

Relationship Among Self-Esteem, Attitude to School and Students' Academic Performance among Federal Government Colleges in North-West Zone of Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between self-esteem and attitude to school on students' academic performance among Federal Government Colleges in Northwest zone of Nigeria. Three research questions, objectives and research hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive correlational design. A sample of 269 SSII students was drawn from the population of 3,430 through multi-stage sampling technique and with the aid of Research Adviser (2006) table for determining sample size. Two set of instruments were adapted in the study: Akinboye (1985) Adolescent Personality Data Inventory (APDI) Sub-scale A to measure the students' self-esteem with a reliability 'r' index of 0.67, Adapted version of Federal Ministry of Education Questionnaire on Attitude to School Scale (PES) to measure student's attitude to school with a reliability 'r' index of 0.87 and researcher designed tests in English language and Mathematics with a reliability 'r' indices of 0.71 and 0.66 respectively. Findings revealed no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic Performance of students while the results of the multiple regressions analysis shows that attitude to school is a better predictor of academic performance than self-esteem of students in Federal Government Colleges in Northwest zone of Nigeria. Based on the findings, recommendations were made including that parents, teachers and counsellors should try to encourage positive attitude to school in students in order to enhance their academic performance since it is indicated in the research finding that attitude to school is a better predictor of academic performance of students.

Introduction

The prevalent poor academic performance in most secondary schools in Nigeria today has devastating effect on the country's image and presents an over whelming challenge to educators and parents. Academic performance is the knowledge and skills acquired through training. Academic performance is determined by the performance of students in different school subjects over a period of time. Academic performance is one of the top priorities for schools. It is the outcome of education, that is the extent to which a student, teacher and institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic performance is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important. According to Musa (2013) academic performance is the qualitative description of students' level of accomplishment through the use of test and other tools. To achieve this aim Musa (2013) emphasized that it become necessary to frame the questions for the education from a proper sampling of all areas as mentioned in Bloom's taxonomy of education which are knowledge, comprehension, analysis, evaluation and application. To Muhammad (2013), academic performance is the basic index of quality education. Salau (2015) asserted that academic performance had been linked with various factors of which some are resident in the society, some in the school, some in the child's home and others in the child himself.

Various factors have been suggested as sources of influence on student's academic performance: self-esteem and attitude to school as variables on a child are very important. Self-esteem affects school success. Children who feel good about themselves and their abilities are much more likely to do well in school than children who often think they can't do things right. School success, in turn, affects a child's self-esteem. How children do in school will affect how they feel about themselves. Children who do poorly in school often think poorly of themselves. However, despite popular beliefs that high self-esteem facilitates good academic achievement, only a modest correlation was discovered between general self-esteem and school performance (Katz. 1995).

Self-esteem is considered to be a state of mind. It is the way people think and feel about themselves. Having high self-esteem means having feelings of confidence, worthiness and positive regard for oneself. People with high self-esteem feel good about themselves. They feel a sense of belonging and security. They respect themselves and appreciate others. They tend to be successful in life because they feel confident in taking on challenges and risking failure to achieve what they want. They have more energy for positive pursuits because their energy is not wasted on negative emotions, feelings of inferiority or working hard to take care of or please others at the expense of their own self-care (Bello, 2016). The amount of self-esteem an individual has depends on many factors including how the person was raised, his parental attitudes, life experiences, and the like.



Sometimes people loose self-esteem and feel bad about themselves because of failures or disappointments in life, or because of the way others have treated them. It is important to know that self-esteem can be gained at any time in life. Ideally, it happens in childhood; realistically, most people have to cultivate it later in life (Southern Astrophysical Research Programme (SOAR), 2003).

Self-esteem more often is used to refer to the affective or emotional aspect of self and generally refers to how one feels about or how he values himself or herself. This is sometimes used as a synonym for self-worth, although some authors suggest self-worth is a more central concept (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). This relates to the discussion of one's being or one's action is more important to constructing one's self views. However, Abdullahi (2011) argued that Self-esteem continues to be one of the most commonly research concepts in social psychology, its significance is often overstated to the extent that low self-esteem is viewed as the cause of all evil and high self-esteem as the cause of all good. Self-esteem is associated with depression, anxiety, motivation and general satisfaction with one's life (Masqud, 1998). It is believed that, children and adolescents who lack self-esteem may be more dependent on their parents and have lower academic and vocational goals (Rohner, 1995).

