SELF CONCEPT AND MOTIVATION AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS ACHIEVEMENT IN ECONOMICS IN OWERRI EDUCATIONAL ZONE I OF IMO, STATE.

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the researcher investigated students' self-concept and motivation as correlates of their academic achievement in economics in Owerri Educational Zone I of Imo, State, Nigeria. To achieve purpose of the study, five research questions were asked and five corresponding hypotheses were tested to guide the study. The design of the study was correlational survey. The population of the study consists of all 8,633senior secondary school students (SS 2) who offer economics in Owerri Educational Zone 1 of Imo State. The sample size consists of 382 students from public secondary schools. The sample was drawn using proportionate random sampling technique, while Taro Yamen formular was used to determine the minimum sample size. Three instruments (questionnaires and achievement test) were used for data collection for this study. These instruments were validated by three research specialists. Reliability coefficients of 0.86 for Self-Concept Questionnaire (SCQ), and 0.87 for Students' Academic Motivation Questionnaire (SAMQ) were obtained using Cronbach alpha analysis.The research questions were answered using simple and multiple linear statistics while t-test of significance of simple linear statisticsand F-test of the significance of the coefficient of multiple correlationwere used to test the hypotheses. The result found that there is a high, positive and significant extent of relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement irrespective of gender in economics. The result revealed that there is a high, positive and significant extent of relationship between students' academic motivation and their achievement irrespective of gender in economicsin public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that teachers should use some teaching strategies that would boast students' academic self concept will in turn promote academic achievement in Economics. The students also should be ready at all time to think positively about themselves in order to improve their achievement in Economics.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, as a developing nation is very much aware of the importance of education in the economic development of the nation. That is why the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014) emphasized the inclusion of economics in senior secondary education curriculum as the objectives of post-basic education and career development includes; offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, disposition, opportunities and future roles; provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job-specific skills for self-reliance, and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic

development; inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence; raise morally upright and well-adjusted individuals who can think independently and rationally, respect the views and feelings of others and appreciate the dignity of labour. Formal education generally is seen as a means of imparting and acquiring knowledge. This is done through teaching and learning within the four walls of the school. It is a key to the development and growth of individuals, societies and nations, therefore, the rate of development of any nation is fundamentally determined by the actualization of her educational goals. These goals will be effectively actualized depending on the achievement goal orientation setting and importance the citizens anchored on educational enterprise for the actualization of those educational goals.

Furthermore, the world is changing daily, individuals need to be equipped with learning experience that will help them adapt to the changing world and also have impact in the national development which will enable the nation compete in the changing world. Economics aids in providing adequate knowledge for national development. Every nation that is committed to progress and advancement, strives to have a system of education that reflects the changing needs of the nation. Such changes are usually not out of coercion but out of the desire by government and the people to evolve a system that meet their goals, aspirations, immediate and long-term needs (Medumere, 2021).

Economics is one of the Social Sciences subjects taught in senior secondary school. As an elective subject, it is concerned with human behaviour such as how people earn their living and make choice between alternatives to satisfy their wants. Nmonwu, Amanze, Chukwu and Obinna-Akakuru (2018**),** opined that Economics is the study of how society decides what, how and for whom to produce goods which are physical commodities such as steel and strawberries and render services which are activities such as message or life concerts consumed or enjoyed only at the instant they are produced. They went further to say that the question of what, how and for who to produce is either answered by a central planning agency or the price mechanism depending on the economic system practiced by a country. Nmonwu, et al (2018**),** further outlined the specific objectives of Economics as to include equipping students with the basic principles of Economics necessary for useful living and higher education; preparing and encouraging students to be prudent and effective in the management of scarce resources; and raise students respect for the dignity of labour and their appreciation of economic, cultural and social value of the society. Lionel Robbins in Akunya (2015) defined Economics as the science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. Amaechi (2014) sees Economics as a social science that studies human behavior in an effort to allocate scarce resources efficiently and effectively in order to minimize cost. It is a subject concerned with the efficient utilization or management of limited productive resources for the purpose of attaining the maximum satisfaction of human wants. Njoku (2011) relates Economics to human beings who live within a framework of a given historical civilization as it relates to their experience in various wants, such as food, shelter, clothing, education, social prestige, entertainment, expression of religious beliefs and so on in relation to the scarce resources to satisfy human wants. Isiozor and Amaechi (2019) asserts, that given this definition there is need to add that Economics as a science helps one to understand and manage his/her scarce resources in order to meet his/her numerous wants. In line with this, Economics is one of the subjects taught in

