European Journal of Special Education Research
ISSN: 2501 - 2428
ISSN-L: 2501 - 2428
Available on-line at: www.oapub.org/edu

DOI: 10.46827/ejse.v9i1.4733 Volume 9 | Issue 1 | 2023

SELF–ESTEEM, PEER PRESSURE, EXAMINATION ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS IN DELTA NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT, NIGERIA

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Abstract:
This study examined self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary students in Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State. Six research questions and six hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised all public Senior Secondary School Three (SSS 3) students in Delta North Senatorial District. The sample of the study comprised 1,647 senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. A multistage sampling procedure was used. A questionnaire and students' English Language questions were used for data collection in this study. The face validity of the questionnaire was examined through experts' judgment while factor analysis was used to estimate its content and construct validities. The reliability was tested by using Cronbach's alpha for estimating the internal consistency of the instrument. This yielded a reliability index of 0.61 for Self-Esteem Rating Scale; 0.70 for Peer Pressure Rating Scale; and 0.71 for Examination Anxiety Rating Scale. The data obtained were analysed with Pearson's coefficient of determination and regression statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance; between peer pressure and academic performance; between examination anxiety and academic performance; and among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students. The study, however, found that there is no significant moderating impact of sex and school location on the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students. The study recommended that Guidance counsellors should implement

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the psychoeducational program in schools to provide a chance for students to express themselves and develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Keywords: self–esteem; peer pressure; examination anxiety; academic performance; secondary school students

1. Introduction

The issue of students' performance has been a major subject of discussion among stakeholders. This is because schools are established to provide knowledge to the students. Academic performance is one of the measures of testing students' knowledge of subject matters. Every policy and innovation introduced is geared towards improving the performance of students. So many studies have been carried out and are still being carried out to find ways of improving the performance of students at all levels of education.

Despite the efforts put in place by stakeholders and researchers across the country to salvage the educational system of Nigeria, students' performance remains a major challenge. In order to gain admission into higher institutions in Nigeria, students need to obtain a minimum of five credits including Mathematics and English language. Without this requirement, no student will be able to move from secondary schools into tertiary institutions in the country.

Obtaining five credits in major examinations has become a major challenge for students aspiring to gain admission into tertiary institutions. Observations have shown that all is not well with the system as a result of the poor performance of students recorded in public examinations in recent years. The persistent poor performance of secondary school students in these examinations has made the development of secondary education in the State a difficult task. Education stakeholders have made a variety of comments about students' performances, particularly in English language and mathematics. From the WAEC Chief Examiner's report of 2018, it was observed that fewer than 40% of the total number of students that registered and sat for the exams obtained a 5-credit pass including Mathematics and English. Also in 2017, the report shows that only 59.22% of the total number of candidates obtained 5 credit passes including Mathematics and English language.

In 2020 the report shows that 1,003,668 candidates out of 1,538,445 students that sat for the 2020 WASSCE examination, representing about 65.24%, obtained at least a credit pass in a minimum of five subjects, that includes English and Mathematics (WAEC, 2020). The 2021 WAEC GCE examiners' report shows that a total of 51,444 candidates wrote the November/December examination out of 52, 973 registered candidates, out of which, only 25,008 candidates representing 48.61 per cent obtained credits and above in a minimum of five (5) subjects, including English Language and Mathematics, of this number, 12,272 were male candidates, while 12,736 were female candidates. In the same year (2021), the chief examiner's report shows that out of a total of 1,560,261 candidates

that sat for the examination, 1,398,370 candidates, representing 89.62 per cent, obtained credit and above in a minimum of any five subjects (with or without English Language and/or mathematics); while 1,274,784 candidates, representing 81.7 per cent, obtained credit and above in a minimum of five subjects, including English Language and mathematics. Although, there seems to be an improvement in the results yearly, much is still expected.

