



Influence of Self – esteem on Academic Achievement of Public Senior Secondary School Students in Gashu’a Education Zone, Yobe State Nigeria

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Abstract

*This study investigated the influence of self – esteem on academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in Gashu’a Education Zone Yobe State, Nigeria. For the conduct of the research, two objectives and two hypotheses were used. A correlational design was adopted for the purpose of this research work. The total population of the study was (7117) from six public senior secondary schools. A sample of 364 students was selected which made up of 184 male and 180 female students (SS 1 and SS 2) through purposive random sampling technique. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale questionnaire was used to measure self – esteem and end of term academic examination scores of students for data were collected. Pilot testing was carried out on two senior secondary schools which were not part of the present research. The instrument was found to have $r=0.58$ as its reliability coefficient. Rosenberg Self – esteem scale questionnaire was distributed to the student participants and data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Statistic. Independent sample *t*-test was used to find out academic differences between high and low self - esteem students. The findings showed that there was significant positive relationship between self - esteem and academic achievement among respondents $P= .006$. This finding also indicated no significant*

difference between the academic achievement of students with high self – esteem and those with low self – esteem (P = .305). Based on these findings, it was recommended that teachers and parents should help develop students’ self – esteem by assisting them feel and think positively. This would encourage them to improve their academic achievement.

Keywords: *Self – esteem, Academic Achievement, Influence*

Introduction

In recent time, poor academic achievements among secondary school students have been on the increase. For instance, Obi (2016) observed poor academic achievement among secondary school students which was attached to self – esteem variables that influenced students’ school academic achievement. Balakrishnan and Fernandez (2018) defined self-esteem as a comprehensive assessment of a person's value. High self-esteem is often associated with people who are more confident, happy, and self-respecting while people with low self-esteem will be anxious, lacking self-confidence and self-criticism. Self-esteem is also seen as an important foreteller of personal and social well-being. According to Palermi, Servidio, Bartolo, and Costabile (2017), self- esteem is the way one perceives about the self and the world through personal beliefs. Positive

experiences such as success and good opinions increase the tendency for higher self-esteem. And this could contributed to develop students’ academic achievement in the schools. Academic achievement is the outcome of the students’ results. It is the extent to which a student has achieved his or her learning objectives. The research on academic achievement has formed significant contribution to educational system in many Countries and Nigeria in particular. Academic achievement was once thought to be the most important outcome of formal educational experiences and while there was little doubt as to the vital role such achievements plays in student life in the schools and later (Kell, Lubinski, & Benbow, 2013). Also the researches on academic achievement were initiated to discover avenues by which academic achievement could be managed and improved. Martinez (2007, as cited in

Lamas, 2015) defines academic achievement as the outcome of a student's effort at educational establishment, which was usually expressed through educational grades. Martinez, further explained that it was the general ability of students regarding their achievement in school subjects compared to a specified standard 'Pass Marks'. Adeyinka, Adedeji and Olufemi (2011) viewed academic achievement as the attainment of success of a student in his school work among his classmates. Kpolovie, Joe and Okoto (2014) opined that academic achievement is the ability of the student to study and remember facts and being able to communicate his knowledge orally or in written form even in an examination condition. Academic achievement refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers (Bell, 2010). Academic achievement also refers to the observed and measured aspects of a student's mastery of skills and subject contents as measured with valid and reliable tests (Joe, Kpolovie, Osonwa & Iderima, 2014). In view of the above, academic achievement for the purpose of this research is defined as the outcome of students as a result of instruction that has taken place in a formal educational setting. Akpan, Ojinnaka and Ekanem (2010) reported that overall level of academic achievement of students was average grade which can be high or low depending on the variables that influence the students for achieving academic tasks in the schools.

A direct relationship exists between self - esteem and the academic performance of students in secondary schools which has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback of real values of life especially among students in our various school poor academic performance.

Statement of the Problem

Low academic achievement has become a problem in Nigerian schools. Educators in Nigeria are calling for a change in the education system in the Country. The poor academic achievements in our various schools as a result of self – esteem influenced seriously affect students' emotional and behavioural overall well-being. Research findings showed that self – esteem was found to have significant relationship with academic achievement of students in senior secondary schools (Ahmat, Muda and Neoh 2018). It was against this background that the current research was conducted to investigate the influence of self-esteem on academic achievement as a way to approach their various needs, and helps to find solutions for their problems related to academic

achievement of public senior secondary school students in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State.