Attitude to school is one of the psychosocial factors that can predict students' academic performance. Chilota (2008) defined attitude as a positive or negative affective reactions towards a denotable abstract or concrete thing or proposal. Attitude describes a person's feelings, thinking or manner of responding towards particular activity, object, person or idea. Chilota (2008) argue that, attitude entails any existing predisposition to respond to social objectives which interact with other variables, guides and direct overt behaviour of the individual.

The concept attitude to school, thus embrace the conditions under which some disposition are initially formed and consequently modified in a course of a person interaction with his physical and social matters of opinion and in deep seated sentiments that are properly regarded as constructive personality, changes that occur in the natural course of maturation and experiences as well as those that result to exposure to deliberate persuasion or propaganda (Tambawal, 2012). Tambawal (2012) defined attitude to school as the tendency or disposition that student has to respond positively or negatively to teaching and learning or school related activities. Psychologist Cromback in Oyelowo (2002) stated that so many factors influence students' attitude to school, the social environment of student plays an important role on shaping the students' attitude to school and academic success of the students. This is because attitude is always affected by the surroundings in which an individual lives and other people with whom he comes into regular contact with. Oyelowo (2002) has established that out of the agencies and influences that contribute to academic success or failure in the early years, attitude is the most potent source of influence. Rasaq (2011) also concluded that the interest that students take in school activities is closely related to their success or failure in life.

Statement of the Problem

Academic performance is interestingly an important issue; a fundamental premium upon which all teaching/learning activities are measured using some criteria of excellence e.g. good academic performance, poor academic performance and academic failure. The concern for improving academic performance has also increased in the years. The reason for this can be attributed to the high percentage of poor performance of the students at the secondary school level in recent time. It is worthy to note that in Nigeria, the successful completion of six-year secondary education is the foundation or the basis of studentship in the University, College of Education or Polytechnic.

The release of results from the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) is always followed by public outcry as student's performances in both examinations do not match the government and parental investment in the North-west zone of Nigeria. All stakeholders are unhappy as to why the system is turning out senior secondary graduate with poor results. This has made failure in public examination a problem of national concern.

Failure in public examination poses serious danger of polluting the streets with drop-out, half-educated, maladjusted, unemployables that can only constitute a social menace and a threat to the peace and stability of the Nation in general and North-west zone in particular. The education system and its processes in terms of the quality of inputs and the psychosocial disposition of the learner relative to the teaching and learning process have been implicated. Among the psychosocial variables of the learner that are considered significant in his/her performance are self-esteem and attitude to school. It is in the light of this that the researcher looked in to variables that could bring about improvements among Senior Secondary School Students academic performance and how these variables can contribute towards an improved educational standard in general. Therefore, the main thrust of the present study was to examine the relationship between self-esteem and attitude to school on students' academic performance among some selected Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria.



Research Questions

To guide the study, the following research questions were raised:

- 1. Is there any relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria?
- 2. Is there any relationship between attitude to school and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria?
- 3. Is self-esteem a better predictor of academic performance than attitude to school of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

This study was to find out:

- 1. The relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria
- 2. The relationship between attitude to school and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria
- 3. Whether self-esteem is a better predictor of academic performance than attitude to school of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between attitude to school and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria

Ho3: Self-esteem is not a better predictor of academic performance than attitude to school of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria

Methodology

A correlational survey method was used in this study to determine the relationships between self-esteem and attitude to school, and how these two variables (referred to as predictor variables) predict students' academic performance (the criterion variable). The population for the study consists of senior secondary school (SSII) students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria with a total number of three thousand four hundred and thirty (3,430) students. To sample the states for this study, 3 states were purposively selected from the North-west zone which include; Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States. The total population of Federal Government Colleges in the 3 states was 8. Thus, the whole 8 Federal Government Colleges in the 3 states was purposively selected. A purposive or judgment sampling is a technique used for the study based on the assumption that with good judgment, one can handpick element of cases in a population, which are satisfactory in relation to one's needs. The sample of 269 students comprising of both male and female students was selected with aid of Research Advisor (2006) table for determining sample size to simplify and justify the work. Thereafter, the sample of 269 students was proportionately selected across the 8 schools. The proportionate sampling technique was used to select corresponding number from the various schools to ensure equal or proportional representation (Creswell, 2008). With proportionate sampling method, the researcher does not leave the representativeness of the sample entirely to chance.

