

The impact of Self-efficacy and resilience and the effect of the socio-political crisis, Covid 19 in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon on the academic success of adolescent students in the University of Buea, Cameroon.

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Abstract

This study examined, "The impact of self-efficacy and resilience and effect of the socio-political crisis, Covid 19 in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon on the academic success of adolescents' students in the University of Buea, Cameroon". Specifically, the study aimed at finding out the effect of self-awareness on adolescents' academic success, investigating the effect of goal setting on adolescents' academic success, finding out the effect of self-esteem on adolescents' academic success and investigating the effect of optimism on adolescents' academic success. The study adopted the survey research design. The target population for the study comprised of adolescent students of all the faculties, colleges and schools in the University of Buea. The accessible population of the study consisted of students, drawn from 8 faculties in the University of Buea. The sample size consisted of 80 students. A closed ended questionnaire was used for data collection. The data were analyzed using percentages and frequency for description and product moment correlation test for inferences. The findings revealed that (self-efficacy self-awareness, goal setting, self-esteem and optimism) has a strong positive effect on adolescents' academic success in the University of Buea. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made; self-awareness, students should be able to understand their strength and weakness, set goals with agentic thinking, create routes and pathways, put effort, bounce back to adversities and remain determined with hope.

Keywords: Self-efficacy; resilience; socio-political crisis; Corona virus (Covid 19); self-awareness; goal setting; self-efficacy; optimism; academic success

Introduction:

Core values are the backbone of resilience especially positive psychology. That is viewing adversity as an opportunity is what takes people out of the victim mentality and empowers them to be survivor and makers of change. Resilience can be physical, emotional or psychological. Physical resilience is the ability to bounce back easily from physical stress, illness or injury which requires an extra set of skills above beyond strength training. It goes with setting goals, having willpower, and creating back up plans in case willpower fails, emotional resilience will go with the ability to cope with crisis and adapt to stressful situations, that is coping with the ups and downs of life and never surrender while you are the captain and pilot of your life. Psychological resilience here will be the ability to mental cope in the midst of crisis where one is able to adapt to the challenges and turmoil of life. Resilience gives people the mentally strength to overcome life crisis and never giving up when they are faced with difficult challenges. Self-efficacy makes people determine in the midst crisis and determined to achieve their life goals especially adolescents which is a period of ups and downs, with adolescent crisis overcome the crisis is a problem and staying focus in their education needs resilience and self-efficacy to become successful. Adolescent is a transition period, a peak period that needs resilient minds to bounce back to life and focus on their goals. Resilience is needed in all



developmental life span, as they are always risk factors, like pain, poverty, diseases, health problems, loss of love ones, unemployment, financial constraints, stress and depression just to name a few especially in contemporary African neighbourhoods and societies. So, resilience becomes a dynamic capacity to bounce back to life challenges. Mindfulness becomes very important for students to overcome distress by not judging their minds negative while focusing on their education for the road to success is always hilly. So, students need positive state of mind, positive wellbeing and positive emotions in order to flourish.

Background to the study:

Notwithstanding, this study touches the life trajectory of the researcher, who lost both of his parents in his early childhood days, and passed through painful moments in life, where he became the captain of his future. Growing up in a difficult neighbourhood, with difficult and harsh life situations and realities, with the trauma of being an orphan in his childhood, he went through a lot of psychological torture. As a young man with dreams, purpose, he was focus determine, hopeful, optimistic, effortful in his education where he never gave up. With his dreams, in his peasantry childhood life, he struggles had his Ordinary and Advanced Level Certificate, and couldn't go to the university. He had to spend a year after he had his Advance level to gather knowledge on Computer education due to financial difficulties, stress, distress and poverty. The following year, he went to the Government Teacher Training College Kumbo for Teacher Grade One studies. After his Grade one, he taught in a primary school. In 2011, he was admitted in the University of Buea where he spend almost 8 to 9 years and got his Doctorate Degree in 2020, that is PhD in Educational Psychology and before having his PhD, he was already teaching courses in the University of Buea. Moreover, the researcher's life experience and difficult life pathways is what prompted the researcher to carry out a study on resilience and self-efficacy on academic success due is the difficult life story and going through his PhD studies since 2016 when the socio-political crisis erupted in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon. The stories of most African children are painful, and the researcher thought it necessary to anchor on self-efficacy and resilience.

