PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AS CORRELATES OF UNDERACHIEVEMENT AMONG HIGH ACHIEVERS IN MODEL SCHOOL IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

Gifted underachievement is everywhere across the lifespan of both children and adolescent, with a significant amount of time spent in school. Therefore school has a substantial impact on the academic development of every young people. It has been observed that high achieving students are increasingly faced by the problem of not achieving academically. Thus some of them have been tagged as "underachievers".

The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a sample of 200 participants randomly selected from some secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis. Data were collected using emotional intelligence scale (r=0.79), Academic self efficacy scale (r=0.71), Self esteem scale (r=0.76) and underachievement scale (r=0.76). Data were analysed using pearson product moment correlation and multiple regression which were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

The independent variables (emotional intelligence, Academic self efficacy, self esteem) had significant joint contributing effect R^2 on underachievement (F(3,195) = 73.426, P<0.05, which accounted for 53.0% (Adj. R^2 = .530) variation in the prediction of underachievement among high achievers. While the most potent factor was efficacy (N=.426, t=7.384, P<.05) was ranked second in the distribution.

There is a great tendency of sound academic performance among the high achieving learners if the predictor factors (emotional intelligence, academic self efficacy and self esteem) increases.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Academic self efficacy, Self esteem, Underachievement and High achievers.

Introduction

Underachievement crosses all cultural boundaries and differs across the cultures in the whole universe. Pointing to focused specifically on culturally diverse of underachievers, Reis and McCoach (2000) suggested that high achievers face unique barriers to achievement. The study has embraced significant psychological factors that brought more insight about issues of underachievement among high achievers. Though, this construct has a links to perceive self-efficacy which is singular as to people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designed levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave in the school settings. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes. These include cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes.

A strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well-being in may ways. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. Such an efficacious outlook fosters intrinsic interest and deep engrossment in activities. They set themselves challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them. They heighten and sustain their efforts in the face of failure. They quickly recover their sense of efficacy after failures or setbacks. They attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skills which are acquirable. They approach threatening situations with assurance that they can exercise control over them. Such an efficacious outlook produces personal accomplishments, reduces stress and lowers vulnerability to depression.

Self-efficacy refers to individuals' belief in their ability to produce a desired result (Wigfield, Byrnes, & Eccles, 2006) as well as to learn and perform (Bandura 1997; 2004) also has stated that self-efficacy may be particularly important for surmounting barriers especially among underachievers, noting that in the absence of impediments, everyone can be efficacious. As regular exercise typically involves confronting and getting past numerous barriers, and the influence of self-efficacy may be particularly robust in the face of barriers, researchers may need to pay attention to salient barriers (in student's academic performance) when examining self-efficacy.

Bandura emphasizes in social cognitive theory that construct of self-efficacy and its impact on learning, as this belief in one's own ability influences choice of activities and effort (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2006), engagement in the behaviours that are necessary to attain goals (Thomas, 2005), academic interest and motivation (Bandura, 1997), as well as growth of cognitive competencies and accomplished achievement (Pajares, 1996; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Zimmerman, 2000).

According to social cognitive theory, self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment: Unless people believe that their actions can produce the outcomes they desire, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties. These self-perceptions touch virtually every aspect of people's lives whether they think productively, self-debilitating, pessimistically or optimistically; how well they motivate themselves and persevere in the face of adversities; their vulnerability to stress and depression; and the life choices they make. Self-efficacy is also a critical determinant of the self-regulatory practices in which individuals engage as they go about the important task of self-correcting their actions and cognitions.

Self-efficacy beliefs should not be confused with outcome expectations, which are people's judgments of the consequences that their behaviour will produce. Typically, self-efficacy thinking help foster the outcome one expects. Confident individuals anticipate successful outcomes. Students confident in their social skills anticipate successful social encounters. Those confident in their academic skills expect high marks on exams and expect the quality of their work to reap academic benefits. The opposite is true of those who lack confidence. People who doubt their social skills often envision rejection or ridicule even before they establish social contact. Students who lack confidence in their academic skills envision a low grade even before they begin an exam or enroll in a course. The expected results of these imagined performances will be differently envisioned: social success or greater career options for the former, social isolation or curtailed academic possibilities for the latter. Thus, low self-efficacy increases the highest level of underachievement among high achievers.

