

## TEACHERS' CONTROL IDEOLOGIES AS CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC SELF- CONCEPT AND SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT OF ADOLESCENTS.

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### **Abstract**

*Sustainable development is not realistic in the school if the teachers do not show commitments in providing school environments that are capable of producing learners who have positive academic self- concept and are well adjusted to school. This study investigated teachers' control ideologies as Correlates of students' self- concept and school adjustment. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study employed a co relational research design. The population comprised all the 19,634 senior secondary students Nsukka education zone, Enugu State. The sample was 510 senior secondary students drawn from six Government owned secondary schools drawn through proportionate stratified sampling techniques. Three instruments; students' perceived teachers' Control Ideology Questionnaire (SPTCIQ) ; Students' School Adjustment Scale (SSARS) and the Students' self-Concept Scale (SSCS). Were developed and used for data collection. Data collected for the study were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Regression statistics. The finding revealed that Teachers' control Ideologies perceived by the students correlate with the students' academic self-concept and their school adjustment. Based on the findings recommendations were made that teachers should adopt humanistic control ideology which is evident in democratic school and classroom.*

**Key words:** Teachers' control ideology, Academic Self concept, school adjustment, Adolescent students.

### **Background of the Study**

In recent times, adolescent students rarely live up to expectation in their homes, schools and the society in general. The prevalence of behaviours that are not in conformity to the values, norms, rules and regulations tend to be high among the adolescent students. This could be due to a combination of both the psychological upheaval associated with the stage of adolescence and the environment they are exposed to.

Non conformity in this respect often manifest in school related maladaptive behaviours such as truancy, bullying, stealing of other students' property, talking back to teachers, drug use, indecent dressing, cult involvement, examination malpractices, disobedience, sexual involvement which in climax result in poor achievement and school dropout. A collection or combination of two or more of the

above behaviours ultimately results to failure in social integration, and as a result greatly diminishes a person's chances to achieve personal success in legally accepted ways (Ibenekwu, 2014). These localized non conformity in the homes and schools collectively give the index of the overall indiscipline in the society which has often been identified as a national problem.

Based on that, research evidence shows that the way forward in life for the adolescents is internalized informally in the home and formally in the school (Nwachukwu, Enweremuzo & Amadi, 2014). In the school, the teacher plays a strategic role in achieving the goals affecting the students directly and indirectly. Research shows that if the teachers create focused and comfortable classrooms, it increases students' learning and conflict resolutions within the school; and help the students to develop skills that will enable them adjust well in and outside the school (Wolfolk, 2011). Consequently, it is apparent that teachers' control ideology could help to make or mar the child's self-concept development and general school adjustment.

Research evidence inferred that ideologies may function as prepackaged units of interpretation that spread because of basic human motives to understand the world, avoid existential threat, and maintain valued interpersonal relationships (Chirtes, 2010). It can be described as a set of conscious and unconscious ideas which make up one's goals, expectation, motivation and world view. It is a coherent system of ideas, relying upon a few basic assumptions about reality that may or may not have any factual basis (Bas, 2011).

Teachers' Control ideologies to this effect represents those set of ideals, principles, myths, and symbols which form the basis of teachers' view about how best to control the learners and bring about optimum learning outcomes in the school, development of desired personal features and also inculcate discipline in the pupils for day to day social relations in the school and outside there. Learners' control is of great importance to the educators because of the long lasting psychological effect of different control patterns on children. Teacher's control Ideologies manifest in an array of different control measures teachers adopt in order to achieve discipline and participation of learners in the teaching-learning process. It also informs the classroom management styles adopted by the teachers. Agne, Greenwood and Millan (2004) defined teachers control ideology as a multidimensional construct which consist of attitudes, behaviour, value and practices that teachers adopt in dealing with children in the school. It involves the teachers' controlling behaviour in the classroom and school environment as a whole.

