

INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON ACADEMIC ANXIETY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

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Abstract

This study examined Influence of School Environment on Academic Anxiety among Undergraduate students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of this study is made up of sixteen thousand eight hundred and fifty-five (16,855) 300 level students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. However, the researchers select five faculties in ABU because of the time and population of the students. The sample of this study is 378 male and female students of the five selected faculties, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Data was collected using Academic Anxiety Questionnaire (AAQ) and School Environment Questionnaire (SEQ). The data collected were analyzed using descriptive (frequencies, mean and standard deviation) for the analysis of bio data and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) and t-test independent. Inferential statistic was used for data analysis, all tests were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Finding revealed that significant relationship also exists between School environment and Academic Anxiety among undergraduate students with the following values; academic anxiety and school environment $p=0.000$ $r=0.388$, there is no significant difference between male and female students in their school environment $p=0.185$, $t=1.327$. There is no significant difference between Male and Female students in their Academic Anxiety of undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria $p=0.073$, $t=1.795$. From the results of the findings, the researcher recommended that school environment must be made conducive by providing the necessary social infrastructures that will enhance social anxiety and interactions of the students and Psychologist should be able to distinguish the differences between male and female in their School environment and manage each group appropriately.

Keywords: school environment, academic anxiety of undergraduate students.

Introduction

Academic anxiety refers to a child's ability to meet academic demands, to be attentive, to participate in class activities, and become an independent student, while school and anxiety refer to a child's ability to establish meaningful and positive relationships with teachers and peers, and feeling secure Upadhyaya (2013) had also defined school anxiety as involving not only children's academic progress and achievement, but also their attitude towards school, anxieties, loneliness, school support and academic motivation.

School anxiety is a broad construct which consists of many different aspects such as academic achievement, school satisfaction, school engagement and pro school behaviour. Well-adjusted students usually value what they are learning, are positively involved in classroom activities and perform well academically. But poor school anxiety leads to poor academic performance, behavioural problems, discordant educational aspirations and sometimes school dropout Adhiambo, Odwar and Mildred (2011). In a related Adhiambo, Odwar and Mildred (2011) defined school anxiety as the achievement of goals that result in school integration as well as those that result in positive development outcomes for the self. He referred to school integrative goals as those outcomes that promote the smooth functioning of the school groups, school approvals and school acceptance, while the self-regulated goals are those outcomes that promote achievement of personal competencies, feeling of self-determination, and feeling of school and wellbeing. School anxiety, for the purpose of this study is defined in relation to a child's ability to develop school, and academic competencies that facilitate the achievement of school success. School anxiety is characterized by quality school relationships with peers and teachers, feeling of security, less aggressive behaviours, pro-school behaviours, longer retention in educational system and better academic performance.

According to Raju and Rahamtulla (2007) a student is said to be making positive anxiety when: students appears to be making satisfactory academic progress, students is able to establish satisfactory relationship with his/her teachers and classmates and students appears to be making both satisfactory academic progress and also be able to establish satisfactory relationship with his/her teacher and classmates

Raju and Rahamtulla (2007) explained that by the first view, a student who achieves what students is expected to achieve is considered adjusted. But the student who does not learn, who performs poorly in grades or who drops out of school before graduation fails to meet these criteria of school anxiety. A brilliant child who is performing slightly better than average may be considered as making unsatisfactory school anxiety. But a child of very limited potential may be considered as making satisfactory anxiety if his/her achievement is commensurate with his/her ability. By the second view, a child who gets along with his/her classmates and teachers is considered adjusted. But a child who is unable to form satisfactory relationships as a result of being aggressive and unruly or very shy and withdrawing is considered poorly adjusted. In the third view, school anxiety is considered as a combination of academic achievement and school adequacy.

Academic anxiety is necessary in the educational settings. Anti-school behaviour such as withdraw bully, lesson disruption, absenteeism, lack of participation in school activities and aggressiveness require positive anxiety in order to make learning meaningful in the lives of the learners. Both children and adults in the school system and parents at home require anxiety. Academic anxiety is desirable for all Nigerians- both at home and at school. This is because children do learn from adults behavioural manifestations, "like teacher, like learner", like parents like children", is potent in Nigerian contemporary society. In order to enhance educational anxiety, there is the need for behavioural modification. Posits that it is necessary that guidance and counselling unit of every school plays the role of behavioural modification so that positive changes take place in both learners and teachers. The experiment carried out by skinner reveals that positive reinforcement increases the probability of an operant and negative reinforcement results into an extinction of the action. That is to say that adoption of positive behaviour and

learning problems can be remedied through positive reinforcers. According to Child (2011), the following strategies are capable of effecting positive academic anxiety in the learners and adults.