Also, closed to 4 years getting to five years in Cameroon, the Country is suffering from a socio-political crisis in the Northwest region and the South West Region of Cameroon. Since 2016, claims were made concerning the Common Law System and the English System of Education, demanded by a group of Anglophones in the English part of Cameroon. Since then, the country has been very unstable with many registered deaths as a result of armed conflict between State Actors and the Non-State Actors that resulted to violence, kidnappings, payment of ransom, killings, burning of schools and hospitals, stopping children from going to school by armed men, etc. This malice has caused many students to drop out from school, many as refugees and internally displaced persons, and this armed conflict has affected many students, families and communities, psychologically, socio-emotionally and physically with painful traumatic flashback. The researcher was then pushed to carry out the study to see how adolescent students' academic success in the context of the armed conflict in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon could be better through self-efficacy and resilient.

With the dreadful "Covid 19", corona virus, people therefore need

community resilience. Community resilience refers to the ability of groups of people to respond to and recover from adverse situations such as natural disasters, pandemics and epidemics, acts of violence, economic hardship and other challenges of society. Community resilience builds strong communities. Creating resilience plans becomes very important. Community resilience is the sustain ability of a community to use available resources to respond, withstand and recover from adverse situations. Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease caused by newly discovered coronavirus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus experience mild to moderate respiratory illness. Therefore, people need to protect themselves by washing their hands, using alcohol based rub frequently, putting facemasks, respecting physical and social distance rules especially large gatherings, as the Covid 19 virus spreads primary through droplets of saliva or discharge from nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Many people have lost their lives with this dreadful pandemic, schools shutdown and reopen, social distance measures, hand sanitizers, washing of hands, putting on face masks reinforced in schools especially in the university of Buea, online lectures put in place with the traditional face to face. Academic success, which is the accomplishment of the learning process, gaining subject knowledge, and developing employability skills becomes very vital in this study. Therefore, students' success is defined as academic achievement, engagement in educationally purposeful activities, satisfaction, acquisition of desired knowledge, skills, competence, and persistence of the attainment of educational goals becomes very important.

Resilience according to Masten (2014) is capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threatens system function, viability or development. Resilience also carries a connotation of positive or typical developmental adaptations despite exposure to clear threat or adversity. Resilience is defined as the ability of a complex system to demonstrate outcomes in the face of adversity (Ungar, 2011). Therefore, resilience draws attention to pathway to positive psychology, positive health and wellbeing. Also, resilience, is seen as the ability to successfully cope with change misfortune or adversity (Flach, 1989, Wagnild & Young, 1993; Garnezy, 1996). Furthermore, resilience therefore promotes adaptation, with values such self-reliance, that is to recognize one's personal strength and limitations, perseverance, that is the persistence in spite of adversity and the willingness to continue the struggle, to reconstruct one's fullness, Meaning that is understanding that life has a purpose, existential aloneness, that is the awareness that each individual's life pathway is unique, and in the course of life pathways, perservance, adaptation and mental flexibility becomes very important. Resilience is also seen as the ability to withstand difficulties, bounce back from adversity and learn from their experience. Resilience as a concept to researcher is the gateway and key to life. Some of the elements that of resilience and self-efficacy the researcher paid attention was optimism, self-esteem, self-awareness and goal setting.

