

VALUE PREFERENCES AND ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTATION OF IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN ANKPA LOCAL EDUCATION ZONE OF KOGI STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of value of preferences on achievement orientation of in-school adolescents. The research was carried out in Ankpa education zone of Kogi State. The study employed a survey design. The population was 2803 in-school adolescents in the senior secondary II in the urban and rural locations of the zone. Then, 280 SS II was used as a sample. Three research questions were posed and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. An instrument called Value Preferences and Achievement Orientation Questionnaire (VPAOQ) developed by the researchers was used to collect the data. Mean scores and standard deviations were used to answer research questions while one-way ANOVA was used to address the null hypotheses. The study found that both male and female in-school adolescents have preferences for the same value like fulfillment, affluence, family life, creativity, religion, competitiveness and hard work except friendliness and leadership irrespective of their locations. It was found that there is value diffusion among the in-school adolescents. The researchers therefore, recommended inclusion of core values and gearing of the school curriculum, enlightenment campaign on core values and gearing of efforts toward having conscientious hard working role-model in the society.

The word “value” has several meanings. It could mean the actual worth of an object or item in monetary term. It could also mean a general conviction a person or group holds and defends (Marta, 2003). In psychology, researchers are made into values mostly in terms of needs, interests and human motivation (Collin, 2000). Value emerges in the process of interactions and activities in the society. Value defines the choice between different ways of behaviour in a certain situation. Basic human values

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enhance good behaviour, attitudes and give purposes and direction to human values enhance good behaviour, attitudes and give purposes and direction to human lives. People form their world views and convictions through experiencing values.

Values can be core or ephemeral. The core values are those values which the individual cannot compromise. They are for the well being of the individual and the society. For example, creativity, integrity and so on are core values. While the ephemeral values are those values meant to unduly aggravate self above societal values. For example, affluence and popularity are ephemeral values.

One of the aims and objectives of the nation's educational policy is the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society (FME, 2004). Therefore, no mention can be made of education without value. Value here means the attachment of importance to issues, things or phenomena. It is a belief in a reason for existence which is preferred to its opposite.

Edgar (1987) stressed that changes in value preferences are expected from middle to late adolescence, as school influence lessens and contact with the working environment become established. Therefore, value preference is considered as the choice of values an individual makes in all facets of his or her life. Such choice directs the individual's attitudes and behaviour.

Achievement has been viewed as the progressive realization of a predetermined worthwhile goal (Ukah, 2008). It is a journey that is on "going" but it is not an event. In the context of this study, achievement is conceived as the attainment does not mean how much one has in one's bank account or property, rather it is what one legitimately own and is satisfied with, which one get without violating the rights of others. The way one takes to the top needs to be scrutinized and one's character tested before one's position is considered. That is, the person's achievement orientation. In the words of Anikweze and Orji (1998) adolescents are overgrown children and immature adult and so they are faced with both pressures of adult and children. Achievement orientation means the attitudes and behaviours of the individual towards success.

The in-school adolescence are spread across the country, hence, how they orient themselves toward achievement is a subject of interest. The in-school adolescents are those adolescents who are still in school. They are the school "stayers". Such adolescents might have considered schooling as worthwhile with perceived ability to carry out school tasks.

The adolescents are individuals found in the period bounded by childhood and the upper limit is the beginning of adulthood (Eke, 2008). The adolescents fall between

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the secondary school years. That is, 11 or 12 to 15 years. Eke (2008) stressed, educators expect the adolescents to be out of secondary school at 18 years. So, here the adolescents referred to young people between the ages 11 and 18 years.

However, the ways and manners most adolescents pursue the attainment of their goals are problematic, they want to attain them through internet stealing, advance fee fraud (419) and the like due to their eagerness and hurriedness to attain or “arrive at” a goal without the readiness to go through necessary training that lead to enduring success. For instance, some young people prefer medicine, engineering, law, banking, architecture and pharmacy as professions they want to enter upon graduating from school without adequately considering what it takes to succeed and achieve in those careers (Ekoja and Egbochaku, 1999), Ogunsanwo, 2000; Salami, 2000). Many existing researches focused on ways and means of addressing the problem of poor achievement in secondary school subjects like mathematics, and science subjects and seem to dwell more on socio-economic status of students, lack of teaching and learning materials and teacher effectiveness (Salami, 2008; Vickers, 2004) and very little researches have been carried out on value preference of the adolescent and how they impact on their achievement orientation.

