



Resilience and Adolescents Educational Advancement among Secondary School Students in Mbanga Sub Division, Cameroon

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author NZM designed the study, performed the statistical analysis. Author HAK wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author NE managed the literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this study was on Resilience and Adolescence Educational Advancement in Secondary Schools in Mbanga Sub Division Cameroon. The main objective was to find out the role of self-concept a component of resilience on the educational advancement of adolescence. Self-concept was operationalized in terms of; knowledge about and belief about self; self-ability and taking personal initiative, overcoming difficulties and identifying negative aspect of self. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative method for data collection. Purposive and simple random techniques were used in selecting the participant. The sample comprised of 260 students from three secondary schools involving 151 (58.1%) female and 109 (41.9%) male between the ages of 12-19 years. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 23.0) with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistics. Spearman's rho test and Chi-square test were the inferential statistical tests adopted for the study .Chi-square test was used and the qualitative data was analyzed using the thematic analysis technique with the aid of themes, groundings/frequency and quotations. The findings revealed that: majority of the adolescents 256(98.5%) have good

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knowledge and belief and their self-ability. For overcoming difficulties and identifying negative aspects of self, 233(89.6%) affirmed that they can easily identify negative things about themselves. Also, majority of the adolescents 225 (86.5%) agreed that they always take initiative to overcome difficult situation in their life. In all the finding showed that (68.3%) of the adolescence have positive self-concept while (37.1%) of them have negative self-concept. Those with positive self-concept also have a high passion for educational advancement. Self-concept was found to have a significant relationship with educational advancement of adolescence. Some recommendations were made especially that guidance counsellors in schools should assist students in building a positive self-concept which will enable them to remain more resilient and focused on their educational engagements.

Keywords: Resilience; adolescence; educational advancement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-concept is the core of human personality. It refers to the totality of people's perception about their physical, social and academic competence. It is the set of perceptions that the person has about himself, the set of characteristics, attributes, qualities, deficiencies, capacities limits, values and relationships that the subject knows to be descriptive of him [1]. This knowledge has a strong bearing the overall development the individual either positively or negatively. Focus on positive developmental outcomes in the midst of high risks or negative expectations in society have led to an interesting area of research called resilience. The worry about why some adolescents develop strategies to cope with problems and adapt successfully while others develop adjustment problem remains a major question. The resilience process may be sensitive to contextual conditions and give rise to different developmental trajectories for different youth subgroups [2]. Resilience is the ability to bounce back and overcome the stress or successful adaptation to the challenging and threatening circumstances or environment. Resilient students experience one or more difficult life circumstances or traumatic events but somehow find the power to overcome their adverse impact [3]. The ability to overcome setbacks, disappointments or failures can be determined by the amount of positive resilience, protective factors and/or patterns of behaviour acquired by a person. Reivich & Shatte, [4] say that resilient people are happier, live longer and are more successful in school and jobs, are happier in relationships and are less likely to suffer depression. This is the same situation with adolescence as the grow up in their different environments and cultures.

Adolescence is a developmental phase between childhood and adulthood during which,

adolescents go through a series of developmental challenges before attaining adulthood. According to Nsamenang, [5], adolescence is a cultural process in the sense that adolescents everywhere develop in a niche that has been constructed through centuries of cultural evolution. Africans therefore virtualize an adolescent from childhood as an active agent, developing in a sociocultural field in which full personhood is a matter of assent, acquired by degree during ontogeny [6]. To become an adult is a gradual process through incremental maturation [7-10]. In their assent to adulthood, adolescents construct and modify their identities through successive interpersonal encounters and experiences that make up their ontogenetic history. In the Cameroonian context with a huge diversity of cultural heritage growing up and passing through adolescence seem even more challenging. Knoll, [11] say that adolescents experience a variety of biological, psychological and social changes.

While some adolescents face significant risks, the majority of them are able to successfully navigate their way through by making good use of self-concept which is a strong component of resilience. They are born with an instinctive capacity for resilience [12], and that results when they respond to risk with properly functioning adaptation systems [13]. Some adolescents maintain positive adaptation despite experiences of distressing life conditions such as violence, poverty, stress, trauma, deprivation and oppression. All these changes and challenges affect the way in which adolescents advance educationally. Academic self-concept and academic performance directly affect each other. Academic self-concept for example: how one understands himself as an individual who has a set of unique or special characteristics. "Their beliefs and opinions are based on their sensitivity

and self-awareness about their strength and weakness. Establishment of one's Academic self-concepts is built by the person's nature, maturity, and his natural surroundings". The important people that build-up of Academic self-concepts are parents, adults, peers and one's own self [14]. Academic/educational resilience referred to individuals achieving academic/educational competence despite being in challenging or disadvantaged circumstances (Martin 2002, [15] Wang et al. 1994).

Resilience is a two-dimension construct: exposure to adversity or risk and manifestation of successful academic adaptation (or better than expected outcomes) in the face of that risk or adversity [16,15] 2001). Exposure to adversity or risk could render an individual vulnerable to unfavourable outcomes (Kapla 2000; [15] [17] Rauh 1989). It may be because these individuals have some distinctive protective factors and the roles of protective factors are to mediate or modify the effects of risk [16,18].

