

Prediction of Self-Concept and Anxiety on the Tendency of Postgraduate Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to Acquire Research Skills in Two Public Universities of Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for Counseling

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Abstract: *Background:* Acquisition of research skills provide the forum for incorporating Nigerian graduate students with disabilities and university lecturers into the international scientific culture and the developing knowledge economy.

Aim: This study investigated the prediction of self-concept and anxiety on the tendency of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to acquire research skills in two Public Universities of Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for counseling. Two objectives of the study were stated to guide the study and to achieve the purpose of the study. Two research questions were formulated, which were converted to two statements of hypotheses. A literature review was carried out based on the variables under study.

Method: The survey research design was considered most suitable for the study. A stratified random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the 49 respondents sampled for the study. A validated 20 items four-point modified Likert scale questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The face and content validity of the instrument was established by experts in Test and Measurement. The reliability estimates of 0.81 of the instruments were established using the Cronbach Alpha method. A simple Linear regression statistical tool was used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. The hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results: The results obtained from the data analysis revealed a significant prediction of self-concept and anxiety on the tendency of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to acquire research skills in the study area.

Conclusion: Based on the findings of the study, it was therefore recommended, among others, that internal seminars and workshops should be organized by Graduate schools every quarter of the year, where each postgraduate student delivers a standard paper, and this should be made compulsory. This will encourage sharing knowledge and increase skills and zeal for using knowledge and more research publications.

Keywords: Self-concept, anxiety, learning disabilities, research skills, counselling.

INTRODUCTION

Research skills are required in all areas of life, including medicine, health care, environment, education, and so on [1]. Research skills include tangible principles that can be taught more visibly, like good study design and the scientific method. Evidence suggests that we are more likely to recognize having

learned something if we are told explicitly that we will be learning it [2]. In addition, enabling students to be more aware of their own skill sets may be important for employability, as they can communicate these skill sets to potential employers when applying for jobs. Teachers may have spent decades with research as their primary activity in a typical academic setting. In contrast, the student's primary activity is to learn and understand medical knowledge. Thus, we may need to be more overt about research skills and explain their impact on employment within our curricula so that the

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students can understand what they are learning and why.

A university education aims to arm oneself with the information and skills necessary for a meaningful existence. It follows that for any genuine development to take place in any country, it needs people who have developed special skills to address both local and global issues as they arise. All universities aim to create the trained labor force that societies need to run smoothly. Their training programs are therefore geared to fulfill this goal. The capacity of one university to carry out this mandate sets it apart from the others. This is the foundation for ranking universities. Those who can successfully and effectively fulfill this duty are given a better ranking than others. One of the main objectives of tertiary education under the National Policy of Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is for students to achieve their potential and become self-reliant. Therefore, fulfilling this mission entails influencing the necessary research skills, knowledge, and attitude [3].

The ability to create knowledge might be a highly important human asset, given the importance of knowledge to mankind. This emphasizes how important it is to have these skills in order to pursue higher education. Therefore, ensuring such purchases among graduates, particularly postgraduate students, is a fundamental responsibility of education, especially university education.

Learning disabilities are disabilities that affect the acquisition of knowledge and skills, particularly a neurodevelopmental condition affecting intellectual processes, educational attainment, and the acquisition of skills needed for independent living and social functioning. Unlike other universities, public universities in Cross River State are generally concerned about the development of research skills, not just for postgraduate students (PGS) who want to be the creators of new knowledge and understanding but also for those who will acquire and use this additional knowledge and information in their professional activities.

[4] note that identifying inferential linkages between statements, including the capacity to understand the likelihood that what we believe may be false and the ability to spot the types of data that would erode our belief, is the fundamental research skill a research scientist must acquire. Additionally, it has been seen and personally experienced by researchers that the majority of postgraduate students who are expected to

exhibit superior research abilities are seen deliberating over one or more questions. Many of them lack the essential skills needed to complete their graduate work, including the ability to express problems clearly, conduct literature reviews, design and validate instruments, collect and analyze data, reference sources, and write reports. Without all of these skills, no useful work can be done.

