RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM, CAUSAL ATTRIBUTIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BWARI AREA COUNCIL, FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is a record of my research work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree at any other Institution.

…… ……

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CERTIFICATION

This work titled : Relationship between self-esteem, causal attributions and academic achievement among secondary school students in Bwari Area Council, Federal Capital Territory by Obochi, Helen Nwamaka meets the requirements governing the award of Degree of Masters of Education in Psychology in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

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DEDICATION

My Family: for their love, encouragement and sacrifices to make this a reality.

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It is true that no one individual builds a house alone. The completed edifice is a complete efforts and contributions of numerous artisans who participated in its construction. This is especially true of this work. Therefore, my warm thanks go to the plumbers, masons, carpenters and electricians who collectively and individually raised this edifice.

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the relationships between self-esteem, causal attributions and academic in secondary school students in Bwari Area Council of Federal Capital Territory. The research sought to find out how self esteem and causal attribution interact with the of students academic achievement. Also, the research explored gender differences in self-esteem and causal attribution for success and failure. Six research questions guided the research and six hypotheses were tested. The design of the study was survey and sample size was 191participant comprising 90 males and 101 females from five secondary schools in Bwari Area Council, FCT. Two standardized questionnaires were used, the Academic Causal Attribution Scale which is a five point scale questionnaire and Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale which is a four –point scale questionnaire. Academic achievement was measured by the term result of a standardized examination given to the students by the education board. The data were analysed using Pearson product Moment Correlation to test relationships and Independent sample t-test to test differences between variables. At 0.01 level of significant, self- esteem was positively associated with academic achievement so also internal attribution for success. At 0.05 significant level, external attributions for success was negatively related to academic achievement. At 0.01 alpha level, external attributions for failure was related to academic achievement. No gender difference was discovered in both self-esteem and internal or external attributions for success and failure. The implications are that students will benefit by giving internal explanations for occurrences in their life. Also students with low self esteem are to be guided and counseled so they could adjust well in school and life generally. It is therefore recommended that methods of building positive self-esteem and internal attribution be embraced by both parents and teachers.

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Operational Definition of Terms

Academic Achievement: This is measured by end of the term examination result of the questions set by the Secondary Education Board of the participants in the school.

Self –Esteem: A measure of the feelings of self-worth in individuals measured with the Rosenberg self esteem scale.

Attributions: This is described as what individuals perceived as the causes of events in their lives.

External belief: This is the belief that events in one's life are determined by forces beyond their control like luck, fate chance, significant others.

Internal belief: This is the belief that events in individuals life are as a result of personal ability and effort.

Success: This is the situation in which an individual meets up with the intended objective.

Failure: failure is the state or condition of not meeting a desirable or intended objective.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Academic achievement is the outcome of an education. It is the extent to which a student has achieved his or her learning objectives. The study of academic achievement and other variables has formed significant contribution to educational system in many Countries. Some researchers reported that academic achievement is associated with both cognitive and non-cognitive variables including environment, climate and culture. The research in academic achievement and other variables was initiated to discover avenues by which academic achievement could be managed and improved. Lavin (1965) in his book , 'Prediction of Academic Achievement' listed 29 types of variables which have been used as predictors of school achievement in over 3000 studies published during the period 1953-1961.

Self-esteem is one of the variables that have been associated with academic achievement. Several inquire and research has traced the study of self-esteem to the Hindu Scripture. Self-esteem became an official area of study in 1890 with James William's contribution to psychology. James (1890), saw self esteem as an evaluation process which could be measured as the ratio of individuals success to his affectations.

C.H. Cooley's work in Human Nature and Social Order in 1902 brought about the theory of "looking glass self". Looking glass self stated that people see themselves through the eyes of others. Self-esteem then became an object of empirical investigation. Yeung and Martine (2003) postulated three main components of the looking-glass self to include: we imagine how we must appear to others, we imagine the judgment of that appearance, and we develop our self through the judgments of others.

Lecky (1945) was among the first to note that student's level of achievement might be related to the perceptions they have of themselves as learners. In his study, he found out that students with high self-esteem tend to have high academic achievement and this was a very important contribution in the academic community. It is important to note at this point that self-esteem and self-concept would be used interchangeably in this research work since both refers to ones feelings about oneself.

Academic achievement has also been linked to attributions. The Psychological theory of attribution emerged from social psychology. The founding father was Hieder (1958) when he investigated the reasons people give for their successes and failures. He identified two reasons which are mostly cited for failure and success- "can" (ability) and "try" (effort). According to his theory, the expectation for future success depends on whether the individual attributes his success to ability – can or effort-try. By 1966, Rotter provided the theory that describes individual in

term of their tendencies to attribute success or failure to internal or external factors. He believed internals exhibit two characteristics which include high achievement motivation and outer- directness. Externals on the other hand are those individuals with a high external locus of control that is; they believe that powerful others, fate, or chance primarily determine events in their lives. With the emergence of his work on achievement motivation, Weiner (1972) found out that causal attribution is a determinant of achievement-related behaviour which does influence academic performance. Weiner postulated three dimensions to causal attribution for success and failure. From Rotter(1966), he took causality locus (internal and external), control (controllability and uncontrollability). Later, he added stability (stable and unstable).

Weiner also identified four causes of success or failure used by students. They are: effort/lack of effort, ability/lack of ability, easy task/task difficulty and good luck/bad luck. It has been revealed that students mostly cited ability and effort as the causes of their success.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The study sought to discover the variables associated with academic achievement. It sought to look at the ways self-esteem and causal attributions may be used to improve academic achievement. Low academic achievement has become a problem in Nigeria schools. Educators in Nigeria are calling for a change in the education system in the Country. For instance, the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) released the result of the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) 2011 and out of 1,493,604 candidates who registered and sat for the examination, 842, 851 scored below 200 which was the pass mark. Only 40% of the candidates representing: 597,494 scored 200 and above (JAMB, 2011).So many are giving reasons why there is a rise in academic failure in the Country. The Nigeria University Commission according to Komolafe and Yara (2010), believed it was caused by non qualified teachers thereby stipulating in 2009 that the minimum qualification for teaching in the Universities to be PH.D. Others, he said blamed poor performance of students on defective teachers while some see it as caused by schools being concerned with only the cognitive aspect of a child in the school thereby paying little or no attention to the affective domain of learning which a very important aspect of academic success is. The emotional content of a child determine how far he is able to push him or herself to achieve success. Examination which is a device applied in ascertaining child's performance, teachers effectiveness and teaching method were given

enough consideration in several researches with no or little thought given to attribution, self-concept and or self-esteem. Research has shown that School failures often entail such perceptions as low self-esteem and tendency to attribute failure to incapacity and successful outcome to luck (Marsh, 1992 &Wiener, 1979). This means that when a student fails in the past and attributes it to luck; he will not expend energy in future to ensure success. Brophy (1996) in his study said failure syndrome students fail because they do not exert the necessary effort to succeed. Without paying attention to this affective domain of a child, the downfall of academic success which has most times lead to examination malpractices both on teachers' side and the students. Even the parents are guilty of this malpractice. Students depend more and more on cheating in order to secure good grades without putting any effort to learning. This is destroying our society and if adequate measure is not taken, we will raise more drop outs, delinquent children, etc.

Consequently this study was to enable the researcher examine how these two variables, (self-esteem and causal attribution) influence academic achievement by collecting self-report questionnaires that measure these two characteristics and then identifying how they influence academic achievement as defined by school result scores of the subjects.

This will enable the researcher determine if there is need for interventions that could be used to enhance the academic success rate of the students. It will help further guide researchers to study techniques that would encourage individual

characteristics that are essential for academic success which will lead to a greater academic success without resorting to cheating.

1.3. Objectives of the study

Approaching this research, the following objectives were intended:

1. Find out the relationship between self-esteem and the academic achievement of students.
2. To determine if there is gender differences in student's self-esteem.
3. Determine the relationship between the internal and external attribution for success and academic achievement of the students.
4. Establish the relationship between internal and external attribution for failure and students' academic achievement.
5. To find out if there is gender difference in student's internal and external attribution for success.
6. Establish the gender differences in students' internal and external attribution for failure.
7. Determine the relationship between self-esteem and causal attributions.

