

ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AND SELF-CONCEPT AS CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG STUDENTS OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGES IN NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated achievement motivation and self-concept as correlates of academic performance among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria. Two research objectives, 2 research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population consists of 5,452 and the sample size consists of one thousand two hundred and seventy-five (1,275) Senior Secondary School Students using multi-stage sampling technique which was drawn from three states in North Central in seven (7) Federal Government College from each state using simple random sampling technique. Three instruments were used for data collection which include Students' Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (SAMQ) 0.89, Students' Self-Concept Questionnaire (SSCQ) 0.87 and Students' Academic Performance Test with 0.79, respectively. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Findings of the study shows that there is significant relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance; self-concept and academic performance, respectively. The study concluded that there is significant correlation between achievement motivation, self-concept and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria. The study recommended that English Language teachers should help students realize the fact that success and failure is in their hands, and not associated with any external force and they should be offered professional guidance by educational authorities on these self-constructs in students as an avenue to improve on students' academic performance by help students in developing the right personality construct among others

Keywords: Achievement Motivation, Locus of control, External locus of control, Internal locus of control, School Adjustment

Background to the Study

Achievement motivation can be understood by examining the meaning of achievement and motivation separately. Motivation was explained above while achievement stresses the importance of accomplishment and attainment with effort involved in a particular task. Erhuvwu and Adeyemi (2019) said achievement motivation is defined as the need to perform well or the striving for success and evidence by persistence and effort in the face of difficulties. Achievement motivation: It is a relatively stable willingness in personality that determines the extent of the individual's pursuit and perseverance in order to achieve success or reach the goal (Mayers, 2018).

Achievement motivation in the school context can be defined as a driving force that accounts for students' behaviour in achievement situations (Erhuvwu & Adeyemi, 2019). It determines cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects of student's attachment and contribution to the

process of education in the educational subsector (Tucker, 2008). In addition, Ericksen (2018) defines achievement motivation as "a relatively constant drive in personality that determines the extent to which an individual strives and perseveres in the pursuit of a specific goal and then attains the success that results in reaching the degree of satisfaction in situations involving the evaluation of performance against a specific level of excellence. Mayers (2018) believes that individuals who have low achievement motivation tend to choose tasks in which their probability of success is either very high or very low, and by choosing this, the probability of their success in easy tasks is guaranteed, so that they avoid the feeling of failure and thus a feeling of shame and remorse, and they are choosing the difficult tasks not. They feel shame if they fail to do so and attribute their failure to the difficulty of the task

According to Esra'a and Abu-Alkeshek (2021), achievement motivation is one of the most important aspects of the human motivation system, and it has emerged in recent years as one of the landmarks of research and study in personality and behavior, and it can even be considered one of the most important achievements of contemporary psychological thought, and the topic of achievement motivation is one of the few topics in psychology that has attracted the interest of many researchers. It is considered in many societies the basis of economic and social development and growth, as some of these societies began years ago to prepare programs for training students to develop the achievement motivation in them, so it has become important to identify the factors that can contribute to the formation of the pattern of achievement motivation, especially in our present time (Guay, 2015). Achievement motivation therefore is a significantly important factor for academic learning and achievement from childhood through adolescence. In submission of Uguroglu and Walbert (2017) suggested that achievement motivation as an important contributing factor to students' achievement.

Tella (2017) emphasized that achievement motivation is often correlated with actual academic achievement. Therefore, motivation to achieve, however may evidence itself only in behaviour that children value; a student may be highly motivated to achieve and may be exhibited in other school curriculum activities. Thus, different situations have different achievement attaining values for children. Highly motivated students are probably more inclined to learn ways to cope with stress related test situations than their less motivated peers (Jen, 2008). Moreover, the relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance can be influenced by several factors such as cultural background, socioeconomic status, and the learning environment. Ericksen (2018) sees achievement motivation as a consistent personality trait that influences the extent to which an individual strives for and perseveres in pursuing specific goals, ultimately achieving success and satisfaction when meeting or exceeding a particular standard of excellence.