Teachers' control ideologies can be viewed from two opposite poles, ranging from custodial to humanistic control ideologies (Willower, Edel and Hoy 1973; Hoy, 2001; Redeout & Morton, 2010). A school with a typical custodial ideology around the school and classroom environment tends to provide a highly controlled setting concerned primarily with the maintenance of order. Students are stereotyped in terms of their appearance, behaviour, and parents' social status. Teachers do not attempt to understand students' misbehaviour; in fact, they view misbehaviour as bad and believe that irresponsible and undisciplined persons should be controlled through

punitive sanctions. Watchful mistrust and autocratic control are the critical aspects of a custodial perspective. Custodial Ideology manifest in authoritarian classroom management styles in which the teacher create classroom atmosphere with a rigid and highly controlling environment. There is strict maintenance of order. Authoritarian educators manifest suspicious and distrust of pupils, often addressing them in an unpleasant and angry manner (Rideout & Morton, 2010).

On the other hand, in a humanistic ideology setting, the school is conceived as an educational community in which students learn through cooperative interaction and experience (Okafor, 2006). According to the humanistic control ideology, students' learning and behaviours are considered psychologically and sociologically rather than morally (Okafor, 2006; Lunenburg & Cadavid, 1992). This ideology view pupils' control as supporting the children's autonomy to controlling the children's behaviour. To control children, the teacher can use external controls as rewards and comparisons. On the other hand, to support the children's autonomy, the teacher seeking to minimize salient external control but attempt to take the students internal frame of reference with respect to problems, ideas and initiatives. (Deci & Ryan in Eze, 2010). Self-discipline is substituted for strict teacher control. The humanistic ideology leads teachers to encourage a democratic atmosphere, with its attendant flexibility in status and rules, sensitivity to others, open communication and increased student self-determination. Teachers build close relations with students and sustain positive friendships with them. Explaining this, Willower, Edel and Hoy (1973) pointed out that, in the humanistic teachers orientation, the school is viewed as an educational community in which the students learn through cooperation. The model stressed the importance of the individuality of each and the creation of atmosphere to meet wide range of students' needs (Agne, Greenwood & Miller 1994) such needs may include academic, social or moral (Miller 2004). Teachers with humanistic orientation are patient, congenial, and easily approached and highly responsive to students' suggestions and ideas; and encourage pupils' self discipline and independence.

In a correlation study, Lunenburg and Mankowsky (2000) studied the relationship between teachers' control behaviour and student's motivation. The study examined the teachers' autonomy support and teachers' humanism and how these affect students' intrinsic motivation and social goals. Results revealed among others that supportive, caring and humanistic classroom climate enhances students' motivation to learn and satisfy the students need for autonomy and sense of belonging.

Another study by Wentze (2012) on the role of perceived pedagogical caring on Student motivation in middle school. This study examined adolescents' perceptions of pedagogical caring in relation to their motivation to achieve positive social and academic outcomes in middle school. It was found that Perceived caring from teachers predicted motivational outcomes, achievement and social competence. Clearly, from the preceding discourse, one can infer without doubt that, a child that learns under custodial teacher could differ from those under humanistic teacher in both self concept and school adjustment.

Self-concept is a cognitive or descriptive component of one's self (example: "I am a fast runner"). Generally, self-concept embodies the answer to "Who am I?" "A self-concept is a collection of beliefs about one's own nature, unique qualities, and typical behaviour. According to Ukoha in Dibia, (2014) self-concept is an individual's evaluation of various aspects of self and his idea about himself. To that effect, an individual's self-concept is his/her mental picture of self (Weiten, Dunn, & Hammer, 2012). The self-concept is an internal model that uses self assessment in order to define one's schemas. For example, the statement "I am lazy" is a self-assessment that contributes to self-concept. It includes the past, present, and future selves, where future selves (or possible selves) represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, or what they are afraid of becoming. All these Percepts derive from the individuals' previous experience (i.e they are learned) and may function as incentives for certain behaviours including how they go about their own learning (Hamachet, 1998). Self-concept has been found to be a dominant factor in the process of human development (Dibia, 2014) including the development of skills that would enable one to adapt effectively to school environments and the related activities.

However, some research studies have found that self-concept is a general term, whereas academic self-concept is a subcomponent of general self-concept; maintaining that there exist a correlation between academic self-concept and achievement as students move through the grades (Marsh et al., 2002). Development of positive self concept is very important in adolescents because it enhances their efforts to act in accepted manner to achieve stability and independence enough to take them into adulthood (Dibia, 2014 ;). Consequent upon that, Liu and Wang (2005), noted that individuals' self-concept is developed through experience and it influences their behaviour, their choice of action and persistence in academic task. It therefore, becomes obvious that pupils' academic self-concept could be determined by the kind of experiences they have with their teachers and could equally determine their level of school adjustment.

