

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Education plays a very important role in the economic development of a country as it is aimed at supplying the economy with human capital that can convert effectively and efficiently other resources into output of high value. It is perceived as the corner stone of economic and social development and a principle means of providing for the welfare of individuals (Orodho, 2004). Educational organizations are founded with the view of helping society and as well enhance knowledge, attitudes and skills (Okumbe 1999).

There have been many discussions on reasons why students do not do well in school. With the rapidly changing educational environments in many countries in the world over, there is an opening for research exploring solutions to the challenge of enhancing student academic performance to getting a good education. Many variables play a role to students' academic performance. Academic motivation is an important psychological construct for learning and academic performance in all the school subjects (Schunk, 1991). Since it is unobservable, it can only be inferred from actions or verbalisation. The relationship between academic motivation and academic performance is still unclear and can only be determined with continued observation of the students. In this study the contribution of academic motivation towards school attendance and academic performance was explored.

Okumbe (1999) explained that schools have two goals which are performance or outcome goals and organizational maintenance goals. Schools pursue performance goals by attempting to be top performers in national examinations. Organization maintenance goals are activities which sustain it and ensure its survival. These include high academic and discipline standards, good performance in co-curricular activities and public image. In secondary schools set-ups, efficient and effective achievement of the two goals, (performance or outcome goals) which entails provision of quality education, which is determined by the quality of both its inputs and output (Okumbe, 1999). It hence calls for quality teaching and learning, a fact supported by Dornyei (2001) who stressed that the achievement of successful schooling largely depends on the quality of teaching force.

Although performance on standardized tests receives the greatest attention in discussions of students' academic performance, teachers' evaluations of performance as indicated in course grades represent a common metric of student performance that often is more directly tied to the day-to-day business of teaching

and learning than are annual standardized test scores. Grades serve a number of important functions. They explain to students and parents about students' mastery of course content. In high school, a passing grade is also the criterion for a course's contributing to a favourable mean score. Finally, grades provide information for consideration in university or college admissions. However, as a measure of academic performance, teacher-given grades have well-known limitations. Grades are composite measures that account not only for students' content mastery but often for other factors, such as their class participation, attitudes, progress over time, and attendance. General and special educators are understood to consider these factors during grading, but to emphasize different factors. Despite many complicating factors, student grades still are an important indicator within the academic performance outcome domain for students because they indicate success by a teacher's standards and success relative to other students in a given classroom (Yang, 2003). This study aims to investigate student motivation and academic achievement with a cross sectional analysis of selected secondary school students in Eti-osa LGA, Lagos, Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Educators have a major role of helping children and youth become successful in school and in life. In order to realize this goal, students need to acquire a solid base of academic, social, and emotional skills. The ability to recognize and manage emotions, develop care and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively are key to school and life success.

Development of academic motivation in students ought to be an important goal for educators and teachers because of its inherent importance for the future. Studies have shown a decline in academic motivation and academic performance in many children as they move from elementary school into secondary school. The basic principles of social and emotional learning also serve as the underlying principles of motivation. A deeper understanding of these principles enables committed adults to create an environment that fosters children's motivation to learn.

A few empirical studies have actually investigated the precision of the relationship between individual academic motivation and academic performance. Thus, this current study had the potential to underscore the relationship between academic motivation, and academic performance among secondary school students in Eti-osa LGA, Lagos.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective or main objective of this study is to investigate student motivation and academic

achievement with across sectional analysis of selected secondary school students in Eti-osa LGA, Lagos, Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

- i) To examine the effects of motivation on learning among secondary school students
- ii) To investigate the prevalence of motivation and academic performance among secondary school students
- iii) To understand the influence of the students' age on academic motivation and academic performance among secondary school students

1.4 Research Questions

The following are some of the questions which this study intends to answer:

- i) What are the effects of motivation on learning among secondary school students?
- ii) What is the prevalence of motivation and academic performance among secondary school students?
- iii) What is the influence of the students' age on academic motivation and academic performance among secondary school students?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following are the research hypotheses to be tested in this study:

- i) There is a significant relationship between motivation and academic performance among secondary school students
- ii) There is a significant correlation between students' age on academic motivation and academic performance among secondary school students

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are significant in the following ways: Lagos State Ministry of Education will benefit from the study in getting to know what to include in its post teacher training needs to be able to motivate students to perform well academically. The findings may be used by academicians and other researchers for further research on how to improve students' motivation. The Ministry of Education will use the findings to improve various students' motivational strategies. The findings of the study will be useful to serving teachers, headteachers and students in identifying factors that motivate students and hence make adjustments where necessary.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study investigates student motivation and academic achievement among selected secondary school students in Eti-osa LGA, Lagos. Therefore, the study will be carried out among ten selected secondary schools in around Eti-osa LGA. For better result, five selected secondary schools each from

public and private schools in the area.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

In the course of this study the researcher probably encountered by the following limitations. The study was conducted in only the banking sector as a case study. Therefore the study could be limited by the following limitations.

Time factor: it was anticipated that the time for the study may not be enough to carry out intensive and extensive study since some of the information is not easily and quickly available. Therefore the researcher used extra time; weekends so as to be able to collect, analyse and interpret the collected data.

Lack of enough funds: the funds available for the researcher is not enough to meet all expenses during the study like transport cost, photocopies and stationeries expenses. Hence the researcher conducted the study in accordance with the fund provided by the sponsor and the researcher own fund.

STUDENT MOTIVATION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (A CROSS SECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ETI-OSA LGA, LAGOS)

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