Objectives of the Study

1. Determine the relationship between self – esteem and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in Gashu'a education zone Yobe State
2. Find out the differences between academic achievement of students with high self – esteem and students with low self – esteem in public senior secondary schools in Gashu'a education zone Yobe State

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between self – esteem and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State
2. There is no significant differences in academic achievement between students with high self – esteem and students with low self – esteem of public senior secondary schools in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State.

Scope of the Study

This current research focused on public senior secondary school students in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State, Nigeria. Six Public Senior Secondary Schools were selected. Using students from these schools would make sure there was diversification and evenly spread sample. Moreover, only students in SS1 and SS2 were used when conducting the research. This was because; it enabled the researcher get a complete academic results of these students and be sure they would be available in the school during the research period.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Abraham Maslow's Theory of needs

This study was guided by Maslow's Theory – The Hierarchy of Needs; Maslow designed the ladder of needs, which was believed to contribute for improving school academic achievement.

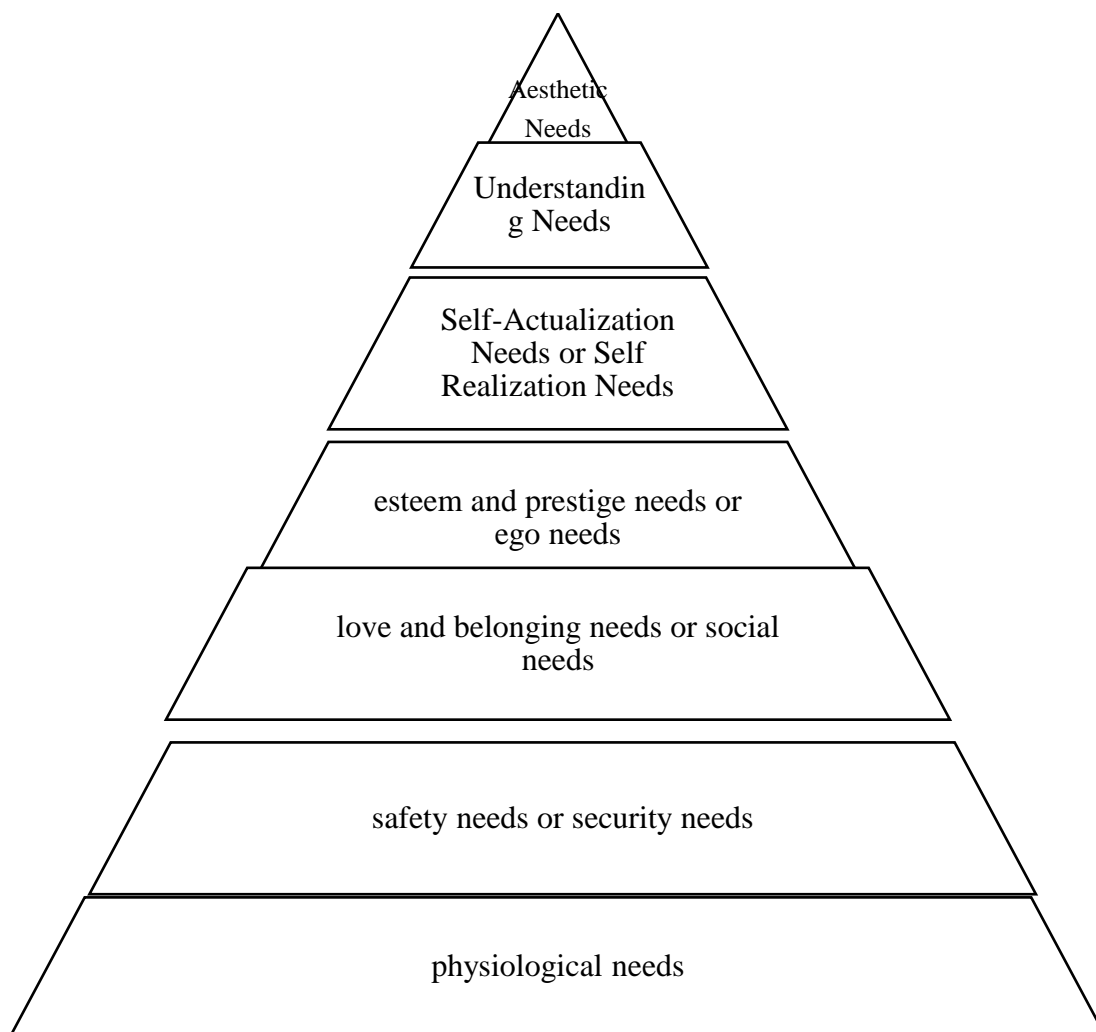


Figure 1: Abraham Maslow's 7 Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Anyanwu, C.N., Omolewa, M.A, Adeyeri, C.L.K, Okanlawon, A.B. & Siddiqui, A.A (1985) *Adult Education and Community Development*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nig.) Ltd

According to Maslow, when these seven basic needs were met particularly the esteem need the students could performed well in their various school academic activities. The mention of esteem may bring to mind the fourth level of Maslow's pyramid: esteem needs. While these needs and the concept of self-esteem are certainly related, because Maslow's esteem needs are more focused on external measures of esteem, such as respect, status, recognition, accomplishment, and prestige (McLeod, 2017). There was a component of self-

esteem within this level of the hierarchy, but Maslow felt that the esteem of others was more important for development and need fulfilment than self-esteem. Maslow further explained that for one to achieve self-actualization and grow their need for inner-respect and esteem from others must be met. This could encourage them and improved their academic achievement.

These seven (7) levels of needs of peoples as articulated by Maslow strengthen human desire to address students' needs with a view to improving the living conditions in various schools environment. The central focus of Maslow's hierarchy of needs is on exploration of how student's attitude was stimulated and desired to meet certain educational goals and improved their academic achievement in the schools. Mulwa (2008) states that Abraham Maslow's theory of needs is specifically built on the idea that students' behaviour is really motivated by the simple desire to meet specific needs for esteem. In fact, these needs and the concept of self-esteem are strongly linked; because Maslow's esteem needs are more focused on external measures of esteem, such as respect, status, recognition, accomplishment, and prestige which affects the students' academic achievement to performed either positively or negatively in the schools.

