

SELF-CONCEPT AS A CORRELATE OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

Special education has shifted from a position of delivering professional services to students with disabilities to a system that seeks to encompass the broad concept of promoting quality education for students. This study examined the self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research type. Special needs students in the three local government areas in Ilorin, Ilorin South, East and West Local Governments Area constituted the total population for this research. The researchers designed a questionnaire entitled: self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs students' questionnaire" (SCCASNSQ). 200 questionnaire forms were administered. Research questions were answered using mean score, while

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inferential statistics of mean, standard deviation and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were used to test the formulated hypotheses. The finding of the study revealed that academic ability, physical ability, social ability, emotional ability, general self-worth ability and scholastic ability influence self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. More so, there was no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara state in Kwara state. There was significant relationship between religion, school type, age and self-concept and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. The findings concluded that while self-concept may not directly influence academic achievement among special needs students in Kwara State, factors such as religion, school type, and age significantly impact both self-concept and academic performance. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that parents and other stakeholders in the education sector should enhance adolescents' interpersonal relationship by strengthening their physical, social and emotional self-concepts through relevant social skills training.

Keywords: Self-concept, academic achievement, special needs students

Discipline: Cultural Anthropology

Absztrakt

A TANULÓI ÉN-KÉP MINT A SAJÁTOS NEVELÉSI IGÉNYŰ DIÁKOK TANULMÁNYI TELJESÍTMÉNYÉNEK KORRELÁTUMA KWARA ÁLLAMBAN

A gyógypedagógia fejlődése során a hangsúly a fogyatékkal élő tanulók számára nyújtott szakmai szolgáltatások biztosításáról egy átfogóbb rendszer felé tolódott el, amely a minőségi oktatás előmozdítását célozza. Ez a tanulmány azt vizsgálta, hogy a tanulói én-kép milyen kapcsolatban áll a különleges igényű diákok tanulmányi teljesítményével Kwara államban. A kutatás leíró felmérési módszert alkalmazott. A vizsgálat teljes populációját Ilorin három helyi önkormányzati területén (Ilorin Dél, Kelet és Nyugat) élő különleges igényű diákok alkották. A kutatók egy saját tervezésű kérdőívet készítettek „A tanulói én-kép mint a különleges igényű diákok tanulmányi teljesítményének korrelátuma” (SCCASNSQ) címmel. Összesen 200 kérdőívet osztottak ki. A kutatási kérdéseket átlagpontszámok segítségével elemezték, míg a feltételezések ellenőrzésére a statisztikai elemzés során az átlag, a szórás és a Pearson-féle korrelációs együttható (PPMC) módszerét alkalmazták. A kutatás eredményei azt mutatták, hogy a tanulmányi képesség, fizikai képesség, szociális képesség, érzelmi képesség, általános önértékelési képesség és iskolai képesség befolyásolja a tanulói én-képet, mint a különleges igényű diákok tanulmányi teljesítményének korrelátumát Kwara államban. Ugyanakkor nem volt szignifikáns kapcsolat az én-kép és a tanulmányi teljesítmény között a különleges igényű diákok körében Kwara államban. Viszont szignifikáns összefüggés volt kimutatható a vallás, az iskolatípus, az életkor és az én-kép, valamint a tanulmányi teljesítmény között. A tanulmány megállapításai alapján arra a következtetésre jutott, hogy bár az én-kép nem befolyásolja közvetlenül a különleges igényű diákok tanulmányi teljesítményét Kwara államban, olyan tényezők, mint a vallás, az iskolatípus és az életkor jelentős hatással vannak mind az én-képre, mind pedig a tanulmányi eredményekre. A kutatás ajánlásai között szerepel, hogy a szülők és az oktatási ágazat egyéb szereplői erősítsék a serdülők közötti interperszonális kapcsolatokat fizikai, társas és érzelmi én-képük fejlesztésével, amelyet releváns szociális készségfejlesztő tréningekkel lehet támogatni.

