachment: secure, avoidant, ambivalent and disorganised. Also, Bowlby pointed out that attachment styles include secure attachment, anxious-resistant attachment, avoidant attachment and the disorganized-disoriented attachment style (Ackerman, 2018). Generally, research indicates that during adolescence, secure attachments with parents is linked to high levels of self-efficacy (Arbona & Power, 2003). However, it is important to note that there might be gender variations in the influence of parent-child attachment on social skills and academic self-efficacy of

the students. Gender usually refers to a range of characteristics, such as traits and behaviours that society judges to be appropriate, used to distinguish between male and female, and the masculine and feminine attributes assigned to them (Adimora, Akaneme & Nwokenna, 2017). The researchers observed that none of the studies reviewed, explored the relationship of parent-child attachment on social skills and academic self-efficacy observed among university undergraduates in Public Universities in South-East, Nigeria. The researchers wondered if the low academic self-efficacy and anti-social behaviour could be as a result of lack of parent-child attachment on the social skills and academic self-efficacy of these students. The desire to investigate this problem and proffer a possible solution motivated this study on parent-child attachment as a correlate of social skills and academic self-efficacy of undergraduates in Public Universities in South-East, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

The researchers of this present study have observed that social skills affect everyday actions, and they are paramount in enabling children/adolescents to build relationships. Students with poor social skills have been a great concern to the lecturers, University administration, psychologists, guidance counsellors, peers, parents and the general public. The researchers also observed the cases of anti-social behaviour such as bullying, fighting, indiscipline, indecent dressing, disobedient to teachers and constituted authorities, truancy, and lying which are prevalent and are reported by students in Public Universities in South-East, Nigeria. This situation may create an uncondusive environment for teaching and learning at universities.

It is noteworthy that if the trend of anti-social behaviour among students remains unchecked and uncontrolled, it could be detrimental to their self-esteem and self-efficacy. Research shows a significant association between academic self-efficacy and students' learning, cognitive engagement, analytical thinking, academic commitment, strategy use, persistence, susceptibility to negative emotions and achievement. Students' beliefs in their personal efficacy to control their own educational processes and outcomes to become proficient in challenging subject matter, likely has a great impact on their scholastic impetus, interest and educational performance. On the other hand, as has been observed, students who are confident in their capability to organize, execute, and regulate their problem-solving or task performance at a designated level of competence are said to demonstrate high academic self-efficacy. Research has shown that students with low academic self-efficacy give up easily on a difficult academic task, some may indulge in examination malpractices, dwell on impediment which they view as obstacles they cannot overcome. They lack motivation to learn, lack self-confidence in themselves and others; they equally do not work hard but believe that they cannot do well no matter how hard they try. It is not quite clear whether the problem is traceable to the parents (although seemingly, when parents are very emotionally warm, available, and affectionate, the children's academic self-efficacy is boosted), or teachers, government or societal influences. This study, therefore, seeks to ascertain the nature of the relationship between parent-child attachment on students' social skills and academic self-efficacy. Hence the problem of this study put in question form: What is the relationship between parent-child attachment on the social skills and academic self-efficacy of University Undergraduates in South-East, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) correlates with social skills and academic self-efficacy of university undergraduates in South-East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to ascertain the:

1. Relationship between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on social skills.
2. Relationship between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on academic self-efficacy.
3. Relationship between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on social skills of male and female undergraduates.
4. Relationship between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on academic self-efficacy of male and female undergraduates.

Theoretical Significance of the Study

Theoretically, the study was anchored on attachment theory by Bowlby (1969). The findings of this study may validate or invalidate attachment theory. Attachment theory is a framework for understanding the nature of the enduring family bonds that develop between children and their parents - their attachment figures. One of the basic tenets of attachment theory is that early attachment relationship affects an individual functioning throughout the lifetime. The theory focuses mainly on relationship during early childhood, and the impact these have on the emotional development and mental health of individuals as they grow up. It can be seen that parents have the singular privilege of forming an attachment with their children at an early stage and in the course of this bonding, good social skills and virtues are transferred from the parent to the individual. Therefore, it is the researchers' belief that the findings of the study give credence to the tenets of this theory. Finally, the findings of this study will also guide future researchers in similar areas.

