Adolescents Resilience and their Educational Advancement in Secondary Schools in Mbanga Sub Division Littoral Region, Cameroon

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ABSTRACT

Bouncing back and taking responsibility of our action is what we need to overcome the 21st century challenges. The purpose of this study was to investigate "the role of agency in the educational advancement of adolescents in Mbanga Sub Division. Agency was operationalized as; understanding how mind work, future picture through symbols, directed mind, forethought about the future, optimistic about dreams, blame of failures, responsible for action, reflect before acting and sound thoughts. The study employed mixed method and questionnaire was used for data collection. The purposive sampling technique was used with the sample of 260 students. Data was analyzed using both the descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistical tools were frequency count, percentages and Spearman rho test to establish the relationship between agency and educational advancement. The findings revealed that: Findings affirmed that there was a significant and positive relationship between agency and educational advancement of adolescents (P <0.001 far less than 0.05 level). The positive sign of the correlation value (R= 0.496**) implied that adolescents were more likely to advance in their education or resist academically when their agency was high. Based on the findings, some recommendations were made that the adolescents should be sensitized on forums like seminars, television and radio to be more resilient and agentic so than their performance should increase and which will make them to remain in school despite adversities. Adolescents should be seen as contributors to the welfare of society not passive agents.

KEYWORDS: adolescents, resilience, agency educational advancement

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental phase between childhood and adulthood during which, adolescents go through a series of developmental challenges before attaining adulthood. It starts with physical beginnings of sexual maturity and ends with the social achievement of independent adult status (Reijone, Pratt, Patel, & Greydanus, 2003). Adolescence is increasingly recognized as the second major _window' of opportunity and risk in development (Twenge, & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2002). Knoll, (2015) say that adolescents experience a variety of biological, psychological and social changes.

According to Maniehto (2005) agency is defined as a feeling that someone has the ability to change something about themselves or their environment for a valued goal. According to the UN Convention on the Right of the Child, Article 12 (1989) encourages thinking about why young people's agency is important by stating that children should not be treated as silent subjects of our concern, but as people with their own views and feelings which should be taken seriously. Accordingly, what an adolescent values as important in their life has intrinsic motivating power shaping present choices and actions as well as being a focus for their desired life trajectory.

Agency has been conceptualized as a combination of cognitive, evaluative processes such as self-efficacy and planning (Bandura, 2001), as cognitive conceptualizations of goals, beliefs, and expectancies (Little, Snyder, & Wehmeyer, 2006), as a process of social engagement, informed by the past, oriented toward the present and future (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998), and as combination of self (Pantin, Coatsworth, & Szapocznik, 2007). Adolescents who operate from a place of empowerment, efficacy, self-direction, or intentionality experience better developmental outcomes relative to those with less agentic orientations. Those who demonstrated higher levels of agentic competencies, such as dependability, effective use of intelligence, and self-confidence, experienced better adulthood outcomes relative to those who were less agentic in adolescence (Clausen, 1991).

Agency is the ability to make decisions and take actions that shape the course and direction of one's life (Hitlin & Elder, 2007). Agency identifies the individual as the primary author of personal actions and decisions, which are self-generated and engaged at will (Balconi, 2010). Furthermore, agency affords individuals the ability to be actively engaged in their own personal development, to increase their well-being, to take new directions in life, and achieve self-actualization (Seligman, 2002; Sumerlin, 1997).

Resilience generally refers to a psycho-social process of coping with life adversity in such a way that the development and functioning of an individual maintain normal or even surpass general expectations. Specifically, resilience is defined as a capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways (Ungar, Liebenberg, Boothroyd, Kwong, Lee, Leblanc & Makhnach, 2008).