Apart from the WAEC results, the 2021 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) recorded poor performance by the candidates, as only 168,613 scored above 200 out of the available 400 marks. A review of the paper the Board released following its policy meeting in Abuja revealed that the performance was a far cry from the 404,740 students who out of the 1.9 million who took the exam in 2020 scored higher than 200. In 2020, a total of 2.11 million applicants sought admission into tertiary institutions in Nigeria, with over 300,000 direct entry applicants who needed not to write UTME. In the year 2021, 1,428,208 applied and over 300,000 were also direct entry candidates. According to JAMB's analysis of candidate performance in 2021, 90,688 candidates scored between 180 and 189 marks, 168,613 candidates scored between 190 and 200, and 64,323 candidates got between 190 and 199. Other students include 149,421 with a score between 160 and 169 and 117,970 with a score between 170 and 179. 369,023 applicants earned between 140 and 159 points, while 170,816 received between 130 and 139 points.

The above statistics imply that only a small percentage of secondary school graduates meet the requirements for admission to tertiary (higher) education institutions. As a result, the majority of these dropouts become social annoyances and miscreants. Various reasons have been identified be responsible for the poor performance of students in secondary schools. These factors are related to the students, their teachers, their parents and the school environment. These reasons may include teachers' educational qualification and workload and parents' attitudes (Ibezim, 2018); shortages of qualified teachers, a lack of fluency in the teaching language, and significant facilities such as laboratories and books and inadequate school facilities and instructional materials (Hassan, Ali, Salum, Kassim, Elmoge & Amour, 2015); students' attitude, resource availability, students –teacher inter-personal relationship and students' regularity to class (Apuh, 2020); and school location, laboratory adequacy and frequency of practical classes (Oginni, Awobodu, Alaska & Saibu, 2013).

From the above, it was observed that various studies have tried to explain and provided empirical data that demonstrate that students' performance is determined by various factors. These factors have been well researched, and even though it has been empirically proven, controversies still exist regarding the actual role they play in students' performance. Of particular interest to the current study, is the possible influence of self-esteem, peer pressure and examination anxiety.

Self-esteem refers to how an individual values himself or herself. Mamat (2019) defined self-esteem as how individuals self-evaluate themselves and whether they perceive it in a positive or negative manner. The concept of self-esteem is very important

because it influences a person into achieving set goals and has a major influence on decision-making. Self-esteem is considered to be a state of mind. It is the way people think and feel about themselves. Having high self-esteem means having feelings of confidence, worthiness and positive regard for oneself (Abubakar, et al. 2018).

People with high self-esteem feel good about themselves. They feel a sense of belonging and security. They value others and respect themselves. They typically succeed in life because they aren't afraid to face obstacles and risk failure in order to get what they desire. Because they are not wasting their energy on negative emotions, inferiority complexes, or exerting themselves to please or take care of others at the expense of their own needs, they have more energy for good endeavors (Bello, 2016). The level of self-esteem a person has is influenced by a variety of things, such as how they were reared, their parents' attitudes, their experiences, and other similar things.

Mugambi (2010) found that students with positive self-esteem can perform well academically if the right environment is presented. However, the majority of these studies centred on the cognitive aspects of the learner and instructions and methods used by the teachers in teaching, ignoring the affective domain of the learner. Research has shown that enhancing the self-esteem of students is a critical goal and is a means of facilitating the attainment of desirable outcomes in education such as academic effort and persistence in tasks. There is a need to understand the influence of students' self-esteem on academic performance. Self-esteem among secondary school students is influenced positively or negatively by their peers, which is another variable that is of concern in this study.

A person's social and emotional growth is greatly influenced by their peers. It is normal, healthy, and crucial for adolescents to have and rely on friends as they develop and mature; their effect starts at a young age and increases through the teenage years. Peer pressure, according to Hartney (2011), is the influence that peers may have on one another. Peer pressure is when individuals within the same social group (such as age, grade, or status) exert emotional or mental pressure on another person to act or behave similarly to themselves. Peer pressure, according to Jones (2010), is the power people with similar social status or ages have to persuade others in similar age brackets. Although its influence is not limited to teenagers alone, peer pressure is typically associated with adolescents. It is common to observe mature adults, teens, young adults, and children acting in ways that will gain their friends' approval.

