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SELF-CONCEPT AND TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS AS CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ANAMBRA STATE

BY

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Abstract

This study examined the self-concept, and teachers' expectations, as correlates of academic achievement among public secondary school students in Anambra State, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 6,526 SS II students from which a sample of 341 students was drawn from 66 schools in Awka Education Zone. Multistage sampling technique was used to draw the sample. The Instruments employed for data collection were Self-Concept Questionnaire (SCQ) and Teachers Expectation Scale (TES). Academic Achievement (AC) was assessed with students' Cumulative Grade Point Averages (CGPAs). The reliability of the instruments were determined using Cronbach alpha method which yielded coefficient of 0.80 for Self-concept Questionnaire and 0.98 for Teacher's Expectation Scale. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to answer research questions while null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study's findings revealed a non-significant negative relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics, between teachers' expectation and academic achievement. However, significant positive relationships were found between self-concept and academic achievement among male and female students, and between teachers' expectation and academic achievement among male and female students. The study concluded that self-concept and teachers' expectations played a crucial role in academic achievement in Mathematics, particularly when considering gender. Based on the findings, it was recommended that educators and policymakers prioritize enhancing self-concept development and improving teacher-student interaction to promote academic achievement in Mathematics. Additionally, teachers should be trained to maintain high expectations for all students, regardless of gender, to foster a supportive learning environment that promotes academic success.

Keywords: *Self-Concept, Teachers Expectations and Academic Achievement*

Introduction

Academic achievement is a crucial aspect of education, serving as an indicator of a country's educational success. In Nigeria, secondary education plays a vital role in preparing students for useful living within society and higher education. The academic achievement of students is a major variable that interests both teachers and educational psychologists. According to (Brookover, 2020) academic achievement refers to the level of proficiency a student attains in academic subjects, typically measured by grades, test scores, and other assessments. However, the academic achievement of secondary school students in Anambra State has been a persistent concern, characterized by low grades and test scores (Adeyemi, 2019), high dropout rates (Okebukola, 2020) limited opportunities for further education and employment (OECD, 2018), and negative impact on academic achievement. This trend has significant implications for the students, their families, and the broader society. Enoch & Asogwa (2021), perceived academic achievement as the overall accomplishment of students, evident in their scores in standardized examinations. Lee et al; (2020) defined academic achievement as the outcome of students' learning experiences, reflecting their mastery of academic skills, knowledge, and competencies. Sinclair et al., (2019) opined that the academic achievement as the level of academic success a student achieves, measured by various assessments, grades, and academic milestones. Academic achievement deals with the extent students' have gained from a particular course of instruction. Determining academic achievement helps the teacher and the students to evaluate and estimate the degree of success attained in learning a given body of knowledge.

The problem that necessitates this study is that many in public secondary schools in Anambra State have .t shortage of teacher's, Inadequate learning environment, lack of family support, low student motivation, ineffective learning style, socio-economic constraints and Resources limitation. These factors can lead to a vicious cycle of underachievement, low motivation, and decreased opportunities for further educations. This can lead to decreased self-esteem, increased stress and limited future opportunities. Some of public secondary schools have shortage of teacher's and this tend to affect the academic achievement of students. Some public secondary schools have textbooks that are outdated and can hinder students learning. Another additional problem of academic achievement is excessive use of mobile phone and internet addiction. Internet addiction and excessive use of mobile phones have a negative impact on academic achievement of secondary schools student's. It brings distraction, sleep deprivation and social comparison and decreased self-esteem. The gravity of this problem necessitates an investigation into the relationship between self-concept, teachers expectation, and academic achievement among public secondary school students in Anambra State. Academic achievement is a critical aspect of education, as it determines students' future opportunities and career prospects. In Nigeria, academic achievement is often measured by students' performance in national examinations. Unfortunately, many students in public secondary schools in Anambra State struggle to achieve good grades in these examinations, which can limit their access to higher education and employment opportunities.

The importance of academic achievement in Mathematics cannot be overemphasized. Mathematics is a fundamental subject that plays a crucial role in the development of Science Technology Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. It is also a critical tool for problem-solving and critical thinking. The skills can be developed through practice and seeking feedback from teacher's and peers. Furthermore, having a passion for Mathematics and a genuine interest in the subject can also contribute to excelling in the field. However, despite its importance, academic achievement remains a significant challenge for many students, particularly those in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The government's extensive educational efforts have failed to assist many students in achieving higher academic levels (Sukmayadi & Yahya, 2020). The effectiveness of teaching and learning tools, along with the students' personality, goals, and teachers' skills, all have an impact on academic progress.

