

PERCEIVED TEACHERS' EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AS A CORRELATE OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OGUN- EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF OGUN STATE

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Abstract: Undergraduates spend most of their daily time in the classroom, have to face new and complex school tasks, and deal with different kinds of pressure and expectations. In light of the emotional burden related to overwhelming school demands and the abovementioned evidence, it is not surprising that they could significantly influence by the emotional support received from significant adults in the school environment, especially the teachers. Therefore, this study addressed the issue of perceived teachers' emotional support as correlates of students' academic resilience among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria.

A cross-sectional survey research design was used for the study. The population consisted of secondary school students. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the sample for the 388 respondents that participated in the study. Two main instruments were used in collecting data while the data collected was analyzed using simple percentage, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and T-test analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results revealed the overall level of perceived teachers emotional support to be fair (41.3%), the overall level of students' academic resilience among secondary school students was 61.6%, and there is a positive relationship between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience ($r = .563$, $p = 000 < .05$). Additionally, there is no significant difference between male and female students' perception of teachers' emotional support ($t = 1.756$, $df = 386$, $P = 0.000 > 0.05$), while there is a significant difference between male and female students' academic resilience.

It was concluded that the university system in Nigeria should be comprehensively reviewed towards meeting the emotional demands of the students and adherence to school values and vision. It was recommended that Understanding how emotional support influence students academic engagement behaviours can help teachers provide the best quality of services for students.

Keywords: Academic resilience, Emotional support, teachers, students

INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, academic resilience has gained increasing attention in the school context due to its relation to positive achievement and school-related adjustment. Resilient students, indeed, seem to be able to successfully overcome stressful school-related conditions, maintain optimal levels of motivation, and gain high performance despite the difficulties. The term resilience has been intellectualized to mean the ability to withstand and recover from adverse situations (Wu et al., 2020). Similarly, "academic resilience" is defined as a learners' ability to cope with issues that are both significant and persistent enough to significantly disrupt their learning (Sara et al., 2024; Eva et al., 2021).

Academic resiliency has been variously defined by researchers as the ability of individuals from at-risk environments to overcome adversity and succeed academically despite their circumstances (Serrano Sarmiento et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2021). In the same way, other scholars have defined academic resilience as the ability to persevere in the face of adversity within the context of an educational setting while still achieving outstanding academic success (García-Crespo et al., 2021; Lohner & Aprea, 2021). Notwithstanding, learners who have faced significant obstacles in their schooling tend to be more resilient in the classroom (Gartland et al., 2019). Learners that are highly resilient are actively involved in the procedure. They are not readily discouraged by the seemingly insurmountable challenges of academic life, and this trait has been shown to be a significant predictor of favorable outcomes such as strong motivation and academic achievement (Rao & Krishnamurthy, 2018), reduced attrition intentions, and high levels of life satisfaction (Bittmann, 2021).

The concept of resilience has been widely studied in recent years, particularly in the academic setting, due to its correlation with success in school

and the ability to adapt to new circumstances (Dwiastuti et al., 2022; Rojas, 2015; Tamannaeifar&Shahmirzaei, 2019). Learners who are able to persevere in the face of adversity and emerge stronger on the other side are the ones who will thrive in the most challenging educational environments (Rao& Krishnamurthy, 2018; Salvacion et al., 2018). Learners who have developed academic resilience are far more invested in their studies than their counterparts, who lack this capacity for perseverance, because they are able to draw on their own personal resources to keep them going when things become tough. In spite of the multiple pieces of evidence that exist, it is worthwhile to strengthen the importance of the contextual personal resource by concentrating on emotional forms of support, such as the emotional support that teachers provide to their learners and how does it influence resiliency.

Perceived teachers' emotional support, according to the Theory of Self-Determination, represents a learners' sense of rapport with their teacher (Yang et al., 2021). The teacher shows genuine concern for the learner and responds to his or her needs with enthusiasm and positivity. However, the majority of academic articles published on the topic of the current investigation center on elementary and secondary school settings. Positive climate (PC), teacher sensitivity (TS), and regard to adolescent perspective (RAP) are the three dimensions of teachers' emotional support, as stated by Yang et al. (2022). Instructors that actively foster a positive climate provide their learners with more chances to succeed in class and develop as learners (Pangle, 2022). When a teacher exhibits teacher sensitivity, they keep a close eye out for signs that their learners could use some extra help (Kennedy, 2019).

Researchers have found that teachers who give their learners enough emotional support have a greater impact on their learners' capacity to adapt to school and succeed academically (Domitrovich et al., 2017; Frenzel et al., 2021; Konishi & Wong, 2018). Additionally, previous investigation has shown that learners who are more academically resilient and who experience greater degrees of emotional support from their teachers are more likely to relate to a good learning environment than those learners who struggle to be academically resilient (Cassidy, 2015; YilmazFindik, 2016). Studies have found that learners who are academically resilient are more likely to have positive long-term effects as a result of the emotional support offered to them from their teachers (Pitzer & Skinner, 2017; Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2018).