Peer pressure is frequently linked to instances of adolescent risk-taking since these behaviors—such as delinquency, drug misuse, and sexual behavior—often happen in the presence of peers. When young people are pushed by their peers to behave well, it can also have positive impacts. such as giving to charities or performing well in school (Kellie, 2013). Peers can, however, also be a bad influence. They might encourage one another to use drugs or drink, steal, cheat, skip class, or engage in other harmful behaviors. Joining a group of people who consume alcohol, smoke cigarettes, or use Indian hemp, among other behaviors, is one way that negative peer pressure can have an impact. Peer pressure encourages teenagers to linger in the streets, watch movies and go to parties during class

hours while feeling ill and unhappy in order to avoid exams. Exam anxiety is a significant factor in this study as well.

The examination periods are regarded as the defining feature of every term since they signal the point at which students start to pay more attention to their academic work. Exam season is seen by students as a crucial time in the academic year, and they are under a lot of pressure, which causes them to feel stressed, anxious, and apprehensive while taking exams (Olaitan & Moroluyo, 2014). This results because of anxiety among students (Obikeze & Umezulike, 2013). Exam anxiety, also known as test anxiety in the research literature, is a state of unease or trepidation felt prior to, during, or following an exam due to worry, concern, or a fear of ambiguity (Nnorom, Anyanwu & Stephen, 2020).

Exam anxiety is a group of phenomenological, physiological, and behavioral reactions that go along with worry about potential negative outcomes or failure on an exam or other similar evaluative circumstances, according to Zeidner (2008). It is an emotion that someone could experience when under extreme time constraints or when success is on the line. Anxiety before exams is not altogether negative. In fact, some exam anxiety is healthy and required for students in order to keep them focused and motivate them to work on developing, implementing, and improving techniques that will ensure their greatest possible performance on the test. It's important to inspire and support pupils in remaining aware both intellectually and physically (Birjandi & Alemi, 2010). Performance suffers when anxiety levels rise above that ideal level, though. Some children actually struggle academically when their anxiety is at its worst. Their academic performance is negatively impacted by the unexpected disability caused by worry during exams, such as their hands going numb, shaking, and blanking out.

Sex may likely be a significant contributing factor when it comes to academic performance. This is so because, in any human endeavour, boys do not respond the same way that girls do, this could be due to the genetic makeup of both sexes. For instance, studies by Olasehinde and Olatoye (2014) found that the biological explanation of gaps in performance between male and female learners suggested that differences in brain structure, hormone production, and/or maturation rates may account for differentiated performance in school-related tasks. Kimura (2005) also stated that the parts of the brain responsible for processing verbal information and permitting the exchange of information between hemispheres were more highly developed in girls. Girls also demonstrated earlier development in the brain regions responsible for impulse control, and, in general, matured earlier than boys (Viadero, 2006). In relation to the role of sex in the academic performance of secondary school students, Awodun, Oni and Aladejana (2014) states that one of the variables that influence academic performance is sex. They recommended an investigation of the interrelationship between sex and science learning.

Also, of interest and significance in the study of students' academic performance is school location. Ezeudu (2003) used the terms "urban" and "rural" schools when defining school location. In comparison to other places, it is a unique location. According to Akpan (2008), schools in metropolitan regions have the infrastructure, more teachers, access to power, and a water supply. Rural places have low populations, a subsistence

lifestyle, are monotonous, and are burdensome. Urban areas are those with high population densities, high variety, and beauty. Numerous studies have examined the connection between student academic achievement in chemistry and school location. For instance, Ogunleye and Adepoju (2011) discovered that kids in urban schools perform more brilliantly than their counterparts in rural schools. The academic achievement of students in urban peri-urban settings was also shown to differ significantly, according to Adesoji and Olatunbosun (2008). According to Bosede (2010), where a student attends school can have an impact on their academic achievement in specific subjects. Onah (2011) also claimed that urban schools outperformed rural schools in terms of scientific achievement. Particularly, Owoeye and Yara (2011) demonstrated in their investigations that academic performance was higher in urban schools than in rural ones.