The development of resilience within the school setting can help learners to feel more empowered and be in control of their own lives, in order to be able to better deal with disruptions that can impact success, which reinforces the importance of fostering resiliency in students [19]. Implicit in the concept of resilience as a dynamic process is the understanding that resilience can grow or decline over time depending on the interactions taking place between an individual and their environment. For developing the student's positive academic self-concept, parents should provide a pleasant atmosphere at home with full of happiness and to fulfil the desires of children. A helpful learning environment by teachers can fulfil the psychological needs of the students. Parent, school, peers, teachers, media, society, and culture all of these influence on the child's academic self-concept. School and teachers have a straight effect on child's feelings, inspirations and attitudes and on their academic achievement. Therefore, an individual may be resilient at certain times and not at others depending upon the circumstances and relative strength of protective factors compared to risk factors at the given moment. It is therefore safest to assume that all adolescents, regardless of whether they seem vulnerable or not, could benefit from a focused attempt to develop resilient attributes. Bahr & Pendergast [20]. In this regard adolescents will be better equipped to

face their developmental challenges and also move on with their education smoothly.

Academic self-concept has a significant consequence on academic performance and educational advancement and vice versa. This positive relation was further demonstrated by the significant relation between self-concept and academic achievement Marsh, H. W. & Seaton, M. [21]. According to Kpolovie [22] educational advancement refers to the ability of a student to enrol, persist and progress in school despite all odds. According to, Phillipson, S., & Phillipson, S. N. [23] "academic performance is the measured ability and performance level of a learner in a school, subject or particular skills". Therefore academic performance has to do with a learner's scholastic ability and attainment, as regards his or her work and this is often measured through tests, exams, course works and assignments.

Secondary education plays a crucial role in laying the foundation for the further education of students. If a good foundation is laid at the secondary school level, students can better cope with the challenges of life with less stress and greater ease. Academic self-concept influences not only a student's academic performance but also his or her effort, engagement, and persistence in classroom activities; intrinsic motivation; help-seeking behaviour and course selection Bong, M. & Skaalvik, E. M. [24]. In the context of this study academic self –concept include but does not exclude; knowledge and belief about self, personal effort and initiative, identifying and overcoming difficulties. All these variables put together form a strong foundation for resilience and educational advancement within the school context. In this context, the adolescents are likely to start dating and feel an urge to explore, with peer pressure leading many into premature sexual experiments and pregnancy which increases the number of adolescent problems as those involved end up dropping out of school and their educational advancement halted.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Academic experiences of success or failure significantly affect the students' self-concept and educational advancement. Improving levels of school performance by previously optimizing levels of self-concept and levels of perceived competence is crucial for educational advancement Rubie-Davies, Christine, M. [25]. A

great number of adolescents in Mbanga abandon school to get involved in cocoa farming and other small businesses. They start by doing daily jobs (journées) for instant payment and gradually drop out to get their own portions of land to become farmers. Also, with the presence of the train station in Mbanga, these adolescents have abandoned school to hawk inside the train going to Kumba and coming back on a daily routine. Many finally drop out of school to continue this business. Many girls also have abandoned school and, gotten attracted to cocoa farmers for their money. Added to this, adolescents here are exposed to substance abuse, violence, risky sexual activities, unwanted pregnancies, discrimination, corruption, criminality, poverty, low parental support, accidental injuries and others, which help to bring hopelessness and depression. With these hardships, they drop out of school and their educational advancement becomes stagnated. This situation notwithstanding, some of these adolescents still pursue their educational careers to the end. This study therefore focused on investigating how resilience influences the educational advancement of adolescents. The main aim of the study was to find out the role of self-concept as factor of resilience and educational advancement. Specifically, the study looked at knowledge and belief about self, identifying and overcoming difficulties and personal effort and ability to take initiative.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Self-Concept (resilience) and Educational Advancement

Self-concept is the perception that individuals have of their own worth. This includes a composite of their feelings, a generalized view of their social acceptance, and their personal feelings about themselves [26]. It is an individual's general composite or collective view of him or herself across multidimensional sets of domain specific perceptions, based on self-knowledge and evaluation of value or worth of one's own capabilities formed through experiences with and interpretations of the environment [27]. Chapman, Tunmer, and Prochnow [28] showed in a longitudinal study that when students develop a negative academic self-concept, their academic skills suffer. Specifically,

Swann [29] says that:

Because self-knowledge generally emerges from, and is sustained by, our experiences with others, negative self-views have interpersonal as well as personal components. This means that for people to enjoy improvements in their self-views, changes must occur not only in the way they think about themselves, but also in the environments that sustain their self-views.

The value of this quote is substantial. Not only is this positive self-concept extremely important in students with adolescents, it is also significant for everyone. Our experiences in life and our perception of who we are define what we eventually become. It is the set of knowledge and belief about self, the ability to identify and overcome challenges/difficulties, personal efforts and ability to take initiatives. It is this awareness that the individual has about his/herself that builds up the self-concept. Self-concept includes positive and negative appraisals about an individual's self (Adams, 2010; Greene & Way, 2005) [30]. We form our self-concept as we grow; based on the knowledge we have about ourselves. It is multidimensional, and can be broken down into these individual aspects; for example, you may have a very different idea of who you are in terms of your physical body and who you are in terms of your spirit or soul.