senior secondary schools, and it takes a central position in student learning, as approved by the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in her National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014). The curriculum is built on the principle of providing Senior Secondary School graduates with basic understanding and abilities to appreciate the economic problems of what to produce, how to produce and find out ways of solving them in the Nigerian Economy.

Its structure and theme design follows a spiral form from Senior Secondary 1-III; simple to complex with in –built teachers and learners activities for each topic. This is because it occupies a central position in students learning as one of the subjects taught at the post upper basic level of education and very vital in every aspect of life. . Economics as a secondary school subject has relevance virtually in all human activities and the economy. The main objectives of teaching economics intermingle with the central purpose of education. FGN(2014:2), outlined the cardinal national objectives as the building of: "a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self- reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy and a land full of opportunities for all citizens". The above objectives are realizable through its effective implementation of economics curriculum in senior secondary schools. The objectives of teaching Economics at the post basic level of education as prescribed by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2008) is to enable students: appreciate basic economic principles and concepts as well as the tools for sound economic analysis, contribute wisely to discourse on economic reforms and development as they affect or would affect the generality of Nigerians, understand the structure and functioning of economic institutions, appreciate the role of public policies on national economy, develop the skills and also appreciate the basic for rational economic decisions, become sensitized to participate actively in national economic advancement through entrepreneurship, capital, understand the role and status of Nigeria and other African countries in international economic relationship, and appreciate the problems encountered by developing countries in their effort towards economic advancement.

The economics curriculum is basically designed to promote objectivity and independent thinking. This makes students to think and behave objectively in contrast to subjective ways. It makes students not to accept statements without verification; Uchendu,(2022) is of the view that:

> The concept of scarcity, for instance helps them to understand that they various concepts in economics offer explanations to economic events and these help them to have a more complete understanding of events happening in the real life activities. Also the idea of scarcity, for example, helps them to understand that resources are limited in supply, and as such, they need to be efficiently allocated to achieve the aim of meeting human wants in the best possible way''. (p.4)

The basic understanding of economics helps the individual to allocate his scarce resources in more optimal ways. As contained in the National Policy on Education, (FGN, 2014) Economics was made to be one of the elective subjects to be studied in the senior secondary school and it is based on the philosophy of showing economics as a subject that is relevant in everyday life of individuals and could prepare graduates for an entrepreneurial career in future. Economics is a living subject and has to be taught and learned in a practical and realistic way.

Observations on students' academic achievement over the years in the results of senior secondary certificate examination (SSCE) revealed that students performed poorly in economics despite the relevance of the subjects (economics) in today's world. Feed backs from Chief Examiner of May/Jun, West African Examination Council (WAEC), 2015-2019, indicated that candidate's results became poorer within the above stated year. The reports revealed the following weaknesses: shallow coverage of the syllabus, inability to draw and label diagrams properly and disobedience to the rubrics. One wonders if the mass failure of students in economics could be linked to the strategy/strategies which the teacher uses in his/her classroom or lack of students' academic self-concept and academic motivation.

From the foregoing, it should be noted that within the years under review, students have never obtained up to 50 percent credit pass in Economics. This trend has adverse implication on the nation's effort in this era of globalization, industrialization and technological revolution. To the students, it creates room for dropping out of school, unemployment, anti-social behaviours such as rape, cultism, kidnapping and so on. Nigeria needs nothing short of good grades in economics at all level of schooling, hence the need for this study.

Researchers have attributed poor academic achievement over the years to various factors, such as unqualified economics teachers, teachers' truancy, unconducive learning environment, low motivations to teach, high teacher/student ratio, Inadequate Financial Allocation, Conflict among Teachers, Lack or Inadequacy of Facilities/Materials, Lack of Relevant Training and Induction Courses and improper remuneration among others (Oguejiofor, Anyakaorah, Ekechukwu and Ogbuanya, 2021). Someother researchers have tried to look into academic self-concept, academic motivation and student achievement (Medumere, 2021).