Self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in his or her ability to organize and execute the courses of action required to achieve goals (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1997) views self-efficacy as the individual's conviction of being able to master specific activities, situations or aspects of his or her own psychological and social functioning. According to Larson (2002), adolescence is defined as the period of transition between childhood to adulthood that



involves biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes. Adolescence is the most vulnerable age for development, a child entering in this stage requires intensive readjustment to school, social and family life. Self-efficacy pertains to optimistic belief about being able to cope with a variety of challenges. Adolescents with high self-efficacy choose to perform more challenging and difficult task (resilience). Adolescents with high level of self-efficacy approach life with a positive attitude that allows them to see challenges as problems to be solved instead of threats that must be avoided. They also set appropriate challenging goal for themselves and maintain a strong commitment to those goals. When they encounter stressful situations their belief in their ability to manage situations to their benefit, promotes their self-confidence. Academic success is the accomplishment of the learning process; gaining subject knowledge; and developing employability skills (Cachia, 2018)

According to Mullainathan (2005), an important feature of self-efficacy was that it was a “mental model”, independent from the actual competence of an individual, her environment and of how realistic her judgement is. What is important for setting ambitious goals and reaching them is the belief to have all what it takes to reach them. It is this belief that enables people to dare to learn new information, try new inventions, set high goals, keep trying for a longer time even when problems arise. Having a high degree of self-efficacy means that a person believes she has influence on her life, she has the internal locus of control and can move from there to act. She is able to be persistent in her endeavors, master difficulties and keep on trying for a longer time. Self-efficacy is the core prerequisite of human agency as it is this belief that enables people to act as an agent for herself and others. To Welzer (2013), self-efficacy may occur in concert with resilience and entitlement, but while self-efficacy is part of the inward-oriented self-construct, entitlement is outward oriented and part of an individual’s worldview. Asymmetric occurrence of these three connected traits leads to social stress that may adversely affect adolescents school success: having a sense of entitlement without the self-efficacy to earn the rewards one feels entitled to may lead to a feeling of deprivation which may lead to adverse or maladapted social behavior and to shortcomings in economic activity.

To Bandura (1994), adolescents’ beliefs in their self-efficacy were developed by their four main sources of influence. These include mastery experiences, vicarious experiences or seeing another person similar to oneself managing task successfully, social persuasion, that one has the capabilities and somatic and emotional states in which ordinary realities are strewn with impediments, adversities, setbacks, frustration, and inequities which have important contribution to self-efficacy belief. Self-determination theory by Ryan & Deci (1985). Self-determination theory (SDT) is a macro theory of human motivation and personality that concerns people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. It is concerned with the motivation behind choices people make without external influence and interference. SDT focuses on the degree to which an individual's behaviour is self-motivated and self-determined. SDT is centered on the belief that human nature shows persistent positive features, with people repeatedly showing effort, agency and commitment in their lives that the theory calls "inherent growth tendencies".

Theoretically, the following theories were found relevant, Self-efficacy theory by Albert Bandura, people should be able to

believe in themselves in order to execute their goals. Self-awareness theory by Duval & Wicklund, people should be able to trust their thoughts and trust their capacities and their views of the world. Also, people should understand the self, understand their thoughts and emotions, (1972) Self-determination theory by Ryan & Deci (1985), people should be optimistic to attain their goals and hope theory by Snyder (1998) was also relevant in the study.

Statement of the problem:

The researcher observed that adolescent students’ in the University of Buea academic performance was fluctuating as the socio-political crisis in the North West Region and the South West Region of Cameroon cause psychosocial dissonance in the minds of students. Their academic accomplishment was not the best, and the level of skill development, attitudes, aptitude and knowledge was in adequate that affected their learning, and the researcher thought it necessary to carry out a study on self-efficacy and resilience to see how they could probably impact adolescent students’ academic performance positively in the University of Buea. With the dreadful Covid 19 corona virus, and socio-political crisis in the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon, the academic success of learners becomes questionable wholistically.

General objective:

- To find out the effect of self-efficacy and the effect of the socio-political crisis on adolescent students’ academic success in the University of Buea.