Statement of Problem
Adolescence is a stressful period where adolescents have to strive towards meeting their life goals. During this period, they need capabilities which will allow them to become successful in life but it is not the cash of adolescents in Mbanga Sub Division. Mbanga being purely agricultural and business town with many adolescents of school-going age drop out from school daily. Here cocoa is like their gold and children leave school half way to get involved in cocoa farming. They start by doing daily jobs (journées) for instant payment and gradually get their own portions of land to become farmers. With the presence of the train station in Mbanga, many children have abandoned school to hawk inside the train moving to Kumba and back. Many girls have abandoned school and, gotten attracted to cocoa farmers for their money. Added to this, adolescents here are exposed to substance abuse, violence, risky sexual activities, unwanted pregnancies, discrimination, corruption, criminality, poverty, low parental support, accidental injuries and others, which help to bring hopelessness and depression. With these hardships, they are not consistent in school which consequently affects or retards educational advancement and career choice. The capacity of adolescents to influence their lives through free will and efforts becomes an issue of concern due to inability to take decision, procrastination and forecasting their future with hopelessness.

Literature Review

Educational Advancement
The term educational advancement is used interchangeably with academic performance, and academic success, which is indispensable in every formal educational institution (Kpolovie, Joe & Okoto, 2014). Educational advancement of student is the ability of the student to study and remember facts and being able to communicate his knowledge orally or in written form in daily life (Udoh, 2005). The students' educational advancement plays an important role in producing the best quality graduates who will become great leaders and manpower for the country contributing to the nation's economic and social development (Ali, Jusoff, Ali, Mokhtar, & Salamt, 2009).

MacCann, Duckworth & Roberts (2009); Poropat (2009) stipulated that educational advancement is a key indicator of student success, and is one of the most common outcomes explored by researchers interested in resilient constructs. EPA (2006) posits that educational advancement is significant in student life and it is also called success, productivity and performance in that area which we learn educational goals. Ugwuja (2010) stated that educational advancement has to do with what a learner is able to accomplish by execution of class work in the school. Wentling (2000) argued that advancement in education refers to achievement of individuals' objective to various types of knowledge and skills. According to the author the objective are established based on the age, prior learning and capacity of individuals with regards to education, socialization and qualification

Melissa (2018) reviewed that in educational institutions, success is measured by educational productivity or academic achievement or academic performance which is defined as how well a student

meets standards set out by the local government and the institution itself. Garrison, Kingston, and McDonald (1964) affirmed the definition of academic achievement as the progress students make toward the goals and objectives of the curriculum, Garrison et.al (1955) asserted further about the definition that achievement may be the one's ability or the extent of his/her knowledge in a specific content area.

Resilience

In studying resilience, there are three critical conditions: growing up in distressing life conditions, the availability of protective factors, including internal assets and external resources that may be associated with counteracting the effects of risk factors, and the achievement of positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity (Windle, 2011). Richardson (1999) contends that resilience is the process of coping with disruptive, stressful, or challenging life events in a way that provides the individual with additional protective and coping skills than prior to the disruption that results from the event. Similarly, Higgins (1994) describes resiliency as the process of self-righting or growth, while Wolins (1999) define resiliency as the capacity to bounce back, to withstand hardship, and to repair yourself.

Benson (1997) postulated that the term "resilience" indicates a paradigm shift from the identification of the risk factors of an individual (i.e., a pathological view) to the identification of strengths of an individual. A "resilient" individual is stress-resistant and less vulnerable despite experiences of significant adversity (Garmezy, 1994). To sum up, resilience can be defined in terms of an individual's capacity, the process he or she goes through, and the result (Masten, Best, and Garmezy, 1990). Resilience as a capacity refers to an individual's capacity for adapting to changes and stressful events in a healthy way (Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, and Hawkins, 2004). Resilience as a process is regarded as a reintegration process and a return to normal functioning with the support of protective factors after encountering a severe stressor (Richardson, 2002). Resilience as a result is defined as the positive and beneficial outcomes resulting from successfully navigating stressful events (Masten, Best, and Garmezy, 1990).

