

Correlational Analyses of Self-Esteem and Peer Pressure on Scholarly Activities of Students

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the connecting indexes of self-esteem and peer pressure on the scholarly activities of students. The correlational survey research method with a structured questionnaire, Self-esteem and Peer Pressure on Scholarly Activities Questionnaire (SEPPSAQ), was administered to randomly selected one hundred high school students in five Schools in Ojo Education District in Lagos. Obtained data were assessed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 20.0) for computing the percentage distribution and Pearson Products Moment Correlation (PMMC) at 5% significance level. The study showed that the self-esteem of students had a significant bearing on their scholarly activities and showed a potent relationship between peer pressure and students' scholarly activities. Some of the recommendations include: (1) Counsellors should be actively engaged in assisting students to get through their educational and psychological needs, as this would improve their academic attainments and help them develop positive self-esteem. (2) Family counselling will improve parent-child relationships and reduce negative group influence.

Keywords: correlational, self-esteem, peer pressure, scholarly activities, Lagos

INTRODUCTION

Studies have shown that there has been a slump in the scholarly activities of high school students in Nigeria generally and in Lagos particularly (Ogundele, Olanipekun, and Aina, (2014); Nbina, (2012); Adegoke and Orekelewa (2020)). Stakeholders in education generally express displeasure towards a downward trend in performance in nationwide examinations such as the Senior Secondary School Certification Examinations (SSCE) conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) in Nigeria. To these educational councils, negative self-esteem-cum-peer pressure has been indicted as one of the factors responsible for this (Adegoke and Orekelewa, 2020). Negative self-esteem-cum-peer pressure has also been reflected in maladjustments and nefarious behaviours exhibited by students, which distracts them from serious academic endeavours (Sadiq, Ochelos, Meseko, Olofinniyi, Agada, and Ochai, 2020; Ononye and Obiakor, 2020). This unwholesomeness in the educational sector has informed this study, which aims to investigate the connection between peer pressure and self-esteem vis-à-vis students' scholarly activities.

Excellence in scholarly activities presupposes that students achieve instructional mastery, and school goals and objectives. To attain this, there must be a tandem between self-esteem, peer pressure, and students' scholarly engagement at school (Ononye and Obiakor, (2020); Ogundele, Olanipekun and Aina, (2014). Students' scholarly activities are defined as students' participation in activities and conditions that are connected to exceptional learning (Adeniyi and Kolawole, 2015). The basic concept is that learning is influenced by how well a learner engages in scholarly motivated activities. That is, the time spent actively engaging in intellectual activities matters.

Scholarly activities constitute essential aspects of training the young child and even adolescents. In this dynamic and evolving world that is characterised by scientific and technological growth, there is an advancement in educational outlook. This has made parents set high standards and specific academic goals for their youngsters. Scholarly activities, the core of the school record, form an essential aspect of each student's life as good scholarly

activity is the basis of all recommendations to higher institutions of learning and work (Ogundele, Olanipekun and Aina, (2014); Nbina (2012); Adegoke and Orekelewa, (2020).

Self-esteem is a personalised opinion an individual has about their capacity to face life's struggles, their understanding of their ability to overcome obstacles, and their moral justification for being happy and respected (Sadiq, Ochelos, Meseko, Olofinniyi, Agada, and Ochai, 2020). Self-esteem is an essential and powerful predictor of various outcomes, such as scholarly attainment and behaviour. Parents are the first determinants of the self-esteem of their children (Adegoke and Orekelewa, 2020), and they are at the centre of all the experiences, be they positive or negative. Low self-esteem observed during the developmental stages of children has been indicted for negative results in important life realms (Ononye and Obiakor, 2020; Musa and Dauda, 2014).

Self-esteem affects all facets of life, including our trust in others, our relationships, and our work. Positive self-esteem emboldens the individual by giving flexibility plus strength to be in control of their lives, learning from mistakes without the fear of being rejected. Negative self-esteem, on the other hand, causes individuals to feel unworthiness, incapability, and incompetence. It has been posited that self-esteem is a personal judgment of worth existing along a continuum of positive and negative ends. Self-esteem has been widely found not to be a static but a dynamic trait in the life of an individual (Musa and Dauda (2014); Nbina (2012); Adegoke and Orekelewa, (2020).

Studies have shown that peers contribute significantly to the emotional and social advancement of adolescents (Sadiq, Ochelos, Meseko, Olofinniyi, Agada, and Ochai, (2020); Allen and Joseph (2005). As the adolescent child moves through the various stages of life (i.e., from an early age through the teenage years), it is naturally healthy and desirable for the adolescent child to have groups of friends they interact with as they grow and mature. A group of friends could be any set of individuals one looks up to in behaviour, or someone who the individual perceives to be equal to in age or ability (Hardcastle, 2012). However, the term “pressure” vis-à-vis peer pressure connotes the process that influences individuals to do anything they might not have done in isolation

According to Allen and Joseph (2005) and Nbina (2012), peer pressure refers to the emotional or mental forces that peers exert on one another within the same peer group to behave in a manner acceptable to one another. Studies have shown that this peer pressure among people from the same rank, class, or age could be negative (e.g., poor sexual behaviours, delinquency, and drug abuse) or positive such as excelling in academics or volunteering for charity (Ononye and Obiakor, (2020); Hardcastle, 2012). This shows that peers can either have a negative or positive influence.