However, research articles by [5, 6] have opined that a number of factors, such as instability in tertiary institutions, a lack of research facilities, compromise on the part of the supervisors in research supervision, a lack of research skills on the part of the students themselves, and incompetence in lecturers of research methodology courses, are to blame for students' inability to acquire research skills in universities. There are discoveries of contributing multi-level, cross-level, and psychological-social factors that impact the development of research skills from an ecological standpoint. These factors include age, gender, peer group, academic interests, self-concept, attitude, anxiety, motivation, marital status, and economic level. These factors may all be found in a person's life. In order to determine the proper place of these factors for the purposes of this study, self-concept and anxiety were studied. The reasons for this are straightforward.

First, owing to its link to students developing research skills, self-concept, or one's subjective perspective of oneself, is a crucial building block in education. Self-concept is generated and modified by one's own personal experiences and how others perceive those experiences. Self-concept, or how someone views "self" in relation to learning research techniques, is related to one's aptitudes. One's behavior, as well as their emotional and cognitive results, can be influenced by their self-concept. Self-concept often refers to the conscious perception of one's personality or self as a unique phenomenon from others or the outside world [7]. The cognitive or thinking part of who we are—related to our perception of ourselves—is our self-concept. It is frequently referred to as the entire system of acquired attitudes, views, and beliefs that each individual clings to their life. This system is complex, structured, and dynamic. Self-concept, according to [8], is what we think, feel, and judge about ourselves. Strong self-concept holders believe they are capable of setting and pursuing ambitious goals. The ways people often view themselves and their connections with others closely correlate with many of the achievements and failures they encounter in other areas of their lives [9].

Few life events have any more significance than the assumptions we hold about our identities, our conceptions of who we are, and how we fit into the cosmos; it is becoming increasingly clear [10]. However, everyone at public institutions, even the librarians, is aware of who they are and what they stand for. According to [11], self-concept is a person's perception of who they are based on their environment, interactions with important people, and how they attribute their actions. It implies that the idea of oneself is not innate; rather, it is developed via experience as a result of interactions with other people and the environment.

These self-inferences from a healthy self-concept are beneficial. Therefore, those who have a good self-concept are optimistic and more inclined to draw positive conclusions about themselves as well as embrace who they are. A positive self-concept has improved people's welfare and achievements in numerous areas, including research output. High self-esteem individuals create difficult objectives for themselves and stick to them. When faced with failure, they exert more effort and continue. Our sense of identity is influenced by our self-concept [12]. Social comparisons—perceptions of how similar and dissimilar you are from others—and other people's thoughts and judgments have a significant impact on our self-concept. There is a strong correlation between employees' self-perception and their job performance/productivity across organizations, according to prior [13].

According to [9], there is strong evidence to imply that the concept of oneself serves as the foundation for all motivated behavior. The self-concept is what gives rise to one's potential, and one may create their own reasons for doing. The productivity of a librarian's job might be influenced by his or her perception of what is possible for him or her.

Ayodele 960 investigated the intensity and nature of the connection between developing one's own self-concept and acquiring research skills among students at public institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Utilizing a multi-stage sampling process, the study employed a survey form categorization of 360 postgraduate students drawn from three public institutions and three senatorial districts in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The Self-Concept Scale -* ty7u8i c *(SCS) and a questionnaire regarding developing research abilities were the instruments employed in this study. The results of the study showed a substantial connection between the

development of research abilities at public universities in Ekiti State and the self-concept. Therefore, it is advised that teachers make use of their students' positive perspectives and self-concepts to increase student interest in a subject.

[14] investigated how students' perceptions of themselves affected the growth of their study abilities. The questionnaire, which had 40 closed-ended questions pertinent to the student self-concept constructions taken from the literature, was completed by 297 randomly chosen pupils in Elmina Township, Ghana. A five-point scale was employed in the survey that was used for the study. The reliability of the survey was examined using Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficient was 0.86. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are used to examine the findings. Students appear to have a good opinion of their own self-concept, but this self-concept does not clearly represent the growth of students' study abilities. It only functions when students are willing to put up some effort to comprehend the material covered in their private study. Teachers, parents, and other stakeholders must understand this student's self-concept since they have an impact on pupils' development of positive self-concept while interacting or conversing with them. If students' learning efforts are in line with their self-concepts of physical, psychological, value, faith, economic, and educational interest, they will perform better academically, which in turn will significantly improve their overall academic success. We will support, track, and supervise students by providing a private timetable for studying and instructing them in their everyday learning.

