

SELF-REGULATED LEARNING AS STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING UNDERGRADUATES' ACADEMIC MOTIVATION IN NIGERIA

¹Ayuba, O. HAMMED, *PhD.*

²Prof. Mary, O. ESERE, *PhD.*

³Khadijat, MAGAJI-YUSUF,

&

⁴Chistianah, M. DAVID-SUNMONU

^{1,2,3,4}Department of Counsellor Education,

Faculty of Education,

University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Correspondence to 08153916775 or hammedayuba66@gmail.com

Abstract

Lack of self-regulation has been found to be a major cause of underachievement when students are unable to control their own behaviour. Self-regulation is the self-generated thoughts, feelings and actions for achieving goals. This study examined self-regulated learning as strategy for improving undergraduates' academic motivation in Nigeria. To explain how self-regulated learning can be used as a strategy to increase undergraduates' academic motivation, the social cognitive theory approach was used. According to self-regulated learning, which was founded on social cognitive theory, learning is impacted by behavioural and environmental events in addition to internal processes. To help increase undergraduates' academic motivation, counsellors can implement a variety of counselling techniques based on the self-regulated learning model's instructional strategies. In order to guarantee undergraduates' academic motivation, counsellors in Nigerian universities have a variety of responsibilities related to self-regulated learning. Using the instructional strategies, counsellors may need to teach undergraduates certain skills like goal setting, reading, study skills among others. In line with the tenets of this paper, it was suggested that, there should be a defining guideline for universities in Nigeria to help in encouraging undergraduates to be academically motivated counsellors in universities should adopt self-regulated learning framework to counsel students, counsellors should counsel parents on ways to motivate their undergraduates' children towards academics and counsellors in the universities should assist the undergraduates to develop skills to be able to self-regulate in the process of learning.

Keywords: Academic Motivation, Undergraduate, Counselling, Strategy, and Self-Regulated Learning.

Introduction

Self-regulated learning is an important educational concept that has been accepted by parents, students, teachers, and educational administrators. Self-regulation is the capacity to cultivate attitudes, abilities, and knowledge that can be applied to a range of learning contexts and from the learning circumstance in which the knowledge has been learned to leisure and professional settings. Many of the leading educational psychologists have developed cross-sectional and longitudinal studies and as well proposed theoretical models to explain self-regulated learning in a way that is both theoretically and practically relevant. The purpose of this paper was to highlight self-regulated learning as a strategy for improving undergraduates' academic motivation.

According to Kitsantas (2002), self-regulation denotes the capacity to manage one's own cognitive processes, emotions, and actions with the intention of attaining objectives. The absence of self-regulation in students has been identified as a prominent factor leading to underperformance. In the context of academic task completion, self-regulated learners have been noted to demonstrate self-constraint, self-restraint, and self-guidance. Self-regulated learning has consequently emerged as a key area of study in many educational fields worldwide (Tavakolizadeh & Ebrahimi-Qavam, 2011).

In order to establish favourable learning environments at various learning stages, self-regulated learners engage in planning, self-inspection, self-control, and self-evaluation (Walters, 2003). Self-regulated learners use various cognitive strategies, such as repetition, rehearsal, elaboration, and organization, to improve their comprehension and memory when completing academic tasks. When these techniques are used successfully, the student can feel independent and valuable when completing their coursework (Tavakolizadeh & Ebrahimi-Qavam, 2011). It has been discovered that a student's academic success can be predicted in part by the relationship between academic motivation and self-regulated learning (Kitsantas, 2002).

Academically motivated students exhibit a higher interest in learning and are more likely to finish their assignments (Artino & Stephens, 2009). People agreed that it is a crucial part of education, academic achievement is higher among motivated students. (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Self-concept is one of the important motivating factors that is closely related to self-regulation techniques (Cleary & Zimmerman, 2004). According to Pajares (2000), people who have a strong sense of self-worth are industrious, persistent, and more tolerant when it comes to solving cognitive problems. In order to learn the problem and improve their own academic efficiency, students who employ self-regulation techniques more often attempt to give the information meaning or a logical connection to earlier information. They also manage this process and create an appropriate learning environment. In other words, students are conscious of the caliber of their learning through the use of metacognitive techniques (self-questioning, self-control, and self-assessment) (Hammed, 2023).