1.4. Research Questions

The questions this study would ask and find answers to are:

1. Does the self-esteem of students influence the level of their academic achievement?
2. How do boys differ from girls in their self-esteem?
3. Is there a relationship between internal and external attribution for success and academic achievement of the students?
4. Do the students' internal and external attributions for failure affect their academic achievement?
5. What are the gender differences in the way students internally and externally explain their success?
6. What are the gender differences in the way students internally and externally attribute their failures?
7. Is there a relationship between self-esteem and causal attributions?

1.5. Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study.

1. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and the academic achievement of secondary school students.
2. There is no significant gender difference in the students' self-esteem.
3. There is no significant relationship between internal and external attributions for success and academic achievement of secondary school students
4. There is no significant relationship between internal and external attributions for failure and academic achievement of secondary school students.
5. There is no significant gender difference in students' internal and external attribution for success.
6. There is no significant gender difference in students' internal and external attribution for failure.
7. There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and causal attributions.

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1.6. Basic assumptions

1. It is assumed that some Nigerian secondary school students attribute their failures to some factors.
2. It is also assumed that students believe their successes in school are caused by certain reasons.
3. It is also assumed that most secondary school students go through the same kind of school system, curriculum and syllabus.
4. It is also assumed that the way an individual feels about him or herself influence their achievement.

1.7. Significance of the study

Students, who attribute failure to controllable factors such as effort, tend to be persistent even after they experienced failure. Those that attribute failure to uncontrollable factor such as luck, on the other hand tend to give up easily when faced with failure (Dweck & Repucci ,1973) It has also been found that students with high or positive self-esteem tend to be high academic achievers while those with low self-concept are low achievers. (Hamacker. 1995 & Kifer, 1973).

With the realization of the above stated facts, the researcher considers it necessary and significant to research so that adequate information and proper intervention will be provided in these areas of attribution and self-esteem. Through the understanding of what students attribute their academic successes and failures,

proper interventions would be made to correct maladjusted belief. The study of self-esteem, causal attribution for success or failure and academic achievement would be important contribution for Nigerian educational system because; it will give solutions to government for improving educational system since teachers and educators will be made aware of the important role affective domain play on students thereby helping them in shaping students behaviour.

When teachers are aware of the effects of low self esteem on students, they would embrace the methods of building a positive self esteem in students. Also, knowing the effect of attribution on future performance, teachers would implement attribution programmes which would enable students restructure their unproductive explanations for their successes and failures into productive one for future success.

1.8. Scope and Delimitation of the study

This study focused on secondary school students in Bwari Area Council, Federal Capital Territory. There are nine (9) Government Secondary Schools in Bwari Area Council. Five (5) schools were selected randomly in this study. Using students from these five schools was to make sure there is diversification and evenly spread sample. Moreover, only students in SS1 and SS2 were used in this study. This was to enable the researcher get a complete academic result of these students and be sure they would be available in the school during the research period.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter focused on the explanation of what the study is all about. It will explain what other researcher discovered in the courses of their investigations of the variables under investigation. Here, the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the study will be discussed. This will include the discussion of the concept of academic achievement, self-esteem, causal attribution, theories of attribution and the theories of self-esteem. Finally, related studies will be reviewed.

2.2. The Concept of academic achievement

Academic achievement has been described as the conclusion of an education. It is the extent to which a student has achieved his or her educational objective. Academic achievement is also defined as the experiences in life which includes community, family, current and school experiences. So to understand the process, the family, community is required.

The study of academic achievement and other variables has formed significant contribution to educational system in many countries. Some researchers reported that academic achievement is associated with both cognitive and non-cognitive variables including environment, climate, culture, and socio-economic status.

The research in academic achievement and other variables was to discover avenues by which academic achievement could be managed and improved .There are many ways in which academic achievement could be fostered in students.

Social Emotional Learning is one of these ways. It is the process for learning life skills which includes how to deal with oneself, other relationships and work in an effective manner. One learns to recognize emotions and learns how to manage it. This has been shown to boost students' academic achievement. Schools that creates socially and emotionally sound learning and working environment helps students develop social and emotional competence and ensure long term academic outcome for students.

There is a close relationship between academic achievement and self –esteem but researchers always disagree on the nature of this relationship. One position said the students need to do well in academic work in order to have a high self esteem; the other position said high self esteem brings about high academic achievement. Covington (1989) in his study discovered that as level of self-esteem increase, so also academic achievement while decrease in self-esteem results in decrease in academic achievement. Holly (1987) said a certain amount of self-esteem is a requirement for high academic achievement. Hence, whichever comes first, it is important to note that self-esteem and academic achievement interacts significantly. Academic achievement has been correlated with attribution of students. Many studies have shown the relationship between attribution belief and

academic success. According to Johnson & Johnson (1985) in their research showed that past attributions affect student's current achievement motivation. He pointed out that motivation to achieve is greater when students feel their past performance was their sole responsibility not remediable and beyond their control.

2.3. The Concept: Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is ones' judgment of oneself. Social psychologists refer to self evaluation whether favourable or not as individuals self -esteem. Self esteem has been known to affect behaviour of individual. Self-esteem is important in psychology because one's judgment of oneself affect the way he relates to others. Self-concept has been defined as the perception that an individual has of himself/herself, regarding the different aspects of him/herself (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003; Harter, 1999). Milton (1668) is argued to have first coined this term self-esteem after a career in the proto-psychological lore of phrenology in the 19th century. The term entered more mainstream psychological use in the work of the American psychologists and philosophers Lorne Park and William James in 1890. Nevertheless, some argued that the study of self-esteem began with Hindu scripture. With Cooley's (1902) contribution to the theory of the looking-glass-self which stated that people see themselves through the eyes of others; self esteem became a target of empirical research.

2.4. Theories of Self-Esteem

In psychology, self-esteem reflects a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth. Many theorists have explained self-esteem each having different views. These theorists includes: Carl Rogers, Cooley and Rosenberg. Each of them made important contribution to the development of the concept, self-esteem.

2.4.1. Carl Rogers Self Theory

This theory is called the self theory. Carl Rogers believed people do things out of free will. He was concerned with distinguishing one s values and understanding their association to other people. Rogers said the self is the brain of the person. He understand that every individual build up a need for self-esteem. According to him the path to self-actualization involves getting in touch with our real feelings and acting on them. Rogers said that each person has within them the natural tendency to continue to grow and develop. As a result of this the individual's self-esteem and self-actualization is continually influenced. This development can only be achieved through what Rogers refers to as 'unconditional positive regard' (Rogers, 1951).

2.4.2. Cooley's Looking glass self theory

This theory postulated by Cooley (1902) was based on the way in which individual's sense of self is reflected on others. The self he postulated depends on

the perceived responses of others or as he put it 'each to each a looking glass, reflects the other that doth pass'. The theory has three components which include: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of their judgment of that appearance; and the self feelings such as pride.

2.4.3. Rosenberg self esteem theory

Rosenberg (1965) referred to self-esteem as the subjective life of the individual, largely one's thought, feelings and behaviour. He identified two elements of self: identity and the self esteem. Identity he said represents cognitive variables and self esteem represents affective variables. Rosenberg also believe self-esteem has two components which includes feeling of self worth which is based on reflected appraisals and feeling of efficacy based on observations of the effects of one's actions.

2.5. The Concept: Attributions

The Psychological theory of attribution emerged from Social Psychology. Social Psychologists were interested in the kinds of attribution which explains motives. Motivation is the driving force behind all the actions of an individual. The influence of individual's needs and desires has a strong impact on the direction of their behaviour. This leads to the questions of: How do people decide the likely cause of their behaviours? Why do they attribute an individual's action to one

cause rather than another? In the effort to answer such questions, social psychologists started pursuing the basic motives and tried to ascertain the rules the average person follows when analyzing the cause of behavior. The study of these rules is termed, attribution theory.

2.6. Causal Attribution Theories

"Attribution theory deals with how the social perceiver uses information to arrive at causal explanations for events. It examines what information is gathered and how it is combined to form a causal judgment" (Fiske & Taylor, 1991)

Attribution theories or the cognitive explanations of the motivation assume that every person question the reason of their success and failure as an attempt to understand them. In this way, they used to attribute their successes and failures to their ability, effort, mood, knowledge, luck, etc.

Attribution theory attempts to identify how individuals explain the reasons for their success or failure. People tend to ask themselves why certain things occur and as a result they search for the causes. In an educational context, individuals may ask themselves: "Why did I fail mathematics test?" or "What caused me to make a B on my Introductory Technology test?" In the bid to answer these questions, different explanatory theories evolved.