1. Operant conditioning of the maladjusted individuals,
2. modelling for the learners to emulate shaping the behaviour by various methods,
3. Scheduling several of reinforcements, extinction, and rewarding, ignoring method, sensitization and time-out technique.

Lari, Okpede and Bulus (1992) assert that human behaviour is learned and can be unlearned if appropriate therapy is applied to the situation. The knowledge of this has some implications to teachers and parents since children are not born delinquent. Most mal-anxiety in deviant behaviour result from uncongenial atmosphere of home and school environment. Most behaviour can be modified, changed or altered at home and at school by the teachers' interactions with the children can modify the mal-anxiety in behaviour. It is wrong to label a child or children as maladjusted children without psychological investigation. Any issue of anxiety must start with orientation. The need for educational orientation for the newly admitted students in schools right for the primary school levels to tertiary institutions cannot be overstressed. The does and don'ts of every school must be made familiar with the new students. This familiarity is the first step towards anxiety to academic organisations. Mangvwaty (2005) posits that orientation of the students and even teachers who are new in the school settings offers them quick acclimatization. For instance, toilet facilities, classrooms, staff rooms and offices can be area of interest for the new comers.

It is agreed that the state of school environment affects child development, since the parents are the first socializing agent in one's life. Some school environment parameters the development of aggressive behaviour like poverty, living in violent neighbourhood, deviant peers, recreational areas, bad parenting style and lack of school support, which seriously make students to exhibit these aggressive behaviours in their various schools. Students are growing up in a culture of fear and hate as in many ethnic minority communities around the world, which foster aggressive behaviours in the environment and may well account for generations of ethnic and religious hatred and genocidal wars (Desforges & Abouchaar 2003). Aggression is a range of behaviours that result in both physical and psychological harm to oneself and the environment. It can be verbal attack, insults, threat, sarcasm, or physical punishment or restrictions.

Behavioural problems in school take different forms. Truancy, tardiness, insubordination, profanity, vandalism and aggression. The causes for such behaviours are many in number. In addition to biological factors, the causes for misbehaving reside on parental rejection, home environment, neighbourhood environment; poverty, viewing violence in the media, peers and gang influence and the frustration that accompanies low scholastic achievements (Fisher & Faggot, 2007). The type of environment where the child grows to a large extent determines his behaviour. For example, the availability of beer parlours, drugs, outlets, gambling sites among others cannot be exonerated from the causes of aggression among students. It is also true that aggressive behaviour among students may be prompted by false religious teaching and politics but largely have their antecedents in the homes and immediate school environment. It is believe that children who are aggressive at the early age tend to show delinquent behaviour during adulthood. Students that are exposed to harsh and nasty environment are likely to result to physical and problems, such as involving in destruction of goods and property and refusal to

abide by the norms and values of the society they belong to. Students who are within the environment that is more harsh and nasty may grow to be more aggressive as well. While children that grow in less aggressive environment tend to come up as good citizens although with exception as changing school condition can lead to change in aggressive behaviour (Fergusson & Horwood, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

University education is an open system where all members including students, teachers and administrators interact with one another. There is the need, therefore, to establish a conducive school environment, a healthy school environment where there is collective responsibility and effective interpersonal relationship among the different groups of members of the university (teachers, students, and administrator). Several factors have been identified as contributory to students' academic anxiety these include home background, personality and intelligence, parent socio-economic standing, school environment and societal norms. Poor physical, psychological and school aspect of the school environment have effect on school environment of students, as a consequence, the goals of university education may be jeopardized.

