

Self-Esteem and Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Gombe Metropolis: Implication for Counselling

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between Self-esteem and the Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Gombe Metropolis: Implication for Counselling. A descriptive survey design was adopted. While purposive sampling procedure was used to select six Senior Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis. In all, 346 students were selected using Krejcie and Morgan's table of determining sample size in a given population. Two set of instruments were used for data collection in this study namely: Adopted version of Akinboye's Adolescent Personality Data Inventory (APDI) Subscale A to measure the Students' Self-esteem and researcher designed Academic Performance Test (APT) which measured academic performance of students in Mathematics and English Language. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and t-test with the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 15.0. The result showed that self-esteem has no significant relationship with Senior Secondary School Students Academic Performance while female students performed better in Mathematics and English Language subjects than their male counterpart in Gombe Metropolis. Based on these findings, it was recommended that counsellors should assist the students in developing positive self-esteem in order to improve their academic performance and to minimize the level of failure in both terminal and public examination.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Academic Performance and Counselling Implication.

Introduction

The Nigerian system of education consists of various levels which include, Basic Education, Post Basic Education (Senior Secondary Education) and Tertiary Education. At the secondary school level, education is meant to be of help in teaching students to be morally, socially and academically sound. Thus excellent academic performance is highly needed and encouraged. But despite the encouragement and the desire for good academic performance of the students, the students seem to be lagging behind academically which that contributes to their poor performance. Several factors have been advanced to affect students' academic performance. Korau (2006) reported that such include the students' factor, teacher factor, societal factor, governmental problem, language problem, examination related variables, textbook related variables and home related variables. In the same vein, Saage (2009) identified specific variables such as poor primary school background in all subjects, lack of incentives for test, lack of interest on the part of students, students not interested in hard work, incompetent teachers in the school and fear of the subjects psychologically.

Today, secondary school students seem to have low self-esteem or lack courage in developing their self-esteem which in one way or the other that affects their academic performance at various school levels. Salawu (1995) observed that during the formative years of a child in the pre-school years and the first few years of schooling, a child normally spends more time in the home with members of his family. According to Oladele (1987), a good home is of great importance to adolescents, who are mostly at secondary school level. A respectable home also provides love, support, help and security that could enable their children to cope with life's demand. When parents love and encourage their children they would tend to become extrovert, warm, conscientious, composed, happy and perform better in the school (Jimoh in Kilgori, 2013). However, Children pay attention to their parents' behavior in the perception of cleverness and ability. If they cannot see the behaviors in their parents, their self-esteem cannot be improved (Fathi & Badleh, 2013). On the other hand, the messages that the children perceive about people closer to them can influence their self-esteem. The children usually perceive everything as reality. Indeed, this improves their attractiveness. Also parents' self-esteem influences their children's lives. The children usually behave according to their parents' behaviors. Therefore, the family's structure plays a significant role in the child's self-esteem (Veenhoven, 2000).

Children's perception of their parents' behaviours toward them has great influence on the way they themselves behave toward their parents and others which could contribute to their successes or failure in life. Therefore, self-esteem also 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).

Furthermore, 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 yourself. 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 (Coopersmith, 1981). The amount of self-esteem an individual has depends on many factors these include, how the person was raised, his parental attitudes, life experiences, and the like. Sometimes people lose 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, 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, Wells & Marwell, Wylie, and Baumeister in 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).

Statement of Problem

The academic performance of senior secondary school graduates in West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) is considerably poor. This remains a major source of concern as good academic performance determines the upward mobility of the students from one class to another as well as the basis of studentship in the university, college of education or polytechnic. More so, it is a means of evaluating the extent to which learning has taken place in the students. Various factors have been adduced, however, available literature appear to be scanty on the variables of this study in Nigeria and Gombe State in particular. Hence, self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis was examined. In the light of this the following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to find out if there is any:

Relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis.

Difference between academic performance and gender of senior secondary school Students in Gombe Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to answer the following:

Is there any relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis?

Is there any difference between students' academic performance and gender?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypothesis were tested in this study:

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis.