In view of the above, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship that exists among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and academic performance of secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

2. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1) What is the relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
2) What is the relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
3) What is the relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
4) What is the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
5) What is the moderating impact of sex in the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
6) What is the moderating impact of location on the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?

2.1 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study;

1) There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

2) There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.
3) There is no significant relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District
4) There is no significant relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.
5) There is no significant moderating impact of sex in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.
6) There is no significant moderating impact of location in the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

3. Methods

The correlational research design was adopted in this investigation. The study's population was 16,473 Senior Secondary two (SS 2) students in public secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial District's nine Local Government Areas. This study included a sample size of 1,647 senior secondary school students, which represented 10% of the total population. Using a simple random sampling technique, the researcher selected schools in each of the nine local government areas in Delta North Senatorial District in the first stage. On a sheet of paper, the researcher wrote the names of all the schools in each of the nine Local Government Areas, fold them, and placed it in a basket. He shuffled the basket and pulled out three pieces of paper, revealing what was written on them. The schools that were chosen through this approach. This continued until three schools from each of the nine Local Government Areas in Delta North Senatorial District were chosen (for a total of 27 schools).

The researcher thereafter chose 53.58% of students from each school in the second stage. This was accomplished through the use of a proportionate sampling technique. The researcher utilized a stratified sampling technique to divide the students into male and female students when selecting individuals based on their sex. Appendix II shows the sample size selection.

Questionnaires and English Language Achievement Test was used to collect data for this project. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Part A contains the respondents' demographic information, whereas Part B contains the Self-Esteem Rating Scale, Peer Pressure Rating Scale, and Examination Anxiety Rating Scale. The Self-Esteem Rating Scale contains 10 items, which were adopted from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (the scale was reduced to 7 items after validation); Peer Pressure Rating Scale contains 30 items that were adopted from Perceived Peer Pressure Scale developed by Palani and Mani (2016) (the scale was reduced to 15 items after validation); while

Examination Anxiety Rating Scale contains 21 items, adapted from the Examination Anxiety Scale developed by Abbasi and Ghosh (2020) (the scale was reduced to 9 items after validation). The scales were structured on a 4-point rating scale, which includes 4 for strongly agree; 3 for agree; 2 for disagree; and 1 for strongly disagree. The English Language Achievement Test will be used to measure the students' academic performance. The test will be adopted from previous WAEC English Language questions for the 2020/2021 academic session. The test contains 50 multiple-choice questions. It will be scored 2 score to one question, making a total of 100 total possible scores.

The instrument was given to experts in Guidance and Counselling in the Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka for the purpose of face validation. Some of the items were modified to suit the purpose of the study. The suggestions of the experts were followed before the instrument was sent out for trial testing. Factor analysis was used to estimate the content and construct validities of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered to 50 respondents who will not be part of the study. The data obtained were subjected to a factor analysis. The Principal Component Analysis was used to estimate the content validity by using the extraction method. The total cumulative variance was used to ascertain the content validity estimate of each subsection. The result shows that Self-Esteem Rating Scale explained 62.85% variance, Peer Pressure Rating Scale explained 71.37% variance while Examination Anxiety Rating Scale explained 61.68% variance. The construct validity was estimated with the rotated factor loading matrixes. The eigen value above 1 was used to select factors that measure a similar construct. The result shows that Self-Esteem Rating Scale had a factor loading matrix that ranged between 0.61 and 0.94; Peer Pressure Rating Scale had a factor loading matrix that ranged between 0.63 and 0.93; while Examination Anxiety Rating Scale had a factor loading matrix that ranged between 0.56 and 0.83. The reliability of the instrument was estimated using Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient, which gives measures of internal consistency. The data obtained from the pilot-testing earlier stated was subjected to a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability index obtained include 0.61 for Self-Esteem Rating Scale; 0.70 for Peer Pressure Rating Scale; and 0.71 for Examination Anxiety Rating Scale.

