

**PEER PRESSURE, SELF-CONCEPT AND EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE AS PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NORTH- CENTRAL, NIGERIA**

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EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled “Peer Pressure, Self-concept and Emotional Intelligence as Predictor of Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in North-central, Nigeria” was written by me and it has been the record of my own work. I also proclaim that neither the whole work nor any part of it has been, is being, or is to be submitted for another degree at this or any other University or examining body.

Signature:.....

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June, 2018

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this study, entitled Peer Pressure, Self-concept and Emotional Intelligence As Predictors of Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in North-central, Nigeria by GBADURA, Adeniyi Otuoze (05/68SB004), has been read and approved as meeting part of the requirements of the Department of Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D. Degree) in Educational Psychology.

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DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to the glory of the Almighty God who has led me throughout the period of this research.

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ABSTRACT

In spite of the efforts of stakeholders in the education sector to improve educational achievement, students' achievement in the English Language has been consistently poor over the years. This has made researchers to shift attention to identifying factors that may be responsible for secondary school students' poor achievement in the English Language. It is against this background that the researcher investigated peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English Language achievements of secondary school students in North-central, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to examine: (i) level of secondary school students' peer pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and English Language achievement; (ii) the joint contribution of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English Language achievement; (iii) the contribution of each of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English Language achievement; and (iv) peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English Language achievement based on gender and school type.

The correlational research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 1,500 senior secondary school II students was drawn out of a population of 1,232,367 from both public and private schools in North-central, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure involving simple random, stratified and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the three states, three senatorial areas, and 50 secondary schools in North-central, Nigeria. Three adopted questionnaire and one researcher-designed achievement test were used to collect data. The four instruments were validated using test-re-test reliability procedure, which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.77, 0.87, 0.69 and 0.84, respectively. The research questions were answered using mean, while the hypotheses were tested using Multiple Regression at alpha level of 0.05 significance.

The findings of the study were that:

- (i) peer pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and English Language achievement had a mean scores of 88.32, 91.02, 201.38 and 63.65, respectively which were above average;
- (ii) peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence significantly predicted secondary school students' English Language achievement at $df = 3/1,496$; $r = 0.7$; $F = 2.89$ sig at 0.03;

- (iii) peer pressure and emotional intelligence did not significantly predict achievement of secondary school students in English Language whereas self-concept significantly predict achievement of secondary school students in English (Beta=0.06; $t=2.46$; $\text{sig}=0.01$); and
- (iv) peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence did not significantly predict English Language achievement of secondary school students on the basis of gender and school type.

The study therefore concluded that the joint influence of peer pressure, self-concept, and emotional intelligence, if adequately enhanced in the teaching and learning of English Language, as well as positive encouragement of self-concept, could be a good factor in improving students' academic achievement. The implication is that independent variables had a low significant predictive power on secondary school students' achievement in English Language. It was recommended that teachers and educational psychologists should make desirable effort to maintain and sustain the influence of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence in the teaching and learning of English Language at Secondary School level in North-central, Nigeria.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The best legacy a nation can give to her citizens, especially the youth, is education. This is because the development of any nation or community depends largely on the quality education of such a nation. Education is the process by which the accumulated knowledge, skills and values of the society is being transmitted from one generation to another. It is globally-accepted as the most viable tool for sustainable human development. It is equally an indispensable tool for enhancing economic growth and national development. Education is seen as the cornerstone of every development forming the basis for literacy, skill acquisition,

technological advancement as well as the ability to harness the natural resources of the state. Education is also seen as the process of developing the capacities and potential of individuals so as to prepare those individuals to be successful in any given society. It is the aggregate of all the means by which human beings develop the necessary socially acceptable skills for survival functionally (Ijanaku, 2010). Education is further perceived as a social institution that should be organized to improve social life and social institutions such as politics, family, culture, and economy (Nuthana & Yenagi, 2009). To the sociologists, society is dynamic; that is, constantly changing and growing and the changes must be reflected in the various social institutions. In fact, ‘education is the vehicle for effecting any social change’ (Adepoju & Oluchukwu, 2011).

Education is, therefore, of importance to the economic, social, cultural and technological advancement of every nation. For instance, Omede and Omede (2004), maintained that when some nations achieved self government they turned their attention to nation building by looking up to education as the tool; and to this end hoping that what it had done to the “great power”, it can also do for them. In Nigeria, education is the most important instrument of change, and it helps in the transmission and cultivation of societal desirable habits, skills, attitudes and values necessary for the survival of the individual. This was why during the National Curriculum Conference of 1969, it was accepted that it is through functional education that Nigeria could develop her human resources, which will further develop her material and physical resources. This in turn, would lead to other services that are very important in the development of a healthy national integration.

Education in a broadest sense is seen as a life-long process, which transforms the life of an individual from that of a helpless and dependent creature to a self reliant, rational and skilful person who can contribute efficiently to the development of his society. The National Policy on

Education (2008) has one of the objectives of education as geared towards self-realization, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, and national unity as well as towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological emancipation. Changes most often are effected through the educational system of the nation through various reform programmes and curriculum development. It is a fact that education is the vehicle for effecting any social change. Education is said to be a polyvalent agent for the transmission of appropriate values, norms, ideals and skills from generation to generation. Azikwe (2007) noted that education is also the most powerful instrument for developing and empowering members of the society to compete for survival.

No modern society can achieve her aim of economic growth, technological development and cultural advancement without harnessing the talents of her citizens. One of the major tasks of education is to help children develop the skills appropriate to the age in which they live, and those skills which promote a lifetime learning. A recurring question baffling them has been, “why do some students succeed in their studies; why do others fail?” This question is sometimes considered to be closely related to learning than teaching (Azikwe, 2007).

Arising from the forgoing, academic achievement is regarded as a key criterion through which an individual’s total potentialities and capabilities are judged (Bansal, Thind & Jaswal, 2006). This concept occupies an integral place in education as a whole and the learning process in particular. Therefore, good academic achievement becomes inevitable for every school child since it is the major index of his or her future especially in a highly competitive world. Also, academic achievement is perceived as the quantum of benefits derivable by targeted learners during educational instruction and in various academic activities. In addition, academic achievement is taken as knowledge attained and skills developed in school subjects as measured

in tests. Research evidence abound that factors such as personality, motivation, opportunities, training, study habit, self concept, socio-economic status, intelligence, locus of control and learning environment among others, jointly or severally influence academic achievement in school children (James, Jurich & Estes, 2001).

In a school setting, learners are the centre of focus, while adequate information about students is necessary for a meaningful learning to take place. Several variables have been used to source information needed to foster meaningful learning. Pertinent among others are: Peer pressure, Self-concept, and Emotional intelligence .The essence of these variables are examined below and this also forms the focus of this study.

Peer pressure is the influence a peer group or an observer exerts to change the attitudes, values or behaviours of an individual in other to conform to the group norms (Treynor,2009). Peer pressure is the influence of a social group over an individual. Bobbies and Elhaney (2005) indicate that peer pressure refers to the way people of the same social group act or believe in order to influence one another, often in negative ways. The key feature of this definition is that individuals in your own age group are actively encouraging or urging you to do something (Santor, Messervey & Kusumaker, 2000). Clearly, the central feature of most notions of peer pressure is that individuals are motivated to act or think in certain ways because they have been urged, encouraged, or pressurized by a peer to do so (Santor, et. al., 2000). The pressure is either positive or negative. It is positive when it encourages positive attitude, healthy values, respect and hard work while it is negative when it encourages negative values. The positive pressure strengthens the potential of a person and the negative pressure reduces the person's strength. The positive pressure leads to rewards while negative pressure leads to failure in life.

Positive peer pressure is therefore, an essential means of success; and it plays a basic part as an instigator to succeeding. As the world problems multiply, the need for positive peer pressure becomes more pressing and apparent. Students can be part of, or influenced by multiple peer groups at the same time (Sallee 2007). However, students might simultaneously feel pushed to achieve success through a group of peers in a class but receive clues from their bosom friends that academic achievement is not to be necessarily valued. Students' success is also shaped by their position among peer groups and various social networks. For instance, some students belong to peer-groups that have access to fewer resources for the college-going process. Santor, (2000) opined that negative peer pressure leads to a decrease in academic achievement through the mediation of self-system processes involving low perceived relatedness and low perceived academic competence.

Furthermore, the sense of belongingness in a classroom and peer-teacher support have been associated with school motivation and expectancies for academic success. Over the course of the academic years, peer pressure appears stronger and similar within groups. Children who join a group of positive peer pressure students will be influenced to have high academic achievement as others. Good influences from their peer group will help them to study and be active in school activities such that their academic achievement will increase their success level. However, if children join a group which consists of negative peer pressure students, they might be influenced to have low academic achievement.

Closely related to the variable of peer pressure in the academic achievement of secondary school students, particularly in this study, is self concept. Self-concept is broadly defined as the image of perceptions that students hold about themselves (Onawola, 2011). Self-concept can also be defined as the totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of

learners' beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds about his or her personal existence. It includes attitudes, feelings and knowledge about abilities, skills, appearances and social acceptability (Boulter, 2002). Self-concept is therefore, an important variable in education, since it links student's motivation, achievement confidence and psychological wellbeing (Hay, 2005). Kayode (2000) reported that self-determined academic motivation is a key mediator between academic self-concept and academic achievement. It can, therefore, be interpreted that academic self-concept influences teacher-rated student engagement (i.e. positive emotion, flexible problem solving, and extra curricular academics), which in turn is associated with students' grades and achievement scores (Cokely, 2000). Positive academic self-concept is shown by high academic self-concept score; while negative self-concept is shown by low academic self-concept score.

The relationship between self-concept and academic achievement is supported by researches. Theoretically, the impact of self-concept on academic achievement outcome is compelling. Research findings support the view that self-concept influences academic achievement differently, depending on race or culture (Rouse & Cashin, 2000; Worrel, 2007). There is also a strong empirical evidence indicating differences in the conceptualization of self and academic achievement according to sex and age (Cokely, 2002; Rouse & Austin, 2002; Wong; 2002; Wang, 2006; Award, 2007; Thomson & Zand; 2007; Tolman 2008). Related to peer pressure and self-concept is the concept of emotional intelligence.

In a globalised era, students are growing up in a technological-enabled socially networked environment in which their wellbeing depends largely on the draw at different times, and in different contexts. Personal achievement and productivity draw at different times, and in different contexts. Personal achievement and productivity depend on both academic

achievements, but also on the emotional intelligence that assists an individual in coping with the multiple stress and pressure of modern life. Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's and to recognize these emotions in others through empathy and to recognize these emotions in others through empathy. This has been marginalized within education systems that measure success in predominantly academic terms.

Emotional intelligence embraces and draws other numerous branches of behavioral and communication theories such as Linguistic Programmed (LP) and Transactional Analysis (T.A.) (Brandi 2014). The basic thrust of emotional skills can facilitate problem solving capacity in students. Thus, emotional intelligence is closely related to peer- group pressure and self-concept. Uzma and Tajama, (2004) opined that the concept of emotional intelligence brings new depth to the understanding of human intelligence; it expands our ability to evaluate one's general or overall intelligence. Like cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence is difficult to define. Broadly speaking, emotional intelligence addresses the emotional, personal, social and survival dimensions of intelligence, which are often more important for daily functioning than the traditional cognitive aspects of intelligence. Emotional intelligence is concerned with understanding yourself and others, relating to people, adapting to and coping with the immediate surroundings so as to deal successfully with environmental demands.

Since its emergence in 1990s, the concept of emotional intelligence has generated interest in the popular media and scientific circle, leading to several definitions and two general competing models of emotional intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (2011) introduced an ability model of emotional intelligence in an initial theoretical paper, and used two-part approaches, speaking first of the general processing of emotional information and secondly specifying the skill involved in such processing.

Taken together, there are some differences between the ability and mixed approaches towards emotional intelligence. According to Salovey and Mayer (2011), mixed approaches claimed a stronger predictive power for success, but the ability model only offers potentiality and being emotionally intelligent in the ability model does not mean that a learner will necessarily succeed in school. Also having high emotional intelligence in the ability model appears relatively independent of most personality characteristics such as extroversion or optimism. In spite of the differences, the two approaches of emotional intelligence share a similar intention in understanding how an individual perceives and regulates his or her emotions. Similarly, Goleman (2000), who commercialized and popularized the concept of emotional intelligence, identified five domains of emotional intelligence; namely

- a. Self-awareness (knowing one's emotion):- Observing yourself and recognizing a feeling as it happens.
- b. Managing emotions: - Handling feelings so that they can be appropriate; realizing what is behind a feeling: finding way to handle fears and anxieties, anger and sadness.
- c. Motivating oneself:- Channeling emotion in the service of a goal, emotional self control, delaying gratification and shifting impulses
- d. Empathy: - Sensitivity to others feeling and concerns; taking their perspective appreciating the differences in how people feel about things.
- e. Handling relationship: - Managing emotion in others, social competence and social skills.

Looking at these five domains, it would be that they have a wider range of useful implications for secondary school students. When faced with transitional traumas, all the five aspects of emotional intelligence can make useful contribution towards working out the

problems. Mayer and Salovey (2000), explained further that an ability to recognize emotions and their relationships; to reason and solve problem and the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotional related feelings, promote understanding and management of those emotions.

Recently, more attention has been placed on the effect of emotional intelligence on academic success in education (Elias, 2003). However as Brackett and Katulak (2007) stated, quite a few studies have been conducted to explore this concept in contexts where English is spoken as a second foreign language, given the idea that the emotional intelligence serves both internal mechanism and external environments in the process of language learning (Goleman, 2001). Emotional intelligence, which reveals synthesis between cognitive and effective processes has stimulated some research, mostly in the fields other than second language acquisition/learning. For instance, in the field of education, Stottlemayer (2002) in a study of emotional intelligence and its relation to students' achievement among 200 American students in Texas found that emotional intelligence skills were significantly predictor of academic achievement. From the definitions and explanations above, it can be deduced that positive peer pressure influences positive self-concept and it leads to high academic performance. In other word, negative peer-pressure leads to negative self-concept as well as low academic performance. Furthermore, it can be rightly claimed that there is a close relationship among peer-pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence with academic achievement. A student with positive peer pressure, positive self-concept and adequate emotional intelligence will attain high academic achievements.