2.6.1 Fritz Heider's Attribution theory

Heider (1944, 1958) expressed attribution in the laypersons thinking when he said he was concerned with 'intuitive psychology' – the cause-effect analysis of the "man in the street". When he investigated the reasons people attribute for their success or failure, He identified two reasons that are mostly cited for failure or success. "Can" which is the ability and "Try" which is effort. He said we nonetheless have a tendency to explain any one behaviour as caused more by either internal or external factors. He said that the expectation for future success depends on whether the individual attribute his success to ability or effort (Heider, 1958). If the failure is attributed to effort, greater effort will be expended next time leading to future success. If failure is also attributed to ability, there will be the likelihood that greater effort will be expended for future success. Heider talked about what he referred to as fundamental attribution error. He said there is tendency to overestimate the internal and underestimate the external factors when explaining behaviours of others. This he said may result to the tendency to pay more attention to situations rather than individual. (Heider, 1958). Miller and Ross(1975) in their exploration of this theory postulated self serving bias where they said we tend to equate successes to internal and failure to external attributes. They said this bias is true for most people but differs for people with low self esteem, depression or those that view themselves in the negative. Depressed individuals view failure as their own negative quality and view success as luck .

2.6.2. Rotter's Locus of Control of Reinforcement

Rotter provided the theory that describes individuals in terms of their tendencies to attribute success or failure to internal or external factors and that became the birth of Locus of control. Locus of control is the believe that the causes of an events in one's life is either internal or external. Rotter believed that behavior is guided by reinforcements which through individuals come to have belief about what causes their actions or occurrences in their lives. The belief they have also guide the kind of attitude and behavior they adopt. Another Psychologist sees locus of control orientation as "a belief about whether the outcomes of our actions are contingent on what we do (internal control orientation) or on events outside our personal control (external control orientation)", Zimbardo, 1985, p. 275. Even though Rotter introduced locus of control, its use in education started with Crandal , Crandal & Katkovsky (1962) in their study in intellectual-achievement responsibility. They mostly stated that the child believe that he caused his successes and failures that occurs in intellectual achievement situations. Locus of control has also been believed to develop through past learning (Rotter, 1966).Through past reinforcements, an individual could acquire locus of control.

2.6.3. Weiner's Motivational attribution theory

Weiner (1972) took causality locus, control and added stability in his effort to explain attribution theory. By 1985, he identified causes of success and failure used by students. In the motivational attribution theory, Weiner proposed that individuals have affective responses to potential consequences of the intrinsic or extrinsic motives which in affect their future behaviours. This means that one's attribution determine the amount of effort the person will put in performing an activity in the future. Weiner also explained that such affective and cognitive assessment influences future behavior when the person encounters similar situations. Based on Weiner's theory, numerous research works has been done on attribution and other variables.

2.7. Review of related studies:

In Lavin (1965, p. 92) study, he said, "Although research finds below the college level are spotty the studies suggested a positive self-image is associated with higher performance." Nevertheless, the relationships between self-esteem and other variables have been extensively researched. Low self-esteem has been correlated with low life satisfaction, loneliness, anxiety, resentment, irritability, and depression (Rosenberg, 1985).

Blyth and Traeger (1988) found a correlation between high self-esteem and perceived intimacy with parents. High self-esteem has also been correlated with

academic success in high school (O'Malley & Bachman, 1979), internal locus of control, higher family income, and positive sense of self-attractiveness (Griffore, Kallen, Popovich, & Powell, 1990).

Bhatnager (1966, p. 178) said in his study that, "The self concept construct has been utilized by the several psychologists in research related to academic under achievement in education. Though their studies are based on different assumptions and hypotheses, it is not difficult to find some logical truth in the belief that certain type of self-regarding attitudes may affect academic performance. For example, if the child is perceive as adequate and a person of worth, worthy of respect rather than condemnation, he has more energy available to spend on academic achievement. On the other hand , if he perceives himself as worthless, incapable to cope with life's problems, he may not find it convenient or possible to identify with academic achievement and may fail in spite of being intellectually capable of achieving more.''

To support this evidence, Shibutani (1961, p. 433) said, "Much of what a person does or refuses to do depends upon his level of self-esteem". Brookover, Erickson and Joiner (1967) saw self-concept of academic ability to achieve in academic tasks as compared with others engaged in the same tasks. Patterson (1965) explained that "once a child is convinced he cannot learn in school, the task of educator becomes almost impossible. He will become trouble for his classmates, his teachers and himself. A negative self-concept is just as crippling as just as hard

to overcome as any physical handicap. In fact, a negative self-image may be even more crippling because it is often hidden from the view of the naïve or untrained observer. Most children who hate themselves act out this self-hatred by kicking the world around them. They are abusive, aggressive, hard to control, and full of anger and hostility at a world that has told them that they are not going to be given a chance. Such attitudes often continue to cripple an adult life'. Although, this description may be an extreme for black adolescents, Patterson (1965) stated, "The child with the negative view of self is a child who will not be able to profit adequately from school" and this supports Brookover's view.

Low self-esteem has been correlated with low life satisfaction, loneliness, anxiety, resentment, irritability, and depression (Rosenberg, 1985). High self-esteem has been correlated was academic success in high school (O'Malley and Bachman, 1979), internal locus of control, higher family income, and positive sense of self-attractiveness (Griffore, Kallen, Popovich, & Powell, 1990).

There are different positions on the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. It has been argued that students have to do well in school first before they could have high self-esteem. Another position is that self-esteem is necessary before one could do well in school. Covington (1989) reported that increase in self-esteem results in increase in academic achievement. Decrease in self-esteem also result in decrease in academic achievement. Marsh (1992) reported in his study

that the relationship of self-concept to school achievement is very specific. He postulated that general self-concept and non academic aspect of self concept are not related to academic work, general academic measures are related moderately to academic success.

However, Hamachek (1995) asserted that self-concept and school achievement are related. He supported the fact that both variables affect each other. The direction of the relationship: that is, does self-esteem produce achievement or achievement produce self esteem is tackled by Gage and Bediner (1992). They stated that evidence is accumulating; however, to indicate that level of school success particularly over many years predict level of regard of self and one's ability

(Kifer, 1975), whereas level of self-esteem does not predict level of school achievement. The implication is that teachers need to concentrate on the academic success and failure of their students.

James (1890) said that academic achievement leads to self-esteem/concept but self-concept is a better predictor of being low track or high track student, it would appear that there are some intervening variables. He stated that the intervening variables are personal expectations. That means that the increase in self-esteem results when success is improved relatively to expectations.

Kleinfeld (1972) recognized that, "academic self-concept has been found to be strongly related to school achievement for both white students and Negro students'

(p.211). Academic achievement rate among African American students have been found to be lower than those of white peers.

Wiggins, Shatz and West (1994) reported that self-esteem and academic achievement were positively correlated. Kifer's findings supported this view. Arancibia et al (1990) indicated that if a child has positive self-image, he would be more success probability when he performs a task. Lavin (1965) in his review of measures of a self-image as predictor of achievement indicated that a positive self-image is associated with high performance. Covington, (1984) said that the students withhold effort to avoid possible failure, which could threaten self-worth.

Although, Holly (1987) disagreed with the idea that self-esteem has a direct impact on academic achievement, he pointed out that it may have effect in other ways. For instance, feeling worthless can lead to depression, which can inhibit performance. Fear of failure also can lead students to hold back while people with greater self-esteem may be more willing to take up challenges. Moreover, constant failure and the accompanying feeling of incompetence tend to be discouraging and demoralizing.

Bachman and O'Malley (1977) in their research examined longitudinal data utilizing a priori model relating self esteem and achievement, which focused on the influence of self esteem at high school on the educational achievement of young males. High school self esteem was found to exert no significant causal influence on educational achievement.

Stipek (1998) considered the consistency of past performance as significant, influencing current attributions and suggests that the stability dimension also play a role. Dweck and Repucci (1973) found that when student attribute failure to controllable factors such as effort, they tend to be more persistent even after they experiences failure. In his study, Weiner (1985, 1994) showed that there exist relationship between causal attribution and academic achievement. Effort attributions have great implications for future performance than any other cause. Students who attribute their past performance to low effort can still expect future success if they work harder in the future. This is not applicable to students who attribute their past performance to low ability. They will not be motivated to exert much effort since they see themselves as incapable of success regardless of how much effort they exerted. Koestner et al(1990), Ames (1984), Butler (1987), Dweck et al (1988) and Jagacinski et al (1984) all supported the report that attributional beliefs of adolescents and adults are related to achievement oriented behaviours. Marsh et al (1984) criticized that there is no differentiation of attributions regarding academic achievement. Attribution cannot be generalized for results of success and failure because they depend on academic contents only. (Stipek & Weisz 1981 quoted by Marsh et al 1984). Alderman and Midgley (1997) noted that students who believe their performance is caused by factors out of their control are unlikely to see reason to hope for improvement. In contrast, if

students attribute their poor performance to lack of important skill or to poor study habit, they are more likely to persist in future.