Conceptual Framework

Parent-child Attachment and Social Skills

Parent-child attachment is a concept that greatly influences a child's interactions with others throughout their lifetime. A child develops an attachment with anyone who they spend time with on regular basis. Parent-child attachment is the emotional bond between child and caregiver, which emerges overtime from a history of parent-child interactions (Carlson, Sampson & Scroufe, 2003). Attachment theory as propounded by Bowlby, gives definitions of different types of parent-child attachment with their different peculiarities and attributes. Parent-child attachment develops in early infancy and can be discerned in secure and insecure attachment. When a child is securely attached to the parent, the parent is consistent and sensitive in contact with the child (Brown & Wright, 2001), but when a parent is insensitive, aloof, dismissive, inconsistent and carefree to the needs and cues of the child, an insecure parent-child attachment may develop. Insecure parent-child attachment is associated with lower social competence and poor social skills (E.g., functioning in crowds and sustaining personal friendships) and an increasing violent behavior

(Carlson, Sampson & Scroufe, 2003). Secure attachment has been found to facilitate the development of coping skills and acts as an essential protective factor for mental health in subsequent childhood through adulthood. Interactions with teachers differ between children who are safely protected and insecure. O'Shaughnessy and Dallos (2009) explained that relative to their need for emotional support, insecure attached children tend to seek their teachers at a higher frequency than their classmates who have a secure attachment. Oftentimes, they seek to attract attention, whether positive or negative, whereas children who are secure receive needed support from their teachers and seek help when they need it, openly communicate their difficulties when the demands of the assignment and academic tasks become overwhelming (O'Shaughnessy & Dallos, 2009).

A similar study by Kuran (2019) revealed that 5-6-year-old kindergarten children showed differences in their level of social skills according to their mothers' attitudes, their gender, mother's employment status, the number of children in the family, or the caretaker. The results also indicated that general social skills become different according to mothers' attitudes. The children whose mothers are democratic and permissive seem to have higher social skills than the children whose mothers are authoritative and protective.

Parent-Child Attachment on Academic Self-Efficacy

Academic self-efficacy is specific to the context of academia and focuses on one's belief about one's capabilities regarding academic tasks. Sharma & Nasa (2014) define academic self-efficacy as a set of beliefs that influence how a person feels, thinks, motivates himself or herself, and behaves during educational tasks. Kuran (2019) as well as McGrew (2008) view academic self-efficacy as individual beliefs in the ability to perform the necessary behaviour to produce a certain educational outcome. By implication, academic self-efficacy is the belief in oneself to excel academically amidst all odds. Academic self-efficacy promotes hard work, which leads to success in school career, through developing a secure attachment with the parents, confidence and demonstration of effort, motivation, and perseverance to learn academic tasks could be developed in those children. Parents who are warm, responsive, and supportive are more likely to foster trust, competency and academic self-efficacy beliefs in their adolescent and provide diverse and multiple opportunities for mastery experience (Bandura, 2008). Such beliefs of competence are necessary during transition to different stages of development to help adolescents to cope with stressful events. However, it is important to note that the impact of the parent-child attachment relationship of students may likely differ based on their gender differences. Research by Segrin, Taylor and Altman (2005) as well as Collins and Dozois (2008) showed that inter-parental conflict may be a stronger predictor of adolescent negative psychosocial consequences such as depression, low self-efficacy, and low self-esteem (Burns & Dunlop, 2002).

