
SCHOOL VALUES AND ACADEMIC GOALS ATTAINMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN UYO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, AKWA IBOM STATE

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Abstract

This study determined the relationship between school values and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area. Based on this, two research questions were raised and two hypotheses formulated and tested at .05 level of significance. A correlational research design was adopted. The population comprised 6,628 senior secondary 2 students in the fifteen public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area. A systematic random sampling technique was used to select 7 public secondary schools out of 15. Thereafter, fifty-four (54) students were sampled from each of the sampled schools which gave a total of 378 sampled respondents. The researchers designed instrument titled School Values and Academic Goals Attainment of Students Questionnaire (SVAGASQ) was used for data collection. The method of reliability used was internal consistency reliability technique, with reliability coefficients of .75 for school values and .82 for items measuring academic goals attainment of students respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics was used to test hypothesis. The study findings revealed a significant relationship between academic hard-work, obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary schools. The study concluded that academic hard-work and students' obedience to school rules are crucial for the attainment of academic goals. It was recommended among others that students should consistently behave in accordance with school rules and regulations so that the schools can positively attain the set academic goals.

Keywords: Academic Goals, Goals Attainment of Secondary Schools, School Values

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Introduction

School values are the moral principles that guide the conduct, thought and behaviour of students and teachers. These values are intended to support personal, social and academic goals attainment of the school. The central function of schools is to equip students with knowledge and skills for their successes in life. The achievement of this function is determined by the extent to which school values are rightly promoted on the students by the schools. School values are very significant because it can help students to understand the rights and wrongs activities in the school environment and can shape the mindset and behaviour among the students for the future.

According to Drew (2023), stated that school values promotes the attainment of students' wellbeing, sense of belongingness, emotional and cognitive development, opportunity to navigate challenges and build strong interpersonal relationships. Drew (2023) added that school values such as honesty, cooperation, hard work, integrity, passion for academic excellence, personal responsibility, commitment, respect, self-determination, resilience, acceptance among others are very significant factors facilitating positive goals

attainment in academic activities. This is because a student learning is fostered in an environment that promotes success and concerned with the welfare of students. Students tend to develop a positive attitude towards learning as they are encouraged to see themselves as being competent and responsible. It is the students' happiness, development and acceptance of themselves as people of worth, together with the acquisition of understanding and skills that will make them work positively towards academic goals attainment.

School values are the lists of positive characteristics that students are expected to accept as desirable behavioural development academic goals attainment. School values identify something intrinsically valuable or desirable for students and adults which can be reflected in one's behaviour. Such values, as noted by Boerema (2012) clarify educational and behavioural objectives which the students are expected to observe. When students' behaviour exemplifies the defined values, the students can be recognized and will inspire them towards positive goals attainment.

Goals are anything a student aspires to achieve. Student goals attainments are identified students' needs and reflect acceptable growth during the course or school year for all students. Academic goals for secondary school students may include punctuality to classes, persistent reading of lesson materials, class concentration, and prompt submission of assignments among others. As noted by Reece, Jenna and Natalie (2015), academic attainment goals of students are classified into two major goals, which are mastery and performance goals. Mastery goals focus on mastering new skills, trying to gain increased knowledge and understanding and as well as improving competent in academic work. Students who are mastery-oriented focus on effort, use appropriate learning strategies, make choices that are challenging and develop positive attitude towards learning. On the other hand, performance-oriented are interested in demonstrating their competence by doing better than other in examination. In order for students to successfully attain their academic goals, Allen *et al.* (2017) noted that the observance of school values by students play vital role in their academic success. The authors added that school values like academic hard-work, honesty, responsibility, obedience to school rules among others can enhance students' attainment of academic goals.

Academic hard-work as an aspect of school values that may influence students' academic goals attainment. According to Catayoc (2021), hard-work is a process of engaging a lot of effort and zeal to perform a particular task. In the learning process, students work hard in school so that they learn requisite knowledge, skills and develop right attitude towards learning for positive goals attainment. As stated by Maxwell and Evelyn (2015), hard-work builds confidence and self-esteem in learners. A hard-working student is determined to persevere, give his best and take advantage of assignment that will make the realizable of achievement goals possible. By embracing such disciplined behavior and high standard, students are likely to achieve mastery in learning and better performance.

Success in any field of human endeavour is determined by members cultivating the spirit of hard-work. To be hardworking demands that an individual need to put extra effort in the performance of a particular task, so as to gain positive achievement. In the school setting, Greene and Saxe (2012) maintained that students should be able to study harder together with self-determination in order to succeed academically. This required the effort of teachers in encouraging students to take their academic task seriously. Teachers could instill the spirit of hard-work in learners by acting as role model to the children. Teachers could also achieve this through teaching students' values, monitoring and assisting students on learning activities that are coordinated with the students' class-work and personal study and reading of learning materials (Guido, 2022).