In addition, according to [15], the hyper-arousal condition that causes physiological, mental, and intellectual alterations, as well as the inability to successfully apply previously acquired abilities, is what is meant by the term "anxiety." Anxiety has two distinct subcomponents: emotionality and intelligence. The cognitive subcomponent suggests the worry that prevents attention, concentration, and effective information processing, whereas the emotional subcomponent suggests performance-related natural excitement. It would appear that a student's emotions, surroundings, and attitude might have an impact on their cognitive abilities. This could affect an adult's performance in several ways, including in a classroom. Since working memory is essential for the initial stages of job learning, people with high levels of anxiety frequently engage in worried or distracting thoughts that may impair working memory performance.

According to [15], anxiety is "an unusual and frightening sense of fear and apprehension frequently marked by physiological signs (such as sweating, tension, and heightened pulse), doubt about the reality and nature of the threat, and self-doubt about one's ability to cope." Similar to this, anxiety was defined by [4] as "an anticipatory feeling of apprehension over probable adverse outcomes" (p. 137). Although there are various ways to define anxiety, they all share a tendency to worry excessively about potential hazards in one's immediate environment. Fear of both traits and conditions is thought to be a part of the fear system. External events are assumed to be the cause of state anxiety, which manifests as fear and anxiousness in response to certain acute stresses. Feature anxiety, on the other hand, is defined as a personality trait that comprises a generalized propensity for seeing risks in all or most settings. Social anxiety and, at its worst, social phobia are two examples of anxiety that are unique to childhood and adolescence.

Postgraduate students spend a large portion of their waking hours in school when they frequently experience pressure from both social and academic evaluations. The knowledge of peer and teacher evaluation in the classroom causes dread and stress in certain kids who have been diagnosed with the social anxiety disorder mentioned above. A growing corpus of material emphasizes how anxiety negatively affects learning study skills ([3]. According to [16], there is a negative link between the measures of anxiety acquisition and research skills. Similar to this, [17] discovered that negative impacts (like anxiousness) continue to negatively affect the development of research skills even after adjusting for cognitive factors (like intelligence testing). Finally, it was shown that anxiety problems were linked to school abandonment. Students' inability to finish their research projects had a range of negative personal and societal effects, including illness, unemployment, criminal activity, and incarceration [6].

For the purpose of overall personal development, [18] evaluated graduate students' acquisition of research skills at institutions in Nigeria's Cross River State. The survey used a survey research design as its methodology. Two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated to provide direction for this project. 3,018 graduate students from the two universities made up the population. A stratified random sampling procedure was used to choose 300. The Students' Acquisition of Research Ability Questionnaire (SARSQ), a tool created by researchers,

was used to collect the data. Utilizing descriptive statistics (Mean Rating) and independent statistical t-test procedures, the acquired data underwent statistical analysis. The findings showed that graduate students were not developing their research skills at a high rate. They develop the best reading, oral presenting, and information-collecting abilities while developing the worst analytical ability. There is a sizable disparity in the development of research skills between male and female graduate students, with the male having the advantage. It was advised that graduate students engage in more research-focused activities to improve their research literacy for all-around personal growth.

According to [19] Goddet's research, students strongly agreed that college offers opportunities for social contact with other graduates, that supervision is available when needed and is of a high caliber, that a variety of essential skills are being developed, and that library facilities support research. Approximately 75% of students say they are happy with the caliber of their research experience, 10% disagree, and 15% give a neutral reaction. This put institutions under pressure to create an atmosphere that encouraged the development of research abilities, which, when used by students, yielded amazing outcomes. They also noted in the same survey that there are gender gaps, with male students self-rating their work production as being higher than that of female students.

In a related trend, [6] discovered that graduate students' research skills have improved as a result of their graduate teaching fellowship programs. In Nigeria, 113 undergraduate education students at Obafemi Awolowo University participated in a study by [20] to examine their development of cognitive research anxiety and research skills. The sample had an average age of 24.07 years and included 77 men and 36 women. The Anxiety Scale for Cognitive Testing (CTAS), created by [21], had 27 items that they reacted to [21]. The research revealed a link between students' development of research abilities and cognitive research anxiety.

[22] also studied 187 undergraduate students from a purposely chosen sample to determine the association between developing research skills and overcoming research anxiety. They discovered that students with weak research skills also had phobias, and the opposite was also true. The results likewise showed no significant relationship ($r = 0.06$) between dread and the advancement of research abilities in a local sample [23].

