



Needs Satisfaction and Academic Adjustment among Secondary School Students in Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State: Implication for Counselling

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Abstract

The study was aimed at examining needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among secondary school students in Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State. The study was guided by three research question and three hypotheses. Literatures were reviewed according to the variables of the study. The study adopted a causal comparative research design. The design was adopted because of the nature of the variables under study that the researcher cannot manipulate because their effects have already occurred. The study also adopted a stratified and simple random sampling technique to select a total of 450 SS1 students from a population of 4523 in Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State. The instrument that was used for data collection was a validated questionnaire titled, 'Needs satisfaction and academic adjustment scale' (NSAAS). The instrument was validated by experts in measurement and Evaluation and the reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha Reliability method and the coefficient of the sub scales ranged from .78 -.85. Data were collected and were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation. The result showed that there was a significant relationship between psychological, physiological and safety needs satisfaction on academic adjustment of the learner. Based on these findings, it was recommended that students should be provided with adequate food and shelter that would help them adjust adequately to their academic activities. That student's competency should be built for the psychological needs to be satisfied in order to help them carry out their academic activities adequately. Counsellors should ensure that they help the parents of the learner to know the importance of satisfying the needs of the child so that the child can cope with the school activities.

Keywords: need satisfaction, academic adjustment, counselling, safety needs education evaluation.

Introduction

The school is a component of the society that is established to help in inculcating in the learner the values, skill, knowledge and techniques that are cherished by the society. The school is established to ensure that values that would promote the existence of the society are orchestrated and maintained in order for the individual to live peacefully with himself and other members of the society. This is to say that the individual at whatever point in time must ensure that he/she copes with the development that is found in the society in order to maintain a balance in his/her living. However, the child grows up in a family and the environment of the child is different from the environment of the school. While the family environment may be warm, caring and accommodating, that of the school may be quite different due to the diversity of the people that are found in such schools and the nature of the teachers that even serve as in loco parentis. There is a dire need for the child to adjust therefore to the needs of the society and the school environment that may be new and different from what the child may have hitherto found himself, this is what adjustment is all about.

The term adjustment has undergone different definitions. Adjustment is referred to as the behavioural process by which humans and other animals maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. Human beings are able to adjust to the physical, social and psychological demands that arise from having interdependability with other individuals. Adjustment refers to the psychological process through which people manage or cope with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It connotes conformity; it deals with the way an individual adapts to his environment and demands of life (Ogoemeka, 2012).

This includes how he relates to others (interpersonal) and how he deals with his responsibilities and inner feelings. Adjustment, as a process describes and explains the ways and means of an individual's adaptation to his self and his environment without reference to the quality of such adjustment or its outcome in terms of success or

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failure. It is an organizational behaviour in life situations at home, at school, at work in growing up and in ageing. It helps one to keep out basic impulses at tolerable levels, to believe in one's own abilities and to achieve desired goals. Thus, adjustment helps for self-initiated growth and development along intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and academic dimensions.

Unfortunately, some learners in the school environment have been having series of academic adjustment problems. These range from inability to answer and ask questions in the class, inability to do an assignment and homework as when due, poor writing skills from the board that they may consider voluminous as well fail in small responsibilities that are given to them in school. The effects of these academic maladjustment is that it causes depression, frustration, lack of self-confidence, low motivation, inferiority complex, high school dropout tendencies, poor academic performance among others. These states of affair have troubled the hearts of parents, teachers, guidance counsellors and all those interested in the education of the child. Many researchers have tried to find out the various factors that are responsible for this social maladjustment among students. Home background, peer rejection, classroom experience, parental occupation, parental care, family type, intelligence, achievement, age, sex, socio-economic status, anxiety, and security have been identified as causes of social maladjustment (Mondal, 2006; Raju and Rahamtulla, 2007; Joymalya, 2012; Sabeena and Viswanathan, 2013).

However, the researcher is presuming that other factors such as need dissatisfaction could be responsible for student's academic maladjustment. Need satisfaction is a range of internal and external desires by man that must be satisfied in order to aspire for greater things. Every individual have certain needs that must be satisfied in order to live a meaningful life. These needs could be intrinsic or extrinsic. Maslow (1954) posited that human needs are structured from physiological to self-actualization needs. That the satisfaction of one level of needs will lead to better aspiration of higher order needs. No student can be devoid of all of these needs and adjust well to the learning environment. For example, were a child does not have writing materials like others or even have text books and others are reading from theirs in the class, the child feel alienated and may not be able to cope with the academic demands of the school. These researchers are however asking, could need dissatisfaction responsible for academic maladjustment among students? It was in a bid to answer this question that this study was carried out.