Self-concept originated from the concept of self, the components of self which include self-image, which refers to the sort of person an individual thinks he is; self-esteem, which refers to how favourable an individual value self and ideal-self, which represents the ideal behaviour manifestations an individual aspires to be. Saikia (2020) explains that self-concept encompasses an individual's attitudes and feelings about themselves, along with a collection of psychological processes that influence behavior and adjustment. In respect to self-concept and academic performance many researchers such as John, et al (2014) found out that students self-concept is perceived positively by students; however, this self-concept does not directly predict students' academic performance. Sayid, (2011) finding showed a close relationship between academic self-concept and measures of academic performance, self-concept is powerfully and positive predicts academic performance. Individuals' feel it is necessary to give adequate and sufficient attention to self-concept and teachers should be offered methodological guidance in

order to work on these throughout the educational process. Samuel (2014) showed that self-concept did not influence academic performance of students, it was recommended that parents, teachers and school counselors should not rate academic performance of students based on their self- concept.

Numerous studies have reported significant relationship between self-concept and academic performances. Bala (2014) found significant relationship between student's high and low in Self-Concept and academic performances. Bala (2014) also found significant negative impact on male and female in terms of self-concept and academic performances. Students sometimes find it difficult to adjust to new school environments, it sometimes again lead to school dropout and facing some sort of difficulty in school life. The study of Rashmi, (2022), Wang and Peck (2013) and Abdul Rashid et al (2023) have shown both positive and negative relationships to these variables in relation to school adjustment and academic performances. In any educational institutions, academic performance is the outcome of educational goals that are achieved either by students or the teacher, i.e., how well a student meets standards set out by local authority or the institution it.

Academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers (Bala, 2014). This could be determined by gender which can be attributed to male and female in term academic performance. A study by Roeser et al. (2012) highlighted that positive emotional experiences and engagement in school were linked to higher academic achievement. On the contrary, poor school adjustment, such as social isolation or behavioral difficulties, can negatively impact academic performance. Based on this, the researcher investigated achievement motivation, locus of control, self-concept as correlates of school adjustment and academic performances of senior secondary school (SSS II) students in Federal Government College students across North Central Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the efforts of government at Federal and State levels to employ highly qualified and competent teachers, improving school facilities and provide necessary social amenities are still needed to improve students' academic performance and school adjustment. Also a significant number of students in the North Central region of Nigeria display low level of motivation to learn and adapt to learning. The increases rate of low academic performance in WAEC examination of secondary schools in Nigeria particular North Central calls for attention. More students increasingly find it difficult coping with the school environment and its challenges. With the academic demands becoming more intense, low self-concept, emotional problems and sometimes the inability to get help from the right source, students may tend to feel frustrated and find it difficult to cope with the school environment (Bama, 2019). They tend to attribute their academic struggles to their teachers and schools, struggle with self-understanding, and face challenges in adapting to the school environment. Some of these students failed to understand their real selves.

The issue of poor academic performance among students is a polemic that continues to be a never-ending debate. This situation worsens every year, especially before students move to higher education institutions. Studies like Abdul Rashid et al (2023), have shown that intelligence is not the main factor in students' academic performance. Non-cognitive factors also need to be identified in understanding the factors contributing to academic performance (Kumar & Tankha, 2020). They further added that achievement motivation has been identified

as an important element in producing outstanding academic performance among students. The pressures of school, family and the environment can undermine student motivation. The ongoing global pandemic has posed major challenges to academic communities including students. Therefore, the study seeks to bridge the gap by examining achievement motivation and self-concept as correlates of academic performance among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study is to:

1. Find-out the relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria
2. Determine the relationship between self-concept and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study

1. What is the relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between self-concept and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were generated for the study.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central Nigeria

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central Nigeria.

Methodology

This study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationships between two or more variables within the same population. Specifically, the design investigated how achievement motivation and self-concept correlate with academic performance in English Language among Federal Government College students in North-Central Nigeria. The correlational approach assessed the degree to which these variables tend to vary together within the same group. As a quantitative research method, it involves analysing multiple quantitative variables from the same population to determine whether statistically significant relationships exist among them. By using this design, the researcher can determine the extent to which

changes in one variable correspond to changes in another, thereby providing valuable insights into their potential associations.