The mental representation of one's academic abilities, the perception and evaluation that a student has or does about his or her academic abilities, which fuels the academic achievement of a student, is known as academic self-concept. With regard to academic self-concept, Laryea, Saani and Dawson-Brew, (2014),) posit that it has two levels and relates to how well we do in school or how well we learn. While the first level deals with the general academic self-concept of how good one is in all subjects, the other has to do with a set of specific content related to self-concept that describes how good one is in mathematics, science, social studies and English language and Economics. Self-concept like any psychological construct is relative and depends on some frame of reference. According to the frame of reference model, academic self-concept will depend on a student's own academic ability and the ability level of other students within the same class. When a student perceives himself as the best in class he tends to hold a positive self-concept of himself/herself. Admiral (2014) reported that one of the difficulties which students experience in most areas of life and education in particular, is closely related with the ways they see themselves and the world in which they live. In other words, many students have difficulties in school not because of low intelligence, unconducive learning environment, teacher's attitude, poverty or whatever, but because they have learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic work especially mathematics related subjects like economics. Thus, students' perceived academic competency and their dedication to involvement and interest in schoolwork are operational definitions of academic self-concept as utilized in this study.

Motivation is derived from the Latin word 'movere' meaning to move stir up. Madumere, (2021) described motivation as what energize behavior, sustains it and directs it to goal so that a state of equilibrium is attained or maintained. Alkış (2015), defined motivation as intrinsic desires that a person has already or that they reflect as they are learning and gaining new knowledge.

Motivation could either be intrinsic or extrinsic state of the organism. Based on the above definition therefore, academic motivation is operationally defined as a set of one or more conditions which activate, turn on behavior, direct it towards goals in education and maintain the behavior until the goal that is achievement, is reached. Such motivation could either be on the part of the teacher, to encourage him/her to be more dedicated to duty, or on the part of the student, to encourage himself/herself to learn and achieve high. It then shows that motivation could either be high or low. When it is high it leads to good grades which in turn put our future into uncertainties and gives hope for technological development. Observation with regards to students' motivation to learning presently no doubt is relatively low. Among the problems in the society that lower their motivation include; unemployment after study, distractions from social media, the mindset of getting rich quick, seeing no purpose in studying because the uneducated are making it faster in life; a boring teaching methods, too high expectations, family circumstances, unfavorable learning environment, learning disabilities, poverty and so on.

Achievement motivation has been considered as an extended person-intrinsic motivation, showing a pattern of actions, planning and feelings connected with striving to achieve some internalized standards of excellence (Madumere, 2021). Psychologists have noted that achievement motivation should be taken into account in education because of its effective relationship with new learning abilities, strategies and behavior, and they have presented motivation for academic achievement, (Browne, 2014). Based on the above definition, academic motivation can be described as a set of one or more conditions which activate, turn on behavior, direct it towards goals in education and maintain the behavior until goal, that is achievement, is reached. Such motivation could be on the part of the teacher, to encourage him or her to be more dedicated to duty, or on the part of the student, to encourage him or her to learn and achieve high. It the shows that motivation could be high or low. When it is high, it leads to good grades in academic achievement, which in turn foster our dreams for industrial development.

Academic achievement is the term used to characterize academic results that show how well a student has met their learning objectives. Reaching educational criteria like a bachelor's degree can be considered academic achievement. Exams and ongoing evaluations are frequently used to gauge academic success. Bichi (2015) defined academic achievement as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instructions in a given area of learning that is, achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill or knowledge has been imparted to him. Academic achievement also denotes the knowledge attained and skill developed in school subject, usually designated by test scores (Karthigeyan and Nirmala, 2012). Obih (2017) opined that achievement is the result gotten through a data gathering strategy for measuring knowledge, behavior and performance.