Kulcsszavak: énkép, tanulmányi teljesítmény, különleges igényű diákok

Discipline: Cultural Anthropology

In recent time, Nigeria has witnessed drastic decline in academic performance of students in both internal and external examinations such as WAEC, NECO, and NABTEB. The annual release of Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) results conducted by the West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC) and the National Examinations Council (NECO) justified the problematic nature and generalization of poor secondary school students' performance in different school subjects (Garba, 2022). The differential scholastic achievement of students in Nigeria has been and is still a source of concern and research interest to educators, government, parents, students and other stakeholders in the educational industry. This does not affect only the regular students but also the students with special needs.

Yssel, Waxman, and Knoche (2019) stated that "special education is a system designed to provide services to students with special needs". Yssel (2019) informs us that special education has shifted from a position of delivering professional services to students with disabilities to a system that seeks to encompass the broad concept of promoting quality education for students. This quest has led to an expectation for a challenged student to receive the same opportunities at success as a regular education student. Consequently, several research over the decades have accumulated evidences and numerous factors that are associated with students' performance at all levels of education. Such factors could include: abstract nature of concepts, inadequate qualified teachers, poor infrastructural and inadequate facilities, teacher centred instruction, non-availability and utilization of instructional materials, academic engagement (Jimoh, Abdusallam & Rahseed, 2015).

Much interest in self-concept as a factor that could influence academic performance of students has not been explored especially in Kwara State, Nigeria. The literature on self-concept is

voluminous and cannot be reviewed completely here.

Self-concept is a multidimensional construct that encompasses various aspects of an individual's self-perception, including their self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-image, and self-worth (Jimoh, 2015). In essence, self-concept is defined as an individual's perception of oneself, including attributes, abilities, attitudes, and self-worth. This personal understanding can significantly impact various aspects of one's life, including academic achievement. When it comes to special needs students, self-concept can play a particularly pivotal role due to the unique challenges they may face in academic environments.

Similarly, Muhammed and Rafique (2018) stated that self-concept is the intellectual attitude of personality. It is commonly referred to the complex, planned and self-motivated system of opinions, outlooks, and thoughts that each human comprehends to be accurate practically regarding his survival. Self-concept is vibrant and dynamic in nature as it gains maturity with age of the person and this aspect basically play a vital role in determining that it can be modified and changed.

It is not constant because as the person become older, he/she gets more insight about his/her abilities, capacities and get more knowledge about his/her potentialities and know how to come across different situations in life (Franken, 2014). In another view, Self-concept is the set of views and opinions an individual has about himself, such as qualities, characteristics, lacks, deficiencies, capabilities and capacities, limits and relationships which an individual thinks/describes his individuality (Marsh & Yeung, 2017).

Self-concept is therefore the knowledge and approach person has about himself. It is the insight that the individual has about himself and the way how he describes his abilities and potentials. Self-concept has great significance and it contributed a lot in building personality of an individual.

Academic achievement describes academic outcomes that indicate the extent to which a student has achieved their learning goals. This may refer to completing educational benchmarks such as a bachelor's degree. Academic achievement is often measured through examinations or continuous assessments. Consequently, academic achievement can be referred to as the extent to which a student or institution has achieved either short- or long-term educational goals. This may be measured through students' grade point average, whereas for institutions, achievement may be measured through graduation rates. Adedigba (2019) established that academic achievement represents performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school, college, and university. School systems mostly define cognitive goals that either apply across multiple subject areas (e.g., critical thinking) or include the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in a specific intellectual domain (e.g., numeracy, literacy, science, history). Therefore, academic achievement should be considered to be a multifaceted construct that comprises different domains of learning. The field of academic achievement is very wide ranging and covers a broad variety of educational outcomes, the definition of academic achievement depends on the indicators used to measure it (Lawal, 2016).