Specific objectives:

- To find out the impact of self-awareness and the effect of the socio-political crisis in Cameroon on adolescents’ students’ academic success in the University of Buea.
- To investigate the impact of goal setting and the effect of the socio-political crisis in Cameroon on adolescents’ students’ academic success in the University of Buea.
- To find out the impact of self-esteem and the effect of the socio-political crisis in Cameroon on adolescents’ students’ academic success in the University of Buea.
- To investigate the impact of optimism and the effect of the socio-political crisis in Cameroon on adolescents’ students’ academic success in the University of Buea.

Literature review:

Resilience:

Resilience is the ability to mentally or emotionally cope with a crisis or return to pre-crisis status quickly. Resilience is also the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events. Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, threats or significant sources of stress. Resilience, therefore, is important because it gives one strength needed to process and overcome hardship. Resilience is the capacity to recover from difficult life events. Resilience can also be seen as the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events. Resilience is a kind of mental toughness. Being resilient entails that one should adapt flexibly, showing



gratitude, compassion, acceptance, meaning and forgiveness. Resilience goes with inner strengths and outer resources and in building resilience people need good interpersonal relations, positive self-esteem and positive self-appraisal, love, social support, problem solving skills, communication skills emotional regulation, forgiveness to overcome risk factors such as stress, depression, anxiety etc. resilience gives people the mental and emotional strength to cope with trauma, hardship and adversity.

Self-efficacy:

Gardner (1983) describes a self-efficacious individual as one who believes in “one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments.” McCombs & Marzano (1990) classify self-efficacy into categories, one of which is academic self-efficacy and states that it reflects a student’s perceived capability with respect to the tasks a student is expected to perform in academic domain. Ollendick, Dailey, & Shapiro (1983) define self-efficacy as the process to activate and sustain thoughts, behaviours and emotions in order to reach goals. When goals involve learning, self-efficacy is converted to self-regulate learning. Self-regulated learners have a combination of academic learning skills and self-control that makes learning easier, so they are more motivated; in other words, they have the skill and the will to learn (Murphy & Alexander, 2000). Cognitive abilities and academic self-efficacy have been recognized in literature as well-established predictors of academic performance. On the other hand, specific mechanisms that may govern the relationship between cognitive abilities and academic self-efficacy have not been sufficiently explored (Schunk, 2004). However, because people differ in their metacognitive knowledge and skills, they differ in how well and quickly they learn (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, & Campione, 1983; Morris, 1990).

According to Schunk (2001), Self-efficacy refers to perceived capabilities for learning or performing behaviours at designated levels. Self-efficacy can influence choice of activities, effort, persistence, and achievement. People acquire information about their self-efficacy for a given activity from their actual performances, vicarious experiences, forms of persuasion, and physiological symptoms. In educational settings, students have goals and varying levels of self-efficacy for learning. As they engage in a task, they acquire skills and evaluate their learning progress. Perceptions of progress sustain self-efficacy and motivation and promote learning. Students' self-efficacy is influenced by such contextual variables as goals, social models, rewards, social comparisons, and forms of feedback. Self-efficacy has been shown to predict student motivation and achievement across a variety of content areas (Schunk, 2001). The concept can also be associated with teachers as teachers' self-efficacy affects classroom planning, instruction, and student interactions.

According to Lynn (2008), Self-efficacy is often measured in conjunction with knowledge because, as some researchers point out, a baseline level of knowledge may be necessary to enable some actions to occur but after this threshold has been met additional information does not automatically bring about added behavioural change. Also, the predictive quality of self-efficacy as well as its positive correlation with self-management and adjustment to chronic illness makes it a potentially useful measure of patients' transition to active self-management following educational interventions. Self-efficacy may also be measured independently if a program's goal is to raise a person's perceived

self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a particularly desirable outcome since a number of research studies have indicated people with a higher level of perceived self-efficacy attempt more, accomplish more, and persist longer at a specific task compared to individuals with lower perceived self-efficacy. Conversely, individuals with low self-efficacy tend to avoid difficult tasks and will often give up sooner if the activities are challenging.