The researchers gave the questionnaire to the respondents directly with the assistance of three research assistants who were fully briefed on the study's objective and nature. The researcher approached the principals of several schools, explained the aim of the visit, and obtained permission to do the research there. To avoid data loss, the completed questionnaire was retrieved as soon as possible. The data were analysed with regression and fisher-z statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The data analysis was carried out with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.

4. Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

Table 1: Regression statistics of the relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District

Model	**Sum of Square**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	465.912	1	465.912	11.082	.001[b]
Residual	69159.740	1645	42.042		
Total	69625.651	1646			
Variables in Equation					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficient**		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
Constant	20.585	1.236	.082	16.659	.000
Self-Esteem	.210	.063		3.329	.001

α = 0.05, R = 0.082, R-Square = 0.007

a. **Dependent Variable:** Academic Performance
b. **Predictors (Constant):** Self-Esteem

As shown in Table 1, linear regression statistics was used to determine the relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The result revealed a significant positive relationship between the two variables, $F(1, 1645) = 11.082$ $p<0.05$ level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The beta value of 0.082 showed that self-esteem contributed 0.7% to the variability in the academic performance of secondary school students.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

Table 1: Regression statistics of the relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District

Model	**Sum of Square**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	1055.233	1	1055.233	25.315	.000[b]
Residual	68570.418	1645	41.684		
Total	69625.651	1646			
Variables in Equation					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficient**		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
Constant	30.689	1.208	-.123	25.404	.000
Peer Pressure	-.131	.026		-5.031	.000

α = 0.05, R = 0.123, R-Square = 0.015

a. **Dependent Variable:** Academic Performance
b. **Predictors (Constant):** Peer Pressure

As shown in Table 2, linear regression statistics was used to determine the relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The result revealed a significant negative relationship between the two variables, $F(1, 1645) = 25.315$, $p<0.05$ level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is a significant relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The beta value of 0.123 showed that peer pressure contributed 1.5% to the variability in the academic performance of secondary school students.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

Table 3: Regression statistics of the relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District

Model	**Sum of Square**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	24611.599	1	24611.599	899.410	.000[b]
Residual	45014.053	1645	27.364		
Total	69625.651	1646			
Variables in Equation					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficient**		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
Constant	-6.822	1.058	-.595	-6.450	.000
Examination Anxiety	1.443	.048		29.990	.000

α = 0.05, R = 0.595, R-Square = 0.353
a. **Dependent Variable:** Academic Performance
b. **Predictors (Constant):** Examination Anxiety

As shown in Table 3, linear regression statistics was used to determine the relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The result revealed a significant negative relationship between the two variables, $F(1, 1645) = 899.410$, $p<0.05$ level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is a significant relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The beta value of 0.595 showed that examination anxiety contributed 35.3% to the variability in the academic performance of secondary school students.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between Self-Esteem, Peer Pressure, Examination Anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

Table 4: Multiple regression statistics of the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District

Model	**Sum of Square**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig**
Regression	25371.298	3	8457.099	313.981	.000[b]
Residual	44254.353	1643	26.935		
Total	69625.651	1646			
Variables in Equation					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficient**		**Standardised Coefficient**	**t**	**Sig**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
Constant	-15.740	2.041		-7.711	.000
Self-Esteem	.085	.051	.033	1.671	.095
Peer Influence	.116	.023	.109	5.154	.000
Examination Anxiety	1.531	.051	.631	29.840	.000

α = 0.05, R = 0.604, R-Square = 0.364
a. **Dependent Variable:** Academic Performance
b. **Predictors (Constant):** Self-Esteem, Peer Pressure, Examination Anxiety

As shown in Table 4, multiple regression statistics was used to determine the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The result revealed a significant positive relationship among the four variables, $F(3, 1643) = 313.981$, $p<0.05$ level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is a

significant relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

The model (self-esteem, peer pressure and examination anxiety) jointly contributes 36.4% to the variability in the academic performance of secondary school students. Examination anxiety makes the strongest unique contribution in explaining the academic performance of secondary school students (with a Beta value of 0.631) while self-esteem makes less of a contribution (with a Beta value of 0.033). All the predictors (self-esteem, peer pressure and examination anxiety) make a statistically significant unique contribution to the equation with a P-value of 0.000.