School adjustment is the process of adapting to the role of being a student and to various aspects of the school environment. School is a more formal setting which there can be changes in teachers, classrooms, school and class rules and procedures, performance expectations, difficulty of the work, and peers. Negotiating these challenges predict school success and equally demands that the child becomes well adjusted. Adjustment involves not only students' progress and achievement but also their attitudes toward school, anxieties, loneliness, social support, and academic motivation (Liu & Wang, (2005).

School climate has an important influence on school bonding (Pianta, Steinbeg & Rollis, 1995). Students are motivated by an authoritative teaching style that is demanding, supportive and fair (Olweus, 1993). Students, who like their classes, believe their teachers are supportive and fair, have good peer relations, and accept their school's mission, values and standards are more likely to bond to the school.

The following are the important aspects of adjustment in school: Adjustment to the new building and school routine; Adjustment to Academic and Co-curricular programs which involves getting most out of specific studies and activities, and overcoming learning problems and instructional difficulties, making satisfactory progress in exploratory experience; Psychological Adjustment involves development of good memory, desirable interest, good temper, desirable attitudes/values and good self perception; Social Adjustment which involves making and sustaining harmonious relationship with the students and teachers, Proper understanding of social needs, requirements and group goals, and meeting effectively to the social requirements of the home, peer groups, culture and the community (Weiten, Dunn & Hammer, 2008).

Factors affecting adolescents' school adjustment as identified by Weiten, Dunn and Hammer (2008) include the teachers, Curriculum, Recreational Facilities, school climate, relationships between administrations, and Evaluation system of the school which gives an index of students' performances. However, Weiten and Loiyd (2003) contended that involvement, or the quality of a student's relationships with peers and teachers, is a powerful motivator when it comes to adjustment in the school. The role of classroom teacher in pupils' school adjustment becomes more prominent as Shunk, Pintrich and Meece (2010) pointed out that class room teacher plays the most strategic role to bring improvement in the class room environment and help the students in adjustment; develop in students a sense self respect and self-concept by complements for work well done; accept the individual differences of students; develop comprehensive cumulative records by collecting information through classroom sitting; practices good mental health and adopt democratic and respective behaviour that will enable the pupils cope effectively.

### **Problem of the Study**

The problems of poor academic achievement and maladaptive behaviours among students in and outside the school are the concerns of education stakeholders. It has been revealed that the success of the school is determined not only by the academic achievement of the students, but also the totality of students' behavioural outcomes. Development of good self constructs such as positive academic self-concept and overall school adjustments help reduce maladaptive behaviours, improve academic success and ultimately lead to sustainable development of the nation.

Issues of school adjustment of adolescents are therefore a critical challenge to the education system. Nevertheless, research has shown that the challenging task of inculcating skills to improve self-concept and school adjustment rest squarely on the teacher who tend to differ variously in their perceptions and approaches to student control (different control ideologies). The question now becomes, how do teachers' control ideologies correlated with their students' self-concept and school adjustment? It is against these concerns that the researchers were moved to investigate the correlation of teachers' control ideology with students' self-concept and school adjustment.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to find out the correlation among teachers' control ideologies to students' self-concept and school adjustment in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu state. Specifically the study seeks to determine:

1. The relationship between teachers' control ideologies (custodial and humanistic) and students' academic self-concept.
2. The relationship between teachers' control ideologies (custodial and humanistic) and School adjustment of students.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between teachers' control ideology and self-concept of students?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' control ideology and academic school adjustment of students?

### **Hypotheses**

Two null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance were formulated to guide the study.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' control ideologies and the self concept of students.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' control ideology and the school adjustment of students.

### **Method**

The study employed a correlational survey research design. A population of the study consisted of 19,634 senior secondary students in public secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. Out of the population, there are 4,544; 1,854 and 1,236 senior secondary students in Nsukka, Igbo-Etiti and Uzo-Uwani Local Government Areas respectively. The sample consists of 832 senior secondary school students drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique from the three local government areas that made up Nsukka Education Zone. This was done to ensure equal representation of each of the local governments since the local government areas do not have equal number of schools and students. Based on this, 6 out of 30 secondary schools were sampled from Nsukka L.G.A; 3 out of 14 secondary schools were sampled from Uzo-Uwani while 4 out of 21 secondary schools were drawn from Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. making it a total of 13 schools. In each school, the researchers further sampled 85 senior students to represent the entire population.