Relationship between parent-child attachment and Gender on social skills

Gender is culture specific and varies from society to society. Gender refers to a range of characteristics used to distinguish between male and female, particularly in the cases of men and women and

the masculine and feminine attributes assigned to them. From a wider perspective, the term gender refers to a socio-cultural classification of women and men. The classification is based on societal norms and values that define the roles men and women should play in society. Research shows that girls have a higher quality of parent-child attachment than boys (Buist, Dekovic, Meeus & Van Aken, 2002). Also, the course in which the quality of parent-child attachment declined with age was found to differ by gender. With regard to the quality of mother-child attachment, girls showed a steady decline of quality with age, whereas boys demonstrated a steep decline of quality till the age of 13 after it raised until the age of 15 where the quality of parent-child attachment lowered again. Gender difference in social skills has been a focus of research for some time. While some research studies showed evidence of girls on average being more assertive and possessing more social skills as showing higher level of empathy and altruism and have less disruptive and impulsive behaviour (Mangvwat, 2006), others document that boys are superior over girls in social skills such as friendliness, trustworthiness, and helpfulness (Pakaslahti, Keltikangas-Järvinen, 2001). Qualities such as assertiveness, bravery, independence, strength, rationality and dominance are attributed to the male gender while the qualities of nurturing, warmth, gentility, emotionally, caring and sensitivity are attributed to the female gender (Ppalia, Olds & Feldman, 2000). This stereotype creates expectations for the manner in which women and men behave, think, feel about themselves and react or respond to the environmental demands. Gender in this study, is thus, referred to as the state of being a male or female and functioning in the role accrue to its status in each society.

Relationship Between Parent-Child Attachment, Gender and Academic Self-Efficacy

According to Bandura (2008), adolescents' self-efficacy is influenced by social factors such as families, school, and peers. Adolescents learn how to use various sources of efficacy from family, peers, and society to develop a steady personal efficacy (Coleman, 2003). Studies show that adolescents who perceive their parents as warm, democratic, and firm are prone to develop positive attitudes toward, and beliefs about, their achievement, and therefore, they are more likely to do better in school (Steinberg & Elmen, 1989). Parents who are warm, responsive, and supportive are more likely to foster trust, competencies and self-efficacy beliefs in adolescents and provide diverse and multiple opportunities for mastery experience (Bandura, 2008). Such beliefs of competence are necessary during transition to different stages of development to help adolescents to cope with the stressful events. Furthermore, adolescents who received encouragement and support from parents develop a strong sense of independence. According to Bandura (2008) self-efficacy can grow through vicarious experiences such as role-modeling and observation of parents, siblings, and peers. These changes of behavior and thinking during early to late adolescence, prepare adolescents for independency by gaining more mastery experiences. However, adolescents with low self-efficacy take this inefficiency to the next stage of development (Bandura, 2008).

Research Design and Methodology

This study adopted a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) research design and was conducted in South-eastern Nigeria. The qualitative data comprised the observation and the interview conducted to elicit information from the respondents. The population comprised of all the senior-year

undergraduates in public universities in the Southeast Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was applied to draw 292 student participants for the study. Three (3) research instruments were used for data collection. They include adapted Parent-child Attachment Questionnaire (PAQ) (Carver, 2013), Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES) (Jinks, & Morgan, 1999), and Social Skills Questionnaire (SSQ). The McGrew (2008) PAQ, ASES and SSQ are adapted and structured instruments using a 4-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4 points) to Strongly Disagree (1 point). The Parent-child Attachment Questionnaire (PAQ) of 14 items elicited information on the respondents regarding their attachment with their parents. The Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (ASES) of 23 items were used to collect data from the respondents on their academic self-efficacy. Section A focused on the demographic data of the respondents. Section B consists of items designed to obtain information from the respondents. The instrument for social skills was a 28-item structured rating scale for students titled: Social Skills Questionnaire (SSQ). The instrument aimed at measuring the extent of parent-child attachment and the students' social skills in life. The instruments were divided into two sections. Section A collected demographic information, while Section B comprised the four subscales of social skills with the total of 28 item statements. The instrument was adapted from Gresham and Elliot (2008). The face validated instrument was structured on a four (4) point rating scale of strongly agree (SA) = 4-points, agree (A) = 3-points, disagree (DA) = 2-points, strongly Disagree (SD) =1-point respectively. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was conducted in a location with similar characteristics but outside the area of the present study, to establish the test of internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha. It yielded 0.82, 0.77, 0.89 respectively. Copies of questionnaires were administered to the respondents by the researchers with the help of research assistants. The data collected from research participants were analysed using Pearson's Product Moment correlation coefficient statistics (r) mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses will be tested using probability value and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. However, only quantitative data was presented and discussed.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship among Parental Attachment, Social Skills and Self-Efficacy

