

Academic Efficacy and Self Esteem as Predictors of Academic Achievement among School Going Adolescents in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate academic efficacy and self esteem as predictors of academic achievement among school going adolescents in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Descriptive research design was used in the study. Three hundred (300) respondents were selected from Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. The respondents were measured with relevant standardized scale (instruments) which include academic efficacy scale, self esteem scale and student achievement scale with strong reliability coefficient of .89 and the data obtained was analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical analysis of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). Two research hypotheses were raised and answered in the study.

The result showed that there was significant relationship between academic efficacy and students' academic Achievement ($r = .781$; $P < 0.05$) and there was significant relationship between self esteem and students' academic Achievement ($r = .781$; $P < 0.05$).

On the strength of these findings, it was stressed and advocated the need for the parents to teach, monitor the students on to improve on their of self esteem and academic efficacy in the society and that the school going Adolescents need to be trained on how to improve significantly their state of self esteem and academic efficacy and to boost their academic achievement. This will help in reducing the level of poor academic performance of students in the society.

Key words: Self Esteem, Academic Efficacy, School Going Adolescents and Student Achievement

INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement of students especially at the secondary school level is not only a pointer to the effectiveness or otherwise of schools but a major determinant of the future of youths in particular and the nation in general. The medium through which the attainment of individuals and the nation's educational goals can be achieved is learning. Learning outcomes have become a phenomenon of interest to all and this account for the reason why scholars have been working hard to unravel factors that militate against good academic performance (Aremu & Soka, 2002). This phenomenon has been variedly referred to in literature as academic achievement, or scholastic functioning. Academic achievement of learners has attracted attention of scholars, parents, policy-makers and planners. Adeyemo (2001) opined that the major goal of the school is to work towards attainment of academic excellence by students. According to him, the school may have other peripheral objectives; emphasis is always placed on the achievement of sound scholarship.

Besides, virtually everybody concerned with education places premium on academic achievement; excellent academic achievement of children is often the expectation of parents (Osiki, 2001). Over the years, the investigations of the factors that influence academic performance of students have attracted the interest and concern of teachers, counselors, psychologists, researchers and school administrators in Nigeria (Wiseman 1973; Sogbetun 1981). This is because of the public outcries concerning the low standard of education in the country (Imoge 2002).

The declining quality of education in the country and the breeding of graduates with little technical know-how have resulted in serious setbacks to the industrial development of the nation. Different factors are capable of influencing the academic performance of university students. Such factors may be the student's internal state (intelligence, state of health, self esteem, anxiety etc.) and their environment (availability of suitable learning environment, adequacy of educational infrastructure like textbooks and well-equipped laboratories). Investigation of these factors has produced several findings by researchers. For example, Clemens

and Oelke (1967) and Emeke (1984) have attributed the cause of poor academic performance to a combination of personal and institutional factors.

Students often develop goals for learning through the examination and their understanding about themselves, the task, and their expectations of success. To extend goal orientation theory and examine the extent to which goals are related to students' beliefs and expectations about their capabilities to perform successfully in school, academic efficacy was introduced in this study. Bandura (1997) defined academic efficacy as people's judgment of their capabilities to complete a designated task successfully. Students with high academic efficacy often take on more challenging tasks, put in more effort, persist in the face of difficulty, and use strategies to make learning meaningful. When students believe in themselves, they may also be more likely to develop enabling goals that when executed will facilitate the accomplishing of the task, while students with sabotaging beliefs about their capabilities may avoid the learning task and opportunities to seek help. Thus, understanding students' beliefs about their capabilities can help educators understand better how goals are adopted and retained, where students' motivation comes from, and how to help students sustain the motivation that they gradually develop. Many researchers have suggested that students' academic efficacy is a good predictor of academic achievement and motivation (Graham & Weiner, 1996; Pajares, 2003; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; academic efficacy, and Achievement Pintrich & Schunk, 1995).

As Bandura (1997) suggested, people's subjective self-appraisals are related to a specific area and they may view themselves as very competent in one area but not in another. Researchers have examined the interplay between academic efficacy and performance goals in predicting learning and achievement, suggesting that academic efficacy plays a moderating role between performance goals and patterns of learning (Butler, 1993; Elliott & Dweck, 1988). They have found that students with performance goals are more vulnerable to maladaptive patterns of learning when they also have low academic efficacy than students who have high academic efficacy. They further suggested that students who adopt performance goals may have adaptive patterns of learning when accompanied by a high sense of academic efficacy for learning (Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Therefore, Elliott and Dweck (1988) suggested that patterns of learning for students who adopt performance goals were highly dependent on the level of academic efficacy. Although such a moderating effect was suggested, several correlational studies have failed to find such a relationship (Harackiewicz et al., 1997; Kaplan & Midgley, 1997; Miller, Behrens, Greene, & Newman, 1993). As studies examining the interaction effect between performance goals and academic efficacy have focused primarily on performance-approach goals, ignoring performance-avoidance goals. Elliot (1999) and Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000) suggested that academic efficacy, and Achievement there is a need to test the interactions of self-efficacy with performance-avoidance goal separately to detect the buffer-effect that either beliefs or goals have on achievement.

