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**Perceived Influence of Psychological Resilience on Academic
Performance of Secondary School Students in Owerri North L.G.A., Imo
State**

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the perceived influence of psychological resilience on the academic performance of public secondary school students in Ikeduru L.G.A of Imo State. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Four research questions were posed to guide the study. The population of the study comprised all public secondary school teachers and the students in Ikeduru LGA. A sample of 450 respondents was selected using simple random sampling techniques. The instrument use for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled “Psychological Resilience and Academic Performance of Students Questionnaire” (PRAPSQ) which was validated by experts in Educational Psychology and Measurement and Evaluation. Reliability of internal consistency for (PRAPSQ) was 0.82 using Cronbach Alpha Statistics. Mean statistics were used to analyze the data collected for the research questions. Results revealed that psychological resilience is perceived to influence students’ academic performance in different ways such as improving critical thinking, encouraging engagement of students to learn, leading to achieving better academically. It was also shown that the respondents agreed that items such as ability to overcome obstacles, self-esteem, and support from teachers, family and friends are factors that contribute to the development of psychological resilience in students. The study also identified the factors that hinder the development of psychological resilience in students as high level of stress and anxiety, food insecurity, poor socioeconomic background and insufficient support from friends, family and teachers. Some psychological strategies for enhancing resilience were identified. Based on the findings, it was recommended that educators should promote individualized learning and productive feedback; students should be encouraged to establish achievable goals and develop a plan to accomplish them.

Key Words: *Psychological Resilience, Academic Performance.*

INTRODUCTION

Psychological resilience plays an important role in determining the academic performance of secondary school students. Psychological resilience and academic performance have gained significant attention in recent years; because as students journey in their academic pursuit, they experience challenges such as academic stress, frustration, tension and depression that if not properly check, might lead to poor attendance to school, absenteeism, emotional trauma, being unable to cope with difficulties in the school, depression, anxiety and stress. This according to Ipem, Eluemuno and Alaribe (2023) may lead to poor academic performance and dropout. No wonder, Ipem and Azubuiké (2022) stated that a depressed, tense and stressed student cannot perform his or her better academically (ThinkImpact, 2023). Based on the above findings, their ability to develop psychological resilience among students in Ikeduru becomes highly imperative and crucial. Research has shown that students who develop resilience are more likely to sustain high levels of achievement, motivation and performance notwithstanding the stressful condition (Ononye & Nwokeoma, 2022; Nastasa & Cîrneanu, 2022).

Psychological resilience according to Steel, Karunaratne, Extintaris et al (2024), is a psychological trait that empowers individuals to adapt and thrive in the face of challenges. It is the capacity to withstand and bounce back from adversity, stress and trauma. It is the ability to successfully adapt to life tasks despite facing social problems. Psychological resilience has been described by Martin (2013) as having the capacity to overcome acute or chronic adversity that is seen as a major threat to student's educational development. Resilience is an important positive psychological factor in understanding academic performance. Alaya and Manzano (2018) revealed that academic resilience can positively affect academic performance. According to Li and Zhang (2024) resilience could enhance academic performance. Psychology resilience of students can improve academic performance and help to reduce stress, tension and dropout rate.

Psychological resilience can influence students' academic performance and success despite numerous challenges and stress in the following ways. According to Abdelrahman (2023) resilience students tend to perform better academically, as they can bounce back from setbacks, adapt to challenging situations, and maintain their motivation to learn. Li and Zhang (2024) revealed a positive correlation between academic resilience and academic performance. Hwang and Kim (2023) found that resilience helps students manage stress effectively, reduce anxiety and burnout. According to Trigueros, Aguilar-Parra and Navarro-Gonzalez (2022), resilience students can mitigate the negative impact of stress on their academic performance by developing coping strategies and emotional regulation skills. Resilience students according to Galve-Gonzalez et al. (2025) are more likely to stay motivated and engaged in their studies, even when they face obstacles. This motivation engagement according to Au et al. (2025) can lead to better academic outcomes and more fulfilling learning experiences. Researchers also found that resilience enhances problem solving skills, critical thinking and mindset to develop effective solutions to problems.

Students with high resilience are more likely to thrive in learning which will increase their academic performance and less likely to suffer academic difficulties (Abdelrahman, 2023). Ononye and Nwokeoma (2022) stated that resilience students often have positive academic self-concept which contributes to their academic success

and self-concept (Nastasa & Cirnean-U, 2022) help students to believe in their ability to develop confidence and persist in the face of adversity. Resilience enables students to regulate their emotion effectively and reduce their negative impact of stress and anxiety on their academic performance (Berdida, 2023).

