

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PAIKORO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment among senior secondary school students in Paikoro Local Government Area of Niger State. Three objectives and three hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was seven thousand one hundred and forty one (7,142) senior secondary school students and a sample of three hundred and seventy (370) male and female SSII students was proportionately selected. A correlational design was used. Two research instruments were used to collect data: Self-efficacy Scale (SES) and School Adjustment Scale (SAS). Face validity was used to ascertain the validity of the instruments. The reliability of the instruments was tested using the test re-test methods. The index obtained was 0.82 for SES and 0.78 for SAS. To analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics was used as inferential statistics to measure the relationship between Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment. The finding of hypothesis one revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ($r = .543$, $p = 0.000$). The finding of hypothesis two showed that there was significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ($r = .613$, $p = .001$) and the finding of hypothesis three indicated that there was significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ($r = .281$, $p = .021$). The study concluded that significant positive relationship exists between self-efficacy of students and their social, academic and emotional adjustments. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers and school administrators should encourage students to seek for counselling services to enhance their self-efficacy. Also, teachers, school psychologists, school counsellors and school administrators should provide conducive and enabling environment and facilities to facilitate proper adjustment of students in their academic, social and emotional atmospheres of life in the school setting.

Keyword: Relationship, Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment and Senior Secondary School

Introduction

School Adjustment is a very important aspect of student's life. Human beings have the capacity to adapt to new situation, they do not only adapt to physical demands, but also adapt to social pressure. Secondary school students' adjustment is a phenomenon that is of great concern to educationists. Educationists need to know what they can do to help their students adjust and benefit from school (Mildred & Adhiambo, 2011). School adjustment is a broad

construct which consists of many different aspects such as academic adjustment, social adjustment and emotional adjustment. Well-adjusted students usually value what they are learning; they are positively involved in classroom activities and receive high grades (Kiuru et al., 2009). School adjustment, for the purpose of this study is defined in relation to a child's ability to develop social, emotional and academic competencies that facilitate the achievement of school success. It is characterized by quality social relationships with peers and teachers, feeling of emotional security, less aggressive behaviors, pro-social behaviors, longer retention in educational system and better academic performance.

Self-efficacy can simply be defined as information about the learners provided by the learner themselves, about their abilities, the progress they think they are making and what they think they can or cannot do yet with what they have learned in a course (Blanche & Merino, 1989). Self-efficacy should also be continuous and not related to the students' grade (Sullivan & Hall, 1997). It is useful because it has been considered that rather than giving a comprehensive diagnostic test to have a glimpse of possible problem areas for the students, it is much faster to ask students directly what problems they feel they have (Harris & McCann, 1994). Practice at self-efficacy or evaluation encourages student to become self-correcting learners, not passive ciphers awaiting orders on what to do next. In another understanding, Self-efficacy refers to the involvement of learners in making judgments about their own learning, particularly about their achievements and the outcomes of their learning. It is an essential component of formative assessment. When a student is trying to learn, feedback about the effort has three elements: recognition of the desired goal, evidence about present position, and some understanding of a way to close the gap between the two. All three must be understood to some degree by anyone before he or she can take action to improve learning. If formative assessment is to be productive, students should be trained in self-efficacy so that they can understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to do to achieve (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Students' self-efficacy/evaluation is a form of educational assessment that has direct benefit to students and their learning. It is an assessment process, "during which students reflect on the quality of their work, judge the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals or criteria, and revise accordingly" (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009, p. 13). In other words, Students self-efficacy or evaluation allows and encourages students to participate in the process of judging, evaluating, and reflecting on their own work or abilities (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009). Practice at self-assessment encourages student to become self-correcting learners, not passive ciphers awaiting orders on "what next"? Becoming more self-aware and self-critical will improve your performance in any course. The ability to self-assess accurately and constructively judge the work of peers is an essential learning skill that teachers have the responsibility to develop during their students' school years. Once students understand the goals and criteria, they must have opportunities to evaluate their own performance and make adjustments in their academic, social, emotional and personal life.

Statement of the Problem

Self-efficacy has gained much more attention in recent years owing to the growing emphasis on learner independence and learner autonomy. One of the heated controversies in this field is whether a student self-assessment works in the school system or not? Similarly, challenges surrounding adjustment of students in secondary schools have become subject of research among counselling and educational psychologists today. Numerous scholars have carried out researches on school adjustment among tertiary education students. However, little researches as well have been conducted on poor school adjustment among secondary school students in relation to self-efficacy, or the relevance of students' self-efficacy in relation to their school adjustment, academic, social and personal life.

A general observation by the researcher revealed that some students are faced with poor school adjustment mechanisms especially secondary school students in the areas of academic, social and emotional adjustment. When children move from primary schools to secondary schools and they progress from one class to another, they are faced with certain adjustment problems in their academic, social and/or emotional life. Thus leading to challenges in the academic outcomes.