The promotive factors that can help youth avoid the negative effects of risks may be either assets or resources (Beauvais & Oetting, 1999). Assets are the positive factors that reside within the individual, such as competence, persistence, adaptation, coping skills, and self-efficacy. Resources are also positive factors that help youth overcome risk, but they are external to the individual. Resources include parental support, adult mentoring, or community organizations that promote positive youth development

A protective mechanism directly or indirectly positively modifies adolescents' response to a risk situation at turning points in life, towards adaptive outcomes. Protective mechanisms may promote adaptive processes or mitigate negative processes. Conceptually, protective mechanisms may operate differentially to: reduce the impact of risk, reduce or break negative chain reactions, establish and maintain self-efficacy, or open up new opportunities (Rutter, 1990).

A supportive family environment is one of the most crucial protective mechanisms for supporting resilience in children and throughout life. Parental support aids resilience among Adolescents facing a diverse range of risks (Ahern, 2006) and has been specifically linked to better outcomes with respect to substance use, violence and alcohol abuse (Fergus and Zimmerman, 2005). This aligns with evidence of the importance of secure attachment in promoting resilience, specifically, and supporting good psychological functioning for any child or adult

Agency as a resilient strategy

According to Synder et al (1991) agency refers to the determination and commitment that helps one move in the direction of a goal, and is considered the driving force of hope and pathways. Accordingly pathway refer to an individual's perceived ability to find one or more effective ways to reach his or her goals as well as the perceived ability to formulate alternative plans when obstacles get in the way of goal attainment. In the context of this study, if the adolescents of Mbanga are determined and committed, they will likely be more goal-oriented. This will enable them to be makers of their destinies, acting purposefully and taking decisions that will move them ahead in education despite the hurdles they will meet on their paths.

The development of agency is particularly important during the adolescent years. Adolescence represents an opportune time for youth to develop and solidify a sense of agency. As youth mature from childhood through adolescence social roles and expectations of youth begin to change. Schools and parents begin to transfer more responsibility to youth for making important decisions about their lives. Adolescents are expected to take a central role in making education and career choices, navigate decisions about engaging in risk behaviors, and select peers and romantic partners. In essence, they are expected to become more agentic in many aspects of their lives.

Agency also enables adolescents to create and capitalize on ‒turning points‖ in their lives (Masten, et al., 2004). For example, a group of seven individuals who transitioned from being maladaptive (i.e., low competence across multiple life domains) in emerging adulthood to resilient in young adulthood transitioned in part due to improvements in personal autonomy, an agentic characteristic (Masten et al., 2004). Similarly, adolescents who had actively made personal decisions about their destinies (agentic planning) after discharge from a psychiatric hospital later demonstrated resilience in adulthood and parenthood relative to peers with similar psychiatric backgrounds (Hauser & Allen, 2006).

Consequently, the conceptual and theoretical work on agency indicates that it is an important and complex developmental process. However, the empirical studies that exist on agency show that it is a challenging construct to define and operationalize (Hitlin & Elder, 2006; 2007). The challenges and limitations of agency research extend into research on the development of agency in adolescence. Research focused on adolescent development and positive youth development has only recently begun to develop theories around how youth agency should be conceptualized and how it develops (Larson & Angus, 2011). In turn, agency, as hypothesized, significantly predicted self-esteem, connection to school, and negatively predicted school problems, criminal activity, and violence. Additionally, four indicators of social support significantly predicted agency, with family social support being the strongest predictor of agency (Hitlin & Elder, 2006). This model is novel because it includes more than one component of agency (i.e., both self-efficacy and optimism), and also evaluates predictors and outcomes across multiple domains. Typically measures of adolescent agency focus on only one aspect of it. In particular, the most common construct used to operationalize agency is self-efficacy (Bandura, 2001). Although one‘s belief in personal ability is certainly relevant to agency it alone is not a sufficient depiction of agency. Simply believing that one is capable of achieving a certain outcome does not account for their motivation to do so, nor does it represent actions taken to achieve that end.