	Mean	SD					Parent Child Attachme nt	Self- Efficacy	Social Skills
			Securit y	Avoidance	Ambivale nce Worry	Ambivalen ce Merger			
Security	3.37	0.30	1						
Avoidance	3.09	0.55	.489**	1					
Ambivale nce Worry	2.79	0.55	.542**	.540**	1				
Ambivale nce Merger	3.37	0.30	.673**	.489**	.489**	1			
Parent Child Attachme nt	2.88	0.55	.789**	.654**	.325**	.416**	1		
Self- Efficacy	2.69	0.55	.671**	.132**	.202**	.362**	.623**	1	
Social Skills	3.37	0.30	.541**	.146**	.151**	.231**	.776**	.489**	1

Table 1 revealed that security has the relationships with the variables, avoidance- $r = .489$ (moderate positive relationship), ambivalence worry- $r = .542$ (moderate positive relationship), ambivalence merger- $r = .673$ (high positive relationship), parent child attachment- $r = .789$ (high positive relationship), self-efficacy- $r = .671$ (high positive relationship) and social skills - $r = .541$ (moderate positive relationship). Security has a moderate relationship with avoidance, ambivalence worry and social skills. Also, the output revealed that security has a high relationship with ambivalence merger, parent-child attachment and self-efficacy. This depicts the fact that an increased security leads to moderate positive corresponding increase in avoidance, ambivalence worry and social skills. On the other hand, an increase in security leads to a high positive corresponding increase in ambivalence merger, parent child attachment and self-efficacy respectively. More so, avoidance recorded the following relationships, ambivalence worry- $r = .540$ (moderate positive relationship), ambivalence merger- $r = .489$ (moderate positive relationship), parent child attachment- $r = .654$ (high positive relationship), self-efficacy- $r = .132$ (very low positive relationship) and social skills- $r = .146$ (very low positive relationship). This showed that avoidance has a very low positive relationship with self-efficacy and social skills, moderate positive relationship with ambivalence worry and ambivalence merger as well as high positive relationship with parent child attachment. This reveals that a small increase in avoidance leads to a small positive but corresponding increase in self-efficacy and social skills. More so, a moderate positive increase in avoidance leads to a corresponding increase in ambivalence worry and ambivalence merger. Furthermore, a high positive increase in avoidance leads to a corresponding increase in parent child attachment.

Ambivalence worry has the following relationships, ambivalence merger $r = -.416$ (low positive relationship), parent child attachment- $r = .325$ (low positive relationship), self-efficacy- $r = .202$ (very low positive relationship) and social skills- $r = .151$ (very low positive relationship). This revealed that a very low positive increase in ambivalence worry leads to a corresponding very low increase in self-efficacy and social skills. More so, a low positive increase in ambivalence worry leads to a low corresponding increase in parent child attachment while a moderate positive increase in ambivalence worry leads to a moderate positive increase in ambivalence merger. Ambivalence merger has a moderate positive relationship with parent-child attachment ($r = .416$) and a low positive relationship with self-efficacy ($r = .362$) and social skills ($r = .231$) respectively. This implies that a moderate positive increase in ambivalence merger leads to a corresponding moderate positive increase in parent child attachment while a low positive increase leads to a corresponding low positive increase in self-efficacy and social skills. Parent child attachment has a positive high relationship with self-efficacy ($r = .623$) and social skills ($r = .776$). The result showed that a high positive increase in parent-child attachment leads to a corresponding positive high increase in self-efficacy and social skills.

