

# PREDICTIVE INFLUENCE OF LEARNING ORIENTATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC RESILIENCE IN IBADAN METROPOLIS

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## Abstract

*The study examines predictive influence of learning orientation and psychological flexibility on students' academic resilience in Ibadan Metropolis. The study adopted a descriptive research design of correlation type. A total of 300 students in Ibadan Metropolis were selected using multi stage sampling techniques. Questionnaires consisting of demographic information and sections which are standardized scales on academic resilience, learning orientation and psychological flexibility. Three research questions were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis at 0.05 level of significant. The findings showed that learning orientation ( $r = 0.535$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and psychological flexibility ( $r = 0.263$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) had significant relationship to academic resilience among students in Ibadan Metropolis. All independent variables jointly accounted for 39.3% variance in predicting academic resilience of students in Ibadan Metropolis. Also, learning orientation ( $\beta = 0.197$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and psychological flexibility ( $\beta = 0.150$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) had relative contribution to academic resilience. students should be encouraged to work on their academic's activities. Parents should be a good role model to their children by helping them in different academic works.*

**Keywords:** Academic resilience, Learning orientation, Psychological flexibility

## Introduction

School failures happen due to occurrence of specific risk factors causing psychological difficulties and poor academic performance of students. Risk usually involves presence of risk antecedent situation creating vulnerabilities in an individual's surroundings that are likely to lead to behavioral and health problems. Resilience is the ability, it is the attribute and quality that one can develop, and it is dynamic and lifelong. It is a process and one can, if one wishes to, enhance it depending on one's potential to prosper and progress in life. Qamar and Akhter (2019), considered resilience as an attitude that involves thoughts, emotions and behaviours. It is not static or incidental, it is progressive and continues to strengthen with life. They further explored the risk factors affecting academic resilience of elementary students. According to Mirza and Arif (2018), some children survive in the odd times while many others not only survive but also flourish and develop as well. Resilience does not mean to deal with survival aspect of life only.

Some children acquire the capacity to survive regardless of many unfavorable situations in their lives. Many not only survive but also prosper academically and socially. The ability to survive in tough life circumstances defines the notion of academic resilience. The theory of resilience attempts to explain why some students perform better in their academics and achieve success in their lives despite of having negative environmental or psychological situations (Sagone & De Caroli, 2013).

Academic Resilience should be viewed as something we foster throughout students' development by strengthening protective processes for students at critical moments in their lives. Academic resilience

is a context-specific form of individual psychological resilience (Colp & Nordstokke, 2014). To overcome these threats and stress posed by academic condition and yet persevere to overcome proactively all the risk experiences with positive outcomes, students need a quantum of resilience. Also, according to Agasisti, Avvisati, Borgonovi, and Longobardi, (2018), academic resilience is the heightened likelihood of success in school and other life accomplishments despite the adversities brought about by early traits (e.g prior achievement), conditions (social environments) and experiences (academic demands and threats). Despite all the discrepancies in conceptualizing resilience, most definitions are centered on two concepts: adversity and positive adaptation. Another important aspect of resilience is the protective factors which are those influences that modify, ameliorate or alter a person's responses to adversity (Agasisti & Longobardi, 2017). Such protective factor could include positive effects psychological flexibility, extraversion, social support and optimism.

Furthermore, learning orientation has been a potential determinant of students' academic resilience in schools. Therefore, learning orientation is describe as the disposition of an students in approaching, managing and achieving their learning intentionally and differently from others. Other than that, according to Bentley, (2010), Learning Orientations focused on whole-person perspective and can be used as a framework to examine the dynamic flow between deep-seated psychological factors, past and future learning experiences, subsequent choices about cognitive learning preferences, styles, strategies and skills, and responses to treatment, and lastly, learning and performance outcome. These attributes can also be referred to the individual's desire and ability to take responsibility, make choices, self-motivate, manage and improve their academic learning and resilience (Martinez, 2011).

