

Locus of Control, Achievement Motivation and Academic Self Efficacy as Determinants of Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in Ondo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficiency as determinants of secondary school students' academic performance in Ondo State. The study adopted ex-post facto and descriptive research of survey type designs. The population of the study comprises all secondary school students in three Senatorial Districts of Ondo State. Multi-state sampling procedure was used to select 900 sample respondents for the study. Instrument used for data collection were Questionnaire on Locus of Control, Achievement Motivation, Self-Efficacy and Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (LCAMSESPQ) and Academic Performance Proforma. The validity of the instruments was done by expert in Tests and Measurement. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined through test re-test method. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that there was significant relationship among locus of control, achievement motivation, academic self-efficacy and academic performance of secondary school students ($R = 0.456$, $P < 0.05$). Locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy jointly accounted for 20.8% of the total variables in academic performance ($R^2 = 0.208$, $F_{(3,899)} = 78.226$, $p < 0.05$). Locus of control which was the best predictor of academic performance accounted for 55.6% ($\beta = 0.556$, $p < 0.05$) of academic performance and closely followed by achievement motivation with ($\beta = 0.463$, $p < 0.05$), Academic Self-efficacy was the least predictor, with $\beta = 0.233$, $p < 0.05$. Based on the findings, it was concluded that Locus of Control, Achievement Motivation and Academic Self-Efficacy are influential to students' academic performance. It was recommended among others that teachers should endeavour to create adequate time to develop strong internal locus of control in students by encouraging good study habits, lower academic procrastination, low test anxiety both at home and in school in order to boost their locus of control and consequently enhance their academic performance.*

KEYWORDS: locus of control, achievement motivation, academic self-efficacy, academic performance

INTRODUCTION

Education in every human community is an indispensable tool to achieve human progress and development. Any nation that lacks a sound educational culture and philosophy is at the risk of backwardness and retrogression. This is because education (primary, secondary and higher) plays a vital role in the overall development of a country. Thus, informed the commitment of the world leaders towards ensuring that citizenry of the world acquire functional education, especially in the 21st century. Secondary education has the broad aim of preparing students for useful living within the society and preparing them for higher education. One of the major roles of educators is to develop and ensure that students acquire the relevant skills and knowledge that would make them function effectively in the society. Thus, students' academic performance is a major variable that interested both the teachers and Educational Psychologists. Over the years, academic performance is the overall measured cognitive, affective and psychomotor achievement of a student with which they are judged academically fit or unfit (Okafor, Obi & Oguzie, 2018). More so, Tella, Tella and Adeniyi (2011) viewed academic performance as students' scholastic ability and attainment, which signifies the overall level of knowledge they have acquired in school, a subject, or a particular learning activity, process or situation. In the context of this study, academic performance is taken to mean a symbol that indicates the level of knowledge/experience a student has acquired in a particular course of study and their ability to communicate this knowledge/experience in oral or in written form. Parents care about their children's academic performance because they believe that good academic results will determine the chances of their children in the world of work and security of job. Thus, academic performance is important in the lives and activities of students, it is necessary to investigate issues that are factors responsible for poor academic achievement among students with the sole aim of devising measures on how to ensure good academic performance by the students.

Globally, there has been an increasing concern in the education sector on how to ensure that students learn optimally at school and achieve academic excellence in their academic pursuits. In Nigeria, there has been a nationwide cry by the stakeholders in education on the fallen standard of education. The growing rate of failure of secondary school students in the yearly release of Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) has raised a lot of questions about the standard of education in Nigeria.

Locus of control (or location of control) refers to people's general, cross-situational beliefs about what determines whether or not they get reinforced in life (Sagone & Decaroli, 2014). The determinants may be internal, that is internal locus of control, or external, that is external locus of control. Thus, internal locus of control holds tenaciously that success or failure is due to the students' efforts, whereas externals believe that reinforces in life are controlled by luck, chance or powerful others. Consequently, internal locus of control considers success in an

examination as a result of students' hard work (for example, good study habits), while externals consider failure in an examination to be the result of an unfair test. In Carden, Courtney and Rebekah (2004) study, findings showed that students with internals significantly demonstrated lower academic procrastination, low test anxiety and reported higher academic achievement than externals. These findings indicated the importance of locus of control as a correlate to students' academic performance.