The issue of the relationship of peer-pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence with secondary school students' academic achievement should be the major concern of the

Nigerian education researchers. In Nigeria, there is a general concern about the students' current poor achievement in all examinations by the stakeholders in schools. The issue, though of national concerns, negates the possibility of a research that can be empirically carried out to cover the nation at large. In this instance therefore, the Northern Central zone of the country has been selected for this study. The North central Nigeria comprises of Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The zone has an estimated population of about 22.5 million people located in the mid-central part of Nigeria. It is geographically unique because its boundaries totally cut across other geographical zones. It is bounded in the North-East by Kaduna state, Kebbi and Zamfara states in the North-West, and Republic of Benin along Agwara Local Government Area also in the North West. Taraba, Cross River and Enugu states to the South West and the zone shares a common boundary with the Republic of Cameroun on the South-East. Ondo and Ekiti states are her boundaries in the West (Nuhu, 2013).

The researcher intends to examine the Relationship of Peer Pressure, Self-concept and Emotional intelligence with academic performance in English Language of Secondary school students in North Central Nigeria. This is due to the fact that English Language is a requirement for further studies at all levels. Since English language is our lingua Franca and the bedrock of other subjects or courses, no student can perform excellently in other courses or subjects without understanding its rudiments and prompt usage. Hence, effective teaching and learning as well as better performances in all ramifications lies on our understanding of this language. The importance of English language on educational attainment can never be over emphasized. English language has been the language of instruction in Nigerian schools till today; students who are deficiency in it might find it very tough to cut across academically. When Students'

Performances in English Language is encouraging, it definitely influences and improves the academic performance of such students in all ramifications. Nevertheless, when English Language is lacking in any academic setting, it will definitely lower the academic performance of such students. English language is one of the factors contributing to poor performance of students in other subjects.

To this effect, the influence of the English Language on other subjects of the curriculum invariably pointed at the notion that students' success in English language could influence the overall performance of students in other disciplines. Little wonder Iroegbu (2006) places much emphasis on passing of English language at credit or distinction level in addition to other subjects to enable any candidates gain admission into any Nigeria Higher Institution of learning. English language is very important to any course in Nigeria educational system and it is a powerful factor in the study of other courses in Nigerian Universities. One could thus infer from the fore-going that anyone who can read English Language can keep in touch with the whole world without stepping out. English Language, in no doubt, has positive impact on academic performance of students in other fields. Although several studies have been conducted in Nigeria and other nations, peer pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and academic achievement remain of important area in research because of the low level of research using these variables. For instance, no study known to the researcher, actually studied the direct influence of variables of Peer Pressure, Self-concept and Emotional Intelligence on the cumulative effects on academic achievement. Therefore, the research topic under consideration, is worthy of empirical study and has complimentary to existing studies in this area. The study is therefore, amply justified.

Statement of the Problem

Academic achievement has become an index of a child's future in this highly competitive world. It is one of the most important goals of the educational process, a major goal which every individual aspires to attain. The decline in the academic achievement of secondary school students in Nigeria has been a major source of concern to stakeholders and policy makers in the education sector (Nwadinigwe, 2012). Measures taken by the government at various levels to eliminate this problem and improve the academic achievement of students have focused more on improving infrastructure, equipping the schools and providing qualified teachers; steps which may not have produced the desired results. Learners achievement have been empirically found to be low over the years and this trend has been attributed to many factors including inadequate facilities, teachers' and learners' poor attitudes towards the subject as well as inappropriate teaching strategies (Adepoju & Oluchukwu, 2011).

In spite of the efforts of the stakeholders to salvage the limits their potentials for advancement in career and their ability to compete effectively in an ever increasingly competitive global village. Though the curricula at the secondary school level are designed to limits their potentials for advancement in career and their ability to compete effectively in an ever increasingly competitive global village. Though the curricula at the secondary school level are designed to address this inherent gap, the importance of students' emotional standard of performance may have been seen to be missing, misunderstood or neglected. It is therefore necessary to interrupt the ugly trend of poor academic achievement among secondary students by developing and enhancing their emotional intelligence skills which have been observed to be major determinants of academic achievement because a student may recover from physical pain or injury, but may never recover from the terror and degradation of his or her emotional state. As a result, researchers have been forced to shift attention to identifying both internal and

external factors that may be responsible for secondary schools students' achievement in English language.

When applied to secondary school students, English language achievement is a yardstick for measuring learners' outcomes in the core subject of any nation. Being made a prerequisite for admission into institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, like other countries of the world, it is mandatory for secondary school students to pass English language at credit level in the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) conducted by the public examination bodies. However, it is rather disheartening to observe that students' performances in this subject at the end of their secondary education, have not improved over time (Tella, 2007). A major concern in schools, therefore, is to increase students' English achievement. One way of doing this is to focus on variables of peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence which may influence students' English achievement and facilitate learning. This study employed a process of analyzing peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence variables to support students' achievement in English language, a core subject at all levels of the school system, an understanding of which might allow for professional development for teachers to focus on the ways of creating conducive environment that would influence positive self concept and encourage high emotional intelligence in learners in order to achieve the ultimate goal of enhancing academic achievement generally.

It is on this basis that this study was conducted in North central zone of Nigeria using the variables of peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence as predictor of academic achievement of secondary school students in English language. This study is therefore concerned with these variables as a complimentary study to the existing knowledge and at amply justifiable. It is also attempted to make suggestions that would enhance peer pressure, self

concept and emotional intelligence to improve their achievement in English language as a subject.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of secondary school students' achievement in English Language. Specifically, this study examined:

1. The general level of secondary school students' peer pressure, self concept, emotional intelligence and English language achievement in North Central zone of Nigeria.
2. Joint contribution of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English Language achievement of secondary school students
3. The contribution of each of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English Language achievement of secondary school students.
4. Joint contribution of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on gender.
5. Joint contribution of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on school type.

Research Questions

The following questions have been raised in line with the research purpose:

1. What is the general level of peer pressure, Self concept and emotional intelligence of secondary school students' achievement in English language in the North-Central zone, Nigeria?

2. Are the joint variables of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students in North Central, Nigeria?
3. What are the relative contributions of each variable of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence as predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students in North Central, Nigeria?
4. Are the joint variables of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on gender in North Central, Nigeria?
5. Are the joint variables of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on school type in North Central, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

To answer the research questions, the following hypotheses were tested in the course of the study:

H₀₁: The joint contribution of variables of peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students in North Central, Nigeria.

H₀₂: The contribution of each of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence is not a predictor of English language achievement of secondary school students' in North Central, Nigeria.

H₀₃: The joint contribution of variables of peer pressure, self-concept, and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on gender in North Central, Nigeria.

H₀₄: The joint contribution of variables of peer pressure, self-concept, and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on school type in North Central, Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

The study examined Peer pressure, Self-concept, and Emotional intelligence as predictors of academic achievement of secondary school students' in North-Central zone, Nigeria. The sample consisted of one thousand, five hundred (1500) senior secondary school two (SSS2) students spread across fifty (50) senior secondary schools in three of the six states and FCT in North-central zone of Nigeria, namely Kwara, Kogi, Niger states and the FCT. The senior secondary school two (SS11) students were selected for the study on the premise that their level of maturity and education was high enough to enable them to respond to the questionnaire appropriately.

The main instruments used for the study are 'Peer Pressure Inventory (PPI) and Vignettes' developed by Santor, Messervey and Kusumakar (2000); Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI); International Personality Item pool (IPIP) and Multiple choice English language Test. The data collected were analyzed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics namely frequency count, mean and Multiple Regression Analysis.

Operational Definition of Terms

The following variables are operationally defined in the context in which they would be used in this study:

Academic Achievement: Students' performance in researcher's designed multiple choice test in English Language.

Emotional Intelligence: Emotional Intelligence is the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought which will ultimately enhance higher academic achievement.

North Central Zone: This comprises Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Peer Pressure: The act of being influenced by a group of students to act in a certain way.

Self-Concept: This is an organized, learned cognitive and unity configuration of conscious perception and evaluation by individual or self as he is (perceived self).

Significance of the Study

The problem of poor academic performance among senior secondary school students is a serious issue that requires continuous and systematic investigation. A growing body of research shows that students' academic performance is of importance, and factors of peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence (Olaniyi, 2016). As a means of solving this lingering problem of poor achievement in secondary schools, the present study was conducted in three states among the six states and the FCT in North Central zone Nigeria with emphasis on peer

pressure, self-concept, and emotional intelligence of secondary school students' academic achievement.

This study is significant due to the fact that it would provide an insight for learners to take cognizance of the physical components and social interactions occurring in their classrooms as well as their personal attributes, mainly peer pressure, self concepts and emotional intelligence so as to make a desirable adjustment that would enhance their academic achievement, especially in English language. Also, it would help secondary school teachers to recognize the need to create conducive classroom climate where students would experience safety and relevance so as to be helped to develop positive peer pressure, positive self-concept and high emotional intelligence in order to enhance their English language achievement in particular.

Educational psychologists would benefit from the findings of this study through their understanding of the impact of peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence to enhance teaching and learning. As a result, the success expected to be recorded by learners in all school subjects, and English language in particular, would give them the needed self satisfaction and confidence to face their academic pursuit with the vigor it deserves so as to achieve successful efforts, endowment and skills. Thus, learners would be helped to develop positive self-concept, emotional intelligence, and peer pressure to enhance their achievement in English language, like other school subjects, and brighten the hope of national advancement.

The findings of this study may also, hopefully, contribute to the existing literature by extending the stock of knowledge on the influence of peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence in secondary schools of the North Central Zone. It will also provide some useful reference materials for future researchers who might be interested in conducting similar studies

elsewhere. Furthermore, the study places much emphasis on the fact that teachers should be academically, physically and intellectually sound to be able to produce efficient students that the nation needs in the achievement of her millennium development goals.

With other existing data on students' learning and education, the findings of the study would enrich public knowledge on the importance of the learning environments so as to sensitize school administrators on why and how they should cultivate a climatic classroom that is more conducive and non-threatening, paramount in their respective schools. In return, they would be aware of their roles in enriching classroom climates in their schools to ensure that students learn effectively, a situation that would eventually develop positive peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence in the learner whose orientation would also be more internal. This would enhance English language achievement of such learners.

Furthermore, deriving from the findings of this study, parents and guardians would be more enlightened on the need to provide an enabling home environment for their children and wards to maximize their learning opportunities in the school so as to maintain positive peer pressure, self concept and emotional intelligence that are beneficial to their education in terms of English language achievement. Also, government at all levels have shown a great concern to the poor level of students' achievement in the core subjects in the formative stage of school children's education at primary and junior secondary schools. The findings in this study could make government agencies shift their focus on creating conducive physical and psychological classroom climate and developing positive peer pressure, self concept and high emotional intelligence in students to enhance high English language achievement.

Finally, the findings of their study could form a basis for further research on peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence predictors of academic achievement of

secondary school students in other geo-political zones of Nigeria. To attain these goals, the researcher would make the findings available to the respondents used in the study, their teachers and the management of the schools that participated in the study. The teachers and the school heads would also be encouraged to discuss the findings of the study at the Parent-Teachers' Association forum. The researcher would also endeavour to get findings of the study published in reputable journals and upload into the internet. By so doing, the usage of the findings of this study would be enhanced and the general public would be greatly assisted to have better understanding of the relationship between education and psychology.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This research examined “peer-pressure, self-concept and Emotional Intelligence as predictors of academic achievement of secondary school students in North-Central Zone of Nigeria. To achieve this, a critical review of available and current literature was examined under the following sub-headings:

- a. Concept and Effects of Peer-Pressure on Academic Achievement.

- b. Concept, Characteristics and effects of Self-Concept on students' academic achievement in English language.
- c. Self-Concept and Academic Achievement of the Students
- d. Concept, Component and Conceptual Model of Emotional Intelligence.
- e. The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Academics
- f. The influence of Gender on Students academic achievement
- g. The Influence of School Type on Student's Academic Achievement
- h. Empirical Studies on Peer Pressure, Self-Concept and Emotional Intelligence as Predictors of Academic Achievement.
- i. Appraisal of the Literature Reviewed
- j. The Conceptual Framework.

piness in return for wages. Smith was however heavily criticized for limiting his view of work to slave labour (Magdoff, 2006). But in the view of Engel (1934), work is central to human existence, it constitutes the prime basic condition for all human existence. Indeed, it was through creative work that mankind created culture and civilization (Applebaum, 1992).

Magdoff (2006) explained that Engel's speculation was that work created man himself in that as man developed bipedal locomotion (walking on two feet), the hand became free to develop and undertake more complex tasks. The specialization of the hand led to work, mastery of nature and exploitation of its comparative environmental advantages. These in turn brought people together which necessitated speech development. Speech thus came with work and further development of the brain.

By the combined function of hands, speech organs and the brain, not only in individuals but also in societies, men became capable of executing more and more complicated operations, and were able to set for themselves higher order of goals. The work of each generation itself became different, more perfect and diversified. Agriculture was added to hunting and cattle raising. Then came spinning, weaving,

metal working, pottery and navigation, trade, industry, art and science (Engel 1934 cited in Magdoff 2006).

The world of work has always been in perpetual evolution. From the above, work is seen as a progressive continuum from historical times till date and with all indications will continue to rapidly change with science and technology driving the changes. From the evolutionary trends of the work world, arose division of labour, separation of people into classes and social organizations, private property ownership, and exchange. These and many more became dominant characteristic of economic life (Magdoff 2006). The world of work (wow) today involves the pursuit of opportunities for productive work that delivers a fair income, security of workplace, social protection, better prospects for personal development and social integration (Ilo, 2012).

The alignment of the world of work in Nigeria with this concept is not far - fetched. Magdoff (2006) reported Engel as saying that when work is not conceived as an imposition but as needful by the individual, it becomes attractive and a delightful experience for the individual to undertake. This leads to the individual's self realization and satisfaction. Among the many importance of work is that; work fetches money and better living, gives social status, provides identity, fulfills dreams and desires. In addition, work provides platforms to utilize the possessed skills, provides a platform for everyday learning, and gives a sense of security. Work makes a person a "better and responsible citizen" (Thompson, 2011; Superdawn, 2013). In Nigeria, not much respect is accorded anybody who does not work. Against this background, the crave for employment by graduating students in Nigeria can be clearly understood.

The world of work has never been static, it has continued to change. No one would have thought of the current shape of the work world some 50 years back (Herman, 1999). Experts have predicted that machines would soon make workers obsolete (Thomson, 2015). This in a

way, accounts for the current scarcity of jobs in the country and globally. These evolutionary trends serve as pointers to the impermanent nature of the job market to all and particularly the graduating students. The prevailing situation highlights the disappearance of jobs that existed some two decades ago. The reality is also that even if a job is secured today based on some specific skills, such skills might soon be obsolete and the job lost to technological advancement.