Sulaiman *et al.* (2024) conducted research on the role of hard-work on academic success among university students in Malaysia. One of the findings revealed that academic hard-work is a strong predictor of students' academic success. Muhammed *et al.* (2021) also researched on the impact of academic goal

setting on students' hard work and motivation for learning in University of Ilorin. One of the findings revealed that students academic hard-work significantly enhances their achievement of academic goals. Obedience to school rules is one of the school values which may likely serve as a predictor of students' academic goals attainment. Students are expected to respect school rules and regulations by obeying the orders of the school administrator as well as the teachers. Obedience to rules or instructions issued by the school principal as well as teachers is very vital in students' attainment of academic goals (Fekado, 2019). According to Firman et al. (2025), school rules and regulations are among the strategies designed to instill good conduct of students with their classmates, teachers as well as learning activities. The author added that students who disobey the instruction and guidance of the teacher as well as the established rules by school administrators are most likely to be disengaged from school activities, hence, making the attainment of pre-determined goals impossible.

Ango and Kyari (2018) conducted a study on the relationship between obedience and attitude of undergraduate students towards entrepreneurship education in Kaduna State University. The result showed a significant influence of obedience to school rules on attainment of educational goals in entrepreneurship. Al-Alwan (2014), conducted a study on modeling the relations among involvement, school engagement and academic goals attainment of high school students in Kano State, Nigeria. One of the study findings revealed that students' obedience to teachers' instructions is significantly correlated with their attainment of academic goals.

Theoretical Review

Goal Content Theory by Kasser and Ryan (1996)

This study is anchored on the goal content theory that was developed by Kasser and Ryan in 1996. Goal content theory (GCT) theory integrates self-determination and relationship motivation theory with values research to suggest that basic psychological needs also drive or underlies value systems in specific ways. That is intrinsic values/aspirations emerge from the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness and, in turn, the pursuit and attainment of intrinsic values works to satisfy these needs. Intrinsic aspirations include close relationships, personal growth, and community contributions. In contrast, extrinsic aspirations are geared toward obtaining external validation and proof of self-worth for effective realization of academic goals.

According to Kasser and Ryan (1996), the basic psychological need for relatedness dives the initial desire to seek out and maintain close and meaningful relationships. Ultimately, optimal close relationships between the students and the teachers are ones in which each party supports the autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs of the other. This is because all human beings possess the fundamental need to feel cared for; people aim to cultivate relationships with those who value them and who are sensitive to their needs and wants. People also want to feel authentic in relationships and to know that their relationship partner understands and values their core self.

The relevant of this theory is that it clearly explained the importance of obedience to rules and instruction of the teachers on their academic goals attainment. It is observed from this theory that the more students cooperate and relate well with their instructors; the more they will work towards the realization of academic goals. This is because when students experience greater cooperate with their teachers during the instructional process, they stand a better chance of experiencing positive self-identity and intrinsic motivation, feel interested and engaged in learning activities to facilitate the realization of academic goals.

Statement of the Problem

School values are the principles that guide students' thinking behaviour or actions. School values are principles that help students understand right actions from wrong actions which can also help to shape the mindsets and behaviour of students. Students are expected to abide by school values exposed to them by teachers and the school administrators so that they can successfully achieve better in mastery and performance goals. However, in Uyo Local Government Area, the opposite seems to be the case, as some school adolescents usually engage in social vices such as cultism, indecent, dressing, rape, drug abuse, and examination malpractice, truancy among others, instead of engaging in academic activities that promotes the attainment of academic goals. In the course of gathering materials for this article, it was realized that no research has been conducted on school values in connection with academic goals attainment. Also, no research known to the researcher has been conducted on this topic in the present study area. Therefore, it was based on these observable gaps that the researcher sought to investigate the relationship between school values and academic goals attainment of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between school values and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, this study sought to determine the:

- i. relationship between hard-work and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.
- ii. relationship between obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. Is there significant relationship between hard-work and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.
- ii. Is there significant relationship between obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested:

Ho¹: There is no significant relationship between hard-work and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.

Ho²: There is no significant relationship between obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.

Methodology

The correlational research design was adopted for the study. This design was used whenever the researcher wanted to find out the magnitude and direction of relationship that exists between the dependent and independent variables (Udoh and Joseph, 2005). Therefore, this design was considered suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to measure the interrelationship between school values and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.