The locus of control of a person is conceptualized, as either internal or external. Those who believe that their own behaviours determine the positive reinforcement they receive and that they have control over their own lives are internal. Individuals with external locus of control are those people who believe that the rewards or motivation they receive are the results of fate, luck, character or other external circumstances. Such individuals attribute their problems to environmental factors (Ogunmakin & Akomolafe, 2013).

Achievement motivation is a fundamental recipe for academic success. It involves internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to job, role or subject, or to make efforts towards attaining a goal. Dornyei (2001) argued that motivation explains why people decide to do something, how hard they are going to pursue it, and how long they are willing to sustain the activity. In other words, "motivation is what gets you going, keeps you going, and determines, where you are trying to go" (Slavin, 2004). Tella, Tella and Adeniyi (2011) indicated that those students who, have optimum motivation have an edge because they have adaptive attitudes and strategies, such as; maintaining intrinsic interests, goals setting, and self-monitoring. Besides, motivational variables interact with cognitive, behavioural, and contextual factors to upset self-regulation.

Furthermore, motivational beliefs are very essential to the academic achievement of students, because they help to determine the extent to which students will consider, value, put in their efforts, and interests in the task. For example, self-efficacy influences how learners feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave. Researchers have shown that students' problem solving performance significantly relates to their self-efficacy beliefs (Marcou & Pilippou, 2005). Highly efficacious students are quickly capable of rejecting faulty strategies, solving more problems, and reworking more previously difficult problems than their less efficacious counterparts. Students who displayed greater perceptions of efficacy and used learning strategies progress well in school. Students' belief about their academic efficacy can provide an essential "window" to understand individual differences in learning and motivation. The general expectancy-value model of motivation characterizes motivation into three components; value components which includes; goal orientation and task value; expectancy components which includes; self-efficacy and control beliefs; and the effective construct of test anxiety (Yukselturk & Bulus, 2007).

In view of the above, the study examined locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy as determinants of secondary school students' academic performance in Ondo State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study examined:

1. if locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy predicted academic performance of secondary school students; and
2. the relative contribution of locus of control, academic motivation and academic self-efficacy to the prediction of students' academic performance of secondary school students.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the research;

1. Locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy do not jointly and significantly predict academic performance of secondary school students
2. There is no significant relative contribution of locus of control, academic motivation and academic self-efficacy to the prediction of students' academic performance of secondary school students.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design of Survey type and ex-post facto method were used in the study. The population comprised all secondary school students in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study covered the three Senatorial Districts in Ondo State (Ondo North, Ondo South and Ondo Central Senatorial Districts). The sample size for the study was 900 Secondary School students including; males and females. A multi-stage random sampling procedure was used to select 18 public Secondary Schools in Ondo State, Nigeria from which the respondents for the study were drawn from the Local Government Areas.

A self-developed, structured questionnaire by the researcher, titled, "Questionnaire on Locus of Control, Achievement Motivation, Self-Efficacy and Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (LCAMSESPQ)" was used to collect relevant data for the study. Academic Performance Proforma was used to collect the performance of students from Ondo State Ministry of Education, Akure. The structured questionnaire was adapted from Walter (2009) and Hassan (2004). The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A sought for comprehensive bio-data of the respondents while section B consisted of 17 items on locus of control. Section C consisted of 10 items on achievement motivation and Section D consisted of 15 items on academic self-efficacy. Section B to D involved items which measured the independent variables structured on the 4 Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Also, the Academic Performance was used for the collection of students' results in English Language and Mathematics.

The validity of the instruments was done by expert in Tests and Measurement. Proper scrutiny of the items were done, their suggestions, modifications and corrections were effected. The instruments were found as valid for the study. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined through test re-test method. Questionnaires were administered on students twice at an interval of two weeks on the students. The Scores of the two tests were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis to establish the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficients of each section (LCM, AM and ASE) of the instrument were 0.89, 0.79

and 0.86 respectively. Therefore, due to the high level of results obtained, it was adjudged the instrument was reliable, thus used for data collection.