Noel, Forsyth and Kelly (1987) in their study showed that if students are taught to have more hopeful attitude (develop internal locus of control) their grade tend to rise. Moreover, attributional training has been found to increase internal locus of control and improve task persistence. (Shelton, Anastropoulos & Linden, 1985). Balarabe's (1989) study of motivation and academic attainment among British, Hungarian and Nigerian Secondary School Pupils which was geared towards the motivation of Hausa children in Nigeria and identifying the ethnic differences in motivation between ethnic groups. The findings in this research indicated that the ethnic groups parental occupation, feeling, teachers rating play significant role in the attribution of students from different ethnic groups.

Ipaye (1981) singled out failure for study. His study was to find out how College of Education students would ascribe the causes of failure which they had in their examinations, even when the students have had a long period of time to make "self analysis and enable them to arrive at more rational reasons (Ipaye, 1981, p. 136). Ipaye's questionnaire, the Examination Performance Questionnaire (EPQ) consists of 33 statements or reasons which subjects perceive as contributing to their failure in an examination. The questionnaire measures items in six areas, namely: internal stable, internal unstables, external stables, external unstables and third party factors. In addition to checking which statements students thought applied to their

situations, they were to freely state other factors which were not on the EPQ but which they felt were responsible for their failure.

Comparing this with that of Munro (1979), one can see that the approach differs and hence conflicting results were obtained. This researcher felt the need to study attributions among the secondary schools rather than post secondary schools as Ipaye has done. He also felt that both success and failure should be the focus of the research, since the researcher felt that a questionnaire. Ipaye (1981) in his study found and claimed that most Nigerians tend to attribute failure, disappointment, and misfortune to external factors while results of the study carried out by Asonibare (1986) indicates that Nigerian students are mostly internal contradicted Ipaye's findings. Previous research suggests that children who believe they have control over their academic success are more likely to have higher achievement than students who believe they have no control over their academic success (Messer, 1972, Findley and Cooper, 1983).

Studies suggest that both internal and external loci of control are important

Predictors for academic achievement (Crandall, Katvosky, & Crandall, 1965; Hjelle, 1970; & Messer, 1972). For example, kids with an internal locus of control have been found to do better academically (Stipek, 1980). Hjelle (1970) found that undergraduate students with an internal locus of control have higher GPA's. Messer (1972) also found that 4th grade students with an internal locus of control had higher grades than students with an external locus of control. Likewise,

Maqsud (1993) conducted a study based on Eysenck's research that has concluded that personality factors; such as locus of control; and intelligence play important roles in meeting the goals of school. He studied 7th grade students from Botswana and he found a negative relationship between externality and academic achievement and a positive relationship between internality and academic achievement. Verma, (1996) found that even students who had a low internal locus of control still did better in school courses than students with a high external locus of control. In summarizing the results, the author concluded, as did Masqud (1993), that students with an internal locus of control possibly do better academically because an internal locus of control is associated with greater use of personality relevant information that would foster superior academic performance regardless of course content.

Weiner, Nierenberg, & Goldstein's study (as cited in Weiner, 1979) found that after giving individuals a chance to experience repeated successes, individuals who attributed these successes to stable factors including ability and task ease had stronger expectations for future success on this task than individuals who attributed their successes to unstable factors such as effort and luck. Research has also found this to be particularly evident when children make stability attributions associated with failure. Weiner, Cook, Heckhausen, and Meyer (1971) subjected students to a situation in which they would experience repeated failures. They found that high attributes to stable factors associated with failure decreased expectations for future

success. Weiner and Kukla (1970) found that children high in achievement motivation are more likely to attribute failure to lack of effort and, as a result, this motivates them to participate in continued goal activity. Weiner and Peter (1973) also found that children high in achievement motivation believe that success is primarily due to hard work while failure is primarily due to lack of effort. It is possible that an emphasis on effort may motivate children to be more successful because effort has been shown to facilitate persistence and continued goal activity locus of Control. Several researchers studied self esteem and gender among students. SarAbadaniTafreshi,(2006) in his study showed a significant difference in self esteem between males and females .Hossaini's, (2002) research result however achieved a different result in his work titled: ' Forecasting between self-esteem, Parenting and gender among pre-university of students in Shiraz' included 240 students. The result showed that gender is not a predictor of self -esteem of pre-university of students. However, Zareh (1994) who studied the relationship between achievement of motivation, self-esteem and gender among high school of students found that there is significant relationship between self- esteem and gender esteem. It has been shown that females have low self esteem thereby are low achievers (Delacourt, 1997; Elig &Freize 1979, Marsh, 1992 & Kester, 1994). On the other hand, Brookover et al (1967) found that self-concept of ability is significantly related to achievement for both boys and girls. Researchers like Bledsoe(1967), Cambell, (1965) and Fink, (1962) stressed that Brookovers's

research is clearer for boys rather than girls. Adenekan and Ade (2000) in their study to determine gender differences among Yoruba Adolescents stated that male adolescence express high self-esteem than the female. Adediwura, (2007) in the work titled Self-Esteem evaluation of Nigerian teenage students found that teenage students' self-esteem level is not significantly independent of age. He also discovered that teenager self-esteem level has a significant relationship with gender. The study also revealed that there is a significant difference in male and female self-esteem perception and that the difference in self-esteem perception between teenagers in mixed schools and teenagers in single sex schools is significant.

Research evidence supports differences in gender as they related to attribution of performance. Eyo (1985) in his study on locus of control established that females were more prepare responsibilities for both positive and negative academic outcome. Ozioko(1990) in his study of the psychological roots of poor performance in mathematics," the role of locus of control and learned helplessness" found some significant relationships between males and females in their locus of control orientation. He stated that females are more external than male. Cramer and Oshima (1992) in their study stated that females do not attribute their success to their own ability. Dweck and Reppucci, 1973; Nicolls, 1975, Stipek's (1984) also support this finding. Another study said male adolescents see ability as the most important reason for their performance outcome (Covington,

1984). That is why they are reluctant to seek help since they feel they will seem having less ability. In his study tilted 'gender motivation and approaches to studying among secondary school pupils', Balarabe(1991) discovered that boys score higher in the achievement enhancing motivations of fear and peer pressure while girls were higher in conscientiousness to work. Hence girls are as achieving as boys. In locus of control study, girls were found to be more external than boys (Nowicki & Roundtree 1971). This difference is based on sex role serotype. Hjelle (1970) did not find any sex differences in his study but Rotter (1966) found locus of control to be significant in sex. Leftcourt (1982) found boys who are successful to attribute their success to self while successful girls are less likely to do so rather are inclined to accept responsibility to failures.

Studies have shown the interaction of causal attribution for success and failure, self esteem and academic achievement. Marsh, (1986) and Wiener, (1985) found that School failure often entails such perceptions as low self-esteem and tendency to attribute failure to incapacity and successful outcome to luck. Weiner, (1980) also found a positive relationship between attribution belief, self-concept and achievement. He stated that Causal attribution determines affective reaction to success and failure. Wang, Kick, Fraser, Burns, & Thomas (1999) also found that locus of control along with self-esteem and parental occupation predicted students' educational and occupational attainment.