Peers may encourage their members to skip classes, use drugs, abuse alcohol, engage in stealing or cheating or become involved in other risky behaviours. Most of the adolescents who abuse drugs or substances engage in such behaviour because of peer pressure (Allen and Joseph, 2005; Nbina, 2012). Peer pressure also includes indulging youths in loitering about on the streets, watching films during school hours and attending parties on school nights. (Musa and Dauda, 2014; Allen and Joseph, 2005).

Students' scholarly activity is improved by active participation. Scholarly activity has been associated with the school dropout phenomenon, and it is a major factor that can influence the negative decision of a student to withdraw from school. Studies have postulated that there is a positive relationship between students' scholarly activity and academic performance, and it has consistently been reported to be a robust index of behaviour and achievement in the school environment (Adeniyi and Kolawole, 2015).

It has been posited that understanding the influence of scholarly activity will assist educators in averting detrimental consequences for at-risk students. That is an important concept to students, their parents, educators, and researchers due to its mediatory role in predicting scholastic success. Studies have documented that there is a positive correlation between the mediatory role of motivation on student scholarly activity, and high school completion (Furrer and Skinner; 2003). Consequent upon these, good scholarly activity can be posited to be an asset associated with beneficial student outcomes (Furrer and Skinner; 2003).

Adolescence is a transitional stage when the now “matured child” typically seeks out independence from hitherto

parental dominance to seek belongingness, acceptance, and approval to peer/group culture. Studies show that this break away from adult control is starting to have alarming consequences (Juvonen, Graham, and Schuster, 2003).

The outcome of this study will positively impact the lives of individual students by sensitising them to the merits of good self-esteem, and positive peer pressure which could improve discipline, thereby producing well-rounded students who can contribute substantially to society and national development in general. The study will aid teachers and counsellors in functioning more effectively as role models and promote further investigation into educational research.

Research Objectives

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between self-esteem and peer pressure on the scholarly activities of secondary school students in Lagos state.

1. To find out if there will be no significant relationship between self-esteem and student scholarly activities in secondary school.
2. To investigate if there will be no significant relationship between peer pressure and student scholarly activities in secondary school.

Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the following research questions are generated for this study:

1. Will there be no significant relationship between self-esteem and students' scholarly activities in secondary school?
2. Will there be no significant relationship between peer pressure and student scholarly activities in secondary school?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses for this study are as follows:

1. There will be no significant relationship between self-esteem and students' scholarly activities in secondary school.
2. There will be no significant relationship between peer pressure and students' scholarly activities in secondary school.

METHOD

Design

The design is an interviewer-administered correlational survey. This study investigates the connecting indexes of self-esteem and peer pressure on the scholarly activity of students in Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Participants

The sample population consists of one hundred (100) students from five high schools in Ojo Education District, Lagos State, in the Southwest geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The high schools used were: Ajangbadi High School, Ajangbadi; Ilogbo, Elegba Grammar School, Ilogbo; Lagos State Government Secondary School, Ijanikin; The Root of David High School, Ijanikin, and Otto-Awori Grammar School, Otto-Awori. Respondents were selected using a simple random sampling technique in which twenty (20) students comprising ten (10) males and ten (10) females from each location.

Ethical Consideration

The instrument for this study does not contain any element that would induce pain in participants or harm them in any way. Personal information and the identity of participants were kept confidential, and anonymous. No personal information such as names or addresses was collected. Participants filled in the questionnaires after consent was obtained, and there was no financial remuneration involved.

Instrument

The instrument, Self-esteem and Peer Pressure on Scholarly Activities Questionnaire (SEPPSAQ) is a structured questionnaire with 20 items using a 4-point Likert scale from 4 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). It consists of sections A and B where section A elicits information on the personal data of the respondents such as gender, age and class. Section B contains 20 items on a 4-point rating scale featuring questions such as “*Students with huge self-esteem always outperform their contemporaries during examination*”, and “*Students’ academic activities depend on their level of self-esteem*”.

Reliability

Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.964	22

Source: SPSS 20.0

This value is within the acceptable ranges.

Procedure for Data Collection

Questionnaires were administered directly by the researchers and the research assistants who had earlier been tutored in questionnaire administration. The questionnaires were distributed to the participants who responded by completing them after thoroughly understanding the process. The questionnaires were collected on the spot upon completion.