There are various indicators of academic achievement such as procedural and declarative knowledge acquired in an educational system, more curricular – based criteria such as grades or performance on an educational achievement test, and cumulative indicators of academic achievement such as educational degrees and certificates. All criteria have in common that they represent intellectual endeavors and thus, more or less, mirror the intellectual capacity of a person. In developed societies, academic achievement plays an important role in every person's life. Research into

the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement among students has indicated that there is a connection between how students view themselves and their performance in academic settings (Afolayan, Donald, Onasoga & Babefemi, 2015). A positive self-concept is often correlated with greater motivation to learn and persist through challenges, while a negative self-concept might lead to lower academic achievement and decreased effort.

An area of concern for students with special needs is the effects of their self-concept on academic performance. Much research has been done on the effects of self-concept and self-perception on the academic performance of mainstream students. However, how does this affect the academic performance of students with disabilities? Unfortunately, it is quite common for these students to place limited expectations on their own academic achievement, both from an early age and throughout their school careers (Ajmal & Rafique, 2018). There are four main influences that affect the self-concept of students with disabilities: reactions of others, social comparison, performance and feedback. All of these factors are interrelated and can either have a positive effect on the students' self-concept and motivation, or a negative one.

The correlation between self-concept and academic achievement among students in Kwara State is a topic of considerable significance in the realm of education. Self-concept refers to an individual's perception of themselves in various domains, including academic abilities, social skills, and personal attributes. Academic achievement, on the other hand, pertains to the level of success a student attains in their educational endeavors. Understanding how these two factors intersect can provide valuable insights into the educational experiences and outcomes of special needs students in Kwara State (Akintunde, 2019). Self-concept plays a crucial role in shaping students'

academic performance and overall educational experiences. Research such as: Abdusalam, Jimoh and Rasheed (2015), Garba (2022), Daliko, Sameer and Bindu (2023), Ajiboye, Kolawole, Adeleke and Jesuseun (2023) among others has consistently shown that individuals with a positive self-concept tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation, engagement, and resilience, which are essential factors for academic success. Conversely, students with a negative self-concept may experience feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem, and decreased motivation, which can hinder their academic progress.

In the context of special needs students in Kwara State, the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement may be influenced by various factors. Firstly, the nature and severity of the students' disabilities can impact their self-perception and academic abilities (Albalawi, 2019). Students with disabilities may face unique challenges in accessing educational resources, participating in classroom activities, and interacting with peers, which can affect their self-concept and academic performance. Furthermore, the availability of support services and accommodations within the educational system can significantly influence students' self-concept and academic achievement. Schools that provide tailored support, such as individualized education plans (IEPs), assistive technologies, and specialized instruction, can help empower special needs students and enhance their sense of self-efficacy and competence. Conversely, a lack of adequate support services may contribute to feelings of frustration, isolation, and low academic achievement among special needs students.

Additionally, the attitudes and perceptions of teachers, peers, and society towards disability can impact students' self-concept and academic outcomes. Positive and inclusive learning environments that foster acceptance, understanding, and support for special needs students can promote a

positive self-concept and facilitate academic success. Conversely, negative stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination can undermine students' confidence, self-worth, and academic performance (Artino & Stephens, 2020). Self-concept plays a critical role in shaping the academic achievement of special needs students. By understanding the interplay between self-concept, disability, support services, and societal attitudes, educators and policymakers can work towards creating inclusive, supportive, and empowering learning environments that enable all students to thrive academically and personally.

Empirical studies, such as the work done by Moein, Wael, and Hussein, Zahra, among gifted and non-gifted students in the light of some variables provide valuable insights into these correlations (Hamouda & Deiwa, 2022). Such research can help educators, and policymakers understand the influence of self-concept on the academic achievement of special needs students and the importance of creating supportive and empowering educational environments. To foster positive self-concept among special needs students, which could positively correlate with their academic achievement, several strategies can be implemented. Such strategies include but not limited to positive reinforcement, tailored instruction, inclusive practices, support services and family involvement.

Ultimately, the correlation between self-concept and academic achievement among special needs students in Kwara State would reflect the broader findings in this area: a stronger, more positive self-concept could be defined as individuals' understanding of their roles and characteristics. Self-concept is also seen as the totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings (Rosenberg, 2019). It refers to an overall evaluation of a person's life domains which has influence on individual's perception of himself or herself, which varies from situation to situation and goes through many changes with age. It moves from infancy to

adulthood. Self-concept is the apex of the conceptualization. It is a general affective self-evaluation of a person as a whole. It is the general evaluation of attitude and feelings that students have about a subject.