Marsh et al (1984) in their investigations found that persons with high self-concept showed more tendencies to attribute their success to internal causes while persons with low self-concept have a tendency to attribute their positive result to external causes. Covington (1984) also postulates that self-worth is determined by self-attributions as students formulate self attributions and behaviour so as to lead to feelings of self-worth. Self-worth is considered synonymous with self-esteem. Self-worth theory emphasizes competency as the dominant source of self-esteem even though effort is also an important source. He considered that individuals who are success orientated take personal responsibility for their successes and attribute failures to external causes that do not reflect on their worth as a person. In this way students protect their self-concept of ability by utilizing different attributions for success and failure. Covington and Beery (1976) suggest for low self-concept children, anchoring a sense of worth on ability is risky as schools can threaten a student's belief in his/her ability. A student who tries and fails is vulnerable to the conclusion that they lack ability. From this perspective a combination of high effort and failure is evidence for low ability. Therefore this theory hypothesizes effort as a "double-edged sword"(Covington and Omelich, 1985). Children who are underachievers avoid failure by not studying so that failure cannot be blamed on a lack of ability. In a society that values achievement there is little benefit in adopting such a strategy. According to this theory teachers should be able to alter a student's failure rate by increasing motivation to succeed. Teachers praise effort as

well as achievement; students who work hard are likely to be praised most to offset achievement as the main source of approval. Research (Covington, 1992; Covington and Omelich, 1979c; Nicholls, 1975) shows that praise for ability is most valued, thus effort feedback alone is not sufficiently rewarding for the student. This theory therefore suggests there is a need to balance an image of both competency and diligence as sources of self-concept. Covington (1984, p. 98) considers that students must accept success as caused by skilful effort to gain a sense of personal control and the simultaneous belief in ability as the dominant cause of achievement. When failure threatens one's perceptions of ability "a shift is needed from an ability affect dependency to an effort based valuation so that self-praise in success comes to depend to a greater degree on effort expenditure, and self-criticism in failure becomes linked to attributions of insufficient or improper effort" (Covington, 1984, p. 99). Therefore this theory considers a linkage between ability and self-worth can have disastrous results as perceptions of intellectual adequacy are easily threatened by failure. Weiner (1979) experiment on the cognition-emotion process in Achievement related context examined the linkages between cognition and emotions. Subjects reported a critical incident in which they succeeded or failed an examination for a particular reason. From the finding in this experiment, he proposed that cognition-emotion and emotion cognition are symmetrical. Klein, Fencil-Morse & Seligman (1976) studied depressed and non depressed college students receive unsolvable and solvable

problems. They discovered depressed group performed worse than no depressed group . Unsolvable group performed worse than solvable group. When depressed, solvable group attributed their failure to the difficulty of the problem rather than to their own in the competence. They therefore suggested that failure in itself is not sufficient to produce helplessness deficits in man but failure that leads to a decreased belief in personal competence is sufficient.

2.8. Summary

This chapter focused on the research work conducted by numerous researchers into the area of attributions, self-esteem and academic achievement. Their various work showed that these variables interrelated to form individuals' actions and reactions. The self-esteem of individuals was shown to be related to their academic achievement. In some cases, there relationship was in question. A performance of an individual was shown to be related to how they explain events in their lives as either internal or external. This chapter explained different findings of different researchers in the same field and related fields.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter focused on the methods employed in carrying out the investigation into the relationship between self-esteem, causal attributions and academic achievement of secondary school students in Bwari Area Council, FCT. The focal points of this chapter were on the research design, population, sampling, instrumentation, and administration of research instrument and the method of data analysis.

3.2. Research design

A research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigating a research problem. The design used in this research was descriptive survey design. This was because, the researcher collected data on phenomenon that could not be directly observed which self-esteem and causal attributions were. Also, it enabled the researcher study the sample chosen from a population in order to discover the relative incidence, distribution and the interrelations of these sociological and psychological variables. This design is most adequate for this study.

3.3. Population of the study

The population of Secondary School Students in the nine schools in Bwari Area Council according to the record from FCT Secondary Education Board (2009/2010) is seven thousand, two hundred and twenty four(7224). This includes both males (3200) and females (4024) with their ages` ranging from 13-18years.

Table 3.1. Distribution of the population of students by gender

Showing the population of Secondary School Students in Bwari Area Council from FCT Secondary Education Board, 2009/2010 by gender.

S/N	Names of School	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Government Sec School Kubwa	616	813	1429
2	Government Sec School Byazhin	268	274	542
3	Government Sec School Jibi	361	376	737
4	Government Day Sec School Dutse	320	328	648
5,	Government Girls Sec School Dutse	0	1377	1377
6.	Government Secondary School Kawu	46	16	62
7.	Government Day Sec School Bwari	262	242	504
8.	Government Sec School Bwari	1170	497	1667
9.	Government Sec School Shere	157	101	258
	Total	3200	4024	7224

3.4. Sample and sampling technique

A sample is potion of a population or universe which represents that population or universe. Out of nine (9) secondary schools in Bwari Area Council, a total of five (5) schools were randomly selected by the researcher for the study. The schools were all day schools. The total population of students from the schools selected for the research was three thousand, eight hundred and sixty (3860) with a total of 1827 boys and 2033 girls. Probability method was used in selection of the sample for the study: that is, random selection of subjects so that every subject was given an equal and independent chance of being included in the study. To determine the sample size, Israel, (2002) formula was applied. The sample size for plus or minus 7% precision level where confidence level is 95%. A population of 4000 would require 192 sample while a population of 3000 require 191. A ratio scale was used in allocating the sample size to each school.

Table 3.2 .Distribution of the sample by gender

S/N	School	Population	Sample		Total
			Males	Females	
1.	Government Sec School Kubwa	1429	30	41	71
2.	Government Sec School Byazhin	542	13	14	27
3.	Government Sec School Jibi	737	18	19	37
4.	Govt Day Sec Sch Dutse Alhaji	648	16	15	31
5.	Govt. Day Sec School Bwari	504	13	12	25
	TOTAL	3860	90	101	191

3.5. Instrumentation

Three (3) numbers of instruments were utilized in this study. They include:

a. Academic Achievement scale

b. Academic Causal Attribution Scale

c. Rosenberg Self –Esteem Scale

3.5.1. Academic achievement Score

Academic achievement was measured by mathematics and English language examination scores. The grades range from 1-100% according to FCT education system. The examination was a standardized examination set by Secondary

Education Board, FCT at the end of the term. An average of the students' scores in mathematics and English language was taken and used in the analysis.

3.5.2. Causal Attributions

The Researcher adopted the Academic Causal Attribution Scale (ACAS) designed to measure causal attribution for success and failure. It has a likert scale type of questionnaire developed by Balarabe (2007) while carrying out a research on motivation and academic attainment among British, Hungarian and Nigerian secondary school pupils. It is a 5 points scale of strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Not Sure (NS), Disagree (D), and Disagree (SDA). Each degree of agreement was given a numerical score and the respondents total score was computed by summing up scores from all statements.

The question was made up of 4 Sections (A-D) with each section having 10 statements making a total of 40 answerable statements. Two (2) sections (B and D) measured failure while sections A and B measured success. For each situation, the students had to evaluate some possible causes: ability, effort, others mood, personal mood, task difficulty, teacher's generosity and internality.

3.5.3. Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale

The construct self- esteem will be measured with the scale developed by Rosenberg (1965) adopted by Oyeyemi(1989) .It is a clearly established and

reliable scale for measuring self-esteem. The scale was originally developed for adolescents. Participants were asked to score themselves on a 4-point Likert scale. Positive statements are scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4(Strongly disagree) and negative statements scored from 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). The scale has ten (10) items were presented in the scale as declarative statements and the students were asked to choose one of the four responses which explain their feeling. Five of the items have positively worded statements and the other five have negatively worded ones. The scale measures state of self-esteem by asking the respondents to reflect on their current feelings.The scoring ranged from 0-30. Scores between 15 and 25 are within normal range; scores below 15 suggested very low self-esteem.

3.6. Validity of the instrument

Validity of an instrument refers to the degree which an instrument measures what it has set out to measure. Rosenberg self-esteem scale is a standardised instrument and has shown good levels of internal consistency and stability.(Rosenberg, 1989, Santo & Maia 2003 and Oyeyemi, 1989) The Academic Causal Attribution Scale has also been found to have good internal consistency and measured what it was designed to measure,(Balarabe, 2007)

3.5.5. Reliability of the Instrument

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a standardized instrument and has shown good levels of internal consistency and stability. The scale has reproducibility: 93%; items Scalability: 73% and Individual Scalability: 72 %(Rosenberg 1965). The scale has high reliability: test-retest correlation in the range of .82 to .88 and cronbach alpha for various samples ranged from .77 to .88. Oyeyemi (1989) adopted the scale and reported an alpha coefficient of .85. The instrument had been clearly established and is reliable scale for measuring self-esteem. Academic Causal Attribution Scale on the other hand had been found to be reliable with cronbach alpha: Internal success at 0.62, External success=0.66, Internal failure=0.61 & External failure at 0.63.(Balarabe, 2007)

3.6. Procedure for data administration/ collection

The researcher embarked on a direct procedure of data collection. A letter was written to the Secondary Education Board, FCT seeking approval to embark on the research in the selected schools. Another letter was addressed to the principals of the schools by the Secondary Education Board informing them of the research. 191 questionnaires were distributed to the students in groups in the classrooms. The questionnaires were also collected on the spot.