Table 2: Hypothesis testing of the relationship between Parental Attachment and Social skills

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Security	Regression	56.564	1	56.564	1139.234	.000 ^b
	Residual	14.399	290	.050		
	Total	70.963	291			
Avoidance	Regression	60.037	1	60.037	1593.540	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.926	290	.038		
	Total	70.963	291			
Ambivalence Worry	Regression	25.236	1	25.236	160.046	.000 ^b
	Residual	45.727	290	.158		
	Total	70.963	291			
Ambivalence Merger	Regression	49.762	1	49.762	680.691	.000 ^b
	Residual	21.201	290	.073		
	Total	70.963	291			
Parent Child Attachment	Regression	52.880	1	52.880	848.055	.000 ^b
	Residual	18.083	290	.062		
	Total	70.963	291			

Table 2 revealed that security has $F_{1, 290} = 1139.234$, $p < 0.00$, Avoidance- $F_{1, 290} = 1593.540$, $p < 0.00$, Avoidance worry- $F_{1, 290} = 160.046$, Ambivalence merger- $F_{1, 290} = 680.691$, $p < 0.00$ and Parent child attachment- $F_{1, 290} = 848.055$, $p < 0.00$. This showed that security, avoidance, avoidance worry, ambivalence merger as well parent child attachment has significant positive relationships with social skills. Their probability values are 0.00, which is less than the alpha value of 0.05 ($p = 0.00 < 0.05$).

Table 3: Hypothesis testing of the relationship between Parental Attachment and Self-Efficacy

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Security	Regression	69.572	1	69.572	1643.957	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.273	290	.042		
	Total	81.844	291			
Avoidance	Regression	54.302	1	54.302	571.776	.000 ^b
	Residual	27.542	290	.095		
	Total	81.844	291			
Ambivalence Worry	Regression	23.486	1	23.486	116.708	.000 ^b
	Residual	58.358	290	.201		
	Total	81.844	291			
Ambivalence Merger	Regression	68.667	1	68.667	1511.189	.000 ^b
	Residual	13.177	290	.045		
	Total	81.844	291			
Parent Child Attachment	Regression	64.655	1	64.655	1090.825	.000 ^b
	Residual	17.189	290	.059		
	Total	81.844	291			

Table 3 revealed that security has $F_{1, 290} = 1643.957$, $p < 0.00$, Avoidance- $F_{1, 290} = 571.776$, $p < 0.00$, Avoidance worry- $F_{1, 290} = 11.6708$, Ambivalence merger- $F_{1, 290} = 1511.189$, $p < 0.00$ and Parent child attachment- $F_{1, 290} = 1090.825$, $p < 0.00$. This showed that security, avoidance, avoidance worry, ambivalence

merger as well as parent child attachment have significant positive relationship with self-efficacy because their probability (sig.) values of 0.00 is less than the alpha value of 0.05 ($p=0.00 < 0.05$).

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment correlation between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on social skills of male and female undergraduates.

Gender	Social Skills			Parent-Child Attachment		
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	R
Male	141	2.81	.49	2.66	.71	.850
Female	151	2.78	.49	2.63	.63	

Data on Table 4 revealed that the male undergraduate students have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.81 and .49 for social skills as well as mean and standard deviation scores of 2.66 and .71 for parent-child attachment. On the other hand, female undergraduate students have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.78 and .49 for social skills as well as mean and standard deviation scores of 2.63 and .63 for parent-child attachment respectively. The Pearson Product Moment correlation of .850 showed a positive high relationship of parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on social skills of male and female undergraduates.

Table 5 here: Pearson Product Moment Relationship between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on self-efficacy of male and female undergraduates

Gender	Self-efficacy			Parent-Child Attachment		
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	R
Male	141	2.77	.55	2.66	.71	.908
Female	151	2.74	.51	2.63	.63	

Data on Table 5 revealed that the male undergraduate students have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.77 and .55 for self-efficacy as well as mean and standard deviation scores of 2.66 and .71 for parent-child attachment. On the other hand, female undergraduate students have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.74 and .51 for self-efficacy as well as mean and standard deviation scores of 2.63 and .63 for parent-child attachment respectively. The Pearson Product Moment correlation of .908 showed a positive high relationship of parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on self-efficacy of male and female undergraduates.