Shavelson, Hubner and Stanton [31] defined the term self-concept as the perception that each one has about him, formed from experiences and relationships with the environment, where significant people play an important role. The perception people have about their past or future selves is related to the perception of their current selves. The temporal self-appraisal theory [32] argues that people have a tendency to maintain a positive self-evaluation by distancing themselves from their negative self and paying more attention to their positive one. In addition, people have a tendency to perceive the past self-less favourably [33] (e.g. "I'm better than I used to be") and the future self-more positively Wilson, Buehler, Lawford, Schmidt & Yong [34]. (e.g. "I will be better than I am now").

According to Rogers [35], everyone strives to reach an "ideal self". Rogers also hypothesized that psychologically healthy people actively move away from roles created by others' expectations, and instead look within themselves for validation. On the other hand, neurotic people have "self-concepts that do not match their experiences. They are afraid to accept their own experiences as valid, so they distort them, either

to protect themselves or to win approval from others."Aronson, Wilson & Akert, R. [36].

Coleman & Hagell [37] stated that those possessing a positive self-concept show tendency happy towards others, are healthy, productive and successful, make much longer effort to overcome the difficulties, sleep better at nights, have less risk in developing ulcer, show less tendency against accepting others and the pressures of their peers. Those having low self-esteem, on the other hand, are individuals who are worried, pessimistic, having negative thoughts about future and having tendency of unsuccessfulness. Kassin [38], on the other hand, states that the individuals having a negative self-concept exhibit the characteristics, such as expecting unsuccessfulness, being nervous, making less effort, and may ignore the important things in life, also make charges such as worthless and untalented against themselves when they are unsuccessful. Accordingly, the individuals having high self-esteem prefer much more difficult activities, seem to be quite sure of their efforts resulting in success, are less sensitive against emotional turbulences, are less affected by depression, are more open to accept critical analyses from efficient people, state less negative effect and do not experience negative effect when they notice that others are superior to them Yelsma & Yelsma, [39]. In adolescence, the self-concept undergoes a significant time of change. Generally, self-concept changes more gradually, and instead, existing concepts are refined and solidified. Zafar, Nabeel & Khalily [40].

Despite differing opinions about the onset of self-concept development, researchers agree on the importance of one's self-concept, which influences people's behaviours and cognitive and emotional outcomes including academic achievement levels and educational advancement. With a positive self-concept, they too will be happier, healthier, more optimistic and ready to engage in challenging tasks, overcoming difficulties and taking personal initiatives. It should be noted that adolescents with a positive self-concept exhibit a good dose of autonomy as indicated by Garmezy [41] in his theory of resilience. They will therefore persist and stay focused on tasks, advancing academically while those having a negative self-concept will see themselves as failures and consequently fail in tasks and end up dropping out of school.

In addition, the beneficial effects produced by a good level of self-concept have been substantiated. Hay, Ashman and Van-Kraayenoord [42] in their study found that participants with a high self-concept were compared with other participants with low self-concept, teacher reports showed that they consider the high self-concept students as more popular, cooperative and persistent in class work, with lower anxiety levels, more supportive families and higher expectations of future educational advancement and success. Self-concept and academic performance influence and determine each other mutually. Nalah [43] in a study examined the influence of self-concept on academic performance among students of College of Education, Akwanga, Nasarawa state-Nigeria.

A total of 412 participants were randomly selected for the study. There were 210 male (51%) and 202 female (49%) who participated in the study. A validated instrument on self-concept and academic performance with Cronbach's Alpha reliability of .540 and Factor Analysis ranging from .578 to .814, designed by the researcher was used. Three hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics. Result indicated that a statistical significant relationship existed between students' high and low in self-concept and academic performance. A significant relationship exists between the self-concept and academic performance of fresh (NCE1) and final year (NCE3) students. The finding also revealed no significant relationship between the self-concept and academic performance of male and female students. Based on this finding, it was recommended that the parents, teachers, guardians, government, and the society should encourage positive and high self-concept in order to improve students' academic performance.

Hannan et al. [44] carried out a study on the relationship between academic self-concept and students' performance among school age children. The study was carried out in freedom school for basic education boys and girls at Cairo governorate. A purposive sample was composed of 182 school age children and their teachers. A descriptive correlational design was utilized in this study. Tools of data collection consisted of three parts: Structured Questionnaire; which consisted of students' socio-demographic characteristics including personal data; such as gender, age, and family

history, family size, Academic Self-Concept Scale and Academic Performance Rating Scale. Results indicated that there was a significant statistical relationship between academic self-concept and students' performance among school age children. This finding implied that there was a wide gap in how males develop their self-concept as compared with female students. The relationship between gender and academic performance was investigated. It was concluded that students' academic self-concept can affect their performance. The students with high academic achievement receive reward and have more opportunities in future. The researchers recommended implementing psycho-educational program in formal and informal curriculum for parents, teachers to provide a chance for students express themselves and develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Chamundeswari et al. [45] in a study investigated the relationship between self-concept, study habit and academic achievement of students. They used the Survey method to select a sample of 381 students at the higher secondary level. The Self-concept Inventory [46] was used to study self-concept, Study Habits Inventory [47] was used to assess study habit, and academic achievement marks scored by students in their quarterly examination were taken for academic achievement scores. The results of the statistical analyses showed a significant correlation between self-concept, study habit and academic achievement of students. A significant difference was found between students at the higher secondary level in state, matriculation and central board schools, pertaining to self-concept, study habit and academic achievement.