Self-concept and academic achievement are collaborative and mutual. Each one is equally emphasizing to the degree that any change whether positive or negative in one enables the appropriate variation in the other. Relationship between academic self-concept and academic achievement has a strong relationship with scholastic self-concept rather than general self-concept (Kumari & Chamundeswari, 2014).

Kumari and Chamundeswari (2018) in her study found that some psychological aspects like self-concept have great impact on the achievement of students and it helps in determining the level of competence among students' potentials. It was also concluded that the way students behave in academic settings depends upon self-awareness. It is on this note that this study investigates the self-concept as a correlates of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara state.

Self-concept and interpersonal relationship are important development of one's personality, especially, for adolescents. Because the environment plays a significant role is the socialization process of adolescents, their relationship with significant others such as parents, family, friends, teachers and others cannot be undermined. However, secondary school students tend to experience a low or negative self-concept during adolescence stage of life. For some, the decline can become so severe that they may be unable to cope; thus, battling this till adulthood (Awodun & Oyeniyi, 2018). This therefore, marks their relationship with others. For example, in Kwara State, students had been found in the secondary schools having difficulty making friends, some had withdrawn from others, many were unable to take chances in the presence of others and inferiority complex had

affected their problem-solving and decision-making process to the extent that they feel nothing is good about themselves as they battle with the feeling of worthlessness. A negative self-concept had been linked with a poor social competence or relationships (Oladiran, 2020). So, addressing self-concept as related to students' academic achievement is significant to the development of students with special needs' total personality for overall success in life. These and others reasons motivated this study examined self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State.

Problem

It has been a general notion over the years that level of academic performance has been very low among secondary school students in Ilorin, Kwara state (see: West African Examination Council (Dawson-Brew, Saani & Laryea, 2014). This trend has been attributed to certain factors including social, economic, religion and psychological, under which self-concept finds expression (Abdul-Jaleel, 2014). Besides, the culture of the school has also been tagged as one of the factors that hinder students' academic performance (Saani, 2019).

Self-concept is totality of the individual thought and feelings. Thus, it is capable of influencing attitude, feelings, aspiration and performance of learners about certain subject matter. It is a general wish and aspiration of students, parents, educators and all stakeholders of education, that students and for that matter, learners at all levels of education, excel in their pursuance of academic work at all times (Chineze & Sandra, 2015). In view of this, various attempts are being made by students, parents, teachers among others in Ilorin, Kwara state to ensure high academic performance among students. Many researches have also been conducted on various factors determining students' academic performance. For instance, Dawson-Brew, Saani and Laryea (2014) investigated the

influence of student's self-concept on their academic performance in the Elmina Township, Ghana. The study found out that student's self-concept is perceived positively by students; however, this self-concept does not directly predict students' academic performance.

Similarly, Oghenekaro and Okoye (2020) investigated the relationship between self-esteem, academic procrastination and test anxiety with academic achievement of post graduate diploma in education (PGDE) students in Delta state university, Abraka. Findings of the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among PGDE students. The study discovered a negative and significant relationship between academic procrastination and academic achievement. Moreso, recently, Ajiboye, Kolawole, Adeleke and Jesuseun (2023) investigated self-concept as a correlate of aggressive behaviour among undergraduate students of University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The findings show that there was low level of self-concept among respondents; males have lower self-concept than female undergraduate students and high level of aggressive behaviour among respondents; males have more aggressive behaviour.

Despite the number of studies carried out on self-concept and academic performance, most of the studies were carried out outside Kwara state. Moreso, none of the studies considered recognition of such effect on the special need students which are the gaps there-in. These and many other factors propelled this current study. Hence, this study seeks to investigate self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State.

Research Question and Hypotheses

This research question was raised to guide the construct of this study: What is the self-concept of special needs students in Kwara state?

