Self-Concept and Academic Attitude Among Undergraduates of The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Wildlife Resource Management, University of Calabar

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Abstract- ***The study examined Self-Concept and Academic Attitude Among Undergraduates of the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Wildlife Resource Management, University of Calabar.***

Research questions and hypotheses

Three research questions and corresponding null hypotheses were formulated to guide.

Research design

The study employs an ex-post facto design, which is a systematic empirical inquiry where the researcher does not have direct control over the independent variables. This design is suitable for examining the effects of variables that have already occurred and cannot be manipulated by the researcher.

Population and Sampling

The population of the study consists of 631 undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar. A sample of 334 respondents was selected using stratified sampling and Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula.

Data Collection Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire, the "Self-Concept and Academic Attitude Questionnaire" (SC&AAQ), was used for data collection. The questionnaire's validity was established through expert scrutiny, and its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with indices ranging from 0.81 to 0.83.

Data Analysis

The study will employ both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics will include mean and standard deviation, while inferential statistics will involve simple and multiple regression analyses. All hypotheses will be tested at a significance level of 0.05.

Findings

- ***i. Physical self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates.***
- ***ii. Social concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates.***
- ***iii. Economic self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates.***

Recommendations

Teachers should help students with poor social self-concept by recommending them for counselling. This disposition will encourage students to open up and share their academic challenges with them for necessary assistance

Index Terms- Self-Concept, Academic, Attitude & Agriculture

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is regarded as the bedrock for human and technological development. This underscores why quality education is very necessary for any country that wants to compete in both human and technological development. To achieve this aim, the learners' psychological and values must be taken into full consideration to achieve academic excellence. Within the context of public universities in Cross River State, Nigeria, understanding the intricate interplay of self-concept, values orientation, quick success syndrome, and academic attitude among undergraduates holds significant importance for fostering holistic development and academic success. Academic attitude refers to a person's positive or negative belief towards participating in any learning, understanding the knowledge-based concepts, and their applications. A positive attitude is associated with high motivation to attend learning sessions that

can contribute to higher academic performance and becoming an autonomous learner (Topală, 2014).

Self-concept, also known as self-evaluation or self-perception, is the culmination of a person's views about their personal qualities. It shows how a person assesses themselves in the domains (or regions) in which they value success (Hadley, Hair & Moore, 2008). Furthermore, self-concept is the accumulation of knowledge about the self, such as beliefs regarding personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles (Geary & Xu, 2022).

Research has shown that students' academic attitudes are shaped by a multitude of factors, including personal beliefs about intelligence and learning, past academic experiences, social influences, cultural norms, and institutional policies (Meece et al., 2006). For example, students who perceive themselves as capable learners with the potential to improve through effort and persistence are more likely to adopt a growth mindset, which is associated with higher levels of academic engagement and achievement (Dweck, 2006). Studies have investigated the influence of physical self-concept on academic performance. Laryea, Saan, and Dawson (2014) found that students' physical self-concept does not directly predict academic performance unless accompanied by effort in learning. Nunez et al. (2021) examined the relationship between physical self-concept and moderate-to-vigorous physical activity in adolescents. Social self-concept refers to how we perceive ourselves in relation to others. It involves relationship building, empathizing, and communicating. Adamu (2022) found that school ownership and age significantly influence students' academic achievement through social self-concept. Tehseen et al. (2018) discovered a positive correlation between social self-concept and academic achievement among university students.

Other studies have explored the relationship between self-concept, academic attitude, and performance. Eyong, Henry, and Ojong (2019) found a significant effect of formative assessment, attitude, and gender on learning outcomes. Yahaya (2020) investigated the influence of socio-economic background on self-concept and academic achievement among junior secondary school students. This study aims to examine the link between Self-Concept, Unrealistic Expectations, and Academic Attitude Among Undergraduates of the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management, University of Calabar