In selecting students to represent the sample in each school, the researcher used simple random sampling technique by writing 'YES' and 'NO' on folded piece of papers. All those students that picked 'YES' were selected to represent students sample of the population while those that picked 'NO' were not selected to represent the students sample which indicated that all students were given equal chance of being selected. The number of respondents selected in each school was presented in Table 1.



Table 1: Sample Size of the Study

S\NO	Colleges	Population	Sample Size Required for the Study	Percentage%
1.	Federal Science College Sokoto, Sokoto State	153	43	16%
2.	Federal Government College Sokoto, Sokoto State	245	69	26%
3.	Federal Government Girls College Tambawal, Sokoto State	48	14	5%
4.	Federal Science Technical College Zuru, Kebbi State	34	10	4%
5.	Federal Government Girls College Gwandu, Kebbi State	139	40	15%
6.	Federal Government College Birnin Yauri, Kebbi State	81	23	9%
7.	Federal Government College Anka, Zamfara State	125	36	13%
8.	Federal Government Girls College Gusau, Zamfara State	120	34	12%
Total		945	269	100%

Research Instruments

Three set of instruments were used by the researcher to measure the students' self-esteem, attitude to school and academic performance. Two adapted instruments were used by the researcher while the researcher designed tests in English language and Mathematics was used to measure academic performance of students. The following are the instruments:

- i. Adapted version of Akinboye (1985) Adolescent Personality Data Inventory (APDI) Sub-scale A to measure the students' self-esteem.
- ii. Adapted version of Federal Ministry of Education Questionnaire on Attitude to School Scale (PES) to measure student's attitude to school.
- iii. Researcher designed Test in English Language and Mathematics for Senior Secondary School II (SS II) students, to measure student's academic performance.

Adapted version of Akinboye (1985) Adolescent Personality Data Inventory (APDI) Sub-scale A

The Adolescent Personality Data Inventory (APDI) (Sub-scale A) was originally developed by Akinboye (1985) with 30 items on the instrument, in an attempt to develop the course "Psychology of Nigerian Adolescents" at the Department of Guidance and Counselling, University of Ibadan. It was developed to assess some of the social, familial, biological, personal, psychological and educational factors affecting the behaviour of Nigerian adolescents. However, the researcher adapted the first twenty items and also adapted the 5 point likert-scale to a 4 point likert-scale by subjecting the instrument to a pilot testing to assess the appropriateness and practicality of the data collection instrument and still found the instrument appropriate for senior secondary school students. Thus, in this study the inventory which has 20 test items was adapted and administered to the sample group to measure the students' self-esteem.

Validity of (APDI) Sub-scale A

The researcher exposed the instrument to experts to scrutinize whether the statements in the instrument do relate to what they are supposed to measure. Draft of the instrument was given to experts from the Department of Educational Foundations, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto, who are professional counsellors and experts in Guidance and Counselling as well as the researcher's supervisors to check how well the items were developed and whether the items are relevant in answering the research questions and testing the hypotheses. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated in the corrections made for the final instrument. At the end of the exercise, the test items were adjudged to posses construct and content validity.

Reliability of (APDI) Sub-scale A

The researcher used a population of 40 students from Federal Government College Daura, Katsina State, a test-retest correlation was carried out with an interval of six weeks between the first and second administration of the instrument to ensure they did not exactly remember their previous responses. With the use of Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient formula, a reliability coefficient of 0.67 was obtained. This was considered to be good enough for use in this study.



Scoring of (APDI) Sub-scale A

In APDI (Sub-scale A), the scoring of self-esteem with statement like Strongly Agree "SA" response carries 4 marks, Agree "A" response carries3 marks, Strongly Disagree "SD" response 2 marks while Disagree "D" response carries only 1 mark. The total scores obtained by the individual represent the level of his or her self-esteem. APDI Subscale A maximum score is 80 points and the minimum score is 20 points.

