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**AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF INTRINSIC  
MOTIVATION, SELF-EFFICACY EXPECTANCY  
AND PEER PRESSURE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF  
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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**Abstract**

This study examined the relationship between intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy expectancy, peer pressure and academic performance of public school students in Oshimili North Local Government Area (ONLGA) of Delta State. A thirty item Likert scale questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.69 was administered to thirty five students each from six public schools in total. Two hundred and ten questionnaires were collected by the researcher. Three research questions were raised which gave rise to three hypotheses formulated for the study. The hypotheses were statistically analysed using the Pearson product-moment correlation method at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that to a high degree of significance there is a relationship between intrinsic motivation and academic performance of students; a student that is self-motivated to produce academic excellence does better academically than a student that is not self-motivated towards academic achievement. There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy expectancy of students and academic performance; students that believe in themselves, their ability and capability perform better academically than students that do not believe in themselves. This study also revealed that peer pressure influences the academic performance of secondary school students in ONLGA of Delta state. The study recommended that teacher training programmes should incorporate innovative techniques in training the student teacher on how to psychologically stimulate students towards being self-motivated, believing in themselves and also not allowing the influence of peers hinder their academic performance.

**Introduction**

In the educational system of Nigeria today, academic achievement of students is attributed to factors such as intelligence and “hard work”. There are other factors

that possibly influence the educational achievements of students. The curricular and extra-curricular activities established in the school system are with the objective of guiding students towards achieving academic excellence. Some other factors that can influence the academic performance of students are the psychological well-being of students, peer pressure and self-efficacy of students (Okorie, 2014).

Psychological factors such as intrinsic motivation which in simple terms means self-driven motivation and Self-efficacy expectancy has an effect on academic performance of students. Dornyei (2001) in a study carried out opined that motivation is the underlining factor to achieving academic set goals, and the sustainability of willingness towards achievement. A student that is intrinsically motivated is self-driven to produce academic excellence.(Elliot, Kratoch will, Cook and Travers,2000). Gbollic and Keamu (2017) asserts that motivation is the fundamental key to producing academic success. Gasco, Goni and Villarroel (2014) argued that motivation plays a central role in learning because it gives rise to academic performance of students. Bassey(2011) in his study on the factors that affect academic performance of secondary school students,found motivation to be a vital factor.

Bandura the proponent of Self-efficacy theory defines self-efficacy as one's belief on his or her ability to accomplish a given task. Self-efficacy influences how learners feel about themselves, what they think and believe about their capabilities and ultimately their behaviour (Bandura, 1993). Marcou and Phillipou (2005) in their study found self-efficacy for learning and performance of a given task as an important factor in the teaching and learning process. Self-efficacy is the belief in an individual's ability to understand, comprehend and reproduce a given task. Self-efficacy is an important psychological factor needed in students to produce maximum academic excellence. Business dictionary (2017) defines self-efficacy as belief in learners' ability and capacity to accomplish given tasks. Okorie (2014) in her study on factors that promote academic achievement in students drew a positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance of students. Peers play significantly important roles in emotional and social development of students(Allen, 2005). The influence of peers on an individual begins at an early stage in life. Peers are important and necessary contributors to behaviour. On the other hand pressure refers to making someone do something that they would not do otherwise. According to Okobia and Ohen (2006) the peer groups of students go a long way to motivate and influence the intellectual functioning of the students, and ultimately their academic performance. Negative peer pressure influences students into joining gangs and participating in defiant behaviours such as smoking, skipping classes, cultism and attending parties during school hours, to mention a few(Ariefand Martin,2011)

Academic performance refers to how well a student carries-out a given task or a set objective (Scott, 2012). Academic performance or achievement refers to the extent to which students gain mastery over the objectives of the subjects stipulated by the curriculum (Okorie, 2014). Aremu and Sokan (2003) were of the opinion that academic achievement is more focal in subjects such as Maths and English among Secondary school students. The West African Examination Council (WAEC) over the years have reported a dwindling success rate and a confirmation of poor academic performance of students over recent years (Okorie, 2014).

Generally the Nigerian educational system is said to be depreciating in quality which manifests in the area of output, particularly in the academic performance of students. How self-motivated a student is, how much a student believes in himself or herself towards achieving a given task and the mounting pressure of their peers are some of the factors that may influence academic performance of the student. This study therefore seeks to find possible relationships between intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy and peer pressure on academic performance of students.

