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Learning Efficacy, Academic Goal Setting, and Burnout of Adolescent Learners in the Post-Pandemic Era

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the extent to which learning efficacy and goal setting will interact with academic burnout among learners in the post covid-19 pandemic era. The quantitative research design was adopted for this study. A total of 1, 407 adolescents in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria (male = 38.8%; female 61.2%) aged between 12 and 20 (mean = 15: SD = 4.24) responded to an online survey developed by the researchers, which was open for two months. Data were analysed using inferential statistics of linear logistics and regression analysis. The findings revealed that all the factors had a strong association with academic burnout, learning efficacy (OR = 1.02, 95% CI {1.01–1.04}) and goal setting (OR = 1.04, 95% CI {1.01–1.06}). Further, learning efficacy made the highest contribution to academic burnout (Beta = -.322, t= -12.629, p<0.05), and goal setting (Beta = -.234, t= -9.184, p<0.05). By implication, learning efficacy and goal setting played a significant role in reducing academic burnout of adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era for effective learning outcomes. It was, therefore, recommended based on this outcome that schools should employ professional school counsellors who can assist learners by adopting psychological interventions that are helpful to manage academic burnout to navigate adolescent learners through their academic life.

Keywords: *Adolescent Learners, Academic Goal Setting, Burnout, Learning Efficacy, Post-Covid-19 Era*

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INTRODUCTION

Given the complete reopening of schools and socio-economic activities, after a prolonged COVID-19 pandemic lockdown witnessed globally, there has been a paradigm shift from a conventional to a hybrid approach to carrying out activities by many institutions not exempting educational institutions. This shift allows for the use of both conventional social interaction or face-to-face as well as a digital approach where various digital platforms such as Google Meet, GoToMeeting, Microsoft Teams, RingCentral video and Zoom are being used for social events particularly teaching and learning activities such as classroom delivery and assessment tasks.[1] Among several advantages of this approach as acknowledged by scholars include access to an unlimited amount of learning resources, the opportunity for rapid learning, significant innovative and creative opportunities for teachers,

[1] Savitha Basri et al., "Do Academic Stress, Burnout and Problematic Internet Use Affect Perceived Learning? Evidence from India during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Sustainability* 14, no. 3 (January 26, 2022): 1409, https://doi.org/10.3390/su14031409.

availability of learning in different locations, encourages collaborative learning and the achievement of tasks, enhancement of learning competence, motivation and the development of a personal learning style just to mention a few.[2]

Essentially, a successful transformation to emergency remote teaching and learning which may mainly be learner-centred could probably put pressure on learners to adopt newer instructional methods and virtual interactions by submitting assignments and tests online with minimized face-to-face interactions with instructors and peers.[3] Thus, this hybrid approach may perhaps be stressful for students who lack digital competence and skills thereby increasing the levels of learning stress imposed to be tech-savvy producing burnout.[4] Although, Lawrence and Fakuade; Stickel allude that before the pandemic, adolescents are regarded as digital natives who are digital compliance, with a significant increase in their digital presence during the COVID-19 lockdown as a result of being confined to their homes by the threat of the disease.[5] Besides there are still some associated challenges that threaten not only the implementation of a hybrid but also the adolescence stage of development. Adolescence is a stage marked as a stormy and stressful period as a result of changes that are pivotal to their biological, cognitive, emotional and social development.[6] Aside from the psychological stress associated with this stage, the demand of having to be active during classroom lessons, carrying out some online tasks, sourcing for online material, and other learning requirements may be stressful and can lead to prolonged stress, academic frustration, and exhaustion, hence experiencing academic burnt.[7] Considering the review above, there are no known studies that have focused on or linked goal setting with academic burnout, hence this current study is desirable.

Aim

This study aims to determine the extent to which learning efficacy and goal setting interact with academic burnout among adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era.

Research Hypotheses

To achieve the above-stated objective, two research hypotheses were tested at a 0.5 level of significance.

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[2] Ammar J. M. Karkar, Hayder K. Fatlawi, and Ahmed A. Al-Jobouri, "Highlighting E-learning Adoption Challenges Using Data Analysis Techniques: University of Kufa as a Case Study," *Electronic Journal of E-Learning* 18, no. 2 (February 1, 2020), https://doi.org/10.34190/EJEL.20.18.2.003; Kehinde Clement Lawrence and Olubusayo Victor Fakuade, "Parental Involvement, Learning Participation and Online Learning Commitment of Adolescent Learners during the COVID-19 Lockdown," *Research in Learning Technology* 29 (April 8, 2021), https://doi.org/10.25304/rlt.v29.2544; Antonio-José Moreno-Guerrero et al., "E-Learning in the Teaching of Mathematics: An Educational Experience in Adult High School," *Mathematics* 8, no. 5 (May 22, 2020): 840, https://doi.org/10.3390/math8050840; Poppy Yaniawati et al., "Integration of E-Learning for Mathematics on Resource-Based Learning: Increasing Mathematical Creative Thinking and Self-Confidence," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (IJET)* 15, no. 6 (2020): 60–78.