Adapted version of Federal Ministry of Education Questionnaire on Attitude to School Scale (ATS)

The attitude to school scale was designed by Federal Ministry of Education, Guidance and Counselling Unit for secondary school students. The instruments consist of twenty (20) items. However, the instrument was adapted for use because of the date of the instrument which is 1986 and the use of five point likert-scale of SA, A, U, D, SD. The current practice is the use of a 4 point likert-scale of SA, A, D, SD. This was to disregard the idea that someone who did not decide at all obtained more score than the one who made choice. Thus, the respondents provided answers on a four point rating scale. The response symbols are: SA= Strongly Agree; A= Agree; D= Disagreed and SD= Strongly Disagreed.

Validity of Attitude to School Scale (ATS)

This is another instrument that was used in collecting data for this study. It was adapted from the Federal Ministry of Education guidance and counseling unit for use. To validate the instrument, it was given to some experts from the Department of Educational Foundations, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto, who are professional counsellors and experts in Guidance and Counselling as well as the researcher's supervisors. These test experts' independent judgment was considered to determine the construct and content validity of the instrument.

Reliability of the Attitude to School Scale (ATS)

To investigate the aspect of reliability, the researcher administered the test twice over a period of six weeks, to determine the stability of scores over time using 40 SSII students which are selected from Federal Government College Daura, Katsina State. With the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula, a test-retest reliability coefficient 'r' of .87was obtained. This result was considered adequate and good enough for use.

Scoring of Attitude to School Scale (ATS)

1. The instrument was hand scored for all items as indicated in the answer. Key: SA= 4points; A= 3points; SD= 2points and D= 1point. The maximum score is 80 points and the minimum score is 20 points.

Researcher Designed Test in English Language and Mathematics for Senior Secondary School II (SS II) students

The items for both English Language and Mathematics test were carefully chosen using a table of specification which contains 20 items for each subject respectively. The items were selected based on the syllabus of English Language and Mathematics for SS II students.

Validity of English Language and Mathematics Test

Both English Language and Mathematics teachers who are examiners of WAEC, NECO and NABTEB and as well as teachers of the two subjects were given the test to peruse to ascertain their appropriateness for SS II student. Their independent judgment was considered to determine their content validity.

Reliability of English Language and Mathematics Test

To establish the reliability of the instrument, a test-re-test was carried out by the researcher. The test was administered on 40 students at (6 weeks interval), to determine the stability of scores over time from Federal Government College Daura, Katsina State. With the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient formula, a reliability coefficient of 0.71 for English Language and 0.66 for Mathematics were obtained.

Scoring of Mathematics and English Language Test

The performance test consist of 20 objective questions and each question is followed by four options lettered a, b, c and d for respondents to choose for both subjects (English Language and Mathematics). Each correct answer carries 2 marks, thus, the maximum score possible in both is 80 and minimum score is 0.

Method of Data Analysis

The analysis of data was based on the research hypotheses earlier formulated to guide the study by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20.0 (Statistical Software). Ho₁ and Ho₂ were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient statistics while Ho₃ was subjected to Multiple Regression



analysis.

Data Presentation and Analysis

 \mathbf{H}_{01} : There is no significant relationship between Self-esteem and Academic Performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria

Table 2: Relationship between Self-esteem and Academic Performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria (N= 269)

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	P-value	Decision
Self-esteem	269	54.97	10.817			Not Significant
				.015	.800	
Academic Performance	269	40.23	13.551			

Source: Field Work 2018.

From table 2, it can be seen that the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students has a calculated r-value of .015 which was low; p>.05. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria because the p-value is greater than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis which says there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria was retained. This means that the value student attached to themselves does not significant affect their academic performance in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Attitude to School and Academic Performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria

Table 3: Relationship between Attitude to School and Academic Performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria (N= 269)

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	P-value	Decision
Attitude to School	269	64.47	6.637			
				.135	.027	Significant
Academic Performance	269	40.23	13.551			_

Source: Field Work 2018.

From table 3, it can be seen that the relationship between attitude to school and academic performance of students has a calculated r-value of .154. Thus, the hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that there is significant relationship between attitude to school and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria because the p-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis which says there is no significant relationship between attitude to school and academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria was rejected. This means that positive attitude to school greatly leads to better academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria.