Conceptually, learning orientations categorized learners based on how they choose to plan, set, perform and attain goals, intend to commit and expend effort and also, experience academic resilience, learning and achievement. Tasir, Noor, Harun, and Ismail (2018) found that Learning Orientations are considered useful and rational for students' academic resilience when considering the impact of emotions, intentions, effort to accomplish learning and success, and social factors on learning. Therefore, Psychological flexibility refers to the idea of the individual's inclination to remain stable and sustain his calm and self-balance when being exposed to stress or uneasy situations along with his ability to effectively adapt and positively confront pressures and upsetting situations (Wendling, 2012). This tendency requires students to be able to positively conform these pressures and inconveniences as this will have impact on their academic resilience and performance. Thus, this may speed his recovery and quickly overcome stressful situations, return to the normal purposeful state and make him consider disturbing or a stressful situation as an opportunity to strengthen oneself and immunize it against pressures and stressful situations in the future.

Psychological flexibility is one of the main determinants of students' academic resilience in various situations. It enables them, when it is high, to effectively perform the appropriate response that fits the situation. On the other hand, its weakness is the most obstacle in the way tithe compatibility of individuals with others (Sakarnah, 2021; Rababah, 2019; Zaheer, 2015). The study of students' academic resilience and it relation with psychological flexibility has become of great importance due to their association with human mental health (Marbahand Bilal, 2017), and for their role in perseverance, achievement and positive outlook on life (Reed, 2016). Lack of psychological flexibility, or psychological inflexibility, is commonly displayed as avoidance of stimuli and situations associated with pain, low academic resilience and related distress.

Psychological flexibility is the person's ability to efficiently face different situations and respond rationally (Reich, Zautra, & Hall, 2012). It establishes good relations with others based on friendliness,

mutual respect and acceptance of others (Marshall & Brockman, 2016). It is the process of good adjustment (academic resilience) and positive response to difficulties, shocks, calamities or normal psychological pressures that human beings face, such as family problems, problems with relationships with others, health problems, and work pressures. It is a critical component in determining the way in which students react and deal with academic stress. There is a wide range of traits associated with flexibility which are related to positive manifestations and strengths of an individual's mental state.

Students have faced a lot of challenges in schools which has affected the formation of their personality, their social relationships, psychological and physical health, their academic achievement and more importantly their academic resilience and psychological flexibility (Sakarneh, 2021). Studying academic resilience and psychological flexibility is of a great importance due to their relationship to their study habits (Ruthig, 2009). They have a role in the positive outlook on life among school students. School students suffer from developments and mood swings that may make them in a state of turmoil and confusion or a change in their perception. They may form misperceptions that make them focus on the negative aspects of everything surrounding them (Allam, 2021). Understanding what exactly academic resilience is and how to best develop it are important areas where more research and studies are needed. The future of education could benefit from more research on academic resilience and increased focus on developing academic resilience in students. The study therefore examines predictive influence of learning orientation and psychological flexibility on students' academic resilience in Ibadan Metropolis.

### **Objectives of the study**

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To find out the significant relationship among learning orientation and psychological flexibility on academic resilience among students in Ibadan Metropolis.
2. To investigate the joint contribution of learning orientation and psychological flexibility on academic resilience among students in Ibadan Metropolis.
3. To see if there are relative contributions of each learning orientation and psychological flexibility on academic resilience among students of Ibadan Metropolis.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the conduct of this paper:

1. Is there any significant relationship among the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) and the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in the Ibadan Metropolis?
2. What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) to the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in the Ibadan Metropolis?
3. What is the relative contribution of each of the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) to the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in the Ibadan Metropolis?

### **Methodology**

This paper adopted a descriptive research design of correlational and the design is for purposes of describing the relationship. The research design was adopted because the researcher did not manipulate the variables of interest in the study, procedure for data collection and method of data analysis. The population for this research comprises of all students in the Ibadan Metropolis. This includes all male

and female students with the age range of 10-18 in selected three local government areas (Ibadan North local government, Ibadan south west and Ibadan North east) considering six schools. A total of three hundred (300) students in the Ibadan Metropolis (Ibadan North local government, Ibadan south west and Ibadan North east) was considered for this study through multi stage simple random sampling procedure which was done in three stages. The objective of sampling is to get accurate empirical data at a fraction of the cost that it would take to examine all possible cases. The technique was adopted because of equal (random) chances of being selected for the study. The sample includes males and female students in the Ibadan Metropolis. Six (6) secondary schools were randomly selected from Ibadan, Oyo State in which 50 students each was considered in each school. At first stage, randomly, three (3) local governments were selected in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo state which are Ibadan North local government, Ibadan south west and Ibadan North east. At second stage, two schools will be selected each from the three local making six selected schools in total. At the last stage, 50 participants each were selected from the selected schools which sum to total of three hundred (300) students in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo state.