3.7. Procedure for Data Analysis

Data collected from this study were obtained through questionnaire for the two concepts: causal attribution and self-esteem and the results of the students for academic achievement. The data collected in this study were analyzed using independent sample t-test and pearson product moment correlation (PPMC) statistic. Independent sample t-test was used to test the differences between male and female in hypothesis 2,5 and 6. Students't-test for independent sample was used because two groups (males and females) were being examined to determine the differences in their mean scores.

Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC) was used to test the relationships between causal attributions and academic achievement in hypothesis 3 and 4 and the relationship between self esteem and causal attributions in hypothesis 7. This was because, the data set followed a normal distribution and the subjects were selected at random from a population where they had equal chance of being selected. Also, PPMC was used because of the need to find the correlation between two variables.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents and interprets the analysis of the data contained in the study. The data analysis includes 191(90males and 101 females) carefully sampled students' respondents from five secondary schools whose responses on various items on self-esteem, causal attribution for success and failure and their academic achievement were analysed. The gender participants are as presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Demographic characteristics of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	90	47.1
Female	101	52.9
Total	191	100

Out of the total 191 sampled respondents, details in the above table 4.1. Showed that 101 of the respondents which is 52.9% are females while the rest 90 representing 47.1% are male students of the sampled secondary schools. By this classification, both male and female students in the selected secondary schools could be said to be well represented in the study.

4.1. Testing of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between student self-esteem and academic achievement.

The students' self-esteem was measured with a four point scale. Academic achievement was measured with the average result of mathematic and English language scores of the students. Pearson product moment correlation statistic was used to test the relationship between the two variables as indicated in Table 4.2.1.

Table 4.2. Pearson product moment correlation statistics to test relationship between students' self- esteem and academic achievement (N=191)

Variables	Mean	S.D	r	Sig. (2 tailed)
Self esteem	53.377	11.3548	.664**	.000
Academic Achievement	30.178	4.34799		

Correlation between academic achievement and self-esteem were computed and presented in the above table. The result showed clear relationship between these two variables(r =.664; p =.000). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Consequently, it could be concluded that there is a significant relationship between

self-esteem and academic achievement among secondary school students. The students whose academic achievement was high were discovered to have high score in their self –esteem. The magnitude of relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement is very high (r = .664**).

Hypothesis Two: This stated that there is no significance gender difference in the students' self-esteem.

This hypothesis was to test the gender difference in the student's self-esteem. The hypothesis was to find out if male and female students differ in the way they feel about themselves. Independent samples t-test was used because it has the command of finding out the differences between two variables as shown if table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Independent sample t-test statistics to test gender difference in students' self -esteem.

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	t calculated	t critical	Sig. p
Male	90	30.29	4.15	.437			
Self esteem:					.033	1.96	.974
Female	101	30.17	4.54	.452			

The results of the Independent sample t-test statistics table above revealed that there is no significant gender difference in the students' self-esteem. This is because the calculated significant value of p = .974 while the calculated t = .033. The mean scores of both male and female are 30.29 and 30.17 respectively confirming that both male and female students do not differ in their self-esteem. This warrants the accepted and retention of the null hypothesis. The summary to the explanation of this result showed that sex do not seem to affect the ways that students feeling of self worth whether positive or negative.

Hypothesis Three: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between student's academic achievement and their internal and external attribution for success.

This hypothesis has two components: the relationship between internal Attribution for success and academic achievement and relationship between external attribution for success and academic achievement. Pearson product moment correlation statistic was used in the analysis since the test was for a relationship between two variables as shown in tables 4.4. and 4.5.respectively.

Table 4.4. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics to test relationship between academic achievement and internal attribution for success. (N=191)

Variables	Mean	S.D	r	Sig.
Internal attribution for success	43.4921	4.5223	.186**	.010
Academic Achievement	53.377	11.3548		

The result of the above PPMC (Person Product Moment Correlation) Statistics table revealed significant relationship between students academic achievement and their internal attribution for success; because the r= .186 while p = .010. Academic achievement was correlated with the all factors of success and internal causes were high. Students who were internally oriented were high academic achievers. Causal attribution for success was found due to ability and effort. This shows a significant correlation between internal attribution for success and academic achievement.

Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between students' academic achievement and internal attribution for success is hereby rejected.

Table 4.5. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics to test relationship between academic achievement and external attribution for success. (N=191)

	Mean	S.D	Corr. Index r	r	Sig. 2tailed
External attribution for success	35.6545	6.80990	-.154*	.195	.033
Academic Achievement	53.377	11.3548			

The above analysis showed a significant relationship between external attributions for success and academic achievement. This is because the significant value of p = 0.33 while the calculated value of r = -.154. This is a negative relationship which means that the higher the more students attribute their success to external factors, the less their academic achievement. The students tends to blame their academic success on external factors including luck, others mood, generosity, etc. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between students' academic achievement and external attribution for success is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Four: The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between student's academic achievement and internal and external attribution for failure.

This hypothesis has two components: the relationship between internal attributions for failure and academic achievement and relationship between external attributions for failure and academic achievement were both tested using Pearson product moment correlation statistics. This procedure was used because; the researcher was testing for relationship between variables.

Table 4.6. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics to test relationship between academic achievement and internal attribution for failure.(N= 191)

	Mean	S.D	Corr. Index r	r critical	Sig. 2tailed
Internal attribution for success	34.1623	6.27693	-.015	.195	.835
Academic Achievement	53.377	11.3548			

The result of the relationship between the two variables is not significant as indicated: p = .835, r = -.015. The above result shows no correlation between

internal attribution for failure and academic achievement. The students do no blame their failures on internal factors like effort and ability. They do not accept responsibility for their inability to perform well in their school work Hence the null hypothesis is hereby accepted.

Table 4.7. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics to test relationship between academic achievement and external attribution for failure.(p = 191)

	Mean	S.D	Corr. Index r	r critical	Sig. 2tailed
External attribution for failure	29.4869	6.6204	-.391**	.195	.000
Academic Achievement	53.377	11.3548			

The above Statistical table revealed significant relationship between students' external attribution for failure and their academic achievement . The calculated significant (2 tailed) value of p = .000 and r = -.391. The question whether failure will be attributed to external factor was answered in the positive. Students who failed their examinations attributed it to luck, teachers' mood, task difficulty etc.

Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between students' external attribution for failure and their academic achievement is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Five: The null Hypothesis states that there is no significant gender difference in the students' internal and external attribution for success.

This hypothesis as well has two components. It tested the gender difference in internal attribution for success and gender difference in external attribution for success. The independent sample t-test was used to test these differences since two categories of students (male and female) were involved as shown in tables 4.8. and 4.9.

Table 4.8. Independent t-test statistics to test gender differences in internal attribution for success.(N = 191 :Male 90, female 101)

Sex	Mean	S.D	S.E	t cal	t critical	D.F	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	43.57	4.53	.477				
Int.Att.for success				.214	1.96	189	.830
Female	43.43	4.55	.452				

The outcome of the above independent t-test statistics table above revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their internal attribution for failure. This is because the calculated significant value of p= .830 is greater than the 0.05 level of tolerance while the calculated t = .214 is less than the 1.96 t critical value. The mean internal attribution for success score of 43.5667 and 43.4257 for male and female respectively confirms that there is no significance difference between male and female students. Consequently the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their casual attribution belief is hereby accepted and retained.

Table 4.9. Independent t-text statistics to test gender difference in students' external attribution for success.(N = 191: Male- 90, Female -101)

Sex	Mean	S.D	S.E	T cal	T crit	Sig. 2 tailed
Male	36.3222	6.62957	.69882			
Internal attribution for success				1.28	1.96	.202
Female	35.0594	6.94525	.69108			

The outcome of the above independent sample t-test statistics table revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female students in their external attribution for success. This is because the calculated significant value of 1.28 is less than 1.96 t critical at df =189 while the calculated significant value (2-

tailed) value of .202 is greater than the 0.05 level of tolerance. This shows that both male and female students do no differ in the ways they explain their success to external factors. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted and retained.

Hypothesis Six: The null Hypothesis stated that there is no significant gender difference in the students' internal and external attribution for failure.

This hypothesis was tested with independent sample t-test was used to measure both gender differences in internal attribution for failure and external attributions for failure. This test was to find out if male and female differ in the way they explain failures in their lives.