Academic success:

There are different approaches to defining the concept of academic success. Perhaps the most certain way a student can define this concept is being able to meet an institution’s expectations (Brooks, 2005). This may include being in a better standing and making all the satisfactory progress towards earning their credentials. Beyond that, academic success may also include the students themselves. As a student, you also need to identify your own success goals while in school and work towards achieving them. Once the goals are successfully achieved, an individual can claim to have achieved academic success.

According to York, Gibson, and Rankin (2015), students look at academic success differently. There are those that define academic success as being able to earn a specific grade point average, others are of the opinion that it entails landing a successful career while others define this as being able to gain admission to a particular graduate program. Depending on how we look at it, any of these different thoughts can be used as an academic success definition without having to disregard any.

The concept of academic success has generally been associated with the attainment of summative assessments, as stipulated by learning outcomes. However, York, Gibson, and Rankin (2015) argue that the meaning of this term is debatable as it has an ‘amorphous’ identity, depending on varying subjective perspectives. Indeed, while academic success can be attributed to the attainment of knowledge demonstrated through high assessment grades, it can also refer to the graduates’ capacity to secure a professional role related to their degree. York et al. (2007) identify six elements which define it namely: ‘academic achievement, engagement in educationally purposeful activities, satisfaction, acquisition of desired knowledge, skills and competencies, persistence, attainment of educational outcomes, and post-college performance.

Goal setting:

Goal setting involves the development of an action plan designed to motivate and guide a person or group toward a goal (Grant 2012). Goal setting can be guided by goal-setting criteria (or rules) such as SMART (Specific, Measurable, attainable, relevant and Time-bound) criteria (Grant, 212). Goal setting is a major component of personal-development and management literature. Studies by Edwin-locke (2002) have shown that more specific and ambitious goals lead to more performance improvement than easy or general goals. The goals should be specific, time constrained and difficult. Difficult goals should be set ideally at the 90th percentile of performance assuming that motivation and not ability is limiting attainment of that level of performance. As long as the person accepts the goal, has the ability to attain it, and does not have conflicting goals, there is a positive linear relationship between goal difficulty and task performance.



According to Latham (2012), studies have shown that the simplest most direct motivational explanation of why some people perform better than others is because they have different performance goals. The essence of the goal setting can be viewed in fourfold. First, difficult specific goals lead to significantly higher performance than easy goals, no goals, or even the setting of an abstract goal such as urging people to do their best. Second, holding ability constant, as this is a theory of motivation, and given that there is goal commitment, the higher the goal the higher the performance. Third, variables such as praise, feedback, or the involvement of people in decision-making only influences behaviour to the extent that it leads to the setting of and commitment to a specific difficult goal. Fourth, goal setting, in addition to affecting the three mechanisms of motivation, namely, choice, effort, and persistence, can also have a cognitive benefit. It can influence choice, effort, and persistence to discover ways to attain the goal.

Self-esteem:

Self-esteem is an individual's subjective evaluation of their own worth. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs about oneself as well as emotional states, such as triumph, despair, pride, and shame (Hewitt, 2009). Smith and Mackie (2007) defined it by saying "The self-concept is what we think about the self; self-esteem, is the positive or negative evaluations of the self, as in how we feel about it.

Self-esteem is an attractive psychological construct because it predicts certain outcomes, such as academic achievement, happiness, satisfaction in marriage and relationships, and criminal behaviour (Orth & Robbins, 2014). Self-esteem can apply to a specific attribute (for example, "I believe I am a good writer and I feel happy about that") or globally (for example, "I believe I am a bad person, and I feel bad about myself in general"). Psychologists usually regard self-esteem as an enduring personality characteristic (trait self-esteem), though normal, short-term variations (state self-esteem) also exist. Synonyms or near-synonyms of self-esteem include many things: self-worth, self-regard, self-respect, and self-integrity.