Many factors contribute to resilience among students. For instance, Soriano, et al. (2025) identified individual factors such as self-esteem, self-efficacy development of effective problem-solving stretch. Reyes and Torres, (2025) identified managing effective emotions and emotional intelligence. Trigueros et al. (2020) noted that emotional intelligence and resilience are linked with students who can regulate their emotions better equipped to handle academic pressures. Affuso et al. (2023) added that motivation significantly predicts academic resilience. Soriono et al (2025), identified self-efficacy as an important factor in academic resilience which influences student' ability to overcome obstacles. Cai and Meng (2025) postulates that teachers support mediates the relationship between academic resilience and academic performance. Peer support was also identified by Martinez-lopez et al. (2023) as a factor that increases academic resilience and motivation in students. Putri (2024) found family support as a foundational stronghold that fosters academic resilience.

Another plausible area to discuss in these studies is the factors that can hinder psychological resilience in students. It has been found that high levels of stress and anxiety can decrease resilience in students and make it hard for them to cope with their challenges (Abdelrahman, 2023). Insufficient support from families, friends or teachers can make students more vulnerable to stress and reduce their resilience level (Beri & Kumar, 2018). It was also found that students from poor social economic backgrounds may face additional challenges that can affect their resilience (Nastasa et al, 2022). Nastasa et al (2022) also noted that uncertainty about food to eat can contribute to stress and anxiety thereby hindering resilience in students. Studies also showed that students' low self-esteem tends to be more vulnerable to stress and anxiety (Celebi, 2023). It was also found that difficulty in managing emotions can make students more susceptible to mental health issues and it reduces the ability to bounce back from challenges (Hwand and Kim 2023). Academic procrastination or putting off task according to Huang et al. (2022) and Madjid 2021 can lead to increased stress and decrease motivation that hinders resilience. Tsui and Cheng (2021) noted that excessive gaming or internet game addiction can negatively affect mental health and resilience. More so excessive academic pressure can lead to stress; anxiety and decrease motivation and this can hinder resilience (Alkhalwaldeh et al., 2023).

This study is also interested in the psychological strategies in Ikeduru LGA. Researchers like Kuperminc, Chan, Hale, Joseph, Delbasso (2020) found that school-based monitoring promotes resilience among vulnerable high school student. Llistosella, Sánchez-Álvarez & Tomás-Sábado (2023) found that effective resilience base intervention increases resilience and decreases depressive symptoms. Ready Education (2024) identified ways of building students' resilience and involvement such as promoting positive emotions, encouraging goal settings and fostering a supportive community (Felver, Razza, Morton, Clawson, Mannion, 2020). This study is anchored on the self-efficacy theory proposed by Albert Bandura (1977, 1997), this theory posits that self-efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in motivation, behaviour and psychological resilience. Social support theory (Cohen et al 2015) also gave credence to this study as it highlights the importance of social support in promoting resilience and wellbeing.

Statement of the Problem

Influence of psychological resilience on academic performance of students has been a pressing issue due to the various challenges students are facing in their academic endeavour. Psychological resilience, as we know, plays an important role in determining students' academic performance, as it enables them to cope with adversity, trauma and chronic stress. It has been found that students with high resilience tend to perform better academically, exhibit better emotional regulation, and maintain a positive outlook despite setbacks. However, the extent to which psychological resilience affects academic performance and the underlying mechanism have not been fully understood among secondary school students in Ikeduru and their teachers. The research work was informed by the experience of the researchers during the teaching practice exercise in Public Secondary Schools in Ikeduru LGA.

Previous studies have been carried out on areas that determine students' academic performance such as the age of students, their social economic background, gender, motivation, teachers' quality, learning environment just to mention but few; however determinants of the individual resilience seems to be another strong psychological factor that need serious exploration to explain academic performance and challenges properly among public secondary school students in Ikeduru local Government Area of Imo State. Presently, no study has been carried out on psychological resilience and academic performance of students in Ikeduru. Thus, the gap this study tried to fill; by investigating the influence of psychological resilience on students' academic performance in Ikeduru Local Government Area of Imo State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of psychological resilience on academic performance of public secondary school students in Ikeduru L.G.A of Imo State. Specifically, the study tried to:

1. Identify various ways in which psychological resilience is perceived to influence students' ability to achieve academic success in Ikeduru LGA of Imo State
2. Determine factors that contribute to the development of psychological resilience in students.
3. Identify factors that hinder the development of psychological resilience in students.
4. Identify psychological strategies that can be adopted to enhance resilience among secondary school students in Ikeduru?

Research Questions

1. What are the various ways in which psychological resilience is perceived to influence students' ability to achieve academic success in Ikeduru LGA of Imo State?
2. What are the factors that contribute to development of academic resilience in students?
3. What are the factors that hinder the development of psychological resilience in students?
4. What are the psychological strategies that can be adopted to enhance resilience among secondary school students in Ikeduru?