2.2 Garmezy's (1991) Model of Resilience

2.2.1 Origins of resiliency research: three seminal studies

The concept of resilience first emerged from studies conducted in the 1970's in the fields of psychopathology, traumatic stress, and poverty. While studying the effects of "risk factors" upon children's development (i.e., factors which increase the likelihood of poor or negative development), researchers discovered that a number of children who were exposed to severe and/or chronic stressors did not experience negative developmental outcomes. These unexpected findings set the foundation for decades of further research in a variety of fields

(e.g. psychology, education, public health) to examine those factors and processes that enabled children and youth to not only survive, but thrive in spite of risk [48,49,50].

Garmezy's [48] seminal study of children of parents with schizophrenia provided a foundation for investigating resilience. He first postulated that existence of "protective factors" that could enable an individual to ameliorate the negative impact of stressors and support positive development. Garmezy found that although having a parent with schizophrenia did increase a child's risk of developing the disorder; a remarkable 90% of children in this study did not develop this illness.

He explained that these children bear the visible indices that are the hallmarks of competence – good peer relations, academic achievement, and commitment to education and purposive to life goals, [and] early and successful work histories [48].

Impressed by these data, he used this platform to encourage the field to shift the focus away from risk factors in order to study "the forces that move such children to survival and to adaptation" [48].

Garmezy [41] a lead researcher of resilience is of the opinion that the environment around the child contributes significantly to the outcomes of children experiencing stress. Garmezy [51] presents an ecological view of resilience based on protective factors at the individual level, familial levels, and the family level, all these different levels influence resilience. Some of these influences include:

- Individual factors; dispositional attributes of the child such as temperament (activity level), how one meets new situations (positive responsiveness to others), and cognitive skills.
- Familial factors; family cohesion and warmth (despite poverty or marital discord), the presence of a caring adult in the absence of responsive parents (such as a grand-parent), or a concern by parents for the wellbeing of their children.
- Support factors; external to family, and included the availability and use of external support systems by parents and children, a strong maternal substitute, a supportive and concerned teacher, or an institutional structure that fosters ties to the larger community (church, social worker).

Garmezy [41] came up with the Challenge model with a curvilinear relationship, where stressors enhance adjustment but not at very low or very high levels. Very high levels of stress lower competence. The basis of the challenge model is that some stress is helpful for adolescents and young people as it can develop coping skills and encourage them to mobilize internal and external resources which will help them to attain their goals in life.

Garmezy's [41] triadic model of resilience provided a widely accepted ecological framework for understanding the resilience process. Multiple scholars use this framework to study resilience (Gordon & Song, 1994; Morales & Trotman, 2004; Werner & Smith, 1982). The triadic model described the dynamic interactions among risk and protective factors on three levels (individual, family, and environmental). The model also emphasized that resilience is a process that empowers individuals to shape their environment and to be shaped by it in turn. Similarly, Cicchetti and Lynch's (1993) interactive ecological-transactional model of development highlighted how certain contexts (e.g. culture, neighbourhood, family) interact with each other over time to shape development and adaptation. These ecological models highlight the intersection of varying influences upon one's development and how risk and protective factors can interact to enhance or inhibit a person's resilience [52-55].

Implicit in the concept of resilience as a dynamic process is the understanding that resilience can grow or decline over time depending on the interactions taking place between an individual and their environment and between risk and protective factors in an individual's life [56,55]. Therefore, an individual may be resilient at certain times - and not at others - depending upon the circumstances and relative strength of protective factors compared to risk factors at the given moment [57]. Interestingly, the term resilience was adopted in lieu of earlier terms because it more accurately conveyed the dynamic process [58]. Masten [15] contributed the idea that resilience is a pattern over time, characterized by good eventual adaptation despite risk, acute stressors, or chronic adversities. Pushing scholars to look beyond the individual level of resilience, Secombe [59] asserted that:

...The widely held view of resilience as an individual disposition, family trait, or community phenomenon is insufficient resiliency cannot be understood or improved in significant ways by merely focusing on these individual-level factors. Instead careful attention must be paid to structural deficiencies in our society and to be social policies that families need in order to become stronger, more competent, and better functioning in adverse situations" Garmezy [48].