Research Question 5: What is the moderating impact of sex in the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?
Hypothesis 5: There is no significant moderating impact of sex in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

Table 5: Multiple correlation and Fisher's Z statistics of the moderating impact of sex in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District

Sex	Variables	*N*	*R*	Fisher-z	Remark
Male	Self-Esteem	870	0.578	1.956	Not Significant
	Peer Pressure				
	Examination Anxiety				
	Academic Performance				
Female	Self-Esteem	777	0.635		
	Peer Pressure				
	Examination Anxiety				
	Academic Performance				

As shown in Table 5, multiple correlation and Fisher's Z statistics were used to determine the moderating impact of sex in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The result revealed no significant moderating impact, (R [m] = 0.578; R [f] = 0.635; Z = 1.956). Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, which means that there is no significant moderating impact of sex in the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

Research Question 6: What is the moderating impact of location in the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District?

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant moderating impact of location in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

Table 6: Multiple correlation and Fisher's Z statistics of the moderating impact of location in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District

Location	Variables	*N*	*R*	Fisher-z	Remark
Urban	Self-Esteem	925	0.576	2.489	Significant
	Peer Pressure				
	Examination Anxiety				
	Academic Performance				
Rural	Self-Esteem	722	0.644		
	Peer Pressure				
	Examination Anxiety				
	Academic Performance				

As shown in Table 6, multiple correlation and Fisher's Z statistics were used to determine the moderating impact of location in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District. The result revealed a significant moderating impact, (R [m] = 0.576; R [f] = 0.644; Z = 2.489). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, which means that there is a significant moderating impact of location in the relationship between self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Delta North Senatorial District.

5. Discussion

The first finding revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and the academic performance of senior secondary school students. What this finding means is that self-esteem may likely predict academic performance among students, that the higher an individual's self-esteem is, the higher such individual will perform in his or her academics. This finding underscores the importance of how students feel about their competence and ability to be successful in their educational programmes. Students who are convinced that they are good and have the ability to succeed or control their educational experiences are likely to make efforts to excel in school-related work.

The above finding buttresses the assertion by Akey (2016) that students' beliefs about their competence and expectations for success in school are linked to the students' level of engagement as well as emotional states that promote their ability to be academically successful. The finding also supports the research findings of Bryne as cited in Liu, et al. (2009); Guay, Ratelle, Roy and Litalien (2010). Bryne in a study in Canada found that students who performed higher academically had a higher academic self-concept. The results of Bryne's study showed that academic self-concept did not only

determine school achievement but also served as a more effective discriminator between low and high-ability students. Guay, et al (2010) on their part, found that students who perceived themselves as academically competent obtained higher grades because their academic self-concept led them to be more motivated at school.

The second finding showed a significant negative relationship between peer pressure and the academic performance of students. This finding implies that peer pressure can contribute to the variability in the academic performance of secondary school students. The more an individual is susceptible to peer pressure, the less likely he or she will perform academically, especially when such an individual is involved with deviant peers.

Peer groups can serve as both positive and negative role models. For instance, if one is part of a group that is driven and committed to achieving academic excellence, one may feel under pressure to do the same in order to stay in the group. On the other hand, individuals who are associated with a group that exhibits negative behaviours may end up performing poorly in their academics. One of the contributing factors to most students' poor academic performance could be a bad peer impact; the obvious explanation for this is that they spend a lot of time in extracurricular activities. Academic priorities are frequently ignored, which negatively impacts academic success.