Statement of the Problem

Literature clearly suggests a shift in values of the adolescents from the adult values. The adolescent have their characteristic way they view values. They believe that values are not static but change with the changing world. Hence, adolescents consider adult values as out-dated and old. So, adult values seem to conflict with adolescent values. For instance, most adults may prefer hard work and right training for achievement but most adolescents may be more at home with short-cuts to achievements. Such short-cuts often result in vices like examination malpractices, cultism, internet stealing, and abduction of innocent citizens, robbery and opportunistic religious clerics. The belief in short-cuts to success has been fueled by the advent of the information and communication technologies in recent times. This predisposes the adolescent to various information which the adults are not even aware of. Such information shapes fast the value system of them young people.

Unfortunately, in this part of the world, the inculcation of right values in the teaming youths has not received adequate attention, hence adolescent’s values preferences are not sufficiently explored. Therefore, in-school adolescents are at risk sine very little is done about how to change their attitudes. The problem of this study poses a question as: how do value preferences influence achievement orientation of the in-school adolescents? Would gender be a significant factor on value preferences of the in-school adolescents?

Methodology

The study is a descriptive survey research. The study was carried out in Ankpa Education zone of Kogi State. The population of the study is 2,803 which involve all

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the senior secondary II students in the study area. The sample of the study consists of 280 senior secondary II students. A multistage sampling technique was used to draw the sample. After the stratification of schools into urban and rural, simple random sampling through “lucky dip” to draw eight (8) senior secondary schools was used. That is, four (4) urban and four (4) rural senior secondary schools respectively. The last stage involved proportionate random sampling to draw 187 males and 93 females. This is the ratio of 2:1 respectively.

The instrument developed by the researchers referred to as Value Preference and Achievement Orientation Questionnaire (VPAOQ) was used for the study. The validity of the instrument was determined by experts in psychology and used to collect data for the study. The VPAOQ consists of two sections. Section A seeks information on the respondent while Section B contains 30 items on values which are in clusters. Items on the VPAOQ are clear enough to reflect on the goals that a person would like to achieve and the preferable modes of behaviour, or means of achieving those goals that are the reflection of the individual’s or means of achieving those goals that are the reflection of the individual’s values. The questionnaire used a modified four-point Likert-type scale of strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree. They are weighted 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Some of the items were positively skewed while others are negatively skewed. The negatively skewed items had the scores reversed.

The reliability of the instrument was established using Guttman split half coefficient yielding co-efficient value of .723. The questionnaire was administered by the researchers with the help of two research assistants. The same method was adopted for the retrieval. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to address the research question while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance. A mean score below 2.50 failed to be accepted while a mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted.

Need for the Study

The findings of this study will be of great benefits to authorities in educational psychology, curriculum developers, adolescents, teachers, vocational counselors and the general public. For instance, it will boast the repertoire of knowledge of the educational psychologists on adolescent’s characteristics. It could also help the teachers to understand the part gender plays in achievement among in-school adolescents. So, the teachers will be helped to come to the full glimpse of the on-going global gender parity campaign. It will equally help vocational counselors to be more focused in their interaction with their clients.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is find out how value preference influence achievement orientation of in-school adolescents. Specially, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the influence of gender on value preference of the in-school adolescents.

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2. Ascertain the influence of location (urban and rural) on value preference of the in-school adolescents.

Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses tested at 0.05 levels of significance were used for the study. These are:

H₀₁: There is no significance mean difference between value preference of male and female in-school adolescents.

H₀₂: The influence of location on value preference of in-school adolescent is not significant.

Results (Statistical Analysis)

Table 1: Mean Rating Of The Respondents On Value Preferences Of Male And Female In-School Adolescents.

S/N	Item	Male		Female	
		X	SD	X	SD
	Fulfillment	3.00		3.15	
1.	Look at life as meaningful	3.61	0.46	3.52	0.59
2.	Working towards success	3.75	0.67	3.84	0.43
3.	Interested in continuous success	1.64	0.78	2.10	0.68
	Wealth (affluence)	3.68		2.86	
4.	Enough wealth	2.81	0.98	2.74	0.83
5.	Too much wealth is bad	2.30	0.74	2.41	0.99
6.	Material possession is desirable	2.93	0.77	3.45	0.15
	Education	3.15		3.04	
7.	University education	3.51	0.99	2.77	1.25
8.	To reach top of career	3.50	1.19	3.21	0.64
9.	Higher education time wasting	2.45	0.76	3.14	0.96
	Happy family	2.93		2.92	
10.	Happy home, my concern	3.61	0.94	3.45	0.74
11.	Sharing life with love ones	2.14	0.76	1.73	0.94
12.	Care earnestly for someone	3.25	0.93	3.46	0.47
13.	Have people who love me around	3.25	0.93	3.46	1.11
	Compositeness	3.54		3.30	
14.	Like to finish school tasks early	3.54	0.63	3.49	0.84
15.	To finish school tasks first, no concern	3.14	0.94	2.74	1.16
16.	Always want to win	3.64	0.84	3.56	0.99
17.	Classmate may finish task before	3.85	0.67	3.41	0.72
	Friendliness	2.33		2.42	
18.	Trusting friends	2.57	1.12	3.21	0.96
19.	Keep friends for long	2.10	1.72	1.63	0.72
	Religion	3.34		3.31	
20.	Want to be deeply used by God	3.51	0.67	2.89	0.96
21.	Religion not too necessary	3.17	0.89	3.74	0.70
	Creativity	2.99		3.07	
22.	Thinking out solution to problems	3.14	0.84	2.74	0.66
23.	Best to solve school task oneself	2.85	1.15	3.40	0.74
	Leadership	2.91		2.16	
24.	Want to be a leader of one group	2.10	0.14	2.16	0.43