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The concerning trend of poor academic attitude among undergraduate students, particularly in the faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Wildlife Resource Management, University of Calabar, warrants investigation. This is because students often exhibit negative attitudes towards their studies, manifesting in poor study habits, inadequate career planning, and a lack of academic integrity. This can lead to various forms of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism and cheating, often stemming from poor class attendance. Research emphasises the importance of regular attendance for academic success (Eyong, Ugada & Aminu, 2020). Furthermore, some students mistakenly believe that paying for grades is a viable path to academic excellence, even though most lecturers prioritise academic merit over financial gain. Universities have implemented counselling centres to provide students with guidance and support, enabling them to address academic and personal issues. However, despite these efforts, poor academic attitude remains a pervasive issue. This raises concerns about the prospects of students who struggle with academic matters. If left unaddressed, this trend could compromise the credibility of the academic system. This study aims to explore the relationship between self-concept and academic attitude among undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar. By investigating these factors, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the underlying causes of poor academic attitude among Agriculture, Forestry and Wildlife Resource Management the University of Calabar and inform strategies to support students' academic success.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study investigates the relationship between self-concept and academic attitude among undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife

Resource Management at the University of Calabar. The study utilises the following objective

i. Investigate the predictive relationship between physical self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.
ii. Examine the predictive relationship between social self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.
iii. Determine the predictive relationship between economic self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study

i. To what extent does physical self-concept predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar?
ii. To what extent does social self-concept predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar?
iii. To what extent does economic self-concept predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were posited to direct this study

i. Physical self-concept does not significantly predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.
ii. Social self-concept does not significantly predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.
iii. Economic self-concept does not significantly predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.

V. METHODS AND PROCEDURE

The study employs an ex-post facto design to investigate the relationship between self-concept, unrealistic expectations, and academic attitude among undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar. This design is suitable for examining the effects of variables that have already occurred and cannot be manipulated by the researcher. According to Isangedighi et al. (2004), an ex-post facto design is a systematic empirical inquiry where the researcher does not have direct control over the independent variables. The population of this study comprises all 631 undergraduates of UNICA in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar. The sampling technique adopted for this study is the stratified sampling technique, specifically proportionate stratification. Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula was used to select a sample of 334 respondents. This approach ensures that the sample is representative of the population, enabling more accurate and generalisable findings. The instrument for data collection is a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Self-Concept and Academic Attitude Questionnaire" (SC&AAQ). The validity of the instrument was established by subjecting the questionnaire to scrutiny by experts in Measurement and Evaluation as well as Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar. Their suggestions and modifications were incorporated into the final version before administration. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha to measure internal consistency, with reliability indices ranging from 0.81 to 0.83. Data analysis will be conducted

using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics will include mean and standard deviation, while the inferential statistics will involve simple and multiple regression analyses. All hypotheses will be tested at a significance level of 0.05. This methodological approach will enable the researcher to examine the relationships between self-concept, unrealistic expectations, and academic attitude among undergraduates in the specified faculty, providing valuable insights for academic improvement.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics of measured variables

The descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, standard error, maximum and minimum) were computed for the seven (6) dimensions of the independent variables of the study, the dependent variable. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of measured variables (n=334)

Name of study variable	$\bar{X}$	Sd	SEm	Min.	Max.
Physical self-concept	21.1181	5.30135	2.1091	6.00	20.00
Social-concept	21.2504	5.14417	3.0116	7.00	19.00
Economic self-concept	21.4756	4.94072	2.0091	6.00	21.00
Academic attitude of undergraduates	27.6693	9.98299	4.0182	30.00	120.00

The results in Table 1 revealed that among the independent variables measured with the same number of items and response options, the mean for economic value (21.4756) was the highest, followed by religious value (21.4693) and the least was social value (21.2850). All the observed means were higher than the expected mean (27.6693).

Test of Hypotheses

For each hypothesis, the procedures used are explained briefly, followed by the presentation and interpretation of results. All the stated hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. The decision rule is that a null hypothesis is rejected if the p-value associated with the computed test statistic is less than .05 but retained if otherwise.