H0₂: There is no significant difference between academic performances of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis and gender.

Methodology

Research Design

A correlational research design was used in this study so as to collect data on the students' self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis. The population of this study is made up of all students in public senior secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. There are sixteen (16) public senior secondary schools in Gombe metropolis, with total population of six thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight (6798) students that constitute the population of the study. The study sample consisted of three thousand and Nine (3009) SSII students from the six selected senior secondary schools in Gombe metropolis. A purposive sampling was used in choosing the schools, this method was used because all the schools were located within Gombe metropolis. Using Krejcie and Morgan (2006) table of determining sample size in a given population, 346 students' participants were selected. Proportionate random sampling technique was used to select the population sample for each school according to the strength of the population of each school.

Table 1: Sample size of the study according to the six (6) Selected Public Senior Secondary Schools in Gombe Metropolis

S/No.	Name of Schools	Total No. of Students	Number of Male Students	Male Sample	Number of Female Students	Female Sample	Total Sample Size
	Govt. Arabic College Gombe 1	258	135	16	123	14	30
	Govt. Comprehensive Day Secondary School Gombe.	289	229	26	60	07	33
	Govt. Day Secondary School Bolari East	562	251	29	311	36	65
	Govt. Day Secondary School Gandu	743	455	52	288	33	85
	Govt. Day Secondary School Pantami	611	360	41	251	29	70
	Govt. Day Secondary School Pilot Gombe	546	373	42	173	21	63
	Total	3009	1803	206	2313	140	346

Source: Gombe State Ministry of Education, 2015.

Instrumentation

In order to obtain relevant information for this study, the following research instruments were employed:

Adopted version of Adolescent Personality Data Inventory (APDI) Subscale A by Akinboye (1985) to measure the Students' Self-esteem.

Researcher self-designed Academic Performance Tests of English and Mathematics to measure Students' Academic Performance.

Adolescent Personality Data Inventory (ADPI) Subscale A

The adolescent personality data inventory (ADPI) (subscale A) was developed by Akinboye (1985), 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. In this study, the inventory will be adopted and administered to the sample group to measure the students' self-esteem.

Validity of the Akinboye's Adolescent Personality Data Inventory APDI (Subscale A)

In order to validate this subscale A, Akinboye (1985) reported that test scores from 30 items that survived an initial screening of the original 120 items are subjected to internal consistency analysis. The co-efficient alpha obtained was 0.75. He called this an index of item homogeneity. Thus, the researchers adopted this instrument for the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the subscale A of APDI was measured by the internal consistency method. According to Akinboye (1985), this was indicated by a fairly high co-efficient alpha of 0.874. The alpha values were found by Akinboye (1985) to be sufficiently high enough to determine the reliability of the instrument. Since it has been found to be reliable, the researchers adopted it for this study.

Researchers Designed Academic Performance Test (APT)

The items for both Mathematics and English test were carefully drawn from the Government owned senior secondary schools' end of term examination questions.

The items were selected based on the syllabus of Mathematics and English for SS II students. Both Mathematics and English language 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 SSS II. Their independent judgment was considered to determine their face validity. A reliability index of 0.72 for Mathematics and 0.68 for English Language were obtained via Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient method.

Method of Data Collection

The instrument APDI (subscale A) and English/Mathematics Test were administered in the six (6) selected public senior secondary schools in Gombe metropolis by the researcher with the help of trained research assistants. The (APDI) was first administered and after a short break of 15 minutes, then the English/Mathematics Test was also administered in two intermittent sessions. In all the schools where the test was administered, some members of the staff were assigned to serve as research assistants. Thereafter the completed questionnaires were collected immediately for scoring. The data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics and t-test.

Data Presentation and Analysis

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis.