Hitlin & Elder (2007) support the view that beliefs about possible future selves motivate current agentic choices and over time, these actions get folded into our sense of self and become guiding forces for ‒identity agency‖. This supports the bi-directional link between future orientation and life values and congruent desired identity.

According to Alkire (2005) self-direction is one of the universal values that motivate human action. A person is autonomous when his or her behaviour is experienced as willingly enacted and when he or she fully endorses the actions in which he or she is engaged and or the values expressed by them. King (1998) argued that pursuing personal goals is an expression of agency. Hence goal pursuit implies a belief in one's ability to take effective action to reach a desired outcome. Thus, having goals indicates recognition of oneself as an agent. King (1998) emphasized that the linkage between concrete goals and more abstract life dreams indicates an implicit belief in the potential to control one's destiny. Thus reaching one's life dreams is a profound experience of agency. Thus agency in the life course emerges in the process of striving toward and realizing one's goals. Harlow & Cantor (1995) suggest the strategies people use to achieve life tasks reveal the progress of creating agency in everyday life. One major challenge that adolescents encounter during their teenage years involves acquiring a sense of personal agency in what often seems to be a recalcitrant world. Personal agency refers to one's capability to originate and direct actions for given purposes. It is influenced by the belief in one's effectiveness in performing specific tasks, which is termed self-efficacy, as well as by one‘s actual skill.

In schools, the onset of adolescence marks a profound shift in expectations regarding students' ability to assume responsibility for their functioning. When students enter middle or junior high schools, they are no longer under the direct control of a single teacher but instead are taught by a number of teachers in different classrooms, often with different classmates. These adolescents are expected to personally manage these diverse requirements for learning in class or to seek out help when it is needed, especially from their teachers. At this middle level of schooling, a significant part of students' academic work is completed out of the class, including reading assignments, and preparing for tests. Adolescents' success in making this developmental transition is complicated by a major increase in the difficulty of the academic work that is assigned in middle or junior high schools (Wigfield, Eccles, & Pintrich, 1996).

If adolescents fail to regulate this demanding academic environment effectively, their academic grades will likely decline often leading to a loss of agency which will affect their advancement and success in school. As their self-efficacy diminishes, adolescents can become embedded in a downward cycle of academic achievement that may involve

aligning themselves with peers who possess unfavorable views about the value and importance of school (Steinberg, Brown, & Dornbusch, 1996).

This concept is greatly relevant to this study in the sense that if adolescents in Mbanga have to advance educationally in the midst of adversities, they need to act with intentionality, forethought being self reflective and reactive. On the other hand, lack of a sense of oneself as an agent of personal selfhood may not initiate the much needed performance to help students advance in their education and life goals.

METHODOLOGY
This this study made use of the cross sectional survey and the population of 3096 adolescents in secondary schools in Mbanga Sub Division in the Littoral Region of Cameroon. The accessible population comprised of 766 adolescents from form five, lower and upper sixth of the three (Government Bilingual High School Mbanga, College St. Jean and Progressive bilingual comprehensive high school Mbanga) secondary schools in Mbanga. The sample size was made up 260 adolescents. Purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that the public, confessional and the lay private were represented. Each school sample was determined through Krejcie and Morgan (1970) model of determining sample size for research activities.

Instrument for data collection **were** questionnaire and an interview guide. The questionnaire and interview focused on adolescent agentic behaviour

(resilience) and their educational advancement. The questionnaire and interview were used for data collection because they were less time consuming, less expensive and were appropriately used to collect the desired data from the sample. The questionnaires were constructed following the likert scale–with options ranging from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD).