Data were generated using three questionnaires, titled, Students' Perceived Teachers' Control Ideology Questionnaire (SPTCIQ); Adolescents' School Adjustment Scale (ASARS) and the Adolescents' Self-Concept Scale (ASCS). The first questionnaire (SPTCIQ) a 20-itemed developed by the researchers from literature review elicited information on teachers' control Ideology. The

Adolescents' School Adjustment Rating Scale (ASARS) was also developed by the researchers to obtain information concerning the students' level of school adjustment. It is made up of 37 items which the researchers developed from the reviewed literature. On the other hand, Adolescents' self-Concept Scale (ASCS) is 21 item questionnaire developed by the researcher to elicit information on the students self-concept. The three instruments were four point scales of strongly agree (SD)-4; agree (A)-3; disagree (D)-2 and strongly disagree (SD)-1.

The three instruments were subjected to face validation; and test of internal consistency. The face validity of the instruments were established by presenting them the three experts in Educational Psychology(2) and Measurement and Evaluation (1), University of Nigeria Nsukka. Their corrections and suggestions were used to produce the final versions of the instruments. The validated instruments were subjected to reliability testing using Crombach Alpha method in each case and reliability coefficients were 0.81, 0.79 and 0.74 respectively for SPTCIQ, ASARS and ASCS.

The researchers administered the three questionnaires to the senior secondary students. All the questionnaires were retrieved after completion and used for data analysis.

The research questions were answered using Person-Product Moment Correlational Coefficient (r), while the null hypotheses were analysed using regression statistics tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

**Research question 1**

What is the relationship between teachers' control ideologies and students' school adjustment?

**Research question 1**

What is the relationship between Teachers' control ideologies and the self-concept of students?

**Table 1: Pearson-Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) Showing Relationship between teachers' control ideologies and Self-concept of students.**

Control ideologies	n	Pearson Correlation (r)	R square	Adjusted R square	std error of estimate
<b>Custodial ideology</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>- .33</b>	<b>.33</b>	<b>.31</b>	<b>.49</b>
<b>Humanistic Ideology</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>.57</b>	<b>.44</b>	<b>.03</b>	<b>.48</b>

Data in Table show the relationships between the teachers' control ideologies and the self concept. Custodial ideology of the teachers had a negative correlation with the self-concept (r=-.33). Humanistic control ideology on the other hand had a moderate positive relationship with self-concept: r=.57. This indicated that students who are nurtured under custodial teachers have low self-concept. In other words, the

higher custodial the teacher is, the lower their students' self-concept. On the other hand, students who are nurtured under humanistic teachers develop high self-concept. This implies that the higher humanistic the teachers in a school, the higher self-concept of their students. Null hypothesis 1 further addresses this research question thus:

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between teachers' control ideologies and the school adjustment of students.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis on the relationship between teachers' control ideologies (custodial and humanistic) and students' academic self concept.**

	Control ideology	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	Custodial Ideology	.192	1	.192	10.781	.002
	Humanistic Ideology	.003	1	.803	9.011	.000

Data in Table 2 above reveal that teachers' control ideologies have significant relationship with their students' academic self-concept. The custodial control ideology has significant negative relationship with the students' academic self-concept. This is shown by F-value of 10.781 which is significant at .002 alpha level which is less than the set alpha level of 0.05. Also, the humanistic control ideology has an F-value of 9.011 which is significant at .000 level of significance which is also significant at 0.05 alpha levels. This indicates a significant positive relationship with the academic self-concept of students. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is adopted. Thus, there is significant relationship between teachers' control ideologies and students' academic self-concept.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between teachers' control ideology and school adjustment of students?

**Table 3: Pearson-Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) Showing Relationship between teachers' control ideology and students' school adjustment.**

Control Ideologies	n	Pearson correlation (r)	R square	Adjusted R square	Std error of the estimate
Custodial Ideology	208	.103	.082	.064	.89715
Humanistic Ideology	302	.613	.870	.162	.45322

Data in Table 3 above show the relationships between the teachers’ control ideologies and their students’ school adjustment. Custodial ideology has a very low positive relationship with the students’ school adjustment with  $r = .203$ . Humanistic ideology on the other hand has a moderate positive relationship with the students’ school adjustment ( $r = .613$ ). Hypothesis 2 further addressed this research question.

