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Academic and Social Self-concepts as Predictors of Students' Academic Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated academic and social self-concepts as predictors of students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Literature review covered theoretical review, conceptual review and empirical studies. Correlational research design was adopted. Population of the study comprised 96,102 students in all the public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State for 2024/2025 academic session. Sample size of the study was 400 SSS 2 students. Taro Yamane's formula was used to obtain the sample of 399.99 but was approximated to a round figure of 400. Two self-structured instruments titled: "Academic and Social Self-concepts Questionnaire" and English Language Performance Test for SSS 2 were used for data collection. The face and content validity of the instruments were determined by two experts in the field. Test blue print and Test. Kuder Richardson (KR 20) formula were used to establish the internal consistency reliability of the English Language Performance Test with $KR = 0.92$, while Cronbach Alpha method was used to obtain reliability coefficients of 0.73 and 0.76 for Academic and Social Self-concepts. Regression Analysis was used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that academic and social self-concepts predicts students' academic performance to a moderate extent. It was recommended that students should embrace academic self-concept by engaging in academic activities to enable them perform well academically, and that students should learn to improve in their social self-concept in order to be fully involved during class interactions for better academic performance in school.

Keywords: Self-concept, academic self-concept, social self-concept, predictors, academic performance

INTRODUCTION

It is a well-known fact that academic performance of students at the senior secondary school level determines their admission into higher institutions. Academic performance represents performance outcome which shows the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals specifically in school, college or University. Academic performance can be viewed as the knowledge or skills gained or ability of a student to execute a task in a given subject area or at the end of a given instructional process. Arnadi (2017) viewed academic performance as the level of students in examination administered in a school setting. Narad and Abdullah (2016) explained that the success or failure of any academic institution

depends largely upon the academic performance of its students, hence the general belief that good academic performance signals better career prospects and thus a secure future. Academic performance of a student is measured through examinations or continuous assessments, but there seems to be no general agreement on how best it is evaluated or which aspects is most important. Suleiman et al. (2019) noted that the academic standard in all Nigerian educational institutions has fallen considerably below the societal expectations. Some of the identified reasons for the decline in students' academic performance are personal factors such as family conflict, individual's intelligence, knowledge, study habit, achievement motivation, anxiety, self-esteem and locus of control (Fathi-Ashtiani et al. 2017).

It is important to look into the contribution of academic and social concept towards students' academic performance. Shashi (2018) described self-concept as how we think about and evaluate ourselves, beliefs about one's ability that have a profound effect on what one is able to do. It is a multi-dimensional construct, but the components of focus in this study are academic and social in relation to academic performance of students. Academic self-concept refers to how people think about and evaluate their academic ability which could profoundly affect what they are able to achieve academically (Shashi, 2018). Cheng (2023) explained that academic self-concept can help the students navigate their academic challenges in school with greater resilience and confidence with the likelihood of experiencing better scholastic adjustment and high academic motivation. Students with high academic self-concept seem to be capable of finding solutions for many academic problems that come their way. Another kind of self-concept is physical self-concept.

Abuhilal and Bahri (2020) revealed that academic self-concept is strongly linked to academic achievement of students, because it has been found as a cause and an effect of academic achievement. This implies that academic self-concept appears to influence and decide for academic performance/ achievement. In their study, Ajmal and Rafique (2018) reported that there is a strong relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement of distance learners. Similarly, Awan et al. (2017) conducted a study on the relationship between achievement motivation, self-concept and achievement in English and Mathematics at secondary level of Sargodha District and found that academic self-concept was significantly related to academic achievement. However, Marc (2017) argued that improving students' academic performance without improving their self in similar academic domains would most likely result in only short-term gains.

Social self-concept refers to an individual's perception about social situations which could affect his/her esteem and ability to actively participate in academic activities. Social self-concept enables an individual to value and personalize his/her social relationships and interactions with peers and materials in school for better learning outcomes (Sevari, 2017). This shows that within the social context, social situation could shape the link between a person's self-concept and academic activities. Neil (2015) observed that students perceive themselves as having average self-concept, except for social self-concept which they view as high. Dontoh et al. (2019) investigated the impact of social self-concept on the academic performance of teacher-trainees in Ghana and found among others that social self-concept of teacher trainees are related to their academic performance positively, and thus recommended that academic counsellors of the college organise guidance programmes such as workshops, symposia, and public lectures periodically for trainees to equip them with the needed skills to enhance their social and academic self-concepts. However, in contrary, Asma-Tuz et al. (2019) in their study on relationship of academic, physical and social self-concepts of students with their academic achievement of bachelor degree female students found that social self-concepts were unrelated to academic achievement of the students, which is a great difference from the finding of this current study. However, there seems to be not much empirical studies in recent times on academic and social self-concepts linking academic performance of students, hence the need for this study.