Baumiester and Robbins (2003) assert that, Self-esteem is an attractive psychological construct because it predicts certain outcomes, such as academic achievement, happiness, satisfaction in marriage and relationships, and criminal behaviour. Self-esteem can apply to a specific attribute (for example, "I believe I am a good writer and I feel happy about that") or globally (for example, "I believe I am a bad person, and I feel bad about myself in general"). Psychologists usually regard self-esteem as an enduring personality characteristic (trait self-esteem), though normal, short-term variations (state self-esteem) also exist. Synonyms or near-synonyms of self-esteem include many things: self-worth, self-regard, self-respect, and self-integrity.

Abraham Maslow states that psychological health is not possible unless the essential core of the person is fundamentally accepted, loved and respected by others and by her or himself. Self-esteem allows people to face life with more confidence, benevolence, and optimism, and thus easily reach their goals and self-actualize (Branden, 1990).

Self-esteem may make people convinced they deserve happiness (Branden, 1990). Understanding this is fundamental, and universally beneficial, since the development of positive self-

esteem increases the capacity to treat other people with respect, benevolence and goodwill, thus favouring rich interpersonal relationships and avoiding destructive ones. For Erich (2000), the love of others and love of ourselves are not alternatives. On the contrary, an attitude of love toward themselves will be found in all those who are capable of loving others. Self-esteem allows creativity at the workplace and it's a special critical condition for teaching professions.

José-Vicente Bonet (1997) claims that the importance of self-esteem is obvious as a lack of self-esteem is, he says, not a loss of esteem from others, but self-rejection. Bonet claims that this corresponds to major depressive disorder. Freud (1986) also claimed that the depressive has suffered "an extraordinary diminution in his self-regard, an impoverishment of his ego on a grand scale. He has lost his self-respect".

Optimism:

Optimism is a mental attitude reflecting a belief or hope that the outcome of some specific endeavour, or outcomes in general, will be positive, favourable, and desirable. A common idiom used to illustrate optimism versus pessimism is a glass filled with water to the halfway point: an optimist is said to see the glass as half full, while a pessimist sees the glass as half empty (Bates & Timothy, 2015).

Optimism connotes building positive constructs as far as adolescents' academics is concerned. According to Mahmood (2016) academic optimism is a collective set of beliefs about strengths and capabilities in schools that paints a rich picture of human agency in which optimism is the overarching theme that unites efficacy and trust with academic emphasis. Optimism provides the belief that the faculty can make a positive difference in student learning; teachers believe in themselves. Faculty trust in students and parents reflects the belief that teachers, parents, and students can cooperate to improve learning, that is, the faculty believes in its students. Thus, a school with high academic optimism defines a culture in which the faculty believes that it can make a difference, that students can learn, and academic performance can be achieved (Hoy, Tarter, and Woolfolk Hoy, 2006).

Hoy, Tarter, and Woolfolk (2006) identified the new construct of academic optimism as a general latent concept related to student achievement, even after controlling for socioeconomic status (SES), previous performance, and other demographic variables (Guvercin, 2013; Rutledge, Cohen-Vogel, Osborne-Lampkin, & Roberts, 2015). The structural model of academic optimism supports and builds upon Seligman's (1998) theory that optimism influences achievement as much as talent and motivation and that optimism can be learned and developed. As such, Hoy and his colleagues outlined three interrelated components: (a) academic emphasis, (b) collective efficacy, and (c) faculty trust; they suggested that, collectively, these components enhance learning, improve student achievement, and shape school norms and behavioural expectations (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottcamp, 1991; Lee & Bryk, 1989). According to Beard, Hoy, and Hoy (2010), the components are considered as a "triadic set of interactions," one supporting the other.

Although the three components are interrelated, each of these three areas is specifically defined and grounded in theory and research. The importance of academic optimism as a theoretical framework is its inclusion of cognitive, affective, and behavioural



domains. Hoy et al. (2006) posit that, “Collective efficacy is a group belief or expectation, it is cognitive. Faculty trust in parents and students is an effective response. Academic emphasis is the push for particular behaviours in the school.”