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the conduct of this study;

1. Self-concept will not significantly correlate academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State.
2. Religion, age and school type will not significantly correlate with the self-concept of special needs students in Kwara State.
3. Religion, age and school type will not significantly correlate with the academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State.

Methods

The method that was used to carry out this research is the descriptive survey method. According to Best and Khan (2009), descriptive survey design is concern with conditions or relationships that exists, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. The survey research type is considered appropriate because there is no manipulation of the independent variables by the researcher. This method involves the collection of data or information from a sample of a population through the use of a researcher-designed questionnaire. The descriptive survey method was chosen because it offers the researcher the opportunity of direct contact with a population which has features, qualities or attitudes which are relevant to the particular findings. It also allows the use of adequate and appropriate samples which results in valid judgment.

The population is the entire group from which the researcher is interested in gaining information and upon which subsequent conclusions are drawn (Daramola, 2016). Sample is defined by Ojo (2018) as a smaller set of data that a researcher selects using a predetermined selection process from a larger population. These components are referred to as observations, sampling units, or sample points. It also refers to a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain

information about the whole. A sample is the representative of the entire population. The population for this study will consist of all secondary school students with special needs in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara.

The respondents responded to the questionnaire chosen using the purposive sampling technique and were selected based on the characteristics of a population and objectivity of the study.

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, is a non-probability sampling technique where researchers intentionally select individuals or groups for inclusion in a study based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. Unlike probability sampling methods where every member of the population has a known chance of being included in the sample, purposive sampling relies on the different stages to select participants who are deemed most appropriate for the study. The stages are explained below:

First stage: Kwara State currently has a total of 7 special public and private schools and learning centres for children with disabilities with the combined enrolment capacity of about 2000 pupils. The population for this study are all the secondary school students with special needs in Ilorin Metropolis. The reasons for choosing the students as respondents is because they are in the best position to rate self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State

Stage Two: The target population of this study was made up of all the senior secondary school students with special needs in Ilorin Metropolis covering (Ilorin South, East and West) of Kwara State, Nigeria.

Stage Three: However, for the purpose of this study, random sampling technique was used to select 4 secondary schools of students with special needs and the same technique was used to select two hundred (200) students with special needs as

participants drawn among the senior secondary school students with special needs.

The instrument that was used is a structured questionnaire entitled “self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students’ questionnaire” (SCCASNSQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A contains the biographic information of the respondents E.g., gender, age and school type while Section B was made up of twenty (20) items structured for the students.

The respondents were required to respond by placing a tick at the appropriate column. The questionnaire requires the respondents to tick (✓) for the appropriate response where applicable to agree or disagree.

Content validity was employed to determine the validity of the instrument. This was achieved by seeking the assistance of experts in psychology, sociology and counselling in screening the items. The researchers adopted a test re-test method whereby 10 copies of the questionnaire forms were administered to a group of respondents twice at an interval of three weeks to ascertain the reliability. The results obtained from the two tests were correlated using the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and a coefficient value of 0.85 obtained showed the instrument was reliable enough for the study.

The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis. The data were analyzed based on the stated research question and hypotheses using both descriptive and inferential statistics (mean and standard deviation). Specifically, the demographic data was analysed using the percentage while the research hypotheses was tested using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Correlation Matrix at 0.05 level of significance

Results

The demographic data involves personal information of respondents which was analyzed using

frequency count and percentage. Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents by age. Among the respondents, 61 (30.5%) were between the age range of 10-15 years, 112 (56.0%) were between 16-20 years old and 27 (13.5%) were 20 years old and above.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Age. Source: the Authors

| Age (in years) | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------|---------------|
| 10-15 years | 61 | 30.5% |
| 16-20 years | 112 | 56.0% |
| 20 years and above | 27 | 13.5% |
| Total | 200 | 100.0% |

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents by nature of religion. 9 (4.5%), were African traditional religion, 91 (42.0%) were Christianity while 100 (53.5%) were Islam.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Religion. Source: the Authors

| Religion | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|---------------|
| ATR | 9 | 4.5% |
| Christianity | 91 | 42.0% |
| Islam | 100 | 53.5% |
| Total | 200 | 100.0% |

