

INFLUENCE OF SELF-CONCEPT AND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM ORPHANAGE HOMES IN BENIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

The main thrust of this study was to examine the influence of self-concept and social acceptance on academic achievement of students from orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two null hypotheses and adopted the correlational research design. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 secondary schools in the Metropolis while the purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting a sample of 200 respondents. Three instruments were used for obtaining data for the study. They are: the adapted version of Akinboye's Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI) Subscale; Social Acceptance Scale (SAS); and Academic Achievement Scale (AAS). The relationship direction was determined by the use of the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistic while the hypotheses were tested at .05 level. The result of analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students in the orphanage homes; there is a significant relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary school students in the orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis. The study recommended that care-givers, teachers, and counsellors should encourage and support the training of self-concept to the students in orphanage homes and that society be enlightened towards having positive regard for children and individuals in orphanage homes.

Keywords: Self-concept, Social Acceptance, Academic Achievement, Orphanage Homes

Introduction

Academic achievement, according to Adeyemi and Okotie (2023) is the sum total of the outputs from the individual inputs mediated through certain structural operations. It is a multidimensional element of an individual's behaviour which can be described in broad or general terms or described in minute details. Academic achievement refers to how well students can accomplish the classroom tasks given to them by their teachers. Muhammad and Asma'u (2016) opined that academic

achievement is the extent to which they cope with their studies about the stipulated aims and objectives of the school. It reflects the learners' ability to be able to communicate the knowledge they have acquired within a given period. Psychologists, social workers, and educationists are becoming more concerned with the academic achievement of students in various subject areas and the factors responsible for such performance. To ensure that students from orphanage homes achieve better educational outcomes, it is important to understudy certain factors such as self-concept and social acceptance and how they influence their academic achievement.

The home is the first unit with which children have continuous contact and in the same context, form their educational patterns. Ekeng and Odey (2019) opined that successful education, either in the formal setting of the school or in the informal setting of the home, a correct approach to the education of the child is quite essential. The family provides the first education for a child's training. The atmosphere at home helps or hinders the student's overall attitude towards school. If a student is valued, appreciated, cared for, and looked after as an asset right from home rather than being seen as a liability, such a child is likely to learn to appreciate and value schooling. The influence of home may constitute a problem for children in orphanage homes, most especially in how they perceive themselves to enhance their academic status. This is because children from such orphanages will have to join other children from normal homes as they get to school age, starting from primary school level to other upper levels of education.

Statement of the Problem

An orphanage is a residential institution, total institution, or group home devoted to the care of orphans and children who for various reasons cannot be cared for by their biological families. The parents may be dead, absent, or famished. There may be substance abuse or mental illness in the biological home or the parents may simply be unwilling to care for the child (Askeland, 2005), which may instigate a child to be taken to a safe home. The lack of parents may leave the orphans to pursue dangerous and negative adventures and also engage in risky behavior (Adeyemi&Eghochuku, 2019). This is because they are free from parental control and are deprived of meaningful living. In many cities in Nigeria, such as Benin City, orphanage homes tend to be overpopulated and there seems to be negligence on the part of the people who assign children to such homes. Studies such as Reef s (2005) have shown that children who live in orphanage homes could have developmental issues, problems with nutrition, and difficulties in adapting to the outside world (the school inclusive). The general misconception and negative attitudes towards children living in orphanage homes could affect them adversely. This may make them unconsciously accept wrong perceptions about themselves and misconceptions about their cognitive ability to perform well in school. Hence they may develop weak self-concept and social acceptance which could influence their academic achievement in the school.

The problem of this study therefore is whether the self-concept and social acceptance of children from the orphanage homes could impact on their academic achievement in the secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria. In other words, could there be a relationship between self-concept, social acceptance and academic achievement among the orphanage children in Edo State secondary schools, Nigeria?