[3] Bojan Lazarevic and David Bentz, "Student Perception of Stress in Online and Face-to-Face Learning: The Exploration of Stress Determinants," *American Journal of Distance Education* 35, no. 1 (January 2, 2021): 2–15, https://doi.org/10.1080/08923647.2020.1748491.

[4] Basri et al., "Do Academic Stress, Burnout and Problematic Internet Use Affect Perceived Learning? Evidence from India during the COVID-19 Pandemic"; Michael Kerres, "Against All Odds: Education in Germany Coping with Covid-19," *Postdigital Science and Education* 2, no. 3 (October 4, 2020): 690–94, https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-020-00130-7.

[5] Lawrence and Fakuade, "Parental Involvement, Learning Participation and Online Learning Commitment of Adolescent Learners during the COVID-19 Lockdown"; Logan Hans Stickel, "Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants: Exploring Online Harassment Victimization by Generational Age," *International Journal of Cyber Criminology* 11, no. 1 (2017): 39–62; Ritwik Ghosh et al., "Impact of COVID -19 on Children: Special Focus on the Psychosocial Aspect," *Minerva Pediatrica* 72, no. 3 (June 2020), https://doi.org/10.23736/S0026-4946.20.05887-9.

[6] Brett Laursen and Amy C. Hartl, "Understanding Loneliness during Adolescence: Developmental Changes That Increase the Risk of Perceived Social Isolation," *Journal of Adolescence* 36, no. 6 (December 15, 2013): 1261–68, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2013.06.003.

[7] Antonio Fernández-Castillo, "State-Anxiety and Academic Burnout Regarding University Access Selective Examinations in Spain During and After the COVID-19 Lockdown," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (January 27, 2021), https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.621863.

1. There is a significant relationship between learning efficacy, goal setting and academic burnout among adolescent learners in the post-Covid-19 pandemic era.
2. Learning efficacy and goal setting will significantly contribute to academic burnout among adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era.

REVIEW OF CONCEPTS AND RELATED STUDIES

Academic burnout is a psychological term that is conceptualized as a state of cognitive, emotional and physical fatigue as a result of performing responsible activities under demand and stress.[8] Generally, people are prone to burnout when they engage in activities continuously for a long period. Burnout among learners refers to tiredness due to emotional exhaustion resulting from academic demands, lack of interest in academic tasks and having a pessimistic sense (cynicism) and feeling of incompetency as a learner (inefficacy).[9] Learners exposed to a hybrid approach as a result of the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic experience symptoms of academic burnout such as lack of academic interest, truancy, disaffiliation in-class activities, low self-efficacy, high rate of absenteeism from school, less motivation, incapability in the acquisition of academic issues, lower commitment to learning activities, sense of meaninglessness in academic activities and lower level of academic performance. Academic burnout is characterised by a negative attitude toward schooling.[10] Scholars have identified three ways by which academic burnout can manifest: (a) the main manifestation is fatigue, (b) depersonalisation and distancing from the required responsibility which involves low academic achievement and abandonment; and (c) lack of commitment due to lack of motivation.[11] Akinleke avers that academic burnout among students occurs from psychological depersonalisation, the nervousness of rebuke from parents, teachers and peers as a result of poor performance.[12] Importantly, Kumar claims that because of the negative attributes of academic burnout, its manifestation is destructive for students.[13]

Although the manifestation of burnout was initially known among workers and was associated with job satisfaction, it was later expanded to other fields such as education where learning demand, stress and overload over extended time were considered as the etiological factors that explain the presence of exhaustion and demotivation.[14] Hence, there are enormous consequences of academic burnout which according to Akinleke can significantly impede learners' ability to function well and achieve optimal learning outcomes.[15] In the same vein, other scholars have raised concerns about the devastating effect of academic burnout on learning outcomes and overall well-being.[16] This situation

