

Predictive Influence of Students' Academic Engagement and Academic Self-Concept on Achievement Motivation among Post Graduate Students in University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study was to investigate the predictive influence of students' academic engagement and academic self-concept on achievement motivation among post graduate students in University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Descriptive research design was used in the study. Five hundred (500) respondents were selected from five (5) selected Faculties in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The respondents were measured with relevant adapted standardized scale (instruments) which include academic self-concept scale, academic engagement scale and achievement motivation scale and the data obtained was analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple regression statistical analysis of the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). Two research Questions and Two Research Hypotheses were raised and answered in the study. The result showed that there was significant relationship between academic engagement and achievement motivation among post graduate students ($r=0.967$; $P<0.05$), there was significant relationship between academic self-concept and achievement motivation ($r=0.782$; $P<0.05$), the independent variables (academic engagement and academic self-concept) when pulled together have significant effects on the achievement motivation among the post graduate students (R (adjusted) = .972 & R^2 (adjusted) = .956 and each of the independent variables made a significant contribution to the prediction of post graduate students' achievement motivation. In terms of magnitude of contribution, academic engagement made the most significant contribution ($Beta = 1.151$; $t=37.429$; $p<0.05$) to the prediction follow by Academic Self-concept ($Beta=.131$; $t=6.055$; $p<0.05$). In view of these findings, the study stressed and advocated the need for the management and directors of the schools to provide conducive environment for the students and other staff in the school and that the school counsellors need to enlighten the students on how to improve the level of their academic self- concept and academic engagement in the school.*

Keywords: Academic engagement, academic self- concept, Post-graduate students, Motivation and Students' achievement

1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Every year many students choose to go for their second degree programme after the completion of the first degree without securing any job. Few of them got job and keep themselves alive on the job, still see the need for their second degree. These two categories of post graduate students constitute the set of students admitted every year in our universities. The zeal for achievement in these students varies such that some want an excellent grade for better job after completion of the programme while others want an average grade just to secure promotion in their workstations. Aside this factor, it has been discovered that there are lots of underlying factors which could be predictors of individual achievement. Among other factors are self-efficacy, academic engagement or participation, resilience and self concept. Although, several studies have been conducted on each of these factors with achievement motivation but this research work aims at finding the integral influence of these factors on students' achievement motivation (Muraina, Muraina, Amao & Oyelade, 2013; Muraina, 2013).

Motivation is generally defined as internal condition or external condition that stimulates, directs and maintains behaviour. There is a strong relationship between learning and motivation. According to Abraham Maslow when the need for love and belongingness are met, individual can then

focus on higher level needs of intellectual achievement. At this stage urge to learn increases (Wool Folk, 2004). Motivating students to succeed at all level of education is a topic of great concern for educationist today and greatest challenges of this century.. Lack of motivation is a big hurdle in learning and a pertinent cause in the determination of education standards. According to Deci and Ryan (2000) motivation is greatly appreciated because of the consequences it produces. Achievement motivation has been defined as the extent to attain rewards, such as physical satisfaction, praise from others and feelings of personal mastery (Mc Clelland,1985). People with high achievement motives will act in ways that will help them to outperform others, meet or surpass some standard of excellence, or do something unique (Schmidt & Frieze,1997). All students are influenced by a need to achieve to a certain degree, those, students who hold a high desire of success, work hard to achieve (Zenzen, 2002).

Student academic engagement is primarily and historically about increasing achievement, positive behaviour and a sense of belonging in all students. More recently, the construct student academic engagement is quite ubiquitously incorporated into district plans with the hopeful intention of enhancing all students' abilities to learn how to learn or become lifelong learners in knowledge based society (Gilbert, 2007). Thus, becomes both a strategic process of learning and an accountability goal or outcome unto itself. Examining academic engagement among post graduate

students will afford knowing some other factors that bring about it and how the absence of these factors could lead to disengagement toward academic work and how this in turn determine level of achievement motivation in students.

Researchers have recently used the term academic engagement to refer to the extent to which students identify with and value schooling outcomes, and participate in academic and non-academic school activities. Its definition usually comprises a psychological component pertaining to students' sense of belonging at school and acceptance of school values, and a behavioural component pertaining to participation in school activities (Muraina, Muraina, Amao & Oyelade, 2013; Muraina, 2013; Goodenow, 1993; Veolki, 1995). The psychological component emphasis students' sense of belonging or attachment to school which has to do with feelings of being accepted and valued by their peers, and by others at their schools. The participation component of academic engagement is characterized by factors such as school and class attendance, being prepared for class, student academic engagement is used in this broad sense to refer to students' altitude towards schooling and their participation in school activities. Students' academic engagement is also seen as a disposition towards learning, working with others and functioning in a social institution, which is expressed in students' feeling that they belong at school and in their participation in school activities.

