

GOAL ORIENTATION AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS CORRELATES OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NORTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship among goal orientation, emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English Language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria. The study was guided by three objectives and their corresponding hypotheses. A correlational research design was adopted. The population consists of 315,538 students and sample of 1,532 selected through multi-stage sampling technique. Data were collected using Students' Goal Orientation Questionnaire (SGOQ), Students' Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (SEIQ) and English Language Performance Test (ELPT). The three instruments were validated by experts from educational psychology, English language and educational measurement and evaluation. Using Cronbach Alpha statistical analysis and Kuder-Richardson 20 formula, the instruments yielded reliability coefficients of 0.85, 0.80 and 0.79 respectively. Multiple Regression Analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were employed to test the hypotheses using SPSS 23 version. Findings of the study revealed a significant positive correlation between goal orientation and students' academic performance in English language ($r = -0.015$, $p < 0.05$), and between emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language ($r = -0.132$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that fostering goal-oriented behaviours and emotional intelligence can enhance students' academic performance in English language. The study recommended integrating goal-setting workshops and emotional intelligence training into school curricula.

Keywords: Goal Orientation, Emotional Intelligence, Academic Performance, English Language

Introduction

The importance of quality education is well recognized in Nigeria as in all education communities all over the world. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) affirms that, to realize the goal of education, which guaranteed the right of education for all citizens. Psychological constructs such as goal orientation and emotional intelligence have been identified as potential influencers of academic success (Goleman, 1995). Goal Orientation is an individual disposition towards developing one's ability in goal achievement setting (Vandewalle, 2005). According to Chanut and Thanita (2016), goal orientation is the reasons or purposes for engaging in learning activities and individual's different ways of approaching and responding to achievement situations.

According to Amrita et al. (2017) mastery goal orientation, which is defined as 'a desire to develop competence and increase knowledge and understanding through effortful learning', and performance

goal orientation, which is defined as 'a desire to gain favorable judgment of one's competence. Students with performance goal orientation seek positive judgments of their performance in relation to others, whereas students with performance-avoidance goal orientation avoid negative judgments of their performance in relation to other people (Satoris et al., 2011). Goal orientation refers to how an individual interprets and reacts to tasks, resulting in different patterns of cognition, affect and behavior.

Goal orientations play a critical role in explaining academic performance. Goal orientations have been shown to be associated with individuals' academic achievement (DeGeest & Brown, 2011). An individual's goal orientation has a significant impact on his or her cultivation of new skills, and thus has important implications for educators. Classroom environments that foster comparison between students lead those students to develop performance-oriented attitudes toward education (Kavitha & Suthanthiradevi, 2022). Specifically, learning in a competitive environment leads students to become more performance oriented and more likely to sacrifice learning opportunities to be positively evaluated.

Conversely, a non-competitive, collaborative environment allows students to value learning rather than immediate performance success (Lam et al., 2014). Researchers and Scholars like Mohammad, et al., (2014); Venkatesan and Prabu (2022) are interested in the relations between goal orientations and academic performance is sometimes inconsistent. Although the reasons are not much clear, much depends on how student achievement is measured by different kinds of ways (e.g., scores on standard tests, teacher made tests or teacher assigned grades that may or may not include homework or conduct) do not reflect student's real understanding and managing of their emotions.

Emotional intelligence rooted in general intelligence theory, has been called an elusive construct. The complexity in defining and validating emotional intelligence is analogous to the complexity in defining and validating general intelligence. Psychologists Salovey and Mayer (1990) are credited with being the first to introduce emotional intelligence, which they conceived of as being smart about one's emotional life and relationships with others. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), there are three classifications of emotional intelligence: mental ability models, personality models and mixed models. Mental ability models focus on the interplay of emotion and cognition, viewing cognitions as mental processes.

Emotional Intelligence is the capacity or ability of an individual for perceiving, processing, knowing and regulating emotional information accurately in an effective manner involving intra and inter abilities to guide one's thinking to make certain changes in others (Abdullahi et al., 2022). According to Tyagi and Ashish (2017), the concept of emotional intelligence has been defined by three different models: the ability model, trait model and the mixed model. In the ability model by Mayer and Salovey (2024), emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to observe emotion, integrate emotion to check thought, understand emotion and regulate emotion to promote personal growth. In the trait model by Petride (2000), this model refers to the individual's self-perceptions of his or her emotional abilities, being labelled as trait emotional self-efficacy. It is a construct outside the taxonomy of human cognitive ability. In the mixed model by Goleman (1998), emotional intelligence is the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well in us and in our relationships.

