An Investigation of the Impact of Socioeconomic Status, Gender, and Religious Views on Attributional Patterns of High School Students in Nigeria

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, GENDER, AND RELIGIOUS VIEWS ON ATTRIBUTIONAL PATTERNS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JANUARY 1994
In recent decades, attribution theory has generated considerable interest among researchers. The reason for the dramatic increase in interest is the centrality of attribution theory to human motivation. One of the concerns of classroom teachers is how to motivate students to learn. How students attribute their successes and failures to either internal or external factors influences their level of motivation. Students who attribute their successes to internal causes (e.g., effort) are believed to be internally controlled, they are more motivated, and, consequently, they achieve more academically than students who attribute their successes to external factors such as luck. This research project was designed to determine the attributional patterns of high school students in Nigeria, and to determine how socioeconomic status (SES), gender, and religiosity mediate these attributional patterns. The overall aim of the project was to explore the utility of attributional retraining which would help students make more adaptive attributions.

One hundred and ninety-six subjects (94 males and 102 females) drawn from rural (low SES) and urban (high SES) high schools participated in the study. Forty-seven males and
fifty-three females were selected from urban high schools; forty-seven males and forty-nine females were selected from rural schools. The Bardis Religion Scale, Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale, and the Attribution Style Questionnaire (ASQ) were administered to the subjects. The independent variables were socioeconomic status and gender. Dependent variables were attribution scores, locus of control scores, and religiosity scores.

Factorial analysis of variance (F-ANOVA) results showed that rural school subjects (low SES subjects) more than their urban counterparts (high SES subjects) viewed negative events as stable. The results also showed that males, relative to females, were more externally controlled both on the internal-external (I-E) dimension of the ASQ, and on Rotter's I-E Locus of Control Scale. Also, males, more than females, tended to view negative events as stable. Overall, the results showed that the high SES and low SES Nigerian subjects were highly religious, and highly externally controlled. That is to say that a positive correlation between religiosity and externality was found.
I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to members of my dissertation Committee (Dr. Ronald Morgan, Dr. Carol Harding, and Dr. Todd Hoover) for their invaluable assistance, support, and suggestions. Their outstanding affability, and availability made the task more bearable. My special thanks goes to Dr. Carol Harding for her special interest, and exceptional encouragement at the rudimentary stage of the project.

I am indebted to my Bishop, Rev. Dr. Albert Obiefuna. Reposing confidence and trust in me, he sent me to the United States to study and become more equipped academically for my priestly ministry, and for the growth of Awka diocese. I am grateful to my brothers (the priests of Awka diocese) especially those who kept the parishes all these years some of us were away on further studies. I am thankful to Rev. Frs. Bertrand Muojekwu and GeoFisher Onyebuchi for their personal concern. Fr. Onyebuchi spent his time and energy travelling from school to school collecting the data for this dissertation. It was his commitment and effort that made this project a reality.

Finally, I am grateful to my brothers and sisters for their prayers, encouragement and support all these years of intense struggle abroad.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Most people would agree that education holds the key to economic and technological development. Motivation to learn is considered to be necessary for academic success. It has been clearly documented in the literature (Woolfolk, 1990) that a motivated student achieves higher than an unmotivated student, and that an intrinsically motivated student performs better than an extrinsically motivated student. How a student attributes his or her successes and failures to internal and external factors appears to affect the motivation level of the student. (Weiner, 1980).

In his attribution theory, Weiner (1979, 1984) describes how an individual’s explanations, justifications, and excuses influence motivation. According to Weiner, most of the causes to which students attribute their successes or failures can be characterized along three different dimensions. The causes for success, or failure could be internal or external (i.e., within or outside the individual), stable, or unstable (i.e., the causes can stay the same or change over time), and controllable or uncontrollable (i.e., the causes can be under the individual’s control or beyond his/her control). Luck, for instance, is an external, unstable, and uncontrollable cause for success or failure. Luck is external, because it is not
within the individual, it is unstable because it is changeable, it is uncontrollable because it is beyond the individual's control. If a student says "I was lucky to have passed the test," the student is attributing his/her success to an external, unstable, and uncontrollable cause.

Whereas luck is considered to be external, unstable, and uncontrollable, effort is considered to be internal, unstable, and controllable. Effort is internal because it is within the student, unstable because the student can increase or decrease it; it is controllable because the individual has control over it. If, for instance, a student says "I passed the test because I put a lot of energy into it," the student is attributing his success to an internal, unstable, and controllable factor. A comparative summary of the components of attribution is presented in Table 1.

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Weiner believes that how students make attributions has important implications for motivation. Students often try to
explain their successes and failures to themselves. Generally, students attribute their successes to internal factors (e.g., effort), and their failures to external factors (e.g., test difficulty or teacher bias). But sometimes students see themselves as capable, but do not do well on a test because they did not put much effort into the task of studying for the test. Such students attribute their failures to lack of effort (an internal, controllable cause) and generally, they try to apply themselves to their study when they prepare for the next test. This is a positive, and adaptive response, one that is likely to lead to achievement and success (Woolfolk, 1990).

The greatest problem arises when students attribute failure to internal, stable, and uncontrollable causes. If a student says, for instance, "I don't think I can make it in school because I am not a good student. My teachers have tried to help me, but I still fail." This student is attributing his failures to internal, stable, and uncontrollable cause. Students who make this kind of attribution often resign themselves to failure, learn to be helpless, and eventually drop out of school. In sum, students who attribute their successes to effort stay in school, achieve higher, and are internally controlled whereas students who attribute their successes to external factors achieve lower and tend to be externally controlled (Woolfolk, 1990).

The overall aim of this research project is to examine how the variables of SES, gender, and religious views interact
with respect to affecting the attributional patterns of high school students in Nigeria. This study is considered to be important because if the results show that students attribute their successes to external factors, and their failures to internal, stable, and uncontrollable causes, then the end of the gloomy social, economic, and political conditions in Nigeria is not in sight. School drop-outs, especially among males, will continue to be high. It is assumed that the students of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and for any nation to make economic, and social progress, the leaders must not only be educated, but education must also top their political agendas. Education must be viewed as a controllable means to bring about change.

If high SES correlates with high motivation, and low SES correlates with low, or no motivation, it follows that children from developed nations are likely to be more motivated, and achieve more academically than children from developing countries because they are generally more economically advantaged. It also means that the rate of school drop-out will be significantly higher in developing countries like Nigeria. Should this be the case, it would mean that Nigeria would never be an economic power, and more important, the dismal economic situation and overall underdevelopment would continue to be cyclical and perpetual since motivation to learn would continue to be low, or absent as long as poverty persisted. It should be noted that the urban high
school sample consisted of high SES students. Urban high schools in Nigeria are noted for their academic excellence. Many of them are considered to be premier high schools founded during the colonial era. Because of their reputation for academic excellence, it is generally more expensive to study in these schools. Consequently, children from wealthy backgrounds attend such schools.

As a result of the feminist movement, developed nations have begun to tap the many potentials of their women for economic growth. Most developing nations like Nigeria have substantially emancipated their women. Women are now making strides in education, and politics. In some parts of Nigeria, schools are dominated by women both in student enrollment and in teaching staff. But how do these women view themselves and their successes? Whether they attribute their academic strides to internal or external causes is yet to be determined. This research will give a clue to the attributional patterns, and locus of control of women in high school in Nigeria who are beginning to ascend the academic ladder.

In addition, it has been reported that religious views may be related to locus of control (Fowler, 1981; Gabbard, Howard, Tageson, 1986). James Fowler (1981) has identified six stages of faith. According to him, stage One faith is called Intuitive-Projective faith. It characterizes children between 2-7 years. Children within this age range are in
Piaget’s preoperational stage of cognitive development. The preoperational children cannot perform most conservation tasks because their thinking is not yet reversible, and cause-effect relationships are poorly understood. As a result, Fowler maintains that because children in this stage cannot decenter, they frequently believe that their perception of any event or phenomenon is unquestionably correct. Consequently, Intuitive-Projective faith is fantasy-filled, and a child can be powerfully, and permanently influenced by examples, and actions of adults in their lives.

Stage Two faith is considered to be a Mythic-Literal faith. In this stage, people begin to take on the stories, beliefs and observances that symbolize belonging to their communities. Beliefs and religious symbols are given literal interpretation. Fowler maintains that although this is the stage commonly associated with the faith of elementary school age children, adolescents and adults can also be found in this stage. People in this stage do not formulate reflective, and conceptual meaning. That is to say that meaning of any religious narrative is trapped or contained in the narrative (Fowler, 1981).

Stage Three faith is viewed as a conformist stage in that it is tuned to the expectations and judgments of others. People in this stage have not yet developed autonomous judgment to construct and maintain an independent perspective. They have not been able to step outside their beliefs to
reflect on, or examine those beliefs critically or systematically. Although this stage has its ascendancy in adolescence, many adults settle at this stage (Fowler, 1981).

According to Fowler, stage Four is a demythologizing stage of faith. The self claims identity that is no longer defined by the roles one plays society. It translates symbols into conceptual meanings. This stage usually occurs in young adulthood but the movement from stage Three to Four is considered to be critical, for it is in this transition that the late adolescent begins to take seriously the burden of responsibility for his own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs, and attitudes. Tension between individuality versus being defined by a group, self fulfillment as a primary concern versus service to others mark a genuine movement towards stage Four (Fowler, 1981).

A person at stage Five faith, which begins at mid-life, strives to accommodate others who are different. A person at this stage of faith is committed to justice. At this stage of faith, a person tries to free himself or herself from the constraints of ethnicity, class, nationality, and religious bias. It is a stage marked by tolerance.

Whereas a person at stage Five Faith is tolerant of other people, a person at stage Six faith goes beyond mere tolerance. He questions the status quo, and imagines an ideal situation. People in this stage of faith intrepidly preach social change and justice. They envision a universal community
which breaks the barriers of race and nationality. People in this stage are heedless to threats to their lives as they engage in disciplined, non-violent actions aimed at social change. In sum, they become martyrs to the visions they represent.

The overall assumption here is that one’s stage of faith is related to one’s level of education. For Fowler, knowledge is one of the factors that make for growth in faith. More educated people are likely to be in stage 4 or above because they are more likely to be reflective and conceptual with respect to their faith. Less educated people are likely to be in stages One to Three. These stages are characterized by literalism, conformism, and conventionalism. This study has included religious views to determine, in general, the level of religiosity of high school students in Nigeria by their attributional patterns. Research (Gabbard et al, 1986) has shown that non-reflective (stage two faith) christians who are almost fundamentalists are externally controlled. Theoretically, the subjects in this study should be moving into stage four, as they have had some amount of education to be reflective, but Fowler has indicated that adults in spite of their education, could be fixated on stages two and three. If these students are still at stages two and three which are the rudimentary stages, they will likely be externally controlled, and attribute their successes to external factors. But if they are in stage four, they will likely be internally
controlled since people in this stage focus on self-fulfillment. Consequently, attributions to success are likely to be internal rather than external.

It is probably safe to say that religious views are related to motivational variables. People who are internally controlled may be more motivated because they believe that life in itself has little meaning; it is the individual who gives meaning to his or her life through his or her efforts. Conversely, people who are externally controlled may not be highly motivated to achieve because of their conviction that since everything follows divine plan, effort is inconsequential in influencing outcomes (Spilka & Benson, 1973).

The general goals of the study are as follows:
1. To determine whether differences in SES have any effect on religious views and locus of control.
2. To determine whether there are gender differences in attribution scores, religious views, and locus of control.
3. To determine whether there are differences in attribution scores between the subjects from urban and rural schools.

In addition, an effort will be made to determine whether there are differences in religious views, and locus of control of subjects from these two settings.

One hundred and ninety-six high school students from urban and rural towns participated in the study. Based on a selective review of the literature, it was expected that there
would be differences in attributional scores between both sexes, between rural and urban school subjects, and between subjects from middle SES and lower SES backgrounds. It was also expected that there would be differences in locus of control scores between both sexes, between rural and urban subjects, and between subjects from the two SES groups.

The psychological constructs examined in this study were assumed to reflect universal human characteristics. Therefore, data collection occurred entirely in Nigeria. Although some of the instruments used in this study may be culturally insensitive, the intent of the study was to examine group differences within the Nigerian sample as measured by the abridged instruments. Any weakness attributed to the use of these instruments should lead to a revision of the instruments, rather than to perpetuating the assumption that all instruments employed in psychological research must be normed on or compared to a Euro-American sample.
In this chapter, existing literature related to attribution theory is reviewed. The review of literature is focused on what we know about the relationships among socioeconomic status (SES), gender, religiosity and attribution variables. The aim is to set the stage for integrating the results of this study to previous research findings.

