Relationship Among Achievement Motivation, Self-Esteem, Locus of Control and Academic Performance of Nigerian University Student.

DR. ABDULLAHI, O.E.
Department of Education -al Foundations University of Ilorin

The thrust of the study was to examine the relationship among achievements motivation, self-esteem, and locus of control and academic performance of university students in a Nigerian University. The purpose was to determine the extent university student's academic performance was influence by the criterion variables. One thousand, three hundred and thirty-five male and female university students from seven faculties participated in the study. They were selected by stratified cum simple random sampling techniques, result from multiple regression analysis revealed that clearly the subjective independent variables did not predict objective measure of the student academic performance. Psycho-sociological evidences abound the lack of achievement motivation and low self-esteem, creates in student lack of interest to strive for high academic performances, and zeal to contribute positively and efficiently to national development.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a strongly felt social need in Nigeria and the society is anxious for change and improvement -of the nation through a rapid educational development. In line with the above statement, the Republic of Nigeria 1999 Constitution in Section 18 state that"............ Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all level" Similarly section 5, sub-section 31 of the 1998 national policies on Education states that “teaching and research function of the higher educational institution have an important role to play in the national development particularly in the development of high level of manpower” This is further expanciated with specific reference to university education that:

There is need to intensify and diversify university programmed for the development of high level manpower within the context of the needs of the economy .(National policy on education 1998 p.22). thus in Nigeria, university education is recognized as one of the major factor for achieving a more rapid economics, political and social development. Psycho-sociological empirical and theoretical evidence, however, provide strong support that achievement motivation, self-esteem, locus of control and to a greater extent the acceptance of the expectancy placed on these variable are important factors for consideration in the education process at any level. By achievement motivation, it means an individual difference In striving for success fin general or specifically referred to as “the basic concept of psychogenetic motive ”(mc Cleland 1961) or need as a useful expectation of how individual differs in the strive for general goals”. Achievement motivation is thus “a personality construct possessed by all human beings in varying degrees that could be estimated (Guilford 1971) sustain, fostered, stimulated and strengthened”. Burger (1993) says of self-esteem as “the way an individual feels about him and herself for what he/she worth’s. by locus of control is therefore, a psychiphilophical orientation about how an individual attribute the course of events that happen to him/her, either of his/her own internal locus of control, or another person’s-external locus of control.

The objective of the study was, therefore, to investigate the relationship among achievement motivation, locus of control, self-esteem and academic achievement of students in a Nigeria university. It is necessary to emphasize that this writer is not claiming that the major variable of university students’ academic performance are these criterion variables. Influencing high performance of university students’
through premium placed only on providing conducive educational environment, qualitative teaching and non-teaching personnel, reading materials, coupled of course with scholarships awards may not "provide high level man power within the context of the needs of the economy". The focus of the study was, therefore, to examine the extent university students' academic performance was influence by the variable of achievement motivation, self-esteem, and locus of control. A study of this nature might play a significant role in assisting to motivating students towards better adjustment to university environment, especially in areas of improved academic performance, good initiative and creativity relevant to national development. At the present level of the Nigerian economic and social hardship, a study in this direction might be significant in promoting students' self-esteem, evaluative behavior and encouragement towards the achievement of university educational goals. The study furthermore, compliments the existing literature on students’ academic performance at university level in the Nigerian social environment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In recent times, psychologist and other social scientists have shifted emphasis on the academic performance. Concerning achievement motivation, scholars such as McClelland (1961), Kulka (1972), Greenberg and Hoffra (1973) Bar-Tal & Frieze (1977). Oggunlade (1978), Kuhl & Blaucauship (1999), and Wiener (1985) have done extensive studies on it and the common conclusion seems to be that people with high achievement motivation are high academic achievers and they are always set for a high level of aspirations. Thus achievement motivation is positively related to high academic achievement and efficiency in the school system. With regard to self-esteem, scholars such as Copersmith (1967), Shrauger and Sorman (1979), Abdulganiyu (1991), Oniyamu (19992) and Ibironke (1995) have examined the influence of self-esteem on academic achievement. The aggregate summary of their findings revealed that in the face of difficult academic task, especially when subjects are informed of their poor performance, the low self-esteemed individuals withdraw and they are said to do worse when similar difficult tasks are presented. On the other hand, high esteemed individuals work just as hard as ever regardless of how low they performed with determined zeal to overcome their failure. It seems to be that self-esteem enhances self reliance, boosts individuals morale to achieve higher while when it is promoted, it increases individual's zeal to do better even with the low self-esteemed people, particularly in academic performance.