The study of Shrun and Glinson (2013) also contended that the use of appropriate teaching method could avail students the opportunity to learn from what they know, emotion and as well grasp practical

skills of goal orientation. To this end, Maryourt (2013); Wafa, et al., (2022) maintained that the use of activity-based teaching method in teaching psychomotor-related subjects like goal orientation and emotional intelligence could enhance students' academic performance. This implies that the use of activity-based teaching method such as constructivist instructional method could facilitate understanding, performance prove and mastery of concepts. Hence, the study ascertained the influence of goal orientation and emotional intelligence on academic performance among senior secondary school students in North-west, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The level of academic performance in English Language determined goal orientation which consist of cognitive, emotion and creative and can be seen as part of language skills that consist of listening, speaking, reading, and writing for the simple reason that thinking is impossible without language and that language is of no use without thinking. The trend of poor performance of secondary school students has also been confirmed by the May/June West African Examination Council (WAEC) results scored by students in examination in North-west states shows that, at least in five (5) credits, English Language and Mathematics inclusive, the failure rate revealed poor performance of student in secondary schools public examination.

Academic performance in English Language remains a critical concern in Nigeria, with persistent poor results in national examinations (WAEC, 2021). Studies such as Ukoima et al. (2021), Akaani, (2021) and Aburime (2017); have shown that students' academic performance is very poor now compared to before. This may be attributed to student poor emotional intelligence, lack teacher's creativity in teaching and learning, lack of necessary skills needed in teaching and learning, some teachers also do not use imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting, exiting and effective (Ukoima et al., 2021). Hence, this study investigated the correlate of goal orientation and emotional intelligence on students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the following objectives guided the study to:

1. find out the relationship between goal orientation and students' academic performance in English Language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.
2. investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English Language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.
3. investigate the combine relationship among goal orientation, emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between goal orientation and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Ho₃: There is no significant combined relationship among goal orientation, emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study employed correlational survey research design. Correlation design is usually used to establish the existence of a relationship between two or more variables of a situation (Creswell, 2012). Based on this fact, the design was considered most appropriate for this study because it enable the researcher to ascertain the extent to which variations in one variable are related to variations in another variable. It is therefore used to investigate the relationship among goal orientation, emotional intelligence and creativity as correlates of students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

The target population for this study consists of 315,538 students of all public senior secondary schools (SSS II) in North-west states (State Ministries of Education in North-west, 2024). These students were targeted because they are made-up of teenagers and they are more stable emotionally under the care and control of their parents and school authority, also they are in second year in senior secondary school education. An appropriate sample size of 1,532 comprising 800 male and 732 female students that is in line with recommendations offered at a 95% confidence level and margin error of 2.5% were selected for the study (Research Advisor, 2006). The selection was done through multi-stage sampling techniques to obtain more accurate representation, and to address the different characteristics of the targeted students. Multi-stage sampling requires the researcher to choose the sample in stages until required sample is obtained (Nnamdi, 2009).

Three instruments which involve two questionnaires and one test were employed for data collection. The instruments are: Students' Goal Orientation Questionnaires (SGOQ) adapted from VandeWalle (1997), Students' Emotional Intelligence Questionnaires (SEIQ) was developed from Joiceswarnalatha (2015) and English Language Performance Test (ELPT). While both SGOQ and SEIQ were designed in Likert scale and have twenty items each, ELPT was a multiple choice and has twenty five items. The three instruments were given to three experts for validation and their suggestions and recommendations were incorporated. The reliabilities of the three instruments were obtained by pilot testing working with 30 students in a school that is not part of sampled schools for the study. The Cronbach Alpha Statistical analysis and Kuder-Richardson 20 formula were used to analyze (ELPT). The two scores obtained from the sample of the first administration were correlated with those of the second administration. The Alpha coefficients values obtain for the instruments were 0.85, 0.80 and 0.85 respectively. These values show that the instruments were suitable and reliable for the study.

The data was analyzed using multiple regression analysis for hypothesis 1 and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to analyze hypotheses 2 and 3. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance employing SPSS Version 23 statistical software.

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between goal orientation and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Table 1: Relationship between Goal orientation and English language Performance

Variable	N	Mean	S.D	df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Goal orientation	1,532	50.35	8.93				
Students' Academic Performance	1,532	14.64	3.44	1,530	-.015	0.552	Sig.

Correlation significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result on table 1 shows that there is significant relationship between goal orientation and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria. This indicates that correlation co-efficient is *r*-value of -0.15, and *p*-value 0.552 is greater than 0.05 significant alpha level. Therefore, hypothesis two is hereby retained. This implies that there is no significant relationship between goal orientation and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Table 2: Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Academic performance

Variable	N	Mean	S.D	df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Emotional Intelligence	1,532	57.35	14.43				
Students' Academic performance	1,532	14.64	3.44	1,530	0.132**	0.000	Sig.