The concept of self-esteem has been addressed by many of the theorists in the field of psychology in general. The definition of self-esteem differed by the researchers and this difference was due to the dimensions that their think formed. It was defined as based on a sense of value, while others as a recipe based on a sense of worth and efficiency (Yeshodhara, & Vishalakshim, 2012). According to Balakrishnan and Fernandez (2018) self-esteem was a comprehensive assessment of a person's value. High self-esteem was often associated with people who are more confident, happy, and self-respecting while people with low self-esteem will be anxious, lacking self-confidence and self-criticism. Self-esteem is also seen as an important foreteller of personal and social well-being (Palermi, Servidio, Bartolo, and Costabile 2017) in addition, considered self- esteem as the way one perceives about the self and the world through personal beliefs. Positive experiences such as success and good opinions increase the tendency for higher self-esteem. Sari, Bilek and Çelik

(2018) explains self-esteem as another predictor that contributes to academic performance and defined as the evaluative segment of self-concept. Development of self-esteem was considered to be shaped by learning experiences, lived throughout life, and a dynamic process, and it encompasses individual perspectives and qualities of the self (Sari, Bilek and Çelik 2018).

Concept of Academic Achievement and its relationship with students' self - esteem

Academic achievement has been and continues to be the centre of educational research in all educational settings (Ahmar & Anwar, 2013). It was further emphasized that, academic achievement serves as a yardstick for progressive scholastic development of a child and human resources development at community, national and international levels. This has depicted the important of academic achievement in the attainment of set objectives in any educational institutions.

Academic achievement refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers (Bell, 2010). It also refers to a student's performance in a given academic area (e.g. reading or language arts, mathematics, science and other areas of human learning. It relates to academic subjects a child studies in school and the skills the child is expected to master in each (Kathryn, 2010). It further refers to excellence in all academic discipline, in a class as well as extra - curricular activities which requires high degree of moderate to high self – esteem for achieving the stated target goals. It includes excellence in sporting behaviour, confidence, communication skills, and others. Academic achievement was once thought to be the most important outcome of formal educational experience and while there is little doubt as to the vital roles such achievement play in students' lives and later (Kell, Lubinsk, and Benbow, 2013). However, researchers and policy makers are ever increasingly turning to social and emotional factors as well as the relationships among them, as indicators of students' well-being and psychological development (Chernyshenko, Knakarar, and Drasgors, 2018). Therefore, Academic achievement can be seen how well

a student is accomplishing his tasks and studies in school and is evaluated in a number of ways. For regular grading students demonstrate their knowledge by taking written and oral tests, performing presentations, submission of homework and participating.