In this paper, 117 (39.0%) of the respondents were male, while 163 (61.0%) of the respondents were female. Also, 34 (11.3%) of the respondents were within the age range of 10-12years, 214 (71.3%) of the respondents were within the ranges of 13-15 years while 52 (17.3%) of the respondents are within the ranges of 16yrs and above. Furthermore, 201 (67.0%) of the respondents were Yorubas, 81 (27.0%) of the respondents were Igbos and 18 (6.0%) were Hausas. Lastly, 190 (63.3%) of the respondents were Christian and 110 (36.7%) of the respondents were Muslim.

A standardized questionnaires was used to gather information from the respondents. Academic resilience scale (ARS): Academic resilience scale was developed by Hamill, (2003). The scale was developed to measure students' capacity to perform highly despite a disadvantaged background. It contains of 30 items ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagreed, Strongly Disagree. Two samples item are: "I would use the situation to motivate myself" and "I would not accept the tutors' feedback". The developers reported reliability coefficient of .90. The pilot study result shows a reliability of .937. The researcher make used of statistical tools which include Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. Pearson product moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable and Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the joint and the relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable and all were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

## **Results**

The following results presented are based on the research questions raised, which the study has sought to answer.

### **Testing of Research Questions**

#### **Research Question 1:**

Is there any significant relationship among the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) and the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in the Ibadan Metropolis?

**Table 1: Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between learning orientation, psychological flexibility and academic resilience**

Variables	Academic resilience	Learning orientation	Psychological flexibility
Academic resilience	1		
Learning orientation	.535**	1	
Psychological flexibility	.263**	.184**	1
Mean	36.20	30.28	13.95
SD	6.11	11.54	5.31

Table 1 is on significant relationship among the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) and the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in the Ibadan Metropolis. The result shows that there were positive, significant relationships between learning orientation ( $r = 0.535$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and psychological flexibility ( $r = 0.263$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) to academic resilience of students in the Ibadan Metropolis. This implies that learning orientation and psychological flexibility were related and influential factors of students' academic resilience.

**Research Question 2:** What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) to the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in the Ibadan Metropolis?

**Table 2: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis on Composite Contribution of Independent Variables to academic resilience**

R = 0.637					
R Square = 0.406					
Adjusted R Square = 0.393					
Std. Error of the Estimate = 4.76502					
Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Regression	3779.871	2	755.974	33.295	0.000*
Residual	5540.129	296	22.705		
Total	9320.000	298			

Table 2 reveals that the composite contribution of learning orientation and psychological flexibility to academic resilience was significant ( $F_{(2,244)} = 33.295$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It further revealed a multiple regression coefficient ( $R = 0.637$ ) and multiple regression adjusted ( $R^2 = 0.393$ ). This implies that 39.3% of the variation in academic resilience among the respondents were accounted for by the joint effect of the independent variables when taken together while the remaining may be due to other factors and residuals. This implies that when learning orientation and psychological flexibility were taken together, they jointly contribute significantly to adolescent's academic resilience.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relative contribution of each of the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) to the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in the Ibadan Metropolis?



**Table 3: Summary of Multiple Regression Showing Relative Contribution of Independent variables to academic resilience**

Model	Under standardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficient		T	Sig.
	Beta ( $\beta$ )	Std. Error	Beta ( $\beta$ )		
(Constant)	13.082	2.682		4.878	.000
Learning orientation	.517	.138	.197	3.756	.000
Psychological flexibility	.397	.133	.150	2.978	.003

Table 3 reveals the relative contributions of learning orientation and psychological flexibility to academic resilience of students in the Ibadan Metropolis. The relative contributions of Learning orientation ( $\beta = 0.197$ ;  $t = 3.756$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and psychological flexibility ( $\beta = 0.150$ ,  $t = 2.978$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) to academic resilience were significant. In terms of rank, learning orientation was the most potent factor followed by psychological flexibility.