Attribution theory, which has generated a considerable research effort in recent decades, casts a fresh perspective on the study of human motivation. Usually, people want to know why events have occurred, and, consequently, engage in attributional search (Weiner, 1986). In an academic setting, a student may want to know why he or she performed poorly on an examination especially if poor performance was not expected. A student, for instance, may ask "why did I fail the history test?" "Why did John perform better than I in biology?" It has been suggested (Diener & Dweck, 1978) that low achievers are more likely to engage in attributional search, but it has also been found that high achievers make causal attributions for their successes (Weiner, 1979). It was Heider (1958) who originated the theory of attribution. In a discussion of naive analysis of action, he suggested that people could make uninformed (ie., naive) search for causes of
behavior (Shunk, 1992). Heider opined that people attribute causes to internal (effective personal force), or external (effective environmental force) factors (Shunk, 1992).

Guided by Heider's ideas, Weiner (1986) postulated that causal attribution follows a general pattern, and he identified four main factors that people view as causes of their successes or failures. These include: effort, ability, luck, and task difficulty. These causal factors follow three causal dimensions (locus of control, stability, and controllability). Abramson, Alloy, Peterson, and Seligman (1984) identified another dimension, globality, that refers to a causal factor affecting other situations and not just a specific situation. In addition to defining the location of a cause as being internal or external to the individual, the locus dimension also affects self-esteem. Attribution of success to internal factors increases self-worth, and attribution of failure to internal causes decreases it (Weiner, 1983).

The stability dimension describes causes as constant or varying over time. The stability dimension relates to changes in expectancy of success or failure. When failure is ascribed to a stable cause (e.g., lack of aptitude) there is an expectancy of future failure. But if failure is attributed to an unstable cause (e.g., luck), expectancy of failure in the future does not exist. The stability dimension also relates to affect. When the future is anticipated (expectancy) to be as
bleak as the present, feelings of helplessness may arise.

Controllability refers to having outcomes under one's volitional control (Weiner, 1986). For example, effort is viewed as controllable since individuals are responsible for the amount of energy they expend on a learning task. On the other hand, aptitude is perceived as uncontrollable since it is viewed as an inborn characteristic that cannot be altered (Weiner, 1986; Beate Schuster, Forsterling & Weiner, 1989). Controllability also influences sentiments and evaluations of others. When a student fails a test because of a perceived controllable cause (e.g., lack of effort), then the failure often elicits anger from significant others and the person may be negatively evaluated. But if failure is due to an uncontrollable cause (e.g., poor health), then the person may elicit sympathy and be positively evaluated (Weiner, 1983). In general, people attribute successes or positive outcomes to internal factors, and failures or negative outcomes to external factors (Fitch, 1970; Frieze & Weiner, 1971; Simon & Feather, 1971, 1973; Kukla, 1972; Luginbuhl, Crowe & Kahan, 1975; Falbo & Beck, 1979; DeBoer, 1985; Burke, Hunt, & Bickford, 1985; Weiner, 1986; Misra & Misra, 1986).

Each causal dimension has far-reaching psychological significance. Both stability and globality are related to expectancy of success. For instance, when failure is attributed to a stable and global cause, such as lack of ability, it promotes the belief (expectancy) that failure will
occur in other contexts. However, failure ascribed to an unstable and specific cause, such as effort, or task difficulty, will not reduce expectancy of success at the failed task (Weiner, 1983).

The locus of control and controllability of a cause are believed to be related to affect. When success is attributed to an internal cause, such as high ability, self-esteem is enhanced. But when failure is ascribed to internal factor, such as low ability, self-esteem, and self-worth are depreciated. However, if achievement outcomes are attributed to an external factor, such as task ease, self-esteem is not affected (Weiner, 1983). Controllability is also believed to be related to a variety of affective states. If a student, for instance, fails because of a perceived lack of effort, teachers and parents may feel angry. But if failure is due to an uncontrollable cause (eg., physical handicap), it may give rise to pity. (Weiner, 1983).

It is important to note that Weiner simply refined and expanded Rotter’s (1966) Internal/External locus of control construct. Rotter’s formulation of the locus of control construct is one-dimensional (internal or external). That is, a cause is either internal or external to the individual. But Weiner (1986) separated locus of control and controllability. That is to say that he conceptualized locus of control as a hind-sight (backward-looking) belief about a cause of an outcome. Hence, it is viewed as a locus of causality, and can
be internal or external to the individual. For Weiner, control
refers to an individual's volitional influence on outcomes
(Weiner, 1979).

Weiner pointed out that attribution of a cause to
internal or external factors does not offer much information
about the person making the attribution especially in an
academic setting. Effort and ability, for instance, are
considered to be internal, but each has a different behavioral
significance. While some individuals consider effort to be
controllable, others view ability as set (that is, it is not
under one's capacity to increase or decrease it). Whereas
ability can be stable, effort is considered to vary across
situations. Given these differences in the conceptualization
of effort and ability, it becomes clear that Rotter's
formulation of the Internal/External locus of control
construct that views ability and effort just as internal
factors, lacks specificity (Stipek, 1993). Elaborating on
Rotter's formulation of Internal/External locus of control,
Weiner added two other dimensions (stability and
controllability). These dimensions allow for more specificity
with respect to predicting behaviors related to success or
failure (Stipek, 1993).
Implications of Attributional Theory for Education

There is an assumption that causal beliefs about success and failure experiences have important consequences for subsequent feelings, expectancies, and learning outcomes. Causal assumptions reportedly influence consequent achievement behavior (Andrews & Debus, 1978). The attributional dimensions (locus of control, stability, and controllability) have important implications for learning and instruction. They are critical for understanding learning outcomes and individual differences in academic achievement (Rotter, 1966).

When success is attributed to internal factors (e.g., effort), the individual not only feels that he or she is in control of the learning outcomes, but also feels proud, confident, and competent and hopes to succeed in subsequent situations (expectancy). Self-esteem is enhanced. But attribution may become debilitating when failure is ascribed to internal, and stable factors (e.g., lack of ability). Attribution of failure to a lack of ability is considered to be an internal, stable, uncontrollable, and global ascription. Attribution of failure to internal factors leads to reduced self-esteem whereas external causal attributions do not (Forsterling, 1985).

It should be noted that attributing failure to internal
causes is not entirely maladaptive. For instance, if a student attributes his or her failure to a lack of effort, (internal attribution), it indicates a realization that he or she is in control of the learning outcomes. The student understands that increasing effort can lead to an improved academic performance. He or she knows that failure means more effort and change in strategy. This is believed to be an adaptive attribution. It leads to an expectancy of success.

It is claimed that attribution of failure to internal, stable, and uncontrollable factors engenders learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975) and possibly depression. Seligman and Maier (1967) developed the concept of learned helplessness using laboratory animals in their experiment. Two groups of dogs were harnessed. Group one was put in a room and given a mild shock. There was nothing they could do to prevent the shock. The dogs soon became passive (helpless) in their uncontrollable situation. When they were put in another situation where they could avoid the shock, they still remained passive suggesting that they had learned that their own behavior could not save them from the shock. They had learned to be helpless. Group two was also harnessed and shocked, but they managed to turn off the switch that controlled the shock. When put in another situation, these dogs learned avoidance strategy. They jumped out of the window as soon as the light that preceded the shock was turned on. The investigators (Seligman & Maier, 1967) claimed that the
dogs in the first group were passive (helpless) because they perceived that their behavior was inconsequential in changing their circumstance.

When extrapolated to human situation, the findings of studies such as this one, suggest that people who had learned to be helpless might not avail themselves of opportunities to improve their condition in favorable situations. They tend to believe that there is nothing they can do to effect changes in what they believe to be a helpless situation. So, the basic assumption of learned helplessness is that an individual gives up trying when he or she perceives that his or her responses are ineffective in producing the desired results. This implies that helplessness ensues when outcomes are not under one's control. In an academic situation, learned helplessness occurs when students believe that they cannot influence learning outcomes. Failure is attributed to low ability over which they believe they have no control (Stipek, 1993). The associated debilitating effects of learned helplessness may take many forms (motivational, cognitive, and emotional). Not only is the individual slow in making responses that will produce the desired results (motivation), he or she also has difficulty learning in future situations in which he or she has control (cognitive) because he or she has become passive, withdrawn, and depressed (emotional) (Ormrod, 1990).

Two factors need to be present before helplessness experienced in one situation can generalize to other
situations. These factors are the causal attribution a person makes about the uncontrollable events, and the similarity of the new situation to the original situation. If the uncontrollable event is ascribed to a global cause, then helplessness will generalize to other situations. But if the uncontrollable event is attributed to a specific factor, helplessness will not generalize across situations (Abramson et al., 1984). Attribution of failure to internal and uncontrollable causes are considered to be dysfunctional because this condition may lead to a permanent state of helplessness (Forsterling, 1985). Weiner (1986) articulated this maladaptive attribution succinctly:

This theoretical perspective, therefore, suggests that attributions indicating that failure is due to factors beyond the personal control of the actor are maladaptive; such ascriptions... produce helplessness, low expectancy of success and motivational decrements. Ascriptions of failure to low ability (aptitude), bad luck, external hindrance, are, therefore, dysfunctional. On the other hand, attribution of failure to lack of effort or to poor strategy are functional, for these causes can be volitionally changed (p. 181).

The concomitant of learned helplessness is depression. Depressed students have been reported (Abramson, Semmel, & Seligman, 1978; Metalsky, Abramson, Seligman, & Peterson,
to attribute failures or negative outcomes to internal, stable, and global factors, while success or positive results are attributed to external and unstable causes. Depression, like helplessness, results when an individual feels that he or she is not in control of a situation and that his or her responses are not yielding the desired result (Klein, Fencil-Morse, Seligman, 1976). Failure that results from lack of effort does not lead to depression; it is failure that stems from the belief and perception that one is incompetent (lacks ability) that leads to helplessness and possibly depression (Klein et al., 1976). Helplessness leads to deficits in motivation and learning (Weiner, 1986).

The Significance of Attribution Theory to Practitioners.

One of the major challenges of classroom teachers today is how to motivate students to learn. If causal attribution influences achievement striving, then a change in attribution style may produce a change in behavior (Forsterling, 1980). Goal setting alone may not be sufficient to motivate students. A student's burning desire (goal), for instance, may be to become a psychologist. But if he or she does not believe (self-efficacy) that he or she has the ability to realize his or her goal, then motivation may be diminished. Therefore, self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) is believed to be equally
Self-efficacy is a belief in one's ability to achieve a goal, and this belief will determine whether an action will be initiated to attain that goal. It will also influence the amount of effort expended on the task, the persistence on the task, and the overall performance (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy is considered to be a significant variable in most learning situations. According to Bandura (1982), people tend to avoid tasks that they perceive to be beyond their ability, and undertake tasks that are commensurate with their capacity. Thus, self-efficacy does not reflect one's objective ability or skill; it is only a belief about one's ability. So, it is possible that a student can underestimate or overestimate his or her self-efficacy. Each extreme can lead to negative outcomes. The student who underestimate his or her self-efficacy will not initiate a goal, if he or she does, he or she will not persist in the goal if difficulties and obstacles are encountered. Such a student may not work to potential. Similarly, the student who overestimates his or her self-efficacy will undertake unrealistic tasks and the failure which is inevitable will engender depression and anger because self-efficacy did not match outcome expectations. The effect is that the motivation to undertake another task will be inhibited since self-efficacy beliefs reportedly influence a student's thoughts and behaviors especially when confronted with a task (Stipek, 1993). Self-efficacy has an affective
component. A student who is efficacious on a task feels competent and desires to attempt more tasks. Such students are task-oriented. But a student who lacks confidence that he or she can accomplish a task, often feels anxious and incompetent especially if he or she is being evaluated. Rather than being task-oriented, they become ego-oriented (Stipek, 1993).

Because self-efficacy has many consequences related to achievement outcomes, teachers and parents can help children develop a realistic view of their abilities (Hackett & Betz, 1981). Researchers (Pintrich & De Groot, 1990) have found a correlation between self-efficacy and cognitive strategies necessary for academic success. Efficacious students demonstrated the use of cognitive strategies in solving problems, and showed more persistence on difficult tasks. The foregoing empirical evidence underscores the need to foster and encourage self-efficacy in academic learning situations (Stipek, 1993).

