Influence of Self-Efficacy on Students’ Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students in Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
Background: Recently, there is observable high rate of poor academic performance among students and teachers, parents, educators and the general public are worried. Thus, there is need for studies to investigate variables that could be responsible for the menace.

Objective: To investigate the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement among secondary school students in Anambra State, Nigeria, with regards to the students’ gender and location.

Methodology: The study adopted expos-facto research design with a sample size of 300 students from Awka Education Zone of Anambra State, Nigeria. The questionnaire used for data collection was Influence of Self-Efficacy on Academic Achievement Questionnaire (ISAAQ). The data collected were analyzed using t-test statistics.

Results: The findings of the study indicated that the influence of self-efficacy belief on academic achievement of secondary school students do not differ significantly in terms of gender and location.

Conclusion: Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that if the current manner of teaching both male and female students, urban and rural students are not maintained and strengthened, unhealthy academic differences may be existing with respect to gender and location. Thus, there is need for high level of improvement in the learning and teaching process.

INTRODUCTION

Self efficacy is people’s judgment of their capability to organize and execute course of action required to attain a designated type of performance. Bandura (1994) perceived self-efficacy as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources and courses of action needed to meet given situational demands (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Bandura (1994) posits that People acquire self efficacy through their past experiences, modeling, social persuasion and psychological factors. The author further hypothesized that the level of self-efficacy can determine whether a task will be initiated, the amount of effort that will be expended and the level of persistence to complete the task when faced with obstacles and aversive experiences. For example, a student may be able to attain a certain level of achievement in a class test based on his skills, abilities and intelligence. Due to some failure experiences, the student formed poor judgment in his/her capability. The lack of self-efficacy will not enable the student to persist and work hard for the class test. On the other hand, if the student had acquired a high level of self-efficacy belief, the student would have motivated himself to put in more effort, persisted longer and work harder.
to achieve better in the class test. Ever since Bandura theorized self-efficacy in his seminal article, extensive studies were done to extend the role of self-efficacy as a mechanism to better understand behavioural change in the area of academic achievement.

In the academic setting, research findings, such as Abah (2010), Egwu (2010) and Williams (2010) have shown that there is positive and significant correlation between self-efficacy with academic achievements in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. These studies have shown that a student with higher sense of self-efficacy will achieve better academic performance. Thus, self-efficacy seems to be a good predictor of the achievement scores.

High self-efficacy belief could make students to work hard to conquer a task and achieve success. Students with high self efficacy resist failure through hard work and see success in hard work, while students who have low self-efficacy believe that they cannot do well no matter how they try (Pajeres & Schmutz 2001). When individuals have a strong belief in their ability to achieve a particular goal, they may design steps towards achieving the goal. Previous research such as Ndukwu (2012) showed that positive relationship exists between self-efficacy and primary school pupils’ academic achievement. Similarly, Martins (2010) and Abah (2010) also found out that self-efficacy improves primary school pupils’ academic achievement. On the other hand, Williams (2010) and Egwu (2010) in their respective research findings established that self-efficacy influence secondary school students’ academic achievement positively. In other words, students who have self-efficacy could have higher academic achievement.

Achievement can be regarded as something good but difficult, which was carried out successfully. It is something which has been accomplished successfully, especially by means of exertion, skill, practice or perseverance. Achievement can be seen as a test for measurement and comparison of skills in various fields of academic study. Achievement can be high or low. Evidence of the low academic achievement is seen in the students’ poor examination results.

Currently, it is observed that students’ results of external examinations are going backward in important subjects like English and Mathematics. This situation is increasing in Anambra at a very significant rate and has constituted serious worry for the stakeholders in education sector such as the parents, teachers, school administrators, and the government but it is not clear whether a factor like self-efficacy belief can influence the poor performance of students. Meanwhile, previous studies have indicated that self-efficacy belief influence academic achievement of secondary school students. For instance, Martins (2010) conducted a study on the impact of self efficacy on students’ academic achievement and found out, among other things, that self-efficacy has influence on pupils’ academic achievement; and that gender has no significant influence on self-efficacy and academic achievement of pupils. Williams (2010) carried out a study on the effect of self-efficacy on students’ academic achievement and found out, among other things, that self-efficacy has influence on students’ academic achievement; and that gender has no significant influence on self-efficacy and academic achievement of pupils. Williams (2010) carried out a study on the effect of self-efficacy on students’ academic achievement and found out, among other things, that self-efficacy has influence on students’ academic achievement; and that gender has no significant influence on self-efficacy and academic achievement of pupils. Egwu (2010) carried out a study on comparative analysis of self-efficacy and students’ academic achievement and found out that self-efficacy has direct influence on secondary school students’ academic achievement; and that gender has no significant influence on the effect of self-efficacy and academic achievement. Edward (2003) conducted a study on the perceived influence of self-efficacy on children academic achievement and found out that self-efficacy has significant influence on children academic achievement; and that gender has no significant influence on the effect of self-efficacy on pupils’ academic achievement.