It is observed that school environment measures teacher-student relationship, and students-students relationship are becoming poorer by the day which may be as a result of level of tension created by insecurity state of the nation and the school in particular. Mutual distrust and suspicion among various diversities of students, poor recreational facilities in the school to help cope with the stressful events of life among other school environment and difficulties are on the increase in the educational system and the nation at large. This situation may in turn have effect on University students, and academic outcome especially at university where level of collectiveness and cordial academic relationship are to be created so as to enhance learning among students.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to determine the influence of School environmental factors on Academic Anxiety among Undergraduate Students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the relationship between School Environment and Academic Anxiety among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria.
2. To determine whether gender differences exist between School Environment among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria.
3. To determine whether gender differences exist between Academic Anxiety among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Null Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were raised to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between School Environment and Academic Anxiety among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female in their School environment among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria?
3. There is no significant difference between male and female in their Academic Anxiety among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The population of this study is made up of sixteen thousand eight hundred and fifty-five (16,855) 300 level students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. However, the researcher select five faculties in ABU because of the time and population of the students. The sample of this study is 378 male and female students of the five selected faculties, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. The selection conforms to the Research Advisors (2006) prescription as attached in the appendices of this research. Simple Random sampling techniques is a method of selecting a portion of population such that each member of the population has equal chance of being selected. However, this could be done through various ways by ballot method and use of table of random numbers. Therefore, the researcher made use of ballot method in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In this method, the element in the population could be assigned numbers or names used directly which are then written on pieces of paper crumple or folded so that the number on each paper is hidden. So the pieces of paper are put in a bag or a suitable container and shakened thoroughly so the required number of the subject is picked from the bag (possibly without looking into the bag one after the other). (Abdullahi 2015) opined that Purposive sampling technique were used to target 300 level students from the 5 selected faculties in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. It is characterized by the use of judgment and deliberate effort to obtain representative samples. Their level of school environment were determined and correlating with their academic anxiety.

Two main instruments were used for this study. The instruments are school environment and academic anxiety inventory. The instrument is comprised of three sections. Section (A) Biographic Data of the Students, section (B) school environment, section (C) academic anxiety inventory, were used. Both school environment and academic anxiety inventory are Adapted from Academic Achievement and Access Centre, The University of Kansas (2017) and Adopted by Usman DajiMakama (2015). The instruments are found valid and reliable for this type of research. The instruments are reliable as both have an appreciable internal consistency. School environment has the internal consistency of .804, academic anxiety inventory has the internal consistency of .821, respectively. These reliability measures were determined by the use of Cronbach's Alpha. These reliabilities show that the instruments are reliable to collect data for the research.

Results

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between school environment and academic Anxiety among undergraduate students of ABU Zaria

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) statistic on the relationship between school environment and academic Anxiety among undergraduate students of ABU Zaria

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Correlation index r	Df	Correlation r	P
Academic Anxiety	373	59.59	4.53	-0.388**	371	0.098	0.000
School environment	373	58.02	5.83				

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). P < 0.05*

Outcome of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics in Table 1, revealed that significant relationship exist between academic Anxiety and School environment of undergraduate students ABU Zaria. Reasons being that the calculated p value of 0.000 is lower

than the 0.05 alpha level of significance, at a correlation index r level of - 0.388 and at df 371. This shows that inverse relationship exist between academic Anxiety and School environment of undergraduate students ABU Zaria. Therefore the null hypothesis which state there is no significant relationship between Test Anxiety and motivation of undergraduate students ABU Zaria, is hereby rejected.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between School Environment of Male and Female undergraduate students of ABU Zaria Nigeria.

Table 2: Independent; t test statistics on difference between School Environment of Male and Female undergraduate students of ABU Zaria, Nigeria.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean diff	df	t computed	P
School Environment	Male	310	59.73	4.57	0.83	371	1.327	0.185
	Female	63	58.90	4.31				

$P = 0.18 > 0.05$, $t_{computed} = 1.327 < 1.96$ at df 371

The Independent t test statistics in Table 2, showed that there is no significant difference between Male and Female undergraduate students in their School Environment ABU Zaria, Nigeria. This is because the calculated p value of 0.185 is greater than the 0.05 alpha level of significance and the computed t value of 1.327 is lower than the 1.96 t critical value at df 371 The descriptive statistics showed that the computed Mean School Environment values are 59.73 and 58.90 by male and female students respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant difference between Male and Female students in their School Environment in ABU Zaria, Nigeria, is hereby accepted and retained.

Null Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between Academic Anxiety of Male and Female undergraduate students of ABU Zaria, Nigeria.

Table 3: Independent; t test statistics on difference between Academic Anxiety of Male and Female undergraduate students of ABU Zaria, Nigeria.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean diff	df	t computed	P
Academic Anxiety	Male	310	58.26	5.923	1.444	371	1.795	0.073
	Female	63	56.82	5.23				

$P = 0.073 > 0.05$, $t_{computed} = 1.795 < 1.96$ at df 371

The Independent t test statistics in Table 3 showed that there is no significant difference between Male and Female students in their Academic Anxiety of ABU Zaria, Nigeria. This is because the calculated p value of 0.073 is greater than the 0.05 alpha level of significance and the computed t value of 1.795 is lower than the 1.96 t critical value at df 371 The descriptive statistics showed that the computed Mean Motivation values are 58.26 and 56.82 by male and

female students respectively. Therefore, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant difference between Academic Anxiety of Male and Female undergraduate students of ABU Zaria, Nigeria, is hereby accepted and retained.