METHODS

The study adopted a description survey design which is aimed at investigating the perceived influence of psychological resilience on the academic performance of public

secondary school students in Ikeduru LGA OF Imo State. The population of the study comprises all the teachers in all the 14 public secondary schools in Ikeduru L. G. A. totaling 389 (Planning, Research and Statistics Unit of Secondary Education Management Board on Staff Strength, 2025/2026 Academic Session). The sample size is 182, drawn with cluster random sampling technique. The population exists in clusters of 14 (that is 14 public secondary schools) simple random by paper bulleting sampling technique was used to draw 8 secondary schools and all their teachers totaling 182 form the sample size. Four research questions guided the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled “Psychological Resilience and Academic Performance of Students’ Questionnaire (PRAPOSQ) which was validated by experts in Psychology, Measurement and Evaluation. Fifteen public secondary school teachers in the LGA but not among the sampled teachers were used to establishing the reliability coefficient of temporal stability of instruments. The instrument was administered to them and in ten days’ time the same instrument obtained two scores (that is x and y). Then Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to establish the reliability coefficient of the instrument as 0.87. This shows that the instrument is highly reliable over time. PRAPOSQ has five sections. Section 1 elicited information on demographic data. Section 2 was a 10-item cluster that elicited information on various ways in which psychological resilience influenced students’ ability to academic success. Section 3 elicits information on the factors that contribute to the development of psychological resilience in students. Section 4 elicits information on factors that hinder the development of psychological resilience in students. Finally, section 5 elicited information on psychological strategies that can be adopted to enhance resilience among students. The instrument OSAPMQ, was of a four-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) -4 points, Agree (A) – 3 points, Disagreed (DA)- 2 points and Strongly disagreed (SD)- 1 point. The decision mean for the analysis was 2.5. Hence, the acceptable mean was 2.5. This implies that every mean score which is exactly or above 2.5 agrees with the decision was accepted while any score below 2.5 disagrees with the decision was rejected. Data collected was analyzed using mean statistics.

RESULTS

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Respondents on Ways in Which Psychological Resilience Influence Students’ Academic Performance

S/N	Item Statements	SA	A	D	SD	X	S	Dec
1	Resilient students tend to perform better academically	98	72	12	-	3.47	0.62	A
2	They can easily bounce back from setbacks	82	94	6	-	3.42	0.56	A
3	They can adapt to challenging situations.	121	57	4	-	3.64	0.52	SA
4	Resilience students can manage their stress effectively	88	78	16	-	3.40	0.65	A
5	They try as much as possible to reduce anxiety and burnout	84	79	19	-	3.36	0.66	A
6	Resilience helps students to stay motivated and engage in their studies	88	74	20	-	3.37	0.68	A
7	Encourages full engagement of students in learning	96	68	18	-	3.43	0.67	A
8	Resilience can lead students to achieve better academic outcomes	114	50	18	-	3.53	0.67	SA
9	Resilience enhances problem solving skills	120	58	4	-	3.64	0.53	SA

10	It helps to improve critical thinking.	98	67	17	-	3.45	0.66	A
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Table 1 shows the item's mean, standard deviation and decision taken per item. It shows that items with serial numbers: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 10 have mean value of approximately (that is to the nearest number) 3 each which indicates Agree. Also, items with serial numbers: 3, 8 and 9 have mean value of approximately A which indicates strongly agree. Since each of the items has mean value greater than the criterion mean of 2.5, they are all accepted.

Table 2: Mean Ratings of Respondent on Factors that Contribute to the Development of Psychological Resilience in Students

S/N	Item statements	SA	A	D	SD	X	S	Dec.
1	The following are the factors that contribute to the development of psychological resilience in students. Self-esteem	62	82	28	10	3.08	0.84	A
2	Developing effective problem-solving strategy	72	68	30	12	3.10	0.90	A
3	Ability to overcome obstacles	76	72	19	15	3.15	0.91	A
4	Having support from family and peers	82	92	6	2	3.40	0.61	A
5	Support from teachers	78	65	29	10	3.16	0.89	A
6	Having Emotional stability	91	82	9	-	3.45	0.59	A
7	Possession of emotional intelligence	72	79	24	7	3.19	0.81	A

Table 2 showed the item's mean standard deviation and decision taken. The table showed that the items have mean value that is approximately 3 (that is to the nearest whole number) which indicates agree. Since each of the items has mean that is greater than the criterion mean value of 2.5, they are all accepted.