The theoretical view that work is sacrificing one's peace, freedom and happiness for wages, though strongly criticized, still holds some relevance in the current world of work in Nigeria. It is a view that should galvanize the graduating student into entrepreneurship and self employment instead of looking and wishing for an employer to whom he will surrender his tranquility, peace and freedom as an employee.

The concept of the wow is closely related to the total workforce. A country's workforce comprises of the total number of the country's population employed, plus those not employed who are actively seeking for paying work (businessonlinedictionary.com). The workforce does not include children, (below age 15), those who choose to stay at home not seeking any employment, the invalids and full-time students. Though with slight variations by countries, it does not also include the elderly, aged 65 years and above in Nigeria (NBS, 2016). The unemployed are the people in the workforce bracket who are actually looking for paid jobs and are yet to secure one.

In Nigeria, the fresh university graduate is automatically launched into the workforce after the compulsory one year national service. From here the individual begins to plot his or her way into a means of legitimate livelihood either by being employed or self-employed. Success in this direction places the fresh graduate in the employed divide of the workforce. One can thus conclude that the wow is simply the divide of the workforce that is employed.

Securing employment after graduating from the university

To secure employment after graduating from the university, the individual could be hired in the public or private sector. The graduate could also choose to be self employed. Whether by being hired or by self employment, the bottom line is earning a living within the norms of the society. Securing a well paying job that will guarantee and sustain a comfortable living standard has been the paramount motive for many seeking university education in the first place (Croux, 2013). University education offers graduates more job opportunities to choose from. It is a lifetime-high-income yielding investment that improves individual's quality of life which goes hand in hand with education (Allen, 2007). But all these have been over taken by the current economic downturn which has no preference for degree certificates.

In the current dispensation, graduates leaving universities are entering a very different wow from what obtained some three decades back (specifically before the 1980s in Nigeria). The current wow is marked with high level of uncertainties, complexities and rapid changes, reflecting the bewildering array of global issues of economic instability, economic meltdown, general recession and youth unemployment including university graduates (Sterling, 2014). By orientation, it is believed that every degree holder in Nigeria must be employed by government (Ogege, 2011). Or at least the government should facilitate their employment. Many graduates are still searching and waiting endlessly for government employment under the illusion that the government owes them a job and a living (Eneji, Mailafia and Weiping, 2013). This concept which is premised on an orientation and notion that do not fit into the present dispensation has kept pushing higher and higher the population of graduates stuck in their effort to enter or find placement in the wow.

How much intervention government should impose on economic activities of a state/society has remained unresolved by economic theorists. Hayek (1948) postulated that

markets and market forces alone should dictate all economic decisions. This is the classical liberalism stand point. Classical liberalism theory holds that market forces should reserve the sole mandate to make all economic decisions and dictate the tone of economic activities of the society/state. Through the same source, explanation could be found for the performance or non-performance of the economy per time (Laflamme, 2008). Going by this theory, the current difficulties graduates in Nigeria are facing in securing employment is largely due to overproduction of graduates vis-à-vis available job opportunities (Ashimuneze, 2011; Eneji, Mai-Lafia and Weiping, 2013).

For interventionist liberals led by Keynes (1936), the government could and should intervene in aspects of the economy not adequately addressed by market forces. Keynes believes that fluctuation in economic activities, giving rise to distortions such as; unemployment, inflation and instability in prices and many more could be effectively checked by government intervention. Keynes advocated that increasing investment can similarly increase the volume of employment and reduce unemployment. But this prescribed intervention is often hard to come by in Nigeria because of fiscal indiscipline and corruption, abuse and misuse of state resources resulting in the sustenance of the vicious cycle of unemployment and poverty (Eneji, Mai-Lafia & Weiping 2013).

Neo-classical liberalism dates back to the post second world war era of recession. Keynesian economics and welfare state was too costly for governments to continue to pursue full employment policies (Laflamme 2008). Neoclassical liberalism became the choice of world leaders (America and Britain) as this economic stand point rejected any government intervention in the domestic economy and placed increasing importance on global institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The creation and strengthening of these institutions put pressure on regions and developing countries to subscribe to the policies emanating from them (Laflamme, 2008). Neo-classical liberalism emphasizes extensive economic liberalization policies such as; fiscal austerity, deregulation, free trade, reduction in government spending to increase the role of private sector participation in the economy (Wikipedia, 2017). Neo classical liberalism is still very much in place with additional new institution – the world trade organization – to consolidate the system.

Neo-classical liberalism encourages the developing economies (Nigeria inclusive) to buy into its theories/policies of globalised market forces and monetary policies. In addition, developing economies are encouraged to liberalize their economies as fast as possible and to ignore social concerns arising from such implementation. The implication of implementing these economic theories and their policy prescriptions provides explanation for the current climate of the wow in Nigeria. The inability of a huge number of graduates to gain entry into the wow is a serious social concern and the prescription of this theory about social concerns is clear – they are to be ignored (Lanflamme, 2008). The inability of a huge number of graduates to secure entry into the wow in Nigeria could thus be appreciated against this theoretical background.

Graduate employability

The concept of employability refers to an individual's capacity to become and remain attractive in the labour market (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011). Employability has to do with the capability of the individual to be successful in a wide range of jobs because of the possession of appropriate skills set, interest and other attributes. Employability therefore involves the possession of a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a

person more likely to secure employment, keep and grow through it (Paadi, 2014). To be employed or unemployed is largely the function of the employability of the individual, graduate or youth hence the attention accorded employability in this chapter covering some of its models and theories.

Graduate employability is the ability of graduates to secure jobs in the labour market, being equipped with skills required by the employer. Graduate employability is multifaceted and encompasses academic performance, career management skills and labour market awareness (Paadi, 2014). It also involves being career resilient, that is, to possess the ability to adapt to changing circumstances even when the circumstances are not pleasant (Collard, Epperheimer & Saign, 1996). Employability skills usually considered important in most developed economies are; team work, communication, self-management, critical thinking and analytical ability (Jackson, 2013). For developing and transitional economies (like Nigeria), Hargreaves and Shaw (2004) suggested lifelong learning and training as what is most needed. They submitted that education creates the future and lifelong learning promotes and sustains the quality of that future. The concept of lifelong learning Hargreaves and Shaw (2004) added, involves a situation where people have skills, disposition and values to continually access information and build knowledge for the workplace and the overall interest and general goal of the society. It could thus be summarized that lifelong learning implies the possession of knowledge, skills and competences, and the disposition to keep building on them to the interest and advancement of the individual as well as the overall interest of the society.

Graduate employability models

Models in general help to facilitate the understanding of concepts. Knight and Yorke (2004) defined employability as “a set of achievement skills, understandings and personal

attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits them, the workforce, the community and the economy” (p.5). Knight and York went further to develop a four interrelated components of employability titled USEM. USEM is an acronym for:

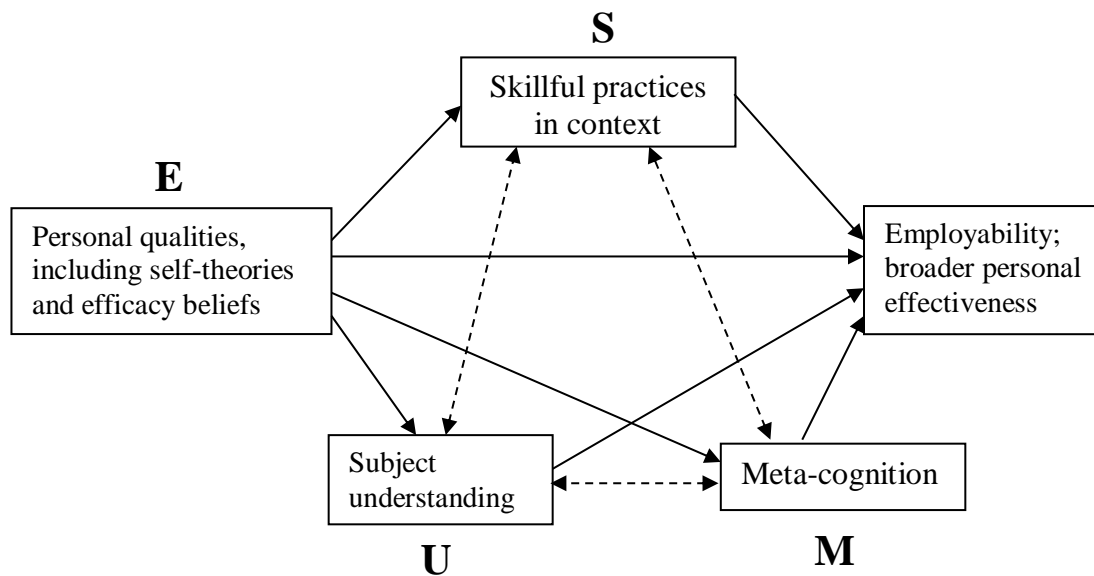
Understanding

Skills

Efficacy, beliefs, and

Metacognition

Figure 1: USEM model of employability.

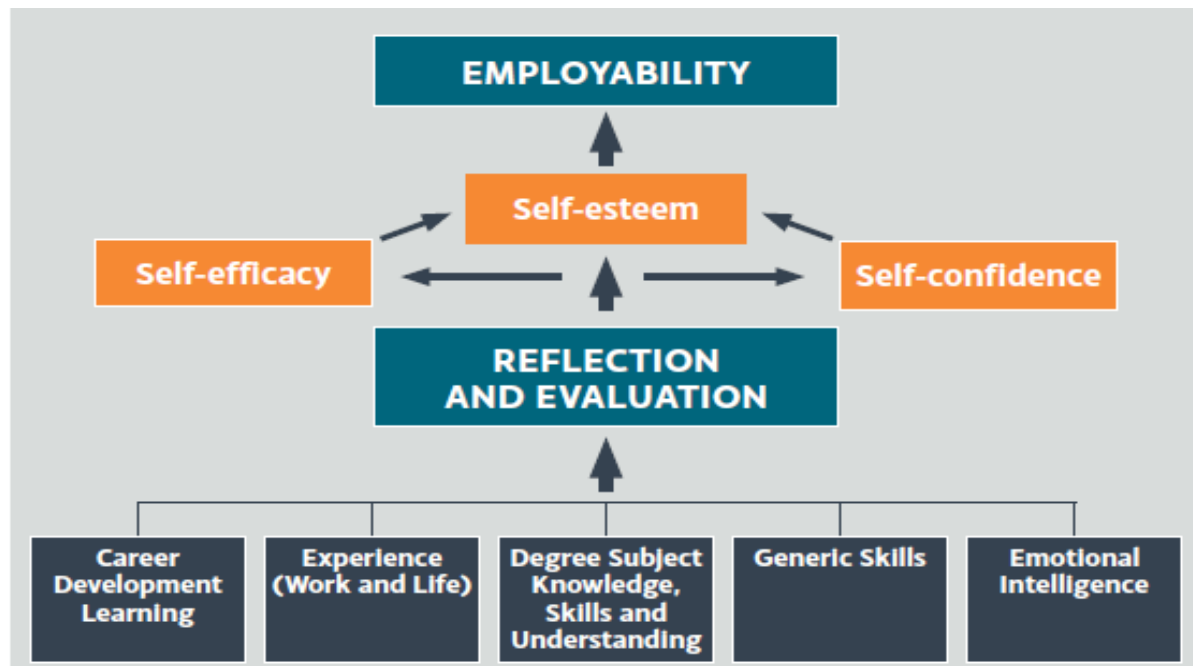


(Source: Cole & Tibby, 2013) The Higher Education Academy.

The USEM model provides a framework for considering how to embed employability into the curriculum taking into account the needs of students, employers and other stake holders. USEM encourages curricular assessment that develops students' efficacy and metacognition, relating them to subject knowledge and professional skills that are transferable (Cole & Tibby, 2013).

Pool and Sewell (2007) acknowledged the relevance and strength of USEM. They however observed that its clarity is limited to experts in the field. Non-experts e.g. students, parents and (even some employers) could be stuck in grasping its explanation of what exactly is meant by employability. Pool and Sewell (2007) then came up with career EDGE model of employability.

Figure 2: Career EDGE Model of Graduate Employability.



Source: Cole & Tibby (2013) The Higher Education Academy.

This model is designed to show that each component is vital and if any is missing, it can compromise the graduate's employability. Pool and Sowell (2007) noted that this model offers to all stake holders in the promotion of graduate employability a clear picture of the issues involved. Career development learning is a life-long exercise. Specialized skills of the chosen field must be acquired through experience (through internship). These acquired skills must be accompanied with generic skills and emotional intelligence to produce self efficacy, self confidence and self esteem, culminating in employability. Employability rating will however be determined by how much of these components the graduate possesses

DOT employability model

This employability model was developed by Law and Watts (1977)

Decision learning

- Decision learning skills

Opportunity awareness

- Know what opportunities exist and their requirements

Transition learning

- Including job searching and self presenting skills

Self awareness

- In terms of interests, ability and values.

DOT's employability model (Watts, 2006)

This model comprises of four major components of employability identified by Law and Watts (1977) as follows.

- Decision learning
- Transition learning
- Opportunity awareness
- Self awareness

With special skills to learn under each component as shown above the model is easy to adopt. Career development learning (though a life-long exercise) can also be facilitated when the components of this model are adopted.

Employability Theories

Consensus theory

The concept of graduate employability in Nigeria can further be appreciated against the background of consensus theory of Brown, Hesketh & William (2003). The emphasis of the theory is on what social groups or subgroups have in common in terms of social norms, cultural

values and beliefs. In this case graduate employability is the common concern. The common ground here is that graduate employability deficit is a reflection of the shortcoming of higher education system in Nigeria amongst other factors. The Nigerian national policy for education assigns the role of training high level manpower to the universities to facilitate the economic and over all development of the country. But in about the past three decades, graduate unemployment has continued to rise by the year while the universities appear helpless about it and kept graduating more and more students every year (Ogege, 2011; Ashimueze, 2011; Kolawole, 2012; Nwokwu, 2013).

Consensus theory assumes that Nigerian universities are running obsolete pedagogy, completely out of tune with the realities of the current developmental needs of the country and the labour market demands (Elegbede and Shadare, 2012). The theory in addition, assumes that the employability deficit of the Nigerian graduate is rooted in poor government funding of universities, poor skill acquisition, weak industrial support and corruption (Elegbede, 2012; Irmeli, 2013; Nwokwu, 2013). With a holistic view at the Nigerian education system, consensus theory blames the problem of graduate employability challenges on the government, the universities, employers and the graduates themselves for each party not doing enough to halt or reverse the trend (Godwin & Johnson, 2012). One can therefore conclude that, to a large extent, the massive current graduate and youth unemployment figure in Nigeria could be ascribed to the interplay of all these factors with varying degree of influence.