Influence of High and Low self – esteem on Students’ Academic Achievement

Self-esteem has strong relation with happiness and low self-esteem will lead to depression (Baumeister, 2003). Children with low self-esteem seem to be more dependent in their schools activities and this dependency leads them to have poor academic achievement (Srivastava, 2009). In general, self-esteem refers to how an individual value oneself based on feelings and self-evaluation thought (Robert 2010). In academic achievement, self-esteem is considered in helping students view the capability to promote themselves through effort and set of goals which improved their ability in the schools. Common research has proved that the best way to enhance students’ academic achievement is through improving their self-esteem (Rubie Townsend & Moore, 2004). As a result of the study it was found that self-esteem has a medium level positive relationship with student academic achievement. (Wickline 2003; Schmidh and Padilla 2003; Stupnisky, Renaud, Perry, Ruthig, Haynes, & Clifton 2007; Balkis and Duru 2010; Giunta, Alessandri, Gerbino, Kanacri, Zuffiano, & Caprara 2013; Soufi, Damirchi, Sedghi, & Sabayan 2014; Lackner 2015) findings similarly revealed the influence of self-esteem on student school academic achievement. This was because; a students with low self-esteem might lack strength, become rigid and dogmatic in views, do not grow from their mistakes, and are afraid of rejection which in turn influence students negatively and resulted in poor academic achievement. While student with positive self-esteem, demonstrated: Confidence, self-direction, non-blaming behaviour, an awareness of personal strengths, an ability to make mistakes and learn from them, an ability to accept mistakes from others, optimism, an ability to solve problems, an independent and cooperative attitude, feeling comfortable with a wide range of emotions, an ability to trust others, a good sense of personal limitations, good self-care, the

ability to say no (www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu). And these helped students to improve their academic achievement positively because of self-direction and been aware of their strengths and weaknesses and also accepted mistake they made.

Review of Empirical Studies

Ahmat, Muda, and Neoh, (2018) Assessed self - esteem level and its relationship to academic performance among undergraduate pharmacy students in Malaysian public university using cross – sectional design. All undergraduate pharmacy students, from year 1 to 4, with total population (n=764). Stratified random sampling was used and sampled 256 students. 10 item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), was administered which was scored from 0 (strongly disagree) to 3 (strongly agree). Academic performance for each student was determined based on the cumulative grade point average (CGPA), ranging from 0 (lowest) to 4 (highest). The questionnaire was pilot-tested for face and content validity as well as for reliability of RSES (Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.71). Statistical Package for Social Sciences Program (SPSS) version 22.0 was used and analysed the data collected. Descriptive statistics (i.e. mean, median, standard deviation and average) were employed. Pearson correlation, independent t-test, one-way ANOVA test) were also used. Findings showed that there was negative correlation between the self-esteem level and academic performance among the undergraduate pharmacy students. The study was in line with current study by using the same instrument such as (RSES) (CGPA) (SPSS) descriptive statistic; PPMC and t – test to analyse the data. In other hand, they differed because it was cross – sectional design; small population, sample size, ANOVA test and findings.

Doodman, Zadeh and Chargizi, (2017) investigate the relationship between self – esteem and academic achievement among high school students in Lamerd City Iran, adopting correlational designed with total population of 300 while 167 respondents were randomly selected 73 boys and 96 girls. The instrument used was Copper Smith self-esteem instrument questionnaire and previous semester GPA score indicate their academic achievement. For data analysis,

descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation coefficient was used as a statistical for drawing the inference. The result revealed strong relationship between academic achievement and self – esteem in the study area and therefore, recommended that teachers and parents are to improve in given all other related effort to improve students’ self-esteem which in turn will lead to good academic achievement. This study was similar with current study in the area of design which was correlational, descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation coefficient was used and the findings. It was contrary on the other hand because of the small population which was 300 and sample size 169. Also, the instrument used was Copper Smith self-esteem and previous semester GPA which were different from this current research study.