When self-efficacy belief and outcome expectation differ, the self-efficacy belief is more likely to determine the behavior. Students may well realize that strong academic skills are essential for obtaining a good score and being admitted to the college of their choice, and this, in turn, may ensure a comfortable future lifestyle. But if students lack confidence in their academic capabilities, they may well shy away from challenging courses will approach examination with apprehension and self-doubt, and may not even consider college attendance. In the social interaction, individuals may realize that pleasing manners and physical attractiveness are essential for attracting the attention of others, which is the first step toward building long-lasting relationships. If, however, they have low confidence in their social skills and doubt their physical attractiveness, they may hesitate to make contact and hence miss potentially promising opportunities.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a concept based on the tradition of multiple intelligences which is positively found among gifted children. EI can be traced back to the work of Thorndike (1920) who introduced the concept of Social Intelligence in his Multi-Factor theory of intelligence. However, the concept of emotional intelligence vividly correlated with violence behavior among in-school adolescents. With constructive ideas channeled towards students successes in life. Any student with higher emotional intelligence

will see violence as future destroyer towards their career and youths are to be well thought to attain reasoning high, have the perception of relating good not only to peers and also to see the reasons for living positively and objective with various supporters to make life befitting not only to the said youth but to the society at large (Goleman, 1998).

Emotional intelligence has been said to matter as twice has intelligent quotient (Goleman, 1998). Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, access, and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions, and to regulate emotions so as to promote better emotion and thought towards one's academic ability. (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) is the ability to perceive and express emotions, assimilate emotions in thought, understand and reason with emotions in self and others. Emotional intelligence is the capacity for recognizing one's feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships (Goleman, 1995). Mayer and Salovey (1997), sees emotional intelligence "as a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own emotions, to discriminate among them and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions.

Self-esteem is defined as the complication of feelings that guide behaviour, influences attitudes, and drives motivation (Dezmon. 2006). The research discusses problems with self-esteem and how it can affect students. Struggling with self-esteem creates adverse effects en all areas of a student's life from social to academic. Self-esteem is most often lowered by failure, criticism, and rejection (Leary. 1999).

There has been a general concern in recent times in the educational arena regarding the academic performance of high achieving Barbara (2005) concluded that the processes of defining underachievement, identifying gifted underachieving students, explaining underachievement, and suggesting appropriate interventions remain controversial. Aside from school or family influence, Gallagher (1991) opined that personal/psychological factors could also cause underachievement in students. However, the present work therefore focuses on the students themselves, bearing in mind the fact that a student's cognitive functioning will increase to a large extent when it's well nurtured academically, which in turns affect performances at school.

Why do so many talented students fail to realize 'their potential? For years, the underachievement of gifted and talented students has troubled both parents and educators. Two often, students who show great academic potential fail to perform at level commensurate with their abilities. Some under achieving students may lack self-efficacy, goal-directedness or self-regulation skills (Siegle and McCoach, 2001) Other low achievers may suffer from either obvious or hidden disabilities. Still. others may underachieve in response to inappropriate educational conditions or environments.

The achievement dream still exists, and researchers are continuing to launch investigations of academic performance in the context of what affects it, how it can be achieved, and how it can be sustained (Astin, 1993). This researcher reported that academic achievement is associated with non-cognitive variables as well as cognitive variables. For example, non-cognitive variables such as climate and environment (Dezmon, 1995) should be accorded recognition along with cognitive variables such as high school grade-point average and high school class rank. The question of how those variables can be managed to improve academic performance of African-American males is still a complex problem at all levels of education. Researchers are continuing to investigate ways to improve academic achievement (Butler, 1992; Clark. 1983: Comer & Poussaint. 1990).

Some have suggested that a high level of self-esteem facilitates the achievement of goals. Teachers who are aware of the levels of self-esteem their students have about themselves can develop activities and lessons that lead to success to the students. Thus high achievement students who are able to achieve their goals of being successful in school, experience a boost in self-esteem and encouragement.

Statement to the Problem

The conception of underachievement needs to be brought to limelight in all facets of educational demands especially the gifted underachieving children in modifying the level of accessibility and effective learning outcome in their level of academic success, that is commensurate to each child in life.

In addition, to economic consequences underachievement is a visible sign that education is not working for all students. These students need more assistance than they are receiving to reach their potential. Because their insight is essential to reversing the situation that has caused this lack of success, individual conversations with students is the most effective way to determine the specifics of underachievement to become an achieving students. The study therefore investigate how emotional intelligence, self esteem and low self efficacy can predict cases of underachievement among identified high achievers in schools.