Table 6: Hypothesis testing of the Relationship between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on social skills of male and female undergraduates.

Gender	Between Groups	1.281	2	.640	2.036	.132
	Within Groups	90.911	289	.315		
	Total	92.192	291			
Parent-child attachment	Between Groups	.955	2	.478	1.178	.309
	Within Groups	117.221	289	.406		
	Total	118.177	291			

Data on Table 6 revealed that gender has $F_{2, 289}=2.036$, $p=.132 >.05$ (not statistically significant) and parent child attachment has $F_{2, 289}=1.178$, $p=.309 >.05$ (not statistically significant). The result reveals that gender of undergraduate students is not a significant moderator of their relationship between social skills and parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) (gender- $F_{2, 289}=2.036$, $p=.132 >.05$ & $F_{2, 289}=1.178$, $p=.309 >.05$).

Table 7: Hypothesis testing of the Relationship between parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on self-efficacy of male and female undergraduates

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	.928	2	.464	1.669	.190
	Within Groups	80.323	289	.278		
	Total	81.251	291			
Parent-child attachment	Between Groups	.646	2	.323	1.378	.254
	Within Groups	67.701	289	.234		
	Total	68.347	291			

Data on Table 7 revealed that gender has $F_{2, 289}=1.669$, $p=.190 >.05$ (not statistically significant) and parent child attachment has $F_{2, 289}=1.378$, $p=.254 >.05$ (not statistically significant). The result showed that gender of undergraduate students is not a significant moderator of their relationship between self-efficacy and parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) (gender- $F_{2, 289}=1.669$, $p=.190 >.05$ & $F_{2, 289}=1.378$, $p=.254 >.05$).

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study showed the relationship between the types of parent-child attachment and how they relate with social skills and academic self-efficacy. The findings reveal that security, avoidance, avoidance worry, ambivalence merger as well as parent-child attachment have significant positive relationships with social-skills of undergraduates. This finding aligns with a recent finding by Okeke and Anierobi (2020), who reported in their study on the relationship between parental attachment and aggressive behaviours of in-school adolescents in Anambra State, Nigeria. Their research found that parental attachment had a positive relationship with social skills. Similarly, earlier findings by Engels, Finkenauer, Meeus and Dekovic (2001), in a study on parental attachment and adolescents' emotional adjustment: the associations with social skills and relational competence found a significant positive correlation between parental attachment and adolescents' social skills. The results of this study also showed that security, avoidance, avoidance worry, ambivalence merger as well parent child attachment have significant positive relationships with self-efficacy. This study aligns with the work of Njoku & Ekeh (2018), whose research indicates attachment patterns as predictors of academic self-efficacy among secondary school students in Rivers state, Nigeria and found significant positive relationships between attachment and self-efficacy. Further supporting this relationship, a study by Tavakoblizadeh, Tabari and Akbari (2015) on academic self-efficacy as a predictive role of attachment styles and meta-cognition skills, found that attachment has significant positive relationships with self-efficacy.

Results of this study further showed a positive high relationship of parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on social skills of male and female undergraduates. The gender of the

undergraduate students was not a significant moderator of their relationship between social skills and parent-child attachment. This finding also corroborates the finding by Wilkinson & Walford (2001) of no significant difference in gender in relation to attachment and social skills.

Results of this study further showed a positive high relationship of parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) on self-efficacy of male and female undergraduates and that the gender of the undergraduate students was not a significant moderator of their relationship between self-efficacy and parent-child attachment.

Conclusively, parent-child attachment (secure, avoidance, ambivalent, disorganized) is positively related with self-efficacy and social skills, and gender of students is not a significant moderator of their relationship between social skills, self-efficacy and parent-child attachment.

Ethical Approval

This study was approved by the University of Nigeria, Nsukka research committee (March 8, 2021). It was performed in accordance with the Declaration of research committee of the University. All participants gave informed consent.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflict of interest.

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author, (Adimora, D.E) due to privacy/ethical restrictions. The data are not publicly available due to restrictions, containing information that could compromise the privacy of research participants. Our policy is to share upon request.

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