The researcher defined Academic achievement as ones success in an academic programme over time. It is measured using academic scores or results obtained after a test or examination.

Self-concept refers to an individual's perception of themselves in relation to specific characteristics, such as academic and non-academic aspects. Ugogchukwu (2021) explained the self-concept is the way a person views himself. It is a reflection of an individual's behaviour. According to Arens et al., (2020), self-concept is defined as a student's perception of their academic abilities and competence, which can influence their motivation and engagement in learning. Another author, (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020), supported this definition, stating that self-concept is a critical factor in academic achievement, as it influences students' self-efficacy, motivation, and overall academic achievement. Self-concept is a critical factor influencing academic achievement. Furthermore, self-concept can influence students' learning behaviour, such as their willingness to take risks, ask questions, and seek help when needed. Students with positive self-concepts are more likely to adopt a growth mindset, persist in the face of challenges, and seek opportunities for growth and development. In contrast, students with negative self-concepts may become easily discouraged, give up quickly, and avoid challenging situations.

The impact of self-concept on academic achievement can be far-reaching, affecting not only students' academic achievement but also their emotional well-being and overall quality of life. Therefore, it is essential to understand the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement among public secondary school students in Anambra State, with a view to identifying strategies that can promote positive self-concepts and enhance academic outcomes. Their positivity towards themselves academically causes them to attain desirable academic outcomes in any field like Mathematics for instances (students with positive Mathematics self-concept tender to achieved higher than those with negative self-concept in Mathematics). A positive self-concept creates a positive classroom-learning environment that believed can contribute to good academic achievement by students.

According to the researchers self-concept is defined as how one sees and think about himself with charisma. Another variable that is considered when examining relationship between academic achievement and self-concept is teacher's expectation. Teachers' expectation which refers to the expected level of success for a specific child, based on assumptions about different issues such as the student's capacity or motivation, amongst others. Ardila, (2022), observed that teacher's expectations is another critical factor that influences academic achievement. Teachers' expectations can either enhance or hinder students' academic achievement, depending on whether they are positive or negative. When teacher's hold high expectations for their students, they are more likely to provide challenging learning opportunities, offer constructive feedback, and create a supportive learning environment that fosters academic success.

Conversely, when teachers hold low expectations, they may unintentionally create a self-fulfilling prophecy, where students perform poorly due to lack of challenge, support, and encouragement. Unfortunately, high expectations can also create a negative impact on the learners and also the teachers'. In this case, both learners will feel pressured to attain a specific achievement and further become frustrated if they do not achieve the goals, they set for themselves, creating mental traumas can negatively affect the self-esteem of the learners, especially when the learner is a poor performer and is being pushed to match the teachers expectations which at some point is impossible because the learner suffers from academic difficulties. In this case, the learner will feel left out hence. In addition to factors that relate to the teacher, the individual factors of students play an important role.

The impact of teachers' expectation on academic achievement can be profound. Research has shown that teachers' expectations can influence students' self-concept, motivation, and overall academic performance (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). When teachers believe in their students' abilities and potential, they are more likely to inspire confidence, motivation, and a growth mindset in their students. Conversely, when teachers hold negative expectations, they may inadvertently create a barrier to students' academic success. Teacher expectation plays a significant role in shaping student outcomes. Rosenthal and Jacobson, (1968) defined teacher expectation as the beliefs and attitudes teachers hold about their students' potential academic achievement. This definition is supported by (Babad, 2020), who emphasizes that teacher expectations can significantly impact student motivation, engagement, and overall academic achievement. (Rubie-Davies, 2018) highlighted that teacher expectations can significantly impact student motivation and engagement.

The researchers defined teacher's expectation as what a teacher hopes or anticipates from their students after a test or examination or instruction. However, when a teacher has high expectations, those expectations promote the learner's mental well-being and good, if not excellent academic achievement, thus creating a conducive and comfortable environment for learning since they have a motivating factor. Academic achievement and self-concept for example, are also considered

important predictors of academic success (Brühwiler & Helmke, 2018; Valentine, 2017). The relationship between self-concept, teachers' expectation, and academic achievement is complex and multifaceted. This study investigated the relationship between these variables among public secondary school students in Anambra State, with a view to identifying strategies that can promote positive self-concepts, enhance teacher's expectations, and improve academic outcomes.