Table 4.10. Independent t-text statistics to test gender difference in internal attribution for failure.(N = 191: Male-90, Female-101)

Sex	Mean	S.D	S.E	t cal	t crit	Sig. 2 tailed
Male	33.88	5.89	.621			
Ext. attribution for success				-.590	1.96	.556
Female	34.42	6.62	.659			

The result of the Independent sample t-test statistic table above showed that there is no significant gender difference in the students' internal attribution for failure. This is because the calculated significant (2-tailed) value of p = .556 is greater than the 0.05 level of tolerance while the calculated t value of -.590 is less than the 1.96 critical values at df 189. This explains that both sexes do not differ in the way they explain their failures to be caused internal factors. Hence, the null hypothesis is consequently accepted and retained.

Table 4.11. Independent t-text statistics to test gender difference external attribution for failure. (N = 191: Male-90, female-101)

Sex	Mean	S.D	S.E	t cal	t critical	Sig. 2 tailed
Male	29.31	6.84	.720			
Internal attribution for success				.346	1.96	.730
Female	29.64	6.45	.642			

To better explain the above analysis, the calculated significant value of .346 is less than the t critical value 1.96.The calculated significant values of .730 is greater than the 0.05 level of tolerance .This means that there is no difference between male and female students' in the way they explain their failure to external causes. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and retained.

Hypothesis Seven: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and causal attributions. This hypothesis was tested with Pearson product moment correlation statistics.

Table 4.12. Pearson Product moment Correlation to test the relationship between self-esteem and causal attributions.

		Students self-esteem	Internal Attributions for success	External Attributions For success	Internal Attributions for failure	External attributions for failure
Students self –esteem	r	1	.135	-.045	-.038	-.286**
	sig		.062	.540	.606	.000
Internal attributions for success	r	135	1	.186**	.040	.001
	sig	.062		.010	.579	.989
External attributions for success	r	-.045	.186**	1	-.128	.426**
	sig	.540	.010		.078	.000
Internal attributions for failure	r	-.038	.040	.-128	1	.096
	sig	.606	.579	.078		.188
External attributions for failure	r	-.286**	-.001	.426**	.096	1
	sig	.000	.989	.000	.188	

The result of the above PPMC (Person Product Moment Correlation) Statistics table revealed a negative significant relationship between students self-esteem and their external attributions for failure because r= -.286** while p = .000. Self-esteem was correlated with external attributions for failure and a negative

relationship was discovered. As the students self -esteem decreases, external attributions for failure increases. Students who attribute their school failures to external factors like task difficulty, teacher's mood, luck had low self-esteem. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between students' self-esteem and causal attribution is rejected.

4.2. Summary of major findings

1. That significant relationship exists between student self-esteem and their academic achievement.
2. That no significant gender difference exists in students' self-esteem.
3. That significant relationship exists between internal attributions for success and academic achievement.

   That there is significant relationship between external attributions for success and academic achievement.
4. That there is no significant relationship between internal attributions for failure and academic achievement

   That there is significant relationship between external attributions for failure and academic achievement.
5. There is no significant gender difference in the students' internal attribution for success.

There is no significant gender difference in the students' external attribution for success.

6. That there is no significant gender difference in the students' internal attribution for failure. That there is no significant gender difference in the students' external attribution for failure.
7. That significant relationship exists between self esteem and external attributions for failure.

4.3. Discussion of findings

The analysis of the data was made from the bio-data variables, descriptive, answering of research questions and testing of some postulated research hypotheses in the last three sections; this section discusses the results of the findings.

The work sampled 191 senior secondary school students from five schools in Bwari Area Council Abuja which includes: Government Secondary School Kubwa, Government Secondary School Byazhin, Government Secondary School Jibi, Government Day Secondary School Dutse/Alhaji, and Government Day Secondary School Bwari. These students' ages range between 11-25years of age with age 16 and 17 taking 63.9% of the total respondents. The analysis of the bio-date variables also showed that 52.9% of the respondents are female while male accounted of the remaining 47.1%.

Results of the six research hypotheses presented interesting outcome that are hereby discussed below.

The first hypothesis predicted that there would be no significant relationship between self-esteem felt by students and their academic achievement. Investigation revealed this to be untrue since significant relationship was discovered between the way students feel or see themselves and their academic achievement. This is because the students with low self esteem were discovered to have low scores in their school work. On the other hand, most of the students that have high self esteem scores also scored high in their school work. This finding is in line with Wiggins, Shatz & West (1994), Arancibia, Maltes &Alvarez (1990) which indicated that if an individual has positive self image, he would have more success probability when he performs task. Also, this finding in this study is in line with Lavin (1965) findings which said that a positive self image is associated with high performance.

The second hypothesis revealed no significant gender in the students self- esteem. In fact the result of their mean scores for self esteem items were 30.1889 and 30.1689 for male and female respectively. The reason for this almost uniformity in their self-esteem score may be because both of them are exposed to the same environment, same culture, same teaching in and out of the classroom and therefore will ultimately have the same or almost the same feeling. Hence there is

no significant difference in their self- esteem. This finding is in line with Hossaini (2002) which showed that gender is not a predictor of self-esteem of students.

The third hypothesis predicted that there is no significant relationship in student academic achievement and internal and external attribution for success. Testing this hypothesis provided interesting results. Some students were found to attribute their success to internal factors. They accept responsibility for their success claiming their efforts and abilities lead to success. This finding is in line with Crandal, Katvosky &Crandall (1965), Hjelle,(1970), Stipek, 1980 and Messer (1972) which found students who are internal locus of control to be high Academic achievers. Also, the finding is in line with Masquad (1983) which found a positive relationship between internality and academic achievement in his study with Hausa children.

The subsequent part of this second hypothesis which tested external attribution for success and academic achievement showed negative significant relationship. These students who were low academic achiever blamed their successes on external factors. They credited their success in their school work to external elements including teachers' generosity, good luck, others mood, etc.

. This result is in line with the findings of Balarabe (1989) which said that low academic achievers ascribed their success to external elements which confirms the low motivational status of the external attribution for success.

The result of hypothesis four showed no significant relationship between academic achievement and internal attribution for failure; and a significant relationship between external attribution for failure and academic achievement. No relationship was found between internal attribution for failure and academic achievement. No students blame their inability to score high or pass examination on ability or effort. This finding is in line with Hejelle (1970) which stated that internality for failure could have debilitating effect on achievement rather than enhance it. This is because he said attributing failure to internal causes threatens self-esteem and thus individuals tend to avoid ascribing failure to the internal as a form of defense. Weiner and Kukla (1970) noted that there is a tendency to react defensively to failure by ascribing its causes to external factors. The second finding saw students attributing their failures to external factors. This finding is in line with Balarabe (1989) study, the low examination achievers were higher in external attributions of failure which is in line with their assumed lower level of motivation.

The students tend to blame their failures in academic task on external factors including task difficulty, others mood, personal mood, etc. This finding is also in line with Ipaye (1981) finding which claimed that most Nigerians tend to attribute failure, disappointment and misfortune to external factors.

. Hypothesis five showed no significant gender difference in internal and external attribution for success so also the sixth hypothesis which revealed no significant gender difference in both internal and external attribution for failure. This implies

that no matter the sex of the student, their direction of their attribution tend to run in the same direction. The study has shown that both male and female students do not differ. They are both either internal or external .This is in line with the findings of Balarabe(1991) which states that girls are as achieving as boys since while boys scored higher in achievement enhancing motivation of fear and peer pressure, girls were higher in conscientiousness. Also, Hjelle (1970) did not find any sex difference in his study in these areas.

Finally, the seventh and last hypothesis which stated that there is no relationship between self-esteem and causal attributions revealed a negative significant relationship between the variables self-esteem and external attributions for failure. As the students external attribution for failure increase, their self esteem decreases. This finding is in line with Marsh(1986) and Weiner(1985) findings which stated that school failure often entails such perceptions as low self –esteem and tendency to attribute failure to incapacity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented, interpreted and discussed the result of data analysis. This chapter will give appropriate summary conclusion and offer suitable recommendations on how secondary school students could be further enlightened on building their self esteem and attribution as well as further research topics.