Theoretical review:

Self-awareness theory by Duval & Wicklund (1972):

Self-awareness is the capacity to take oneself as the object of thought. People can think, act, and from their experiences, and they can also think about what they are thinking, doing, and experiencing. According to the theory, anything that makes people focus attention on the self will increase self-awareness. The theorists accomplished this by placing a group of people in front of large mirrors, videotaped them, had people listen to recordings of their voices, and made the people feel like they stick out. Momentary levels of self-awareness are measured by people's use of self-referential words and pronouns and by how quickly people recognize self-relevant information. Duval and Wicklund (1972) proposed that, at a given moment, people can focus attention on the self or on the external environment. Focusing on the self enables self-evaluation. When self-focused people compare themselves with standards of correctness that specify how the self ought to think, feel, and behave, then we can say that objective self-awareness has taken place. The process of comparing the self with standards allows people to change their behavior and to experience pride and dissatisfaction with the self. Self-awareness is thus a major mechanism of self-control. When people focus attention on the self, they turned to regulate their emotions and that is why the researcher found the theory relevant.

Self-determination theory by Ryan & Deci (1985):

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a macro theory of human motivation and personality that concerns people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. It is concerned with the motivation behind choices people make without external influence and interference. SDT focuses on the degree to which an individual's behaviour is self-motivated and self-determined. SDT is centered on the belief that human nature shows persistent positive features, with people repeatedly showing effort, agency and commitment in their lives that the theory calls "inherent growth tendencies". People also have innate psychological needs that are the basis for self-motivation and personality integration. SDT identifies three innate needs that, if satisfied, allow optimal function and growth:

1. Competence- Seek to control the outcome and experience mastery
2. Relatedness- Will to interact with, be connected to, and experience caring for others
3. Autonomy- Desire to be causal agents of one's own life and act in harmony with one's integrated self; however, Deci and Ryan (1985) note this does not mean to be independent of others.

These needs are seen as universal necessities that are innate, not learned (instinctive), and seen in humanity across time, gender and culture.

Deci and Ryan claim that there are three essential elements of the theory:

1. Humans are inherently proactive with their potential and mastering their inner forces (such as drives and emotions)

2. Humans have an inherent tendency toward growth development and integrated functioning
3. Optimal development and actions are inherent in humans, but they don't happen automatically

To actualise their inherent potential, they need nurturing from the social environment. If this happens there are positive consequences (e.g. well-being and growth) but if not, there are negative consequences. So SDT emphasises humans' natural growth toward positive motivation; however, this is thwarted if their basic needs are not fulfilled.

Self-efficacy theory by Albert Bandura (1997):

For Bandura (1997), the capability that is most "distinctly human" is that of self-reflection, hence it is a prominent feature of social cognitive theory. Through self-reflection, people make sense of their experiences, explore their own cognitions and self-beliefs, engage in self-evaluation, and alter their thinking and behaviour accordingly. Of all the thoughts that affect human functioning and standing at the very core of social cognitive theory, are self-efficacy beliefs, "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances". Self-efficacy beliefs provide the foundation for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment. This is because unless people believe that their actions can produce the outcomes they desire, they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties." (Pajares, 2006)

According to Staples et al. (1998), self-efficacy theory suggests that there are four major sources of information used by individuals when forming self-efficacy judgments. In order of strength:

1. Performance accomplishments: personal assessment information that is based on an individual's personal accomplishments. Previous successes raise mastery expectations, while repeated failures lower them.
2. Vicarious experience: gained by observing others perform activities successfully. This is often referred to as modeling, and it can generate expectations in observers that they can improve their own performance by learning from what they have observed.
3. Social persuasion: activities where people are led, through suggestion, into believing that they can cope successfully with specific tasks. Coaching and giving evaluative feedback on performance are common types of social persuasion
4. Physiological and emotional states. The individual's physiological or emotional states influence self-efficacy judgments with respect to specific tasks. Emotional reactions to such tasks (e.g., anxiety) can lead to negative judgments of one's ability to complete the tasks. The ability to stay within a task and accomplish goals is what made the theory relevant.