Conflict Theory

The problem of graduate unemployment in Nigeria is a serious concern to all (Eneji, Mai-Lafia & Weiping, 2013; Akande, 2014). Conflict theory traceable to Karl Marx (economic conflict) and Max Weber (power conflict), provides a clear picture of this national concern.

Marx believes that a society (state) is always in perpetual conflict because of competition between the component socio-economic, political and other similar interest groups (Brown, Hesketh & William 2003). The theory has often been used in explaining a wide range of social phenomena, including conflicts among groups. Conflict theories emphasize the importance of interests over norms and values. The way in which those interests are pursued generates different types of conflicts.

The phenomenon of graduate employability in Nigeria involves the role of different groups, namely the government, employers, the academia, employees (the graduates) and other peripheral groups with varying stakes and influences. The Scenario of the labour market in Nigeria at present is that graduates complain of unemployment. Employers on their part, argue that graduates are poorly prepared for work. The employers complain that a university degree certificate is no longer a guarantee for good communication skills or technical competence. As a result university graduates are commonly viewed as ‘half-baked’ (Dobalen, Oni & Adekola, 2000). The conflict here is that graduates see themselves as ready for work but employers see them as highly unprepared.

Employability is multifaceted (Paadi, 2014) and so also are its conflict grounds. There is the academia versus employers’ conflict. The employers feel that the universities have not been giving adequate specific and generic skills training to their students to make them employable. Conflict theory argues that employer should take responsibility of providing work place training for the graduates they employ and not to expect the university to provide all skills needed, even the skills specific to a particular firm.

Another area of conflict is the demand for experience by employers whereas the fresh graduate needs the employment to acquire experience. Similarly, in the area of skills acquisition,

there is a conflict in what skills students think are relevant in enhancing their employability. The skills students focus on are at variance with what the employers demand (Brentley preparedness studies, 2014).

Search theory

Terry (1998) search theory also provides another picture of the concept of graduate employability in Nigeria. The summary of the search theory is that while graduates are involved in searching for a good job, the firms or employers are also involved in searching for competent workers. This exercise probably accounts for the common scenario of strenuous screenings and multiple layers of interview of graduate applicants for job placement in the Nigerian current labour market. Although the theory is tagged unemployment search theory, it becomes relevant in understanding employability concept because ability to search skillfully is one of the components of employability (Watts 2006). For a successful search for employment within a reasonable time limit, the graduating student requires an appropriate blend of all the components of employability including emotional intelligence and resilience.

Empirical Review

Graduate Unemployment /Youth unemployment

Generally the term employment refers to people in who are engaged in some form of remunerated work while unemployment refers to those who are actively seeking paid jobs but are unable to secure one. Unemployment is a major challenge of fresh graduates world over. Hanapi and Nordin (2013) examined the phenomenon of graduate unemployment in Malaysia. They noted that in 2009, graduate unemployment figure stood at 3.7 percent. The researchers

were quick to add that this figure, though low, when compared with countries like the USA and other countries in Europe, it is however not an issue to be neglected.

Citing some official state sources, Hanapi and Nordin (2013) put the 2005 graduate unemployment figure at 59,000 and the figure of others who worked in fields that do not match their higher educational qualification at 30,000. Graduate unemployment in Malaysia according to the researchers is due largely to the weak quality of the graduates. They reported that the graduates do not have suitable skills and qualifications which meet the needs of the industries. Based on records of job vacancies and job placements in Malaysia in 2012, job vacancies kept increasing from year to year, showing that graduate unemployment in that circumstance was not due to lack of job opportunities but due largely to low quality of graduates (Hanapi & Nordin, 2013).

In Zimbabwe, Mafumbate, Gondo and Mutekwe (2014) investigated graduate employment challenges, using Zimbabwe Open University as a case study. The researchers found out that many graduates who undertook studies in higher education, anticipating employment in their field of specialization were disappointed as most employers were hesitant to employ highly qualified persons particularly with the economy still in depression. Many graduates end up taking any job they can find. The research also revealed that there was a mismatch in what the Universities produce and what the employers need or are demanding. Using a mix method of qualitative and quantitative research, Mafumbate, Gondo and Mutekwe (2014) reported that 30 percent of their respondents found suitable jobs in their area of specialization. 50 percent got jobs below their academic qualification, while 20% were still job searching. The study also reported that graduate unemployment in Zimbabwe is due mainly to limited job opportunities in specialized fields.

Elegbede and Shadare (2012) investigated graduate unemployment in Nigeria and noted that graduate unemployment in Nigeria was unknown before the late seventies. According to them, if there was anything as graduate unemployment in the country before 1972, it was presumably very minute and not due to lack of employment slots but due mainly to slow bureaucratic machinery for processing application for employment. They observed that at that time, there was a serious shortage of medical doctors, graduate teachers and Engineers although agriculture graduates were underutilized. The semblance of graduate unemployment began to rear its head only in the late seventies in Nigeria.

In their study which relied on both primary and secondary sources, Elegbede and Shadare (2012) enumerated the causes of graduate unemployment in Nigeria as; general economic recession, faulty government approach in addressing the recession, government's faulty manpower planning and expansion of educational facilities that unduly raised the expectations of Nigerian youths, the introduction of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme, imposition of a national minimum wage, unionism collective bargaining, use of capital intensive technology, graduate attitude to certain job and certain locations as well as rural urban migration. Elegbede and Shadare also identified that lack of necessary training for employment readiness has also contributed substantially to graduate unemployment in Nigeria in addition to lack of reliable data on which to base human resource and developmental planning. As these challenges keep lingering unresolved, graduate unemployment and general youth unemployment with their ripple effects kept mounting they concluded.

Ogunlusi (2015) in an in-depth look at unemployment/employment statistics in Nigeria noted that reliable data on the country's population is often hard to secure and that calculations based on unreliable data will also produce unreliable results. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) puts the unemployment figure in Nigeria at 7.5 percent as at the end of the first quarter of

2015. This figure according to Ogunlusi has been sharply criticised by many observers who believe it does not tally with the observable reality in the country. Some describe it as an unserious approach to deal with a national problem such as unemployment. To some other critics, the figure must have been a typographical error mistaking 7.5 for 75 percent.

The validity of this unemployment figure may remain questionable and contestable until the method of gathering the data used is assessed to determine how credible. Ogunlusi (2015) explained that the population considered for employment often described as the “economically active” segment of a population is made up of people between 15 and 64 years of age who are available for, and are actively seeking for employment. People who choose to stay at home, full-time students, the sick and invalid persons are not counted as unemployed. Ogunlusi explained further that the number of hours of work per week determines whether one is in full-time employment or not. The International Labour Organization (ILO) puts the benchmark at one hour a week. In other words if an individual in the economically active bracket works for at least one hour a week, he or she cannot be classified as unemployed. South Africa and Zimbabwe adopted the formula in calculating unemployment figures in (Ogunlusi, 2015).

In Nigeria a benchmark of 40 hours a week was adopted in 2001 by the National consultative committee on statistics. Since then only people who have worked up to 40 hours a week (the week preceding the survey) are counted as employed by the Nigerian standard. However the NBS, in September 2014, reviewed this benchmark in tune with the prevailing realities in the country (Ogunlusi, 2015).

With due consultation, the review fixed a new benchmark at 20 hours work per week to measure employment/unemployment in Nigeria. Applying this new approach, in the first quarter of 2015, as shown in table 4, 75 percent of the population of the country’s work force

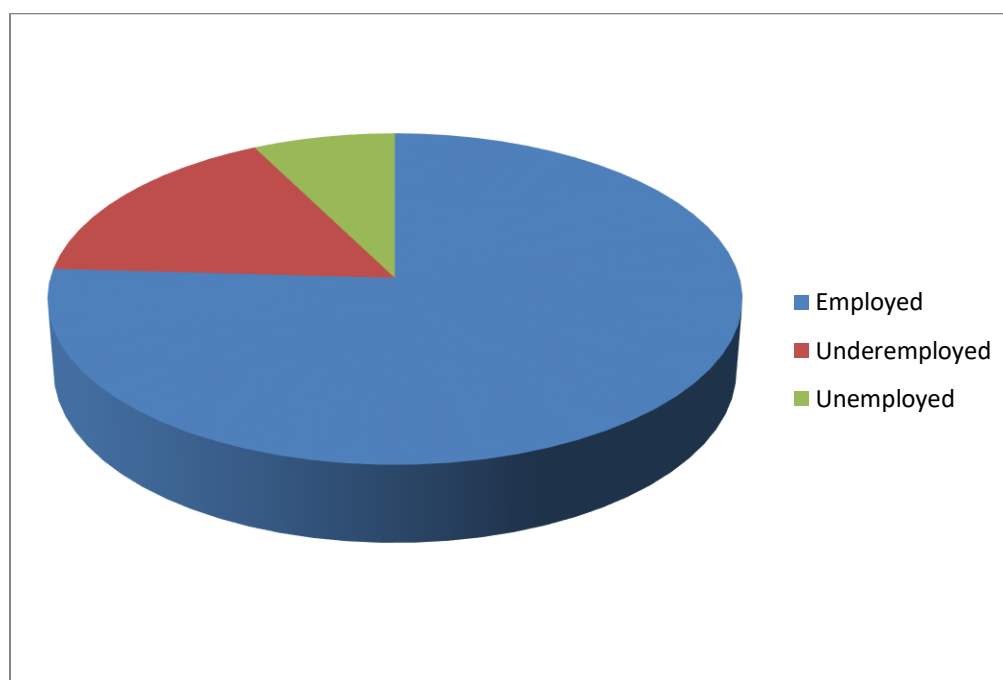
representing 55.7 million people, were employed. About 12.2 million of the people, representing 16.6 percent were underemployed, while only 7.5 percent of the work force is unemployed (Ogunlusi, 2015).

Table 4: Percentage of Employed, Underemployed and Unemployed People in Nigeria first quarter 2015

Employed	Underemployed	Unemployed
75.9%	16.6%	7.5%

Source: Ogunlusi (2015)

Figure 3: Employed, unemployed and underemployed population in Nigeria first quarter 2015



Source: Derived from Ogunlusi (2015)

In summary, Ogunlusi (2015) concluded that Nigerians are working but not necessarily in the formal or high productive job sectors. Just as in many other developing nations most

Nigerians cannot afford to be completely unemployed. The World Bank, according to Ogunlusi, remarked in its 2014 country Economic report that “those without good productivity employment, engage in various low productivity and low paying tasks for survival”. This implies that the real problem is underemployment and not unemployment. Going by this, it is unlikely to have a Nigerian graduate sitting at home doing absolutely nothing. He or she will offer to conduct tutorials for secondary school students, sell recharge cards or similar merchandise, engage in “Okada” business, just anything provided it is legitimate, including being an airport tout (Ogunlusi 2015). Whatever the analysis may look like, with the attendant arguments and divergent views, what is obvious is that graduate and youth unemployment though a worldwide phenomenon, remains a chronic problem in Nigeria.

In an effort to trace the root of graduate unemployment in Nigeria, Adebayo (2013) observed that following government deregulation of education in Nigeria there was a sharp rise in the number of educational institutions in the country. Adebayo observed further that this aggressive creation of more private and public funded institutions has not been matched with commensurate job creation strategy for graduates of these institutions. As tertiary institutions / universities turn out grew in geometric progression, job creation and the economy in general remained static and in some cases went into decline (Adebayo 2013; Ajufo, 2013). In 1986/87 graduate turnout in Nigeria was 73,339; it rose to 431,016 in 1996/97. In 2009 about 4.5 million graduates of tertiary institutions entered into the labour market without any hope of securing employment (Adebayo, 2013). In 2014, about 8.6 million graduates were released into the labour market (Akande, 2014).

Akinyemi, Ofem and Ikuenomore (2012) investigated graduate unemployment in Nigeria with specific focus on the mismatch between the knowledge and skills graduates are equipped with and the skills demanded by employers for the available jobs. The study revealed that this mismatch is the major cause of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. The study reported that in 2003, graduate unemployment figure was 25.6 percent. This rose to 40.3 in March 2009. The reported 2003 figure agrees with Debalen, Oni and Adekola (2000) who had earlier put graduate unemployment figure in Nigeria at about 25 percent. Dabalen, Oni and Adekola (2000) was based on the analysis of available labour statistics. They also interviewed 55 public enterprises, private firms, professional associations and non-governmental organizations. Their findings show in addition that the managers surveyed were of the consensus that:

- University graduates were poorly trained and unproductive on the job
- Graduate skills had drastically deteriorated over the past decade.
- Short-coming were particularly severe in oral and written communication as well as in applied technical skills.

But Ashimueze (2011) defers on graduate unemployment figure of 40.3 percent, arguing that going by available records, not more than 10 percent of graduates secured any graduate level jobs in 2009 and 2010. In other words over 80% of fresh graduates were unemployed. One can deduce from these figures that the country is in dire need of reliable data source especially as regards her population and its component groups. The fact however remains incontrovertible that graduate and youth unemployment figures are enormous.

Transition from the university into employment is a herculean task. The observable trend seems to suggest that graduates are often poorly prepared for their navigation into the work world resulting in a huge number of Nigerian university graduates roaming the streets searching for

job placements that have perpetually remain elusive (Ajiboye, Oyebanji & Awoniyi, 2013). The situation is further compounded as most of these graduate job seekers do not possess the skills needed for the available jobs. Against this background, Ajiboye, Oyebanji and Awoniyi (2013) undertook an investigation into the perception of university lecturers on the influence of various fields of study on the employability of graduates. Engaging a sample of 60 lecturers from five faculties in University of Ilorin, the researchers found out that; in the perception of university lecturers, higher education positively influence employability of the recipients. The degree of influence however varies across different fields of study. The study shows that science and technology field has the strongest influence on employability, followed by agriculture. A total number of seven fields of study were considered. Law had the least employability influence according to the findings.

Earlier, Adeyemo, Ogunleye, Oke and Adenle (2010) conducted a survey of factors determining the employability of science and technology graduates of polytechnics and universities in Nigerian labour market. Their findings show that science and technology graduates also suffer from the current general graduate unemployment. The study revealed however about 75 percent of job placements were influenced by the field of study/specialization showing a strong consonance with Ajiboye, Oyebanji and Awoniyi (2013). The study also revealed that about 54 percent of job placements were influenced by the reputation of the institution attended.