The target population for this study comprise of five thousand four hundred and fifty-two (5,452) Senior Secondary School (SSS II) students from Federal Government Colleges in North-Central, Nigeria. The focus on SSS II students is deliberate for several reasons; they are primarily teenagers, a developmental stage characterized by relative emotional stability under the guidance of both parents and school authorities, also they are not in their final year examination class.

The sample of this study was one thousand two hundred and twenty-five (1,275) Senior Secondary School (SSS II) students from Federal Government Colleges in Nigeria's North-Central region, comprising six states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). This sample size was determined based on a 95% confidence level and a 2.5% margin of error (Research Advisor, 2006), ensuring statistical reliability. The selection of SSS II students was deliberate, as they are in their semi-final year, making them more academically stable and better suited for assessing factors like achievement motivation, locus of control, self-concept, and school adjustment.

The study employed multi-stage sampling technique. The sampling process involved five stages: first, identifying the states and FCT; second, using stratified random sampling to categorize schools into boys-only, girls-only, and co-educational institutions; third, purposively selecting one co-educational school per state (totaling seven schools) to align with the study's focus; fourth, applying proportionate random sampling to allocate sample sizes based on each school's population and fifth, using simple random sampling (via a "Yes" or "No" ballot system) to select final respondents, ensuring equal participation chances (Bebeji & Bello, 2013). This structured approach ensured an unbiased and representative sample, enhancing the study's validity.

The instrument used to collect data for this study were as follows:

1. Students' Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (SAMQ)
2. Students' Self-Concept Questionnaire (SSEQ)
3. English Language Achievement Test (ELAT)
4. Surdents' Achèvement Motivation Questionnaire (SAMQ)

The first instrument, titled the Students' Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (SAMQ), was developed by Erhuvwu and Adeyemi (2019) and adapted for this study to better align with the respondents' driving forces in accomplishing their goals. The original instrument is in five Likert scale and contained thirty items, while researcher select twenty items that are in line with study objectives. The purpose of adapting this instrument is for its linguistic relevance to this study and it is written in simple language for students' easy understanding of items. The instrument contents and structure are in line with applicability to the target population of the study. Also, it is necessary for modification due to original's validity and reliability contents. The test items assess individual traits by measuring different motivational personalities, exploring how individuals are driven to achieve objectives and attain success. Scoring was conducted using a modified four-point Likert scale: 4 = Strongly Agree (SA), 3 = Agree (A), 2 = Disagree (D) and 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) for positively cued items, while negatively cued items (specifically items 4 and 15) were reverse-scored. The total possible scores ranged between 1 and 60, with 60 being the

highest achievable score for combined traits, while individual traits were scored between 1 and 20, with 15 as the maximum per trait. Based on the total scores, performance levels were categorized as high (41–60 points), average (21–40 points), or low (1–20 points).

Students Self-Concept Questionnaires (SSCQ)

The third instrument, the Students' Self-concept Questionnaire (SSCQ), was adapted from Liu and Wang (2005) and comprises 20 items measuring individual self-concept on a 4-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree = 4 to Strongly Disagree = 1). The need for adaptation is because of lengthen of the items for students and population context of the study. The best and concise items from instrument were adapted for the study to consist of 20 statements in the questionnaire that determined students' Self-concept in academic performance. To ensure clarity, items were phrased in simple sentences, with higher scores indicating a more positive self-concept. The total score ranges from 20 to 80, categorized as low (1–40), moderate (41–60), or high (61–80) self-concept. This tool assessed the influence of students' self-concept on their academic or behavioural outcomes.

English Language Achievement Test (ELAT)

The fifth instrument, titled the English Language Achievement Test (ELAT), was designed to measure students' academic performance in English Language. The test comprised fifty (50) multiple-choice objective questions, each with four options, and was adapted from past West African Examinations Council (WAEC) questions. These questions were carefully selected from the May/June examinations conducted between 2021 and 2023 to ensure relevance and alignment with the Senior Secondary School (SSS II) English Language syllabus. Each question carried two (2) marks, totalling a maximum score of 100 marks. The test covered a wide range of topics from the syllabus, providing a comprehensive assessment of students' proficiency in English Language. By utilizing standardized WAEC questions, the ELAT ensured reliability and validity in evaluating academic performance.