Table 2: Relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis (N= 346)

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	P-value	Decision
Self-esteem	346	111.9	15.29	.029	.694	Not significant
Academic Performance	346	45.3	10.82			

Source: Researcher's Field work, 2015

From the result of table 2, senior secondary school students' self-esteem and academic performance were positively related but not significant, Pearson's $r = .021$, $p = .694$. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis because the p-value is greater than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis which states there is no significant relationship between

self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis was accepted. This means that self-esteem of students might not be an important determinant of their academic performance.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between academic performance and gender among senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis

Table 3: t-test Statistical Difference of Gender and Academic Performance (N= 346)

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t-Cal	P-value	Decision
Male	206	42.51	10.80	344	.612	.000	Significant
Female	140	49.40	49.40				

Source: Researcher's Field work, 2015

Table 10 shows that on average, female students performed better in English and Mathematics (mean = 49.40) than male students (mean = 42.51). This difference was significant at t-cal (.612), $p (.000) < .05$ level of significance at 344 degree of freedom. This is because the p-value (.000) is less than the .05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant difference between academic performance and gender among senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis was rejected. This implies that gender has influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding indicated there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis. The result of the finding indicated, Pearson's $r = .021$, $p = .694$. This shows that there was no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis because the p-value is greater than the .05 level of significance. This result was in agreement with studies conducted by Patrick & Joseph (2005) finding on the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in high ability students: Evidence from the Wollongong Youth Study. The study reveals that there was no correlation between self-esteem and academic performance. Similarly, Kilgori (2013) also found that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. The result is also in line with finding of Iniama (2014) on the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of freshman at the University of the Virgin Islands. The finding of the study showed

that there was no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance.

Hypothesis two shows that female students perform academically better in English and Mathematics than their male counterpart in Gombe metropolis. Therefore, there is significant difference between academic performance and gender of senior secondary school in Gombe Metropolis, because the average scores of the students shows that, female students performed better (mean = 49.40) than male students (mean = 42.51). This difference was significant at t-cal (.612), $p (.000) < .05$ level of significance at 344 degree of freedom. This is because the p-value (.000) is less than the .05 level of significance. This result was in agreement with the findings of Joshi and Srivastava (2009) which indicated that Girls were significantly higher on academic achievement as compared to boys.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance among the senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis. Hence students' self-esteem is not a determinant factor of their academic performance. This indicates that students' academic performance is independent of their self-esteem and It was also found that there is a significant difference between academic performance and gender, because female students perform academically better than their male counterparts specifically on English and Mathematics. This implies that gender has influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Gombe metropolis.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

There should be well secured learning environment with parental support to enhance a positive self-esteem.

The parents and teachers should team up to encourage their students in building their positive self-esteem and to provide basic needs of their children/ward which are related to their teaching subjects in order to improve their academic performance.

School administrators should find out the strategies to adequately motivate their students, such as organizing speech and prize giving day celebration, quiz and debate among the secondary school students in order to facilitate learning and improve academic performance.

Implications for Counselling

This study has implications for counselling revitalization, since self-esteem was not a determinant factor on students' academic performance because the interest and abilities on students may not be fully developed so as to allow students achieve self-actualization in life. Based on the researchers' findings the dependent variable and independent variables i.e. self-esteem and academic performance, there is no significant relationship among the variables which the hypotheses testified. To assist students to overcome these problems, the following techniques have to be used in counselling students and their parents, counsellors and parents should know that thinking of children do affect their behaviour and by understanding the way they think, counsellors and parents should take note on what children should do and what to avoid during communications. The parents should also form the habits of having confidence in their children, this will enable them feel that they are doing things that are acceptable to themselves, parents, community and school.

The findings of this study also implies that, there is an explosion of poor academic performance of the students in English and Mathematics in our secondary schools particularly the male students. Therefore, counsellors and parents should have greater role to play in shaping the behaviour of the students, by applying adequate counselling techniques that will reinforce or regulate the behaviour and performance of students in school.

Finally, there is the need for secondary schools to employ professional counsellors. It is pertinent that the counsellors be equipped with skills of behaviour modification techniques for effective discharge of their duties, Counsellors are capable of providing educational, persona-social and vocational counselling. The counsellors can help in assisting the students in developing a positive self-esteem in order to improve their academic performance and to minimize the level of failure in both terminal and public examinations.

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