In a study carried out by Obih, (2017) on students' achievement, they found out that achievement could be improved by innovative methods of teaching. Moreover, students' poor achievement in economics may not only be affected by the teaching methods used but also may be influenced by students' gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of men and women such as norms, roles, and relationships of sexual nature (Uchendu, 2022). The phenomena of gender is specifically created by society, which assigns distinct tasks, responsibilities, behaviours, and mannerisms to the two sexes. Sex refers to the biological characteristics that defines human as female and male (Opara, 2014), it also refers to physical differences between males and females. Sex is assigned at birth based on physiological characteristics including their genitalia and chromosomal composition. Male and female genitalia both internal and external are differed. This study's gender context reveals that male and female students have distinct preferences for particular disciplines. The classroom responses of both boys and girls reveal something about their intellectual abilities in connection to their academic performance.

There is therefore the need to explore other factors (Self-concept and Academic motivation) which would help to improve the interest and achievement of students in economics hence the need for the study 'Students' academic self-concept and academic motivation as correlate to students' academic achievement in economics.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate student's self-concept, and motivation as correlates of their academic achievement in economics in Owerri Educational Zone I of Imo, State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study will sought to;

1. Determine the students' self-concept and academic motivation in economics
2. Determine the relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics

Research Question

The following research questions will guide the study;

1. What are the academic self-concepts and motivation of the students in economics?
2. What is the relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study

Ho$_1$: The academic self-concept and motivation of the students do not differ significantly.

Ho$_2$: There is no significant relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics.

RESULTS

In this chapter, the researcher presented the results in tables according to the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question One: What is the relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics?

Table 1: Summaries of Simple Linear Statistics used to explain the relationship between students' self-concept (X) and their achievement in economics (Y)

V	n	∑	r	MR	DR	Remarks
X	382	7446				**High**
			0.662	High	Positive	**Positive**
Y	382	12469				**Relationship**

Size (n), Summation (∑), Simple Linear Statistics (r), Magnitude of Relationship (MR), Direction of Relationship (DR) and Remarks

Table 1 shows the result for the extent of relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics. A close look at the result shows that an index of 0.662 was realized for the extent of relationship between the two variables (self concept and students' achievement in Economics). The result from the table indicates that the magnitude of the relationship is high and its direction is positive. This positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable is likely to lead to the same measure of increase in another variable and a decrease in one variable could also lead to the same measure of decrease in another variable implying an increase in students' self concept could lead to an increase in their achievement in Economics. Therefore, the answer to the above question is that there is a high and positive extent of relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State.

Hypothesis One

Ho$_1$: There is no significant relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics.

Table 2: Summaries of t-test of significance of simple linear statistics used to test the relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics

V	n	∑	r	α	df	t$_{cal}$	t$_{tab}$	Decision
X	382	7446						
			0.662	0.05	380	**17.196**	**1.96**	**Reject Ho$_1$**
Y	382	12469						

Sample Size (n), Summation (∑), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level (α), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of simple linear statistics between two Variables

Table 2 shows the result for the test of the significance of the extent of relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics. The result gave the degree of freedom as 380 and the t-calculated value as 17.196 and the t-tabulated value as 1.96. As the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis; therefore infer that there is a significant relationship between students' self-

concept and their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship among students' self-concept based on gender and their achievement in economics?

Table 3: Summaries of multiple linear relationship among students' self-concept based on gender male (X_1), female (X_2) and their achievement (Y) in Economics

V	n	∑	r	MR	Remarks
X_1	382	7446			
X_2	382	7446	0.645	High	High Positive Relationship
Y	382	12469			

Variables (V), Size (n), Summation (∑), Multiple Linear Correlation (R), Magnitude of Relationship (MR) and Remarks

     Table 3 shows the summaries of multiple linear relationship used to describe the relationship among students' self-concept based on gender and their achievement in economics. A look at the result shows that an index of 0.645 was realized for the relationship among the three variables (self concept based on male students, female students and their achievement in Economics). The result from the table indicates that the magnitude of the relationship is high, which is to say that, there is a high relationship among self-concept based on male and female students and their achievement in economics. This indicates that an increase in one variable is likely to lead to the same measure of increase in other variables and a decrease in one variable could also lead to the same measure of decrease in other variables, implying a very strong association among the variables. Therefore, the answer to the research question is that there is a high and positive extent of relationship among students' self-concept based on male and female students as well as their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State.