In a similar research by Feroz (2018) undertaken to correlate self – esteem and academic outcome of undergraduate students at university of Swat Pakistan. A total sample of 600 participants was selected randomly from various departments. Out of the 600 participants, 360 were male and 240 were female participants. Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES) was used and students’ Cumulative Grade Point Averages (CGPA). The CGPA of participants was correlated with their score on the RSES scale by applying the Pearson Correlation Coefficient test using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions version 21 (SPSS v21). Results showed that there was significant positive correlation ($r=0.551$, $p<0.02$) between students’ CGPAs and their score on the self-esteem scale. It was concluded from the results that students with higher self-esteem level had higher academic outcome. Though, the researcher fails to identify population of the study. Nevertheless, the similarity with current research was that, the researcher used the same instrument; statistical tools and result of the study were the same. But sample size was larger than the current research which becomes the area of their differences.

Methodology

The design of this present research was correlational. According to Nworgu (2015), correlational design seeks to establish what relationship exists between two or more variables. The design was chosen because it was a technique that shows whether and how strongly variables were related and it was in line with this current research that determined the Relationship between Self-esteem and Academic Achievement of Public senior secondary school students in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State.

Population of the Study

The population covered six Public Senior Secondary Schools in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State with total students of seven thousand one hundred and seventeen (7117) which comprises (4470) male and (2647) female students with their ages ranging from 15-18 years. A sample of three hundred and sixty-four (364) student participants was selected. In order to determine the sample size of this study, Krejcie & Morgan, (1970) formula was applied. On the basis of this formula, a population of 7000 required 364 samples. Purposive sampling technique was applied for selection of this sample so that every participant was given an equal and independent chance of being included in the study.

Research Instruments

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) 1965 was adapted and students' end of term academic achievement examination scores for data collection. RSES contains two sections; Section A of the RSES contains items on demographic information of public senior secondary school students; while Section B contains of 10 items that is related to the feelings of self –acceptance, self–worth and self – competence. Responses were measured on a 4-point likert scale and scoring of questionnaire item was modified ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The scale measures state of self-esteem by asking the respondents to reflect on their current feelings; while the scoring range from 1- 40; scores between 25- 40 were within normal range while scores below 25 suggested very low self-esteem. On the other hand, grades scores of

the students range from 1-100% according to Yobe State education examination system which was standardized set by Secondary Education Board at the end of the term.

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was subjected to three experts for judgements in the department of education faculty of arts and education Yobe state university (YSU), this was done in order to judge the appropriateness and the comprehensiveness of the items for measuring students' self- esteem. The independent judgement of different judges guided the researcher in determining whether the instrument has high content validity or not.

Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot testing was carried out on two schools which were not part of this current research to ensure the reliability of the instrument. 20 questionnaires were distributed to each secondary school for test-retest. The scores obtained from two administrations of the questionnaires at different interval were correlated by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation in order to get reliability coefficient and scores obtained was 0.58. The instrument was found to be suitable for data collection which enables the researcher administered the instrument.

Procedures for Data Administration/Collection

Introductory letters were written to the principals of the selected public senior secondary schools to seek consent to used their students and to access information on the scores of students' continuous assessment and end of term examination. Copies of the questionnaires were distributed to the participants by the researcher and research assistants to the sample of the study in the classrooms and thereafter the questionnaires were collected on the spot.

Procedures for Data Analysis

In this current research; descriptive statistic such as means and standard deviations was used in which hypotheses were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Statistic for hypothesis one. PPMC was employed because of the need to find the correlation between students' self – esteem and their academic achievement. Also independent t-test was used for the analyses of hypothesis two which seek to find out the difference between high and low self – esteem students. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.) was employed.

Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between the self – esteem of students and their academic achievement.

To test Ho₁, were subjected the responses of the students on self – esteem and academic achievement scores to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Summary of the analysis was shown in the table 4.3

Table 1: Pearson's Correlation between Self-esteem and Academic Achievement

Variables	N	X	SD	Correlation value
Self-esteem	364	29.39	4.90	.006
Academic achievement	364	55.37	18.10	

Correlation between students' self – esteem and their academic achievement was computed and presented in the above table 1. The result showed clear significant positive relationship between these two variables at Pearson Correlation Coefficient value = .006 Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students. And this was in

accordance with Audu, Jekwu and Hamsat, (2016) and Aryana (2010) in which all reported significant positive relationship between self – esteem and students’ academic achievement.