When examinations are used to assess students learning, the implicit assumption is that they have submitted work that reflects their understanding of the material after their genuine attempt to learn it. Some students do diligently prepare for examinations and some do not. Additionally, when in reality their efforts are not adequate for the grades they are targeting. When you self-evaluate students, it gives them opportunity to self-reflect and help them to adjust in areas they think they are not performing well. Therefore, it is based on the above premises that the researcher examined the relationship between self-efficacy and school adjustment among senior secondary school students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to determine:

1. The relationship between self-efficacy and social adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.
2. The relationship between self-efficacy and academic adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.
3. The relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and social adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.
2. There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and academic adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

3. There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

Methodology

The study used correlational design. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), a correlational design is a research design in which information on two or more variables are collected in order to investigate the relationship between the variables. This research design was considered relevant because it permits the researcher to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. The population of the study was SS II Senior Secondary Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. The total number of SS II students is seven thousand one hundred and forty-two (7,142) students selected from sixty-seven (67) schools. A sample of three hundred and seventy students (370) was drawn from the population as suggested by Research Advisors (2006). In drawing the sample, simple random sampling was used. In this research, two instruments were used for data collection. The two instruments were Self-efficacy Scale (SES) and School Adjustment Scale (SAS). Face validity was done to ascertain the validity of the instruments. The reliability of the instruments was tested using test re-test method. The index obtained was 0.82 for SES and 0.78 for SAS. To analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics while Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics was used as inferential statistics to measure the relationship between Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels of significance.

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

Table 1: Analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	df	P-value
Self-Efficacy	370	39.97	4.856	.533	369	.000
Social Adjustment	370	34.045	4.572			

Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation in Table 1 revealed that there is significant positive relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ($r = .533$, $p = 0.000$). This means that the higher the students' self-efficacy, the higher their social adjustment. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area of Niger State is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

Table 2: Analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	df	P-value
Self-Efficacy	370	39.97	8.476	.623	369	.002
Academic Adjustment	370	32.206	4.570			
Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)						

Result of the Pearson product moment correlation in Table 2 indicated that there was a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ($r=.623$, $p= .002$). This means that the higher the students' self-efficacy, the higher their academic adjustment. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State is rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

Table 3: Analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	df	P-value
Self-Efficacy	370	39.97	4.876	.291	369	.023
Emotional Adjustment	370	33.314	4.77			
Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)						

Result of the Pearson product moment correlation in Table 3 revealed that there was a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ($r=.291$, $p= .023$). This means that the higher the students' self-efficacy the higher their emotional adjustment. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of hypothesis one stated that there was significant positive relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local

Government Area, Niger State. Thus, the finding agreed with Turingan and Yang (2009) who opined that students who perceived themselves as socially competent obtained higher grades. In contrast, students with negative perceptions about their social capabilities shy away from academic tasks because they view themselves as personal threats with low aspirations and weak commitments to task-related goals (Woolfork & Woolfork, 2010). Zimmerman and Martinez-Pans cited in Woolfork and Woolfork (2010) also explained that once these beliefs are formed, they affect students' performances through their influence on choice of activities, the amount of efforts applied, the levels of persistence, and the kinds of meta-cognition and learning strategies invoked. Bouffard et al. (2005) examined how self-efficacy belief affects self-evaluation strategies and its relationship with performance on a cognitive task. They found that students with high efficacy reported greater confidence and more expectations than students with low efficacy. Students with high efficacy performed better than students from the low efficacy group when striving to achieve learning goals.

The finding of hypothesis two revealed a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. A similar study by Dereje (1997) found that there was a strong relationship between the use of cognitive strategies and academic Adjustment, and also between self-regulation and academic adjustment among students. Bing (2016) also found that students made significant progress within the period which the practice of self-evaluation has been carried out. Furthermore, Brown and Harris (2013) posited that students' self-efficacy have been linked to benefits for students, such as greater critical thinking ability, and improved test scores examination grades (Colliers, 1998). Other studies showed that students' self-efficacy can be helpful across subject areas including: improvement in students' music performances (Bruce, 2001), higher quality science project reports (Olina & Sullivan, 2002), mathematics achievements (Ross et al., 2002), and improved writing ability and skills (Andrade et al., 2008). Although previous studies generally reported a positive impact of self-efficacy on students, some recent studies on students' self-assessment showed little or no academic improvement (Brown & Harris, 2013). Vargas (2012) examined the relationship between self-efficacy and academic adjustment in University of Port-Harcourt, Nigeria and found that self-efficacy is significantly related to academic adjustment among senior secondary school students. Furthermore, a study conducted by Bamidele (2014) in Adekunle Ajasin University on the effect of self-evaluation strategies on school adjustment among secondary school students agreed with the current study that self-efficacy is related to school adjustment among senior secondary school students. This confirmed that students with enhanced self-efficacy academically become highly brilliant, develop higher mental abilities, and are creative in their affairs, and at general public activities at large (Cheng, 2011).

Similarly, finding of hypothesis three indicated that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. This finding corroborated the study of Swaklander and Taube (2007) who found that students who are self-regulated adjust emotionally easily. Renierose and Hernandez (2017) also found that students with high self-esteem have higher levels of adjustment in college activities. Pape and Wang's (2003) findings suggested that the

middle school students from high and low achievement groups differed in the use of self-regulated strategies, how confident they felt about the strategies being used and how often they use the strategies.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that significant positive relationship existed between self-efficacy of students and their academic, social and emotional adjustment. Therefore, it is concluded that positive relationship exists between self-efficacy and school adjustment among senior secondary school students in Paikoro Local Government Area of Niger State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been provided on the basis of findings of the study:

1. Teachers and school administrators should encourage students to engage in positive self-efficacy.
2. Teachers, school psychologists, school guidance and counsellors and school administrator should encourage students on how to adjust properly to the academic, social and emotional problems in school.
3. School guidance and counselling unit should organize orientation services and sensitization programmes to students on how to enhance their self-efficacy and adjustment in the school setting.

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