Hypothesis Two

Ho$_2$: There is no significant relationship among self-concept based on male and female students and their achievement in economics

Table 4: Summary of statistics involved in F-test of the significance of the coefficient of multiple correlation

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Squares	$F_{cal.}$	$F_{tab.}$	Decision
Regression	376.301	2	376.301			Reject
Residual	483.566	379	1.273	**295.708**	**3.00**	
Total	859.866	381				Ho_2

F-test of Significance of Multiple Linear Correlation/Regression among the variables

Table 4 shows the summaries of F-test of multiple linear correlation used to test the relationship among self-concept based on male and female students and their achievement in economics. It was indicated in the table that the calculated F-ratio value used in testing the hypotheses stood at 295.708. Using a degree of freedom of 2:379 at 0.05 level of significance, the calculated F-value of 295.708 is greater than the tabulated F-value of 3.00, hence the researcher rejected the null hypothesis; thus concluding that there is significant relationship among self-concept based on male and female students and their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State.

Discussion of Findings

The Relationship between Students' Self-Concept and their Achievement in Economics

The result showed that there is a high and positive extent of relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State. The high extent of relationship found is a proof that students understand how rewarding economics is to them and as such they read harder to acquire good grades in the subject because they believe in themselves. The findings of the study further established that there is a significant relationship between students' self-concept and their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools. In agreeing to these findings, Ondieki (2022) found a positive and significant correlation between academic self-concept of students and their academic achievement. Similarly, Efobi and Okigbo (2022) revealed that a positive relationship existed between the students' academic self-concept and their academic achievement. The findings therefore strengthened the fact that students offering this subject belief in themselves that they could do well in it. Thus inability to perform well in the subject may not be associated with their perception of any difficulty in the subject but could be related to pedagogical factors. It is important for teachers to always verify the entry behaviour of their students and compliment the students' self confidence with appropriate teaching and learning strategies that would produce expected performance. Also if students have good self-concept of their ability to perform in Economics, it is an indication that such students would be motivated to strive for success in the face of any difficulty that confronts them.

The Relationship between Students' Self-Concept based on Gender and their Achievement in Economics

The result showed that there is a high and positive extent of relationship among students' self-concept based on male and female students as well as their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State. The high extent of relationship recorded in the findings is a proof that gender denomination does not predict one's achievement as far as he or she believes that learning of Economics requires self determination and hard work as the learning of this subject is socially ascribed roles, responsibilities and opportunities associated with women and men, as well as the hidden power structures that govern relationships between them. Thus, it is a parallel and socially unequal division into masculinity and femininity. The findings of the study further established that there is significant relationship among self-concept based on male and female students and their achievement in economics in public senior secondary schools. Corroborating the results, Efobi and Okigbo (2022) revealed that a significant relationship was found between female male students' academic self-concept and their academic achievement. Also, Matovu (2012) revealed that there was a statistically significant effect of gender on academic effort and academic achievement. The findings therefore strengthened the fact that being a male or female does not affect a student's self concept on Economics in public senior secondary schools in Owerri Education Zone I of Imo State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1.   Teachers should use some teaching strategies that would boast students' academic self concept will in turn promote academic achievement in Economics. The students also should be ready at all time to think positively about themselves in order to improve their achievement in Economics.

2.   Teachers, parents and the society at large should help both male and female students not to see Economics as a subject for a particular gender. Also, teachers should provide the male and female students the enabling environment to learn and solve Economics problems cooperatively in order to maintain equity in their achievement.

3.   Principals should find out the strategies to adequately motivate their students, such as organizing speech and price giving day celebration, quiz and debate among the secondary school students in order to facilitate learning and improve academic achievement.

4.   Incentives should be given to students irrespective of their gender who showcases high academic motivation. This should be implemented by all education stakeholders such as the government, parents, teachers, peer groups, non-governmental organisations, private citizens and all the likes.

5.   Principals should organize well packaged seminars and workshop regularly for teachers, students and counselors on achievement motivation and self-concept in order to create opportunities for exchange of ideas among them.

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