Investigators (Shunk, 1982; Locke, Fredrick, Lee, Bobko, 1984) have suggested that the best approach to strengthen self-efficacy is to link self-efficacy with past successes. Associating previous achievement with effort promotes task involvement and personal efficacy. Parents and teachers can use attribution retraining to help students develop a realistic view of their abilities (Hackett & Betz, 1981). Stressing the future benefits of hard work or imploring a child to try harder, has not been found to significantly
improve academic performance. Persuading a child to try harder largely depends on the credibility of the persuader, and even when the persuader is credible, such an approach has been found to have only marginal utility in increasing academic achievement. Relying on past performance provides a child with concrete information about his or her ability which, in turn, promotes self-efficacy beliefs.

Proponents of attribution retraining argue that students ought to believe that they are in control of their achievement outcomes, and feel that they are entirely responsible for their learning. Parents and teachers could encourage them to attribute successes to their effort and not to luck, or chance. This kind of internal attribution will help them build a positive self-concept which, in turn, will enhance their academic performance (Woolfolk, 1990). "I cannot" self statements should be avoided, for such statements diminish efficacy, inhibit motivation, and minimize expectancy of success (Weiner, 1986; Forsterling, 1985).

One of the negative effects of externality is that it connotes powerlessness. To be externally controlled implies powerlessness in controlling the outcome of events (Dweck & Rappucci, 1973). It is interesting to note that powerlessness is an aspect of alienation propounded by Hegel and Marx in their discussion of the exploitation of workers. Workers, in their opinion, were estranged from their productions, and, thus, not in control of their economic destiny. Thus helpless,
these workers became tools of production (Dwight Dean, 1961). Alienation, therefore, is believed to be related to the individual's social circumstances that influence his or her behavior. An alienated individual will believe that he cannot influence outcomes (Battle & Rotter, 1963). But if an individual believes that he or she has control over events, learning will be enhanced (Melvin Seeman, 1964).

Again, practitioners can attempt to teach students to make internal attributions for success, especially students who are prone to making external attributions. In the area of learning, attributional retraining programs often focus on changing students' causal ascriptions of failure to a lack of effort. This kind of attribution retraining has been found to lead to adaptive attribution and improved academic performance (Chapin & Dyck, 1976; Andrews & Debus, 1978; Zoeller & Mahoney, 1983; Forsterling, 1985). Thus, attributional retraining that emphasizes effort has been found to be more effective than retraining that utilizes direct persuasion (affect) (Shunk, 1982). Researchers (Fowler & Peterson, 1981) have found significant increases in reading persistence for children who had received attribution retraining. Direct attribution retraining was found to be significantly more effective than no attribution retraining in increasing children's attribution of success to effort on the Intelligence Achievement Responsibility Scale. Although attribution theory views ability as a stable factor, students...
can be helped to view ability as incremental, and, therefore, somewhat unstable, modifiable, and controllable. That is to say that it is under one's control to increase or decrease ability (Woolfolk, 1990).

Furthermore, parents and teachers are the mirrors through which students see themselves. It is assumed that how teachers attribute successes and failures of their students to internal or external factors are critical in students' perceptions of themselves. If, for instance, a teacher or a parent attributes a student's success to luck or chance (e.g., "these questions must be very easy; you had correct answers to most of them"), the student will also perceive his or her achievement as such (Burger, Cooper, & Good, 1982). When a teacher or a parent says to a student who failed a test "you did not study hard for the test," the teacher or the parent is acknowledging that the student had the ability, but he did not put sufficient effort to the task. But if the teacher shows pity to the student who failed a test by saying, "I am sorry that you were unable to solve the problems," the teacher is inadvertently reinforcing the student's doubts about his or her ability to succeed in school. Students' perceptions of themselves and their abilities are believed to be an internalization of attitudes communicated to them by their teachers and parents (Weiner, 1972). It is recommended that the effort of practitioners should be to extol success, and let students realize that success is the fruit of hard work and failure.
results from lack of effort or use of an inappropriate strategy (Eggen & Kauchak, 1991; Stipek, 1993).

Research (Dweck, 1975) has shown that through attribution retraining, dysfunctional beliefs can be changed to more functional beliefs about causes of success or failure. Dweck (1975) identified a number of elementary school children in a condition of learned helplessness. These children were divided into two groups. Group A represented the success-only condition. During the twenty-five daily training sessions, children in group A (success-only) were exposed to large amounts of success experiences. Those in group B were given attribution retraining which was characterized by successes and failures. Each time failure occurred, the researchers commented that the cause of failure was a lack of effort. It was found at the end of the experiment that the children in the attribution retraining group (Group B) attributed outcomes to effort more than the children in the success-only condition. The children in the attribution retraining condition also showed more persistence, and used better strategies in problem-solving situations. They had ceased to give up in difficult situations. In contrast, the children in success-only condition did not show any change in their attitude towards failure. Some of them even reacted more negatively to failure than they did before the experiment. The findings of this study indicate that teachers and parents can be instrumental in changing children's perceptions about the
causes of failure and success.

It is important to note that effort is not the sole factor for success. Strategy use is equally critical. Stipek (1993) has suggested that students find it discouraging to attribute their poor academic performance to lack of effort when, in fact, they expended much energy on the task. So, attributional retraining should also emphasize strategy use since success is a function of effort and strategy. When a student has studied very hard for a test, and still fails the test, it may mean that he or she did not apply the correct problem-solving strategy. Such a student needs change of strategy. When a teacher attributes a student’s poor academic performance to lack of effort and poor strategy, the teacher recognizes that the student has the potential to succeed, but needs more effort and use of the right strategy (Stipek, 1993).

Factors that Influence Attribution

Attributional patterns are believed to be mediated by variables such as gender, socio-economic status, (SES) and religiosity. Research suggests that females more often than males attribute their successes to external factors (eg., luck, and chance) and perceive themselves as lower in ability than males (Crandall, 1969; McMahon, 1971; Stipek & Deborah, 1984). They have low expectancy of success in a variety of
academic situations (Crandall, 1969). Perhaps, women's perceptions of their abilities are socially created. From birth, most females are socialized to be nurturant, caring, feminine, homemakers, and in some cultures dependent. Conversely, most males are socialized to be striving, achieving, masculine, and independent (Lefrancois, 1990; Woolfolk, 1990).

Some parents encourage exploration in boys to a greater degree than in girls. The toys parents buy for their children also reflect these differential socialization practices. The dolls, and cooking utensils often given to girls reinforce social expectations of child bearing and home-bound activities. Conversely, the toys bought for boys are things like trucks, hammers, guns, and airplanes. These toys foster imaginative play whereby children pretend to be drivers, or pilots. The buzzing sound they make while swinging their arms as they run around represent the noise of an airplane, or the exhaust of a car. It has been noted (Lefrancois, 1990) that imaginative play is cognitively stimulating. Girls, in general, do not engage as much as boys in imaginative play because the toys they play with do not facilitate this kind of play. Thus, socialization practices often embody sex-roles that define differential social expectations of both sexes. The greater participation of boys in play activities that stimulate cognitive development, and facilitate the acquisition of spatial skills may account, in part, for the
gender differences in math and related skills. It has been documented (Hackett & Betz, 1981) that preschool girls who played with blocks and other complex toys developed higher spatial skills than those who never played with these complex toys.

Many parents have differential academic expectations for their sons and daughters. Some parents believe that their daughters more than their sons have to work very hard to do well in math. Thus, these parents tend to ascribe their daughters' academic performance to hard work and their sons' to ability (Parsons, Adler, & Kaczala, 1982). Because children internalize their parents' beliefs and expectations, boys and girls view themselves as possessing differential potentials for success. Even in school, teachers reinforce these stereotypic beliefs by treating boys and girls differently. Not only do they interact more with boys (Jackson & Lahaderne, 1967), but they also praise them more often than girls. They give boys more academic help and encourage them to participate more actively in classroom discussions. Participation in classroom discussion facilitates academic performance, and interest in learning. These, in turn, foster positive attitude towards school (Myra & Sadker, 1985).

Again, it has been reported (Dweck, Davidson, & Enna, 1978; Stipek, 1984) that there are differences in the evaluative feedback boys and girls receive from teachers. Although teachers are more critical of boys, their criticisms
are not related to the boys' intellectual ability. The negative evaluations are often based on marginal issues such as not complying with the rules of form. Consequently, boys view these negative evaluations as peripheral and not of much consequence since their intellectual abilities are not being questioned. Conversely, the negative feedback girls receive from teachers are directly related to their intellectual failures, thus, pointing to their lack of ability. Whereas teachers emphasize motivation as a key to success for boys, they rarely do so for girls (Dweck et al., 1978).

The differential socialization practices of boys and girls by parents, and the differential teacher-student interactions may explain, at least partially, the differences in self-efficacy, and, consequently, attributional patterns of boys and girls. A preponderance of evidence (Miller, 1986; Stipek & Gralinski, 1991; Nicholls, 1979; Hackett & Campbell, 1987; Stipek, 1984; Dweck, Davidson, Nelson, & Enna, 1978) suggest that girls ascribe their failures to a lack of ability (internal attribution). Boys, relative to girls, are more likely to attribute failure to luck (external attribution), and success to ability (internal attribution). Attribution of failure to internal causes is debilitating and leads to learned helplessness which is an acknowledgment of low ability.

Perceptions and feelings of low ability among females are more prominent in those domains (e.g., mechanical, spatial,
mathematical) traditionally believed to be male domains. Empirical evidence abounds (Stipek, 1984; Ryckman & Peckham, 1987; Stipek & Gralinski, 1991) supporting the notion that females avoid mathematics because they feel incompetent in the subject. They are more likely to attribute failure in math test to a lack of ability and are less likely to believe that effort leads to success. Consequently, they have a stronger desire to avoid math. Surprisingly, when boys fail a spelling test (an area in which girls are believed to excel), they do not make the debilitating internal attributions that girls make when they fail a math test. Boys often attribute their failure on a spelling test to an unstable cause (eg., inadequate preparation, or bad mood) that is controllable. This kind of attribution does not affect self-esteem or the expectancy of success (Stipek, 1984). Although girls have more maladaptive attributional patterns in math than boys, they do not generalize these negative feelings to other areas such as language because they do not view their low ability to be cross-situational (Ryckman & Peckham, 1987). It should be noted that not all investigators have found gender differences in causal attributions. For instance, Berndt, Kaiser, & Berndt (1982) did not find sex differences in attributional patterns. Males and females did not show any variability in attributing causes to internal and stable factors.

The overall feeling of low ability among females is closely related to self-efficacy. Bandura (1977) has
maintained that whether or not successful performance on a task increases self-efficacy depends on whether the success was attributed to internal (e.g., ability, or effort) or external (e.g., luck, or task difficulty) factors. In academic situations, women, more than men, generally attribute their successes and failures to external factors such as luck (Hackett & Betz, 1981).

Self-efficacy also influences occupational choices. Discussing self-efficacy in career choice Hackett and Betz (1981) wrote:

If individuals lack expectations of personal efficacy in one or more career-related behavioral domains, behaviors critical to effective and satisfying choices, plans, and achievements are less likely to be initiated, and even if initiated, less likely to be sustained when obstacles or negative experiences are encountered. Research (Lee & Bobko, 1984) has supported Bandura’s claim that self-efficacy is a determining factor in initiating a goal-directed behavior, persistence on a goal, and overall performance. Boys, relative to girls, feel more efficacious in a variety of occupations probably because they are more likely to use ego-defensive attributions to mask their low ability (Miller, 1986). Women’s limited career options and their limited positions in the labor force have been attributed to their weak career-related self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, In Career Choice Development, 1982). While interest was the only
factor in career choice among men, both interest and self-efficacy were found to be significant considerations for women (Post-Kammer & Smith, 1986). There are four sources of information that can enhance self-efficacy if one is exposed to them, and it has been suggested (Hackett & Betz, 1981) that boys are differentially exposed to these sources of information.

The first source of information is performance accomplishment. Hackett & Betz (1981) argue that boys, more than girls, are exposed to a variety of experiences in various domains outside the home. The experiences girls are exposed to are focused on domestic activities. Trying out many skills and succeeding in some of them facilitates self-efficacy. The domestic activities girls are exposed to do not lead to the development of competence and consequent self-efficacy.