[8] Arturo Barraza Macías, "Validación Psicométrica de La Escala Unidimensional Del Burnout Estudiantil," *Revista Intercontinental de Psicología y Educación* 13, no. 2 (2011): 51–74.
[9] Morteza Charkhabi, Mohsen Azizi Abarghuei, and Davood Hayati, "The Association of Academic Burnout with Self-Efficacy and Quality of Learning Experience among Iranian Students," *SpringerPlus* 2, no. 1 (December 18, 2013): 677, https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-1801-2-677.
[10] Heni P. Pamungkas and Eka I. Nurlaili, "Academic Burnout Among University Students During COVID-19 Outbreak," 2021, https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.211223.204.
[11] Fernández-Castillo, "State-Anxiety and Academic Burnout Regarding University Access Selective Examinations in Spain During and After the COVID-19 Lockdown"; Antonio-Manuel Rodríguez-García, Tomás Sola-Martínez, and Manuel Fernández-Cruz, "Impacto Del Burnout En El Desarrollo Profesional Del Profesorado Universitario. Una Revisión de La Investigación," *Revista Electrónica Interuniversitaria de Formación Del Profesorado* 20, no. 3 (July 24, 2017): 161, https://doi.org/10.6018/reifop.20.3.275121.
[12] W O Akinleke, "An Investigation of the Relationship between Test Anxiety, Self Esteem and Academic Performance among Polytechnic Students in Nigeria," *International Journal of Computer Applications* 51, no. 1 (2012): 47–50.
[13] Suneel Kumar, "Influence of Spirituality on Burnout and Job Satisfaction: A Study of Academic Professionals in Oman," *South Asian Journal of Management* 22, no. 3 (2015): 137.
[14] Pamungkas and Nurlaili, "Academic Burnout Among University Students During COVID-19 Outbreak."
[15] Akinleke, "An Investigation of the Relationship between Test Anxiety, Self Esteem and Academic Performance among Polytechnic Students in Nigeria."
[16] Paul Ayobami Akanbi and Kehinde Adeniran Itiola, "Exploring the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment among Health Workers in Ekiti State, Nigeria," *Journal of Business and Management Sciences* 1, no. 2 (2013): 18–22; Christina Maslach and Ayala Pines, "Burnout: The Loss of Human Caring," *Experiencing Social Psychology.–NY: Knopf*, 1979, 246–52; Arnold B Bakker, Michael P Leiter, and Christina Maslach, *Burnout at Work: A Psychological Perspective* (Psychology Press, 2014).

may, however, not be unconnected to the high rate of student dropout, increased involvement of adolescents in internet fraud, high-rank prostitution among females, truancy, bullying, gambling, suicide ideation, political thuggery, armed robbery and many others.[17] These could be worsened among adolescent learners who have limited access to the essential information technology facilities required to meet their academic needs. In light of the above concerns, this present study examines the extent to which learning efficacy and goal setting influence academic burnout among adolescent learners in Ibadan, Nigeria.

One of the effective individual factors which can affect academic burnout is learning efficacy, generally known as academic efficacy.[18] Learning efficacy is regarded as learners' capabilities to successfully attain learning goals. A learner with high learning efficacy tends to be capable of meeting any academic demands or pressures. Hence, Nasa submits that learners with different self-beliefs demonstrate different levels of cognitive, emotional and social engagement in school.[19] In other words, learners with low learning efficacy have higher chances of being vulnerable to academic burnout which would even lead to low learning outcomes or academic failure. Some previous studies have confirmed the predictive power of self-efficacy on burnout among students.[20] Moreover, other related research concluded that self-efficacy beliefs are negatively associated with depersonalization and emotional exhaustion and are positively correlated with decreased personal accomplishment in students.[21] Other evidence showed that emotional exhaustion is closely related to academic stress.[22] Also, Pessimistic attitudes and cynicism toward academic issues have been found to reduce learning motivation.[23]

Recently, Rahmati studied academic burnout among students with high and low self-efficacy.[24] There were undesirable relations between self-efficacy, academic burnout, variability variables in school and its components (school exhaustion, academic inactivity and school inefficiency). Uchenna's study revealed a negative correlation between academic burnout and academic efficacy, which implies that a decrease in academic burnout leads to greater academic self-efficacy.[25] Rogala and colleagues conducted a longitudinal study on the correlation between components of burning out (disengagement and exhaustion) and social support and self-efficacy.[26] The finding revealed that a higher level of self-efficacy reduced emotional exhaustion. Also, Safarzaie, Nastiezaie and Jenaabadi examined the relationship between academic burnout and academic stress with academic self-efficacy among three

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[17] Kehinde Clement Lawrence and Titilola A. Adebowale, "Adolescence Dropout Risk Predictors: Family Structure, Mental Health, and Self-esteem," *Journal of Community Psychology* 51, no. 1 (January 26, 2023): 120–36, https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22884.

[18] Albert Bandura, *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control., Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control.* (New York, NY, US: W H Freeman/Times Books/ Henry Holt & Co, 1997); Charkhabi, Azizi Abarghuei, and Hayati, "The Association of Academic Burnout with Self-Efficacy and Quality of Learning Experience among Iranian Students"; Hui-Jen Yang and Cheng Kiang Farn, "An Investigation the Factors Affecting MIS Student Burnout in Technical-Vocational College," *Computers in Human Behavior* 21, no. 6 (November 2005): 917–32, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2004.03.001.

[19] Gunjan Nasa, "Academic Self-Efficacy: A Reliable Predictor of Educational Performances Prof. Hemant Lata Sharma," *British Journal of Education* 2, no. 3 (2014): 57–64.