Adeyemo et al (2010) reported that up to 48 percent of first job placements were secured through the various institutions' management boards, while 45 percent got their first jobs through personal connections. Only about 8 percent of the respondents got their first employment by applying in response to advertised vacancies. The study reported that employers

surveyed, assessed science graduates as negligent, careless and aversive to work. This attitude the research report noted, negates the general approach of the scientist to work. This attitudinal disposition could also have influenced to some extent, the very stringent measures introduced into recruitment processes by employers in Nigeria.

In a study conducted to find out the employability of Nigerian universities' outputs in the labour market in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria, Effiong and Agboola (2014) used a sample of 1,200 respondents evenly drawn from public and private universities in the zone (600 each from public, and private universities). Based on the response of the employers of these graduates, the study found out that, the employability of these university graduates was below average. The ratings were similar irrespective of gender, or the possession of first or second degree. The study also discovered that there was no significant difference in the employability of the products of public and private universities in Nigeria. The researchers concluded that generally, Nigerian universities' outputs are not employable.

Edinyang, Odey and Gimba (2015) also investigated graduate unemployment in Nigeria. The researchers noted that graduate unemployment in Nigeria is born out of graduates' employability problem - A situation where graduates even with good grades are not suitable for immediate employment after graduation. The summary of the findings of Edinyang, Odey and Gimba (2015) was that:

- Employers complain of lack of requisite skills needed for available jobs - a consensus with Dabalen, Oni and Adekola (2000).
- Employability of Nigerian graduates is significantly influenced by academic discipline. This agreed with Adeyemo et al, 2010; Ajiboye, Oyebanji and Awoniyi (2013).

- Academic grade has no place in employability. This was in consonance with Effiong and Agboola (2014) and Adeyemo et al (2010) who reported that academic grade had only 3 percent influence on the employability of science students.

Ogege (2011) undertook a study of education and the paradox of graduate unemployment in Nigeria. The study noted that university education is universally the highest level of education and has the responsibility of equipping undergraduates with relevant knowledge and skills for high level manpower. This knowledge and intellectual skills are critical determinants of the economic growth and advancement of any society hence the importance attached to university education and its subsequent expansion in Nigeria. It is a paradox however that in spite of global expansion and growth in labour and productivity, Nigeria and other developing countries are experiencing unemployment. This is particularly disturbing as many of the employment seekers include many university degree holders (Ogege, 2011). But Tomlison (2012) shows that even the developed economies are experiencing graduate unemployment. Graduate unemployment may be an enormous challenge to Nigeria as a nation, it is nonetheless a global problem.

The Challenges of entering into the world of work after Graduation

Graduating from the university is a major milestone of success in a student's academic journey. While entering into the world of work implies securing paid work/employment on graduating from the university. This is the desired progression sequence by virtually all undergraduates. But *universityparent.com* (2013) observed that soon after the graduation ceremonies, the fresh graduate is confronted with the challenge of making multiple life decisions such as where to live. It has to be decided whether to live alone or with parents, relatives in specific locations in the same town as the alma-mater, or other cities targeted for job search. These are however life decisions that could be nerve-wracking (Chris, 2009). The fear of

making a wrong decision is often very strong amongst fresh graduates. This leaves a good number of them shying away from making any decision at all about their career and future resulting in them taking no steps. Jacky (2014) in a survey of 390 students, found that 72.5 percent of the respondents were afraid of making wrong choices in life after graduation.

To go for further studies, or to look for work has also been identified as a serious decision problem fresh graduates face (*Universityparent.com* 2013; Jacky, 2014). Most fresh graduates opt for graduate school mainly to avoid immediate entry into the current chaotic labour market (Farrell, 2010; *Universityparent.com*, 2013). In Nigeria for similar reasons, graduating students go into the one year National Youth Service with high enthusiasm knowing for sure that their entry into the labour market is put forward by another one year. Even medical students are reported to share the same fear of immediate entry into the labour market. Some are reported to even unofficially repeat the one year housemanship (Kesh, 2016).

The basic assumption is that the school world prepares students for the “real world” and that the real world is the world of work (Farrell, 2010; Teague, 2013; Wikiteam, 2014). Kiprono (2014), addressing Kenya graduating students said, we have been told to go to school so that we can be employed. But that is not the case anymore. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012) reported a substantial rise in global youth unemployment especially those in the age 18-24 bracket. A good number of university graduates belong to this age bracket. Saulsbury (2012) described the current American labour market as a notorious one. Gardener (2008) said the labour market (talking about the American situation) can only be defined as robust and chaotic. Vertreace (2009) summarized it as a nightmare economy while Hedges (2012) concluded that securing employment is an uphill task, and added that getting into the work is one of the biggest life challenges the graduating student has.

Dickinson (2012) observed that the current American economic condition into which young graduates are launched is scary. He noted that a future that looked so promising some years back had dimmed for most of the 1.7 million graduates set to be launched that year into the ruthless competition of a globalised world. Extending his observation beyond America, Dickinson noted that youth unemployment around the world has assumed an alarming dimension. The ‘Arab spring’ began with an unemployed Tunisian University graduate fruit vendor who set himself ablaze in late 2010 in protest against police harassment (Dickinson, 2012). Jobless youths in both rich and poor nations pose the greatest threat to domestic tranquility Dickinson added, and went further to point out that: in Britain, 1 out of every 5 youths aged 16-24 years is unemployed; in Italy 3 out of every 10 people aged 15-24 years have no jobs. In Greece the unemployment rate is 48 percent, while half of the eligible young people cannot find jobs. Dickinson noted further that in poor nations, youth unemployment statistics is more shocking because there is often no policy measure in place to mitigate the pain, yet birth rate keeps increasing.

Also focusing on employment, Ray (2010) observed that the whole process of recruiting and job hunting has changed because of the nature of the economy which is now characterized by impermanence. Ray noted that of the top 100 companies in 1900, only 16 were left in business by year 2000, and even fewer today. About 75 percent of viable companies in 1955 that could be classified as ‘Blue chips’ on the stock exchange list by today’s standard had disappeared totally by year 2005. Over 90 percent of all new job creation is currently done by small business and entrepreneurs. These facts Ray concluded, have very serious significant negative impact on job hunting. Securing employment in the prevailing circumstance is a fierce competition, described by Petkovic (2009) as a “dog-eat-dog” job search environment, which makes transition from school into the work an uphill battle.

Cassidy (2014) reported that around 18,500 United Kingdom (UK) and European Union (EU) full-time university graduates were assumed to be unemployed after completing their first degree in the 2012/13 academic year, while several thousands more took up primary jobs such as cleaners, shelf-stackers, office juniors, hospital porters, waiters, bartenders, road sweepers, window cleaners and many more. According to Cassidy, available data from Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) show that Arts and humanities graduates were more likely to be involved in such elementary occupations than those who studied sciences.

Millar (2014) however had a contrary view. Millar's argument was hinged on the study conducted by U.S. Commerce Department which found out that only 25 percent of the 15 million people who have Science, Technology, Engineer and Mathematics (STEM) degrees work in STEM jobs. The report added that less than 58 percent of all the people working in STEM fields hold STEM degrees. Based on this report, Millar deduced that at least in the USA one does not necessarily need a STEM degree for a STEM job. And if one has one, it will not guarantee a job in the field of STEM. Matthew (2005) noted that the harsh reality of life after graduation was such that one out of three students who start work when they finished their degree, end up in non-graduate jobs. Matthew reported that a research by HESA confirmed that the feeling amongst many students is that they were being compelled to take jobs which had little or nothing to do with their courses.

Similarly, Guise (2014) noted that in year 2011, 53.6 percent of University graduates under age 25 years were out of work or unemployed in USA. 48 percent of those employed, secured their employment in job areas that require less than a University degree in terms of qualification. Guise added that the number of University graduates that ended up working in retail and hospitality outfits was six times higher than initially envisaged. This employment

scenario rules out completely the applicability of the area of specialization of the young graduate except in a few specialized areas like medicine and engineering.

Owusu (2014) observed that the problem of unemployment in Ghana among University graduates and other tertiary institutions has reached a breaking point. The various public and private Universities turn out thousands of graduates each year who are unable to find job placements, to the consequence that most of the graduates become deeply frustrated that the graduate job market is choked or that the course they studied is not in tone with employers' requirements. Owusu summed up the situation as a hopeless one for the fresh graduate. However University graduates and graduates from other equivalent tertiary institutions in Ghana who are yet to find job placement have closed ranks and formed the unemployed Graduates Association of Ghana (UGAG). The figure of unemployed graduates in Ghana is estimated at 600,000 (Owusu, 2014).

Unemployment constitutes the major challenge of graduating students in Nigeria though a global phenomenon. Chilee (2012) investigated unemployment and the problem of the Nigerian graduate. Relying on data from National Manpower Board and Federal Bureau of Statistics, Chilee reported that only about 10 percent of university and other tertiary institutions released annually into the labour market were able to secure paid employment in the period under observation. This agrees with Kolawole (2012) that not more than 10 percent of university graduates were able to secure employment in 2008 and 2009. But that the rate of graduate unemployment in Nigeria is estimated at 25 percent according to Chilee's source may still require further verification.

Graduate unemployment in Nigeria is very disturbing and confusing, while unemployed graduates complain of lack of jobs, most employers complain of graduates' lack of employable

skills, explaining that graduates are poorly prepared and thus unsuitable for employment. Employers complain that today's graduates are poorly trained and their requisite skills have deteriorated greatly making them unproductive on the job (Chilee, 2012). Employers claim further that, the incompetence of fresh graduates becomes annoying where they manifest in severe shortcomings in verbal /written communication or in applied technical skills. They said in many cases, they (the employers) organize remedial courses for new employees. This measure they said increases the company's operating cost and reduces their profitability and competitiveness, hence they prefer to source for experienced and suitable hands even where it requires sourcing them from outside the country. Added to this is the fact that companies fear losing any employee they have trained and so prefer a prospective employee who is already trained at entry point (Chilee, 2012). Graduates today do not often seek to practice what they studied because in most cases, they do not meet the professional requirements. They therefore accept any offer they can find provided a form of remuneration is attached Chilee added.

Imeli (2013) opined that the causes of graduate unemployment in Nigeria are substantially the product of the consequences of government inadequate effort in the area of policy and programmes targeted at achieving sustainable, inclusive economic growth and full employment. Imeli added that many of the other causes of graduate unemployment in the country as enumerated by Elegbede and Shadare (2012) are actually symptoms of an ageing and declining system of Education that is inconsistent and unable to pace-up with the current realities. The purpose of university education in Nigeria had been to produce graduates for government ministries, parastatals and other agencies/departments. Little or nothing is in place concerning the production of graduates for the private sector, entrepreneurship and self employment.

Preparing graduates for public jobs alone is faulty, especially in the 21st century economic setting. Our educational system is too rigid and too resistant to change Imeli observed.

Imeli (2013) asserted further that, the blame for graduate unemployment in Nigeria is not limited to the government and the university system alone. Graduates themselves are similarly implicated in the unemployment saga as they fail to take responsibility for their learning and self development when the government and the university fail in their own duties/expectations. This opinion is logical especially if the reasoning is for the graduate not to lose out completely. It is equally logical however, to say that if the graduates had enough clues for personal self development, they probably would not have enrolled in any university to expend time, money and energy in pursuit of the same target they already know how to reach. Graduate unemployment in Nigeria is a nebulous issue with adverse effects on a very sizeable number of families nationwide. The flurry of opinions, views and comments cannot therefore be less divergent and contentious.

Describing youth unemployment in Nigeria as a chronic problem, Nwoku (2013) like Ogege (2011) and Kolawole (2012) noted that every year, thousands of graduates are turned out of our universities without any prospect of employment. Nwoku noted further that the streets are littered with youth hawkers who ordinarily should have found gainful employment in some enterprises or be demonstrating their resourcefulness and skills if the appropriate enabling environment is provided. To make ends meet, many university graduates now engage in commercial motor cycle riding while many others subsist as news paper vendors, photographers, and such similar trades (personal encounter). Nwoku acknowledged this trend as he remarked that given the insufficient job opportunities in the formal sector, young people in the country, (graduates inclusive) are forced to engage in one form of casual work or the other, leading to massive underemployment.

Even though reliable data on Nigeria's population, employment and unemployment are hard to come by, Nwoku (2013), Imeli (2014), and Ogunlusi (2015) put youth unemployment figure in Nigeria at about 64 million and underemployment at 1.6 million. They identified the major causes of graduate unemployment in Nigeria as the consequence of outdated school curricula and lack of employable skills. Nwoku reported that some observers and critics have argued that as far as the formal sector is concern, the average Nigerian graduate is not employable because he or she does not possess the skills needed by employers in the sector. The argument extends further that the course content of most tertiary institutions in Nigeria, lack entrepreneurial components that could enable graduates become job creators rather than job seekers.

Apart from aligning with this view point, Nwoku (2013) added that graduate unemployment in Nigeria is also largely due to corruption that has crept into our education system whereby many university graduates now parade certificates they cannot defend. Nwoku noted that corruption has permeated the entire social structure of Nigeria and has robbed the country of developing a vibrant economic base. Consequently, there is no vibrant manufacturing sector which has the capacity to absorb unemployed graduates or unemployed youths in general. Even as corruption seems the biggest problem in Nigeria, affecting almost every segment of the society including university education, other factors such as weak industrial support, graduate laziness, poor skill acquisition and very poor funding of education all fuel graduate unemployment in Nigeria (Uzochukwu 2015).

Emphasising the phenomenon of poor funding, Okon (2014), Uzochukwu (2015) and Abah (2015) noted that while UNESO recommends 26 percent of national budgetary allocation to education to quicken development, Nigeria's expenditure on Education over the years has

always been less than 10 percent whereas our neighbouring country like Ghana commits 27 percent of her national budget to her education sector (Okon, 2014). Some other African countries like South Africa, Botswana, Tanzania, Malawi and Tunisia have similarly surpassed the limit recommended by UNESCO in their budgetary allocation for Education (Abah, 2015). Consequently only very little could be given in terms of quality of attention in all levels of education in Nigeria.

It is pertinent to add here that budgetary allocation is one thing while it is completely another issue if the said meager amount budgeted ever got to the institutions they were meant for as a result of weak monitoring and endemic corruption in the country, If there had been effective monitoring, and direct application of the funds for the purpose for which they were meant whether 26 percent or not, the sector would have fared better (Abah, 2015).

Awareness and Perception

Awareness and perception are two closely related constructs that tend to overlap when being defined. Some see the constructs as two sides of the same coin. However there are still some basic differences between the two. While awareness implies having the knowledge of the existence of a thing, situation or any phenomena at all, perception involves the assessment, judgment or evaluation of the situation, thing or the phenomena based on one's knowledge of it.