However, academic engagement is not an alterable trait of individual, stemming solely from students' genetic make-up or their experience at home. Rather, it entails attitudes and behaviour that can be affected by teachers and parents, and shaped by school policy and practice. Students' academic engagement is also extent to which all learners are motivated and committed to learning, have a sense belonging and accomplishment and have relationships with peers, adults and parent that support learning. Indicators include attendance rate and participation rates in extracurricular activities. Students need to be engaged before they can supply high order creative thinking skills. They learn most effectively when the teacher makes sense and meaning of the curriculum material being taught (Muraina, Muraina, Amao & Oyelade, 2013; Muraina, 2013). This can only happen if the teacher has created a safe learning environment that encourages students to meet challenges and apply high rigor skills to real-world, unpredictable situations inside and outside of school.

Self concept is a person's self perception. It may be understood as Individuals feelings or confidence levels in accomplishing particular academic tasks. Chowhury and Pati (1997) assert that self concept plays a significant role in the education process when a child is accepted, approved, respected and liked he/she will have an opportunity to acquire an attitude of self acceptance, and respect for oneself. In the same vein, self concept refers to a student perception of competence or adequacy in academic and non-academic (e.g. social, behavioural and athletic) domains and is best represented by a profile of self-perceptions across domains. Students frequently display a decline in academic self- concept during elementary school and the transition to middle level. This decrease represents an adaptive reaction to the overly positive self-perceptions that are characteristic of childhood. Young children tend to overestimate their

competence because they lack the cognitive maturity to critically evaluate their abilities and to integrate information from multiple sources. As students develop, they better understand how other view their skills and better distinguish between their efforts and abilities. As a result, their self-perception becomes increasingly accurate (Harter, 1999). As students transit from middle level to high school, their self concept gradually grows, increasing freedom allows adolescents greater opportunities to participate in activities in which they are competent, and increased perspective - taking abilities enable them to garner more support from others by behaving in more socially acceptable ways (Harter, 1999). To view themselves positively, students must feel competent in domains that they deem important. Two domains that educators greatly influence are academics and behaviour for students who highly value these two domains - most adolescent - steady messages of academic and behavioural incompetence (e.g. poor grades, retention, public reprimands and suspension) are likely to result in low self concept. Self concept is frequently positively correlated with academic performance, but it appears to be a consequence rather than a cause of high achievement (Baumeister et al 2003). This suggests that increasing students' academic skills is a more effective means to boost their self - concept than vice versa. According to Wang and Lin (2008) Self -concept was seen as the general confidence that individual felt about themselves and the levels of an individual's self-concept predict whether or the extent to which he or she was able to accomplish academic tasks successfully or unsuccessfully. Therefore, the student's personality variable in general like self-concept and achievement motivation in particular, has a substantial influence on their approaches to study.

As such, in order to fill the gaps in the above studies reviewed, this paper intends to examine the predictive influence of students' academic engagement and academic self-concept on achievement motivation among post graduate students in University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

2. Statement of the Problem

Today, more and more students are showing up in our classroom without having developed a motivation to learn and as a result they ended with poor performance in academics. The poor performance is attributed to the students' ability and motivation (self and significant others). Students also spend more than the required duration for the programme (specifically eighteen months) because of their inability to pass all the courses offered or fulfilled all the departmental requirement for the completion of the programme. However, if students receive necessary motivation from their teachers and other significant others, their ability is equally another important factors that bring about good performance. (Good Performance = Ability + Motivation). Students as a whole constitute several factors that reside in them which tell about their individual ability. Among the factors resident in student is their efficacy, resilience, self concept, self esteem, self motivation to mention a few. In view of this the present study focused on the predictive influence of students' academic engagement and academic self-concept on achievement motivation

among post graduate students in University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

2.1 Research Questions

1. What is the combined effect of two independent variables (academic engagement and academic self- concept) on achievement motivation among post graduate students?
2. What is the relative effect of each of the two independent variables (academic engagement and academic self- concept) on achievement motivation among post graduate students?

2.2 Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between academic engagement and achievement motivation among post graduate students.
2. There is no significant relationship between academic self- concept and achievement motivation among post graduate students.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

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

3.2 Population

The population for the study comprises of all the Post Graduate students in University of Ibadan, South West, Nigeria.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for this study comprises five hundred (500) participants which were randomly selected among post graduate students in selected Faculties in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Ten (10) post graduate students were selected from five (5) Faculties which were also picked from Five (5) Faculties through stratified random techniques balloting. On the whole, five hundred (500) post graduate students were selected for this study. This consists of both male and female. The selected faculties were: Education, Arts, Engineering, Social sciences and Sciences.