Research evidences abound, Lewis (1961), Lefecourt (1966 & 1976), Good and Good (1979), Culbreath (1983), Asonibare (1986), Olayonu (1992), Oyekan (1992), Kayode (2000), that studies done on locus of control were patterned on Rotter's (1966) scale of two dimensions, external and internal locus of control. While "external individual perceives having no control on the causes and effect the events of life, the "internal" person feels that the responsibln life events lie within his/her control. With regard to academic Achievement, (i.e. individual's attainment after a course of instruction that is often designated by test scores). Grandy's (1975) study seems to illustrate common findings that:

Grandy studied the relationship between locus of control, achievement motivation and opportunity for learner decision making in high school science classes. Two hundred and eighty-eight respondents were involved in the study.

....Finding revealed that internal orientation was significantly related to science achievement and this group also scored significantly higher in science achievement than the externally oriented students, (in Kayode 2000 P.84).

Several scholars have also reported positive relationships between locus of control and academic performance. Thus locus of control is a strong predictor of academic performance with the internal individuals achieving better that external individual.

On the basis of the above review of literature, one can conclude, and rightly too, that there are strong and positive inter-relationships among achievement motivation, self-esteem, locus of control and academic achievement of students, and these criterion variables are good predictors of academic performance. If Nigerian government has decided
that "higher education should be used as one of the greatest instrument that the nation can use for quick development of its economic, sociological and human resources", achievement motivation, self-esteem and locus of control are worthy of investigation so as to determine their influence on the Nigerian university students' academic performance. This study is, therefore, amply justified as research worthy.

METHODOLOGY

The research was an ex-post-facto casual design meaning what happened after the events. In this regard, the researcher was not the cause of the differences observed in the variable of research but collected data to meet the requirement of the research. The subject consisted of one thousand, three hundred and thirty five university students spanned across seven faculties in a Nigerian University. The ages of the students range from 20-32 years, a mean age of 24.5, mode of 23 and a standard deviation 2.31 with Skewness of 0.78. The students were selected by stratified cum random sampling techniques.

The instrument consisted of achievement motivation, self esteem and locus of control questionnaires. Achievement motivation is a 36 item questionnaire having five option responses against each statement. It has a reliability coefficient of 0.65 and an internal consistency coefficient of 0.56. The self-esteem instrument consisted of 30 self-evaluation items with five option response scale against each statement. The instrument has advantages of ease of administration, objectivity of scoring and interpretation as well as the issue of general applicability. Correlation with Marsh, Parker and smith's (1983) Self-Descriptive Questionnaire range from 0.64 to 0.74. It has a reliability co-efficient of 0.74 using a test-retest method. Rotter's (1966) locus of control had been used for studies in Nigeria. It has been used severally and the reliability coefficients have been determined using several different methods. For instance, the reliability coefficients range from Rotter's (1966) r=0.70 through 0.72 (Fakayode 2000); 0.73 (Ajayi 2000), to 0.78 (Kayode, 2000). Academic performance was measured by the results of General Studies Results taken by 300 level students in University of florin in year 2000. General Studies is a compulsory subject for years I - III in all Nigerian Universities and is conducted by the Division of General Studies in each Nigerian University. The results were transformed to Z scores before they were used for computation.

Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze the data collected.

Major Hypothesis

$H_0$: There is no significant relationship among achievement motivation, self-esteem, locus of control and academic performance of university students.