### **Statement of Problem**

Government's efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) particularly, Education for All (EFA) cannot be downplayed. The emphasis laid on free Universal Basic Education (UBE) for the first nine years also known as the basic level, the expansion of the sch001 system and or development of infrastructure, the recruitment of teachers, the training and retraining of serving teachers and the emphasis on scholarship scheme by almost every state of the Nigeria Federation points to efforts aimed at building sound, articulate and comprehensive individuals who could in the nearest future change the nation for good.

The unending yearning for reforms in the education sector, in spite of the above, is an indication that all is not too well with the system. This reflects the dwindling quality of the system in spite of the high standard which is in line with international prescription to an extent.

The manifestation of the above are poor performance in certificates examinations, examination malpractice, cultism, truancy, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, death in reading culture, to list a few, compounded in the problem of school drop-out and unemployment. In spite of frantic efforts put in place by government, individuals and non-governmental organizations to put things right the above mentioned vices seems to persist geometrically.

Most youths are frustrated academically not because they are not intelligent enough to be in school but because there is a missing link. The missing link is

motivation. When frustration and conflict arises, the nervous person has little reserved. It is against this back drop that the researcher embarks on a study on the influence of motivation on the academic performance of secondary schools students in Oshimili North Local Government Area (ONLGA) of Delta State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study focuses on the role of intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy expectancy and the influence of peer pressure on the academic performance of secondary school students. It is targeted at finding out:

- The relationship between intrinsic motivation and academic performance of students
- The relationship between self-efficacy expectancy and academic performance of students.
- The relationship between peer pressure and academic performance of students.
- Proffer solution to possible problems that may arise from the investigation.

### **Significance of Study**

From the findings of this study, awareness would be created on the important factors that influence academic performance of students. This study seeks to inform the stakeholders in the educational system such as the curriculum experts, Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) and other relevant organizations on the importance of motivation, the general out-look of students and their belief about their ability; peer pressure and its influences on the academic performance of students in curbing the problems facing the educational system today. This would bring about a rethink in the curriculum planning process for the inclusion of these relevant factors if found to be relevant in the instructional process of students in the secondary schools.

### **Research Questions**

To ensure a thorough and objective study, the following research questions were raised to guide the study

- i. Is there any relationship between intrinsic motivation and the academic performance of secondary school students in ONLGA?
- ii. Is there any relationship between self-efficacy of students and the academic performance of students in ONLGA?
- iii. To what extent does peer pressure influence the academic performance of students?

## **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated to address the research questions.

There is no significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and academic performance of secondary school students in ONLGA

There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy expectancy of students on the academic performance of secondary school students in ONLGA.

There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of students in ONLGA.

## **Scope of Study**

This work focused on the influence of intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy and peer pressure on academic performance of secondary school students. This study covered only public schools in Oshimili North Local Government Area of state .Secondary school students' formed the respondents of the study. Respondents were gotten from six public schools.

## **Research Instrument**

The instrument constructed by the researcher for collecting data was a questionnaire. The questionnaires were designed for secondary school students. In constructing the questionnaire, the researcher used likert scale. The key of the questionnaire were, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Strongly Agree had the highest score which is four and Strongly Disagree had the least score which is one. The cover page of the questionnaire addressed who the researcher was and the purpose of the questionnaire to the participants .The researcher assured the participants of the confidentiality of the information they were to give. A total of 35 questionnaire were received back from the researcher from each school which brought the total sample to 210 participants

## **Results and Discussion**

Each hypotheses stated were analysed and the result presented in a tabular form. The mean and standard deviation of each category of response (agree and disagree) for each variable were presented. The relationship between the dependent and independent variables can also be seen in the table. Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was used in finding the relationship between the dependent and independent variable.

**Hypothesis one:** there is no significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and academic performance of secondary school students.

**Table 1.1: showing the relationship between intrinsic motivation and academic performance of secondary school students in ONLGA**

Variables	TNR	R. R		Mean	SD	R
		A	D			
Motivation	100	63	37	0.63 0.37	69.37 20.11	0.80
Academic performance of students						

From the above table, the correlation coefficient (r) is 0.80 the value of which is greater than 0.05 alpha level of significance. This shows that there is a high degree of relationship between intrinsic motivation and the academic performance of secondary school students. Based on this discovery, hypothesis one is rejected and the alternative upheld.