The relationship between teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience has garnered attention in educational psychology due to its profound impact on students' academic outcomes. Academic resilience, the ability of students to effectively cope with academic challenges and setbacks, is essential for success in the highly competitive academic environment of higher education institutions. Emotional support from teachers, encompassing encouragement, understanding, and a positive relational climate, is considered a critical factor that nurtures students' emotional well-being, thereby influencing their resilience in the face of academic stressors.

According to Ogunleye (2020) students face various stressors, including economic hardships, family instability, peer pressure, and the pressure to meet societal and institutional expectations. These challenges can severely affect their academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. Also, the Nigerian school system, especially at the tertiary level, faces challenges such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate resources, and teacher burnout, which may limit the provision of emotional support to students (Olaitan, 2021). These challenges raise critical questions about the extent to which teachers can effectively provide emotional support and whether students perceive this support as meaningful. Furthermore, the cultural context in Nigeria may present unique challenges for emotional support in educational settings. Traditional expectations often emphasize academic performance over emotional well-being, potentially limiting the attention teachers give to emotional support. As a result, students may struggle to develop the emotional strength and resilience required to persist through academic hardships.

Despite widespread acknowledgment of the importance of teacher-student relationships, studies exploring how perceived emotional support from teachers correlates with students' academic resilience in Nigerian secondary schools are sparse. Existing studies primarily focus on structural factors like curriculum, teaching methods, and institutional support systems, without sufficiently addressing the emotional dimensions that may significantly contribute to academic resilience (Adeyemo & Adeleye, 2019; Eze, 2021).

Moreover, empirical evidence suggests that students who perceive their teachers as emotionally supportive tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation, persistence, and adaptability in their studies. Yet, only few researchers have investigated how these perceptions directly affect academic resilience at higher education institutions. Addressing this gap is crucial for enhancing educational strategies that foster both emotional and academic well-being among students. Without sufficient understanding of this relationship, educational interventions may fail to address core emotional needs and potentially undermining students' resilience. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the correlation between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria

Statement of Problem

Adolescents spend most of their daily time in the classroom, have to face new and complex school tasks, and deal with different kinds of pressure and expectations. In light of the emotional burden related to overwhelming school demands and the abovementioned evidence, it is not surprising that they could significantly influence by the emotional support received from significant adults in the school environment especially the teachers.

It is no more news that students face a lot of problems in the course of their educational pursuit. These problems are multifaceted. The researcher is concerned with the way students perceive their teachers as emotionally supportive, which could tend to help them exhibit higher levels of motivation, persistence, and adaptability in their studies.

As an essential prerequisite in the process of learning, academic resilience is a vital factor influencing college students' academic success and future work perceptions. Furthermore, it even affects higher education success. However, the researcher believe that many college students are with little or poor academic resilience as a result of unfriendly teaching environment which lack of teachers emotional support, resulting in low levels of motivation, poor academic outcomes, and even high dropout. Although many studies have proposed factors affecting college students' academic success. Thus, more studies should be conducted to explore the relationship between students' academic resilience and teachers' emotional support at school. This study aims to address this issue by focusing on perceived teachers' emotional support as correlates of students' academic resilience among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the perceived teacher's emotional support among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of academic resilience among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female students' perception of teachers' emotional support.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female students' academic resilience.

METHODOLOGY

Design: The study adopted a descriptive survey research design of *expost-facto* type. This is so because this method enabled the researcher to carefully analyze the sampled population with a view to inferring the reasons for students' academic resilience.

Population: The target population of the study was made up of all students in both public and private secondary schools in Ogun-east Senatorial District of Ogun State.

Sample and Sampling Technique: A sample of four hundred and forty-five senior secondary school students (SSS2) was used for the study based on Cochran formula of sample determination technique. The selected sample was based on proportional probability sampling (PPS) method in which the district was stratified into three (3) administrative zones based on school type (public/private and mixed/single-sex schools), school location (urban and rural) and boarding system. From the zones, twenty (20) secondary schools were selected. However, the schools and the participants were selected using simple random sampling method in which all the students and schools in each zone had equal chance of being selected or included. The participants' age ranges from 14-19years with a mean of 15.9 and a standard deviation of 6.21.

Instruments: The instrument used for this study was a well-structured survey questionnaire. The research instrument was divided into six sections. Section A: This section elicited responses on demographic variables of participants like gender, religion, level, age, among others.