Though constructs are generally difficult to define, Reinhardt, Mletzko, Sloep and Drachsler (2015) defined awareness as the cognitive ability of a person to discern, decipher and judge a given phenomenon with reference to the background knowledge about the object and situation of the phenomenon in question. Poole (2016) defined perception as how your awareness is shaped and how you feel it in your mind's eye. A similar definition says perception is the mind's way of understanding events within consciousness (Cosmar, 2016). Points of

overlap could be noticed in the above definitions. Situation awareness theory and Huemer's theory of perception depict the inter-relatedness and the salient distinction between perception and awareness.

Situation awareness was identified during the World War I by Oswald Boelke who realized the importance of gaining awareness of the enemy before the enemy gains a similar awareness of you (Santon, Chambers & Piggott, 2001). The theory points out that for people to maintain an adequate awareness about a system/phenomenon, the development of events within and around the phenomenon must be tracked as they unfold. Situation awareness as explained by the theory is the appropriate awareness of a situation or event.

Awareness implies to directly know and perceive, feel or take cognizance of events. In other words, it is a state of being conscious of something (Wikipedia, 2017). This definition shows the inter-relatedness between awareness and perception. Huemer's theory of perception suggests that perception is directed awareness of external reality leading to the knowledge of that reality without inference to previous experience or knowledge (Idiegbonyon-ose, Nkiko & Osinulu (2016). This has however come under strong criticism because it implies that perception (the interpretation/ evaluation) of the object of awareness should be "mind-independent" (Crane, 2005).

Egbule (2009) described perception as the ability of the individual to learn about his surrounding through his sense organs, and that what the individual perceives depends on the previous experience and what the present needs and wishes are as he or she faces the situation. It follows therefore, that it is the perception the graduating student develops about the challenges of his new status that leads to rational thinking and understanding of the situation and how to forge ahead. Perception, Egbule added, is a very critical factor in the process of problem solving and very significant in the development of imaginative thinking and reasoning. It is the

emotional force which helps in building our motivational tendencies to deal with challenges instead of giving up and resorting to some forms of psychological defensiveness. It is therefore ideal to find out the perception graduating students have about the wow as they prepare to commence their transition into it. Their perception no doubt will often influence their attitude and the eventual outcome of the transition process, which as Moon (2009) noted could range from smooth, to rough or somewhere in – between.

Perception of graduating students about the challenges of youth unemployment

Tomlinson (2012) investigated students and graduate perception and approach to future employment and employability in the United Kingdom. The study revealed that in the past, undergraduates were perceived as potential key players in the drive towards all round advancement of their nation and therefore demand sound skill-sets and advanced technical knowledge. They were seen as well preserved core of technocrats, professionals and managers. This recognition Tomlinson reported, has been lost due to the inter-play of massive expansion of higher educational institutions, massive production of graduates, and massive contraction of available jobs as a result of technological advancement and globalization. The perception students now have, based on the current economic reality is that; the labour market engenders high risks and uncertainties. They perceive the labour market as a hazardous process that requires astute planning, sound preparation and foresight as graduating with relevant credentials no longer guarantee graduate level job (Tomlinson, 2012).

The labour market is highly competitive. Graduating students must package themselves well, equipped with not only academic credentials but also with personal and inter-personal behavioural attributes if they desire to make it into the WOW (Tomlinson, 2012). In addition, the study noted that the perception of students about their employability is subjective. It is often

the product of their self concept. Tomlinson concluded that the fact that students show interest in life-long learning indicates that they perceive employability as a life-long exercise.

Accepting that the real world is the world of work, Tomlinson (2008) undertook an investigation involving 53 final year undergraduate students to examine the way higher education students perceive the role of their credentials in relation to their future employability. The finding revealed that students perceived their academic qualifications as having a declining role in shaping their employment outcomes. They also perceived that the graduate labour market is congested and very competitive. While academic credentials are still seen as relevant in their employability, students see a compelling need for additional impetus. Moreau and Leathwood (2007) had noted in employability discourse that the general assumption that the level-playing field in which graduates' credentials, (skills and personal qualities) are key to their success in securing job placements no longer holds. Instead social class, ethnicity, university attended and many more, all now significantly influence opportunities available. This observation falls in line with what Okon (2014) described as personal connection being more vital than best results in Nigeria when it comes to securing graduate level employment in the present dispensation.

Perrone and Vickers (2003), in their research work titled "life after graduation as a very uncomfortable world: an Australian case study", reported that:

- Some University students may be completely unaware of the challenges awaiting them after graduation. (Awareness)
- Students' beliefs and expectations about the employment opportunities and privileges that awaited them after graduation led to disappointments and regrets. (Perception)
- Students tend to procrastinate with regards to life-altering decisions surrounding the direction of their career and employment future. (Attitudinal disposition)

It is clear from the above that the research report centered on the awareness, perception and the attitudinal disposition of their subjects. But in all, Perrone and Vickers concluded that life after

graduation can be fraught with stress, anxiety, shock, fear, uncertainty, loss, loneliness, depression and low self worth. These are feelings according to the researchers not routinely anticipated by undergraduates. In other words as graduating students (fresh graduates in Perrone & Vickers, 2003) never anticipated the challenges that confronted them after graduation, they became prone to stress, fear, anxiety shock, depression and many other related psychological consequences.

According to Atfield and Purcell (2012), research reports on employers' perceptions of labour supply have consistently shown that graduate recruiters generally have a positive impression of graduates overall abilities. They also noted some deficiencies in the capacities and competencies of many job seekers and recruits, particularly in the area of business awareness and capacity for self-management. Atfield and Purcell reported that similar research findings by Institute of Director (IOD) in 2007 noted that only about 25 percent graduate recruiters believe that fresh graduates were well prepared for employment. 40 percent thought they were unprepared. Their employability skill was particularly lacking in areas such as team-working, IT and STEM generally. They noted that various attempts have been made to establish which skills are most sought after by employers and the most useful for graduates. Consequently, Atfield and Purcell (2012) undertook an investigation into graduating students' perception of the skills they have to offer and the skills employers seek. Their findings revealed that the list of skills provided by the students, while corresponding largely with general employability skills needed for entry-level graduate employment, a slight discrepancy was noticeable between the students' self evaluation of their skills and employment readiness when compared with employers' reported opinions about the skills and employability of new graduates. For instance, students identified that:

- Strong communication skill (both written and spoken)

- Strong work ethics and
- Ability to work in a team

are vital employability skills they need. Interestingly, while students are of the belief that they possess these skills, employers judge them as most deficient in these same areas, the research finding revealed.

Atfield and Purcell (2012) also reported that students are aware that the possession of specific “soft-skills are important to discriminate among similarly qualified applicants. Students in vocational areas such as medicine, law and education believe they have more advantage when looking for work. The research revealed that over 80 percent of students about to graduate think they have the skills employers are seeking for in recruitment for the job of their choice. But only about 1/3 of the students felt they will readily secure the kind of jobs they wanted when they graduate. While 2/3 of the sampled students are not so sure they will readily find the kind of jobs they like and for which they possess the required skills.

Concerning long term career plan about 2/3 of the survey respondents believe they have the ability to achieve their long-term goals. Many of the students have short-term strategies of seeking employment in unrelated areas to their career aspiration, and show readiness to accept whatever job offer they can find. Another short-term strategy is going straight to graduate school to delay entry into the labour market, the findings revealed.

The conclusion of Atfield and Purcell (2012) is that the employment challenge of fresh graduates will persist whether their perception of the wow is correct or not. To secure employment will depend on the demand for labour in the economic and occupational context they find themselves as they graduate. Going by the current global economic trend, this conclusion will remain hard to fault.

Using a sample of 1019 respondents in an investigation into the perception of students as regards the importance of employability skills as provided in business undergraduate programme, Jackson (2013) discovered that in the perception of students, the skills they consider as important align closely with that of the employers and other stakeholders concerned with graduate employability. Jackson however noted that despite widespread initiatives in employability skill provision in higher education, gaps between graduate workplace performance and employers' expectations continue to persist. As a result of this, some research findings tend to conclude that fresh graduates are grossly lacking in employability skills.

In an attempt to unearth the root cause of this persistent gap between employability skills of students and the expectation of employers, Grasgreen (2013) noted that students often feel qualified in their own eyes as they graduate from school. They see themselves as capable of doing well in the wow. But from the synopses of articles on employment readiness of new graduates, Grasgreen found that a number of research, findings, including the findings reported in "Bridge that Gap: Analyzing the students skills index", all identified varying degrees of the gap in question.

Analyzing the findings reported in "Bridge that Gap" Bailey (2013) revealed that just 39 percent of the 1000 employers surveyed see fresh graduates as prepared for the WOW. But 50 percent of the 2001 student respondents think they are ready. Over 70 percent of the students think they have the required ability to communicate well. But only 44 percent of hiring authorities believe fresh graduates could communicate with authority figures or clients effectively. Managers and hiring authorities identified "prioritizing", (both resources and time) as extremely important basic skill in the WOW. They observed that this quality is grossly lacking among young graduate entrants into employment fields. This has lead many observers to

conclude that students seem to focus more on developing less important skills and end up graduating “over confident and underprepared” as well as not being aware of how unprepared they are (Bailey, 2013).

Similarly, Bentley Preparedness Studies (2014) in an on-line survey involving 3,149 respondents and about 307 questions covering 11 different themes attempted to find out how stake holders define career preparedness and how this definition shape fresh graduates in readiness for the wow. The findings of the research amongst other things revealed that three skills (integrity, professionalism and positive attitude) which business decision makers and corporate hirers rate as most important were significantly rated lower in importance by students and fresh graduates.

Stakeholders across the survey identified lack of preparedness as a real problem and blame higher education system for not doing enough to prepare graduates for the wow. The study thus slightly disagreed with Jackson (2013) that the perception of students and that of employers on skills vital for employment closely align. But to some extent, agrees with Grasgreen (2013) and Bailey (2013) that fresh graduates believe they are equipped with relevant skills for the WOW as the preparedness studies reported that only 50 percent of the student respondents share this belief.

Paadi (2014) also investigated the perception of what employability skills are necessary to enhance Human Resource management graduates prospects in securing placement in the labour market. The investigation which focused on South Africa revealed that, generic skills (sometimes called “character skills” or “soft skills”) are most sought after in the work place. Paadi noted that there is no correlation between the skills needed in the labour market to contribute to the economy of the country and those produced by Higher Education Institutions,

resulting in shortage of skills in some areas such as the Engineering field in South Africa. The situation has consequently placed univers

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is designed to examine peer pressure, self-concept, and emotional intelligence as predictors of academic achievement of secondary school students in North Central zone of Nigeria. This chapter examines the following:

- a. Research Design
- b. Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques
- c. Instrumentation
- d. Procedure for Data Collection
- e. Data Analysis Techniques

Research Design

The research design for this study is descriptive survey using correlational study type. A correlational study is used in psychological research to identify the relationship or association between/ among two or more variables. In correlational study, data are collected in order to establish a relationship between variables without necessarily deciding which variable is the cause and which is the affect.

In this study, correlational method was used to examine peer pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and academic achievement of secondary school students in North central zone, Nigeria. The correlational method was used for this study because it will enable the researcher to interpret accurately the variables and their inter-relationships.

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study covered all secondary schools in the North central geo-political zone of Nigeria. The zone comprise of Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger, Plateau states and Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Each state in Nigeria has three Senatorial Districts, while the FCT has only one senatorial district. There is a total population of 1,232,367 secondary school students. The target population of the study consisted of all the 985,230 senior secondary school II students in North-Central Education zone, Nigeria. The sample size for the study composed of 1,500 SS2 students, drawn from an intact class of a randomly selected 50 secondary schools in North-Central Education Zone. These figures represented 2.5% of total population of SS 2 students in the zone (Adopted from The Research Advisors' Sample Size Table, 2006). The sample distribution composed of 750 male and 750 female students while on the basis of school type, the sample distribution composed of 750 public secondary school students (SSII) and 750 private secondary school students (SSII).

The method of sampling employed in this study was multistage sampling technique. This is a technique in which more than one sampling method was applied in selecting sample at different stages (Wushishi & Aaron, 2012). The first stage comprises of the selection of three states and FCT for the study through simple random sampling, from six states of the North Central Zone and FCT, namely: Kwara, Kogi, Niger and FCT because they were crises free part of North Central Nigeria at the time of this research. At the second stage, a total of five (5) schools were drawn from each senatorial district, and a total sample of 50 schools was drawn for the study using stratified sampling technique. In the third stage, SSS II Students were

purposively selected. Finally in the fourth stage, thirty (30) participants were selected from senior secondary school two (SS2) in each of the selected schools. By this process, 1,500 secondary school adolescent students were selected to participate in the study using stratified sampling method.

Instrumentation

The instruments used for this study include questionnaires titled:

- (i) Adopted version of Peer Pressure Inventory (PPI) developed by Santor, Messervey and Kusumaker, (2000) to measure peer pressure.
- (ii) Adapted version of Akinboye's Adolescence personality Data Inventory (APDI) sub scale (Adapted by Tambawal, 2001) was used to measure students' self-concept, (appendix. B)
- (iii) Adopted version of The International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) measuring scale related to "Emotional Intelligence" developed by Barchard, (2001) was used to measure students' emotional intelligence;
- (iv) Researcher's designed multiple choices English Language test was used to measure students' academic achievement.

(i) Peer Pressure Inventory (PPI):

This was developed for measuring Peer pressure, Peer conformity and Popularity of adolescents. The Peer Pressure Inventory (PPI) was designed to assess the perception of peer pressure in a number of domains, including peer social activities, misconduct and conformity to norms.

It is suitable in screening large numbers of adolescents efficiently. Its validation was done in the study titled "Peer influence, perceived self – efficacy, family style and parental

monitoring as correlates Bullying Behaviours Among In- school Adolescents in South- west Nigeria” by Hammed, Odedare, and Okoiye. The population for the study consisted of two thousand, three hundred (2,300) In-school adolescents (male and female) in secondary schools in South Western Nigeria. Responses are made on a 5- point scale. Responses to all II item are summed up to yield final composite score with a range from 10 to 48.

Results show that all measures constructed for the study were internally consistent. It has amplified scoring format. The inventory is a Likert scale where the response options are weighted 1 to 5 such as strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D); Not certain/don't know (D/K); Agree (A); strongly Agree (S.A)

(ii) Adolescent Personal Data Inventory APDI (Subscale A)

The Adolescent Personal Data Inventory is a general self perception scale that was developed by Akinboye and validated in 1985. There are ten inventories in Test Folder of APDI. The tests include: (1). Self-concept, (2) Study behaviour (3) Behavioral health attributes (4) Psychopathology (5) Career aspirations (6) Reproductive behaviour (7) Ethical behaviour (8) Interest (9) Creative Thinking Patterns (10) Personal-social behaviour characteristics of adolescents. The researcher used the adapted version of APDI (sub-scale A) by Tambawa (2001) which consists of 30 items. These items were generated from the products of some clinical interviews with adolescent in some Nigeria secondary schools as well as from the existing literature.