The researcher administered copies of the instruments through direct delivery method. Then, the researcher, with the help of two counsellors in each of the selected secondary schools who were duly briefed and well informed about the purpose of the study, distributed and administered the copies of the instruments on the students. The completed instruments for the study were collected for data analysis. Data analysis was done using, both descriptive and inferential statistics. The inferential statistics of Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy do not significantly predict academic performance of secondary school students.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy on the prediction of academic performance of secondary school students were computed and subsequently subjected to statistical analysis involving Multiple Regression statistics at 0.05 level. The result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Multiple Regression Analysis on Locus of Control, Achievement Motivation and Academic Self-Efficacy as Predictors of Academic Performance of Students

Model	SS	df	MS	F	P	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Regression	5187.880	3	1729.293	78.226*	.000	0.456	0.208	0.205
Residual	19807.366	896	22.106					
Total	24995.246	899						

* $p < 0.05$

Table 1 shows that locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy jointly and significantly predicted academic performance of secondary school students ($F_{3, 896} = 78.226$, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis is rejected. The table reveals that there is a positive significant, but moderate multiple correlation between the predictor variables (locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy) and academic performance of secondary school students ($R = 0.456$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that all the predictor variables are factors that can exert influence on academic performance of secondary school students.

The value of the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.208$) indicates that all the predictor variables jointly accounted for 20.8% ($R^2 \times 100$) of the total variance in academic performance

of secondary school students, while the remaining 79.2% unexplained variation is largely due to other variables not included in the study that can account for academic performance of secondary school students.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relative contribution of locus of control, academic motivation, and academic self-efficacy to the prediction of students' academic performance of secondary school students.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores on locus of control, academic motivation, academic self-efficacy and students' academic performance were computed and subsequently subjected to statistical analysis involving, Multiple Regression statistics at 0.05 level. The result is shown in Table2.

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Contribution of Locus of Control, Achievement Motivation and Academic Self- Efficacy to Students' Academic Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta(β)		
(Constant)	34.629	1.481		23.376	.000
Locus of Control	.437	.038	.556	11.503	.000
Achievement Motivation	.164	.022	.463	7.416	.000
Academic Self- Efficacy	.127	.036	.233	3.497	.000
Multiple R=0.456, Multiple R ² =0.208, Adjusted R ² =0.205, F _{3,899} =78.226					

***p<0.05**

The regression result in table 2, reveals that the single best predictor of total variance in students' academic performance is locus of control ($\beta = 0.556$). This was followed by achievement motivation ($\beta = 0.463$). The variable with the least contribution to students' academic performance is academic self- efficacy ($\beta = 0.233$).

In terms of magnitude of the weight of regression coefficient, locus of control had the highest contribution (55.6%) to academic performance of secondary school students; followed by achievement motivation (46.3%) and academic self-efficacy (23.3%) as the least contribution.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study showed that locus of control, achievement motivation and academic self-efficacy significantly predicted academic performance of secondary school students. The finding is consistent with Philips and Gully (1997) that found the influence of locus of control and self-efficacy on academic performance. Thus, it will be very unlikely for students to set high performance goals, if they do not believe that they are capable of performing well, even

though they may have the ability to perform well on that particular task. Nowicki (2004) also agreed that self-efficacy and locus of control have been recognized by researchers to be factors associated with academic achievement.

The result in hypothesis two revealed that there was a significant relationship between locus of control and academic performance of secondary school students. This is in support of Majzub, Bataineh, Ishak and Rahman (2009), who opined that there was a significant positive relationship between locus of control and academic achievement among Jordanian and Turkish University students, respectively. Nejati, Abedi, Aghaei and Mohammadi (2013) also found that locus of control was significantly related to the academic performance of the graduate students. Knowles and Kerman (2007) also opined that students with internal locus of control tend to perform better in academic courses compared to those with external locus of control. This can be attributed to the fact that such students were intrinsically motivated and they viewed themselves as architects of their future.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that locus of control was a major factor that can influence academic performance of secondary school students. In addition, academic self-efficacy which is the belief (conviction) that students have about their abilities to successfully achieve at a designated level on an academic task or attain a specific academic goal significantly predicted academic performance of the students. Finally, Achievement motivation was a significant factor determining secondary school students' academic performance.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Teachers should show greater commitment to monitoring students for specific exhibited characteristics, such as; dependency, lack of confidence in handling academic and personal problems, as well as, responsibility skills in order to instill in them academic self-efficacy thereby improving students' academic performance.
2. Teachers should endeavour to create adequate time to develop strong internal locus of control in students by encouraging good study habits, lower academic procrastination, low test anxiety both at home and in school in order to boost their locus of control and consequently enhance their academic performance.
3. School counsellors should design appropriate and effective counselling techniques to detect, assess and treat students that are exhibiting negative psycho-social and adjustment traits relating to academic motivation, self-efficacy and locus of control in order to boost their morale, enhance their academic self-efficacy and subsequently promote high academic performance of students.

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