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25.	Strives to be a leader in class	3.42	1.33	2.50	0.69
26.	Always want to be in charge	3.22	0.96	2.74	1.17
	Popularity	3.07		3.19	
27.	Work best when praised	3.51	0.76	3.14	0.94
28.	Have name appear frequently in the media	2.64	0.86	3.25	0.66
	Hard work	2.50		2.69	
29.	Love setting challenging goals	3.36	0.91	3.14	0.76
30.	Avoids difficult subjects in school	1.64	0.84	2.24	1.16

Table 1 above shows that both male and female in-school adolescents prefer all the values being investigated except friendliness (2.33 and 2.42 respectively) and leadership which there is little variation. Males prefer leadership (2.91) while females do not with a mean score of 2.16.

Table 2: One Way ANOVA of the Influence of Gender on Value Preferences of In-School Adolescents.

Source of variance	Sum of square	Degree of freedom	Mean score	F
Between groups	2310.102	29	79.659	.738
Within groups	6800.178	63	107.939	
Total	9110.280	92		

F – calculated = 0.738

F – critical = 2.30

Level of significance = 0.05

Df 29 numerator: 63 denominator

The F – calculated (0.738) is less than F –critical (2.30), so, null hypothesis is not rejected.

Table 3: Mean ratings of the respondents on value preferences of urban and rural in-schools adolescents

S/N	Item	Male		Female	
		X	SD	X	SD
	Fulfillment	2.27		2.50	
1.	Look at life as meaningful	3.41	0.83	3.42	0.62
2.	Working towards success	2.66	0.54	3.42	0.66
3.	Interested in continuous success	2.10	0.82	1.34	0.44
	Wealth (affluence)	3.33		3.04	
4.	Enough wealth	3.82	0.75	2.64	0.67
5.	Too much wealth is bad	3.22	0.73	3.35	0.78
6.	Material possession is desirable	2.93	0.51	3.13	0.78

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	Education	3.21		2.20	
7.	University education	3.56	0.51	2.78	0.48
8.	To reach top of career	3.46	1.21	3.50	0.84
9.	Higher education time wasting	2.63	0.76	3.34	0.67
	Happy family	2.85		2.89	
10.	Happy home, my concern	2.89	1.62	3.26	0.99
11.	Sharing life with love ones	2.14	0.67	1.94	0.86
12.	Care earnestly for someone	3.74	0.49	2.96	1.25
13.	Have people who love me around	2.66	0.85	3.42	0.94
	Compositeness	3.33		2.92	
14.	Like to finish school tasks early	3.64	0.98	3.21	0.62
15.	To finish school tasks first, no concern	3.42	0.48	2.74	0.98
16.	Always want to win	2.64	0.76	3.10	0.82
17.	Classmate may finish task before	3.64	0.88	2.65	0.77
	Friendliness	3.1		2.78	
18.	Trusting friends	3.10	0.99	2.74	0.67
19.	Keep friends for long	3.12	0.84	2.83	0.89
	Religion	3.54		3.17	
20.	Want to be deeply used by God	3.54	0.96	3.45	0.64
21.	Religion not too necessary	3.64	1.25	2.89	0.89
	Creativity	2.90		3.31	
22.	Thinking out solution to problems	2.64	0.44	3.12	0.76
23.	Best to solve school task oneself	3.17	0.94	3.51	0.68
	Leadership	2.97		3.10	
24.	Want to be a leader of one group	3.41	0.75	2.64	0.99
25.	Strives to be a leader in class	2.87	0.48	3.26	1.14
26.	Always want to be in charge	2.65	0.84	3.42	0.98
	Popularity	3.14		3.01	
27.	Work best when praised	2.74	1.12	3.35	0.77
28.	Have name appear frequently in the media	3.54	0.55	2.67	0.68
	Hard work	2.14		2.83	
29.	Love setting challenging goals	2.13	0.64	3.54	0.87
30.	Avoids difficult subjects in school	3.15	0.77	2.15	0.96

Table 3 indicates that in-school adolescents in both urban and rural areas prefer all the values investigated except hard work. The mean scores of items 29 and 30 which investigated hard work are 2.14 and 2.83 for urban and rural respectively.