Self-regulation capability makes it possible for the learner to observe and control his/her

own behaviour. In this position paper, social cognitive theory approach was adopted to explain how self-regulated learning can serve as a counselling strategy for improving undergraduates' academic motivation.

Social Cognitive Theory of Self-Regulation (Bandura, 1986)

Social Cognitive Theory started as the Social Learning Theory in the 1960s by Albert Bandura. The Social Cognitive Theory emerged in 1986. Bandura contends that learning takes place in a social setting where behaviour, surroundings, and people interact dynamically and reciprocally.

View of Human Nature

Social Cognitive Theory is distinctive in that it emphasizes social influence, which includes both internal and external social reinforcement. Along with taking into account the social context in which people engage in the behavior, the theory also examined the distinctive ways in which people learn and sustain certain behaviors. In order to determine whether a behavioral action will be taken, the theory considers an individual's prior experiences.

According to Kalenda and Vavrova (2016), these past experiences have an effect on expectations, expectancies, and reinforcements, all of which affect a person's propensity to engage in a specific behavior as well as the reasons behind it. By using control and reinforcement, people can achieve goal-directed behavior that they can sustain over time. This is the aim of social cognitive theory.

Self-regulated Learning as Strategy to Improve Academic Motivation

It has been demonstrated that the explicit instructional model of self-regulated learning helps undergraduates develop their learning strategies (Dorrenbacher & Perels, 2016).

The Self-Regulated Learning strategies are:

- ◆ *Cognitive strategies:* Lehmann, Hähnlein, and Ifenthaler (2014) stated that cognitive strategies are basically internal processes that represent and process information. They are a particular kind of self-regulated learning technique. The cognitive strategies instruction model for self-regulated learning consists of organized practice, elaborated practice, and elaboration.
- ◆ *Meta-cognitive strategies:* These are the exceptional abilities that students have to direct and regulate their behavior, motivation, and mental processes in order to achieve particular goals, like planning and management (Perels, Merget Kullmann, Wende, Schmitz & Buchbinder, 2009).
- ◆ *Motivational strategies:* This entails learners' persistent pursuit to understanding and interpreting factors that instigate them to engage in activities related to the learning process, aiming at academic success. It encompasses the students' self-evaluation of their competence and the estimation of the worth of the task content, such as self-awareness and

self-perception (Paris, Byrnes & Paris, 2001).

- ◆ *Behavioural strategies*: People can currently observe, track, and manage their behavior, which enables them to control it. The tactics include time management and seeking assistance.
- ◆ *Contextual strategies*: Learners must deal with uncertain and uncontrollable conditions when putting contextual strategies into practice.

Students have to deal with contextual differences such as different classroom or instruction formats, both traditional and focused on the student. Several Counselling intervention plans can be implemented to enhance undergraduates' academic motivation based on the self-regulated learning model's instructional strategies.

Counselling Use of Self-Regulated Learning

Self-regulated learning can be used to increase undergraduates' academic motivation in a number of ways. The strategies can be differentiated in a specific and global way based on their scope, content, and time frame. The tactics called for behavioral, motivational, metacognitive, and cognitive approaches. According to Andrzejewski, Davis, Bruening, and Poirier (2016) and Gu & Lee (2019), these strategies aim to help students become proficient in the self-regulated learning strategy while also enhancing academic motivation and performance.

Counselling as a helping profession has some counselling skills and techniques through which a student could be exposed in order to overcome challenges and issues in academics. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, many basic tactics can be employed by counsellors to help students improve on learning. Counsellors can assist undergraduates and guide them on how to develop self-regulated learning skills that will improve the academic performance of the students.