Gender plays a significant role in shaping students' academic experiences and outcomes. According to Hyde, (2019), male and female students often exhibit different learning styles, motivations, and engagement patterns, which can impact their academic achievement. The research suggests that female students tend to perform poor in Mathematics while male students may excel in Mathematics. Yu and Wang (2023) pointed out that gender stereotypes impair girl's mathematical and self-concept, limiting their participation in STEM fields while they excel in verbal domains. These disparities, Yu and Wang (2023), underscored the need for equitable educational strategies that narrow gender gaps and promote female self-efficacy in male-dominated disciplines. Nonetheless, these disparities are neither uniform nor consistent across all places and periods.

Moreover, societal expectations, cultural norms, and teacher biases can also influence students' self-concept and academic achievement differently based on their gender (Riegle-Crumb & Moore, 2014). The impact of gender on academic achievement is complex and multifaceted. Studies have shown that teachers' expectations can have a more significant impact on female students' academic achievement than male students (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Additionally, research by (Kessels & Hannover 2015) found that female students tend to have more positive self-concepts in subjects where they receive support and encouragement from teachers. Furthermore, gender stereotypes and biases can affect students' academic choices and career aspirations, with female students often being underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields (Hill & Lynch, 2017). This study investigated the relationship between self-concept, teacher expectation, and academic achievement, considering gender's potential moderating role. By exploring these dynamics, the study aims to provide insights into how gender influences academic achievement and inform strategies to promote equitable learning outcomes. It is against the background that the researcher seeks to investigate self-concept and teachers expectation as correlates of academic achievement among public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

The persistent shortage of teachers, inadequate learning environment, and lack of family support, low student motivation, ineffective learning styles, socio-economic constraints, and resource limitations among students are significant concerns, as they can lead to limited future opportunities, decreased self-esteem, and negative impacts on overall well-being. Additionally, problems such as internet addiction and excessive mobile phone use have been observed. These

issues have a profound impact on the academic achievement of students, particularly in Mathematics.

Research has confirmed a decline in academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Mathematics, citing factors such as low academic achievement, skipping classes, poor teacher-student relationships, and negative impacts on self-esteem and well-being. As a primary school teacher in Anambra State, the researcher had observed that the relationship between teachers and students is often low, because students rarely seek help from teachers, and absenteeism is common. It is of this concern that the researchers embarked on this study to examine how self-concept, teachers expectation as a correlate of academic achievement among public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study sought to ascertain the relationship between self-concept and teachers' expectations on students' academic achievement identify effective strategies to support students and enhance their academic success.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine self-concept and teachers expectation as correlates of academic achievement among public secondary school students in Anambra State. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Find out the relationship between teacher's expectation and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary schools in Anambra state.
3. Identify the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among male and female students in SS II in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. What is the relationship between teacher's expectation and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. What is the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among male and female students in SS II in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significance relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. There is no significance relationship between teacher's expectation and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. There is no significance relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among male and female students in SS II in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Method

The study adopted correlational research design for this study. The area of the study is Anambra state. There are six education zones in Anambra State which are Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha and Otuocha. The population of the study comprised 6,526 students from Class SS II in 66 public secondary schools in Awka Education zone. The sample size is 377 SS II students drawn from the population using Taro Yamane's (1967) scientific. Multistage sampling technique was used for this study. The instrument for the study was a self-structured questionnaire, titled "Self-concept Questionnaire (SCQ), Teachers' Expectation Scale (TES) and Academic Achievement (AC). The instrument has four section A-D. Section A dealt with the personal data of the respondents, while section B has 36 items, and C has 36 items, section C was designed to evaluate students' academic achievement. The instrument has four point scale response options with response format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) and numerical value of 4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts two in Guidance and Counselling and one in Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents with the help of three research assistants. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha Method and average coefficient values of 0.80 for self-concept Questionnaire and 0.98 for Teacher Expectation Scale which is considered adequate for the study. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for social Sciences (SPSS Version 27). Research questions were answered using Pearson (r) while the hypotheses were tested using test of significance of correlation. Regarding the testing of hypotheses, the significance of the correlation variable was determined using the p-value; at <0.05 which indicates significance of correlation variable while p-value >0.05 indicates non-significance of the correlates variable. All the analysis were computed using SPSS version 26.