According to [24], pupils who have more self-confidence are less anxious and have better study skills than those who don't believe in themselves. In a similar line, [25] pointed out that research has repeatedly shown a clear association between how individuals view themselves and the level of their research skills development. They claim that those who are self-assured often prosper, whereas those who lack confidence do not. According to 23, learning research skills is significantly simpler when one has a good sense of oneself.

In order to develop student's research abilities, [26] investigated the impact of test anxiety on Northwest Students in Kano State, Nigeria. It made use of the idea of descriptive surveys. Purposeful sampling approaches were used to compile 350 responses from the sample region, including 203 male and 147 female pupils. The students' data were gathered using the Anxiety Questionnaire (AQ). Experts have examined the instrument's face and material validity. A dependability index of 0.83 has been obtained using the Cronbach Alpha method. The study's objectives have been served by the formulation and testing of two null hypotheses. The acquired data were examined using the Mean Score, Standard Deviation, and T-test Statistics in SPSS v16 at the 0.05 significant level. Test results revealed that there is no appreciable difference between male and female students in terms of the root causes and symptoms of anxiety related to the growth of their research skills. Based on the findings, the research recommended that psychologists and other educators develop a learning environment for kids that is stress-free and tension-free in order to reduce anxiety and other problems.

Government, non-governmental groups, and the general public have shown great concern over the issue of self-concept and anxiety related to students' propensity to develop research abilities. Successful academic careers require strong research abilities, especially in public universities. However, studies and observations have revealed that some university students appear to lack the necessary abilities to complete their research projects. Perhaps this is one of the reasons some students stay in a program longer than the allotted number of years. Some even wind up quitting these programs because of mounting tuition. The submitted theses and dissertations exhibit irregularities in the organization, poor presentation, and subpar research techniques. It always implies that graduate students seem to struggle with composing their analyses.

The fact that graduate programs are research-based everywhere in the world is very significant. They are designed to be a center for knowledge development that advances social goals generally and educational purposes specifically. As a result, there are high expectations for postgraduate students who are typically thought of as future think tanks and who, as such, should be able to do research with a particular level of competency. The majority of academics, particularly graduate students, who are expected to execute research with high-quality abilities, are seen struggling with one issue or another, according to observations and personal interactions with them. Some people lack noteworthy abilities, including the ability to describe problems clearly, perform research studies, build and test instruments, gather and analyze data, correctly reference sources, and write reports. Where any of these abilities are deficient, no worthwhile study can be done. Postgraduate students will produce research that will be accepted locally and worldwide and provide knowledge for the growth of numerous academic fields when these talents are present in graduate students and effectively employed in carrying out analyses.

Graduate programs now include programs and courses designed by postgraduate school curriculum planners to teach students how to acquire research abilities. The fact that these issues still remain unresolved and that possibly the University administration isn't doing enough to address them is still unexpected.

The government and administration of the Universities of Calabar and Cross River University have put a lot of effort into resolving this issue by encouraging and facilitating scholarship and community service work, as well as making sure that postgraduate students learn both academic and professional skills that will enable them to be self-reliant and productive members of society. Once more, seminars and workshops on teaching postgraduate students research skills have been held, yet the issue of low graduation rates still exists despite these attempts to keep public universities' educational standards high.

These initiatives include graduate school accessibility to E-library, the introduction of a course on using information, communication, and technology (ICT), and the requirement that students take advanced research techniques and statistics during their first years of coursework. The objective of maintaining academic standards at universities has not yet been

met, despite these efforts. It is significant to remember that if pupils lack the ability to realize their long-term goals, they will stay dissatisfied as persons. This scenario is untenable on the levels of the person, the family, the community, and the nation.

However, it is pertinent to note that the gaps which this research covers are that a significant number of researches in the study area focused mostly on socio-economic variables and student's academic achievements and performance, students drop out tendency as influenced by environmental variables using variables such as income level of parents, educational level, teachers' attitude and so on. Statistical techniques like Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Chi-square were used in analyzing data. Again, most of this research covered public tertiary institutions in Local Government Areas, while this research will only cover the public universities in Calabar Education Zone.