The second source of information that can increase self-efficacy is vicarious learning. Few women pursue non-traditional female occupations. As a result, girls do not have as many role models as boys in career-related domains. Besides, women are portrayed by the media and magazines as mothers or as engaging in traditional female occupations. In contrast, boys have more exposure to successful male models in career-related domains. The media, and magazines are full of male models who provide boys with vicarious learning experiences.

The third source of information relevant to the
development of self-efficacy is physiological arousal which leads to different levels of anxiety. High levels of anxiety decrease performance and self-efficacy. Since women consistently score higher than men on tests of anxiety (Lighthall & Waite, 1958), and since high levels of anxiety decrease performance, and, consequently, self-efficacy, it is to be expected that women, relative to men, will have lower perceptions of self-efficacy.

The fourth source of information that can enhance self-efficacy is verbal suggestion and encouragement from others. Betz & Hackett (1981) opine that boys more often than girls receive encouragement and affirmation from others especially those who have succeeded. Not only are girls not given as much encouragement as boys as they pursue their careers, girls are often discouraged from pursuing non-traditional female careers. Buttressing this argument, researchers (Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980) reported that some school counselors rated female clients with non-traditional career choices as having made inappropriate choices, because these occupational choices were considered incompatible with their roles as wives and mothers. These clients were recommended for psychotherapy. Some other guidance counselors discouraged academically strong girls from pursuing careers traditionally viewed as the prerogative of men.

In addition to gender, religious attitude also appears to influence attribution. It can be expected that deeply
religious people, especially those with little, or no education would exhibit an external control pattern as they are likely to believe that since God controls human destiny, they cannot influence the course of events. Lending credence to this view, Gabbard (1986) found that religious fundamentalists exhibited an external control pattern on a religious version of Rotter's (1966) locus of control scale. Similarly, Jahoda (1970) found a positive relationship between locus of control and beliefs in supernatural phenomena among male Ghanaian students. Externally controlled students were found to be favorably disposed to such beliefs. But other findings have been reported to the contrary. Fundamentalists were found to be more internal in their locus of control beliefs than their liberal counterparts (Furham, 1982). Also, God dependent people were found to be more internal than those who were not so dependent on God (Silvestri, 1979). It has also been documented that females are more religiously inclined than males (Allport, 1948; Poppleton & Pilkington, 1963; Sidney & Silverman, 1971). Since women are possibly more religiously disposed than men, and also more external in their attribution than men, it seems logical that there is a positive correlation between externality and religiosity among women. It may also mean that there is an interaction among gender, locus of control, and religiosity (Helode & Barlinge, 1984).

Socio-economic status (SES) is another variable that has
been found to influence attributional patterns. It is measured by a family's status in a community, and determined by the parents' income, occupation, and level of education (Eggen & Kauchak, 1992). It has been suggested (Eggen & Kauchak, 1992) that SES is a good predictor of academic achievement, and years in school. Drop-out rate tends to be higher among children from lower SES backgrounds (Eggen & Kauchak, 1992).

Related to SES are nutrition, and the quality of healthcare. These variables are believed to have some influence on learning outcomes. It has been found (Cattell, 1963) that poor nutrition affects fluid intelligence. Fluid intelligence is the ability to deal with abstractions and draw inferences. This kind of intelligence declines with age, and it is not believed to be directly related to formal education, or experiences. Rather, it is highly influenced by biological development (Lefrancois, 1990). Inadequate nutrition in the early years of life can adversely affect the normal, biological development of the central nervous system which, in turn, can lead to permanent learning deficits later in life, and, thereby, diminish the chances of success in school (Alwin & Thornton, 1984). Also related to SES is the quality of medical care. Lack of it may result in illnesses which can hamper learning. Unfortunately, many lower SES parents often do not have access to proper medical care of their children. Thus, there are differences in the quality of care parents from different SES levels provide for their children. In the
U.S., for instance, it was estimated that in 1965, a high SES mother invested about $8,528 on her preschool child, and a low SES mother, in the same year, spent $1,702 on her preschooler. The wide variation in the financial investment on the children would likely lead to a wide variation in the children's academic potentials (Walberg & Tsai, 1983).

It is recognized that background experiences students bring to school are influenced by SES. High SES parents are more likely to expose their children to educational experiences. They are more likely, especially in technologically developed countries, to take their children to the libraries, museums, zoos, planetariums, and parks than lower SES parents. Because they are generally more educated themselves, middle and high SES parents have books and magazines at home and children are exposed to these books. These parents encourage their children to cultivate reading and writing habits. Students who read more at home have been found to have a higher reading achievement scores in school (Anderson, Hilbert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985).

High SES parents also assist their children with home work assignments. Researchers (Walberg, Paschal, & Weinstein, 1985) have noted that the underpinning of school achievement is the "curriculum of the home." This curriculum comprises doing homework assignments, cordial parent-child interactions, and informed discussions of current affairs, reading, and participation in recreational activities. All these enhance
intellectual growth. These advantages provide children from high SES backgrounds differential academic experiences which, in turn, facilitate their school attendance and academic performance (Alwin & Thornton, 1984).

This differential edge of children from high SES backgrounds over children from low SES backgrounds Walberg (1991) called the "Matthew Effect." Walberg (1991) found that children who came to school with a good knowledge base resulting from previous preparation and experiences at home, learned at a faster rate than children not so advantaged. Children who scored higher in the early grades, also scored even higher in subsequent grades and the achievement gap widened consistently with each grade level (Walberg & Tsai, 1983). The result (the "Matthew Effect") is that the academically rich get richer. The "Matthew Effect" concept was derived from the biblical passage that says "for anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away" (Mt. 13:12). While all students may benefit from school learning, those students with previous academic advantages will benefit more. Complementing this assertion, researchers (Stevenson, Lee, & Stigler, 1986) documented that Japanese, U.S., and Taiwanese students performed equally well on a test in mathematics given to them at the start of school. But surprisingly, Asian students, each year, widened the gap of academic superiority over the U.S subjects. Their marginal
advantage over the U.S. subjects at the end of the first grade became much wider by the fifth grade. The worst Asian subjects performed better than the best American subjects in the study. Once again, the "Matthew Effect" notion might account for the differences between Asian and American students in the sample. Besides the rigorous curriculum and long hours at school, Asian students usually spend many hours at home studying, and their mothers often provide support and encouragement. So, the academic superiority of the Asian students may stem, in part, from their outstanding effort at home. It is likely that the long hours of study at home increased the knowledge base of the Asian subjects, and new knowledge is believed to be anchored on the existing knowledge base (Eggen & Kauchak, 1992). Whereas in the U.S. success is ascribed to ability, in Asia, success is attributed to effort (Walberg, Paschal, & Weinstein, 1985; Walberg, 1991).

High SES parents tend to be more eager for their children's education. Not only do they provide an academic climate at home, they are also more likely to send their children to good schools, or to schools that best meet the needs of their children. They are more likely to monitor their children's progress in school. In the case of poor academic performance or other related problems, high SES parents know the appropriate people to approach. Discussing matters affecting a student with the school personnel can have far-reaching effects on a students' academic career (Baker &
Also, high SES parents tend to be authoritative in their parenting style (Baumrind, 1973). Though controlling and firm in their disciplinary practices, these parents encourage independence, responsibility, self-control, and self-direction. They interact more with their children, explain ideas and events to them, and involve them in decision-making situations. Authoritative parents use indirect techniques in their parenting style. Rather than assert their status and power, these parents rely on reasoning and dialogue. Instead of making rules prohibiting bad behaviors, authoritative parents point out to their children the reasons for refraining from bad behavior (Hess & McDevitt, 1984). Appealing to a child’s reason implies a recognition of the child’s ability to learn. It is believed that the warm, supportive, and positive interaction of high SES parents with their children fosters an internal control pattern of behavior in the children (Katkovsky, Crandall, & Good, 1967; Clark Joe, 1971). Researchers (Franklin, 1963; Rotter & Battle, 1963) have found a significant relationship between high SES and internal locus of control.

In contrast, low SES parents are more likely to be authoritarian in their parenting style (Baumrind, 1973). They use direct techniques in disciplinary situations by asserting their authority. They are liberal with physical punishment, and scolding. In teaching situations, they may be inclined to
use commands (Hess & McDevitt, 1984). Because they are more concerned with obedience, they tend to "tell" rather than "explain" (Eggen & Kauchak, 1992). Since independence is not fostered, many children of authoritarian parents do not exhibit much initiative (Erikson, 1963) and do not take personal responsibility for their successes and failures (Crandall, Katkovsky, Crandall, 1965). Many of these children are withdrawn, lack confidence, and self-direction (Lefrancois, 1990). Their parents' domineering and authoritarian style of parenting promote externality in these children, and externals are often anxious and incapable of making constructive responses that will lead to desired academic outcomes. In fact, these children performed poorly on academic tasks (Tolor & Jalowiec, 1968; Clark Joe, 1971; Hess & McDevitt, 1984).

The overall effect is that these background experiences influence learning outcomes. They are the experiences children bring to school. Since most of us assume that new learning is anchored on existing knowledge base (prior knowledge), it follows that children from high SES will have an edge over children from low SES with respect to intellectual achievement. Researchers (Niles, 1985; Feather, 1986) have found a correlation between lower SES and lower achievement, and between higher SES and higher achievement.

The differences in academic performance between high SES and lower SES children may also be related to the children's
perceptions of sources of reinforcement. Since most higher SES children are more internal than lower SES children (Battle & Rotter, 1963; Misra & Misra, 1986; Gabbard et al., 1986; Butler, 1986), the higher SES children believe more in their ability to influence results. They show interest and persistence in academic pursuits, and, thus, excel academically (Crandall, Katkovsky, Crandall, 1965; Lefcourt 1966). Conversely, lower SES children tend to be academically weaker because one of the results of a deprived background is a feeling that one cannot influence outcomes. As a result, many children from lower SES are more externally controlled (Clark Joe, 1971). Note that it has been documented that learning skills are strongly related to locus of control (Lefcourt, 1966). But it is equally important to note that not all researchers have found a correlation between social class and locus of control. Gore & Rotter (1963) did not find significant social-class differences based on Rotter’s locus of control scale. Similarly, using the Warner Scale based on father’s occupation, Rotter (1966) did not find significant cognitive style differences between subjects from high and low SES groups.

Religious involvement has also been found to vary across SES levels. Lower SES members of Church groups tend to be consistently external in their attribution (Shrauger & Silverman, 1971). Just as lower SES groups are found to be consistent with respect to making external attributions
(Shrauger & Silverman, 1971), so do deeply religious people display externality (Lefcourt, 1976; Gurin, 1977; Gabbard et al., 1986). If a correlation exists between religiosity and locus of control (Gabbard et al., 1986), and if there is a relationship between SES and locus of control (Battle & Rotter, 1963) and the same correlation is found between religiosity and SES (Shrauger & Silverman, 1971), it follows that there is an interaction of the three variables in producing an individual's attributional path. The study to be described below was designed to address this hypothesis. An overall effort was made to document the influence of SES, gender, and urban/rural schools on causal attributions. These variables taken in combination are believed to influence academic achievement. Since these psychological constructs are believed to be universal, the knowledge base (existing literature) related to them are extended to the Nigerian subjects used in this study.
CHAPTER III

METHOD

HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were tested:

1. There will be no significant differences in attribution scores across urban and rural schools.

2. There will be no significant differences in attribution scores across SES levels.

3. There will be no significant differences in attribution scores across genders.

4. There will be no significant interaction effects among SES levels, urban/rural schools, gender, and attribution scores.

5. There will be no significant differences in religious views across subjects from urban and rural schools.

6. There will be no significant differences in religious views across SES levels.

7. There will be no significant differences in religious views across genders.

8. There will be no significant interaction effects among SES levels, urban/rural schools, gender, and religious views.

9. There will be no significant differences in locus of control scores across urban/rural schools.
10. There will be no significant differences in locus of control scores across SES levels.
11. There will be no significant differences in locus of control scores across genders.
12. There will be no significant interaction effects among gender, SES levels, urban/rural schools, and locus of control scores.

Sample

Subjects were drawn from four high schools located in urban and rural areas, but within the same geographical and linguistic area. One hundred subjects were drawn from two urban high schools largely attended by children from the middle class families. Ninety-six subjects came from two rural high schools mainly attended by children from lower SES. The rural schools, unlike the urban schools, are mostly commuter schools, thus, minimizing the cost of education as students do not have to pay for room and board.