3.4 Research Instruments

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used the following scales:

- Achievement Motivation Questionnaire
The achievement motivation questionnaire (AMQ) developed by Ellez (1999) was adopted as a measure of achievement motivation questionnaire in this study. The AMQ has 20 Likert-type items that provide information on each student's achievement motivation with Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$.

- Academic Engagement Questionnaire

The Academic Engagement questionnaire (AEQ) items constructed by the studies done by Hughes, Luo, Kwok and Loyd (2008) were adopted as academic engagement questionnaire in this study. These studies were able to define academic engagement extensively as well as enumerate significant factors under such construct including Behavioral Engagement, Emotional Engagement and Cognitive Engagement. It is a twenty items scale with response anchored based on the five-points likert-type, with internal consistency of the scale using Cronbach's alpha is .89, indicating high reliability.

- Academic Self-Concept Questionnaire

The academic self-concept questionnaire (ASCQ) constructed and validated by Reynolds (1988) was adopted as a measure of self-concept questionnaire. As stated by Reynolds (1988), the scale was reported to have alpha co-efficient of .91.

3.5 Validity of Instrument

The researchers gave the instruments to experts in the field of educational psychology and experts in the area of research and statistics. After all these people had given their suggestions and made necessary corrections on the instrument.

3.6 Reliability of Instrument

After content and face validity of the instruments, thirty (30) copies of the instruments were administered in order to test them for reliability. The cronbach alpha technique was then used to test their reliability to ensure that they are consistent in measuring what they were designed to measure. The reliability coefficient of .67 was obtained.

3.7 Administration of Instrument

The instruments were administered to the subjects on the day approved by the Departmental authorities for the exercise. The researcher was assisted by the teachers in administration and collection of the instruments. On the whole data collection lasted for two weeks. Out of the Questionnaires distributed only those that were properly filled in were considered useful for research purpose.

4. Method of Data Analysis

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression statistical analysis was used to analyse the data. The multiple regression analysis yielded correlation matrix, analysis of variance among others which was used to interpret the data.

5. Results

Research Hypothesis One: There is be no significant relationship between academic engagement and achievement motivation among post graduate students

Table 1: Relationship between academic engagement and achievement motivation

Variables	N	DF	Mean	SD	r	P
Achievement Motivation			79.25	12.93	0.967	Significant
Academic Engagement	500	499	80.48	15.45		P < 0.05

The table 1 above shows that there was significant relationship between academic engagement and achievement motivation among post graduate students ($r=0.967$; $P<0.05$). This means that students' with high academic engagement tend to be highly motivated to achieve than students' with low academic engagement among post graduate students. Hence, academic engagement has influence on achievement motivation of the students.

Research Hypothesis Two: There is be no significant relationship between academic self-Concept and achievement motivation among post graduate students

Table 2: Relationship between students' academic self-concept and achievement motivation

Variables	N	DF	Mean	SD	r	P
Achievement Motivation			81.36	12.95		Significant
Academic self-Concept	500	499	79.88	7.72	0.782	P < 0.05

The table 2 above shows that there was significant relationship between academic self-concept and achievement motivation ($r=0.782$; $P<0.05$). This means that students' with high academic self-concept tend to be strongly motivated to achieve than students with low academic self-concept. Thus, academic self-concept has influence on achievement motivation.

Research Question One: What is the combined effect of the two independent variables (academic self- concept and academic engagement) on achievement motivation among post graduate students?

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis on post graduate students' achievement motivation data

Multiple R(adjusted)= .972				
Multiple R(adjusted)= .956				
Standard error of estimate=5.455				
Analysis of variance				
	Sum of square(SS)	DF	Mean square	F
Regression	45692.34	2	22846.17	4759.62
Residual	2385.82	497	4.80	
Total	47858.16	499		

The table 3 above shows that the independent variables (academic engagement and academic self-concept) when pulled together have significant effects on the achievement motivation among the post graduate students. The value of R (adjusted)= .972 and R^2 (adjusted) = .956). The analysis of variance performed on the multiple regressions yielded an F-ratio value of 4759.62 and was found to be significant at 0.05 level.

Research Question Two: What is the relative effect of each of the three independent variables (academic self- concept and academic engagement) on achievement motivation among post graduate students?