Ho3: Self-esteem is not a better predictor of Academic Performance than Attitude to School of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria

Table 4: Regression Analysis on Students' Academic Performance

Variables	R	\mathbb{R}^2	Adjusted R ²	SE	F	В	T	P-value
Self-esteem	.003	.000	004	.079	.002	.010	.123	.902
Attitude to School	.033	.001	003	.137	.298	.345	2.511	.013

Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

A look at the squared part correlations revealed that self-esteem accounted for 0.3% of the variance in academic performance R^2 adj = -.004, F (1, 268)) = .002, p > .05 while attitude to school accounted for 3.3% of the variance in academic performance R^2 adj = -.003, F (2, 267) = .298, p < .05. Thus, the significant results of the procedure indicated that attitude to school was able to account for significant amount of variance in the dependent variable (academic performance) while self-esteem (B = .010; t = .123; p > 0.05) was not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that attitude to school, $\beta = .345$, t = 2.511, p < .05 emerged as the significant predictor. This indicated that attitude to school is a better predictor of academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria than self-esteem.

Summary of Findings

In view of the hypotheses tested and interpreted the following summaries were generated;

- 1. The value students attached to themselves does not significant affect their academic Performance in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria.
- 2. Positive attitude to school greatly leads to better academic performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria.



3. Regression Analysis indicated that Attitude to School was a better predictor of Academic Performance of students in Federal Government Colleges in North-west zone of Nigeria than Self-esteem.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study revealed that no significant relationship was found between self-esteem and academic performance of students. This finding is in agreement with the study of Patrick and Joseph (2005) who found no correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement for the gifted group. The finding is contrary to that of Muhammad, Syed and Khalid (2015) who found out a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of students. It can be therefore concluded that students need to believe that they have the capacity to achieve what they need and want to, for he/she to adequately cope with the challenges of academic performance. The student who does not belief in either of the above may academically have an external sense, but is probably less effective and creative than he or she would be if he or she possessed self-esteem.

Finding two revealed there was a significant relationship between attitude to School and academic Performance of students. This finding concurs with the study of Bakori (2007) who infers that there is significant relationship between attitude to school and academic achievement. This is consistent with the findings of White and Balami in Tambawal (2012), who agreed that attitude, is a determinant in learning achievement. However, Banu in Tambawal (2012) identify other related significant factors such as teacher related factors and parents attitude towards school. Emina in Tambawal (2012) notes that attitude is a basis for motivation in academic achievements. Therefore, desirable attitude which enhances students' academic performance should be reinforced by teachers in the classroom and parents at home.

The regression analysis indicated that attitude to school was a better predictor of academic performance of students than self-efficacy, self-esteem and parental expectation. This finding is in agreement with the study of Bakori (2007) who found out that attitude to school is a better predictor of students' academic achievement. According to Chilota (2008) in an environment where school activities are encouraged students tend to develop appropriate attitude toward school. It is the established emotion that exerts strong influence on students' academic performance.

Also, Oyelowo (2002) observed that so many factors influence students' academic performance. The social environment of a student plays an important role on shaping the student's attitude to school and invariably his academic performance. This is because attitude is always affected by surrounding in which a student lives. Other studies such as Adeshina and Banu cited in Tambawal (2012) identify attitude as an important variable that can improve the academic achievement of the child. In their separate studies, they all agreed that there is need to develop strategies that will foster desirable attitude to school among students in other to improve academic achievement. Thus, it can be concluded that, the social environment of student plays an important role on shaping the students attitude to school for academic performance of the students. This is because attitude is always affected by the surrounding in which an individual lives and other people with whom he makes regular contact.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, attitude to school was found to be more related to academic performance of students. This means that attitude to school has great influence on students' academic performance. The study concluded that attitude to school was a better predictor of academic performance of students than self-esteem.

Recommendations

In view of the above findings, it was recommended that:-

- 1. School counsellors should encourage students to believe that they have the capacity to achieve a set goal and adequately cope with the challenges of academic performance.
- 2. Students should be encouraged by teachers and counsellors to develop a healthy attitude to school and to school activities by creating an enabling environment for students, as this can possibly enhance students' academic performance.
- 3. Parents, teachers and counsellors should try to encourage positive attitude to school in students in order to enhance their academic performance through parental support, provision of school stationeries and creating an enabling school environment for students since it is indicated in the study finding that attitude to school is a better predictor of academic performance of students.

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