Strategies are planned designs for controlling and manipulating specific information, modes of operation for accomplishing a specific end, or specific methods of approaching a problem or task, according to Brown (2000). Researchers discovered a number of fundamental techniques for raising academic motivation using a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches such as:

Learning from Lecture: Students are expected to learn the lecturer's materials through lecture speech and text writing when they are expected to comprehend and benefit from the educational process in schools. Students can enhance their academic performance by using note-taking strategies, which involve writing down the lecturer's points and facts in order to understand and replicate the information (Van Der Meer, 2012).

Learning from Reading: This is done to help students understand and make connections between the readings. In order to help students fully comprehend what they read, the SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) reading strategy is used in this session (Feldt & Hensley, 2009).

Learning from the Discussion: Gaining knowledge through discussion is when students have a firm understanding of the classroom discussion process and are able to actively participate using the techniques they have acquired. The approach that backs this up is for students to develop the habit of enhancing class discussion (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2013).

Self-Management: Self-management is the process by which students feel compelled to think about environmental management and are able to accomplish their objectives. Goal-setting, organizing the study space, and asking for assistance are the tactics that help this session (Newman, 2008).

Writing Strategies: Students must be able to comprehend and utilize the writing process using a technique that they can control. Writing is primarily used to learn the lecturer's material, which explains students' ideas in detail (Burns & Sinfield, 2012).

Motivational Strategies: Students can better understand the factors that actively drive their learning when they learn from motivation. This session is supported by the following strategies: emotional regulation, interest enhancement, mastery self-talk, self-concept, environment structuring, and the CRAFT method (cancel, replace, affirm, focus, train) (Pintrich, 2000).

Roles of Counsellors in Self-Regulated Learning

In Nigerian universities; counsellors play a variety of roles in promoting self-regulated learning and ensuring undergraduates' academic motivation. Counsellors might need to teach undergraduates the following skills using the highlighted strategies: note-taking, reading, study, and mastery skills; writing for exams; goal-setting; time management; emotional regulation; comprehension; help-seeking; and self-management. Acquiring all of these skills would help undergraduates become more academically motivated and be able to control their learning.

Conclusion

Self-regulated learners must be proactive and goal-oriented, and they must control their motivation, thoughts, and actions while learning, according to the description of self-regulated learning. By using techniques like organizing, planning, tracking, and assessing their learning processes, self-regulated learners control their cognitive processes.

They demonstrate self-control over their motivation by considering themselves capable. Additionally, by choosing, organizing, and establishing settings that support efficient learning, they control their behaviour. Undergraduates set learning goals and then produce the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors necessary to achieve those goals in order to ensure self-regulated learning.

To be able to self-regulate, students must comprehend and value what drives them to do so, what processes can help them become self-aware, how their socio-cultural environment influences their self-regulation, which cognitive, affective, and motivational processes contribute to their self-regulation, and how they can become self-regulatory. In order to develop successful motivational techniques and self-regulatory learning strategies that improve

academic success, it is essential to use individual goal setting in conjunction with appropriate feedback from counselors and teachers. An effective program called self-regulated learning strategies intervention aims to improve students' cognitive, metacognitive, behavioral, motivational, and contextual skills.

Undergraduates who possess self-regulated learning skills will not only understand the value of being achievers, but they will also be inspired to develop these skills in order to improve their academic performance. The techniques encourage undergraduates to better plan, track, manage, and evaluate their actions in order to increase their motivation for learning.

Suggestions

Based on this expository paper, the following suggestions were made:

1. There should be a defining guideline for universities in Nigeria to help in encouraging undergraduates to be academically motivated.
2. Counsellors should counsel parents on ways to motivate their undergraduates' children towards academics.
3. Counsellors in the universities should assist the undergraduates to develop skills to be able to self-regulate in the process of learning.
4. Undergraduates should also develop abilities to effectively learn, set realistic academic goals and be self-motivated in the learning processes.

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