Table 4: Relative contribution of independent variables to the prediction

	Unstandardized coefficients	Standardized coefficients	T	P
Model	B	Standard error	Beta	
Constant	9.183	1.065		8.623 P<0.05
Academic Engagement	1.101	.029	1.151	37.429 P<0.05
Academic Self-concept	.147	.024	.131	6.055 P<0.05

The table 4 above shows that each of the independent variables made a significant contribution to the prediction of post graduate students' achievement motivation. In terms of magnitude of contribution, academic engagement made the most significant contribution (Beta =1.151; $t=37.429$; $p<0.05$) to the prediction follow by Academic Self-concept (Beta=.131; $t=6.055$; $p<0.05$).

6. Discussion of Findings

The result of the first research hypothesis revealed that there was significant relationship between academic engagement and achievement motivation among post graduate students. This finding is in line with the evidence of Eccles & Wigfield (2002) and Hidi & Harackiewicz (2000) over the last decade have drawn attention to the fact that young adolescents are often distinguished by their lack of connection with schooling.

The result of the second research hypothesis revealed that there was significant relationship between academic self-concept and achievement motivation. This finding is consistent with finding of Pajare and Gaonkar (1997) who revealed that age increases level of self- concept which improve their motivation to work and performances. Wang and in (2008) findings supported the present research outcome where they revealed that level of students academic self-concept predict whether or the extent to which he or she was able to accomplish academic task successfully. They also quoted Byrne (2002) that much of the earlier interested in the self-concept versus achievement relationship stemmed from the belief that academic self-concept had motivational functions and thus changes in the academic self-concept would lead to changes in subsequent academic achievement. Moderate to strong relations between academic achievement and academic self-concept has been found in a large proportion of research (Abouserie,1995; Chowdhury& Pati,1997; Collins, Hanges & Locke,2004; Wang and Lin, 2008). They further gave evidence that self-concept and achievement motivation are correlated.

The result of the first research question revealed that the two independent variables (academic engagement and academic self- concept) have combined effect on achievement motivation among post graduate students. The magnitude of the prediction of the two independent variables was reflected in the value of $R= .972$ and R^2 (adjusted) = .956. The result thus demonstrated that 95.6% of the variance in the students' achievement motivation is accounted for by the linear combination of the two independent variables. The result was further strengthened by the value of F-ratio ($F=4759.62$, $p<0.05$). What the results are saying is that the

capacity of the two independent variables to predict students' achievement motivation could not have happened by chance. This finding is in consonance with the work of many researchers. Tella (2007); wikins (2006) and Broussard (2002) in their series of findings concur that achievement motivation and academic self concept are directly and indirectly related to academic achievement. Highly motivated students perform better academically than the lowly motivated students.

The result of the second research question revealed that each of the two independent variables (academic engagement and academic self- concept) have a relative effect on achievement motivation among post graduate students. That is academic engagement and academic self-concept predicts the students' achievement motivation. In terms of magnitude of contribution, academic engagement made the most significant contribution (Beta =1.151; $t=37.429$; $p<0.05$) to the prediction follow by Academic Self-concept (Beta=.131; $t=6.055$; $p<0.05$). This finding means that academic engagement and academic self- concept relative determines the students' achievement motivation. This finding is in consonance with the work of previous researchers. In line with this finding Russell, Ainley, & Frydenberg (2010) found that engagement is the connection between person and activity. In this research current knowledge concerning students' motivation and academic engagement will be reviewed as it relates to two research perspectives: the person and the situation. From the person perspective, the issues concern variables that define a characteristic or set of characteristics identifying individual differences in reactivity, sometimes as broad dispositions, predispositions or orientations, sometimes as transient states. From the situational perspective the issues concern identification of specific contextual variables that trigger, support or increase student motivation and academic engagement. Research on motivation and academic engagement is also about the unmotivated and the disengaged.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Base on the findings of this study, persistent poor achievement motivation of Nigerian post graduate students due to the bad low level of academic engagement and academic self- concept should not continue indefinitely. There is hope that with the improvement of students' academic engagement and academic self- concept, the situation can be changed for the better. The study discovered that students' academic engagement and academic self- concept influence significantly the students' achievement motivation in the school. By and large, academic engagement and academic self- concept have a great influence on the students' achievement motivation. As such, it is very crucial to improve these factors so as to eradicate the persistent occurrence of poor report of students' achievement motivation in this great country, Nigeria. By and large, it was also concluded from this study that academic engagement and academic self- concept has a great impact on the students' achievement motivation. By implication, students' achievement motivation can be improved through high academic engagement and academic self- concept in the school system. It was also discovered from the findings that academic engagement and academic self- concept affect the students' achievement motivation not

only in the University of Ibadan but also in other Federal and State University in Nigeria and other Country at large.

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