The inventories have been used in Nigeria and many parts of Africa for the past three decades, and the test have been found useful and effective for youth development programmes, counseling services and other adolescent and youth related services. The wide spread use of the inventory in the Nigeria school context was an indication that adolescents between the age of 12

and 21 could take the test with adequate explanation of the pretest instructions. The researcher adopted the instrument adapted by Tambawal (2001) on personality inventory. The 30 items was checked and validated by a group of experts and the quality of the items and the instrument was adjudged to possess content validity and was accepted and adopted for use in this study.

The reliability of this instrument by (Tambawal, 2001), was obtained through the measure of stability method. The results of the test re-test produced a fairly high co-efficient Alpha of 0.874, and this was accepted for use in this study.

Administration followed the same pattern. The test- retest method of reliability was employed to determine the reliability of this instruction. The index of the reliability was found to be 0.78 which was found suitable to be used for this study.

In a study carried out by Salami (2008), using Akinboye's (1985), Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI). There are 30 items in this subscale. The subscale was constructed on a 5 – point scale (1-5) such that students were to rate themselves on the extent to which the statement are descriptive of their study behaviour. The instrument has internal consistency reliability of 0.87, using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. The construct validity of the instrument was 0.75 when correlated with scores from Bakare's study Habit Inventory. Also he assessed psychopathology through subscale of Akinboye's (1985) Adolescents Personal Data Inventory of (APDI). Section D which consists of a total of 30 items describes the abnormal behaviours in adolescents. The test has a five point Likert scale that ranged from 1 to 5 such that the students were to rate themselves on the extent to which the statement are descriptive of their psychopathological behaviour. The higher the students' scores on this sub- scale the higher their psychopathology. The internal consistency of the scale was found to be 0.87 by computing the cronbach's (APDI) constructed by Akinboye (1985). It is self – perception scale, which taps

academic, social personal ability of an individual. It has 30 items and test retest reliability of 0.79.

This Self- Concept Scale (SCS) was made up of statement on five point Likert scale and the respondents were required to respond to all the items based on their degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement. The items were rated positively, negatively or not sure as indicated below:

Very true of me

Mostly true of me

Partly true of me

Mostly untrue of me

Very untrue of me

This instrument was adapted with modification. The responses to the items by the respondents would be added together to know their self concept score on the scale. Any score between 91 and 150 was classified as positive self-concept, while scores between 30 and 90 would indicate negative self concept.

(iii) International Personality Item Pool (IPIP):

The adopted International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) scale was designed to measure students' emotional intelligence. The instrument was developed by Barchard (2001) measuring seven components potentially related to "Emotional intelligence". These components include: positive expressivity; Negative Expressivity; Attending to Emotions; Emotion-Based Decision – Making; responsive joy; responsive distress and Empathic concern. In each of the above components, there are phrases describing people's behaviours of which response options include:

1. Very inaccurate
2. Moderately inaccurate
3. Neither inaccurate nor accurate
4. Moderately accurate
5. Very accurate

Scoring: This is how the IPIP Scale is scored: For positive keyed items, the response “very accurate” is assigned a value of 1 “moderately inaccurate” a value of 2, “Neither inaccurately nor accurate” a value of 3, “moderately accurate” a value of 4 and very accurate” a value of 5. For negative keyed item, the response “very inaccurate” is assigned a value of 5, “moderately inaccurate” a value of 4, “Neither inaccurate nor accurate” a value of 3, moderately inaccurate a value of 2 and “very accurate” a value of 1.

The assigned numbers for the items were summed up to obtain a total scale score. To interpret individuals’ scores, one might calculate the mean and standard deviation (SD) for a sample of persons. Scores outside the range can be interpreted as “low” or “high” emotional intelligence.

iv. Academic Achievements: Multiple choices English language objective tests.

In order to measure academic achievement of the students, practicing graduate English Language teachers from different secondary schools were engaged in generating test items for the achievement test. Each of them constructed twenty-five (25) objectives test on different set of topics in English language for the Senior Secondary School II class based on the topic covered. The researcher then pooled the items and drafted twenty-five questions from them. After the test had been drafted by the researcher it was given to English Language Specialist to

vet. This was to ensure that the test was content valid. Each question was scored 2 marks to give a total score of 50 marks. The respondents had only 25 minutes to answer the questions.

Some previous studies that had used criterion scores for academic performance included Akande (2000) who obtained criterion scores from students' performance in tests given on English, Mathematics and Biology which were constructed by the teachers using split half reliable method to determine the co-efficient, she found it to be 0.755, 0.713 and 0.81 respectively. Ijanaku (2009) obtained criterion score from students' performance in tests given in English language which were constructed by teachers. The items were administered to the subjects as a group. The average age was sixteen years. After the instruction on the English test was explained to them, the subject answered the questions. The time limit for answering the question was 50 minutes. When the time was up, the papers were collected. There was less instruction during the second administration. The test re-test method was used to determine the suitability of this instruction.

The four instruments that were used in this research work are all standardized tests that had been used by various researchers and had gained Nation – wide administration. For instance, The Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI) was developed by Akinboye (1985) and had ever been proved to be effective by various researchers ever since then. This subscale was a general self-perception scale, that was developed to assess some of the social, family, biological, personal, psychological and educational factors affecting the behaviour of Nigerian adolescent due to the under spread use of inventory in the Nigerian schools context. There was an indication that adolescents between age of 12 and 21 could take the test with adequate explanation of the pretest instructions. This self-concept scale was made up of statement on a

five point Likert scale and the respondents were required to respond to all the items based on their degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement.

Copies of the instruments were given to the researcher's supervisor and test experts in the Departments of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin to vet the appropriateness, the length and quality of the items. After the validity has been established, the instruments were used to collect the required information for the study.

Reliability is the consistency, accuracy, stability and trust- worthiness of a measuring instrument or scores obtained. Stangor (2004) as cited in Nuhu, (2013) described reliability as an extent to which an instrument is free from random errors, thus measuring overtime the variables of interest. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability index and the internal consistency of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha is a statistic which is used as a measure of the reliability of a psychometric instrument. Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient of consistency and measures how well a set of variables or items measures a single, undimensional latent construct.

Cronbach's alpha was generally increased when the correlations between the items increased. For this reason, the coefficient is also called the internal consistency or the internal consistency reliability test (Nuhu, 2013).

Procedure for Data Collection

A letter of introduction to Secondary school Principals was obtained from the Social Sciences Education Department, University of Ilorin. The researcher obtained the data in two months. Two research assistants were trained on questionnaire administration. Therefore, copies of questionnaires were administered and retrieved at the end of the exercise by the research assistants. This is to ensure efficient handling of the instrument used.

Ethical Consideration: Due to the sensitive nature of the study, the researcher sought the permission of the respondents and assured them of confidentiality before administering the questionnaire. Furthermore, no respondent was compelled to give response to the questionnaires; the distribution of questionnaires was determined by the willingness of the respondents. Also, in the administration of questionnaires as regards this study, the right to privacy of respondents was put into utmost consideration and was not infringed upon. Conclusively among others, permission was sought from various authorities in consulted secondary schools in North-central, Nigeria.

Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive and Multiple Regression methods were used. Multiple Regressions is a statistical technique that allows prediction or inference of a score of one variable on other on the basis of the scores on several other variables. It shows a relationship among several independent or predictor variables and a dependent or criterion variables. Multiple regression is, therefore, an extension of the strength of relationship among variables, whereby the stronger the correlation the closer the scores to the regression line, and the more accurate the prediction.

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the demographic data of the respondents, while research hypotheses 1-4 were analyzed using multiple regression statistical analysis. The categorical variables (gender and school type) were turned to dummy variables before being used for Regression analysis. These sets of data were then subjected to statistical analysis through the use of SPSS using Multiple Regressions at level of significance 0.05. All the hypotheses was tested at 0.05 alpha levels of significance.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter presents the analysis and results of data collated. Descriptive statistics were used to ensure the demographic data of the respondents while multiple regression results were used to test the null hypothesis generated

Demographic Description of Data

The results of demographic description of data are presented below:

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
School Type	Public (SSS II)	750	50.0
	Private (SSS II)	750	50.0
	Total	1500	100.0
Gender	Male	750	50.0
	Female	750	50.0
	Total	1500	100

Results in Table 4 reveal that out of the 1500 students that participated in the study, 750 representing (50.0%) of the students were from public schools, while 750 representing (50.0%) of the students were from private schools. This shows that there were equal representation from public and private schools in this study. Also from Table 4, out of the 1,500 students who participated in the study, 750 representing (50.0%) of the students were male, while 750 representing (50.0%) of the students were female. This implies that there were equal representations of both male and female respondents in the sample involved in the research study.

Having presented the demographic data, the researcher proceeded to answer the research questions using descriptive statistics.

Answering of Research Questions

Four research questions were raised; research questions 1 was answered with the use of percentage, while research questions 2 to 4 that had corresponding hypotheses were tested with the use of the Multiple Regression statistical tool.

Research Question 1: *What is the general level of the peer-pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and academics achievement of Secondary School Students involved in the study?*

In order to answer this research question, respondents' responses on the Peer Pressure, Self-concept, and Emotional intelligence questionnaire and achievement test were collated. The summary of the results are as shown in table 5.

Table 5: Level of Peer-Pressure, Self-Concept, Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement

Variable	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score
Peer-Pressure				
Positive	40-100	1,455	97.0	88.32
Negative	0-39	45	3.0	
Total		1,500	100.0	
Self-concept				
Positive	40-100	1,445	96.0	91.02
Negative	0-39	55	4.0	
Total		1,500	100.0	
Emotional Intelligence				
High	40-100	1,475	98.4	201.38
Low	0-39	25	1.6	
Total		1,500	100.0	
Academic Achievement				
Passed	40-100	1,316	87.7	63.65
Failed	0-39	184	12.3	
Total		1,500	100.0	

Results in Table 5 revealed that, out of the 1500 students that participated in the study, 1,455 representing (97.0%) had positive peer-pressure with the mean score of 88.32, while 45 representing (3.0%) had negative peer-pressure. This means that the total points scored by 1,455 respondents were above the mean score while the total points obtained by the remaining 45 (3%) respondents were below the mean score. This implies that the peer pressure among secondary school students in North-Central, Nigeria was classified as positive peer pressure which is normal for the students to survive in the school environment. Also from Table 5, out of the 1,500 students that participated in the study, 1,445 representing (96.0%) had positive self concept with the mean score of 91.02, while 55 representing (4.0%) had negative self-concept. This means that the total points scored by 1,445 respondents were above the mean score while the total points obtained by the remaining 55 (4%) respondents were below the mean score. This implies that, the self-concept among secondary school students in North-Central, Nigeria was classified as positive self-concept which is normal for the students to survive in the school environment.

From Table 5 out of the 1500 secondary school students that participated in the study, 1475 representing (98.4%) had high level of emotional intelligence with the mean score of 201.38, while 25 representing (1.7%) had low level emotional intelligence. This means that the total points scored by 1,475 respondents were above the mean score while the total points obtained by the remaining 25 (1.7%) respondents were below the mean score. This implies that, the emotional intelligence among secondary school students in North-Central, Nigeria was classified as high emotional intelligence which is normal for the students to survive in the school

environment. Also, from Table 5, out of the 1,500 secondary school students that participated in the study, the result indicated that 1,316 representing 87.7% of the secondary school students in North Central, Nigeria passed the academic achievement test with the mean score of 63.65, while 184 representing 12.3% failed the academic achievement test. This shows that the majority of the secondary school students sampled pass the academic achievement test.

Having answered research questions, the researcher proceeded to test the null hypotheses generated for the study.

Hypotheses Testing

The first null hypothesis is stated thus:

H₀₁: *The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students in North-central zone of Nigeria*

Table 6a: Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent variable = English

Multiple R = 0.076

R Square = 0.006

Adjusted R Square = 0.004

Standard error of the estimate = 21.321

Table 6b: Results of Regression Analysis Relationship Among Independent and Dependent Variables

Analysis of variance	df	Sum of squares	Mean Square	Cal. F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	3	3942.801	1314.267	2.891*	0.034	Rejected
Residual	1496	680060.148	454.586			
Total	1499	684002.949				

Results in Table 6b show that results of multiple regression yielded a multiple correlation of $R = 0.076$ representing 7% conservative estimate of the variables explained and F ratio of 2.891 significant at 0.05 level. Clearly the subjective independent variable predicted the subjective measure of the respondents' achievement in English. The researcher further examined the unstandardized regression with (B) , standard regression weight (Beta) and Error of Estimate STD error B, T scores and significant indices of the variables as shown below in Table 7

The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and restated as research hypothesis that:

H0₁: *The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students in North-central zone of Nigeria*

Having examined the first null hypothesis the researcher proceeded to examine null hypothesis 2

H0₂: *The contribution of each of peer pressure and emotional intelligence did not predict significant achievement of secondary school students in English language but self-concept predicted significant achievement of secondary school students in English in North Central, Nigeria.*

Table 7: Results of Regression Coefficients for Independent (Peer-Pressure, Self-Concept and Emotional Intelligence) and Dependent Variables (Academic Achievement)

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	76.296	8.665		8.805	.000
Peer-Pressure	.078	.051	.040	1.539	.124
Self-Concept	.123	.051	.063	2.422	.016
Emotional Intelligence	.004	.030	.003	.129	.897

a. Dependent Variable: English Language Achievement

The Unstandardized regression weights range from 0.004 to 0.123, and the Standardized regression weights range from 0.003 to 0.063. The standard error ranges from 0.030 to 0.051 with T scores ranging from 0.129 to 2.422, which are not significant, Peer pressure: 124, and

emotional intelligence: 897. The score of 2.422 is significant at .01. Meaning the beta of self-concept predicted student's academic achievement in English language.

The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected for both peer pressure and emotional intelligence but rejected for self-concept and restated as research hypothesis that:

H0₂: *The contribution of each of peer pressure and emotional intelligence did not predict significant achievement of secondary school students in English language but self-concept predicted significant achievement of secondary school students in English in North Central, Nigeria.*

Having examined the second null hypothesis the researcher proceeded to examine null hypothesis 3.