The two selected urban high schools consisted of a girls’ high school, and a boys’ high school. Fifty-three subjects came from the girls’ high school, and forty-seven subjects came from the boys’ high school. The two schools in the rural area consisted of a boys’ high school and a girls’ high school. Forty-seven subjects were drawn from the boys’ high
school. All the subjects (urban and rural) were at the senior secondary level (i.e., they were close to graduation from high school). Given their advanced standing, it was assumed that they would have adequate comprehension to respond to the questionnaire items.

INSTRUMENTATION

Measure of Religious Views.

The Religion Scale questionnaire developed by Bardis (1961) was designed to measure the religious views of subjects by making direct statements that were related to religion, such as, "belief in God makes life more meaningful," "people should pray at least once a day," etc. The scale consists of twenty-five such statements and respondents are asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a five-point Likert scale.

Bardis Religion Scale was standardized after its validity and reliability were tested several times using subjects from various religious denominations. The average reliability of the instrument was reported to be .85 (.01 alpha). This scale constituted the first section of the questionnaire administered to the subjects in this study.
Measure of Attribution.

In measuring attribution, two instruments were used - the Locus of Control Questionnaire (Rotter 1966), and the Attributional Style Questionnaire (Peterson, Abramson, and Seligman 1982). The locus of control instrument measures internal and external locus of control. The items on this instrument are grouped in six categories (academic, social, affect, political, dominance, and philosophy of life) (Stipek 1993). This instrument which is designed using a forced-choice format consists of twenty-nine two-part statements (a & b). There are a total of fifty-two statements appearing on the instrument. For example:

1a. No matter how hard you try, some people just don't like you (externality).

b. People who can't get others to like them don't understand how to get along with others (internality).

2a. In the case of the well-prepared student, there is rarely, if ever, such a thing as a difficult exam (internality).

b. Many times exam questions tend not to be related to what the teacher taught in class, and that makes studying really useless (externality).
Each subject was required to circle the letter (either a or b) next to the statement that best suited his or her opinion. As indicated, for each item, one of the statements implies an internal locus of control orientation, and the other statement implies an external locus of control orientation. Rotter's locus of control instrument was the second section of the questionnaire administered to the subjects in this study.

The Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ) is a more technical and complex instrument. The scale consists of twenty-four main questions each of which has four subquestions (A-D). A hypothetical situation is described in the main statement and subjects are asked to imagine themselves in such a situation. In part A, they are asked to give the reason for the situation; in part B, they are asked to indicate on a 7-point Likert scale whether the cause of the situation described in the statement is due to them, or due to other people. In part C, they are required to indicate on a 7-point Likert scale whether the cause of the situation will be present again in the future. In part D (which reportedly assesses globality of the situation), they are asked to indicate on a 7-point Likert scale whether the cause is something that affects just this type of situation or whether it affects other areas of the subjects' lives. The ASQ was the third section of the questionnaire administered to the subjects used in this study.
PROCEDURE

STAGE ONE: Pilot Study.

Since the three instruments (Bardis Religion Scale, Rotter's I-E Scale, and the Attribution Style Questionnaire) were developed in the U.S., some of the items did not apply to the Nigerian culture from which the subjects were drawn. Such items were systematically deleted by the investigator in collaboration with the members of his dissertation committee. A pilot study was conducted in an effort to establish the reliability of the abridged instruments. This pilot study constituted stage one of the research project.

In the pilot study, forty-seven subjects were drawn from a boys' high school located in an urban area, and forty-nine subjects came from a girls' high school located in a rural area. The principals of the selected schools were consulted. They granted their permission to go forward with the study. The teachers whose classes were involved in the pilot study helped in working out the details for the administration of the pilot questionnaires.

Before the pilot questionnaires were administered, the purpose of the study was explained to the participants. An effort was made to explain the format of the questionnaire to
the participants and how to complete them. An effort was also made to guard against influencing their responses. Because the schools were not located in the same town, the questionnaires were administered to the two schools on different days, but the procedure was the same for both schools, though the time for the administration of the test varied since each school had its own schedule.

After the pilot study was completed, the data set was coded and tested for reliability. The analyses of the data set yielded a Cronbach alpha coefficient of .7687 (.01 alpha). Given this reliability estimate of the abridged instrument, the second phase of the study was then conducted.

**STAGE TWO:**

As noted earlier, in the main study, one hundred subjects were drawn from two urban high schools consisting of a girls' high school, and a boys' high school. There were fifty-three girls and forty-seven boys. Ninety-six subjects (forty-nine girls and forty-seven boys) came from rural high schools made up of a boys' high school, and a girls' high school. As in the pilot study, preliminary arrangements prior to collecting data were made which included consulting the principals of the schools and the teachers whose classes were to be studied. Again, questionnaires were not administered to all the
subjects on the same day since their schools were not close to one another. However, subjects from the schools in the same urban town were given the test on the same day but at different times. Before completing the questionnaires, instructions and explanations for the study were given to all the participants. They were told that the questionnaire was not an examination. Consequently, there were no right or wrong answers. They were instructed to respond to the items on the questionnaire individually and according to their feelings.

DESIGN AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data sets collected from one hundred and ninety-six respondents (one hundred and two girls and ninety-four boys) were analyzed using factorial analysis of variance (F-ANOVA) procedure to test for differences in the three dependent measures (attribution scores, religious attitude scores, and locus of control of scores) across SES levels, genders, and urban/rural school subjects. A $2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial analysis of variance was used because it allows us to examine simultaneously the effects of the three independent variables (SES, gender, urban/rural schools) on each of the dependent variables (attribution scores, locus of control scores, and religiosity scores). But more important, the power of factorial analysis of variance lies in its ability to examine
interactions among variables. For instance, if gender has an effect on religiosity, researchers would want to know whether another variable such as SES is also operating. Factorial analysis of variance will detect such interactions.

Also, a crosstabulation procedure was employed in the analyses of the results. This procedure provided a comparative analyses of the results by showing the percentages of the respondents on each of the dependent variables. The analytic paradigm used in this study is presented below.

ANALYTIC PARADIGM

SES

\begin{align*}
X_{1a} & \quad X_{2a} \\
X_{1c} & \quad X_{2c} \\
X_{1b} & \quad X_{2b}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
(\text{Urban}) \\
(\text{Rural})
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
Y_1 & \quad Y_3 \\
Y_1 & \quad Y_3
\end{align*}
where the independent variables = SES (X1a - X2a)

= Urban/Rural schools

(X1b - X2b)

= Gender (X1c - X2c)

dependent variables

= Y1 -- Attribution scores

= Y2 -- Religious view scores

= Y3 -- Locus of control scores
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Overview of Findings

As noted earlier, this investigation was designed to determine the attributional patterns of high school students in Nigeria. The main goals of the study were to determine whether these students were internally or externally controlled, to determine the degree of their religiosity, and to determine whether gender and SES influenced their attributional patterns. Rural and urban schools were compared with regard to locus of control and religiosity. The locus of control, and religiosity of both sexes were also compared. The dependent variables were locus of control, religiosity, and attribution scores. The independent variables were SES, gender, and type of school (urban or rural).

The minimum score on Rotter's Locus of Control I-E Scale is 21. The maximum score is 42. On Bardis' Religion Scale, the scores range from 13 - 65. The minimum score on each dimension of the ASQ is 13 and the maximum is 84. Factorial analysis of variance (F-ANOVA) procedures were used to test the twelve null hypotheses. The mean scores and standard deviations of the urban and rural schools are shown in Table 2. The mean scores and standard deviations of males and females are presented in Table 3.
Table 2

Means and standard deviations of the urban and rural schools on the Religion scale, Locus of control Scale, and Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>Urban School</th>
<th>Rural School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>MEAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASQ (I-E)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASQ (S-I)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASQ (G-S)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appearing in Figure 1 is a graph depicting the mean scores of the urban and rural school subjects' performance on the Religion scale, Locus of Control scale, and Attribution Style Questionnaire.

Figure 2 is a bar chart variation of Figure 1.
Fig. 1 Comparative graph of the Mean Scores across Urban/Rural Sch. Subjects
Fig. 2 Comparative bar chart of the Means across Urban/Rural Sch. Subjects
Means and standard deviations of males and females on the Religion scale, Locus of control scale, and the Attributional Style Questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>MALES</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>MEANS</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>MEANS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>5.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASQ (I-E)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASQ (S-I)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASQ (G-S)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appearing in Figure 3 is a graph of the mean scores of male and female subjects’ performance on the Religion scale, Locus of Control scale, and Attribution Style Questionnaire. Figure 4 is a bar chart version of Figure 3.
Fig. 3 Comparative graph of the Mean Scores of male/female Subjects.
Fig. 4 Comparative bar chart of the Mean Scores of male/female Subjects.
While the subjects from urban schools represented the middle class (high SES), those from the rural schools represented the lower class (low SES). As can be seen from Table 2, the subjects from rural schools (low SES), tended to be more religious with a mean score of 52.1 compared to the urban subjects with a mean score of 50.9. They also appeared to be more externally controlled with a mean score of 32.7 as opposed to 31.9 for the urban subjects. In addition, the rural school subjects tended to view negative events as stable (i.e., not changeable over time) to a greater degree than the urban school subjects. In other words, they viewed their problems as enduring. Subjects from the urban schools (high SES) tended to be more externally controlled on the ASQ (I-E dimension) than the subjects from the rural schools. They also appeared more than rural subjects to view negative events as specific rather than global.

Gender differences in religious orientation, locus of control, and attributional style as presented in Table 3, indicated that males (mean = 51.9) and females (mean 51.4) were equally religious. But interestingly, males tended to be more externally controlled (on Rotter's I-E scale) with a mean score of 32.9 compared to 31.9 for the female subjects. But on the Internality/Externality dimension of the ASQ, males were found to be more external. Their mean score of 55.4 was significantly higher than that of the females 51.2. On the stability and globality dimensions of the ASQ, males, more
than females, perceived negative events as stable and specific. In other words, males did not view these negative events as generalizing across situations. However, these negative events were perceived as being persistent. In what follows, the specific findings related to testing each of the twelve null hypotheses is presented.

**Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis One.**

The first null hypothesis states that there will be no significant differences in attribution scores across urban and rural schools. This null hypothesis was designed to determine whether there were differences between urban school subjects (high SES) and rural school subjects (low SES) in their attribution of causes of success or failure to internal or external factors, their perceptions of negative events as stable or changeable, and whether these problems were specific or global. The analyses of the results partially supported the rejection of this null hypothesis. The results showed no significant differences in attribution scores (on I-E dimension of the ASQ) across schools ($F=1.80=4.00$, $p<.35$). Since the $F$ value ($p<.35$) on this dimension of the ASQ is greater than $p<.05$, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Although the $F$-ANOVA results showed no statistically significant differences between the urban and rural schools
(high and low SES), on the I-E dimension of the ASQ, it is important to note that subjects in both settings were extensively externally controlled as the analyses of crosstabs results showed. However, urban students (high SES) were found to be more internal 34.2% than rural students (31.8%) who represented low SES. These results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Crosstabs Percentages on Attributional Style Questionnaire (I-E dimension)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable (Schools)</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>34.2% 65.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>31.8% 68.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Again, no significant differences were found (on the globality /specificity dimension of the ASQ) across schools ($F=4$ $p<.43$). This means that urban and rural school subjects are not significantly different in their perceptions of negative events as affecting other situations of their lives. Problems were perceived as specific to the situation. As evident in the crosstabs analyses presented in Table 4, the majority of the subjects from rural and urban schools perceived negative events as specific to the situation. A small percentage in both school settings perceived negative events as generalizing to other areas of their lives. It is interesting to note that more rural school subjects (11.1%) perceived negative events as global as opposed to 8.1% of urban school subjects who viewed these events as global.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(School)</td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

Crosstabs percentages on Attributional Style Questionnaire (Globality/Specificity dimension)
Significant differences, however, existed in the stability/changeability dimension of the ASQ. Given the value of \((F=1.77=3.92, p<.02)\), the null hypothesis related to this variable was rejected. The variability is evident in the mean scores of the two groups (urban 37.1, rural 43.3). Also, the analyses of the results of the crosstabs procedure reinforced the differences. As shown in Table 6, rural subjects were higher (10.6\%) than their urban counterparts in their perception of negative events as stable. They were also lower (89.4\%) than urban subjects (93.8\%) in their perception of negative events as unstable. Conversely, urban subjects were more likely than rural subjects to view failures and problems as unstable even though the majority of the subjects in both settings perceived events events as unstable. Essentially, the majority of the subjects were more likely to devise strategies to solve their problems or avert failures in the future.