Statement of the Problem

Academic performance of the students is normally a focus point in determining the readiness of the students for future academic careers. For instance, for a student to gain admission into the higher institutions, such person is expected pass his/her English Language and Mathematics among three other

subjects at credit level in National Examinations Council’s Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) or West African Examinations Council’s West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). This shows how critical the subjects are in the society. Nevertheless, some students still do not do well in English Language in particular. Could it be that something is missing in the area of self-concept of the students? In order to proffer answers to this challenge, this study therefore, investigated academic and social self-concepts as predictors of students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which academic and social self-concepts predict students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the extent to which academic self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.
2. examine the extent to which social self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does academic self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District?
2. To what extent does social self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Academic self-concept does not significantly predict students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.
2. Social self-concept does not significantly predict students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study adopted the correlational research design. Okwo and Walson (2016) defined correlational research design as the research design that provides clues for the proper understanding of patterns of relationships among variables of a study, and how the factors can predict the dependent variables. The study adopted the correlational research design because it enabled the researcher to determine the extent to which the predictive variables predict the outcome variable. The population of the study comprised all the 96,102 students in the 116 public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State for 2024/2025 academic session. The sample size of the study was 400 students in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State. Taro Yamane’s formula was used to obtain the sample size of 399.99 which was approximated to a round figure of 400. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for the sample selection. Two self-structured instruments titled: “Academic and Social Self-concepts Questionnaire” (SHSQ) and English Language Performance Test” (ELPT) for SSS 2 were used for data collection which were face and content validated by two experts. The Kuder Richardson formula 20 was used to determine the internal consistency of the items of the English Language Performance Test (ELPT) at 0.92 index, while Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency reliability indices of 0.78 for Academic Self-concept and 0.75 for Social Self-concept. The Regression Analysis was used to answer the research questions, and also test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The formula for the Simple Regression which was used for the data analysis is given as:

$$y = b_0 + b_1x_i$$

Where

y = Students’ academic performance

- b₀ = Intercept on y
- b_i = Coefficients of x_i
- x_i (i = 1- 2)
 - 1 = Academic self-concept
 - 2 = Social self-concept

The criteria for remarks or decision for research questions are: 0.001-0.009 (Very Low Extent), 0.010-0.099 (Low Extent), 0.100-0.399 (Moderate Extent), 0.400-0.699 (High Extent), 0.700-1.000 (Very High Extent).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: *To what extent does academic self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District?*

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis Model Summary on Extent to which Academic Self-concept Predicts Students’ Academic Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.392 ^a	.185	.183	3.45574

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Self-concept
 - b. Dependent Variable: Students’ Academic Performance
- y = 11.670+0.434x₁

Results in Table 1 revealed the simple regression analysis summary on the extent to which academic self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District with the regression equation given as $y = 11.670+0.434x_1$ where y = students’ academic performance and x₁ = academic self-concept. In Table 1, the simple regression (R) = 0.392^a, R Square = 0.185 and Adjusted R Square = 0.183. With the moderate Adjusted R Square value of 0.183, it was deduced that academic self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District to a moderate extent. This implies that academic self-concept accounted for 18.3% of the total variance and residuals observed in the prediction of students’ academic performance, while the remaining 81.7% could be attributed to other factors and residuals that are not considered in the study. This shows that academic self-concept alone do not determine the level of academic performance of students.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does social self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District?*

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis Model Summary on Extent to which Social Self-concept Predicts Students’ Academic Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.289 ^a	.136	.133	3.52135

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Self-concept
 - b. Dependent Variable: Students’ Academic Performance
- y = 14.338+0.210x₂

Table 2 reveals the simple regression analysis summary on the extent to which social self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District with the regression equation of $y = 14.338+0.210x_2$ where y = students’ academic performance and x₂ = social self-concept. The results showed a simple regression (R) value of 0.289^a, R Square value of 0.136 and Adjusted R Square value of = 0.133. With moderate Adjusted R Square value of 0.133, it was deduced that social self-concept predicts students’ academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District to a moderate extent. This result showed that social self-concept

accounted for 13.3% of the total variance and residuals observed in the prediction of students' academic performance, while the remaining 86.7% could be due to other factors and residuals that are not considered in the study. This is because with social self-concept, a student can easily associate with other brilliant once from which they can learn and do better academically.

Hypothesis 1: Academic self-concept does not significantly predict students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.