### Discussion of Findings

Based on the findings, all the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility) are positively correlated with the academic resilience of students in Ibadan Metropolis; learning orientation had significant relationship to academic resilience as well as psychological flexibility to academic resilience. Also the study revealed that learning orientation had moderate and positive correlation to academic resilience while Psychological flexibility had weaker and correlation to academic resilience, this implies that psychological flexibility have weak influence on academic resilience among students in Ibadan Metropolis. This is in line with study carried out by Cassidy, 2015; Martin and Marsh, 2006; George, 2008 found positive correlation between learning orientation and resilience. This means that students belief about their capabilities in organizing and conducting activities to manage academic conditions (learning orientation) has impact in their endurance, persistence and stability over problematic and stressful assignments and expectations in academic affairs (academic resilience).

McGillivray and Pidgeon, (2015), noted that some college students cope with emotional change of frustration, confusion and discouragement, and yet remain in school until graduation, which implies that establishing high level of resilience is paramount and positive self-efficacy is complementary. Sesma, Mannes, and Scales (2013) results indicated that students performed well in their studies because of their resilient characteristics. Ahmad and Rana (2012) found out that motivation influences academic performance of college students. Akinsola, Tella, and Tella (2007) reported that students who had higher achievement motivation scored significantly high scores on a mathematics achievement test compared to their counterpart students with lower achievement motivation.

Also, findings two reveals that there was a significant joint contribution of the independent variables learning orientation and psychological flexibility to the prediction of the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in Ibadan Metropolis. Learning orientation had joint contribution to academic resilience and psychological flexibility had joint contribution to academic resilience. The combination of all the independent variable (learning orientation and psychological flexibility} have moderate influence on the dependent variable (academic resilience) among students in Ibadan Metropolis.

The result is in line with the study of McGillivray and Pidgeon, 2015 also identify that resilience promotes mental health human development, inter-personal relationships and creativity. Hanson, Austin, and Lee (2004) identified the students possessing higher levels of resilience, gained higher academic scores as compared to nonresilient students. Hidayati's research (Hidayati, 2014) state that there is a significant positive relationship between resilience and selfesteem, where the higher the psychological flexibility, the higher the resilience, and vice versa. Akinsola, Tella, and Tella (2007), and Akinlana (2013) that students who had higher achievement motivation will be able to solve most academic problems in order to succeed. When academic satisfaction entered the model as the second predictor variable, it accounted for an additional of the variance in the prediction of students' academic confidence.

Furthermore, the study revealed that learning orientation and psychological flexibility had relative contribution to academic resilience among students in Ibadan Metropolis. In terms of rank, academic achievement motivation was the most potent factor followed by learning orientation, followed by psychological flexibility and followed by gender in that order. This is in line with the study of Martin and Marsh, (2006) reported that self-efficacy is one of the factors having positive predictive influence on academic resilience maintaining that resilient students were high in learning orientation. However, it is not clear what the predictive power of learning orientation is on secondary school students academic resilience. McIntosh and Shaw (2017) urged that growth mindset and learned optimism are two characteristics of resilient students, and students believe that success depends on the learning and learning process necessitates time, patience, and perseverance.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate predictive influence of learning orientation and psychological flexibility on students academic resilience in Ibadan Metropolis. Low academic resilience has become a major issue among in school students. In line with the findings, this research work has established that, there is a positive relationship among learning orientation and psychological flexibility to academic resilience among students in Ibadan Metropolis. All the factors are positively correlated with the academic resilience of students in Ibadan Metropolis. Also, there is a positive contribution of the independent variables (learning orientation and psychological flexibility on the dependent (academic resilience) among students in Ibadan Metropolis and also it shows that, learning orientation and psychological flexibility had relative contribution to academic resilience among students in Ibadan Metropolis.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings above the following recommendations have been made:

1. Students should learn to confront thinking distortion. They should learn to say no to thinking, this can help to increase academic resilience of students.
2. Students should be encouraged to work on their academics activities.
3. Parents should be a good role model to their children by helping them in different academic works
4. Students should be encouraged to focus more on their strength than weaknesses.
5. Teachers should learn to engage in unconditional teaching, which means students should be accepted for who they really are as this will increase their academic resilience.
6. Counselors should organize programs in schools that will help the in school adolescent to have high academic resilience.

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