Table 3: Mean Ratings of Respondent of Factors that Hinder the Development of Psychological Resilience in Students

S/N	Item Statements	SA	A	D	SD	X	S	Dec.
1	The following are the factors that hinder resilience in students High level stress and anxiety can decrease resilience.	98	65	19	-	3.43	0.68	A
2	Insufficient support from family and friends can make students more vulnerable	87	72	23	-	3.35	0.70	A
3	Poor socio-economic background of students could be a serious factor	78	76	28	-	3.27	0.71	A
4	Food insecurity can be a challenging issue	72	96	14	-	3.32	0.61	A
5	Students with low self-esteem may suffer from resilience	96	78	8	-	3.48	0.58	A
6	Students with emotional trauma may be vulnerable to psychological resilience	109	72	1	-	3.59	0.50	A
7	Students with mental health issue can suffer psychological resilience	98	69	15	-	3.46	0.64	A
8	Difficulties gaining psychological resilience can negatively affect academic performance.	88	79	18	-	3.38	0.66	A

Table 3 showed the item mean, standard deviation and decisions. The table indicated that 6th item has mean of approximately 4 (that is to the nearest whole number) which indicates strongly agree while each of the remaining items has mean of approximately 3 which indicates agree. Since each of the items has mean greater than the criterion mean (2.5), they are all accepted.

Table 4: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Psychological Strategies that Can Enhance Resilience

S/N	Item Statements	SA	A	D	SD	X	S	Dec.
1	Developing mindset for managing stress and anxiety	72	68	38	4	3.14	0.82	A
2	Creating social support network that can foster relationship with family friends	69	87	19	7	3.20	0.78	A
3	Promoting positive emotions like joy, love and happiness in students	79	92	11	-	3.37	0.60	A
4	Encouraging goal setting among students	88	89	5	-	3.46	0.55	A
5	Fostering supportive communication in students	86	94	2	-	3.46	0.52	A
6	Engaging students in serious academic work.	92	78	12	-	3.44	0.62	A
7	Motivating students for hard work and good behaviour	8.9	72	21	-	3.37	0.68	A

Table 4 showed the item mean, standard deviation and decision and decision per item. The table showed that each of the seven items has mean value of approximately 3 (that is to the nearest whole number) which indicated agree. Since each of their mean is greater than that of criterion mean of 2.5, they are all accepted.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the study revealed various ways in which psychological resilience influence students' academic performance despite numerous challenges and stressors which include improving critical thinking, encouraging engagement of students to learn, leading to achieving better academically. This finding is in line with LI and Zhang (2024) who found positive relationship between resilience and academic performance. It is also in agreement with Abdelrahman (2023), who noted that resilient students tend to perform better academically and can bounce back from setbacks, adapt to challenging situations and maintain their motivation to learn. It was also shown by the study that the respondents agreed that items such as ability to overcome obstacles, self- esteem, and support from teachers, family and friends are factors that contribute to the development of psychological resilience in students.

This finding is in consonance with the findings of Soriano, Beridada and Ong (2025) who identified individual factors such as self- esteem, self- efficacy, and social support from parents, teachers and peers as factors that help develop resilience in students. The study also identified the factors that hinder the development of psychological resilience in students as high level of stress and anxiety, food insecurity, poor socioeconomic background and insufficient support from friends, family and teachers.

This finding is in corroboration with Celebi (2023), who found that students with low self-esteem tend to be more vulnerable to stress and anxiety. Also in line is that of Beri and Kumar, (2018) who found that poor socio-economic background can affect resilience. Nasatasa et al (2022) noted that uncertainty about food eating can contribute to stress and anxiety thereby hindering resilience.

The findings also identified some psychological strategies for enhancing resilience among students such as creating positive mindsets in students, fostering good relationships with friends, teachers, family and peers, developing positive thinking for managing stress and anxiety. This agrees with Maalouf et al. (2020) who found that creating a social support network will foster relationships with family, teachers and peers.

CONCLUSION

The fact remains that some public secondary school students in Ikeduru experience challenges in school which causes them lack of concentration and poor attendance to school, leading to poor academic performance and dropout of school, the essence of psychological resilience which could empower students to adapt to school activities despite challenges becoming very important.

Psychological resilience is the capacity of students to overcome the challenges that pose a threat to their academic success. The study identified various ways in which psychological resilience is perceived to influence students' ability to achieve academic success, determining factors that contribute to the development of psychological resilience identify factors that hinder psychological resilience and strategies that could be adopted to enhance resilience among students.

It was perceived by the respondents that psychological resilience helps students perform better academically; self-esteem, ability to overcome obstacles and supports of some parents and teachers can help develop psychological resilience, high level of stress anxiety and decrease resilience can hinder psychological resilience. While creating social support networks that foster relationships with family and teachers can help enhance resilience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations were drawn

- Curriculum planners should put up resilience building programs into the curriculum to help students develop coping skills and stress management strategies.
- Parents and teachers should create a supportive environment both at home and in school that will encourage students to express their emotions and seek help when needed.
- Teachers encourage positive relationships between them and their students to build a sense of belonging and connection.
- Teachers encourage positive relationships between them and their students to build a sense of belonging and connection.
- Teachers should be trained to identify and support students with low resilience. Also provide access to counselling services and mental health resources.

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