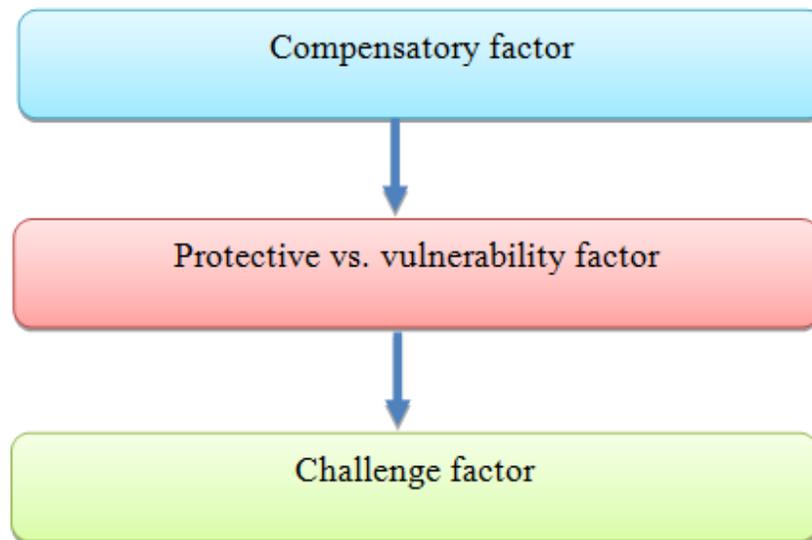


Fig. 1. Garmezy's [48] framework of resilience

Bonnie (1995) argued that resilient children usually have four attributes in common which are: Social Competence; Ability to elicit positive responses from others; thus establishing positive relationships with both adults and peers; Problem-solving skills; Planning that facilitates seeing oneself in control and resourcefulness in seeking help from others, Autonomy: A sense of one's identity and an ability to act independently and exert some control over one's environment and a sense of purpose and future: Goals, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness, and a sense of a bright future [60-62].

In the context of the present study, this theory is relevant because, adolescents growing up and studying in Mbanga sub division who possess individual, familial and supportive factors according to Garmezy, will consequently do better in adverse conditions thereby responding favourably to obstacles in life as well as do well, exhibit competence in school and equally advance in their education. Adolescents in Mbanga who will allow characteristics of risk factors to override those of protective factors will definitely face hard times advancing academically.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study made use of the cross sectional survey research design. This research studied a subjective issue and the quality of responses provided by respondents through questionnaires and interviews provided a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of adolescent resilience and educational advancement. This study was carried out in the locality of Mbanga Sub Division of Mounjo Division in the Littoral Region of Cameroon. The purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used. The sample consisted of 260 students from Government Bilingual High School Mbanga (65), College St. Jean (92) and PBCHS (103) selected from form five, lower and upper sixth. Their age range was between 12 to 19 years consisting of 151 females and 109 males.

A questionnaire and an interview guide were the main instruments used to collect data for data collection. The items were close and open ended questions with likert – type response options ranging from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD). The Likert-type close-ended items were used because of the ease of

responding and the short time required responding.

This study was conducted in Mbanga where the main activity is agriculture and the main source of income. The population produces cocoa, palm oil, banana, plantains, cocoyams, cassava, yams, beans, maize and they are also involved in petit trading. There are both plantation and small scale farmers in Mbanga but with the closing down of the Societé des Plantations de Mbanga (SPM) which was in charge of the production of banana in large scales for exportation, life has not been easy on the thousands of workers who were laid off from this company. This has made life difficult on a cross section of the population who depended on this company for a living especially, students whose parents depended on this to sustain them in school. These environmental stressors and the physiological stresses of adolescence calls for a greater need for resilience because with the changing times only adolescents equipped with resilience may be able to resist issues presented to them by this ever changing world.

Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 23.0) with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistics. Spearman's rho test and Chi-square test were the inferential statistical tests adopted for the study. Chi-square test was used and the qualitative data was analyzed using the thematic analysis technique with the aid of themes, groundings/frequency and quotations. Findings were presented using frequency distribution tables and thematic tables.

3.1 Findings

The present study focused on resilience (self-concept) which was considered in two major categories of self-concept (positive and negative) and the influence of these on the educational advancement of adolescents. With regards to positive self-concept the following parameters were considered; knowledge and belief about self; ability to identify and overcome difficulties and personal effort and examining self. For negative self-concept the parameters were thus; fear about future; anger when challenged; lack of initiative and avoiding criticisms. The last section of the result will deal with educational advancement. Table 1 presents the results of adolescents' positive self-concept.

Finding showed that majority of the adolescents 256(98.5%) and 253(97.3%) strongly agree/agree that they have good knowledge about their self and belief in their self-ability. Also, 218(83.8%) and 225(86.5%) strongly agree/agree that they can easily identify and overcome difficult situations. Whereas 233 (89.6%) strongly agree/agree that they examine their self and 226 (86.9%) strongly agree/agree about their personal efforts.

The parameters for negative self-concept were also considered and the results obtained are presented in the Table 2.

While majority of the adolescents were found to have positive self-concept, some were not. For instance, majority of the adolescents 153(58.8%) are always afraid when they think of their future meanwhile 107(41.2%) of the adolescents do not. Majority of the adolescents 188 (72.3%) and (66.2%) respectively feel angry when criticised by someone and when challenges are more than their ability. Lastly, majority of the adolescents 172 (66.2%) only attempt things they believe they can accomplish while 88 (33.8%) of them disagreed.

In summary, finding showed that (68.3%) of the adolescents have positive self-concept while (37.1%) of the adolescents have negative self-concept. The Fig. 2 below presents the summary of finding on adolescents' self-concept.