Scope of the Study

This research work is designed study psychological factors as correlates of under achievement among high achievers in model schools in Ibadan metropolis. Nigeria. The target population of the study will involve the population of students from senior secondary school (S.S 1-2) who are currently in school in the cities.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be answered in this study;

1. Is there any significant relationship among the independent variables (low emotional intelligence, low self efficacy and low, self esteem) and the dependent variable (underachievement among high achievers)
2. What is the joint effect of emotional intelligence low self efficacy and low esteem on under achievement among high achieving students?
3. What is the relative effect of low emotional intelligence, low self efficacy and low self esteem on underachievement among high achiever students?

Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive survey research design of the ex-post facto type was adopted for this study. Inferences about relations among variables are made without direct interaction from concomitant variation of independent variables. However, the major focus of the study is anchored.

Study Population

The targeted population for the study would comprise of the selected model secondary school students in Ibadan metropolis. However, the total numbers of two hundred (200) participants were selected randomly for the benefits of giving the originality of facts and figures in the study.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Four (4) schools were randomly selected from five (5) local government areas of Oyo State, which one secondary school were chosen from each local government areas to represent the sample of study. Meanwhile, forty (40) participants were drawn from each school to cater for the originality of the study. Two hundred (200) participants were preferred from the erratically selected population to represent the whole sample of study.

Description of the Instrument

Four (4) research instruments were used for the study includes Emotional Intelligent scale. Academic self efficacy scale, Low self esteem scale and underachievement scale constructed and validated by the researchers using assumptions, procedures and principles of summated rating developed by Likert (1932). The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The sections are: A, B, C, D and E.

Method of Data Analysis

The   data obtained from the study were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regressions to answer the research questions.

Results

Research Question 1:

Is there any significant relationship among the independent variables (emotional intelligence, academic self efficacy and low self esteem) and the dependent variable (underachievement among high achievers)?

Table 1: Correlation matrix showing the relationship among study variables.

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	1	2	3	4	5
Under Achievement	50.0000	14.15855	1. 000				
Emotional Intelligence	56.3869	8.90670	.164**	1.000			
Efficacy	51.5477	19.96503	.161**	.435**	1.000		
Low Self Esteem	58.9698	6.32768	.387**	.378**	.367**	1.000	

Correlation is significant at 0.05(2-tailed)

The table 1 above reveals the relationship of each independent variable (low emotional intelligence low self efficacy, low self-esteem) with the dependent variable (underachievement); underachievement positively correlates with emotional intelligence (r =.164. P0.05), low self efficacy (r= .161, P0.05), low self-esteem (r= .387. P0.05). This implies that, an increase in the measured quantity of the predictive factors will improve the tendency of the high achievers to perform better academically.

Research Question 2:

What is the joint effect of low c emotional intelligence, low self efficacy and low self esteem on under achievement among high achieving students?

Table 2: Summary of regression for the joint contributing effect of independent variables to the prediction of under achievement among high achievers.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
R = 728					
R Square -.530					
Adjusted R square =.523 Std.					
Error =9.77648					
Model					
1 Regression	21053.986	3	7017.995	73.426	.000a
Residual	18638.014	195	95.580		
Total	39692.000	198			

Table 2 above reveals significant combined effect of the independent variables (low emotional intelligence, low self-efficacy and low self esteem) to the prediction of underachievement. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions R of .728, multiple R-square = .530 and Adjusted R square =.532.

This suggests that the three factors combined accounted for 53.0% (Adj.R2= .530) variation in the prediction of underachievement among high achievers. The other factors accounting for 47.0% variation in the prediction of underachievement among high achievers are beyond the scope of this study. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there was a significant combined effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable, F (3,195) = 73.426, P<0.05.

Research Question 3:

What is the relative contribution of low emotional intelligence, low self efficacy and low self-esteem on underachievement among high achiever students?

Table 3: showing the relative contribution of study variables to the prediction of underachievement among high achievers.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.579	7.051		-.224	.823
	Emotional Intelligent	.684	.092	.430	7.472	.000
	Academic Self Efficacy	.302	.041	.426	7.384	.000
	Low Self Esteem	-.044	.122	-.020 --------------------	-.357	.721'

P<0.05

Table 3 above shows that *two* out of three predictor factors (low emotional Intelligence and academic self efficacy! are potent predictors of underachievement among high achievers. The most potent factor was low emotional intelligence (B= .430,1=7.472, p<0.05) followed by low self-efficacy (B=.426, t=7.384, p<.05). But Low Self Esteem (B = -.020, t -.357, P>0.05) is not potent predictors of underachievement among high achievers.