**Hypothesis two:** There is no significant relationship between self- efficacy expectancy of students and the academic performance of secondary school students in ONLGA.

**Table 1.2: showing the relationship between self-efficacy expectancy of students and the academic performance of students.**

Variables	TNR	R. R		Mean	SD	R
		A	D			
Self-efficacy expectancy of students	100	61	39	0.61 0.39	13.83 13.83	1.25
Academic performance of students						

From table 1.2 the correlation coefficient (r) is 1.25, the value of which is greater than 0.05 alpha level of significance. It reveals that there is a high degree of relationship between the self-efficacy of students and their academic performance. Students that believe highly of their ability to do well academically, in real terms do better academically than students that do not believe they can achieve anything academically. As a result, hypothesis two is rejected and the alternative upheld.

**Table 1.3: showing the relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of students.**

Variables	TNR	R. R		Mean	SD	R
		A	D			
The influence of peer pressure on students	100	61	39	0.61 0.39	13.83 13.83	1.25
Academic performance of students						

From table 1.3 the correlation coefficient (r) is 1.25, the value of which is greater than 0.05 alpha level of significance informs the researcher that there is a high degree of relationship between the peer pressure and academic performance of students. Students that are greatly influenced by what their peers think of them and how their peers perceive them do not do as well as students that are not clique conscious. As a result, hypothesis three is rejected and the alternative upheld.

### **Conclusions**

This study has been able to establish that intrinsic motivation is a vital factor that can bring about excellent academic performance. This study has been able to establish that there is a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy of students, peer pressure and the academic performance of secondary schools students. For a student to achieve excellence, the student has to be intrinsically motivated. This in simple terms means that students have to be self-driven to achieve academic excellence. Through the use of reinforcements, teaching methods and skills, a teacher can increase the interest of students to learn, increase their confidence in themselves and their ability. Students must be encouraged to see the best in themselves. Most of the students that depend so much on their peers' approval believe little about themselves and their abilities. There is a significantly high relationship between a personal drive to achieve, perceptual ability, peer influence and the academic performance of secondary school students.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

The findings of this study have far reaching implications for government (federal, state and local), Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), curriculum experts, parents, teachers, school authorities, student society at large. In the national policy of education, Nigeria intends to achieve its goals and objectives through education. As a result, education is a vital instrument for the betterment of its citizenry. Based on this, this study proffers the following recommendations.



The teacher is a vital motivator of students. Teachers are to improve their pedagogical skills in appropriate utilization of teaching methods. Teachers are recommended based on the findings of this study, to use incentives to reinforce behaviour of students. The teacher can use praise, word of mouth, clap and any other method to reinforce behaviour. This will make students feel appreciated and also make them believe that they are doing something right and as such would put in their best to get more praise from their teacher. This study recommends that teachers in the secondary sector be very well trained, licensed and competent in carrying out their duties. This way they will be well informed on the different teaching methods and skills they can use to make students interested in learning and motivated to achieve optimal excellence. Verbal reinforcement of students should be included in the teacher training curriculum; innovative ways of boosting the self-worth of students should be a part of teacher training programme. Teachers should learn how to talk their students up and not bring them down with unkind words. Self-efficacy is built through relevant others believing that they are the best irrespective of their performance.

Curriculum planners are recommended to include fun and interesting ways to achieve the objectives of the curriculum. Also TRCN is mandated by the findings of this study to become more rigid in its requirements to certify teachers. This way the issue of teacher's incompetent teachers would be taken care of. TRCN is also recommended to make the teacher internship (teaching practice) to last for a period of minimum a calendar year. This way the teacher becomes properly trained before being licensed to practice.

Finally the student is the centre of the educational system. The student has to be intrinsically motivated first to be extrinsically motivated. The student has to develop a good reading culture, pay attention to parents and teachers, and believe in their ability to achieve excellence academically. This paper calls on all caregivers to speak words of encouragement that would help students to be intrinsically motivated to achieve the best life has to offer. When students are told they will become somebody they internalize it and act accordingly. This paper therefore recommends that students personally should be motivated, because without personally craving for excellence, teacher, parental as well as government motivation cannot influence them. Students therefore are encouraged to be open to instructions so that they can achieve the best and become competent citizens that would foster the development and progress of the nation Nigeria.

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