Table 3 shows the distribution of the respondents by school type. 95 (47.5%) of the respondents attended private school while 105 (52.5%) attend public school.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by school type. Source: the Authors

| Type of school | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|------------|---------------|
| Private | 95 | 47.5% |
| Public | 105 | 52.5% |
| Total | 200 | 100.0% |

What is the self-concept of special needs students in Kwara state? Table 4 shows the ranking items on the self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State according to their mean scores about respondents. Item 20 has the highest mean score of 3.66 which shows that most of the respondents perceived that I am good at mathematics based on their academic ability. Item 11 ranked 2nd with a mean score of 3.60 showing that I am a stronger reader is a self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs. Item 18 ranked 3rd with a mean score of 3.50 showing that the respondents are excellent in problem-solving in self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs. Item 17 ranked 4th with a mean score of 3.46 showing that the majority of the respondents are athletic and coordinated in self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs. Item 15 ranked 5th with a mean of 3.39 showing that the majority of respondents are good at sports which helps in self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs. Item 14 ranked 7th with a mean score of 3.36 indicating that the respondents are strong and physically fit which helps in self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs.

Table 4: Mean summary of self-concept of special needs students in Kwara state. Source: the Authors

| Item No | self-concept of special needs students | Mean score | S.D | Rank |
|---------|---|------------|-------|------------------|
| 20 | I am good at mathematics | 3.66 | .475 | 1 st |
| 11 | I am a strong reader | 3.60 | .575 | 2 nd |
| 18 | I am excellent in problem-solving | 3.50 | .501 | 3 rd |
| 17 | I am an athletic and coordinated | 3.46 | .769 | 4 th |
| 15 | I am good at sport | 3.39 | .489 | 5 th |
| 14 | I am strong and physically fit | 3.33 | .471 | 6 th |
| 9 | I am popular among my peers | 3.33 | .471 | 6 th |
| 6 | I am a good listener | 3.30 | .802 | 7 th |
| 12 | I am outgoing and sociable | 3.29 | .543 | 8 th |
| 16 | I am good at making friends | 3.16 | 1.077 | 9 th |
| 13 | I am a calm and relaxed person | 3.16 | .690 | 9 th |
| 19 | I am sensitive to the feelings of others | 3.16 | 1.077 | 9 th |
| 1 | I am able to handle | 3.15 | .724 | 10 th |
| 7 | I am a capable and competent person | 2.99 | .901 | 11 th |
| 5 | I am happy with myself | 2.98 | 1.007 | 12 th |
| 3 | I am proud of my accomplishments | 2.84 | 1.160 | 13 th |
| 2 | I am as smart as other kids | 2.84 | .690 | 13 th |
| 4 | I am as good as other kids in school | 2.70 | .690 | 14 th |
| 8 | I am as skilled as other kids in school | 2.65 | .939 | 15 th |
| 10 | I am as resourceful as other kids in school | 2.50 | .365 | 16 th |

Hypotheses Testing

Three null hypotheses were formulated and tested for this study. The hypotheses were tested using PPMC statistical methods at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara state. Table 5 shows that the calculated r-value of -0.86 and a corresponding p-value of 0.27 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is greater than level of significance, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara state in Kwara state.

Table 5: Pearson showing relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of special needs students. Source: the Authors

| Variable | N | Mean | SD | df | r | p |
|----------------------|-----|-------|-------|-----|-------|------|
| Academic Achievement | 200 | 9.15 | 3.10 | 198 | -0.86 | 0.27 |
| Self-Concept | 200 | 48.83 | 3.167 | | | |

Hypothesis Two: Religion, School type and Age will not significantly correlate with the self-concept of special needs students in Kwara state. Table 6 shows the Pearson relationship between religion, school type, age and self-concept among special needs students. The results of the test indicated that religion had a calculated r-value of 1.0 and a corresponding p-value of 0.01 which is less than

0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between religion and the self-concept of special needs students in Kwara State.