**Hypothesis 2:**

There is no significant relationship between teachers’ control ideology and the school adjustment of students.

**Table 4: Regression Analysis on the relationship between teachers’ control ideologies (custodial and humanistic) and students’ school adjustment.**

	Control ideology	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	Custodial Ideology	1.045	1	1.045	4.402	.308
	Humanistic Ideology	2.972	1	2.972	1.607	.000

Data in Table 4 above show that teachers’ control ideologies have differential relationship with the school adjustment of students. Custodial control ideology has non significant positive relationship with school adjustment of students. This is because, the F-value of 4.402 is significant at .308 alpha level which is greater than the set alpha level of 0.05, revealing a non significant relationship.

The table further shows that humanistic ideology had a significant positive relationship with students’ school adjustment. This is revealed by the F-value =1.607 is significant at .000 alpha level which is lower that the set 0.05 alpha level, showing that the relationship is highly significant.

**Discussion of findings**

Data in the Tables 1 and 2 above show the test of relationship between teachers’ control ideology and students’ self -concept. The tables show that different teachers’ control ideologies (custodial and humanistic) correlate differently with self-concept of students. While custodial control ideology of the teachers has negative relationship with the students’ academic self-concept, humanistic control ideology has a high positive relationship with students’ self-concept. This agrees with Shunk, Pintrich and Meece, (2010) who indicated that class room teacher plays the most strategic role to bring improvement in the class room environment; helps the students in adjustment and develop in students a sense self respect and self-esteem. The result of the present study indicated that the more a teacher applies their custodial pupils’ control orientation the poorer the students develop their self-concept. This also supports Wentze (2012) who found that perceived caring from teachers predicted motivational outcomes, achievement and social competence. Liu and Wang (2005) further noted that individuals’ self-concept is developed through experience and it

influences their behaviour, their choice of action and persistence in academic task. All these attest to the fact that teachers with humanistic view about pupils' control brings up children with high positive self-concept while those with custodial ideology suppresses the children's self-concept.

Data in table 3 and 4 revealed that students of custodial teachers show low school adjustment. As seen from the table, custodial teacher' control ideology low correlation with students' school adjustment. This means that custodial ideology of the teachers do not determine the students' level of school adjustment. Data further showed a high relationship between humanistic teacher ideology and students' school adjustment. This indicates that students nurtured under humanistic teachers tend to exhibit high level of school adjustment. That is to say that the more humanistic the teachers in a school, the higher adjusted to school the students under their guidance. This result concurs with that of Weiten and Loiyd (2003) who observed that the quality of a student's relationships with peers and teachers, are powerful motivators when it comes to adjustment in the school. Pianta, Steinbeg and Rollis (1995) also indicated that school climate has an important influence on school bonding. Previous research also shows that students are motivated by an authoritative teaching style that is demanding, supportive and fair (Olweus, 1993). However, the teaching and classroom management styles are the key indicators of their control ideologies. This suggests that custodial pupils' control ideology of the teachers reduce the self concept of adolescents while humanistic ideology improves adolescents' self concept.

### **Implications.**

The findings of this study provide practical implications for teaching and learning of the students. Building on the framework of the results of this study will help the teachers create both classroom and school environments that promote students' self-concept and school adjustment. Having found out the relationship between self-concept and different control ideologies of teachers, it will help the teachers adopt different ways of encouraging humanistic school climates that build up students' academic self-concept and school adjustment.

It will also imply that the teachers should adopt strategies geared towards increasing the academic self-concept of students. This can be done by making clear school and class rules, adopting democratic classroom management styles, adopting teaching-learning methods that attend to students needs and putting the students welfare at the fore front of school decisions and practices.

### **Conclusion**

From the findings of this study the following conclusions were made:

- There is negative correlation between teachers' custodial ideology and adolescents' academic self-concept; and positive correlation between humanistic ideology of the teachers and adolescents' self concept.
- Custodial control ideology of teachers have negative relationship with adolescent students' school adjustment to school, while humanistic ideology has positive relationship with school adjustment of adolescents.

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