It seems that previous studies have not considered location as factor that can moderate impact of self-efficacy belief on academic achievement of students. Also, it appears that gender has not been fully explored with regards to self-efficacy. Therefore, the general purpose of the current study is to investigate the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement of secondary school students, with regards to gender and location in Anambra State of Nigeria. The study tested the following null hypothesis: there is no significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement means scores of male and female secondary school students; there is no significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement mean scores of urban and rural secondary school students.

**Method:**

**Design of the Study:**

The study adopted ex-post-facto research design. According to Nworgu, (2006) ex-post-facto design is the type of design in which data are collected after the event or phenomenon under investigation has taken place and for which the researcher does not have control over the variables he or she is interested in and cannot manipulate them.

**Area of the Study:**
The study was carried out in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. Awka Education Zone of Anambra State is made up of five (5) Local Government Areas namely Awka North, Awka South, Anaocha, Dunukofia, and Njikoka LGAs. Awka Education Zone is bounded in the North by Udi Education Zone of Enugu State, in the south by Onisha Education Zone of Anambra State, in the west by Ogidi Education Zone of Anambra State, and in the East by Nnewi Education Zone of Anambra State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques:
The sample size of the study was 300 students. Simple random sampling technique was used to sample three out five local government areas in Awka Education Zone.

Instrument for Data Collection:
The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire constructed by the researchers. The questionnaire titled “Influence of Self-Efficacy on Academic Achievement Questionnaire (ISAAQ)” has two sections: A and B. section A was used to collect personal data of the respondents while section B comprised items aimed at providing information to answer the four research questions. ISAAQ had a four-point rating format as follows; strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D=2) and Strongly Disagree (SD=1).

To ascertain the face validation of the instrument, the instrument was given to three experts, two from Sociology of Education and one from Psychology of Education, all from Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. They were requested to read and correct the items in the questionnaire to ensure suitability, appropriateness and adequacy. The researchers modified the instrument in line with the suggestions and corrections made by the experts.

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to a trial test. This was done by administering the questionnaire to 30 randomly selected secondary school students in Ogidi Education Zone of Anambra State which is not part of the study area but share similar characteristics with the study area. The data collected were analyzed using the Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Technique. The internal reliability coefficient obtained for the instrument was 0.79. This point justified the use of the instrument in the study.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis:
The 300 copies of the validated questionnaire were administered directly to the respondents by the researcher, and collected on the spot. The data collected were analyzed using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Results:

H01: There is no significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement mean scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State.

Table 1: Showing t-test analysis of the significant difference on the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement mean scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>3.4411</td>
<td>.3112</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>.04120</td>
<td>-6.034</td>
<td>.672</td>
<td>Accept H01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>3.4227</td>
<td>.3100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result from table 1 shows that the t-cal value is -6.034, which is less than the t-crit value put at .672. This implies that there is no significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement means scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State.

H02: There is no significant difference on the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement mean scores of urban and rural secondary school students in Anambra State.

Table 2: Showing t-test analysis of the significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement mean scores of urban and rural secondary school students in Anambra State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>3.3211</td>
<td>.2051</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>.12740</td>
<td>-7.381</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>Accept H02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4.3120</td>
<td>.2140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that the t-cal value is -7.381 which is less than the t-crit value put at .714. This implies that there is no significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement mean scores of urban and rural secondary school students in Anambra State.

Discussion:
The finding of the study showed that there is no significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement means scores of male and female secondary school students. The above finding agrees with the earlier findings of Martins (2010) and Williams (2010) who found out that there is no significant difference on the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement means scores of male and female secondary school students.

Also, the study found that there is no significant difference in the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement mean scores of urban and rural secondary school students. The above finding agrees with the earlier findings of Abah (2010) and Egwu (2010) who found out that there is no significant difference on the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement means scores of urban and rural secondary school students.

**Conclusion/Implications:**

The researchers concluded that the influence of self-efficacy belief on academic achievement of secondary school students differs in terms of gender and location. This implies that if the current manner of teaching both male and female students, urban and rural students are not maintained and strengthened, unhealthy academic differences may be in existing with respect to gender and location.

**REFERENCES**