The results of the test also indicated that school type had a calculated r-value of -2.65 and a corresponding p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between school type and

self-concept of special needs students in Kwara State.

The results of the test also indicated that age had a calculated r-value of 0.23 and a corresponding p-value of 0.01 which is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between age and self-concept of special needs students in Kwara State.

Table 6: Pearson showing relationship between Religion, School type and Age will not significantly correlate with the self-concept of special needs students in Kwara state. Source: the Authors

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>r</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-----------------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Religion | 200 | 2.49 | 0.58 | 198 | 1.0 | 0.01 |
| School Type | 200 | 1.53 | 0.50 | 198 | -2.65 | 0.00 |
| Age | 200 | 1.84 | 0.65 | 198 | 0.23 | 0.01 |
| Self-concept | 200 | 48.83 | 3.17 | 198 | 0.53 | .000 |

Hypothesis Three: Religion, age and school type will not significantly correlate with the academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara state. Table 7 shows the Pearson relationship between religion, school type, age and academic achievement among special needs students. The results of the test indicated that religion had a calculated r-value of 1.0 and a corresponding p-value of 0.01 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between religion and the academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State.

The results of the test also indicated that school type had a calculated r-value of -2.65 and a corresponding p-value of 0.00 which is less than

0.05 alpha level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between school type and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State.

The results of the test also indicated that age had a calculated r-value of 0.23 and a corresponding p-value of 0.01 which is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance. Since the calculated p-value is less than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between age and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State.

Discussion of the Findings

The analysis of the research question of this study shows the mean values of the respondents

on the self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. From the results, majority of the respondents believes that academic ability, physical ability, social ability, emotional ability, general self-worth ability and scholastic ability influence self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. The result is in consonance with the study of Ogbonna (2017) who understand that students with special needs face unique challenges in achieving academic success,

but with the right support, accommodations, and inclusive practices, they can reach their full potential. By recognizing and addressing individual strengths and needs, fostering collaboration among stakeholders, and implementing evidence-based strategies, educators can create inclusive learning environments where every student can thrive academically and socially. Inclusive education is not only a legal and ethical imperative but also a pathway to a more equitable and inclusive society where diversity is

Table 7: Pearson showing relationship between Religion, School type and Age academic achievement of special needs students. Source: the Authors

| Variable | N | Mean | SD | df | r | p |
|----------------------|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|------|
| Religion | 200 | 2.49 | 0.58 | 198 | 0.01 | 0.00 |
| School Type | 200 | 1.53 | 0.50 | 198 | -2.65 | 0.00 |
| Age | 200 | 1.84 | 0.65 | 198 | 2.33 | 0.01 |
| Academic Achievement | 200 | 9.150 | 3.11 | 198 | 0.37 | 0.61 |

celebrated, and all individuals have equal opportunities to learn and succeed. Singh, Malik and Singh (2016) presented a straight and significant connect between academic performance of students and the socio-economic development of a country, because acquisition of relevant knowledge as well as skill development become evident through students' academic performance

There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara state in Kwara state. The finding that there is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement among special needs students suggests that self-concept, as a measure of self-esteem and self-worth, may not directly impact academic performance for this group. This could indicate that factors other than self-concept might play a

more crucial role in determining academic outcomes for special needs students. The finding is inline with Sharma and Deshmukh (2013) that "Self-concept and Academic Achievement of Students with Learning disabilities this study found mixed results regarding the impact of self-concept on academic achievement in students with learning disabilities, suggesting that self-concept may not always be a significant predictor of academic success. The finding is also supported by Graham and Weiner (2017) that discusses how various motivational and self-perceptive factors, including self-concept, interact with academic achievement and highlights the complexity of these relationships.

There is significant relationship between religion, school type, age and self-concept of special needs students in Kwara State. The significant relation-

ships between religion, school type, age, and self-concept suggest that these factors are important in shaping how special needs students view themselves. Religion might influence self-concept through its impact on values and community support, while school type and age could affect self-perception through social interactions and developmental stages. This agrees with Crocker and Park (2014) that explored how various external factors, such as community and environment, impact self-concept, relevant to understanding the influence of religion and school type.