Method for Data Analysis
Data was then analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 23.0) with the aid of descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistical tools used were frequency count and percentages. Spearman's rho test and Chi-square test were the inferential statistical tests adopted for the study. The spearman's rho test which is a non-parametric test was used in testing the hypothesis of the study. This test was used because the data for all the variables did not follow the normality assumptions as revealed by Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] and Shapiro-Wilk test with all the P-values less than 0.05.

Findings
Findings were presented using the stretched and collapsed format. In the stretched format, the participant's responses were presented based on the four-point Likert scale meanwhile, in the collapsed format, responses for strongly agree and agree were grouped together and that for disagree and strongly disagree grouped together.

Table 1: Educational advancement by students

Test items	Stretched				Collapsed	
	Strongly agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree (D)	Strongly disagree (SD)	SA/A	D/SD
I persist on my educational tasks despite all challenges	159 (61.2%)	97 (37.3%)	3 (1.2%)	1 (0.4%)	256 (98.5%)	4 (1.5%)
I consistently maintain a positive point of view in my thinking	117 (45.0%)	110 (45.0%)	24 (9.2%)	9 (3.5%)	227 (87.3%)	33 (12.7%)
My last year average was above the previous averages	61 (23.5%)	109 (41.9%)	65 (25.0%)	25 (9.6%)	170 (65.4%)	90 (34.6%)
I believe I can influence the direction of my life	131 (50.4%)	98 (37.7%)	22 (8.5%)	9 (3.5%)	229 (88.1%)	31 (11.9%)
When I find myself dwelling on negative thoughts I quickly change them to positive	123 (47.3%)	108 (41.5%)	20 (7.7%)	9 (3.5%)	231 (88.8%)	29 (11.2%)
I am taking steps to achieve my life goals	195 (75.0%)	57 (21.9%)	5 (1.9%)	3 (1.2%)	252 (96.9%)	8 (3.1%)
I feel like dropping out of school because education has no future for me	2 (0.8%)	5 (1.9%)	17 (6.5%)	236 (90.8%)	7 (2.7%)	253 (97.3%)
Multiple response set	**1297 (49.9%)**	**958 (36.8%)**	**247 (9.5%)**	**98 (3.8%)**	**2255 (86.7%)**	**(345 (13.3%)**

In summary, findings showed that (86.7%) of the adolescents have strong passion for educational advancement meanwhile (13.3%) of the adolescents do not. For instance, majority of the adolescents 256(98.5%) persist in their education despite all challenges. Also, majority of the adolescents 253(97.3%) do not feel like dropping out from school because education has no future for them and are taking steps to achieve their life goals as strongly agree/agree by 252(96.9%) of the adolescents. Also, finding showed that last year, 170(65.4%) of the adolescents scored above average meanwhile 90(34.6%) of the adolescents do not. Findings equally showed that majority of the adolescents 238(91.5%) and 231(88.8%) strongly agree/agree that they solve challenges in their life and quickly change from negative thoughts to positive as well and consistently maintain positive point of view in their thinking 227(87.3%).

Majority of the adolescents 214(82.3%) are not easily influenced by their peers meanwhile 46(17.7%) of the adolescents are influenced by peers. Finally, majority of the adolescents 185(71.2%) always like to be with people who are better than them meanwhile 75(28.8%) of the adolescents do not.