Ingrid (2010) carried out a study on basic psychological need satisfaction in leisure activities and adolescents' life satisfaction. The study set out to examine the relationship between adolescents' satisfaction of the psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy in their participation in leisure activities and their perceived life satisfaction. The aim was to identify the extent to which satisfaction of the three needs explained the relationship between participation in leisure activities and life satisfaction. These proposed mechanisms were based on previous empirical work and the theoretical frameworks of self-determination theory, and were tested in a nationally representative sample of Norwegian adolescents ($N = 3,273$), aged 15 and 16 years (51.8 % boys). The structural equation analysis showed that competence and relatedness satisfaction fully mediated the association between participation in activities and life satisfaction. Autonomy satisfaction had a direct positive effect on life satisfaction but did not show any mediation effect. The positive processes of psychological need satisfaction and especially the need for competence and relatedness, experienced in the leisure activity domain thus seem to be beneficial for adolescents' well-being. These findings add to previous research investigating the positive impact of need satisfaction in other important domains in the lives of children and adolescents.

In a similar study on psychological needs satisfaction and adolescent students' self-esteem by Sesan and Olusola (2009), three hypotheses were raised to determine; (i) the relationship between self-esteem and the various dimensions of psychological needs satisfaction vis-à-vis autonomy, relatedness and competence (ii) the prediction of self-esteem by the combined and relative effects of psychological needs satisfaction; and (iii) difference in self-esteem by the satisfaction of the need for autonomy, relatedness and competence. Sample included 387 students randomly selected from eight secondary schools in an education zone in Ogun State, Nigeria. Two validated instruments were used for the collection of data. Results indicated that the dimension of psychological needs satisfaction are related and also predicted self-esteem. Significant differences also exist in adolescent students' self-esteem by the level of their autonomy, competence and relatedness.

Ratelle and Duchesne (2014) carried out a study on trajectories of psychological need satisfaction from early to late adolescence as a predictor of adjustment in school. The longitudinal study described development patterns of perceived psychological need satisfaction (PNS) from the end of elementary school to the end of high school and their contribution to school adjustment at the end of high school. The first goal thus consisted in estimating whether developmental trajectories of perceived PNS were homogeneous (i.e., all students reported similar developmental patterns) or heterogeneous (i.e., there were several distinct developmental trajectories).

The second goal involved comparing trajectory groups on dimensions of school adjustment (social, academic, and emotional– personality). A stratified sample of 609 students (277 boys, 332 girls) was surveyed annually on a 6-year period, from the end of elementary school until the end of high school. Results of group-based trajectory modelling (Nagin, 1999, 2005) revealed that developmental trajectories of PNS were heterogeneous for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. For each need, four distinct developmental patterns were identified. These trajectories varied in shape, composition, and magnitude such that some students reported increasing PNS over time while others reported stable or decreasing PNS. Results from multivariate analyses revealed that students in upper trajectories (e.g., reporting higher levels of PNS, either stable or increasing) generally reported higher levels of academic, social, and personal–emotional adjustment at the end of high school.

The following hypothesis were stated to guide the study

1. There is no significant relationship between psychological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among students
2. There is no significant relationship between physiological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among students
3. There is no significant relationship between safety needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among students

Methodology

The study adopted a causal comparative research design. The design was adopted because of the nature of the variables under study that the researcher cannot manipulate because their effects have already occurred. The study also adopted a stratified and simple random sampling technique to select a total of 450 SS1 students from a population of 4523 in Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State. The instrument that was used for data

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collection was a validated questionnaire titled, 'Needs satisfaction and academic adjustment scale' (NSAAS). The instrument was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation, the reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha Reliability method and the coefficient of the sub scales ranged from .78 -.85. Data were collected by the researchers and analysed using Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regression technique, the results are presented as follows

Result and discussion

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between psychological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among secondary school students. The independent variable in this hypothesis is psychological adjustment while the dependent variable is academic adjustment. To test this hypothesis, Pearson product moment correlation was used and the result as presented in Table 1 showed that ($r = .391, p < .05$). Since $p (.000)$ is less than $p (.05)$, it implies that there is a significant relationship between psychological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among secondary school students. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 1: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between psychological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment

Variables	r	p	sig.
Psychological needs satisfaction	.391	.000	.000
Academic adjustment	.979	.000	.000

Hypothesis two

There is no significant relationship between physiological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among secondary school students. The independent variable in this hypothesis is physiological needs satisfaction while the dependent variable is academic adjustment. To test this hypothesis, Pearson product moment correlation was used and the result as presented in Table 2 showed that ($r = .565^*, p < .05$). Since $p (.000)$ is less than $p (.05)$, it implies that there is a significant relationship between physiological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among secondary school students. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between physiological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment

Variables	r	p	sig.
Physiological needs satisfaction	.565*	.000	.000
Academic adjustment	.979	.000	.000

Hypothesis three

There is no significant relationship between safety needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among secondary school students. The independent variable in this hypothesis is safety needs satisfaction while the dependent variable is academic adjustment. To test this hypothesis, Pearson product moment correlation was used and the result presented in Table 3 showed that ($r = .565^*$, $p < .05$). Since $p (.000)$ is less than $p (.05)$, it implies that there is a significant relationship between safety needs satisfaction and academic adjustment among secondary school students. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between safety needs satisfaction and academic adjustment

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Correlation	Significance
Safety needs satisfaction	0.87	0.12		
Academic adjustment	0.97	0.09	.565*	.000

Discussion of findings

Hypothesis one result which was aimed at examining the relationship between psychological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment was rejected. This could be due to the fact that adolescents are likely to thrive and be motivated in settings that fit well with their psychological needs. Where the individual needs of relatedness and competencies is achieved, there is every likelihood that they would be able to adjust to the demand of the task, responsibilities that the environment offers to them. The students can accept the responsibilities of the school, respond aptly to the activities that are assigned to him but where this is lacking especially in the area of competencies among the learner, it becomes very difficult for them to adjust appropriately. The result was in line with that of Ratelle and Duchesne (2014) that carried out a study on trajectories of psychological need satisfaction from early to late adolescence as a predictor of adjustment in school. The longitudinal study described developmental patterns of perceived psychological need satisfaction (PNS) from the end of elementary school to the end of high school and their contribution to school adjustment at the end of high school. Results from multivariate analyses revealed that students in upper trajectories (e.g., reporting higher levels of PNS, either stable or increasing) generally reported higher levels of academic, social, and personal–emotional adjustment at the end of high school

Hypothesis two result which was aimed at examining the relationship between physiological needs satisfaction and academic adjustment was rejected. This could be due to the fact that every individual needs certain items like food; clothes and shelter to even life talk less of behaving well in the environment. Where students physiological needs such as food, shelter, good clothing are not satisfied, there is every tendency that most students would not be hungry, and would pay more attention to class activity compared to when they are hungry. The satisfaction of this need provides a sense of comfort, development of high self-concept and ability to

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see academics as an exercise that is relevant for one's development,. The findings were in line with that of the findings, Bakere (2006) noted that at the physiological level is the need for air, water, nourishment, good health, activity, rest, and avoidance of pain. The student requires a belly of nourishing food and clean clothes before he is in any condition to move on to a higher stage of development such as playing patty-cake with his parents. Some of these needs may be specific to the child.

For example, a child deficient in a particular nutrient will develop a specific hunger for foods containing that nutrient. If such is not satisfied, the child begins to withdraw and this affects their relationship with peers and teachers in school.

Hypothesis three result which was aimed at examining the relationship between safety needs satisfaction and academic adjustment was rejected. This could be due to the fact that security is an essential needs of the learner to relate well. For example, where the environment is threatening occasion by bombing, kidnapping and all sorts of anti-human activities, the tendency to study well with others would be difficult and most students who are introverts may not be able to adjust to the demands of the school activities. More so, where students are threatened by teachers and senior students, parents and relative, they develop the spirit of fear which may deter them from relating well with their peers and others in the environment both in school and at home. More so, safety and security needs are about keeping students safe from harm. These needs include shelter, job security, health, and safe environments.

If a person does not feel safe in an environment, they will seek to find safety before they attempt to meet any higher level needs. These security needs are important for survival, but they are not as important as the basic physiological needs. The result is in line with that of Opara and Onyekuru (2013) whose study is on psychosocial predictors of secondary school students' adjustment to school. The results of the simple linear regressions and the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) show that self-concept, basic needs (safety and psychological needs) significantly predicted secondary school students' adjustment to school while emotional intelligence and peer group do not. In terms of the relative effects of the psychosocial factors, self-concept was found to be most effective, followed by provision of basic needs, emotional intelligence and lastly peer group.

Conclusion

The result of the study showed that psychological, physiological and safety needs relates with academic adjustment among secondary students. Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it was recommended that students should be provided with adequate food and shelter that would help them adjust adequately to their academic activities.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were made

School administrators and management should build student's competencies for the psychological needs to be satisfied in order to help them carry out their academic activities adequately.

Counsellors should ensure that they help the parents of the learner to know the importance of satisfying the needs of the child so that the child can cope with the school; activities.

Parents and guardians should help the students achieve proper psychological adjustment both at home and in school for proper development.

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