Hypothesis one

Physical self-concept does not significantly predict academic attitude of undergraduates in Universities in Cross River State. In testing this research question, simple linear regression analysis was applied with physical self-concept as the predictor variable and academic attitude of undergraduates as the criterion variable. The justification for adopting simple linear regression is that both the independent and dependent variables (physical self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates) were measured continuously and the research sought to predict the dependent variable on the independent variable. The results obtained from the test statistical analysis are summarised and presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Regression of the academic attitude of undergraduates on physical self-concept

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.134[a]	.018	.016	9.90111		
Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	1130.330	1	1130.330	11.530	.001[b]
Residual	62054.221	332	98.032		
Total	63184.551	333			
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	24.113	1.118		21.559	.000
Physical self-concept	.252	.074	.134	3.396	.001

*p<.05

Table 2 is a presentation of the results of the simple linear regression analysis of physical self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates in Universities in Cross River State. An r-value of .134 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .018. This implies that the variation in physical self-concept can account for about 1.8% of the total variation in academic attitude of undergraduates, thus, the p-value (.00`0) associated with the computed F-value (11.530) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that physical self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates, with both the regression constant (24.113) and coefficient (.252) making a significant contribution to the prediction model (t = 21.559 & 3.396 respectively, p=.000 < .05). The mathematical relationship of the regression model is depicted by the following equation y= 24.113+ .252x thus, x= physical self-concept and y= academic attitude of undergraduates.

Hypothesis two

Social self-concept does not significantly predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar. In testing this research question, simple linear regression analysis was applied with social self-concept as the predictor variable and academic attitude of undergraduates as the criterion variable. The justification for adopting simple linear regression is that both the independent and dependent variables (social self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates) were measured continuously and the research sought to predict the dependent variable on the independent variable. The results obtained from the test statistical analysis are summarised and presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
Regression of academic attitude of undergraduates on social self-concept

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.137[a]	.019	.017	9.89688		

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	1183.286	1	1183.286	12.081	.001
Residual	62001.265	633	97.948		
Total	63184.551	634			

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	23.885	1.158		20.635	.000
Social self-concept	.266	.076	.137	3.476	.001

*p<.05

Table 3 is a presentation of the results of the simple linear regression analysis of social self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates in Universities in Cross River State. An r-value of .137 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .019. This implies that the variation in social self-concept can account for about 1.9% of the total variation in academic attitude of undergraduates, thus, the p-value (.001) associated with the computed F-value (12.081) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that social self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates, with both the regression constant (23.885) and coefficient (.266) making a significant contribution to the prediction model (t = 20.635 & 3.476 respectively, p=.000 < .05).

The mathematical relationship of the regression model is depicted by the following equation y= 23.885+ .266x thus, x= social self-concept and y= academic attitude of undergraduates.

Hypothesis three

Economic self-concept does not significantly predict academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar. In testing this research question, simple linear regression analysis was applied with economic self-concept as the predictor variable and academic attitude of undergraduates as the criterion variable. The justification for adopting simple linear regression is that both the independent and dependent variables (economic self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates) were measured continuously and the research sought to predict the dependent variable on the independent variable. The results obtained from the test statistical analysis are summarised and presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Regression of academic attitude of undergraduates on economic self-concept

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
.135[a]	.018	.017	9.89905		
Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	1156.074	1	1156.074	11.798	.001
Residual	62028.477	633	97.991		
Total	63184.551	634			
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-value	p-value
Constant	23.713	1.217		19.485	.000
Economic self-concept	.273	.080	.135	3.435	.001

*p<.05

Table 4 is a presentation of the results of the simple linear regression analysis of economic self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates in Universities in Cross River State. An r-value of .135 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .018. This implies that the variation in economic self-concept can account for about 1.8% of the total variation in academic attitude of undergraduates; thus, the p-value (.001) associated with the computed F-value (11.798) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that economic self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates, with both the regression constant (23.713) and coefficient (.273) making a significant contribution to the prediction model (t = 19.485 & 3.435 respectively, p=.000 < .05). The mathematical relationship of the regression model is depicted by the following equation y= 23.713+ .273x thus, x= economic self-concept and y= academic attitude of undergraduates.