The gap this research also covers is that unlike other research carried out in other areas, this study used the simple linear regression statistical tool in analyzing the hypotheses. Also, variables such as self-concept and anxiety were used for the present study. In addition to that, unlike other studies, this study used stratified random sampling techniques to select the respondents for the study. To test the reliability of the study, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was

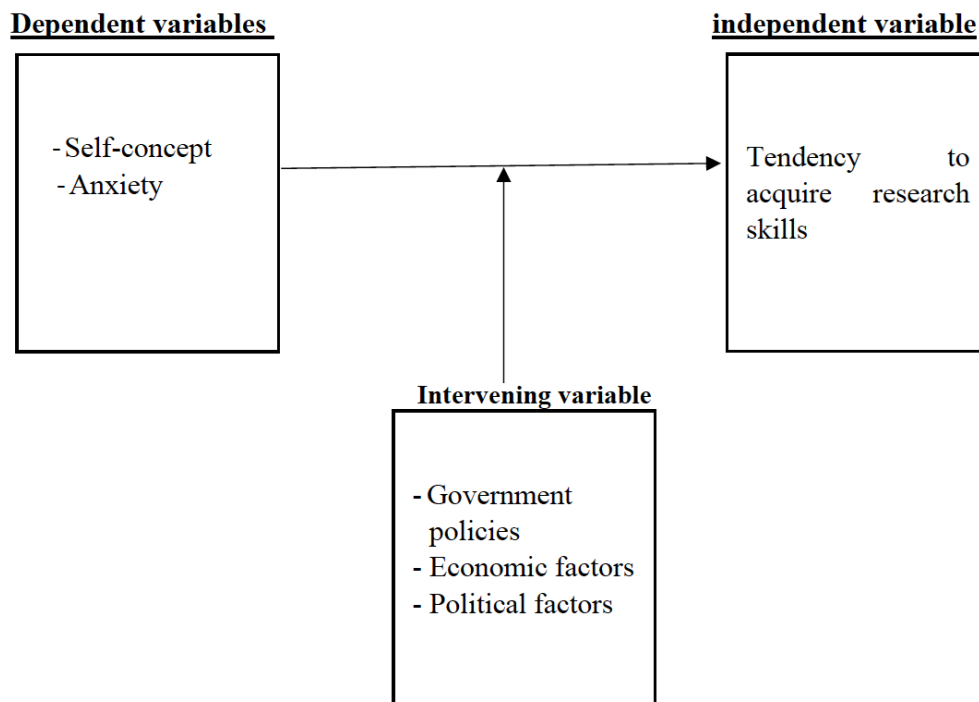
used. The study would serve as a material and empirical study for any other researcher who may have a similar curious mind in terms of how self-concept and anxiety serve as a determinant of research skills acquisition. Thus, the researcher answered the question of whether self-concept and anxiety may predict postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) tendency to acquire research skills in two public universities of Cross River State, Nigeria: implications for counseling, given that the importance of research today cannot be overemphasized in the growth and development of any nation.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine self-concept and anxiety as predictors of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) tendency to acquire research skills in two public universities of Cross River State, Nigeria: implications for counseling.

Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Ascertain the influence of self-concept on postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) tendency to acquire research skills
2. Examine the influence of anxiety on postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) tendency to acquire research skills.



Schematic representation of the dependent and independent variables

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are stated to guide the study;

1. There is no significant influence of self-concept on postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) tendency to acquire research skills
2. Anxiety has no significant influence on postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) tendency to acquire research skills.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Experimental Setting

The study utilized a survey research design. According to Salaria (2012), a research design is used when the goal of a survey is to gather and evaluate information about the examined phenomena from a representative of the entire population with the hope of generalizing the findings to the entire population.

Participant/Sample

The 123 postgraduate students with various learning difficulties from the Universities of Calabar and Cross River who are 20 years of age or older make up the study's population. The study used a stratified random sampling approach. A stratum was created for each university from which respondents were chosen. The study included forty percent (40%) of all the students with learning disabilities (LD) at each university. 49 out of 123 respondents made up the study's sample. The researchers' "Self-concept and Anxiety and Postgraduate Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) Tendency to Acquire Research Skills Questionnaire" is the tool used to gather the data (SCAPSLDTARSQ).