H0₃: *The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on gender in North-central zone of Nigeria*

Table 8a: Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent variable = English

Multiple R = 0.076

R Square = 0.006

Adjusted R Square = 0.003

Standard error of the estimate =21.328

Table 8b: Results of Regression Analysis Relationship among Independent and Dependent Variables

Analysis of variance	df	Sum of squares	Mean Square	Cal. F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	4	3960.362	990.090	2.177*	0.069	Not Rejected
Residual	1495	680042.588	454.878			
Total	1499	684002.949				

Results in Table 7b show that multiple regression yielded a multiple correlation of $R = 0.069$ which accounts for 0.6% conservative estimate of the variables explained with F ratio of 2.177 that is not significant at an alpha level of 0.05. Clearly the subjective independent variable did not predict the subjective measure of the respondents' achievement in English on the basis of gender. The researcher further examined the unstandardized regression with (B) , standard regression weight (Beta) and Error of Estimate STD error B, T scores and significant indices of the variables as shown below in Table 7c.

Table 8c: Results of Regression Coefficients for Independent (Peer-Pressure, Self-Concept, Emotional Intelligence and Gender) and Dependent Variables (Academic Achievement)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	76.042	8.764		8.676	.000
Peer-Pressure	.078	.051	.040	1.528	.127
Self-Concept	.124	.051	.063	2.427	.015
– Emotional Intelligence	.004	.030	.004	.140	.889
Gender	.217	1.105	.005	.196	.844

a. Dependent Variable: English Language Achievement

The Unstandardized regression weights range from 0.004 to 0.217, and the Standard regression weights range from 0.004 to 0.063. The standard error range from 0.030 to 1.105 with T scores ranging from 0.140 to 2.427, and Significant level ranging from 0.015 to 0.889. Clearly the subjective independent variables did not predict the respondents' academic achievement in English language on the basis of gender.

However, the subjective independent variables of self-concept have a T score of 2.427 that is significant at 0.01. This was not enough point to reject the null hypothesis 2. The null hypothesis 2 was therefore not rejected but restated as research hypothesis that:

H0₃: *The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on gender in North-central zone of Nigeria*

Having examined the third null hypothesis the researcher proceeded to examine null hypothesis 4.

H0₄: *The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on school type North-central zone of Nigeria*

Table 9a: Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent variable = English

Multiple R = 0.077

R Square = 0.006

Adjusted R Square = 0.003

Standard error of the estimate =21.326

Table 9b: Results of Regression Analysis Relationship among Independent and Dependent Variables

Analysis of variance	df	Sum of squares	Mean Square	Cal. F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	4	4069.769	1017.442	2.237*	0.063	Not Rejected
Residual	1495	679933.180	454.805			
Total	1499	684002.949				

Results in Table 8b show that multiple regression yielded a multiple correlation of R = 0.063 which accounts for 0.6% conservative estimate of the variables explained with F ratio of 2.237 that is not significant at an alpha level of 0.05. Clearly the subjective independent variable did not predict the subjective measure of the respondents' achievement in English on the basis of school type. The researcher further examined the unstandardized regression with (B) ,

standard regression weight (Beta) and Error of Estimate STD error B, T scores and significant indices of the variables as shown below in Table 8c.

Table 9c: Results of Regression Coefficients for Independent (Peer-Pressure, Self-Concept, Emotional Intelligence and School Type) and Dependent Variables (Academic Achievement)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	75.208	8.909		8.442	.000
Peer-Pressure	.076	.051	.039s	1.495	.135
Self-Concept	.127	.051	.064	2.468	.014
Emotional Intelligence	.003	.030	.003	1.15	.908
- School Type	.588	1.112	.014	.528	.597

a. Dependent Variable: English Language Achievement

The Unstandardized regression weights range from 0.003 to 0.588, and the Standard regression weights range from 0.003 to 0.064 and standard error range from 0.030 to 1.112 with T scores ranging from 0.528 to 2.468 and Significant level ranging from 0.14 to 0.908. Clearly the subjective independent variables did not predict the respondents' academic achievement in English language on the basis of school type.

However, the subjective independent variables of self-concept have a T score of 2.468 that is significant at 0.01. This was not enough point to reject the null hypothesis 3. The null hypothesis 3 was therefore not rejected but restated as research hypothesis that:

H04: *The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on school type in North-central zone of Nigeria*

Summary of the Major Findings

Arising from the analysis of the data generated, the major findings of the study were summarized as follows:

1. The level of peer-pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence of secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria were above average.
2. Majority of the secondary school students sampled passed the academic achievement test.
3. The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students in North-central zone of Nigeria.
4. The contribution of each of peer pressure and emotional intelligence did not predict significant achievement of secondary school students in English language but self-concept predicted significant achievement of secondary school students in English in North Central, Nigeria.
5. The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on gender in North-central zone of Nigeria
6. The joint contribution of variables of Peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence are not predictors of English language achievement of secondary school students based on school type in North-central zone of Nigeria

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study examined the variables of Peer pressure, Self-concept and Emotional intelligence as predictors of Academic achievement of secondary school students in North-central states. From a population of 1,232,367, a sample size of 1,500 SS2 students was obtained through the use of research advisor. The participants of the research composed of 750 males and 750 females. Stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to sample from the three states of Kwara State, Kogi State, Niger State and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). A purposive sampling procedure was used to select schools in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive statistics and multiple regression methods and the results obtained are discussed below:

Discussion of the Findings

The results revealed that peer pressure had mean score of 88.32 which indicated that the students involved in the study had above average mean score. A total of 1,295 participants indicated that they had above average self-concept with the mean score of 91.02. On the variable of emotional intelligence, the mean score of 201 was obtained. The participants made up of 1,453 indicated above average emotional intelligence. The general trend was that the students

involved in the study had above average mean score in peer pressure (88.32); self concept (91.02) and Emotional intelligence(201.38). Concerning academic achievement, the senior secondary school students had a mean score of 63.65 which is above average. The total of 1,316 participants had above 50% passed while 184 made up of 12.3% failed because they had below the 50% bench mark or cut off point that was used to categorize the failing or passing participants.

From the above statistics, the students involved in the study can be adjourned as generally above average students in performance in peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence. Judging from the above score distribution, the general performance of the students involved in the study can be considered as a high level of performance. This report corroborates Emeaba (2014) who conducted a research involving 2,300 students in Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia state, Nigeria. In terms of current social situations in Nigeria, students' academic performance have been on the decline and not efficiently productive for national development as attested by George O Ajehi (2015) who conducted research on "The Causes of and Effect of Falling Standard of Education among secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council with 100 Students in 2015." Of interest to note is that in an economy that was not under depression at the time of data collection, education sector could not be under-funded, in that instance; high performance is not a surprise.

The second finding that is, the joint predictors of the variables indicated low significant predictors of peer pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and academic achievement of the students involved in the study. Several studies in the past had reported similar predictors including Marsh (2002), Kayode (2000), Abisama (2000) and Tope (among 2011) to mention just a few. If, therefore, peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence predicted

academic achievement, and the majority of the students indicated above average of these qualities; (i.e. peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence) high academic performance might not have been a surprised in this instance. The product of the school especially those that were involved in the study could have been productive. Our labour market might in this regard be equipped with the best of the skills needed for effectively meaningful national development. This suggests that our education environments and the students' inherent potentials should be developed by the school system to maintain and do better than there was in this study. Not only adequate attention must be paid to attain functional education system, but also efficient infrastructural facilities in terms of this research variables. It is important to know that only 38 respondents making 2.5% had high peer pressure. 150 participants making 10% had high self-concept and 22 participants making 1.5% had high emotional intelligence. In these circumstances, therefore, the students' academic performance could not only be marginal as reported that 63.65 score were just above the mean in their academic performance.

A further examination of the Regression co-efficient of the variables indicated that self-concept is the only variable that had significant predictor of students' academic achievement: self-concept has largely been reported as a dominant factor in academic achievement. Research reports by Kayode (2000) reported self-concept as predictor of academic achievement. But in this study the majority of the respondents had above average self-concept and their academic achievement were above average mean score. Worthy of note in this prediction of self-concept and academic achievement was that self-concept is central and very important in all life endeavours. If the self-concept is low, such individual would be considered not to do his or her very best especially in academic performance. The instance of self-concept as predictor of academic achievement is a case in point. One can possibly postulate that as the students

involved in this study had high self concept, their academic achievement were equally high, or above average. The researcher is, therefore, of humble opinion that the issue of self-concept be given the deserved attention both at the home and by the school authority. If students are adequately motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically, their self concept will continue to be high and their academic achievement will be improved.

Concerning the other independent variables of peer pressure, and emotional intelligence, they cannot be jettisoned because scholars such as Iheanacho (2002); Mitchell, Oley and McGraw (2006); Punithavathi (2011) had reported high and significant relationship of peer pressure, emotional intelligence and academic performance. However there are other researchers such as as Yahaya, Ramli, Boon, Ghaffar and Zakariya (2009) that had reported significant high predicted value of these variables with peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence.

This discussion cannot be considered complete without adequate consideration of the issue of gender. The respondents consisted of 750 male students and 750 female students from public and private schools. The result obtained showed that gender is not a significant factor in the discussion of the predictors among peer pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and academic achievement of secondary school students involved in the study. However, further examination of regression co-efficients of both independent variables and dependent variables in the study showed that gender is a significantly negative predictor of academic achievement ($T=0.15$ at 0.01 alpha levels). This result seems therefore, to suggest that the issue of gender cannot be jettison in the discussion of academic achievement; i.e, gender should be considered in students' academic achievement. In this study only 150 participants (10%) out of 1,500 participants reported high self-concept.

Closely related to gender issue is the variable of school type. In the Nigerian social school system, co-education is highly encouraged even in the predominantly Muslim local environment. This, therefore, motivated the researcher to examine school type as predictor of secondary school students' achievement in English. The result obtained showed that school type is not a significant predictor of secondary school students' achievement in English. Clearly, the subjective independent variable did not predict an objective measure of the respondent's achievement in English on the basis of school type. This could be interpreted, therefore, that the issue of co-education to stimulate healthy competition is not a factor of students' academic achievement in the area of study. The researcher, however, investigated the regression coefficients of school type. The T-test results showed that school type is not significantly predictor of students' academic achievement in English. The subjective independent variable of self-concept significantly predicted secondary school students' achievement in English (co-efficient $T = 2.46$ significant at 0.01 alpha level). It can, therefore, be suggested from the result that self-concept is a strong predictor of secondary school students' achievement in English. This variable should be of significant concern to researchers concerned with students' academic performance, particularly in the Nigerian educational system with specific reference to the North-central zone where this study was conducted. The researcher is of the humble opinion that, the issues of gender, and school type should be a recurrent decimal in students' academic achievement in English. Having considered the results of the research, the researcher proceeded to conclusion.

Conclusion

Having discussed the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that in the Nigerian schools environment, the issue of peer pressure, emotional intelligence and academic achievement is still controversial amongst scholars in Educational research. That is, self-concept

might be an important variable in the students' academic performance in English Language. This should be of concern to all education stakeholders (i.e. school teachers, administrators, parents and counselors) in an attempt to sustain high self-concept of students in bid to boost their academic achievement. This claim is centred on the basis of severally reported significant predictors of self-concept with other variables of this study namely: emotional intelligence, peer pressure and academic achievement. The issue of no significant predictor among peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence with students' academic achievement in English should continue to be of critical concern to future education researchers because these variables have of recent been reported to be predictors of academic achievement.

Implications of the Findings of the Study

On the basis of the results discussed above, the implication is that, the three independent variables had a low significant predicted value of senior secondary school students' achievement in English language. The students involved in the study had above average mean scores in peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence. The education stakeholders are, therefore enjoined to make spirited effort so as to sustain and increase the students peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence. The recurrence of self-concept as predictor variable of academic achievement of students involved in the study should be of concern to other researchers because self-concept alone can not be the only variable of academic achievement particularly in English Language that is the lingua franca in Nigeria. Other variables cannot but predictors. The method of data collection, the statistical procedure, the method of sampling of respondents, the short period of the study and the choice of a few research areas, might have acted as constraint.

Limitations of the Study

The limitation of the study can be listed as follows:

- i. The study was limited to North-Central states besides the sample size was from only three states and FCT. If the study had covered the whole zones, it might have had a wider consideration.
- ii. The variables considered were only 3 (i.e. peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence) amongst millions of factors that predict academic achievement of secondary school students. Had more variables been chosen, possibly the mode of the results might not have been this kind.
- iii. The study period is a limitation, because, if it has been a longitudinal study the result might have been different.
- iv. Regardless of these limitations, the findings of this study are still considered valid at least in the area of the study. In essence, these limitations do not, in any way, render the results and the conclusions drawn from the study invalid; since the study was empirically done under qualified and experienced supervisors. The results might, therefore, be considered valid and reliable for generalization. The study would also be a reference point to future researchers, thus the pitfall identified could be avoided. Using the results and discussion might be of assistance to school teachers in their attempt to improve student's academic achievement with particular reference to English Language.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and their educational implications already highlighted, it is hereby recommended that education stakeholders should make positive effort so as to increase the research variables, including of course, peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence of secondary school students in North Central zone of Nigeria. This is important, bearing in mind

that the influences of students' peer pressure, self-concept and emotional intelligence on academic achievement are inconclusive.

It is further recommended that education stakeholders do their utmost best to maintain and sustain high self-concept of students in the research area because high self-concept has severally been reported as a positive factor in the academic attainment of students. The recurrence of the variable of self-concept is being strong predictor of students' academic achievement in English, should be of significant concern to other researchers in education.

Furthermore, it is recommended that Educational psychologists as main stakeholders in the education industry, be alive to the interwoven relationship among self-concept, peer-pressure, emotional intelligence and academic achievement and their role in enhancing positive development of peer-pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and academic achievement should be of great concern.

Suggestions for Further Studies

The present study focused on the variables of peer-pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence as predictor of secondary school students' achievement in English in the North Central zone of Nigeria. In view of the findings and scope of this study, the researcher hereby suggested that further studies could be carried out as listed below.

- i. The study locale should be expanded to other geo-political zones in Nigeria. Studies conducted in other schools, states and geo-political zones might produce different results.
- ii. The factors considered as variables could be increased. The independent and dependent variables of peer pressure, self-concept, emotional intelligence and English language might not be sufficient criteria for judging students' academic achievements. Several other

variables need be included as predictors of students' academic achievement in English and other subjects.

- iii. A longitudinal study spanning among three to five years might be a more plausible options.

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- AbdulRahman, A. A. (2014). Emotional intelligence and academic achievement: A comparative, gender-based study of undergraduate English Language learners in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5(6), 178 – 192.