**Correlation not significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result on table 2 shows that there is significant relationship between emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria. This indicates that correlation co-efficient of *r*-value of -0.132 and *p*-value 0.000 is less than 0.05 significant alpha level. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant combined relationship among goal orientation, emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Goal orientation, Emotional Intelligence and English Language performance

R = 0.140^a
R Square = 0.019
Adjusted R Square = 0.018
Standard Error = 3.41336
Analysis of Variance

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	S	Remark
Regression	353.497	2	117.832	10.113	.000 ^b	Significant
Residual	17802.766	1,528	11.651			
Total	18156.263	1,531				

Table 3 revealed that there is significant correlate variables (goal orientation and emotional Intelligence), since the multiple R coefficient indicated 0.140, adjusted R² 0.018, P<0.05, while the R² coefficient was 0.019. The 19% (R² = 0.019, P<0.05) observed variance in students' academic performance in secondary school students in North-west, Nigeria was attributed to the joint effect of goal orientation and emotional intelligence while the remaining 81% of the regression of the unexplained variance was due to other factors not considered in the regression model. The table indicated the F-calculated value as (F = 10.113; p<0.05), hence the hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant combined effect among goal orientation, emotional intelligence and students' academic performance in English language in senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Table 4: Test of Significant of Regression coefficient

Variance	Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Standard Error	Beta	t-value	Sig.
(Constant)	17.517	.724	24.207		.000
Goal orientation	-.010	.010	-.025	-.978	.328
Emotional Intelligence	-.029	.006	-.123	-4.615	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance (P<0.05)

The result on table 4 shows the relative importance of each of the correlate variables (goal orientation and emotional intelligence) to the correlation of students' academic performance in English language as showed by the un-standardized coefficients of Beta weight which ranged from -.029 to -.010. From the table, emotional intelligence with a Beta weight of 0.123 (12%) shown to be the single most potent correlate of students' academic performance in English language in secondary school in North-west, Nigeria. This followed by goal orientation with Beta of 0.025 (25%) with negative sign for all values, while showed as correlate with variable of students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

The table also revealed that the standard errors ranged from 0.10 to 0.006, while the t-values ranged from -.978 to -4.615, at P<0.05. The standard errors for emotional intelligence (-.123), and goal orientation (-.025) are significant correlates at P<0.05 level of significant showed correlates significant effect on students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria. The t-value for goal orientation (-.976) and emotional intelligence (-4.615) are significant

correlates at $P < 0.05$ level of significant showed to have produced significant effect on students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria. The t-value for goal orientation (-.976) and emotional intelligence (-4.615) are significant correlates at $P < 0.05$ level of significant showed to have produced significant effect on students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria. Therefore, the results show the independent variables of goal orientation and emotional intelligence correlates with the dependent variable students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis from hypothesis one, the statistical analysis on this hypothesis using multiple regressions analysis shown that 19% observed variance in Students' English Language Academic Performance were attributed to the joint effect of goal orientation and emotional intelligence. This finding corroborates Kifle and Melese (2017) which showed that, the results of combined correlation analysis of the present study revealed that there was combined significant relationship among goal orientation, emotional intelligence and academic performance. The finding of this study is in line with the finding of Chanut and Thanita (2016) who finding revealed that, multiple regression analyses were used and a positive influence was found of goal orientation and emotional intelligence correlates of academic performance in students. In addition, the finding of this study is in line with the findings of Nizar and Muhammad (2020) who revealed that there is a strong combined relationship among emotional intelligence and academic performance. The finding of this study contradicts with the finding of Gaurav, (2020), who indicates that emotional intelligence is not able to fully correlate the academic performance.

From hypothesis two, the findings of this study support the findings of Kavitha and Suthanthiradevi, (2022) who revealed that, there is no significant relationship between Goal Orientation and Academic Achievement of the Higher Secondary School Students. The finding of this study is in line with the findings of Mohammad, et al., (2014) whose findings revealed no significant relationship between goal orientation learning and academic performance in writing, it has a negative relationship between students' use of cognitive and metacognitive in performance. In contrary, the finding of this study contradicts the findings of Venkatesan and Prabu (2022), which revealed that there exists significant relationship between goal orientation and academic performance of students.

From hypothesis three, the findings of this study corroborate with the findings of Wafa, et al., (2022), who finding revealed that emotional intelligence was significantly correlated with academic achievement among students. In addition, the finding of this study is in agreement with the findings of Abdullahi et al. (2022) who result showed correlation coefficients between Emotional Intelligence and academic performance. In contrary, the finding of this study contradicts with the finding of Gaurav, (2020), who indicates that emotional intelligence is not able to fully predict the academic achievements of students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that goal orientation, emotional intelligence and creativity influences students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria. However, goal orientation does not

significantly correlates with students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The study recommended the following:

1. Students training on emotional intelligence should be integrated into curriculum and encouraged proper guide for senior secondary school students in North-west, Nigeria.
2. Government should organize workshops for students on goal-setting techniques and emotional training for senior secondary schools in North-west, Nigeria.

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