Wiseman (1973), Sogbetan (1981) and Hassan (1983) among others have examined the causes of poor academic performance among secondary school students. Some of the factors identified are intellectual ability, poor study habit, achievement motivation, lack of vocational goals, low self esteem, low socio-economic status of the family, poor family structure and anxiety. The consequences of these include indiscipline in schools and low level of educational standard. A Daily Sketch Publication on "Causes and Cures of Poor Performance at West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE)" in 2006 identified and categorized problems responsible for students' poor performance to problems of teachers, problems of inadequate facilities in the schools, problem traceable to students, problems caused by parents and society at large and problems of government policies and low funding of the education sector (Ajila and Olutola 2007).

Self-esteem has long been considered an essential component of good mental health. It is a widely used concept both in popular language and in psychology. It refers to an individual's sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Self-esteem is a set of attitudes and beliefs that a person brings with him or herself when facing the world. It includes beliefs as to whether he or she can expect success or failure, how much effort should be put forth, whether failure at a task will "hurt," and whether he or she will become more capable as a result of difficult experiences (Coopersmith, 1967, 1981). In basic terms, self-esteem is an internal belief system that an individual possesses about one's self. The concept of self-esteem has been researched by several social scientists.

Several theorists have specifically identified academic performance as an important determinant of global self-esteem. Harter (1985) identified self-perceived competence in scholastics as one of the five major dimensions that individuals use to evaluate themselves. Erickson (1968) specifically identified academic achievement as a vital component in forming a healthy self-image. Academic self-esteem is operationally defined as the evaluative appraisal of the experience of being capable of meeting academic challenges and being

worthy of happiness. Academic self-concept or academic self-esteem can be broadly considered to be how a student views his or her academic ability when compared with other students (Cokley, 2000). However, other evidence indicates that members of stigmatized or disadvantaged groups also protect their self-esteem by selectively devaluing those domains in which the out-group is advantaged and selectively valuing those domains in which their in-group has advantages (Major, Sciacchitano, & Crocker, 1993).

In order to fill the gaps in the literature presented above, the present study concentrates on academic efficacy and self esteem as predictors of academic achievement among school going adolescents in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

As noted by some researchers, academic achievement difficulties of students have been a recurring concern for secondary school education worldwide for various reasons, including the assumption that an improvement in achievement implies a higher graduation rate (Alexander, 2000; Tinto, 1993) and the financial implications of students' academic achievement, that is, the academic dismissal of students due to poor academic achievement can have negative effect on the budget of education (Burke, Modarresi, & Serban, 1999; Nonis & Wright, 2003).

In particular, poor academic outcomes can influence the reputation of a school because academic success is associated with the quality of the school. The alarming rate of failure in our secondary schools is highly embarrassing (Muraina, 2009).

In view of the points above, the study focuses on academic efficacy and self esteem as predictors of academic achievement among school going adolescents in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate on academic efficacy and self esteem as predictors of academic achievement among school going adolescents in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, other purposes of the study include to;

1. Examine the relationship between academic efficacy and students' academic achievement.
2. Access the relationship between self esteem and students' academic achievement.

Research Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant relationship between academic efficacy and students' academic achievement.
2. There will be no significant relationship between self esteem and students' academic achievement.

Significance of Study

This study will be highly important to the government at all level, the parents, educational planners, decision and policy makers as well as other stakeholder in education. However, this study will help the public and private schools to know and ascertain the influence of academic efficacy on the students' academic achievement, thereby making the stakeholders to develop appropriate strategies towards the students' improvement.

The study will provide an insight understanding for the parents to know the effect of self esteem on the students' academic achievement. The academic efficacy and self esteem as predictors of academic achievement among school going adolescents will enable the government and the general public to be aware of the effects of these factors and work towards better improvement.

It is important to note that findings in this study will also serve as a source of reference for other researchers who may want to conduct the same or similar study in other subjects or part of the country.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design used in this study was descriptive study. It is going to ascertain the effects of the independent variables (academic efficacy and self esteem) on the dependent variable (students' academic achievement) without manipulations. However, it is carefully observed and recorded information as it naturally occurred at the time the study was conducted.

Population

The population for the study comprises of all secondary school students in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for this study comprises 300 participants which were randomly selected from secondary school students in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Thirty secondary school students were selected from ten selected schools through stratified random techniques balloting. On the whole, three hundred secondary school students were selected.

Instrumentations

Academic Efficacy

The Academic efficacy scale developed by Chemers et al. (2001) was used as a measure of students' Academic efficacy. It is a twenty one (21) item scale with responses anchored based on the four likert points. According to Chemers et al. (2001), the scale has the Cronbach alpha coefficient ranged from 0.73 to 0.83 with test-retest reliabilities of 0.60-0.882.

Students' Self Esteem Scale

In the attempt to measure self esteem of the students, the Rosenberg's Self-Esteem survey instrument (1993) was used. This instrument consists of ten (10) short questions responses anchored base on the four likert points and had an internal consistency between alpha .75 and .90.