Resilience Scale (RS): The RS-14 is a shortened version of the RS-25, comprising of the following 14 items, selected from the original RS was developed by Wagnild (2009). The respondents were asked to state the degree to which they agree or disagree with each item on a 4-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). All items were positively scored. The possible total scores of the RS-14 range from 14 to 98 and have been scored (Wagnild, 2009) as follows: 14-56 = Very Low, 57-64 = Low, 65-73 = On the Low end, 74-81 = Moderate, 82-90 = Moderately High and 91-98 = High. The scale reported a reliability level of 0.93 and a validity level of 0.81.

Teacher Emotional Support Scale (TESS): Participants will answer items on the Teacher Emotional Support Scale (TESS) (Romano et al., 2020). The questionnaire consists of 15 items on a 5-point Likert scale (1= "Not at all true", 5= "Very true"), measuring students' perception of the teacher's emotional support. It evaluates three dimensions: Positive Climate, Teacher Sensitivity, and Regard for Adolescent Perspective. Positive Climate refers to students' perception of whether their teacher is creating a positive emotional connection with them. It consists of 5 items (e.g., "Our teacher wants students in this class to respect each other's ideas"). Teacher Sensitivity refers to what extent teachers pay attention to students' individual and academic needs; it consists of 6 items (e.g., "Our teacher cares about how we feel"). Finally, Regard for Adolescents Perspectives refers to how teachers consider the social needs of students and promote interactions with peers. It encompasses 4 items (e.g., "Our teacher encourages us to share ideas with one another in class"). In the original study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.82 for Positive Climate, 0.85 for Teacher Sensitivity, and 0.80 for Regard for Adolescent Perspective

Procedure: The researchers administered the inventory on the participants. The data collection lasted 2 weeks. The students were met in their different schools and the study was introduced to them, those that were not interested were allowed to leave the hall, instrument was administered to the remaining students. Every 3rd person in each row was given questionnaire. Both administration and collection were done the same day. The completed inventories were thoroughly checked to ensure that they were properly filled. Out of the 445 questionnaire, 388 were adequately filled and used for analysis.

Method of Data Analysis: In this study, the data analysis tools that were adopted include descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics of frequency distribution mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the data and provide answers to the research questions 1 and 2 while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyse research question 3. Simple regression analysis was used to test hypotheses one through two. All the hypotheses were tested at 5 percent level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) using the SPSS 24 version software.

RESULTS

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Students

SN	Variable (N = 388)	Frequency	%
1	Age	14-15	195
		16-17	156
		18 years above	37
		Mean ± SD = 19.41 ± 5.78	
2	Gender	Female	211
		Male	177
3	Religion	Christianity	321
		Islam	63
		Others	4
4	Ethnicity	Yoruba	257
		Hausa	23
		Igbo	108
5	Field of Study	Science	166
		Non-science	222
			57.2

Three hundred and eighty-eight (388) respondents were estimated and participated in this study. The respondents' socio-demographic characteristics revealed that the age of the participants ranged from 14 years to 19 years with a mean age of 15.91 ± 6.21 years. Majority (62.7%) of the participants were between 15 and 17 years. The gender of the respondents revealed that 211 (54.4%) were females and 177 (45.6%) were males. The results of the analysis further revealed that majority of the respondents were Christians (82.7%), 257 (66.2%) were Yoruba, and 222 (57.2%) were non-science oriented students.

Table 2: The level of perceived teachers' emotional support

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev
Level of perceived teachers' emotional support	388	15.00	75.00	30.988	7.119

Table 2 reveals the level of perceived teachers' emotional support among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria with a mean score of 30.988 (41.317%), which is low. It could then be deduced generally that the level of perceived teachers' emotional support is not satisfactory. Therefore, this study observed that the overall level of perceived teachers' emotional support was 41.3% which signifies that the respondents only received fair emotional supports from their teachers.

Table 3: The level of students' academic resilience

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev
Level of students' academic resilience	388	14.00	56.00	34.478	8.560

Table 3 reveals the level of students' academic resilience with a mean score of 34.478 (61.568%), which is high. It could then be deduced generally that the level of students' academic resilience is high and good. Therefore, this study observed that the overall level of students' academic resilience was 61.6%.

Table 4: PPMC showing the relationship between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience

		Emotional support	Academic resilience
Emotional support	Pearson Correlation	1	.563**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	388	388
Academic resilience	Pearson Correlation	.563**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	388	388

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 4, it could be said that there is a positive relationship between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience ($r = .563$, $p = .000 < .05$). The hypothesis that stated "There is no significant relationship between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience" was rejected while the alternate hypothesis is sustained. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience.

Table 5: T-test table showing differences between male and female students' perception of teachers' emotional support

Variable		N	X	SD	Df	t-cal.	P	Decision
Emotional support	Female	211	31.099	7.482	386	1.756	.076	NS
	Male	177	30.876	7.891				

The results presented in Table 4.5 shows that there is no significant difference between male and female students' perception of teachers' emotional support. Specifically, significant difference was not found between male and female students' perception of teachers' emotional support ($t = 1.756$, $df = 386$, $P = 0.000 > 0.05$).