The population of this study consisted of 6,628 senior secondary Two (SS2) students in the fifteen (15) public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. A sample size of 378 senior secondary two (SS2) students used for this study was determined using Taro Yamane sampling formulae. A systematic random sampling technique was used to select 7 public secondary schools out of 15. A systematic random sampling is a method that requires the selection of items at regular intervals from the array of the populace. On this basis, the 15 public secondary schools were arranged numerically from 1 to 15; thereafter, even-numbered schools were selected for the study. Thereafter, fifty-four students were selected from each of the sampled schools for instrument administration, which gave a total of 378 sampled respondents.

The researcher developed questionnaire titled: School Values and Academic Goals Attainment Questionnaire (SVAGAQ) was used for data collection. The items were framed in line with the research questions and hypotheses. The instrument had two sections, A and B. Section (A) contained 15 items, that is, 5 items each on school values while section (B) contained 8 items measuring academic goals attainment. The SVAGAQ was measured in a four-point rating scale of Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Agree (A) = 3, and Strongly Agree (SA) = 4. The respondents were requested to give their own opinions or views to the instrument using the symbol (\surd).

To ensure the face and content validity of the instrument, three copies of the questionnaire instrument were given to lecturers for validation. Two of the lecturers were from the Department of Psychological Foundations of Education (Measurement and Evaluation Unit) while the remaining one was from Sociological Foundations of Education, all in the University of Uyo to assess the suitability of the items in the instrument. The inputs and corrections made by the experts were used to form the final copy for administration.

To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, internal consistency reliability technique was used. Here, the instrument was administered on 40 SS2 students in a different Local Government Area outside Uyo LGA. The data were subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistics. This yielded the overall reliability co-efficient of .75 for school values and .82 for items measuring academic goals attainment respectively. Therefore, the questionnaire was deemed reliable for use in the study.

The questionnaire was administered with the help of two research assistance. Data obtained were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics, at .05 level of significance.

Results

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between hard-work and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis between hard-work and academic goals attainment of secondary schools

Variables	N	DF	r-cal.	p-value	Decision
Hard-work	378	376	.731*	0.000	Sig.
Academic Goals Attainment					

Significant: $P < .05$;

Table 1 shows that the calculated p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 significant levels at 376 degrees of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is retained. This

implies that there is a significant relationship between hard-work and academic goals attainment of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis between obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary schools

Variables	N	DF	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Obedience to School Rules	378	376	.922*	0.000	Sig.
Academic Goals Attainment					

Significant: $P < .05$.

Table 2 shows that the calculated p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 significant levels at 376 degrees of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is retained. This implies that there is a significant relationship between obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary school students in Uyo Local Government Area.

Discussion of Findings

Results from the first finding revealed a significant relationship between hard-work and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area. This could be true because hard-work is a crucial foundation for achieving academic goals, as it develops essential skills, fosters discipline, and allows individuals to overcome challenges, leading to better academic performance and overall school success. This finding corroborates Sulaiman et al. (2024) that revealed that academic hard-work is a strong predictor of students' academic success. This finding also agrees with the finding of Muhammed et al. (2021) that students academic hard-work significantly enhances their achievement of academic goals. Thus, it is observed from this finding that students who consistently put in their effort in academic activities are more likely to achieve better grades and academic outcomes.

Results from the second finding revealed a very high positive and significant relationship between obedience to school rules and academic goals attainment of secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area. This seems to be true because obedience to school rules generally fosters a conducive learning environment, which can positively impact academic goals attainment by promoting discipline, order, and focus, ultimately leading to improved academic performance. This finding is in line with that of Ango and Kyari (2018), which revealed a significant influence of obedience to school rules on attainment of educational goals in entrepreneurship. This finding is also in tandem with that of Al-Alwan (2014), which showed that students' obedience to teachers' instructions is significantly correlated with their attainment of academic goals. Hence, it is observed from this finding that obedience to school rules create a positive learning environment where everyone feel safe and supported which in turn promotes better learning outcomes. Conversely, Hellen (2020) revealed that students' adherence to school rules and regulations depends on the nature of attitude they have towards the rules. The author further revealed that formulation of rules and regulations without seeking students opinion may lead to conflict and violence, which eventually could render such rules ineffective.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is therefore, concluded that, academic hard-work and obedience to school rules are fundamental school values relevant for students' academic goals attainment.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the findings:

1. Schools should set clear academic goals and encourage students to put in consistent effort and dedication in academic work, as such effort would result in positive academic goals attainment.
2. Students should consistently behave in accordance with school rules and instructions of the teachers in all aspects of learning so that they can positively attain their set academic goals.

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