The above finding agrees with Olalekan (2016), who observed that peer group has a lot of influence on students. This is evident from the significance that peer groups have in a child's development and learning; numerous studies have shown that pupils are more at ease and relaxed in the company of their peers. A talented child who hangs out with uninteresting kids will lose interest in school. On the other hand, a peer group that is inclined to study might positively influence a member's attitude toward learning and spark his or her interest in it. The results are in line with Katz's theory, which holds that a peer group's makeup influences how much of an impact it has on a member's motivation and success (Katz, as stated in Olalekan, 2016). He goes on to say that while one group might negatively affect its members, the other might positively affect its members as well. The results are in line with those of Bankole and Ogunsakin (2015), who looked at how students' peer relationships affected their academic performance and discovered that this was the case.

The third finding revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students. This result demonstrated that a person's likelihood of performing poorly academically decreases with increasing exam anxiety and vice versa. This implies that people with lower levels of exam anxiety are more likely to perform better than people with higher levels.

This result is consistent with Paechter, et al. (2017), who claimed that students with high levels of examination anxiety are prone to a variety of detrimental learning behaviors, including investing less time and effort in learning, efficiently organizing their learning environment, and paying less attention and concentration during a learning session.

The fourth finding showed that a significant relationship exists among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students. This finding suggests that self-esteem, peer pressure, and exam anxiety may all work together to explain why secondary school pupils' academic performance can vary. People who have low self-esteem, are easily influenced by others, and have high test anxiety are more likely to perform poorly academically than people who have high self-esteem, are less easily influenced by others, and have low levels of exam anxiety.

The fifth finding revealed that there is no significant moderating impact of sex in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and the academic performance of senior secondary school students. This research implies that students' sex cannot predict or attenuate the likely impact of self-esteem, peer pressure, and exam anxiety on their academic achievement. In other words, as long as the three predictors are present, the influence will be the same regardless of gender.

This result contradicts a cross-cultural study by Brunner et al. (2009) that measured sex differences using point-biserial correlations. Their study's findings revealed a positive association, demonstrating that boys and girls had different levels of academic self-concept. The findings of their investigation revealed that there were significant regional variations in the sex disparities in academic self-concept. Similar findings were made by Marsh, et al. as quoted in Brunner, et al. (2009), who discovered that girls had greater verbal self-concept while boys had higher mathematics self-concept. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2004), these found sex disparities in domain-specific academic self-concept are consistent with the sex stereotype explanation that asserts mathematics to be a male domain and females to have superior verbal competence.

The sixth finding revealed that there is a significant moderating impact of location in the relationship among self-esteem, peer pressure, examination anxiety and academic performance of senior secondary school students. This research suggests that the combined effects of self-esteem, peer pressure, and examination on the academic performance of secondary school pupils may be influenced by geography. The environmental conditions in urban and rural areas may differ, which may be the cause of this discovery.

The results support the findings of Ellah and Ita (2017), who found that there is a significant difference in students' academic performances in English language based on school location. Their study sought to determine the correlational relationship between school location and students' academic performances in English language in secondary schools in Ogoja Local Government Area. The results of this study concur with those of Eraikhuemen (2014), who found that there is a sizable disparity between rural and urban kids' academic achievement in a study on the impact of sex and school location on mathematics achievement of Senior Secondary School II students in Edo State. And he made the suggestion that the reason for the disparity in performances could be because an urban setting is more favorable than a rural one. This finding, however, contradicts that of Ekpenyong (2017), who found that the location of the school has little to no impact on the academic performance of the children.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study came to the conclusion that self-esteem, peer pressure, and exam anxiety can all individually and together affect senior secondary school students' academic performance. Location and sex cannot influence the link between the study's variables.
Based on the findings from this study the following recommendations were made that:

1) Guidance counsellors should implement the psychoeducational program in schools to provide a chance for students to express themselves and develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.
2) Guidance counsellors and teachers should encourage students through seminars and group guidance, to keep the right friends who will motivate them academically and help them to improve their academics.
3) Students should be prepared effectively for any examination so that they would be able to develop confidence in themselves and this may prevent examination-related anxiety.
4) Guidance counsellors and all those who care about the welfare of the students should be mindful of the joint impact of self-esteem, peer pressure and examination anxiety on the academic performance of the students and seek remediation strategies in dealing with the predictors.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors have no conflicts of interest.

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