Hypothesis 2

HO₂ There is no significant differences between academic achievement of students with high self – esteem and students with low self – esteem.

To test Ho₂, the academic achievement scores of the students with high self – esteem and students with low self – esteem were subjected to t – test statistics and summary of the analysis was shown in table 5.

Table 2: Summary of Independent t – test of Academic Achievement Scores of Students with High Self – Esteem and Students with Low Self – Esteem.

Academic Achievement	N	X	SD	SE	DF	t-cal	p-value
High self-esteem	296	55.034	18.41	1.027	362	1.027	.305
Low self-esteem	68	57.50	17.75	1.041			

Not significant at $p > 0.005$

As shown in Table 4.5, the p-value obtained was .305 at $p > 0.05$ level of significance which was greater than the 0.05 choosing alpha level. This means the null hypothesis was accepted, there is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students with high self – esteem and those with low self – esteem. Finding of this research hypothesis was similar with finding of Ogoamaka, Sylvia and Ekejiuba, (2018) who reported no significant differences between academic achievement of students with high self – esteem and those with low self – esteem. In fact, low self – esteem was not essentially an indication of poor academic achievement in the schools.

Summary of Major Findings

This present research has the following findings:

1. There was significant positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement of public senior secondary school students in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State.
2. There was no significant difference between academic achievement of students with high self-esteem and students with low self-esteem of public senior secondary school students in Gashu'a Education Zone Yobe State.

Discussion of Findings

Results of the two research hypotheses presented interesting outcome that are hereby discussed below:

Finding on the hypothesis one correlation value which was .006 indicated significant positive relationship between self-esteem felt by students and their academic achievements. Investigation revealed this to be true since significant relationship was discovered between the way students feel or see themselves and their academic achievement. Finding of this present research was in line with Audu, Jekwu and Hamsat, (2016) and Aryana (2010) reported significant positive relationship between self – esteem and students' academic achievement. It also agreed with study of Doodman, Zadeh and Chargizi, (2017) who affirmed strong relationship between students' academic achievement and their self – esteem. It was also similar with findings of Maduagwu, Carew, Fajonyomi and Maduagwu, (2014) that students' self-esteem was found to be positively related to their academic achievement. Ogoamaka, Sylvia and Ekejiuba, (2018), Arshad, Zaid, and Mahmood (2015) and Feroz (2018) have equally reported that students' self – esteem was associated with their academic achievement. Hence, there was significant relationship between self – esteem of public senior secondary schools students and their academic achievement.

Finding on research hypothesis two p – value which was .305 revealed no significant positive difference between academic achievements of students with high self – esteem and students with low self – esteem. findings of this research was in accordance with Ogoamaka, Sylvia and Ekejiuba, (2018) reports that

low self-esteem was not essentially an indication of poor school academic achievement; nevertheless, it may be a significant predictor of superior academic achievement. On the other hand; this current result contradicted the findings of Alokun, Ogunsanmi, Makinde, and Fashina, (2014) reported significant difference between academic achievement of students with high self-esteem and those with low. This indicates that students with high self – esteem were academically better than students with low self – esteem. But current research finding demonstrated that students with low self – esteem were academically better than students with high self – esteem as against the perception of society that students who have low self – esteem demonstrates poor school academic achievement.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made based on the findings of the research conducted:

The current research findings showed that, significant positive relationship was established between academic achievement and self- esteem of public senior secondary schools. On the other hand, no significant difference was found between academic achievements of students with high self – esteem and those with low self – esteem in Gashu’a Education Zone Yobe State.

Recommendations

1. Based on findings, it was recommended that teachers and parents should developed students’ self-esteem by helping them feel resourceful as well as important as other students in the class. Students should be allowed to develop skills and experience success that will add to their feeling of personal worth.
2. Government should provide preventive self-esteem development intervention at an early age since self-esteem found to be associated with academic achievement. Also, teachers should boost students' self-esteem and achievement through intensive individual and group counselling,

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