Table 6
Crosstabs Percentages on Attributional Style Questionnaire (S-I dimension)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable (Schools)</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Two

The second null hypothesis states that there will be no significant differences in attribution scores across SES levels. Significant differences ($F=1.77 = 3.92, p<.02$) were found on the stability dimension of the ASQ across the SES levels. However, the other attribution scores were not found to differ significantly across SES levels. These findings are presented in Table 2. Given these findings, null hypothesis two is only partially rejected.

Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Three.

The third null hypothesis states that there will be no significant differences in attribution scores across genders. This null hypothesis was designed to determine whether males were different from females in their ascription of causes to either internal or external causes as measured by the ASQ. It also tested for differences in the perceptions of both genders with regard to stability and globality of negative events. The results yielded significant differences in the Internality/Externality dimension ($F=1, 80 = 4.00, p<.006$) across genders. The analyses of the crosstabs results highlighted these differences. As evident in Table 7, even
though both sexes were highly external, males were higher in attributing negative events to external causes, and females were higher in attributing negative events to internal factors. So, while males were more external than females in causal attribution of negative events, females were more internal in causal attribution of negative events.

Table 7

Crosstabs Percentages on Attributional Style Questionnaire (I-E dimension).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Gender)</td>
<td>Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, significant differences (F=1, 77 = 3.92, p<.003) existed in the stability/changeability dimension. With a mean score of 45.2, males were significantly different from females with a mean score of 36.9 (Table 3). The differences
in the mean scores suggest that males, more than females, tended to perceive negative events as stable, and, therefore, unchangeable.

It should be noted that no statistically significant differences \( F=1.80=4.00, p<.80 \) were found in the globality/specificity dimension. However, the analyses of the crosstabs results (Table 8) indicated that both sexes perceived negative events as specific rather than global. But females (93.6%) more than males (85.7%) tended to view negative events as situationally specific. Taken as a whole, these findings provide only partial support for the rejection of null hypothesis three.

Table 8

Crosstabs percentages on Attributional Style Questionnaire (G-S dimension).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable (Gender)</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14.3% 85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6.4% 93.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Four

The fourth null hypothesis was rejected. It states that there will be no significant interaction effects among schools, genders, and attribution scores. The analyses of the results showed significant interaction effects ($F=3.91$ $p<.03$) among the variables on the stability/changeability dimension of the attribution scores. In other words, attribution scores (on S-I dimension) were influenced differentially by gender and SES. Figure 5 provides a graphic representation of the interaction effects.

Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Five.

The fifth null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant differences in religious views across subjects from urban and rural schools was not rejected. This null hypothesis was designed to determine the degree of religiosity of urban school subjects (high SES) compared to rural school subjects (low SES), and to test whether religiosity influences attributional patterns. The analyses of the results showed no significant differences in the religious views across schools. Given an $F$ value of 4.00 ($p<.31$), the null was not rejected.
Fig. 5 Graph of the Interactions of Gender and SES on the S-I dimension.

- Male
- Female
The means and standard deviations of the two groups are reported in Table 2.

It is important to note that although no significant differences existed in the religious views of the subjects across the school settings, the analyses of the crosstabs results (Table 9) showed that subjects from rural schools (low SES) were higher (56%) than the subjects from urban school (42.9%) with respect to their religious orientation scores. In other words, rural school subjects (low SES) tended to be somewhat more religious than their urban school (high SES) counterparts.

Table 9

Crosstabs Percentages of Urban and Rural Schools on Religion Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable (School)</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Six

The sixth null hypothesis states that there will be no significant differences in religious views across SES levels. The analyses of the results did not support the rejection of this hypothesis. No significant differences ($F = 4.00, p < .31$) were found between the urban and rural school subjects, who represented high and low SES levels.

Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Seven

The analyses of the results did not support the rejection of the seventh null hypothesis which stated that there would be no significant differences in religious views across genders. This null hypothesis was designed to determine whether differences existed between males and females, and whether these differences influenced their patterns of attributions. No significant differences in religious views were found to exist between males and females in the study ($F = 1, 72 = 3.91, p < .60$). The means and standard deviations for religious views across genders are reported in Table 3.

Although the means (males = 51.9, females = 51.4) of the two groups were almost the same, analyses of crosstabs results showed that males tended to be more religious (53.8%) than
females (47.8%). Table 10 presents the results of crosstabs results of religious views.

Table 10

Crosstabs Percentages of Male and Female Subjects on Religious Views.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Gender)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>High 53.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low 46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>High 47.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low 52.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Eight

The eighth null hypothesis states that there will be no significant interaction effects among SES levels, schools, genders, and religious views. This null hypothesis was not rejected given the F value of 4.00 (p<.55). This means that gender, SES levels, and school did not have any differential effect on religious attitudes.

Results Related to Testing Null Hypotheses Nine and Ten.

The ninth null hypothesis which states that there will be no significant differences in locus of control scores across schools was not rejected. The analyses of the results indicated that no significant differences (F=1.93 = 3.92, p<.10) existed in the locus of control scores between the two groups from urban and rural schools.

Consequently, no significant differences in locus of control scores existed across SES levels (null hypothesis ten) since urban and rural schools reflected differences in SES. But the analyses of the Crosstabs results showed that although
there were no significant differences in the locus of control scores between subjects from rural (low SES) and urban (high SES) schools, the rural school subjects were more external than urban school subjects. As shown in Table 11, all the subjects (100%) from the rural schools were externally controlled, as opposed to 95.6% of subjects from the urban schools. Whereas 4.4% of subjects from the urban school (high SES) were internally controlled, no subject from the rural school (low SES) was found to be internally controlled.

Table 11

Crosstabs Results of Urban and Rural Schools on Locus of Control Scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Percentage Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(School)</td>
<td>Internal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Eleven**

This null hypothesis was rejected. It was hypothesized that there would be no significant differences in locus of control scores across genders. The analyses of the results indicated that significant differences existed ($F=1.93 = 3.92$, $p<.03$) between the sexes. It showed that males were, again, more external than females in making causal attributions. The summary of the means and standard deviations of locus of control by sex are reported in Table 3.

**Results Related to Testing Null Hypothesis Twelve.**

The twelfth null hypothesis states that there will be no significant interaction effects among genders, SES levels, urban/rural schools, and locus of control scores. The analyses of the results did not support the rejection of this null hypothesis. There were no significant interaction effects among the variables. Given an F value of 3.93 ($p<.12$), the null was not rejected. Schools, SES levels, and genders did not have a differential effect on the subjects' locus of control scores.
As noted earlier, this investigation was designed to determine the extent to which a sample of Nigerian students are internally or externally controlled, and to what extent SES, gender and religiosity influenced their attributional patterns. This final chapter consists of a discussion of the results related to each of the twelve null hypotheses tested. Overall, an attempt is made here to integrate the findings of this study with those reported in chapter II. Suggestions for future research are also presented.

**Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis One.**

As indicated in chapter 4, the statistical analyses of the results related to testing this null hypothesis showed no significant differences ($F=4.00$, $p<.35$) in attribution scores across urban (high SES) and rural (low SES) school subjects on the Internality/Externality (I-E), and globality/specificity (G-S) dimensions of the ASQ. While the mean score for the urban subjects (high SES) on I-E dimension was 55.0, the mean score for rural subjects (low SES) was 52.45. The mean score difference of 2.55 was not found to be statistically
significant.

An examination of the analyses of crosstabs results showed that urban subjects were slightly more internally controlled (43.2%) than their counterparts in rural schools (31.8%). Although the mean scores and crosstabs results indicated that urban school subjects (high SES) had an edge over rural school subjects (low SES) in being more internally controlled, it is important to note that both urban and rural school subjects were substantially externally controlled as indicated in the analyses of the crosstabs results (see Table 4). While 65.8% of urban school subjects were externally controlled, 68.2% of rural subjects were also found to be externally controlled. Of the nominal number of subjects in both school settings that were internally controlled, 34.2% were urban and 31.8% rural. Urban subjects were slightly more internal (2%) than rural subjects lending statistical support to the mean difference of 2.55. But these differences were not found to be statistically significant.

A possible explanation for lack of statistically significant differences is that the subjects are more homogenous than expected, even though they were drawn from different schools. These schools (both rural and urban) are located in the same geographical area and they are only a few kilometers apart. Also, they are both public schools. It is possible that even though the subjects differed with respect to their SES levels, that the academic climate and overall
school life are almost the same across the two schools.

However, it is gratifying to find that most subjects from rural and urban schools made external attributions to negative events. It indicates that they are probably not depressed since it is only the depressed students who reportedly attribute negative events to internal factors (Seligman, Semmel, Baeyer, 1985). The results also complemented other research findings (Frieze & Weiner, 1971; Falbo & Beck, 1979) supporting the notion that people often attribute negative outcomes and failures to external causes, and positive events to internal factors.

On the globality/specificity dimension, an examination of the statistical analyses of the results showed no significant differences between the urban and rural subjects (F=4, p<.43). The mean score for urban subjects, however, is higher (44.18) than that of the rural subjects (41.95). The analyses of the results of the crosstabs procedure documented significant mean score differences. As indicated in Table 5, both urban and rural subjects viewed their failures or negative outcomes as situational rather than global (ie., affecting all other areas of endeavor). Although both urban and rural subjects were high in their perceptions of negative events as specific, urban subjects were found to be higher (91.9%) than rural subjects (88.9%). The majority of the few subjects who viewed problems as global came from rural schools (11.1%) as opposed to 8.1% of those coming from urban schools.
Perception of failure or negative event as being situationally specific appears to be a positive finding in that it does not promote the notion that failure is likely to occur in other areas (expectancy). Therefore, failure seen as limited to one area will not diminish expectancy of successs in other areas. Overall, it is encouraging that the results showed that the majority of the subjects viewed negative outcomes as specific. Attribution is dysfunctional when failure or negative events are perceived as global (Weiner 1986).

Although no significant differences existed on the I-E and G-S dimensions of the ASQ, statistical analyses of the results showed that significant differences ($F=3.92 \ p<.02$) existed on the stability dimension of the ASQ. As indicated in Table 2, the mean score for urban subjects on this dimension was 37.06 compared to 43.29 for rural subjects. This means that the rural subjects (low SES), more than urban subjects (high SES), attributed causes to stable factors. They tended to perceive negative outcomes as unchangeable over time. Consequently, they appeared not to be in control of events. The analyses of the results of the crosstabs procedure lent statistical support to the differences in the mean scores. It showed that the rural subjects (low SES) were higher (10.6%) than the urban subjects (6.3%) in attributing causes to stable factors. Urban subjects were higher (93.8%) than the rural subjects (89.4%) in ascribing causes to unstable or
changeable factors (see Table 6). But, in general, subjects from both SES groups were substantially high in attributing causes to unstable factors. Again, this is an adaptive attribution. It does not lead to helplessness (Seligman, 1975). Rather, it is a realization that outcomes are indeed under one's volitional control (Weiner 1986).

Taken together, the results on the ASQ showed that the majority of the subjects in both school settings were high in attributing negative events to external causes. They perceived these bad events as specific rather than global, and ascribed causes to unstable factors.

Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Two

An examination of the results of the statistical analyses related to this hypothesis indicated that there were no significant differences across SES groups. It was not a surprise that no significant differences were found between high and low SES groups since no significant differences were found between urban and rural schools which were assumed to reflect differences in SES levels. That significant differences did not exist could be attributed to the prevailing economic depression. The economic hard times are harshly affecting people at all levels. In this sense, the subjects were more homogenous in economic circumstances than
originally expected. Homogeneity has probably confounded finding significant differences across groups.

However, as previously indicated, rural subjects (low SES) tended to attribute causes of negative events to stable factors (eg., ability) more than urban subjects (high SES). This is consistent with other empirical evidence (Battle & Rotter, 1963; Misra & Misra, 1986) that high SES groups are more internally controlled than low SES group. They are more likely to view ability as incremental; consequently, they believe that they can control outcomes.

On the stability dimension, the statistical analyses of the results showed that high and low SES groups were significantly different (F=3.92, p<.02) in their attribution of causes to either stable or unstable factors. Lower SES subjects more than high SES subjects attributed causes to stable factors, thus, heightening the belief that they were not in control of outcomes. High SES subjects were higher in their attribution of causes to unstable factors.

Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Three

The statistical analyses related to testing this null hypothesis showed that there were significant differences (F=4, p<.006) on the I-E dimension of the ASQ across genders.
As evident in Table 3, the mean score for males is higher (55.4) than that of females (51.2). This difference of 4.2 is statistically significant. This finding means that while more males made external attributions of negative events, more females attributed negative events to internal causes.

A statistical analyses of the results of the crosstabs procedure showed (see Table 7) that the males (77.1%) were more external than the females (59.6%) in attribution of causes, even though both sexes were highly external on this dimension of the ASQ. Further analyses of the results (crosstabs) indicated that of the few subjects who made internal attributions, 40.4% were female, and 22.9% male (see Table 7). This finding provides empirical support to other findings (Fitch, 1970; Frieze and Weiner, 1971; Kukla, 1972; DeBoer, 1985) supporting the notion that people attribute negative events to external factors, and positive events to internal causes. Since all the events contained in the original version of the ASQ used in this study were negative, the majority of the subjects, males and females alike, made external attributions. However, it is interesting to note that females appeared to be higher in attributing negative events and failures to internal causes. This complements other empirical evidence (McMahon, 1971) indicating that females, relative to males, consider themselves lower in ability to influence outcomes.

Again, statistical analyses of the results related to
testing this null hypothesis did not show any significant differences (F=4 p<.80) between the sexes in the globality dimension of the ASQ. Their mean scores (male=43.37, female=42.65) did not show much variability between the two groups. But males, more than females, tended to view negative events as global. This finding was given further support by the statistical analyses of crosstabs results on the same dimension of the ASQ (see Table 8). This analysis showed that a high percentage of both sexes (males = 85.7%, females = 93.6%) perceived negative events as specific to a given situation. But males constituted a majority of the small number of subjects who perceived these negative events as global.

Once again, it is heartening to note that the majority of the respondents viewed negative events as specific. This appears to be an adaptive attribution. It suggests that these negative events do not interfere with their endeavors in other areas of life. Failure in one aspect of life does not necessarily suggest failure in other areas as well. Attribution of causes to specific factors make students expect this cause to be present in a similar test situation, but not in a dissimilar situation (Alloy, Peterson, Abramson, & Seligman, 1984). Global attribution of causes leads to wider generalization of helplessness across situations. This may give rise to permanent helplessness deficits (Forsterling, 1985).
With respect to the stability dimension of the ASQ, statistical analyses of the results showed significant differences (F=3.92, p<.003) between the sexes. With a mean score of 45.18 for males compared to a mean score of 36.88 for females, it seems as though males are more likely to attribute causes to stable factors. The analyses of the results of crosstabs procedure related to testing this null hypothesis showed that only a small percentage (17.9%) of both sexes made attributions to stable factors (eg., lack of ability). Of this percentage, males represented the majority (10.8%). Males constituted 89.2% and females 92.9% of the vast majority of subjects who attributed causes to unstable factors (eg., effort). This indicates that more females made attributions to unstable causes.

In sum, the results related to the three dimensions of the ASQ (internality/externality, stability/changeability, globality/specificity) showed that although there were no significant differences between the sexes on the I-E dimension, males were found to be more external than females, they also tended to view problems as being more global than females on the G-S dimension, and they made more attributions of causes to stable factors on the S-I dimension.

While it is positive that the majority of the subjects (males and females), viewed negative events as specific rather than global, it is particularly discouraging that some subjects, though few, considered negative events as
generalizing to other areas of life (global). This concern is heightened when it is realized that the male subjects constituted the majority of the few, responding in the negative manner described above, and that these male subjects were drawn from a culture where males are expected to be striving, achieving, and successful. It is to be remembered that when negative outcomes are ascribed to stable factors, and when these negative events are perceived as affecting other areas of life (global), it is then that helplessness (Seligman, 1975), depression, and alienation (Seeman, 1964) are engendered.

**Discussion Related to Null hypothesis Four**

The statistical analyses of the results related to testing this null hypothesis indicated that there was a significant interaction effect ($p<.03$) among genders, SES levels, schools, and attribution scores on the stability dimension of the ASQ.

As shown in Fig. 5, the interaction is disordinal. This means that there is a relationship between SES and attribution scores on the S-I dimension. But this relationship depends on gender. Low SES males more than high SES males attributed causes to stable factors. But females in both SES levels were
almost similar in their attribution of causes to stable factors. It is interesting to note that high SES females relative to high SES males were more likely to attribute causes to stable factors. Low SES males (rural school male subjects) were more likely to perceive causes as stable. It is also important to point out that rural school subjects (both males and females) were higher than their urban school counterparts in attributing causes to stable factors. This finding is consistent with other findings (Shrauger & Silverman, 1971) that low SES groups are not only externally controlled, but they also perceive negative events as stable since they tend to lack confidence to deal with problems.

Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Five.

Results of the statistical analyses related to testing this null hypothesis showed that there were no significant differences (F=4 p<.31) between urban and rural school subjects with regard to their religious views. Their mean scores (50.9 and 52.1 respectively) were not found to be statistically different. In hindsight, it is not a great surprise that significant differences did not exist between the schools in the two settings because all schools are open to religious ministers to give moral instruction to students on a weekly basis. In addition, liturgical services are held
in both school settings on a regular basis.

However, analyses of the results of crosstabs procedure showed that rural school subjects were more religiously inclined (56%) than urban school subjects (43%). A plausible explanation for this higher inclination of rural subjects towards religion is that rural school subjects are mainly commuter students. Since they are not restricted by school regulations outside school hours, they have more freedom to participate in religious activities in their churches. In contrast, students in dormitories usually do not have the freedom to leave the school premises at will.

Also, since rural school students commute to school, they are constantly under the supervision, and direct influence of their parents. In most instances, parental expectations include Church attendance. So, parents exert a tremendous influence on these students. Conversely, many students in urban schools live in dormitories, and to a large extent, they are comparatively independent of their parents when they are at school. Though school regulation may require students to attend liturgical services on Sundays, not all of them may abide by that regulation. Consequently, participation in Church activities becomes a function of individual convictions, convenience, and upbringing. Because they are not under the direct influence of their parents when at school, it is recognized that some urban students may tend to be lackadaisical with respect to religious matters.
Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Six.

Since urban and rural schools are assumed to represent high and low SES groups, it can be concluded that no statistically significant differences (F=4, p<.31) existed between the high and low SES groups. But as already indicated, the analyses of the results of crosstabs (see Table 9) showed that rural subjects (low SES) tended to be more religiously inclined than the urban school subjects (high SES). It is not a surprise, therefore, that rural school subjects were found to be more externally controlled on the I-E dimension (see Table 4) of the ASQ since deeply religious people are generally believed to be more externally controlled (LefCourt, 1976; Gurin, 1977; Gabbard et al., 1986).

Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Seven

An examination of the statistical analyses of the results related to testing the seventh null hypotheses indicated that there were no significant differences between males and females in their religious attitudes. As indicated in Table 3, the mean scores for both sexes were almost the same ($\bar{X} = 51.9$, and $\bar{X} = 51.4$). A possible reason for this similarity is that boys are as much involved in religious activities as girls, and sometimes more involved as there are more social
activities for boys within the church. Although devotional activities (such as devotion to the Saints), are open to both men and women, women appear to be more inclined to these devotional activities. Males are attracted more to social activities within the church, such as boy scouts, soccer clubs, music and dancing groups. This is consistent with previous research findings (Shrauger & Silverman, 1971) supporting the notion that males and females not only attend to different aspects of religious teachings, but also are involved in religious activities for different reasons. While women appear to focus on religious activities that emphasize moral rectitude so as to achieve desirable ends and avoid punishment, men tend to tilt towards the external forces as determiners of outcomes.

Although there were no differences in the mean scores of both groups, as indicated in Table 3, statistical analyses of the crosstabs results showed that a higher percentage of males (54%) were more religious than females (48%). This finding is inconsistent with other empirical evidence (Allport, 1948; Poppleton & Pilkington, 1963) that indicates that females are more religiously inclined than males. Before any conclusion is made on the basis of this finding, it is important to consider the ages of the subjects. Perhaps, the previous studies focused on College students, and middle-aged adults. Age and level of education have been found to influence religious attitudes (Fowler, 1981).
The subjects in this study were high school students most of whom were probably still grappling with an identity crisis. Though in school, many of them were still trying to define who they were and what they would want to become. It is likely that some of them must have attained the identity status of foreclosure (Marcia, 1980) whereby a choice of career has been made by their parents or guardians. But others might still be in the identity status of moratorium (Marcia, 1980). In this identity status, adolescents are in a real crisis as they re-examine, and re-evaluate their values and goals. As they struggle to resolve their identity crisis, adolescents engage in roles that will give them a sense of who they are, and define their role in society. Many of them find such roles in Church activities; they find fulfillment in active participation in religious activities. Perhaps, a clearer picture of religious orientation of both sexes can be obtained in the later stages of life, such as during the age 30 transition (Levinson, 1978). It is during this stage that life is taken more seriously. It is assumed that identity crisis should have been resolved by this time, parental influence significantly diminished, and that individuals act on their personal, well-developed convictions.
Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Eight.

The statistical analysis of the results related to testing this hypothesis showed that there were no significant interaction effects among SES, schools, genders, and religious views. This means that these variables did not differentially affect religious attitudes of the participants.

Discussion Related to Null Hypotheses Nine and Ten

The statistical analyses of the results related to testing null hypotheses nine and ten did not show any significant differences \((F=3.92, \ p<.10)\) between urban and rural school subjects. Since the schools in the two settings were assumed to reflect differences in SES, it follows that no significant differences existed between high and low SES groups regarding locus of control. This result buttresses the findings of other researchers. In one study, Rotter (1966) administered the Warner Scale which was based on the father’s occupation to a sample of elementary Psychology students. Respondents did not show significant social-class differences. Similarly, Gore & Rotter (1963) failed to find significant differences in locus of control scores among subjects from different SES levels. Once again, it is possible that
significant differences were not found between the two SES levels in this study because of the homogeneity of subjects across groups. Subjects were drawn from a small geographical area with many similarities with respect to educational, and overall economic conditions. If subjects had been drawn from a wider, and more diverse area, perhaps, differences could have been found. For instance, in a nationally stratified sample of 1000 subjects, Franklin (1963) recorded significant differences between high and low SES groups, and found a strong relationship between high SES and internality.

However, analyses of the results of crosstabs statistics (see Table 11) showed that although subjects from the urban and rural schools were highly externally controlled, rural school subjects (low SES) tended to be more external (100%) than urban school subjects (high SES). Ninety-six percent of urban school subjects were externally controlled. This result means that whereas 4.4% of urban school subjects (high SES) were internally controlled, zero percent of the rural school subjects (low SES) were internally controlled.

Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Eleven

An examination of the statistical analyses of the results related to testing null hypothesis eleven indicated that statistically significant differences ($F=4$, $p<.03$)
existed in locus of control scores across genders. Further analyses revealed that although both sexes were substantially externally controlled, males were more external. That is to say that males had higher mean scores (see Table 3).

Lending credence to this result, the analyses of crosstabs results showed that 100% of males were externally controlled as opposed to 96.4% of females. These results are consistent with the results related to testing null hypothesis seven which showed that males were slightly more religious than females. Researchers (LefCourt, 1976; Gabbard et al., 1986) have found a correlation between religiosity and externality. It is particularly interesting to note that males are more externally controlled than females. This finding is not consistent with other empirical evidence (Simon & Feather, 1973) that supported the notion that females are more externally controlled than males.

A cultural interpretation of this finding is that Nigerian females are apparently challenging the status quo whereby they are expected to be loyal, and dependent. The preponderance of women in the schools is an indication that the stereotype is crumbling and that times are changing. The finding that females in this study appear to be more internally controlled than males, also indicates that women in this study perceive themselves as controlling the events of their lives. They are increasingly becoming less dependent. They are assuming more responsibility in directing the course of their lives. This
finding is consistent with the current trend among Nigerian women. Other researchers (Simon & Feather, 1973) have given a similar sex-role interpretation in accounting for externality in women. But McMahon (1970) did not find sex differences in attribution of success to luck (external attribution). Rather, she found a significant sex differences in attribution of success to ability. She opined that females were less likely to attribute success to ability because of the devalued self-perception of women which stems from conformity to differential social norms.