Results

The results presented below were processed at the University of Ilorin, Computer Centre. The results of the zero order correlation coefficients matrix were first presented and followed by the results of multiple regression, the coefficients of under standardized regression weights (B); standardized regression weight (Beta) and Standard Error of Estimate (STD) of the research independent variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>X1</th>
<th>X2</th>
<th>X3</th>
<th>X4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X1</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X2</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X3</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X4</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEY
X1 – Internal locust of control  
X2 – self- esteem  
X3 – achievement motivation  
X4 – academic performance

Results in Table 1 above showed that the zero order correlation coefficients range from -.044 (being the coefficient of variable X2 and X3) through the coefficient of .001 (being the coefficient of variables X1 and X2) to .086 (being coefficient of variables X1 and X3). Further examination revealed that academic performance has coefficients of .042, .052 and .072 with interval locus of control, achievement motivation and self-esteem respectively and that internal locus of control and self-esteem have the highest coefficient of 0.086.

Table 2(a) Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis Between the Research Dependent and Independent Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable: Academic performance (x4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable Entered on step 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R. square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= .10324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= .01066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= .00172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 9.58237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple Regression</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sum of square</th>
<th>Mean square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>328.42975</td>
<td>109.47358</td>
<td>1.19224</td>
<td>.3127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>1333</td>
<td>30484.83818</td>
<td>91.82180</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results in Table 2(a) above showed that the multiple regression analysis yielded a multiple correlation of .1032. 1% conservative estimate of percentage of variable explained with F 0.312~7 that is not significant at 0.05. Clearly the subjective independent variables of achievement motivation, self-esteem and internal locus of control did not predict objective measure of the students' academic achievement. The analysis included unstandardized regression weight (B), standardized regression weight (Beta) and standard error- of estimate (SEB). The coefficient showed that the research independent variables are not significant in predicting the objective measure of students' academic achievement. The standardized regression weight range from -.14618 (being the weight of achievement motivation) through .02613 (being the weight of self-esteem) to .03872 (being the weight of internal locus of control). The probabilities or significance of T of these variables range from 505 through .3080 to .3768 that are not significant at an alpha level of .05.

DISCUSSION
The study centered on the adaptive function of the relationship among achievement motivation, self-esteem, locus of control and academic achievement of university students. Apart from the fact that relatively little attention has been devoted to factors influencing undergraduate students' academic performance, the researcher, is of the humble opinion that a study of this nature might play a significant role in assisting to motivate the students towards better adjustment to university environment. Efficient school adjustment, high academic performance and creative initiative in students that are relevant to national development may be factors of achievement motivation, high self-esteem and favorable locus of control. The essence of a study in this direction may serve as an impetus towards directing interest on research concerning university students' adjustment mechanism.
In order to justify the claims above, the researcher examined the research findings as they are relevant to the issue at hand. The results of zero-order correlation coefficients matrix revealed that the achievement motivation and self-esteem had correlation coefficient of .052 and .072 with academic performance. Internal locus control has coefficient of -.042 with academic performance. Clearly the independent variables of achievement motivation, self-esteem and locus of control did not have significant relationship with academic performance of the university students that were involved in this study. The fact that coefficient are low or not significant means that predictive statistical relation, if it exists, is not linear and further, the linear rules gives no predictive power. It may mean that any relationship found is not functional.

In psychology, there is often a tendency to regard regression problems as somehow "better" than problems in correlation because a problem in regression carries along all the paraphernalia of the usual controlled experiment and a problem in correlation ordinarily does not. In this regard, attempts were made to examine the results of multiple regressions. Results in multiple regression show that multiple regression analysis yielded a multiple correlation of .1032, 1% conservative estimate of percentage of variable explained with F = 0.3127 that is not significant at 0.05 alpha level. Clearly the subjective independent variable of achievement motivation, self-esteem and internal locus of control did not predict objective measure of the students' academic achievement. The standardized beta and unstandardized weight (B) as well as the standard error of estimate (SEB) were not also significant at an alpha level of 0.05.