Table 3: Regression ANOVA on Significant Prediction of Academic Self-concept to Students' Academic Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	223.549	1	223.549	37.069	.000 ^b	Ho Rejected
	Residual	2400.211	398	6.031			
	Total	2623.760	399				

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Academic Self-concept

Data in Table 3 shows the Regression ANOVA on significant prediction of academic self-concept to students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District. The results revealed that at 0.05 level of significance, F-value = 37.069, P-value = 0.000^b and degrees of freedom (df) = 1 and 398. With $P(0.000) < 0.05$, the null hypothesis that "academic self-concept does not significantly predict students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District" was therefore rejected. This implies that that academic self-concept significantly predicts students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.

Hypothesis 2: Social self-concept does not significantly predict students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.

Table 4: Regression ANOVA on Significant Prediction of Social Self-concept to Students' Academic Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	93.594	1	93.594	14.722	.000 ^b	Ho Rejected
	Residual	2530.166	398	6.357			
	Total	2623.760	399				

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Academic Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Self-concept

Table 4 presents the Regression ANOVA on significant prediction of social self-concept to students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District. The results indicated that at 0.05 level of significance, F-value = 14.722, P-value = 0.000^b and degrees of freedom (df) = 1 and 398. Since the P-value (0.000) < 0.05, the null hypothesis seven which states that social self-concept does not significantly predict students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District was therefore rejected. It was concluded that social self-concept significantly predicts students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District.

DISCUSSION OF FINDING

Academic Self-concept as Predictor of Students' Academic Performance

Results for research question one indicated that academic self-concept predicts students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District to a moderate extent. It was further revealed from the test of hypothesis one that academic self-concept significantly predicts students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District. The result of this study could be because students with high academic self-concept are likely to develop the ability and

confidence in finding solutions to their academic problems, and thus do well academically. This finding buttressed the assertion by Abuhilal and Bahri (2020) that academic self-concept is strongly linked to academic achievement of students, because it has been found as a cause and an effect of academic achievement. This implies that academic self-concept appears to influence and decide for academic performance/achievement. Ajmal and Rafique (2018) reported that there is a strong relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement of distance learners. Similarly, Awan et al. (2017) conducted a study on the relationship between achievement motivation, self-concept and achievement in English and Mathematics at secondary level of Sargodha District and found that academic self-concept was significantly related to academic achievement. However, the finding tend to differ with the observation of Marc (2017) when he stated that improving students' academic performance without improving their self in similar academic domains would most likely result in only short-term gains. This shows that there is need to give attention to activities and materials that encourages the development of academic self-concept in order to achieve high academic performance among students.

Social Self-concept as Predictor of Students' Academic Performance

Data analysis for research question two revealed that social self-concept predicts students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District to a moderate extent. The test of hypothesis two further shows that social self-concept significantly predicts students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District. The reason for this finding is not far from the fact that a student who develops social self-concept can easily associate with everyone including the brilliant once and would be challenged to study hard for better performance as to retain his association with them. In line with this finding, Sevari (2017) stated that social self-concept enables an individual to value and personalize his/her social relationships and interactions with peers and materials in school for better learning outcomes. This shows that within the social context, social situation could shape the link between a person's self-concept and academic activities.

Also, Dontoh et al. (2019) investigated the impact of social self-concept on the academic performance of teacher-trainees in Ghana and the findings indicated among others that social self-concept of teacher trainees are related to their academic performance positively, hence they recommended that academic counsellors of the college organize guidance programmes such as workshops, symposia, and public lectures periodically for trainees to equip them with the needed skills to enhance their social and academic self-concepts. However, in disagreement with the finding of the study, Asma-Tuz et al. (2019) in their study on relationship of academic, physical and social self-concepts of students with their academic achievement of bachelor degree female students found that social self-concepts were unrelated to academic achievement of the students, which is a great difference from the finding of this current study.

CONCLUSION

This study which focused on academic and social self-concepts as predictors of students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State established that academic and social self-concepts predicts students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State to a moderate extent. It was therefore, concluded that both academic and social self-concepts are contributes to some extent to the level of academic performance of students in school, and should be given consideration in education policy making.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Students should embrace academic self-concept by engaging in academic activities to enable them perform well academically
2. Students should learn to improve in their social self-concept in order to be fully involved during class interactions for better academic performance in school.

Contributions to Knowledge

This research on academic and social self-concepts as predictors of students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers East Senatorial District, Rivers State has actually made some contributions to knowledge. Firstly, the study has proven that components of self-concept such as academic self-concept and

social self-concept play some role in students' academic performance and should not be ignored in education policy making. Secondly, the study advocated the need through its recommendations for all secondary school students to improve in their academic and social self-concepts, as well as highlighted some counselling implications for the betterment of academic performance among students. Finally, the study would provide empirical evidence towards deepening studies on this subject matter in education.

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