There is significant relationship between religion, school type, age and academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. The significant relationships between religion, school type, age, and academic achievement indicate that these factors have a meaningful impact on academic performance among special needs students. Religion might contribute to academic success through its influence on values and motivation, while school type and age affect access to resources and developmental support. This finding conforms with Martin and Marsh (2008) that examined how factors such as age and school environment impact academic self-efficacy and achievement, relevant to understanding the relationship between these variables and academic success

Conclusion

The study investigated self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. However, findings of the present study, can also be concluded that majority of the respondents believes that academic ability, physical ability, social ability, emotional ability, general self-worth ability and scholastic ability influence self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. The findings suggest that while self-concept may not directly influence academic achievement among special

needs students in Kwara State, factors such as religion, school type, and age significantly impact both self-concept and academic performance. These relationships highlight the importance of considering a range of contextual and personal factors when addressing the needs of special needs students and developing strategies to support their academic and personal development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- School counsellors, parents and other stakeholders in the education sector should enhance adolescents' interpersonal relationships by strengthening their physical, social and emotional self-concepts through relevant social skills training and counselling interventions.
- School Counsellors should design and develop programs that leverage the positive aspects of students' religious beliefs and community values to support their academic and personal development.
- Schools should adapt teaching methods and resources based on the specific needs and characteristics of different types of schools (e.g., public vs. private, special education vs. mainstream).
- There should be proper workshop sessions specifically to enhance the self-concept of students so that they may understand their hidden potentials and use their abilities to achieve better in academics.
- Schools should implement age-appropriate educational and support interventions that cater to the developmental stages of special needs students.

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APPENDIX

SELF-CONCEPT AS CORRELATE OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE QUESTIONNAIRE (SCAASNSQ)

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of the study is to determine the self-concept as a correlate of academic achievement of special needs students in Kwara State. The responses herein are solely for academic purpose. Please respond as honestly as possible. The researcher encourages you to honestly supply required information and bearing in mind that your responses will be strictly for research purposes treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Researchers.

SECTION A: Demographic Data

Instruction: please tick (✓) the appropriate

- Religion: ATR (); Christianity (); Islam ().
- School Type: Private (); Public ().
- Age: 10-15 years (); 16-20 years (); 20 years and above ()

SECTION B: self-concept as correlate of academic achievement of special needs students. Please, tick (✓) answer of your choice as applicable to you using the following keys:

SA -- Strongly Agree, A --Agree, D ---Disagree and SD ---- Strongly Disagree

| S/N | STATEMENT | SA | A | D | SD |
|-----|--|----|---|---|----|
| | Academic Ability | | | | |
| 1 | I am good at mathematics | | | | |
| 2 | I am a strong reader | | | | |
| 3 | I am excellent in problem-solving | | | | |
| | Physical Ability | | | | |
| 4 | I am an athletic and coordinated | | | | |
| 5 | I am good at sport | | | | |
| 6 | I am strong and physically fit | | | | |
| | Social Ability | | | | |
| 7 | I am popular among my peers | | | | |
| 8 | I am a good listener | | | | |
| 9 | I am outgoing and sociable | | | | |
| 10 | I am good at making friends | | | | |
| | Emotional Ability | | | | |
| 11 | I am a calm and relaxed person | | | | |
| 12 | I am sensitive to the feelings of others | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 13 | I am able to handle | | | | |
| | General Self-Worth Ability | | | | |
| 14 | I am a capable and competent person | | | | |
| 15 | I am happy with myself | | | | |
| 16 | I am proud of my accomplishments | | | | |
| | Scholastic Ability | | | | |
| 17 | I am as smart as other kids | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|----|---|--|--|--|--|
| 18 | I am as good as other kids in school | | | | |
| 19 | I am as skilled as other kids in school | | | | |
| 20 | I am as resourceful as other kids in school | | | | |