Statistical Analysis

The questionnaire consists of three sections; A, B, and C. Section A has four items that focus on the respondents' demographic data, such as gender and age. Marital status and Income level while Section B has six items each, making a total of 12 items which focused on the sub-independent variables of the study such as self-concept and anxiety, and Section C has ten items which focused on the dependent variable of the study, which is the tendency to acquire research skills. The total items for the instrument were 22 items. The respondents were required to tick the option that

was most applicable to them. Each item elicited information from respondents on a four-point modified Likert scale, Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. These items were generated from the literature reviewed in the course of the research.

Ten postgraduate students from the University of Calabar who were not involved in the study were used in a trial test to assess the instrument's reliability. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient technique was used to score, evaluate, and analyze the responder data. The reliability test result revealed a dependability index of .81.

The raw scores of all the items in each variable were added together to reveal the outcome for each variable in order to evaluate the data. As all hypotheses would be assessed using independent and simple linear statistical regression methods at the 0.05 level of significance (i.e., 95% confidence interval), the results were presented in frequencies, percentages, tables, and inferential statistics.

To analyze the data, the raw scores of all the items in each variable were summed together to show the result for each variable. Results were presented in frequencies, percentages, tables, and inferential statistics, as all hypotheses will be tested using simple linear statistical regression tools at a 0.05 level of significance (i.e., 95% confidence interval).

Ethical Details

The study strictly observed ethical standards and principles of social science research in order to protect the participants from psychological, physical, and emotional harm by ensuring the privacy, secrecy, and confidentiality of their information. The study was conducted with the informed consent of the participants by informing them of the purpose of the study to influence their choice to participate. The researcher informed the participants about the confidentiality of the information given. Also, the researcher ensured the respondents participated in the study willingly, readily, and voluntarily.

RESULTS

Table 1 provided descriptive information, including mean and standard deviation, for all respondents included in the study. The table indicated that 49 students with different learning disabilities reacted to the instrument's items. The anxiety scale had a mean

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-concept	49	17.18	2.26
Anxiety	49	15.90	2.90
Tendency to acquire research skills	49	27.44	3.69

of 15.90 and a standard deviation of 2.90, the self-concept scale had a median of 27.44 and a standard deviation of 3.69, and the inclination to develop research skills had a mean of 27.44 and a standard deviation of 2.90. Table 1 displays the outcome.

Hypothesis one:

Self-concept has no measurable impact on postgraduate students with learning disabilities' tendency to develop research skills. Self-concept is the independent variable in this hypothesis, and the tendency of postgraduate students with learning difficulties to develop research skills is the dependent variable. The results of the test of the hypothesis using simple linear regression statistics are shown in Table 2.

An adjusted R² of 0.066 was obtained from the simple regression analysis in Table 2 of self-concept on predicting postgraduate students' propensity to develop research skills. This suggests that, in predicting postgraduate students' propensity to develop research skills, the independent variable (self-concept) can explain 6.6 percent of the variation. The regression table's Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) F-value was F = 41.082 with a p-value of 0.000, 1 degree of freedom, and 47 degrees of freedom at the 0.05 level of

significance. The naive theory was disproved. This study indicates that there is a substantial relationship between self-concept and the propensity of postgraduate students with learning disabilities (LD) to acquire research skills since just 6.6% of these students anticipated their self-concept to do so.

Hypothesis two:

The likelihood that postgraduate students with learning disabilities (LD) would develop research skills is not significantly predicted by anxiety. Anxiety is the independent variable in this hypothesis, and the tendency of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to develop research skills is the dependent variable. The results of the test of the hypothesis using simple linear regression statistics are shown in Table 3.

An adjusted R² of 0.019 was obtained from the simple regression analysis of anxiety on the likelihood that postgraduate students with learning disabilities (LD) will develop research skills (Table 3). This suggests that 1.9 percent of the variance in the probability of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) developing research skills may be predicted from the independent variable (anxiety). The

Table 2: Summary of Data and Simple Regression Analysis on the Prediction of Self-Concept and Tendency of Postgraduate Students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to Acquire Research Skills

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square		Std. Error of the Estimate	
0.260	0.068	0.066		3.56376	
Model	Sum of squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	521.763	1	521.763	41.082	0.000
Residual	7188.434	48	12.700		
Total	7710.197	49			
Predictor variable	Unstandardized coeff				
	B	Std error	Std Coeff.	t-value	P-value
Constant	32.045		0.369	78.830*	0.000
Self-concept	-0.205	0.041	-0.231	-6.234	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant); Self-concept.

b. Dependent Variable: Tendency of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to acquire research skills.