Hope theory by Snyder (1998):

According to Snyder (1998) he defined hope as the perceived capability to derive pathways to desirable goals and motivate oneself via agency, thinking to use those pathways. Hope theory according to Snyder consist of cognitive models such as goals, pathways and agency. Goals are abstract mental targets that guide human behaviour. Pathways is the perceived ability to generate multiple routes to desired goals. Agency refers to perceived ability



to initiate and sustain movement along a pathway. High hope persons pursue their goals by thinking productively, through agentic thinking that is perceived capacity to use one’s pathways to reach desired goals and vice versa, and that is why the researcher found the theory relevant in the study.

Methodology:

The survey research was used in the study, the area of study was Buea, and precisely the University of Buea, found in the South West Region of Cameroon. The population of the study was 18.000. The target population for the study comprised of students in all faculties and colleges of the University of Buea. The University of Buea has 8 faculties (Arts, Agriculture, Education, Engineering and Technology, Science, Social and Management science, Health science, and Laws and Political science); 2 Colleges (College of Technology and Higher Technical Teachers’ Training College) and 1 school (Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters- ASTI). The accessible population was faculty of education, Agriculture, Social and Management Sciences, Health Sciences, Health Sciences, Engineering and Technology and Law and political Science. The Sample was made of 80 students. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire.

Findings and Discussions:

| | Research question | Tests statistic | Comment |
|----|---|--|--|
| 1. | Research Question one: To what extent does self-awareness affect adolescents’ academic success (In line with self-awareness theory by Duval and Wicklund, 1972) | Pearson product moment correlation (r=0.810, P = 0.05) | The findings revealed that there is a strong relationship between self-awareness and adolescents’ academic success |
| 2. | Research Question Two: How does goal setting affect adolescents’ academic success? (In line with Hope theory or Snyder, 1998) | Pearson product moment correlation (r=0.730, P = 0.05) | The findings revealed that there is a strong relationship between goal setting and adolescents’ academic success |
| 3. | Research Question Three: How does self-esteem affect adolescents’ academic success? Matches with | Pearson product moment correlation (r=0.702, P = 0.05) | The findings revealed that there is a strong relationship between self-esteem and adolescents’ academic success |

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| | Self-efficacy theory of Bandura, 1997) and Self-determination theory by Ryan & Deci (1985) | | |
| 4. | Research Question Four: How does optimism affect adolescents’ academic success? In line with Snyder hope theory, 1998) | Pearson product moment correlation (r=0.890, P = 0.05) | The findings revealed that there is a strong relationship between optimism and adolescents’ academic success |

Table: Summary of findings

Conclusion:

Based on the study, it can be concluded that, when students turn to be aware of themselves, understand themselves, their strength and weaknesses, they turn to be resilient and do not give up in challenging moments. Also, when students set goals, it makes them ambitious, have hope, agentic thinking and create routes and pathways to attain their goals. When students believe in themselves, they are able to accomplish a task without surrendering along the way. Lastly, when students are optimistic, they turn to be determined with a burning desire to attain their goals especially accomplishing their academic dreams with success stories to tell. They researcher therefore recommends that, adolescent students’ should understand the “self”, have a mental picture of themselves, set goals, have forethought, have agentic thinking and create positive routes to attain their goals, have self-worth, picturize their future with hope by putting effort and not giving up, and bouncing back to life crisis and adversities especially with the socio-political crisis in Cameroon. Based on this study, University adolescent students have to be resilient, determine, effortful, have hope, create pathways, and stay focus with effort to attain their academic goals with the school being a support system. With the present socio-political crisis and dreadful Covid 19 pandemic, the study recommends hope, effort, agentic thinking, self-efficacy and self-esteem, optimism, determination, creating routes and pathways, for adolescent students to be productive in schools. The dispensation and era need that, students should be resilient to adversities.

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