Table 2: Adolescents agency

Test items	Stretched				Collapsed	
	Strongly agree (SA)	Agree (A)	Disagree (D)	Strongly disagree (SD)	SA/A	D/SD
I understand better how my mind works before taking decisions	93 (35.8%)	144 (55.4%)	16 (6.2%)	7 (2.7%)	237 (91.2%)	23 (8.8%)
I often create a picture of my future through symbols	93 (35.8%)	91 (35.0%)	61 (23.5%)	15 (5.8%)	184 (70.8%)	76 (29.2%)
My state of mind directs me to the decisions I take	109 (41.9%)	122 (46.9%)	18 (6.9%)	9 (3.5%)	231 (88.8%)	27 (10.4%)
I have forethought about my future	115 (44.2%)	109 (41.9%)	24 (9.2%)	12 (4.6%)	224 (86.2%)	36 (13.8%)
I am very optimistic about my dreams	144 (55.4%)	90 (34.6%)	15 (5.8%)	11 (4.2%)	234 (90.0%)	26 (10.0%)
I should be blame for my failures	138 (53.1%)	94 (36.2%)	21 (8.1%)	7 (2.7%)	232 (89.2%)	28 (10.8%)
I am always responsible for my own action	90 (34.6%)	117 (45.0%)	33 (12.7%)	20 (7.7%)	207 (79.6%)	53 (20.4%)
I always reflect before acting	101 (38.8%)	131 (50.4%)	25 (9.6%)	3 (1.2%)	232 (89.2%)	28 (10.8%)
I motivate myself to achieve whatever I plan to achieve	143 (55.0%)	104 (40.0%)	12 (4.6%)	1 (0.4%)	247 (95.0%)	13 (5.0%)
I always think of how sound my thoughts are before I take decision	93 (35.8%)	122 (46.9%)	33 (12.7%)	12 (4.6%)	215 (82.7%)	45 (17.3%)
Multiple response set	**1119 (43.1%)**	**1124 (43.3%)**	**258 (9.9%)**	**97 (3.7%)**	**2243 (86.4%)**	**355 (13.6%)**

In summary, findings showed that majority of the adolescents (86.4%) have positive thoughts about their self meanwhile (13.6%) of the adolescents do not. For instance, majority of the adolescents 237(91.2%) and 234(90.0%) strongly agree/agree that they understand how their minds work, and are very optimistic about their dreams meanwhile only a very few of the adolescents are not. Also, majority of the adolescents 247(95.0%) motivate their self to achieve whatever plans they programmed to achieve meanwhile only 13(5.0%) of the adolescents do not. Furthermore, majority of the adolescents 224(86.2%) and 231(88.8%) respectively strongly agree/agree that they have a forethought and good state of mind meanwhile, 36(13.8%) and 27(10.4%) of the adolescents respectively do not.

Also, majority of the adolescents of equal proportion 232(89.2%) blame their self for failure and always reflect before acting meanwhile only 28(10.8%) of the adolescents do not. Findings also showed that 207(79.6%) of the adolescents are responsible for their actions meanwhile 53(20.4%) of the adolescents are not. Finally, majority of the adolescents 215(82.7%) strongly agree/agree that they always think of how their thought sound before taking decision meanwhile 45(17.3%) of the adolescents do not.

Table 3: Comparing student agency by educational advancement

Agency	Statistics	Educational advancement		Total
		High	Low	
High	N	203	19	222
	%	91.4%	8.6%	
Low	N	21	15	36
	%	58.3%	41.7%	
Total	N	224	34	258

Chi-square test=15.69, df=1, P=0.000, <0.001

Findings from the table showed that a strong majority of adolescents 203(97.8%) with high interest for educational advancement were those with high agency which is significantly higher when compared to adolescents with low agency of which it was 21(58.3%) of them found to have high interest for educational advancement.

Testing of hypothesis two (Ho₂): There is no significant relationship between and educational advancement of adolescents

Table 4: Relationship between agency and educational advancement of adolescents

	Test statistics	Agency	Educational advancement of adolescents
Spearman's rho test	R-value	1.000	.496**
	P-value	.	.000
	N	260	260
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Also, when the relationship between agency and educational advancement of adolescents was examined, findings showed that there exists a very significant, moderately strong and positive relationship with correlation significant at 0.01 level (P <0.001) far less than 0.05 level. The positive sign and moderately strong effect of the correlation value (R= 0.496**) imply that adolescents are more likely to advance in their education or resist academically when their agency is high or positive. For instance, a strong majority of adolescents 203(97.8%) with high interest for educational advancement were those with high agency which is significantly higher when compared to adolescents with low agency of which it was 21(58.3%) of them found to have high interest for educational advancement. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there is no significant relationship between and educational advancement of adolescents was rejected and the alternative that states there is a significant relationship between and educational advancement of adolescents was accepted.