Result

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between Self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among SSII student in public secondary schools students in Anambra State?

Table 1

Pearson's Correlation Between Self-concept and Academic Achievement in Mathematics Among SS II Students in Public Secondary School Students in Anambra State

(N=341)

Variables	1	2	Remark
4. Self-concept	1	0-.037	Very Low negative relationship
4. Mathematics	0-.037	1	

Table 1 showed the Pearson's correlation between SS II students' self-concept and their academic achievement in Mathematics. This correlation produced r = -.037, which showed that there was a very low negative relationship between students' self-concept and their academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in Anambra state.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between teacher expectation and academic achievement in Mathematics among SSII students in public secondary school students in Anambra state?

Table 2

Pearson's Correlation Between Teacher Expectation and Academic Achievement in Mathematics Among SS II Students in Public Secondary School Students in Anambra State.

(N=341)

Variables	**1**	**2**	**Remark**
1. Teachers' Expectation	1	0-.043	Very Low negative relationship
2. Mathematics	0-.043	1	

Table 2 showed the Pearson's correlation between teachers' expectation and students' academic achievement in Mathematics. The correlation coefficient (r) of -.043 indicated a very low negative correlation between the two variables. This suggest among SS II students in Anambra State, there was a very low negative relationship between teachers' expectation and students academic achievement in Mathematics.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of male and female in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary school students in Anambra State.

Table 3

Pearson's Correlation Between Self-concept and Academic Achievement of Male and Female in Mathematics Among SS II Students in Public Secondary School Students in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Self-concept	Mathematics	Remarks
Male	120	1.00	0.368	
				Low positive relationship
Female	221	0.368	1.00	

The Pearson's correlation (r) results displayed in Table 3 indicated that the correlation between self-concept of male and female students achievement in Mathematics yielded 0.368. This value indicated that there was no low positive correlation between self-concept of male and female students academic performance in Mathematics.

Hypothesis 1

There would be no significant relationship between Self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II in secondary schools students in Anambra State.

Table 4

Test of Significance of Pearson's Correlation Between Self-concept and Academic Achievement in Mathematics Among SS II Students in Public Secondary School Students in Anambra State

(N=341)

Variables	1	2	P	Decision
1. Self-concept	1	0-.037		
			0.500	Not significant
4. Mathematics	0-.037	1		

As shown in Table 5, there was a statistically non-significant relationship between SSII students' self-concept and their academic achievement in Mathematics, r = -.037, p=.500. Since the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There would be no significant relationship between teachers' expectation and academic achievement in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary school students in Anambra State.

Table 5

Test of significance of Pearson correlation between self-concept and academic achievement of Male and Female students in Mathematics Among SS II Students in Public Secondary School Students in Anambra State.

(N=341)

Variables	1	2	P	Decision
1. Teachers' Expectation	1	0-.043	0.432	Not significant
1. Mathematics	0-.043	1		

As shown in Table 8, there was a statistically non-significant relationship between teachers' expectation and SS II students' academic achievement in Mathematics, r = -.043, p=.432. Since the p-value was greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Hypothesis 3

There will be no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of male and female students in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary school students in Anambra State.

Table 6

Test of significance of Pearson correlation between self-concept and academic achievement of male and female students in Mathematics among SS II students in public secondary school students in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Self-Concept	Mathematics	P- value	Decision
Male	120	1.00	0.368		
				0.000	Significant
Female	221	0.368	1.00		

The results presented in Table 6, showed that there was a significant relationship between male and female self-concept and their academic achievement in Mathematics $r = 0.368$, $p = .000$. The null hypothesis was rejected since the p - value was less than 0.05.

DISCUSSION

The findings in Table 1, showed a non-significant negative relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in Mathematics ($r = -0.037$). However, recent studies suggest that self-concept plays a crucial role in academic achievement. For instance, research by Chen et al. (2022) and Guo et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of self-concept in promoting academic success. Students with higher self-concepts tend to perform better in Mathematics, as self-concept influences motivation, engagement, and overall attitude towards learning. The findings of this study are consistent with some previous research, but contradict others. The complex relationship between self-concept and academic achievement warrants further investigation. Factors such as prior knowledge, learning strategies, and socio-economic status may influence this relationship. Educators can develop strategies to enhance students' self-concept, which can positively impact their academic performance. By fostering a growth mindset and providing opportunities for students to develop their skills and confidence, educators can help students achieve their full potential.