VII. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings can be summarised as follows

1. Physical self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.
2. Social concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.
3. Economic self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Wildlife Resource Management at the University of Calabar.

VIII. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study are discussed hypothesis by hypothesis as presented below

Physical self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates

The findings revealed that physical self-concept significantly predicts the academic attitude of undergraduates in Universities in Cross River State. This finding may be because physical self-concept is important. After all, it significantly influences how individuals perceive their physical abilities, appearance, and overall well-being, impacting their self-esteem, physical activity levels, and overall happiness, particularly impacting their motivation to engage in sports or exercise and contributing to their overall quality of life. Physical self is important because it is the foundation for our mental and emotional selves. Our physical health affects our moods, energy, and ability to think clearly. Taking care of our physical selves is essential for living a happy, healthy life. The present findings agree with the study of Laryea, Saan and Dawson, (2014), who found that students physical self-concept is perceived positively by students; however, this self-concept does not directly predict students' academic performance. It does so only when students can exert some level of effort in learning what they have been taught during their private studies. Also, Nunez, Valero, Conte and Juan (2021) study showed that physical self-concept positively predicted needs satisfaction and this, in turn, was positively and significantly related to the two types of autonomous motivation.

Social concept and academic attitude of undergraduates

It was found that social concept significantly predicts the academic attitude of undergraduates in Universities in Cross River State. The present finding is based on the role of social self-concept which may significantly influence how we interact with others, impacting our self-esteem, relationship dynamics, and overall behaviour by shaping our perception of how we are seen by others, which in turn affects our confidence, decision-making, and ability to navigate social situations effectively; essentially, it's how we understand ourselves within the context of social interactions. Social self refers to how we perceive ourselves in relation to others. It involves relationship building, empathising, and communicating. A healthy, or not-so-healthy, social self will also impact your overall mental well-being and ability to meet life goals. The present finding conforms with the study of Adamu (2022) findings showed that students' social self-concept (demographic variables) such as school ownership (B = 8.069, t = 9.540, P = 0.000); age (B = 0.673, t = 3.551, P = 0.000); and sex (B = -0.879, t = -0.612, P = 0.541) made significant contributions to the prediction of students' academic achievement.

Economic self-concept and academic attitude of undergraduates

The results showed that economic self-concept significantly predicts academic attitude of undergraduates in Universities in Cross River State. An individual's economic self-concept is important because it directly influences their perception of their financial stability, sense of control over their economic life, and overall self-esteem, impacting their decision-making regarding work, spending, and investment, ultimately affecting their overall well-being and ability to achieve personal goals. The results are in harmony with the study of Oladipo, Olawumi and Yetunde (2022), the revealed no significant effect of gender on senior secondary school students' performance in science subjects. Also, Yahaya (2020) and Mashebe and Africa (2022) results of the study found that there is no statistically significant correlation between the self-concept scores and academic achievement of the learners in Agricultural Science.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings underscore the significance of self-concept in shaping students' academic attitudes. These insights have practical implications for teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. Teachers, parents, and stakeholders have a crucial role in fostering a supportive environment that encourages students to develop healthy self-concepts. This can involve providing guidance, monitoring progress, and promoting a growth mindset. By working together, they can help students develop a more positive and resilient approach to learning, which can lead to improved academic performance and overall well-being. It is also essential for stakeholders to help

students understand the dangers of quick success and the importance of effort and persistence in achieving academic success. This can involve encouraging students to set goals, create private timetables, and seek guidance when needed, ultimately boosting their academic performance and reducing the likelihood of seeking quick fixes or shortcuts.

RECOMMENDATION

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

i. Since there is a moderate and positive relationship between academic self-concept and students' academic achievement, teachers should make more efforts to build positive self-concept in their students.
ii. Teachers should help students with poor social self-concept by recommending them for counselling. This disposition will encourage students to open up and share their academic challenges with them for necessary assistance.
iii. Teachers should also make the classroom an enriching and a social integration arena while adopting the student-centred and participatory policy in their method of teaching. Stimulus variation is also recommended to arouse and sustain the interest of the students during classes.

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