5.2. Summary

This study assesses the relationship between self-esteem, ccausal attribution and academic achievement among secondary school students in Bwari Area Council, Federal Capital territory. A total of 191 students from five selected secondary schools in Bwari Area Council in Abuja were sampled. They comprise of a fair number male (90) and female (101) representation from different schools. Significant relationship was established between students' academic achievement and their self- esteem and also their internal and external attribution for success. Significant relationship was also discovered between external attribution for failure and academic achievement and self-esteem and external attributions for failure.

The students' sex status does not affect their self- esteem and internal or external attribution for success and failure.

This study was partitioned into five chapters. Chapter one focused on the background of the study, objective of the study as well as the statement of the problem. Also, the research questions, hypotheses, and the scope of the study were all clarified.

The concept and theories of self-esteem and attribution were discussed in chapter two. The works of other researchers in the area of study were reviewed.

The methodology which includes research design, population, sample and sampling, instrumentation and reliability and validity of different instruments used were discussed in chapter three. Moreover, the procedure for data administration, and statistical analysis of the data were discussed.

Chapter four focused on the statistical analysis of the data, interpretation of findings from the analysed data. The null hypotheses were tested. This is followed by summary of findings and general discussion of the major findings. The hypotheses tested in this study include:

Hypothesis 1 tested significant relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement of secondary school students. Pearson product moment correlation (PPMC) statistics was used to test the relationship and the result revealed a significant relationship thereby rejection of the null hypothesis.

The second hypothesis tested gender difference in the students' self-esteem. Applying independent sample t-test, no significant difference was discovered and the null hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis three tested the relationship between internal and external attribution for success and academic achievement of secondary school students. Using pearson product moment correlation statistic, significant relationship was found in both internal attribution for success and academic achievement and external attribution for success and academic achievement.

Hypothesis four was tested the relationship between internal and external attribution for failure and academic achievement using PPMC. While there was no significant relationship between internal attribution for failure and academic achievement giving ground for acceptance of the hypothesis; negative significant relationship was discovered between external attribution for success and academic achievement leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis five and six tested gender difference in both internal and external attribution for success and failure of Secondary school students. Using independent t-test, no significant difference was discovered for hypothesis internal and external attribution neither for success nor for internal and external attribution for failure. The null hypothesis was therefore retained. Finally, hypothesis seven which tested for a relationship between self-esteem and causal attributions revealed a significant

relationship between external attributions for failure and self-esteem using pearson product moment correlation statistics.

5.3. Educational implications

From the findings of the current study, it would be reasonable to presume that the effect of self-esteem and attribution on students' academic performance can never be ignored. From the findings and discussions of the current study, it will only be reasonable to deduce the following proposition.

Students explain the causes of their successes and failures to some factors either internal or external. consequently, some students essentially have the view that their academic fulfillment is caused by their capabilities and hard work while others tend to put the blame on task difficulty, significant others, luck, etc. Research has shown that those students who attribute their success to internal factors tend to work harder next time so also those that accepted responsibilities for their lack of performance.

The result of this study supported this believe since most of the student who has internal attribution scored high in their school work. It is therefore essential that the attribution analysis of students in this study should be applied to correct maladjustment in attribution which leads students to perform below their potentials. Students will benefit by giving internal explanation for their success and

accepting they did not try hard enough when they failed. Armed with this kind of sincerity will inspire the students to work harder or put more effort in their future work. Educators should therefore help the students arrive at a most adaptive educationally beneficial causal conclusion since it has been proved that externalization does not facilitate educational achievement. Students should be exposed to internal elements to change their attribution from external to internal. Programmes had been developed to restructure student's fruitless explanation of success and failure into productive one .Such programmes should be adopted by schools, parents and Government. On the other hand, self-esteem has been implicated in educational achievement as well as other areas of life. This research revealed a highly positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement. Research has also shown that individuals with positive self-esteem tend to be high achievers in every area of their life while those with low and negative self-esteem are low achievers. Schools and parents should embrace the methods of building a positive self-esteem in their students and children. Students need proper guidance and supervision especially those that are externally attributed and have low self-esteem.

5.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the higher the self-esteem of the student, the higher their academic achievement. In the same vein, the more internal their attributions, the higher their academic achievement. Significant relationship has been established between academic achievement and self-esteem of students. Significant relationship also existed between academic achievement and internal and external attribution for success. Significant relationship was also established between academic achievement and external attributions for failure. No significant gender difference was discovered in students' self-esteem, internal and external attributions for success and failure. Also, a significant relationship was discovered between self-esteem and external attributions for failure.

5.5. Recommendations

The following suggestions are offered as a result of the outcome of the date analysis of the respondents.

1. Adequate measures should be made by both teachers and parents to develop and build the students' self-esteem as this has direct relationship to their academic achievement. They should embrace the methods of building a positive self-esteem in students.

2. Schools should implement attribution programmes to help students change from the unproductive explanation for their failures to a positive one to enable them work harder in future.
3. Parent should not only monitor their children academic achievement but more importantly the affective domain of their education since this if not properly handled could damage a child into adulthood.

5.6. Recommendation for further study

It is highly recommended that similar research work be undertaken simultaneously in other states of the federation, so that a national policy on how self-esteem, internal and external attribution for success and failure and academic achievement can be formulated into law. Moreover, socio-economic status of the student may play an important role in their self-esteem and attribution. It is important to research this area and find out how far the socio-economic status affects the students' self-esteem as well as their attribution. Moreover, the relationships between self-esteem and causal attributions should be explored extensively.

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APPENDIX 1

ACADEMIC CAUSAL ATTRIBUTION SCALE (A.C.A.S.)

This test is designed to see how you interpret the things that happen to you in your schoolwork. In each of the situations described below, you should think back to a time when such a thing happened to you. Concentrate on the situation which you remember very well and indicate your opinion on the statement s presented by ticking on one of the following five options:

Strongly Agree (SA)
Agree to some extent (A)
Not sure (NS)
Disagree (DA)
Strongly Disagree (SDA)

Please make sure that you respond to every item provided. Try to be as accurate as you can in describing your thoughts. There are no rights or wrong answers as you are only telling your thoughts when such things happen.
Please fill in the details below and then turn over and start. Do not hesitate to ask for clarification on any thing you are nor clear about.

Name ……
School:……..
Class……..
Age……..Sex…….
Fathers Occupation…… Mother's Occupation…….
Fathers level of Education (Tick) Mothers level of Education (Tick)

i. University degree and above
ii. Post Secondary e.g. Diploma or NCE
iii. Secondary School Certificate
iv. Primary school Certificate
v. No formal Education

i. University degree and above
ii. Post Secondary e.g. Diploma or NCE
iii. Secondary School Certificate
iv. Primary school Certificate
v. No formal Education

A. Think of an occasion when you were given some work to do and your teacher was very pleased with what you had done.
Why did this happen? (Tick your choice)

	SA	**A**	**NS**	**DA**	**SDA**
1. I tried very hard					
2. I got the right help					
3. The teacher was in a good mood					
4. I was good at it					
5. I did it the right way					
6. It was not difficult					
7. I was lucky					
8. The teacher was kind					
9. I deserved it					
10. I was in the right mood.					

B . Now think back to an assignment in which you scored low marks. Why did this happen? (Tick your choice)

	SA	A	NS	DA	SDA
1. The teacher was unfair					
2. The teacher was in bad mood					
3. I was not good at it					
4. I was not in the right mood					
5. I deserve it					
6. It was too difficult for me					
7. I did not try hard enough					

8. It was just bad luck
9. I did not get the right help
10. I did not do it the right way

C. Try to remember a day when you did very well in the examination. Why did this happen? (Tick your choice.)

	SA	A	NS	DA	SDA
1. I got the right help					
2. I was good at it					
3. The teacher was in good mood					
4. It was not difficult					
5. I tried very hard					
6. The teacher was kind					
7. I was lucky					
8. I was in the right mood					
9. I deserved it					
10. I did it the right way					

D. Recall an examination in which you did not perform as you wanted. Why did this happen? (Tick your choice)

	SA	A	NS	DA	SDA
1. I deserved it					
2. The teacher was unfair					
3. I did not do it the right way					
4. The teacher was in bad mood					
5. I did not try hard enough					
6. I was not good at it					

7. I did not get the right help
8. It was too difficult for me
9. It was just bad luck
10. I was not in the right mood

APPENDIX 2

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

Read each statement below. Decide the extent to which you agree with each statement. Then tick the one that corresponds with your answer.

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
2	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
3	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of .				
6	I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
7	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself				

8	I wish I could have more respect for myself				
9	I certainly feel useless at times.				
10	At times, I think I am no good at all.				