The next section of the results is on the educational advancement of adolescents Table 3 below shows these results.

Findings from the above table shows that a strong majority of the adolescents 174(97.8%) with high passion for educational advancement were those with positive self-concept which is significantly higher when compared to adolescents with negative self-concept of which it was 52(63.4%) of them found to have high passion for educational advancement.

Testing of hypothesis one (Ho₁): There is no significant relationship between self-concept and the educational advancement of adolescents.

When the relationship between self-concept and educational advancement of adolescents was examined, finding showed that there exist a very significant, moderately strong and positive relationship with correlation at 0.01 level ($P < 0.001$) far less than 0.05 level. The positive sign

and moderately strong effect of the correlation value ($R = 0.313^{**}$) imply that adolescents are more likely to advance in their education or resist academically when their self-concept is high or positive. For instance, a strong majority of the adolescents 174(97.8%) with high passion for educational advancement were those with positive self-concept which is significantly higher when compared to adolescents with negative self-concept of which it was 52 (63.4%) of them found to have high passion for educational advancement. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there is no significant relationship between self-concept in the educational advancement of adolescents was rejected and the alternative that states there is a significant relationship between self-concept in the educational advancement of adolescents was accepted. These results were further affirmed by the qualitative responses from the respondents.

The table below shows the qualitative responses of participants on how far they intend to pursue their educational advancement.

Findings here revealed that some of the adolescents wish to go to school to the extent of obtaining a PhD Degree. The quotation on their obtaining a PhD was grounded 50 times. For example "To obtain a PhD degree", "PhD" and some desire to obtain a Master's degree, and GCE advanced level. Some adolescents desire to reach at the University level of education that is first degree.

Summarily, the findings have revealed that (86.7%) of the adolescents have strong passions for educational advancement meanwhile (13.3%) of the adolescents do not. For instance, majority of the adolescents 256(98.5%) persist in their education despite all challenges. Also, majority of the adolescents 253(97.3%) do not feel like dropping out from school because education has no future for them and are taking steps to achieve their life goals as strongly agree/agree by 252(96.9%) of the adolescents. Also, finding showed that last year, 170(65.4%) of the adolescents scored above average meanwhile 90(34.6%) of the adolescents do not. Finding equally showed that majority of the adolescents 238(91.5%) and 231(88.8%) strongly agree/agree that they solve challenges in their life and quickly change from negative thoughts to positive as well and consistently maintain positive point of view in their thinking 227(87.3%). Majority of the adolescents 214(82.3%) are not easily influenced by their

Table 1. Adolescents' with positive self-concept

Test items	Stretched				Collapsed	
	Strongly agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree (D)	Strongly disagree (SD)	SA/A	D/SD
I have a good knowledge about myself	187 (71.9%)	69 (26.5%)	4 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	256 (98.5%)	4 (1.5%)
I often believe on my self-ability	133 (51.2%)	120 (46.2%)	6 (2.3%)	1 (0.4%)	253 (97.3%)	7 (2.7%)
I can easily identify negative things about me	121 (46.5%)	97 (37.3%)	32 (12.3%)	10 (3.8%)	218 (83.8%)	42 (16.2%)
I always take initiative to overcome difficult situations in life	98 (37.7%)	127 (48.8%)	20 (7.7%)	15 (5.8%)	225 (86.5%)	35 (13.5%)
I feel happy when I examine myself	118 (45.6%)	1145 (44.2%)	20 (7.7%)	7 (2.7%)	233 (89.6%)	27 (41.2%)
The outcome of my success is as a result of my personal effort	147 (56.5%)	79 (30.4%)	21 (8.1%)	13 (5.0%)	226 (86.9%)	34 (13.1%)

Table 2. Adolescents' with negative self-concept

I am always afraid when I think about the future	35 (13.5%)	72 (27.7%)	77 (29.6%)	76 (29.2%)	153 (58.8%)	107 (41.2%)
I feel angry when someone criticizes me	103 (39.6%)	85 (32.7%)	48 (18.5%)	24 (9.2%)	188 (72.3%)	72 (27.7%)
I feel angry when challenges are more than my ability	123 (47.3%)	85 (32.7%)	29 (11.2%)	23 (8.8%)	208 (66.2%)	52 (20.0%)
I only attempt things I believe I can accomplish	86 (33.1%)	86 (33.1%)	48 (18.5%)	40 (15.4%)	172 (66.2%)	88 (33.8%)