Literature Review

Self-concept is the “composite of a person's thoughts, beliefs, feelings, strings, hope and fantasies. His view of what he is, what he has been, what he might become, and his attitude about self (Ita&Egbau, 2019). Beginning in infancy, children acquire and organize information to enable them to understand the relationship between them, the self, and their social world. Children and adolescents integrate social information into their self-concept in elementary school by assessing

their position among their peers (Trautwein, Ludtke, Nagy & Marsh, 2009). Throughout later childhood and adolescence, the self-concept becomes more abstract, complex, and hierarchically organized into cognitive mental representations or schemas which direct the processing of self-relevant information (McCarthy, 2010; Adeyemi&Okotie, 2023). Donelson (2010) opined that the emotional state of a child reflects on his appearance and attitudes and sometimes exhibits a lack of security and ability to cope with life problems. Jonav (2013) was of the view that emotional deprivation of the object of love attachment takes its toll on the psychological, emotional, and physical development of the child. Deprivation as a result of biological parental absence, malnutrition, and the atmosphere of orphanages may increase the negligence of orphans in schools. Moreover, early childhood deprivation may lead to maladjustment of personality.

Abiola (2011) observed that the backwardness attributed to developing nations is not just due to a lack of innate potential but due to socio-cultural environment and educational factors which do not promote the type of cognitive incentive in the early years that enhances intellectual ability. Studies by Eguavoen and Eniola (2016) and Marsh et al (2011) showed that self-concept, whether high or low, is a primary predictor of achievement levels. A student from the orphanage who finds in an educational setting with an already low self-concept tends to have academic achievement lowered. Earlier studies, such as Marsh et al (2006) had concluded that there is a continuous flow between the self and the stream of experiences involved in the process of living and learning in school. A student perceives, interprets, accepts, or rejects what he/she encounters in school in the light of the way he/she sees himself/herself as a person generally and as a student.

Social acceptance, according to Bell (2014), is the process of being included and respected by other people. He explained that the desire for social acceptance is a strong motivation that helps to explain a broad range of human behavior. Trautueein et al (2009) viewed social acceptance as the ability to accept or to be able to tolerate differences and diversity in other people or groups of people. Social acceptance includes positive social interaction and inclusion in cultures; organization teams; social awareness; friendship-making skills; communication and interest in peers. When a student from an orphanage is perceived differently or isolated because of his/her background, his/her dignity could be reduced, and may often feel stigmatized. This negative attitude towards children from the orphanages may make them passive; develop poor self-concepts; and have irrational beliefs which could negatively impact their academic achievement. Students from orphanages do experience discrimination, stigmatization, neglect, and sometimes isolation in their interactions with others.

Akubuiro and Joshua (2004) conducted a study on the influence of self-concept and attitude on academic achievement in science among secondary school students in Southern Cross Rivers State of Nigeria. Their findings revealed that students'academic achievement was significantly predicted by self-concept. Moreover, Eguavoen and Eniola (2016) carried out a study on the influence of self-concept and social acceptance of academic achievement of students with visual impairment in Oyo State, Nigeria, and concluded that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of students with visual impairment. Wang (2006) also found that Chinese children focused on social roles and interactions in describing themselves. Wang's study concluded that cultural values and beliefs about self-play are crucial in shaping an individual's self-concept.