Discussion Related to Null Hypothesis Twelve

The statistical analyses of the results related to testing this null hypothesis showed that there were no significant interaction effects (p<.12) among SES, schools, genders, and locus of control. These variables did not differentially influence locus of control.
Summary

Overall, the results of this study showed that most of the subjects were highly externally controlled, and very religiously inclined. The high degree of religiosity of the subjects provides additional empirical support that religiosity correlates with locus of control (Helode & Barlinge, 1984).

As indicated in the preceding chapters, attribution of causes to external factors (on Rotter's I-E scale) sometimes has unsavory concomitants. It can promote feelings of helplessness, powerlessness, and alienation (Seligman, 1975, Seeman, 1964). But students also use external attributions as a defense mechanism. They attribute failures to external factors to preserve their self-esteem. This ego-enhancing attribution is employed when self-esteem is threatened. The motivational explanation for this kind of attribution is that people blame their failures on external causes because they want to protect their ego (Wong & Weiner, 1981; Falbo & Beck, 1979). This ego defensive attribution is stronger in real life situations particularly in achievement-oriented situations such as examinations (Simon & Feather, 1973).

The subjects in this study were equally high in attributing causes to unstable factors (e.g., effort). A significant number of subjects attributed negative outcomes to unstable factors. This kind of attribution suggests that with
unstable factors. This kind of attribution suggests that with effort and assiduity, outcomes can be influenced. This is a functional attribution. It is only when causes are ascribed to internal, stable, and uncontrollable factors that attribution becomes dysfunctional and debilitating.

However, the results of this study point to the need for some attributional retraining which consists of teaching students that their failures can be attributed to lack of effort, an internal, unstable, and controllable factor (Forsterling, 1985). It is important that students perceive themselves as determiners of outcomes, and, therefore, take responsibility for their actions. They can be encouraged to take credit for their achievements, and assume responsibility for their failures. This approach to life can contribute to feelings that they can influence outcomes especially in the area of learning.

The need for attributional retraining is underscored by the participants' response to the following items on Rotter's Scale that dealt with academic performance.

a. In the case of the well-prepared students, there is rarely, if ever, such a thing as a difficult exam.

b. Many times exam questions tend not to be related to what the teacher taught in class, and that makes studying really useless.

Subjects who chose the first statement were considered to be internally controlled while subjects who chose the second
statement were considered to be externally controlled. A frequency analyses of this item indicated that of the 112 subjects who responded to the item, 46 (41.1%) chose the first statement, and 66 (58.9%) chose the second. This shows that more than half of the subjects were externally controlled on this item, thus, supporting the overall results of this study that the majority of the subjects were externally controlled even in academic matters. With some attributional retraining, the students would develop more self-efficacy which is considered to be a bedrock for the development of motivation. Attribution retraining is a cognitive approach to enhancing achievement motivation. It would provide a significant practical tool to change achievement striving (Zoeller & Mahoney, 1983).

Researchers (Forsterling, 1985; Fowler & Peterson, 1981; Andrews & Debus, 1978) have found that attributional retraining not only increased persistence on learning tasks, but it also enhanced academic performance. It is recommended that teachers and parents attempt to alter attributions from stable factors (eg., low ability) to unstable factors (eg., lack of effort). "I cannot" statements which connote lack of ability ought to be changed to "I can" statements. "I can" beliefs imply controllability, and that failure is due to insufficient effort and not lack of ability (Gatting & Stiller, 1979; Zoeller & Mahoney, 1983). It is when success is attributed to internal factors (eg., ability) that students
perceive themselves as able, and worthwhile; it is then that self-efficacy becomes more positive and self-esteem is enhanced. The corollary of these positive feelings about oneself is that it leads to further striving and more academic achievement. The more a student achieves, the more self-esteem is enhanced and the more the student will strive to achieve and the benign cycle of achievement continues.

Suggestions for Future Research

Given the importance and far-reaching ramifications of attribution theory in learning outcomes, this study needs to be systematically replicated. Caution should be exercised in generalizing the findings of this study because some variables especially SES, need to be more adequately controlled. Although the urban schools were more expensive and were attended largely by children from wealthy backgrounds, some very capable children from poor backgrounds have also gained access into these schools with scholarships from wealthy relatives, organizations, or community support groups. So, it is possible to have high and low SES groups in these urban high schools especially now that the Nigerian government is controlling education at all levels, and has subsidized the cost of education. Therefore, future research should aim at establishing considerably more precision with respect to
controlling for high and low SES group differences.

To eliminate speculative interpretation of these results, future investigators need to refine the existing instruments, or develop new ones that are more culturally sensitive. Many of the subjects observed that the instruments, especially the ASQ, were very technical and in some cases very abstract. Certainly, cultural differences may have influenced the pattern of their responses. The ASQ needs to be modified using events that are familiar and relevant to the culture being studied. Modifying instruments to be more sensitive to the backgrounds of the respondents has been found to change the pattern of responses. In a study, LefCourt (1976), and Gurin (1977), modified the Rotter's I-E scale to the backgrounds and circumstances of the participants. Surprisingly, the pattern of the subjects' responses significantly changed.

It should be noted that the original version of the ASQ which did not include positive events was used in this study. Consequently, the participants responded only to negative events. It is recommended that future investigators use the revised version of the ASQ which contains both positive and negative events. This will enable researchers to ascertain whether there are differences in response patterns to the positive and negative events. How subjects attribute good events to internal or external factors will enable researchers to identify subjects who are in a helpless situation.

Again, it is suggested that future researchers attempt to
more adequately measure religiosity. In order to develop a stronger instrument, basic questions related to religion and faith need to be more adequately addressed. For instance, what makes a person religious? Is it active participation in religious activities? Is it being prayerful? Is it belief in religious doctrines? Is it devotion to the Saints, or to the Bible? Is it simply living an untainted life? Or is it a combination of all of these? Thoughtful answers to these and related questions are considered to be essential with respect to developing an instrument that will more adequately measure religiosity. Addressing these questions is important especially as it has been found (Goode, 1966) that mere church attendance and participation in religious activities are not good measures of religiosity. In fact, people from different socio-economic statuses attend church and participate in religious activities for different reasons. While members of the middle class may view church attendance and participation as belonging to yet another social organization, working class subjects (low SES) may display a different pattern. Their participation in religious activities is not as secularized. It is probably more spiritual in character.

Again, future research might be directed at examining the role of birth order in determining attributional patterns. It has been documented (Lefrancois 1991) that first born children are more curious, more striving, and more achievement-oriented. They are also more likely than later borns to excel
in school. Thus, first born children appear to have a lower rate of drop-out from school than later borns. Birth order assumes even more significance if the first born is male. In some cultures such as Nigeria, primogeniture is a strong cultural phenomenon. The first son is viewed as the heir to much of his father's property, but this privilege carries with it an enormous responsibility. The first born son is constantly aware of his special position in the family, and the high parental and social expectations associated it. He must be an adult early in life and astrive to live up to parental demands such as assisting in supporting the family.

Given this situation, primogeniture may be an interesting variable that mediates the development of attributional patterns. It is probable that the first born children especially males will demonstrate an internal locus of control orientation. But externality may be found among the first born males who could not live up to social expectations (ie., they may consider themselves to be failures).

While the foregoing conclusions and suggestions may have cross-cultural relevance to education, they are particularly important in the Nigerian situation. The prevailing poor economic conditions can only improve when students are committed to education. They can demonstrate this commitment when they begin to view their successes and failures in school as resulting from effort or lack of it. This change in perceptions about the causes of success and failure will
likely stem the tide of school drop-out. Nigeria will then become a literate society where everyone participates meaningfully in improving the socioeconomic conditions of the country.
APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Read the following statements carefully, and circle the number that best suits your opinion.

1. People should attend church once a week if possible.  
   1 2 3 4 5
2. Belief in God makes life more meaningful.  
   1 2 3 4 5
   1 2 3 4 5
4. Prayer can solve many problems.  
   1 2 3 4 5
5. Every school should have religious services for its students.  
   1 2 3 4 5
6. There is life after death.  
   1 2 3 4 5
7. People should read the Bible at least once a day.  
   1 2 3 4 5
8. People should pray at least once a day.  
   1 2 3 4 5
9. When people are planning to be married, they should consult their parish priest, or pastor.  
   1 2 3 4 5
10. Delinquency is less common among young people attending church often.  

11. What is moral today will always be moral.  

12. Every person should participate in at least one church activity.  

SECTION TWO

Read the following statements carefully, and circle the letter (a or b) next to the statement that best suits your opinion.

14a. Many of the unhappy things in people’s lives are partly due to bad luck.  

b. People’s misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.  

15a. One of the major reasons why we have wars is that people don’t take enough interest in politics.  

b. There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.  

16a. No matter how hard you try some people just don’t like you.  

b. People who can’t get others to like them don’t understand how to get along with others.  

17a. In the case of the well prepared student, there is rarely, if ever, such a thing as a difficult exam.
b. Many times exam questions tend not to be related to what the teacher taught in class, and that makes studying really useless.

18a. Becoming successful is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it.

b. Getting a good job depends mainly on knowing an influential person.

19a. A common man can have an influence on government decisions.

b. This world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much a common man can do.

20a. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make my plans work.

b. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.

21a. There are certain people who are just not good.

b. There is some good in everybody.

22a. As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are the victims of forces we can neither understand, nor control.

b. By taking an active part in politics and social affairs, people can control world events.

23a. Most people don’t realize the extent to which their lives are controlled by unseen forces.

b. There really is no such thing as ‘luck’.

24a. One should always be willing to admit mistakes.
b. It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.

25a. It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you.

b. How many friends you have depends on how nice a person you are.

26a. In the long run, the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones.

b. Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.

27a. With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption.

b. It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.

28a. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the marks they give students.

b. There is a direct connection between how hard I study and the marks I get.

29a. A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do.

b. A good leader makes it clear to everybody what each person is supposed to do.

30a. Many times I feel that I have no control over the things that happen to me.

b. It is impossible for me to believe that luck plays an important role in my life.

31a. There is no need trying very hard to please people; if they like you, they like you.
b. Team sports are an excellent way to build character.

32a. What happens to me is my doing.

b. Sometimes I feel that I don’t have enough control over the direction my life is going.

33a. Most of the time, I can’t understand why politicians behave the way they do.

b. In the long run, the people are responsible for bad government on a national as well as on a local level.

SECTION 3

Please try to imagine yourself in the situations that follow. If such a situation happened to you, what would you feel would have caused it? While events may have many causes, we want you to pick only one – THE MAJOR CAUSE IF THIS EVENT HAPPENED TO YOU.

Please write the cause in the blank provided after each event. Next we want you to answer three questions about the cause you provided. First, is the cause of this event something about you or something about other people or circumstances? Second, is the cause of this event something that will persist across time or something that will never again be present? Third, is the cause of this event something that affects all situations in your life, or something that just affects this type of event?
34. You met a friend who acts hostilely to you.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is the cause of this due to something about you, or something about other people, or circumstance? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number). Never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

35. You can’t get all the work done that others expect of you.
A. Write down the one major cause.

B. Is the cause of this due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number). Never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present
36. You experience a major personal injury.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is the cause of this due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number). never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

37. You are found guilty of breaking school regulation.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is the cause of this due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstance? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to
me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number) never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

38. You and your parents have a serious misunderstanding.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is the cause of this due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstance? (Circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number) never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

39. After your first term at school, your result was very poor.
A. Write down the one major cause:
B. Is the cause of this due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number) never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

40. Your best friend tells you that you are not to be trusted.

A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is this cause due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number) never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.
41. You cannot sleep soundly.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is this cause due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number) totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number) never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

42. Your Christmas holiday plans are cancelled.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is this cause due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number) totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number) never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your
life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

43. You have trouble with your teachers.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is this cause due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

44. You experience financial difficulties.
A. Write down the one major cause:

B. Is this cause due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number)
totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)
ever present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.
D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.

45. You feel sick and tired all the time.
   A. Write down the one major cause:

   B. Is this cause due to something about you or something about other people, or circumstances? (circle one number)
   totally due to others 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 totally due to me.

   C. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number) never present 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 always present.

   D. Is this cause something that affects just this type of situation, or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)
   just this situation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 all situations.
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Approval Sheet

The dissertation submitted by Ben Ejide has been read and approved by the following members of the committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation, and the signature below testifies that the necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the dissertation is now given a final approval by the committee with regard to content and form.

The dissertation is, therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

10/25/53
Date

Director's Signature