Table 3. Educational advancement by students

Test items	Stretched				Collapsed	
	Strongly agree (SA)	Agree(A)	Disagree(D)	Strongly disagree(SD)	SA/A	D/SD
I persist on my educational tasks despite all challenges	159 (61.2%)	97 (37.3%)	3 (1.2%)	1 (0.4%)	256 (98.5%)	4 (1.5%)
I consistently maintain a positive point of view in my thinking	117 (45.0%)	110 (45.0%)	24 (9.2%)	9 (3.5%)	227 (87.3%)	33 (12.7%)
My last year average was above the previous averages	61 (23.5%)	109 (41.9%)	65 (25.0%)	25 (9.6%)	170 (65.4%)	90 (34.6%)
I believe I can influence the direction of my life	131 (50.4%)	98 (37.7%)	22 (8.5%)	9 (3.5%)	229 (88.1%)	31 (11.9%)
I am always with people who are better than me	79 (30.4%)	106 (40.8%)	59 (22.7%)	16 (6.2%)	185 (71.2%)	75 (28.8%)
I am not always easily influenced by my peers	92 (35.4%)	122 (46.9%)	27 (10.4%)	19 (7.3%)	214 (82.3%)	46 (17.7%)
I believe I can solve the challenges I experience in my life	104 (40.0%)	134 (51.5%)	17 (6.5%)	5 (1.9%)	238 (91.5%)	22 (8.5%)
When I find myself dwelling on negative thoughts I quickly change them to positive	123 (47.3%)	108 (41.5%)	20 (7.7%)	9 (3.5%)	231 (88.8%)	29 (11.2%)
I am taking steps to achieve my life goals	195 (75.0%)	57 (21.9%)	5 (1.9%)	3 (1.2%)	252 (96.9%)	8 (3.1%)
I feel like dropping out of school because education has no future for me	2 (0.8%)	5 (1.9%)	17 (6.5%)	236 (90.8%)	7 (2.7%)	253 (97.3%)
Multiple response set	1297 (49.9%)	958 (36.8%)	247 (9.5%)	98 (3.8%)	2255 (86.7%)	(345 (13.3%))

Table 4. Comparing student self-concept with educational advancement

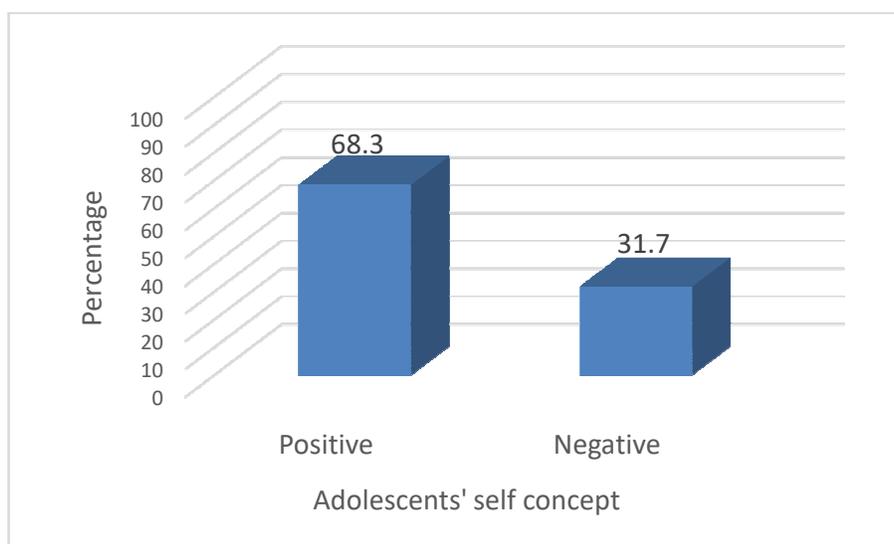
Self-concept	Statistics	Educational advancement		Total
		High	Low	
Positive	N	174	4	178
	%	97.8%	2.2%	
Negative	N	52	30	82
	%	63.4%	36.6%	
Total	N	226	34	260

Chi-square test=13.98, df=1, P=0.001

Table 5. Relationship between self-concept and educational advancement of adolescents

	Test statistics	Self-concept	Educational advancement of adolescents
Spearman' s rho test	R-value	1.000	.313**
	P-value	.	.000
	N	260	260

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

**Fig. 2. The summary of finding on adolescents' self-concept**

peers meanwhile 46(17.7%) of the adolescents are influenced by peers. Finally, majority of the adolescents 185(71.2%) always like to be with people who are better than them meanwhile 75(28.8%) of the adolescents do not. Fig. 3 below presents the summary of findings on the educational advancement of adolescents.

4. DISCUSSIONS

Findings from this study revealed that positive self- concept is an important variable of resilience which significantly influences adolescents educational advancement, this finding is in accord with that of Hannan et al

(2017) whose findings revealed that self-concept significantly affect students'academic performance. The findings are further supported by that of Nalah [43] which indicated that a statistical significant relationship existed between the academic performances of students of high and low self-concept. This implies that adolescents are more likely to advance in their education or resist academically when their self-concept is high or positive. Coleman & Hagell (2000) confirm this by stating that those possessing a positive self-concept show tendency happy towards others, are healthy, productive and successful, make much longer effort to overcome the difficulties, sleep better at

nights, have less risk in developing ulcer, show less tendency against accepting others and the pressures of their peers.

From the present study it can be said that despite the environmental challenges in Mbanga the students are still able to move on academically supporting the views of Martin 2002; [15]; Wang et al that individuals achieve academic/educational competence despite being in challenging or disadvantaged circumstances.

