

Academic Motivation and Self-Regulated Learning as Predictors of Academic Achievement of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

Nationally, the distribution of secondary school students' performance in public examinations has been skewed towards the lower grades. This poor performance has been majorly attributed to school environmental factors and little has been done on individual psychological factors which may contribute towards students' academic achievement. This study was therefore designed to determine students' academic motivation and self-regulated learning as predictors of academic achievement. The main aim was to determine a prediction model of secondary school students' academic achievement given academic motivation and self-regulated learning. More specifically, the relationship among academic motivation, self-regulated learning and academic achievement was established. Further, sex differences in both academic motivation and self-regulated learning were studied. The self-determination theory and the social cognitive theory of self-regulation formed the theoretical framework. The study adopted an ex post factor research design and was located in Nairobi County, Kenya. The target population was all the year 2012 form three students in public secondary schools in Nairobi County. The sample consisted of 938 form three students selected from 10 public secondary schools. Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling procedures were used in the selection of schools and participants. The study used a questionnaire developed to seek information on participants' biographical data. The Academic Motivation and Academic Self-regulated Learning Scales were adapted to measure academic motivation and academic self-regulated learning respectively. Student's academic achievement was measured by use of examination records obtained from school. Pilot study was conducted on 30 form three students selected from a mixed day public secondary school in Nairobi County. Both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures were used to analyze the data. The results provided evidence that there was a significant relationship among academic motivation, self-regulated learning and academic achievement. Further, it was found that among the domains of academic motivation and strategies of self-regulated learning, intrinsic motivation towards accomplishment and organizing strategy had the highest positive predictive value on academic achievement. Significant sex differences were found with regard to academic motivation and self-regulated learning and they were in favour of boys. Ultimately, students' self-regulated learning was found to have the highest positive predictive value on academic achievement as compared to academic motivation. In the exploratory part of the study, a significant main effect on academic achievement was found between type of school, academic motivation and self-regulated learning. A major implication and recommendation of the study was that, teachers, parents and all stakeholders in education should work together in creating conducive school and home environments for fostering the development of these psychological constructs; academic motivation and self-regulated learning, among students. More specifically, the development of the domains of academic motivation and types of self-regulated learning strategies found to have a positive predictive value on academic achievement should be emphasized.

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