[20] André Brouwers and Welko Tomic, "A Longitudinal Study of Teacher Burnout and Perceived Self-Efficacy in Classroom Management," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 16, no. 2 (2000): 239–53; Yang and Farn, "An Investigation the Factors Affecting MIS Student Burnout in Technical-Vocational College."

[21] Brouwers and Tomic, "A Longitudinal Study of Teacher Burnout and Perceived Self-Efficacy in Classroom Management."

[22] Terje A. Murberg and Edvin Bru, "School-Related Stress and Psychosomatic Symptoms among Norwegian Adolescents," *School Psychology International* 25, no. 3 (August 29, 2004): 317–32, https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034304046904.

[23] Edward L. Deci et al., "Motivation and Education: The Self-Determination Perspective," *Educational Psychologist* 26, no. 3–4 (June 1, 1991): 325–46, https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.1991.9653137.

[24] Zeinab Rahmati, "The Study of Academic Burnout in Students with High and Low Level of Self-Efficacy," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 171 (January 2015): 49–55, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.087.

[25] Uchenna C Onuoha, "Evidence of Academic Self Efficacy, Perceived Teacher Support, Age and Gender as Predictors of School Burnout," *Global Journal of Human-Social Science* 15, no. 2 (2015).

[26] Anna Rogala et al., "From Exhaustion to Disengagement via Self-Efficacy Change: Findings from Two Longitudinal Studies among Human Services Workers," *Frontiers in Psychology* 6 (January 8, 2016), https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.02032.

hundred and seven (307) graduate students of the University of Sistan and Baluchestan, the outcome of the study revealed that academic burnout had an inverse significantly relationship with academic self-efficacy.[27] This indicates that an increase in students' academic burnout causes a decrease in their academic self-efficacy. These findings showed that a high level of self-efficacy reduces academic burnout symptoms in a person, while a lower level of self-efficacy increases academic stress and burnout in a person. However, the influence of learning efficacy on academic burnout of adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era is yet to be given attention which is one of the gaps this study is out to bridge.

Goal-setting which Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock describe as the process of establishing a direction for learning is another factor with the potential to decrease burnout symptoms.[28] In the academic setting, goal-setting is the ability to set achievable goals that can lead to good academic performance by depleting academic burnout. An individual learner who possesses goal-setting ability without allowing distraction in the pursuit of the set goals has the potential to perform better than learners with a lack of goal-setting skills.[29] Schunk pointed out that goal setting can lead to learner motivation and higher academic achievement when individuals become aware of the goal and its objectives as well as work towards the achievement of the goal.[30] It is important to note that stating a goal does not automatically translate into achievement or benefiting students. In the view of effective goal-setting ability is pivotal in achieving any task successfully.[31] In other words, learners with goal-setting skills (clearly defined and realistic goals) would be able to cope with learning demands or pressure.

Evidence abounds on the collection between goal-setting and academic burnout among students. For instance, Moeller, Theiler, and Wu conducted a correlational study involving twenty-three (23) high school students on the relationship between goal setting and academic performance.[32] The study found that goal-setting ability increases the academic performance of students over time. Also, a study carried out among college students who experiencing academic stress showed that goal-setting intervention reduced academic anxiety and improved grades.[33] Kadivar, Kavousian, Arabzadeh and Nikdel investigated the relationship between goal orientation and learning strategies with academic stress among three hundred (300) university students at Tarbiat Moallem University.[34] Findings indicate that their learning goal orientation, learning strategies and academic stress are meaningfully correlated. The study concludes that academic stress is predictable through goal orientation. In the study by Bruhn, McDaniel, Fernando and Troughton goal setting was found to improve and maintain academic success.[35] More recently, the United States of America through the Department of Education,

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[27] Hamideh Safarzaie, Naser Nastiezaie, and Hossein Jenaabadi, "The Relationship of Academic Burnout and Academic Stress with Academic Self-Efficacy among Graduate Students," *The New Educational Review* 49, no. 3 (September 30, 2017): 65–76, https://doi.org/10.15804/tner.2017.49.3.05.

[28] Robert J Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane E Pollock, *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* (Ascd, 2001).

[29] Abe Idowu, Ilogu Chibuzoh, and I Madueke, "Effects of Goal-Setting Skills on Students' Academic Performance in English Language in Enugu Nigeria," *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research (NAER Journal)* 3, no. 2 (2014): 93–99.

[30] REL Midwest, "Using ESSA Standards to Assess Levels of Evidence-1 Using the Nonregulatory ESSA Standards to Assess the Level of Evidence in Schunk (1996) Background on Request," 2018, https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/ESSAReviewGoalSetting-Report.pdf.