Muhammad and Asma'u (2014) carried out a study on emotional intelligence, self-concept, and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Sokoto. Their findings indicated that there is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance of senior secondary school students. Furthermore, Awad, (2007), and Cokely (2000) have also established that self-concept has a significant influence on student outcomes. What therefore could be the situation with the students in the orphanage homes in the Benin metropolis? It is against this background that this study is justified to investigate the influence of self-concept and social acceptance on the achievement of secondary school students in orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students in orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis?
2. What is the relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary school students in orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students from orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis.
2. There is no significant relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary school students from orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlation research design. The population of the study consists of all the SS3 students living in orphanages in Benin Metropolis, Edo State, Nigeria. A constructive and purposive sampling technique was used to select a total of 200 students from 20 public secondary schools (students were identified by the class teachers from the school registers) within the area of study. The instruments used for this study are the Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI) sub-scale on self-concept, which was adapted from Akinboye (1982); Social Acceptance Scale (SAS); and Academic Achievement Scale (AAS). The validity of Akinboye's APDI was by the original owner. SAS and AAS were validated by three test experts in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Nigeria. The reliability of instruments was established using the Cronbach Alpha reliability technique. The measure of internal consistency for APDI was 0.76 coefficients; SAS yielded a coefficient of 0.89 while AAS yielded a coefficient of 0.76. The scoring of the instrument was done on a 5-point Likert scale while the two other instruments' scoring was done on a 4-point scale. Research questions were answered descriptively using Pearson Product Moment Correlation while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students in orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis?

Table 1 presented the analysis to answer research question 1.

Table 1: Pearson Moment Correlation of self-concept and academic achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r
Decision				
Academic Achievement	200	46.33	10.829	.787
Self-Concept	200	52.16	18.437	+Rel

+ Rel= Positive Relationship

Table 1 shows that there is a relationship between self-concept and academic achievement as analysis shows that $r = .787$ which implies that there is a positive relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students from orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students from orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis.

Table 2: Test of Significance between Self-concept and Academic Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	df
P					
Academic	200	46.33	10.829	.787	198
Sig					
Achievement					
Self-Concept	200	52.16	18.437		

Table 2 shows that there is a relationship between self-concept and students' academic achievement $r(198) = .787$ at $P < 0.05$. The null hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and students' academic achievement is rejected.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary school students in orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis?

Answer to research question two is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD
rDecision			
Academic Achievement	200	46.33	10.829
.528 + Rel			
Self-Concept	200	25.14	10.382

+ Rel = Positive Relationship

Table 3 shows that there is positive relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary school students in orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of students from orphanages in Benin Metropolis.

Table 4: Test of Significance between Social Acceptance and Academic Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	df
P					
Academic	200	46.33	10.829	.525	198
Sig					
Achievement					
Self-Concept	200	25.14	10.382		

Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of students in orphanages $r(198) = .528$ at $P < 0.05$ with this the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary school students in orphanages is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

To answer research questions 1 and 2, the variables shows that there is a relationship between self-concept, social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary students in orphanages in Benin Metropolis. This indicates that self-concept and social acceptance are very important to help students achieve academically.

Finding from hypothesis one revealed that self-concept is significantly related to the academic achievement of students in orphanages in Benin Metropolis. Students in the orphanages, with low self-concept tend to have low academic achievement. This is in agreement with Eguavoen and Eniola (2016) who found that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of students. The finding is also in agreement with that of Akubuiro and Joshua (2004) that students' self-concept is highly related to their academic achievement. This study, however, is in contrast with the findings of Muhammad and Asma'u (2014) that there is no significant relationship between the self-concept of students and their academic achievement. The finding in hypothesis 2 showed that there is a significant relationship between social acceptance and academic achievement of secondary school students from orphanages in Benin Metropolis. This implies that the dignity of students from the orphanages has been hampered as they could have been perceived differently, or suffered isolation from other students and felt stigmatized. They in turn could have become passive and developed irrational beliefs which could negatively impact their academic achievement. This finding is in agreement with that of Wang (2006) that children focused on social roles and interactions in describing themselves.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that there is a relationship between self-concept and academic achievement; and between social acceptance and academic achievement of students that are raised in orphanage homes in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Caregivers, teachers, and guidance counselors should encourage and support all students, irrespective of their home background, to develop and improve their self-concept and their academic achievement. In addition, teachers and all stakeholders in education should treat all students equally by upholding their self-dignity and self-worth. Furthermore, there is a need to educate society towards having positive regard for children within the orphanages by accepting them as being worthy members of society. Counselors and teachers should help students to develop a positive self-concept through the provision of challenging assessments.

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