DISCUSSION

Agency and Educational Advancement of Adolescents

When the relationship between agency and educational advancement of adolescents was examined, findings showed that there exists a significant positive relationship between agency and educational advancement of Adolescents. The positive sign and moderately strong effect of the correlation value implied that adolescents are more likely to advance in their education or resist academically when their agency is high or positive. The findings of our study tied with that of Selim (2014) who conducted the research on the relationships between student engagement and their academic achievement. The study was carried out with the correlational research and the research sample was made up of 304 students. The results obtained via the analyses conducted revealed that there were significant relationships between the students' academic achievement and student engagement especially the dimensions of cognitive engagement, behavioral engagement and sense of belonging.

The findings revealed that adolescents often create a picture of their future through symbols, their state of mind directs them on the decisions to take and they have forethought about my future. This is in line with Synder et al (1991) as they argued that determination and commitment that helps one move in the direction of a goal, and is considered the driving force of hope and pathways. This was evident in the findings of our study whereby adolescents have positive thoughts about their self, optimistic about their dreams and motivated to achieve plans

Findings also showed that adolescents are responsible for their actions which facilitate their educational advancement. This is in congruence with Synder et al (1991) as they opined that those who are agentic in have effective ways to reach their goals as well as formulate alternatives plans when obstacles get in the way of goal attainment. Dietz & Burns (1992) believe that to have agency, actions must be intentional and agents must have the ability to make choices. It should be noted that adolescent with high agency must have a good state of mind and must always think of how their thought sound before taking decision. This is because, according to Garmezy's Theory of Resilience (1991), for adolescents to be persistent in their academic, they must possess individual such as a good state of mind, ability to make right decision, be optimistic, determined and committed.

Adolescents reported that they should be blame for their failures, always reflect before acting and always think of their thoughts before taken decisions. This is in line with Snyder (2000) who maintained that hope is a cognitive set involving the self-perception that one can produce routes to achieve desired goals. Anderman & Anderman, (2009) in the same line, reflected the idea that, people not only learn, but also use forethought to envision the future, identify desired outcomes and generate plans actions. Similarly, Bandura (2006) supported this view by saying that, future goals and plans can affect the present behaviour of an actor as these are formulated and imagined

Conclusion and recommendations

Findings of this study showed that agency has a strong and positive effect on adolescents' educational advancement. In other words, for adolescents to advance in their education, they must be agentic in their behaviours. Agency was found to significantly correlate more with educational advancement of adolescent. Students by our findings were found to go to school to the extent of obtaining a PhD Degree while some desire to obtain a Master's degree, and GCE advanced level. Also, it was observed by the finding of our study that when many of the adolescents failed a test in school, they feel sad, discouraged, ashamed of their self, angry, depressed but many of the students categorically stated that by failing a test, they try as much as possible to pass next time. Both male and female students, by class of study (form five, lower sixth and upper sixth) and age (from 12 to 19) were found to have high passion for academic advancement.

Based on the findings of the study, the government should sensitize adolescents on forums to be resilient and agentic because the findings of this study have shown that adolescents are endowed with agentic potentials. Adolescents should be seen as contributors to the welfare of society not passive agents. Seminars, workshops, refresher courses could be organized to educate adolescents on issues that will help deviate their minds from deviant behaviours and juvenile delinquency and be more engaged in activities that can add value in their lives and influence their educational advancement enabling them to realize their life goals.

Society should be educated that adolescence is a critical period of development full of storm and stress. Thus, adolescents should be provided a stimulating environment that can help them cope and adapt with adversities so that they can be responsible for their own action and envisage their future with a lot of hope and self-motivation.

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