[31] Sven Asmus et al., "The Impact of Goal-Setting on Worker Performance - Empirical Evidence from a Real-Effort Production Experiment," *Procedia CIRP* 26 (2015): 127–32, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procir.2015.02.086.

[32] Aleidine J Moeller, Janine M Theiler, and Chaorong Wu, "Goal Setting and Student Achievement: A Longitudinal Study," *The Modern Language Journal* 96, no. 2 (2012): 153–69.

[33] Dominique Morisano et al., "Setting, Elaborating, and Reflecting on Personal Goals Improves Academic Performance.," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 95, no. 2 (2010): 255–64, https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018478.

[34] Parvin Kadivar et al., "Survey on Relationship between Goal Orientation and Learning Strategies with Academic Stress in University Students," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 30 (2011): 453–56, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.10.089.

[35] Allison L. Bruhn et al., "Goal-Setting Interventions for Students with Behavior Problems: A Systematic Review," *Behavioral Disorders* 41, no. 2 (February 1, 2016): 107–21, https://doi.org/10.17988/0198-7429-41.2.107.

Institute of Education Sciences, and National Center for Education conducted a study using research recourses and the outcome revealed that student goal setting contributes to positive student academic outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the purpose of this study, the researcher employed the survey method of quantitative research design. Participation was opened to all secondary school adolescent learners in Ibadan, Oyo state Nigeria who were involved in online digital and conventional learning activities. Data collection lasted two months with the use of an online survey Google questionnaire covering two sections. Section A involved demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, class and participants' access to digital devices, while section B included measures of learning efficacy, goal setting and academic burnout. The participants were aged between 12 and 20 years (mean = 15: SD = 4.24). A total of 1407 adolescent learners consisting of males = 38.8%; female 61.2% responded adequately to the online questionnaire.

Instrument

All of the factors were measured using four response options format ranging from (1 = Strongly Disagree to 4= Strongly Agree).

Academic Burnout

Academic burnout was measured using the modified version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Student Survey (MBI-SS) developed by Salanova et al.[36] The inventory aimed to assess academic burnout in students. The inventory consisted of 15 items in all which includes three subscales: five items measured Exhaustion (for example, "*I feel emotionally drained by my studies*")*;* four items measured Cynicism (such as, *"I have become more cynical about the potential usefulness of my studies*"), while six items measured reduced professional efficacy (example of the items is *during class I feel confident that I am effective in getting things done)*. For this study, all items were scored on a 4-point frequency rating scale, ranging from 1: strongly disagree to 4: strongly agree. High scores on Emotional Exhaustion and Cynicism, and low scores on reduced professional efficacy are indicative of burnout (reduced professional efficacy items were reverse-scored). To ascertain the reliability value of the instrument, all three subscales reported high internal consistency; Cronbach's Alpha(α) coefficient values of 0.84 for exhaustion, 0.85 for Cynicism and 0.88 for reduced professional efficacy respectively.

Learning efficacy

Learning efficacy was measured using the Self-efficacy for Learning (SEL) scale developed by Klobas, Renzi and Nigrelli.[37] It is a two-dimensional scale with the first dimension consisting of information processing including knowledge, synthesis, analysis, understanding, and evaluation, while the second dimension covers aspects like library, distinguishing sources, web and writing. The scale consisted of 10 items with a four-point Likert response format ranging from strongly agreed to strongly disagree. Some selected items include "*soon after the end of a lesson, I am able to remember all of the key concepts*", and "*I can find materials in the library a subject that interests me*". The current reliability value of the scale stands at 0.75 Cronbach Alpha coefficient. This implies that the scale has good validity and is suitable for use among adolescent learners.

[36] Marisa Salanova et al., "How Obstacles and Facilitators Predict Academic Performance: The Mediating Role of Study Burnout and Engagement," *Anxiety, Stress & Coping* 23, no. 1 (2010): 53–70.
[37] Jane E Klobas, Stefano Renzi, and Maria Luisa Nigrelli, "A Scale for the Measurement of Self-Efficacy for Learning (SEL) at University," 2007.

Goal Setting

To assess the goal-setting ability of the participants, Gaumer Erickson and Noonan's goal-setting formative questionnaire was adopted.[38] The questionnaire was designed to measure students' proficiency in the three important components of goal setting such as setting a meaningful goal, focusing on personal improvement without comparing yourself with others and prior experiences based on interests and skills as well as feedback. It is a 16-item questionnaire with a response format ranging from not very like me to very like me. Sample of the items includes "*I set goals to achieve what I think is important to me, my goals are meaningful to me when I set a goal, I am confident that I can meet it*". The questionnaire's internal consistency accounted for Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.86. This implies that the scale has a good validity and reliability value useful among the study participants.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency distribution and inferential statistics of multiple correlations and regression analysis. A frequency distribution was used to analyse the demographic information of the respondents, multiple correlations were used to determine the relationships that exist between the factors, while a multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine the contribution of the two independent variables (learning efficacy and goal setting) to academic burnout of the participants.