Academic Achievement

The academic achievement of students was measured through self developed scale base on the present scheme of secondary school students one (SSS 1). It is a twenty item Questions which consist of both English language and Mathematics. The scale was validated and the Cronbach alpha coefficient yielded 0.73.

Procedure for Data Collection

The instruments were administered to the participants on the day approved by the school authorities for the exercise. The researcher was assisted by some teachers in the administration and collection of the instruments. In each of selected school, the administration and collection of instruments were done on the same day of administration. The instrument was administered on the participants in their various schools by the researcher with the support of the teachers in the schools.

Data Analysis

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical analysis was used to analyse the data.

RESULTS

Research hypothesis one: There will be no significant relationship between academic efficacy and students' academic performance

Table 1: The summary table showing the relationship between academic efficacy and students' academic Achievement

Variable	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig	P
Academic Efficacy	300	23.10	51.09	.781	.000	Significant P<0.05
Students' Academic Achievement	300	14.44	46.34			

The table 1 above showed that there was significant relationship between academic efficacy and students' academic Achievement ($r = .781$; $P < 0.05$). This means that academic efficacy influence the level of students' academic Achievement.

Research hypothesis two: There will be no significant relationship between self esteem and students' academic Achievement

Table 2: The summary table showing the relationship between self esteem and students' academic Achievement

Variable	N	Mean	SD	R	Sig	P
Self Esteem	300	17.86	49.03	.861	.000	Significant P<0.05
Students' Academic Achievement	300	25.04	41.34			

The table 2 above showed that there was significant relationship between self esteem and students' academic Achievement ($r = .781$; $P < 0.05$). This means that self esteem influence the level of students' academic Achievement.

DISCUSSION

The result of the first research hypothesis revealed that there was significant relationship between academic efficacy and students' academic Achievement ($r = .781$; $P < 0.05$). This means that academic efficacy influence the level of students' academic Achievement. This is in line with the studies of of Elias and MacDonald (2007) who assess the ability of prior academic performance and academic efficacy in predicting college academic performance with a sample of 202 (115 females and 87 males) undergraduate students at a large university in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States. These authors found that prior performance had a significant and positive effect on both academic self-efficacy beliefs and college academic performance

and academic self-efficacy beliefs accounted for a significant amount of unique variance beyond prior performance in predicting college academic performance. For example, Many researchers have attempted to relate academic efficacy to different educational, social, and psychological factors such as the strategies of learning (e.g., Pintrich & De Groot, 1990), motivational constructs such as persistence and goals/goal setting (e.g., Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Schunk & Ertmer, 1999), affective constructs such as stress and anxiety (e.g., Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001; Finney & Schraw, 2003; Solberg & Villareal, 1997; Zajacova et al., 2005), academic achievement (e.g., Adeyemo, 2007; Bembenutty, 2007; Campbell, 2007; Chandler, 2006; Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, 2001; Gore, 2006; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Pajares, 1996; Zajacova et al., 2005). These researchers have reported that students with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to be more self-regulated and persistent in their learning, more motivated to learn and to be successful in their learning, experience less stress and anxiety, and as a consequence have higher academic achievement than their counterparts who are low in academic efficacy. In research that has examined the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement of students at different levels of education, with the exception of a few studies (Jeffreys, 1998; Reynolds & Weigand, 2010), it has been consistently documented that students with higher levels of academic self-efficacy have significantly higher academic performance compared to their counterparts who are low in academic efficacy. That is, when students have strong beliefs in their academic capabilities to perform well, they will have higher academic achievement than their counterpart students with low beliefs in their capabilities to perform well academically.

The result of the second research hypothesis revealed that there was significant relationship between self esteem and students' academic Achievement ($r = .781$; $P < 0.05$). This means that self esteem influence the level of students' academic Achievement. This is in line with the studies of Different studies have reached the conclusion that academic achievement and self-esteem are positively correlated (Bankston & Zhou, 2002; Lockett & Harrell, 2003; Schmidt & Padilla, 2003). For example, West, Fish, and Stevens (1980) cited a correlation ranging from 0.18 to 0.50 between general self-esteem and academic achievement. Another study, conducted by Carr, Borkowski, and Maxwell (1991) found self-esteem to be a significant predictor of reading awareness. Covington (1989) reports that as level of self-esteem increases, so does the level of academic achievement scores but as the level of self-esteem decreases, achievement declines. He concluded that self-esteem can be modified through direct instruments which can lead to achievement gains. Reasoner (2005) explained that there is a general agreement among researchers that there is a close relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement but that there are considerable disagreements among them as to the nature of the relationship. Some researchers argue that students who perform higher in school do so to possess positive self-esteem, while others argue that positive self-esteem is a necessary pre-requisite for academic achievement.

Conclusion

Base on the findings of this study, persistent poor academic performance of Nigerian secondary school students due to academic efficacy and self esteem should not continue indefinitely. There is hope that with the improvement of academic efficacy and self esteem, the situation can be changed for the better. The study discovered that academic efficacy and self esteem influence significantly the students' academic achievement in the society. As such, it is very crucial to improve these factors (academic efficacy and self esteem) so as to eradicate the persistent occurrence of poor students' academic achievement in this great country, Nigeria.

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