Table 6: T-test table showing differences between male and female students' academic resilience

Variable		N	X	SD	Df	t-cal.	P	Decision
Academic resilience	Female	211	35.819	8.992	386		.000	S*
	Male	177	33.137	7.097		11.449		

The results presented in Table 4.6 shows that there is a significant difference between male and female students' academic resilience. Specifically, significant difference was found between male and female students' academic resilience at secondary schools ($t = 11.449$, $df = 386$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$). Additionally, it was found from the table that the male respondents have a weighted mean score of 33.137 which is less than the female (35.819). This implies that the female students' academic resilience is higher than the male.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The outcome of the first research question revealed that the overall level of perceived teachers' emotional support was about 41%, which signifies that the respondents only received fair emotional support from their teachers. This result is similar to Olaniyan and Ojo (2022), their findings emphasized the cultural context, showing that in communal societies like Nigeria, emotional support from teachers was even more critical for fostering resilience, particularly among students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

On the second research question, it was revealed that the level of students' academic resilience was high. It could then be deduced generally that the level of students' academic resilience is high and good. This corroborates the reports of Gartland et al. (2019) that learners who have faced significant obstacles in their schooling tend to be more resilient in the classroom. Also, García-Crespo et al., (2021), Lohner and Aprea (2021) found that learners that are highly resilient are actively involved in the procedure. They are not readily discouraged by the seemingly insurmountable challenges of academic life, and this trait has been shown to be a significant predictor of favourable outcomes such as strong motivation and academic achievement (Rao & Krishnamurthy, 2018), reduced attrition intentions, and high levels of life satisfaction (Bittmann, 2021).

The results of the first hypothesis revealed a positive relationship between perceived teachers' emotional support and students' academic resilience. The reason for this result is not farfetched because when an individual receives adequate emotional supports from significant others, the likelihood that he will be able to withstand life stress is defined. This study lend credence to other researchers who have found that teachers who give their learners enough emotional support have a greater impact on their learners' capacity to adapt to school and succeed academically (Domitrovich et al., 2017; Frenzel et al., 2021; Konishi & Wong, 2018). Additionally, previous investigation has shown that learners who are more academically resilient and who experience greater degrees of emotional support from their teachers are more likely to relate to a good learning environment than those learners who struggle to be academically resilient (Cassidy, 2015; YilmazFindik, 2016). Studies have found that learners who are academically resilient are more likely to have positive long-term effects as a result of the emotional support offered to them from their teachers (Pitzer & Skinner, 2017; Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2018).

The results of the second hypothesis show that there is no significant difference between male and female students' perception of teachers' emotional support. The reason for this result is not farfetched because every adolescent on a daily basis needs emotional supports from their teachers or tutor to excel; either they are males or females. Therefore, this study is in line with the findings of Pangle (2022) that instructors that actively foster a positive climate provide their learners with more chances to succeed in class and develop as learners. When a teacher exhibits teacher sensitivity, they keep a close eye out for signs that their learners could use some extra help (Kennedy, 2019). Finally, when educators place an emphasis on views related to adaptability, relevance to real-world

experiences, independence, leadership, and beneficial relationships with peers (Vattøy&Gamlem, 2019), the likelihood that they will increase learners' interest and enthusiasm for their coursework (Ruzek et al., 2016) is sure

The last results show that there is a significant difference between male and female students' academic resilience at Senior Secondary School Students in SSS2, which was in male to female students. The gender difference observed in this could have been by chance, but everyone is trying to persevere in the face of adversity within the context of an educational setting while still achieving outstanding academic success.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcome of this study, this study concluded that the perceived level of teachers' emotional support was fair, level of students' academic resilience was good, and perceived teachers' emotional support is positively related to the level at which students' academic resilience could be built. Additionally, gender was found to be related to students' academic resilience but not with the way they perceived teachers' emotional support to their academic goals.

Based on the findings obtained in the study, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1. Education curriculum planners, government and personnel/industrial psychologists are expected to incorporate the contents of emotional support into teachers training programmes and for in-service workplace programmes. This will not only enhance work attitude but could also foster coping skills and motivation for management and staff.
2. Understanding how emotional support influence students' academic engagement behaviours can help teachers provide the best quality of services for students.
3. It is equally recommended that the educational system in Nigeria should be comprehensively reviewed towards meeting the demands of the citizens. Training programmes should be directed at improving the teachers' social skills in Nigeria.
4. Creativity skills are teachable and learnable, regular workshops and seminars should be organised for teachers from time to time to improve their skills and enhance their service delivery.
5. Since teachers are not the only personnel in the educational system, it is recommended that this study be replicated among staff. This is to ensure a holistic approach towards improving the work attitude of staff generally to restore the lost confidence in educational institutions.

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