To establish the validity of the instruments, it was reviewed by three experts from the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling as well as the Department of English Language at Federal University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State. The experts provided feedback on the instruments, and their observations and recommendations were carefully considered and incorporated to produce the final draft. The test-retest method was employed to assess the reliability of the research instruments, which involves administering the same instrument to the same group of respondents at two different times to evaluate consistency across time. To implement this, the instrument was pilot-tested on a sample of twenty-five (25) students from Federal Government College, Minna a group separate from the main study sample with a three-week interval between the first and second administrations to minimize memory effects while ensuring response stability. A coefficient of 0.832 was obtained for the Students' Achievement Motivation Questionnaire (SAMQ), 0.872 for the Students' Self-concept Questionnaire (SSCQ), For the ELAT, the KR-20 formula was applied due to the test's dichotomously scored multiple-choice items, producing a reliability coefficient of 0.794. The data collected in this study was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). All analyses were conducted at a 0.05 significance level using SPSS Version 23.

Results

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between achievement motivation and students' academic performance in English language among Senior Secondary School Students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria.

Table 1: *r* – value between achievement motivation and academic performance in English Language

Variable	N	Mean	S.D	df	<i>r</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Decision
Achievement Motivation	1,532	32.10	6.07				
				1,273	.673	.011	Sign
Academic Performance	1,532	14.86	3.25				

Correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 shows the analysis of relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance. The finding revealed that the *r*-value is .673 and the *p*-value .011 which is greater than .05 level of significant alpha level at 1,273 degrees of freedom. The stated null hypothesis is rejected. It implies that, there is significant relationship between achievement motivation and students' academic performance in English language among Senior Secondary School Students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and students' academic performance in English Language among Senior Secondary School Students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria.

Table 2: *r* – value between self-concept and academic performance in English Language

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	<i>r</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Decision
Self-Concept	1,532	53.39	10.08				
Academic Performance	1,532	14.86	3.25	1,273	.775	.007	Sign

Correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 indicated the analysis of relationship between self-concept and academic performance in English Language. The finding revealed that the *r*-value is .775 and the *p*-value .007 which is less than .05 level of significance alpha level at 1,273 degrees of freedom. The above stated null hypothesis is rejected. It implies that, there is significant relationship between self-concept and students' academic performance in English Language among Senior Secondary School Students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The results from hypothesis one stated that, there was significant relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria. The findings of this study is in support of the findings of Firouzeh, (2013) which shows that, achievement motivation and academic performance are correlates and interaction with one another. In addition, the finding of this study is in line with the findings of Sarangi (2015) which shows that, there was a significant relationship between the achievement motivation and

academic achievement. In the contrary, the finding of this study opposed the finding of Abdul Rashid et al., (2023) which study found that there was no difference in the level of student achievement motivation and academic performance.

The results from hypothesis two stated that, there was significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance in English Language among senior secondary school students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria. The findings of this study supported with the findings of Jalal, et al. (2014) whose finding indicated that academic self-concept had a positive direct effect on academic performance. The findings also corroborated with the findings of Margaret (2021) whose result obtained revealed that there was a positive relationship between self-concept and academic performance. In the contrary, the finding contradicts the findings of John, et al., (2014) who found out that student self-concept is perceived positively by students but does not directly predict students' academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study the following conclusions were drawn:

Achievement motivation and Self-concept correlate with academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria while Self-concept correlates with academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students of Federal Government Colleges in North Central, Nigeria. Thus, the findings can provide greater insight to teachers, psychologists, and educational institutions to better plan the academic environment around the students to adjust to school environmental factors. The study gives a contemporary model to enhance the academic performance of students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were given based on the findings of the research:

1. English Language teachers should help students realize the fact that success and failure is in their hands, and not associated with any external force and they should be offered professional guidance by educational authorities on these self-constructs in students as an avenue to improve on students' academic performance by help students in developing the right personality construct
2. Federal Ministry of Education through the State Ministry of Education down to Zonal Education Quality Assurance and Parents Teachers Association (PTA) should constantly educate parents; reorient them to adopt appropriate need to enhance the academic performance of students.
3. Government, non-governmental organizations and school management should design an orientation exercise in the form of a paper presentation, seminar, or symposium in order to sensitize and enlighten students about the benefits of developing a high self-concept which can attract better academic achievement.

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