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This shows rural in-school adolescents prefer hard work while urban in-school adolescents do not.

Table 4: One way ANOVA to Show the Influence of Location on Value Preferences of In-School Adolescents

Source of variance	Sum of square	Degree of freedom	Mean score	F
Between groups	3787.799	32	118.337	1.284
Within groups	5438.113	59	92.172	
Total	9224.902	91		

F – calculated = 1.284

F – critical = 2.33

Level of significance = 0.05

Df 32 numerator: 59 denominator

Table 4 shows that F – calculated (1.284) is less than F – critical (2.33), to follow the decision rule to accept the null hypothesis when F – calculated is less than F – critical, the null hypotheses is therefore accepted.

Major Findings

The major findings of the study include:

1. Both male and female in-school adolescents have almost the same value preferences.
2. Location does not largely influence in-school adolescent value preference.
3. There is value diffusion among in-school adolescents of both urban and rural locations.

Counselling Implications

There is a close link between the world of school and the world of work. At the end of any academic tunnel, an individual is expected to be equipped with the skills, the knowledge and the attitudes that would make the individual employable. Apart from other factors, the choice of what to do is sometimes determined by the latent abilities of the learner and some other parental influence for various reasons especially compelling their children dabble into career that may reflect that preference regarding most especially the value for such choice. Unbiased career information about themselves and work has become very imperative for the in-school adolescents. Counselors are to think and talk with students vocational planning and decision. One not to be regarded as isolated in the life of the people but part of continuous process of development.

Counsellors are encouraged to develop approaches that will effectively coordinate teaching and guidance with the world of work. There has to be continuous vocational orientation and career guidance of the adolescents.

Discussion and Recommendations

Table 1 shows the results of the analysis of the responses related to the influence of gender on value preferences of in-school adolescents. The results shows that both male and female have preference for all the selected values except friendliness which they showed negative indices. The mean score of friendliness is 2.23 for males while it is 2.42 for females. This implies both male and female in-school adolescents do not consider friendliness as important.

The ANOVA of the null hypotheses I presented on table 2 indicates that the influence of gender on value preferences is not significant. However, the female in-school adolescents showed a negative indices on leadership (mean score = 2.16 and standard deviation of 0.73). This implies that male in-school adolescents consider leadership more important than the female in-school adolescents. These findings support results of other studies which show that there is a societal conditioning of the females as care givers at home (Decay and Travers, 1996; Salami, 2000; Merino, 2009).

The finding in table 3 reveals that the in-schol adolescents in both urban and rural areas of Ankpa Education zone prefer all the values investigated in this study except hard word with variance mean scores (2.14 and 2.83) for urban and rural locations respectively. The difference might have arisen from the fact that rural dwellers put more importance on handwork as a means of success on the farm. And that value must have been inculcated in the rural in-school adolescents.

The ANOVA of the null hypothesis II on table 4 also indicated that the influence of location on value preference of in-school adolescents is not significant. Therefore, location does not influence in-school adolescent's value preference greatly. Decay and Travers (1996) pointed out that values are related to the psychological development of young people. Psychological development despite individual difference is not limited to a particular location.

It is also clear from the findings that there is value diffusion among in-school adolescents. They preferred both core and ephemeral values for instance; affluence and popularity are ephemeral values with high means scores among in-school adolescents. This suggests that such inclination to ephemeral values could influence the in-school adolescent's achievement orientations negatively. This is the trust of the belief in short cuts to success among adolescents.

Recommendations

Based on foregoing discoveries, the researchers make the following recommendations.

1. Despite the multicultural nature of our society there are core values which are undisputable anywhere in the world, hence, constant enlightenment campaign on core values should be carried out in our towns, villages and cities.

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2. Teaching of core values within cultural context should be included in school curriculum. This will help the adolescents to reorganize values that will be of help to them and the society.
3. Efforts by parents should be geared towards inculcating right values in the teaming youths rather than giving them over to value clarifications.
4. Efforts need to be intensified to ensure that conscientious hardworking role-models are put in leadership positions in the country. By that, we will encourage the development of the right way to pursue excellence in the adolescents.

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