Ethical issue

This study complied with all ethics of research. This was done by allowing voluntary participation of the participants and guaranteeing the confidentiality of all the information, provided pledged that the information supplied will only be used for research purposes only.

RESULTS /FINDINGS

The demographical information of the participants as illustrated in Table 1 indicates that on average, the participants' age was 15 years; more females (61.2%) participated in the study than males (38.8%). Also, the majority of the participants were in senior classes (1029 - 73%), with just 378 (26.9%) in junior classes. It was equally gathered that more participants had access to digital devices (1099 - 78.1%) than participants who do not have access to digital devices but depended on their parents' devices for accessibility (308 - 21.9%).

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Characteristics

Factors		**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Age	12 – 14 years	371	26.4%
	15-17 years	665	47.3
	Over 17 years	371	26.4%
Gender	Male	546	38.8%
	Female	861	61.2%
Class	Junior Secondary	378	26.9%
	Senior Secondary	1 029	73.1%
Digital devices' accessibility	Yes	1 099	78.1%
	No, but use parents'	308	21.9%

H_1: There is a significant association between learning efficacy, goal setting and academic burnout among adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era.

[38] Edward John Noon, "Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis: An Appropriate Methodology for Educational Research," *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice* 6, no. 1 (2018).

Table 2 contains the logistics regression of associated factors with academic burnout. The result revealed that all the factors had a strong association with academic burnout; gender (OR = 1.04, 95% CI {.724–1.50}); age (OR = 1.00, 95% CI {.43–2.325}); learning efficacy (OR = 1.02, 95% CI {1.01–1.04}) and goal setting (OR = 1.04, 95% CI {1.01–1.06}). The characteristics of the predictive factors revealed that 281 (19.9%) males and 93 (.7%) females had symptoms of academic burnout while 265(18.8%) males and 388 (27.5%) females had no symptoms of academic burnout. Of those, 93 participants aged 12 to 14 years (.7%), 345 participants aged 15 to 17 years (25.1%), and 303 participants above 17 years (21.5%) were experiencing academic burnout, while 278 participants aged 11 to 14 years (20.1%), 320 participants aged 15 to 17 years (22.7%) and 68 participants above the age of 17 (.5%) were no experiencing academic burnout. The result further shows that 26 (1%) of the participants with low learning efficacy and 92 (6.6%) with moderate learning efficacy had symptoms of academic burnout while 445 (32.6%) participants with moderate learning efficacy and 830 (59.9%) with high learning efficacy had no academic burnout symptoms. Also, 31 (2.2%.) of the participants whose goalsetting abilities were low commitment and 75 (5,3%) with high goalsetting ability had academic burnout symptoms while 220 (15.6.6%) of the participants, as well as 1 081 (76.9%) with high goal setting ability, were not having academic burnout symptoms. In all, there was a strong association between learning efficacy, goalsetting and academic burnout of the participants in this study.

Table 2: Summary of logistic regression showing predictive factors associated with academic burnout

Predictive factors		**Academic burnout symptoms**	**No academic burnout symptoms**	**Odd Ratio (95%CI)**	**p-value**
Gender	Male	281 (19.9%)	265(18.8%)	1.04, (.724–1.50)	.260
	Female	473 (33.6%)	388(27.5%)		
Age	12-14years	93(.7%)	278(20.1%)	1.00, (.043–2.325)	
	15-17years	345 (25.1%)	320 (22.7%)		.590
	Above 17	303(21.5%)	68 (.5%)		
Learning efficacy	Low	26(1%)	0 (0%)	1.02 (1.01–1.04)	.000
	Moderate	92 (6.6%)	445 (32.6%)		
	High	0 (0%)	830 (59.1%)		
Goal setting	Low	31(2.2%)	220(15.6%)	1.04 (1.01–1.06)	.002
	High	75(5.3%)	1 081 (76.9%)		
Model 2 PseudoR2N		21.69, p< .05 .02 1407			

Note: n in this table implies= the total number of participants

H_2: Learning efficacy and goal setting will significantly contribute to academic burnout among adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era.

Table 3 shows the regression analysis of the collective and relative contribution of learning efficacy and goalsetting to academic burnout, in response to research hypothesis two. The result established that the two predictive measures collectively and significantly contributed to the academic burnout of the participants in the current study. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions R = 0.439 and multiple R-square = 0.192, indicating that both measures combined accounted for 19.1% (Adj.R2= .191) variance in the prediction of o academic burnout of the study participants. The other factors accounting for 79.1% variance in the prediction of academic burnout are beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, the ANOVA result shows that the predictive measures contributed significantly to academic burnout, F (2, 1306); (155.590, $p<0.001$). To ascertain the weight of the relative contribution of each of the factors, the result revealed that learning efficacy made the highest contribution to academic burnout (Beta = -.322, t= -12.629, $p<0.05$; 0.00), followed by gaol setting (Beta = -.234, t= -9.184, $p<0.05$; 0.00). This implies that learning efficacy and goal setting contributed to academic burnout of adolescent learning in this post-pandemic era. Importantly, the negative sign indicates that the two factors contributed inversely.