Table 3: Summary of Data and Simple Regression Analysis on the Prediction of Anxiety on Postgraduate Students' Tendency to Acquire Research Skills

R 0.142	R Square 0.020	Adjusted R Square 0.019		Std. Error of the Estimate 3.65319	
Model	Sum of squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	156.464	1	156.464	11.724	0.001
Residual	7553.733	48	13.346		
Total	7710.197	49			
Predictor	Unstandardized Coeff				
Variable					
	B	Std Error	Std Coeff	t-value	P-value
Constant	39.118	0.693		52.009*	0.000
Anxiety	-0.227	0.031	-0.221	-3.562*	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant); Anxiety.

b. Dependent Variable: Tendency of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to acquire research skills.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) F-value from the regression table was $F = 11.724$ with a p-value of 0.001, 48 degrees of freedom, and a significance level of 0.05. The Nave theory was disproved. Because anxiety predicted only 1.9% of the tendency of postgraduate students with Learning Disabilities (LD) to acquire research skills, this result indicates that anxiety has a significant predictive relationship with the postgraduate tendency of postgraduate students with LD to acquire research skills.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate the importance of self-concept in postgraduate students with learning disabilities (LD) developing research skills in Cross River State, Nigeria. These findings back up recent research by Purkey (2018) [9], which found that people with a good self-concept trust their ability to establish and achieve lofty goals. Self-perceptions and interpersonal relationships play a vital role in overall success. Additionally, the study findings support Augustine's (2014) [27] assertion regarding the significant relationship between students' self-concept levels and their acquisition of research abilities. However, no significant correlation was observed between a high self-concept and study capacity among both male and female students.

Moreover, the study reveals that anxiety significantly influences the inclination of postgraduate students to acquire research skills. These results align with Aryana's (2010) [24] study, which suggests that students with higher levels of self-confidence experience lower anxiety levels and exhibit better study

skills. Similarly, Naderi *et al.* (2019) [25] support the association between individuals' self-perception and the development of research skills, indicating that those with strong self-assurance tend to thrive, while those lacking confidence may face challenges. However, the findings contradict the claim made by Owayed El-Anzi (2015) [16] that there are negative relationships between anxiety and research skills. Likewise, in their research, Gumora and Arsenio (2012) [17] found that detrimental factors like anxiety can hinder the progress of research skills, even when considering cognitive factors. These findings from the present study challenge the assertion made by Faleye (2017) [20] regarding the connection between students' research abilities and cognitive research anxiety.

Some limitations should be acknowledged regarding this study. The study was limited to postgraduate students with learning difficulties in Cross River State, Nigeria, and may not fully represent the broader population. And the study's survey research approach relies on self-reported data, which may be prone to response biases. To improve the generalizability of the results, future studies should investigate increasing the sample size and experimenting with different research approaches.

CONCLUSION

The study came to the conclusion that all the variables (self-concept and anxiety) significantly affect postgraduate students' tendency to acquire research skills in the research area. The ability to create knowledge might be a highly important human asset, given the importance of knowledge to mankind. This

emphasizes how important it is to have these skills in order to pursue higher education. Therefore, ensuring such purchases among graduates, including postgraduate students with a range of learning disabilities, is a fundamental responsibility of university management (LD).

IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELING

There is sufficient evidence to show that failing to provide counseling to students with different learning difficulties causes them to be afraid of participating in research and statistics at universities. Students are also more prone to react adversely and engage in cases of unseriousness during research writing, which is a requirement for graduation when they are less involved in the research process. According to the findings, students behave badly because they are afraid of developing a sense of inadequacy, insecurity, and ineptitude in their research skills. As a result, the value of counseling for students cannot be overstated. In order to improve counseling for postgraduate students with learning difficulties to acquire appropriate research skills, student-focused interventions should be put into place (LD).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result of the study, the researcher made the following recommendations;

- i. Graduate schools should have internal seminars and workshops four times a year, with the delivery of a required standard paper being made mandatory for all postgraduate students. This will promote knowledge exchange, improve skills and passion for using knowledge, and raise the number of research publications.
- ii. In order to increase pupils' acquisition of research skills, parents, instructors, guardians, the government, and society should promote positive and high self-concepts and eliminate worry.

CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors hereby declare that there is no conflicting interest. Hence the publishers can go ahead with publishing the paper.

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