The findings on internal locus of control are similar to the findings of Crandall, KatKorsky & Crandall (1965) and Procuik & Breen (1974). These scholars reported that differences in ability of individuals, - externals and internals, to cope with failure situation might have accounted for the non-significant relationships between their academic performance and locus of control. Similarly Yield (1989) identified that religious factor as a casual factor of the non-significant between academic performance and locus of control of his subjects being on majority students in religious study. In the same vein, about 25% of the students involved in this study are students in the Department of Religion in the Faculty of Arts. The non-significant relationship between students' academic performance and locus of control could be a factor of the students' religious background.

With regard to achievement motivation, Guildord (1971) identified factors of achievement motivation as:
(a) Personal qualities such as physical development, health, neurological condition and emotional adjustment.
(b) Environment conditions like the level of motivation, parental attitude to learning, school morale, teachers' expectations, home influence and school factors.
Non-significant relationship between academic performance and achievement motivation may, therefore, be attributed to social disadvantages such as family inability and marked deprivation of acceptable standard care, poor environmental stimulation, lack of interest and aspiration to achieve high in academics. As Okoye (1983) would put it; "intrinsic motivation is a sensory reinforcement to transfer learning principles to concrete tasks". Achievement in most instances depends on individual's level of motivation and interest. Conventionally speaking, therefore, students who lack solid background due to non-stimulating secondary education environment will be found deficient even when they are naturally endowed with high intelligence. These reasons advanced above may be relevant in explaining why achievement motivation has no significant relationship with academic performance in this study.

As for the non-significant relationship between academic performance and self-esteem, it could be explained that, involvement of university students in competitive academic activities today appears to be lacking due to lack of self-confidence. Lack of self-confidence could be explained in terms of rampant examination malpractices on campuses, indiscriminate practice of secret cult and the general outcry of low academic performance of students even at university level. In the face of these ills, students, even university students, may not exhibit high level of self-esteem that correlates significantly with their academic performance.
Regardless of the discussion in terms of the research findings, psychological evidences abound that for healthy and efficient academic performance, university students need be motivated to have adequate desire for continuous improvement in learning. The amount of intellectual stimulation received by students from lecturers remain a significant factor in students' academic performance and intellectual development. These are worthy of attention because gratification of achievement motivation and self-esteem, may be some of the most important goals of human behaviour that energizes and produces renewed vigor in goal striving and level of aspiration. Psycho-sociological theories have proved that lack of achievement motivation and low self-esteem; creates in students lack of interest to perform and acts as down-pulling effect on academic performance, evaluative behaviour and the zeal to contribute positively and efficiently to national development.

If university education is to be used as essential ingredient in the changes and progress of Nigerian development, or the products of university education are to act as architects of national development it remains a basic fact that university students need be motivated their self-esteem needs be enhanced and their locus of control need towards internality in taking and accepting responsibility for whatever it means to them. McClelland's (1961) study on the relationship between national development and achievement motivation revealed that countries with a large number of people who scored high on achievement motivation scale had high rates of academic achievement and also had high rates of economic development than in those countries with low scores in achievement motivation. This might mean that high scores in achievement motivation scale may be a good factor in active participation in a national development. Thus unconducive environment have an inhibiting effects on the productive abilities of university students.

CONCLUSION

Worthy of note in this research is the Neo-Freudian view that "creativity is conscious effort in man to compensate for certain inadequacies inherent in him" (Jung 1959). It means that creativity is born out of individuals strive to reduce guilty feelings from when the creative urge is independently born. The goodness of fit in this study, therefore, could be that out of the individual's strive to reduce guilty feelings on university campuses, the will to be creative might, some day, be independently born. On this note, the hope to use university "programme for the development of high level of non-power within the context of the needs of the Nigerian economy" might be born some day.

Reference:

academic achievement of children selected gifted education at Suleja Academy.
Unpublished Master Dissertation submitted to University of Ilorin, Ilorin.
town, University Press.
to University of Ilorin, Ilorin.
Kuhl, J. and Blankenship, V. (1979). The dynamic theory of achievement motivation: from episodic
to dynamic thinking Psychological Review 86(2) 141-151.
and Social Psychology. 72 (21) 166-174
relations to self-concept as inferred by teachers and to academic ability
British Journal of Educational Psychology. 53.60-78. McClelland, D.C. (1962). On the
dynamics of creative physical scientists