Discussion of the findings

Research Question one examined if there .is any significant relationship among the independent variables (low emotional intelligence, low self efficacy and low self esteem) and the dependent variable (underachievement among high Achievers)?. Table one reveals that underachieving students positively correlates with low emotional intelligence(r =.164. P<0.05).This implies that an efficacious underachieving student whose performances were poor could still have a better performances when fully imbied with the culture of learning as an internal condition to avail with the help of positive/high emotional intelligence.

This finding corroborates Multon, Browne & Lent (1991) who conducted a meta-analysis of the emotional intelligence literature and concluded that emotional intelligence positively correlated to academic performance of underachieving students. The researchers concluded that high levels of personal emotional intelligence strengthened student effort to achieve more, persistence and coping skills in academic endeavours.

The researchers concluded that emotional intelligence had a significant association with students' academic achievement among underachieving students. Table one also reveals that academic performance positively correlate with high/positive emotional

intelligence. (This implies that a great dose of emotional intelligent has high tendency to improve students' academic performance. Emotional intelligence completed at the beginning of the academic year significantly predicted grade point average of underachieving students at the end of the year.

Likewise, Rozell, Pettijohn and Parker (2002), there was a small, but significant relationship between academic success, as measured by grade point average, and three out of the five factors within the utilized emotional intelligence scale utilizing the Goleman (1995, 1998).

Research question two examined the joint effect of emotional intelligence, self efficacy and low self esteem on under achievement among high achieving students?. Table two reveals that the three factors combined accounted for 53.0% (Adj.R2= .530) variation in the prediction of underachievement among high achievers. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there was a significant combined effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable, F (3,195) = 73.426, PO.05.

This result corroborate with Bandura (1997) who suggested that performance accomplishments are the most influential source of efficacy information, as they provide the most authentic evidence of an individual's ability to successfully complete a task. Multon et al. (1991) carried out a meta-analytic review of research into self-efficacy in educational settings.

Research question three investigated the relative effect of low emotional intelligence, low self efficacy and low self-esteem on underachievement among high achiever students? Table three reveals that the three predictor factors (low emotional intelligence, self efficacy and low self-esteem) are potent predictors of underachieving students among high achievers. The most potent predictor was low emotional intelligence (B = .430, t=7.472, p<0.05) followed by academic self-efficacy (B=.426, t-7.384, p<.05).

Researchers do in fact agree that underachieves perform at a level below that of their actual performance potential (Reis *&.* McCoach, 2000). It is with regard to their conceptions of giftedness, however, that they take different approaches to estimating performance potential. Practicing psychologists strive to address the problem of low self-esteem: It has already been established that improvement of self-esteem and self-efficacy can be a powerful tool of intervention in the therapeutic process (Hammond, 1990). Self-esteem interventions enable the psychotherapist to address a wide variety of problems relating to low self-esteem (.for example, depression), low self-image, extreme emotionality, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, victimization, developmental or eating disorders, anxiety and phobias, grieving reactions, and adjustment to chronic illnesses.

This is supported by Tinajero and Paramo (1997) who investigated the relationship between cognitive styles and student achievement in several subject domains (English, mathematics, Natural Science, Social Science, Spanish, and Galician). With the sample of 408 middle school students, the researchers asserted that cognitive style was a significant source of variation in overall performance of students. This finding supports the net analysis of 59 studies by Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2004) who found that emotional intelligence correlated moderately with job performance. In addition, research suggests that emotional intelligence abilities lead to superior performance even in the most intellectual careers.

Recommendations

With respect to the findings made so far, the following are recommended for improvement of underachieving student among high achievers in the model secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis.

It was found in the study that low emotional intelligence significantly predicts student's underachievement This therefore indicates immediate efforts in helping students to build confidence in their ability and to see possibilities in themselves that, underachievement can

only affect their academic performances yet, they can achieve maximally when cross fertilization of knowledge is set in among high achieving students.

It is also necessary to help students to build good relationship among themselves which will go a long way in assisting them in helping each-other in their academic puzzles, thereby eradicating any form of underachievement academically.

School counselors and teachers are enjoined to help students to understand various study techniques in remediating underachievement. Thus, they are to choose the best learning styles to effectively reduce cases of underachievement.

School heads are enjoined to make their various schools a worthy environment suitable for students to build all traits necessary for academic excellent.

Conclusion

The study therefore inferences that, emotional intelligence is the most potent predictor of underachievement among high achieving students, followed by academic self-efficacy. However all the factors when combined accounts for 53% in the variation of underachievement among high achievers.

It is very important to note however, that increase in the psychological factors from this study (Emotional Intelligence, self esteem and self efficacy) are essential in reducing or totally eradicating cases of underachievement being noticed among children that are expected to be achieving greatly especially in their academic performance.

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