Table 3: Summary of the multiple regression analysis of the predictors on academic burnout of adolescent learners

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	
	.439[a]	.192	.191	3.43848	
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	
Regression	3 679.116	2	1 839.558	155.590	
Residual	15 440.991	1 306	11.823		
Total	**19 120.107**	**1 308**			
	Unstandardised Coefficients		**Standardised Coefficients**		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	28.421	.730		38.926	.000
Learning efficacy	-.816	-.065	-.322	12.629	.000
Goal setting	-.144	-.016	-.234	9.184	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant)
b. Independent factors: learning efficacy, goal setting

DISCUSSION

In discussing the findings of this study in line with the objectives and two research hypotheses raised, the first hypothesis sought to know if there is a significant association between learning efficacy, goal setting and academic burnout of adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era. Findings from the study established that academic burnout is significantly associated with learning efficacy and goal setting in this study. Specifically, the association of academic burnout with learning efficacy attests to the fact that learners with low learning efficacy are prone to have academic burnout symptoms, while those with high learning efficacy are less likely to have symptoms of academic burnout. This outcome emphasises that learners with high learning efficacy tend to be capable of meeting any academic demand or pressures, hence are not prone to academic burnout. This finding supports previous studies

such as Nasa, who submitted that learners with different self-beliefs demonstrate different levels of cognitive, emotional and social engagement in school.[39] In other words, learners with low learning efficacy have higher chances of being vulnerable to academic burnout which would even lead to low learning outcomes or academic failure. Other evidence which showed that academic burnout is associated with related factors such as learning motivation is that of Murberg and Bru, Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier and Ryan. [40]

Similarly, the finding also indicates that academic burnout and goal setting are associated with each other. The only plausible explanation for this is that low goal-setting competency was linked with academic burnout symptoms based on the response of the participants, while high goal-setting ability was linked with no academic burnout symptoms. This means that individual learner who possesses high goal-setting ability has a lesser chance of being vulnerable to academic burnout the potential and stand a higher chance to perform better than learners with a lack of goal-setting skills.[41] This outcome is in line with other researchers, including Asmus et al., Moeller et al., and Morisano et al.[42] Kadivar et al. whose studies established that effective goal-setting ability is pivotal in reducing academic-related stress and achieving any task successfully.[43] In other words, learners with goal-setting skills (clearly defined and realistic goals) would be able to cope with learning demands or pressure.

The second research hypothesis states that learning efficacy and goal setting will significantly contribute to academic burnout of adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era. The result revealed that learning efficacy and goal setting contributed negatively and significantly to the prediction of academic burnout. It can be inferred from this outcome that both learning efficacy and goal setting are potent factors that negatively influence academic burnout. Learning efficacy made the highest contribution to the prediction, followed by goal setting. This means that an increase in the learning efficacy of adolescent learners causes a decrease in their academic burnout, while an increase in goal-setting ability also reduces academic burnout. This outcome is substantial in other studies which found that academic burnout had an inverse significant contribution to academic self-efficacy.[44] Likewise, Aftab Shah and Mehmood, Huang et. Al., Pan and Franklin established that academic burnout was significantly but negatively associated with academic self-efficacy, in such a way that increase in academic burnout decreased academic self-efficacy.[45] Charkhabi et. al. found that the influence of self-efficacy was statistically significant on academic burnout and its components.[46]

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[39] Nasa, "Academic Self-Efficacy: A Reliable Predictor of Educational Performances Prof. Hemant Lata Sharma"; Rahmati, "The Study of Academic Burnout in Students with High and Low Level of Self-Efficacy"; Onuoha, "Evidence of Academic Self Efficacy, Perceived Teacher Support, Age and Gender as Predictors of School Burnout"; Rogala et al., "From Exhaustion to Disengagement via Self-Efficacy Change: Findings from Two Longitudinal Studies among Human Services Workers."

[40] Murberg and Bru, "School-Related Stress and Psychosomatic Symptoms among Norwegian Adolescents"; Deci et al., "Motivation and Education: The Self-Determination Perspective."

[41] Idowu, Chibuzoh, and Madueke, "Effects of Goal-Setting Skills on Students' Academic Performance in English Language in Enugu Nigeria."

[42] Asmus et al., "The Impact of Goal-Setting on Worker Performance - Empirical Evidence from a Real-Effort Production Experiment"; Moeller, Theiler, and Wu, "Goal Setting and Student Achievement: A Longitudinal Study"; Morisano et al., "Setting, Elaborating, and Reflecting on Personal Goals Improves Academic Performance."