We form our self-concept as we grow; based on the knowledge we have about ourselves and our environment [63,64]. A strong, positive self-image is the best possible preparation for success in life. This was evident in this study whereby majority of the students were found to believe in their ability and have good knowledge about themselves and this corroborates the position of Howard and Johnson (1999, 2000; [65] that a large number of individuals who have been exposed to disadvantaged circumstances

Table 6. Adolescents opinions on how far they want to pursue education

Themes	Groundings/ frequency	Sample quotation
PhD Degree	50	"To obtain a PhD degree" "PhD" "Getting a doctorate degree". "Terminal degree". "I intend going to school till the fullness". "As far as life permits me to because education is life". "As far as possible" "To the last level of education".
University level	10	"I hope to earned at the university level". "I wish to follow all my dreams in future, go to university have my license and do whatever I wish to be in future". "To achieve all my degree or certificate". "Right to the level of the university".
Master's Degree level	5	"I wish to obtain a degree, Masters 1, Masters 2". "Master's degree"
GCE A level	2	"Advanced level" "I just want to have my advanced level and make money for life"

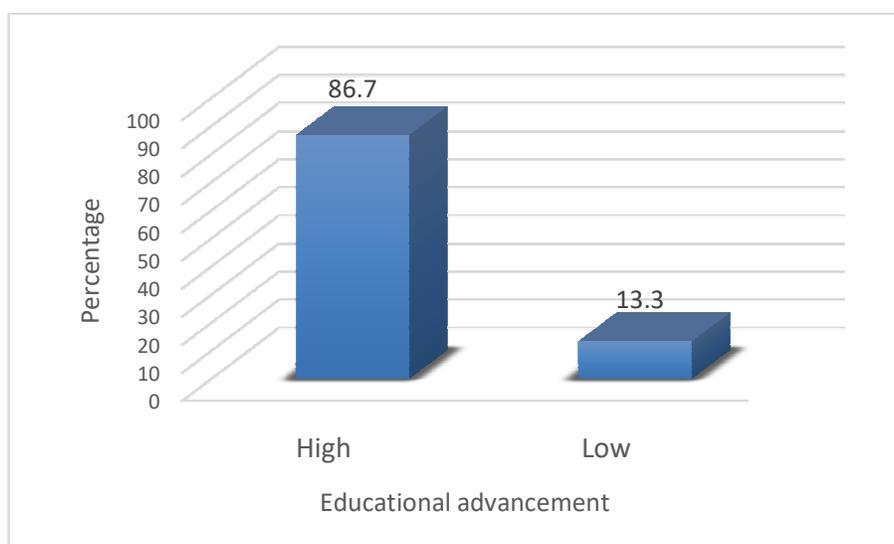


Fig. 3. Distribution of adolescents by educational advancement

have achieved desirable outcomes. Self-concept is the set of perceptions or reference points that the subject has about himself; the set of characteristics, attributes, qualities and deficiencies, capacities and limits, values and relationships that the subjects knows to be descriptive of himself and which he/she perceives as data concerning his identity (Hamachek, 1981, quoted by Machargo, 1991). It is the set of knowledge and attitudes that we have about ourselves; the perceptions that the individual assigns to him/her and characteristics or attributes that we use to describe ourselves. Self-concept includes positive and negative appraisals about an individual's self (Adams, 2010; Greene & Way, 2005) which was evident in the findings of this study where by majority of the adolescents have high/positive self-concept and educational advancement.

Findings also projected that a strong majority of the adolescents have a high passion for educational advancement and they were those with positive self-concept. This is supported by Reivich & Shatte, [4] who said that resilient people are happier, live longer and are more successful in school and jobs, are happier in relationships and are less likely to suffer depression and Hannan et al (2017) who said there is a strong relationship between self-concept and educational advancement.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study shows that self-concept, which is a strong component of resilience has a great role to play in the educational advancement of adolescents who study in unstable environments. In other words, for adolescents to advance in their education, they must have positive self-concept which enables them develop a strong passion for educational advancement that is going to school and obtaining higher qualifications like PhD Degree while some desire to obtain a Master's degree, and GCE advanced level. Kpolovie, (2014) says educational advancement is the ability of a student to enrol, persist and progress in school despite all odds. Secondary education plays a crucial role in laying the foundation for the further education of students. If a good foundation is laid at the secondary school level, students can better cope with the challenges of life with great ease. With educational advancement, students will achieve satisfactory or superior levels of academic performance as they progress through

and complete their college experience. Udoh (2005) maintained that academic performance of students is a phenomenon that has educational, psychological and sociological connotations.

This study revealed the influence of self-concept, resilience on the academic advancement of the adolescents. On the basis of theoretical issue proposed by Aspinwall and Richter (1999), one of the central aspects of individual self-concept is the belief that by means of exercise of control it is possible to influence the outcome of events in one's life and the successful adaptation to a variety of circumstances; control beliefs are considered as important aspects in the development of competence in adolescents who express high levels of resilience. In the same direction, results of this current paper showed that the factors of control and adaptability are strongly influenced by self-concept and resilience both in scholastic performance and in empathy.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made; that adolescents should belief in them and also foster the positive abilities that they have, while looking for ways of overcoming their negative knowledge about themselves.

Parents, teachers, guidance counsellors, and the society should encourage adolescents to develop positive and high self- concept in order to overcome the environmental challenges which sometimes have adverse effects on educational advancement.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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