Furthermore, the findings of the null hypotheses in Table 5, revealed that The relationship between self-concept and students academic achievement in Mathematics is not significant. The results of the current study contradict those of James et al. (2021), who found that academic success in mathematics was positively and strongly predicted by mathematics self-concept. Barman Tapas and Mahanta Bobby (2022) study result postulated that self-concept and academic achievement has a weak negative ($r= -0.039$) relationship, where boys students have a positive correlation ($r= 0.025$) with academic achievement and the locus of control and academic achievement has a moderate negative ($r= -0.509$) relationship among the secondary school students of Coochbehar district.

Findings on the relationship between teachers' expectations and academic achievement in mathematics among SS II students in public secondary school students in Anambra State revealed a non-significant negative relationship between teachers' expectation and students' academic achievement in Mathematics (r = -0.043). Nevertheless, research by Wang et al. (2023) suggests that teachers' expectations can significantly influence students' academic achievement. They found that teachers who hold high expectations for their students can boost their confidence and motivation, leading to better performance. Teachers' expectations can also impact students' self-efficacy, anxiety, and overall well-being. Moreover, teachers who maintain high expectations for all students can create a supportive learning environment that promotes academic success. Thus, teachers should be aware of the potential impact of their expectations on students' academic achievement. The results of the study agree with Muslisa & Kassahum (2019) found that teacher's expectation for students' academic status is likely better predators of their respective motivation to teaching. The results offer insight that teachers have low expectation for students' academic status, which in turn associated with low motivation to teach. The findings of the null hypotheses in table 6 revealed that the relationship between teacher's expectation and students academic achievement in Mathematics is not significant.

Findings on the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement in mathematics among male and female SS II students in public secondary school students' in Anambra state showed a significant positive relationship between self-concept and academic achievement among male and female secondary students in Mathematics (r = 0.368). This finding is consistent with recent research by Chen et al. (2022), which suggested that students with higher self-concepts tend to perform better in Mathematics, regardless of their gender. The relationship between self-concept and academic achievement can be influenced by various factors, including prior knowledge, learning strategies, and socio-economic status. Additionally, educators can develop targeted strategies to promote positive self-concepts among male and female students, which can lead to improved academic performance. By fostering a growth mindset and providing opportunities for students to develop their skills and confidence, educators can help students achieve their full potential. The research findings of Nne and Ekene (2020) showed that students' academic self-concept recorded a very low positive relationship with academic achievement in mathematics. Students' high self-esteem recorded a medium positive relationship with students' academic self-concept. Findings of the study revealed that these variables do not statistically predict academic achievement of the students. The finding of the results is in line with the present study which showed there was a low positive relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of students in Mathematics. The finding of the null hypotheses in Table 7, revealed that there was relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of male and female students is significant.

Conclusion

This study examined the self-concept and teachers' expectation as correlates of academic achievement among public secondary school students in Anambra State. The study's findings provide insights into the complex relationships between self-concept, teachers' expectations, and academic achievement in Mathematics. While the study found non-significant negative relationships between self-concept and academic achievement, as well as between teachers' expectation and academic achievement, self-concept is not a predator of academic achievement of a student. They found that teachers who hold high expectations for their students can boost their confidence and motivation, leading to better performanceb. The study revealed significant positive relationships when considering male and female students separately. These findings suggested that self-concept and teachers expectations play a crucial role in academic achievement in Mathematics, particularly when considering gender.

The study concluded that the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement is non-significant and the null hypotheses was not rejected while there is a significant positive relationships between self-concept and academic achievements of male and female in Mathematics. The null hypotheses was rejected. There is a significant positive relationship between teachers expectation and academic achievement of male and female students in Mathematics among public secondary school in Anambra State and the null hypotheses was not rejected.

Recommendations

The recommendations for this study based on the findings of the study are made:

1. Educators should prioritize self-concept development through targeted interventions and workshops.

2. Teachers should maintain high expectations for all students, regardless of gender.

3. Educational stakeholders should provide professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their understanding of self-concept and teacher expectations.

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