[43] Kadivar et al., "Survey on Relationship between Goal Orientation and Learning Strategies with Academic Stress in University Students."

[44] Safarzaie, Nastiezaie, and Jenaabadi, "The Relationship of Academic Burnout and Academic Stress with Academic Self-Efficacy among Graduate Students."

[45] Noman Aftab, Asghar Ali Shah, and Roqia Mehmood, "Relationship of Self Efficacy and Burnout among Physicians," *Academic Research International* 2, no. 2 (2012): 539–48; Yu-Hwa Huang et al., "Mediating Effects of Emotional Exhaustion on the Relationship between Job Demand-Control Model and Mental Health," *Stress and Health* 27, no. 2 (April 2011): e94–109, https://doi.org/10.1002/smi.1340; Shu Chien Pan and Teresa Franklin, "In-Service Teachers' Self-Efficacy, Professional Development, and Web 2.0 Tools for Integration.," *New Horizons in Education* 59, no. 3 (2011): 28–40.

[46] Charkhabi, Azizi Abarghuei, and Hayati, "The Association of Academic Burnout with Self-Efficacy and Quality of Learning Experience among Iranian Students."

Furthermore, goal-setting which is the ability to set achievable goals that can lead to good academic success equally contributes inversely to the prediction of academic burnout in adolescent learners. As such, goal-oriented learners exert all efforts towards academic achievement by depleting academic burnout. This finding is in tandem with various past studies which emphasise the contributory role of effective goal-setting ability in achieving any task successfully.[47] Specifically, Asmus et al. found that goal-setting ability increases the academic performance of students over time and that goal-setting intervention reduced academic anxiety and improves grades.[48] Consequently, when learners set goals (clearly defined and realistic goals), notwithstanding any academic demand and stress they will be able to cope and overcome such academic pressure which may cause academic burnout.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study outcome has implications for adolescent learners, educational stakeholders and the government. Essentially, this study has contributed to knowledge in the area of literature on academic burnout and its contributory factors. Therefore, it is recommended that schools should employ professional school counsellors who can assist learners by adopting psychological interventions such as Trauma-focused counselling, social effectiveness skills cognitive behaviour, emotional intelligence, goal-setting intervention, motivational interviewing strategy and mindfulness-based cognitive that are helpful to manage academic burnout to navigate through academic careers.[49] The secondary school system, while adopting hybrid teaching and learning methods, should consider personal factors such as learning efficacy and goal setting in managing academic burnout caused by academic demand during exceptional times such as the post-COVID-19 pandemic era, not only in Nigeria but also in the world at large. Further studies can consider an interventional approach by adopting these two factors to reduce academic burnout among students at any level of education. Subsequently, these findings rest on existing studies on academic burnout among school-going adolescents.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated a paradigm shift in the whole world, causing massive adoption of digital resources and approaches across all spectrums of society, not excluding approaches in the educational sector. Academic activities now require more digital resources and competencies to achieve desired goals and aspirations in this new era. While educational institutions across all levels are adopting digital teaching and learning methods as supplementary, it should not be forgotten that there are learners who lack the digital competence and skills required to cope with the demand of the approach, which perhaps may further increase the levels of stress imposed on them thereby cause academic burnout. To ascertain the role of learning efficacy and goal setting on academic burnout among learners, this study examined the association between learning efficacy, goal setting and academic burnout of adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era.

The study established that there is a significant association between learning efficacy, goal setting and academic burnout of adolescent learners in the post-pandemic era. Also learning efficacy and goal setting contributed negatively and significantly to the prediction of academic burnout, thereby

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[47] Asmus et al., "The Impact of Goal-Setting on Worker Performance - Empirical Evidence from a Real-Effort Production Experiment"; Idowu, Chibuzoh, and Madueke, "Effects of Goal-Setting Skills on Students' Academic Performance in English Language in Enugu Nigeria"; Moeller, Theiler, and Wu, "Goal Setting and Student Achievement: A Longitudinal Study"; Kadivar et al., "Survey on Relationship between Goal Orientation and Learning Strategies with Academic Stress in University Students."

[48] Asmus et al., "The Impact of Goal-Setting on Worker Performance - Empirical Evidence from a Real-Effort Production Experiment"; Morisano et al., "Setting, Elaborating, and Reflecting on Personal Goals Improves Academic Performance."

[49] Kehinde Clement Lawrence and Ajibola Omolola Falaye, "Trauma-focused Counselling and Social Effectiveness Skills Training Interventions on Impaired Psychological Functioning of Internally Displaced Adolescents in Nigeria," *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 30, no. 6 (November 24, 2020): 616–27, https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2477.

becoming potent factors in reducing academic burnout of adolescent learners in this post-pandemic era.

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