Discussions of the Findings

The present research assessed the Relationship between School Environment and Academic Anxiety among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria The finding of these research indicated that significant relationship exist between school environment and academic Anxiety among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria. This shows that the higher and efficient the school Environment is, the higher the academic Anxiety and vice versa. the findings agree with that of Paul (2015) who investigated selected factors influencing school and academic anxiety of undergraduate students of Egerton University; Njoro Campus. This study sought to find out the relationship of selected factors on students' social and academic anxiety at the University. The study adopted ex post facto's Causal-comparative research design. The target population was 4831 undergraduate students enrolled at Egerton University and three staff from the Dean of students' office. A random sample of 357 students and purposive sample of - 40 Student peer counsellors, 2 Student counsellors and the Dean of Students was selected. Data was collected using closed and open ended University Students' Questionnaire (USQ) and interview schedule conducted among selected respondents. The collected data was processed and analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and percentages) and inferential statistics (Chi square, Pearson Correlation and ANOVA). The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 15.0 for windows was used to aid in the data analysis. All tests were done at $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that interpersonal relationships and the attitude of students towards university environment and academic programme were critical factors influencing social anxiety and academic anxiety of undergraduate students in the university. Both male and female students were exposed to the same environment that influenced their similar social and academic anxiety in the university. First year students have a higher level of academic anxiety compared to other students in the university.

The finding of this research shows that significant difference between male and female in their School environment among undergraduate students of ABU Zaria Nigeria. The finding agrees with Lloyd, (2011) conducted a study on Impact of Children's School environment Outcomes of students. The study tested whether School environment added to the prediction of academic outcomes above and beyond prior academic functioning. School records and peer, teacher and self -reports were measures were collected for 1,255 third grade children in the fall and spring of school year. Social acceptance and aggression with peers were include as measures of among undergraduate students in Zaria Metropolis Kaduna State, Nigeria. Academic performance includes reading and Math, classroom behaviour, academic self -esteem and absenteeism. As expected support for the causal model was found where both forms of School environment contributed independently to the prediction of each area of academic anxiety. Gender differences in the patterns of the results were present particularly for the impact of aggression and School environment.

The finding of this research shows that significant difference between male and female in their Academic Anxiety among undergraduate students of ABU Zaria Nigeria. The finding agree

with Mayers (2010) investigated the relationship of Academic Anxiety among male and female in Iranian Adolescents. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship of Academic Anxiety among male and female according to their age was proportionally determined and the number of students was determined for each of the high schools. The population for this study comprised nine public high schools randomly selected among the 33 public high schools in Sanandaj. Iran that were divided into subgroups, particularly gender and age group. The respondents comprised of 400 students (200 boys and 200 girls) in the age range and stratified random sampling method was employed. Based on Krejcie and Morgan Table (1970), the appropriate number of respondents participated in the present study were 400 students adolescents in Sanandaj, Iran. Between ages 15-19 years old that were randomly selected from nine high schools in Sanandaj, Iran. A self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection which includes Academic Anxiety Inventory (AAI) (Spilberger 1980), Grade Point Average score and personal information. Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship of Academic Anxiety among male and female as the independent variable. The result showed that Academic Anxiety among male and female were significantly correlated, ($r = -.22$, $p \leq .000$). Evidently, there was a significant relationship of Academic Anxiety among male and female. The negative relationship connotes that as Academic Anxiety increases, respondent's Academic Anxiety decreases. Result shows that there is a significant correlation ($r = -0.23$, $p = .000$) between Academic Anxiety among adolescents. In addition, there is a significant difference ($t = 5.47$, $p = .000$) of Academic Anxiety between male and female adolescents whereby female score higher in their Academic Anxiety. It is recommended that Academic Anxiety and mental health be improved in school settings with support strategies such as educational guidance, counselling and psychotherapy or other psycho-educational program such as teaching life skill.

Recommendations

The researcher put forward the following recommendations as a result of the outcome of the findings

1. The school environment must be made conducive by providing the necessary social infrastructures that will enhance academic outcome and interactions of undergraduate students
2. Psychologist should be able to distinguish the differences between male and female in their School environment and manage each group appropriately
3. Psychologist should be able to distinguish the differences between male and female in their Academic Anxiety and manage each group appropriately.

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