Data Analysis

The data from the completed questionnaires were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) package 20.0. The percentage distribution and Pearson Products Moment Correlation (PMMC) at a 5% significance level were calculated for the variables considered in the study.

RESULTS

Participants Characteristics

This section covers the socio-demographic characteristics of age and gender within the framework of the study sample population.

Table 1: Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid Female	50	50	50
Male	50	50	50
Total	100	100	100

Table 2: Stage of Life

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
12-15 years	23	23	23
16-19 years	62	62	62
Valid 20 years and above	15	15	15
Total	100	100	100

Table 3: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation for Self-Esteem and Students' Scholarly Activities

Variables	n	X	SD	Df	r _{cal}	r _{tab}	Decision
Self- Esteem	100	32.39	8.07402	98	0.989*	0.197	Reject Ho
Students' Scholarly Activities	100	31.07	8.0982				

Table 4: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation for Peer Pressure and Students' Scholarly Activities.

Variables	N	X	SD	Df	r _{cal}	r _{tab}	Decision
Peer Pressure	100	31.07	8.0982	98	0.971*	0.197	Reject Ho
Students' Scholarly Activities	100	29.74	8.43827				

DISCUSSION

Since r_{cal} is greater than the r_{tab} of Pearson Correlation in Table 3, the hypothesised statement is debunked. This means that there is a significant connection between self-esteem and the scholarly activities of students. The current finding is in consonance with earlier studies involving high school students in Oyo, Enugu, Ondo, Nasarawa, Rivers and Ogun States in Nigeria (Ononye and Obiakor, (2020); Alokun, Ogunsanmi, Makinde and Fashina, 2014; Musa and Dauda (2014); Nbina, 2012). Their study found compelling proof that high self-esteem will lead to good schoolwork, while low self-esteem will lead to poor scholarly activity. Individuals with high self-esteem tend to set higher goals than individuals with low self-esteem. They tend to be more persistent and endure in the face of initial failure and are undoubtedly less inclined to give in to the destroying notions of self-doubt, and incompetence (Alokun, Ogunsanmi, Makinde and Fashina, 2014). The findings of this study also align with a study done in the United States of America that investigated the role of self-esteem and performance among selected physicians as reported by Judge, Locke, Durham and Kluger (1998). They posited that self-esteem is an important ingredient in work and family contentment.

It should be noted that low correlation coefficients between self-esteem and scholarly activities, as shown in Table 3 can be explained in varied ways. For instance, when a student exhibits low scholarly activities, this does not necessarily imply feelings of personal degradation. On the other hand, positive self-esteem is more universally conceived and globally affected by all the daily areas of performance (Veronneau and Dishion; 2011). Adegoke and Orekelewa (2020) do not support this finding when they posit that a child's self-esteem levels could affect their belief on how their respective peer groups view them. Another study found that unpopular students were distinguished by lower self-concepts and lower self-esteem (Adeniyi and Olukoya, 2010).

Since the r_{cal} is greater than the r_{tab} as indicated in Table 4, the hypothesised assertion is rejected. This presupposes that there was a significant connection between peer pressure and students' scholarly activities. Several earlier studies in Cross River State, Lagos State, Ekiti State (Nigeria) as well as in Ghana, the Philippines, India and the United States of America support the findings from this study (Tetteh, Asenso, Ansah et al., 2021;

Moldes, Biton, Gonzaga and Moneva, 2019; Deepika and Prema, 2017). Peer pressure has either an inhibitory or facilitatory role in the scholarly activity of students irrespective of the category of students but on the consensus of the peers. Deepika and Prema, (2017) found that there are strong ties between scholarly activity and deviant behaviour of peers/groups. Meanwhile, Poulin, Dishion & Haas (1999) in the study conducted among Oregon youth study boys, found that peer factors also influence scholarly activities through socialisation. Since peer pressure is a force from friends, the characteristics composition of friendship is an essential force to be reckoned with in the study of changes in individuals' paths (Adeniyi and Kolawole, 2015). Adeniyi and Kolawole (2015) also posited further that peer groups are powerful pressures in the life of the individual and are more expository during the developmental years of childhood and adolescence and could negatively affect scholarly activity.

In conclusion, the study shows a strong association between students' self-esteem and their scholarly activities. It also reveals a potent link between peer pressure and students' scholarly activities. This gives a pointer to educators, particularly teachers and parents, in better ways of dealing with students, emphasising that they pay particular attention to these variables in their day-to-day interactions with students.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

1. Counsellors should be engaged in helping students cope with their educational and psychological needs to improve their academic attainments and develop positive self-esteem.
2. Organising family counselling with a view to enhancing parent-child relationships. This has the potential to strengthen the level of self-esteem and reduce negative peer influence.
3. Recreational and educational groups can be utilised to intervene in cases of adolescent students who might have been identified as having low self-esteem and negative peer influence.
4. The government should make provisions for recreational centres and social facilities in communities that will ensure cognitive, moral and social development for all the students in society.

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