
The Influence Of Psychological And Academic Stress On Academic Performance Among Nce Ii Students Within State Colleges Of Education In Northerwest Geo-Political Zone.

Suleiman Lawal Abubakar¹

Department of Educational Psychology Kaduna State College of Education Gidan Waya. Nigeria.

Suleimanla1963@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of psychological and academic stress on academic performance among NCE II Students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geopolitical zone. A purposive sampling technique was used to carry out this study with a sample size of three hundred and sixty four students (364) drawn from the entire population of 6,635 NCE II students. Psychological stress scales as well as academic stress scale were the instruments used for data collection in this study, which were subjected to statistical analysis using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and T-test statistic to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings revealed that, psychological stress has significant influence on Academic performance with (r-value = .138, P=0.008) Academic stress has significant influence on Academic performance with r-value=.255, P=0.000) there is no significant difference on gender and course of study in terms of psychological stress and Academic performance of NCE II Students of these state colleges of education. It is recommended that all NCE II students should be sensitized on the various strategies for managing stress irrespective of their gender and course of study.

Key words: *psychological stress; academic stress; academic performance.*

INTRODUCTION

The concept of stress can be described as the perception of discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual's capacities to fulfill these demands (Topper, 2007). According to Tammen (2009) stress occurs when an individual is confronted by a situation that they perceive as over willing and cannot cope with. Students may experience different types of stress ranging from physical psychological, mental, perceptual, academic and psycho-spiritual. Physical stress is caused by intense physical work, nutritional deficiencies, illness, environmental pollutions, substance abuse, etc. psychological stress consists of emotional disturbances such as fear, anger, grief, sadness and frustrations. (Michaud, Murray & Bloom, 2011).

Munir (2000) define psychological stress as a condition that illicit unpleasant emotions rather than pleasurable ones. According to him, there are no simple one-to-one connections between certain types of stressful events and particular emotions, but researchers have begun to uncover some strong links between specific emotions. Psychological stress evokes feelings of self-blame which leads to guilt, helplessness, sadness and so forth. According to Smith (1993) psychological stress is any situation that leads to feelings of anger ranging from intensify to mild annoyance to uncontrollable rage. Frustration is particularly likely to generate psychological stress. In Freudian theory, link between conflict and anxiety has been recognized. However, anxiety can also be elicited by the pressure to perform the threat of impending frustration or the uncertainly associated with change. This is called psychological stress.

Academic stress according to Hashim (2003) refers to academic pressure the school poses to students. Academic related stress have included fear or falling behind the course work, finding motivation to study, time pressures and concern about academic stability. Tyrell (1992) define academic stress as struggle to meet academic standards, time management worries and concerns over grades. Elliot (2005) opines that these sources of academic

stress may exist through the span of the college students' academic careers if prevention efforts are not developed to assist students deal with academic stress.

Gerda (1980) defines academic performance as the attainment obtained by a child from lessons taught which may include experiences, knowledge, skills and the like. Hussien&Hussien (2006) explain that the child's good or poor performance does not depend on any attributes that the child is born with, but he has complex responses to his family, his home environment, his social contacts, his teachers and the overall climate of his school and assessment procedure.

Beck, (1999) opines that manifestation of academic and psychological stress among students may be due to, too many assignments, competitions with other students, failures in tests and examinations, lack of pocket money, poor relations with other students or lecturers, family problems at home and the like. The institutional kind of stress may include overcrowded lecture halls, semester system, carry over and inadequate resources to perform academic work. Ongori, (2007)&Erkutlu&Chafra (2006) for instance opine that, when these events take place, an individual may become disorganized, disoriented and therefore, less able to cope with this may result in stress related problems. The pressure to perform well in the examination or test allocated, might make academic environment very stressful. Notwithstanding, it should be brought to notice that NCE students in their peculiar endeavors are exposed to various kind of stressors including academic and psychological stress which could militate against their active participation in school progress, and this may block the possibilities of realizing the aforementioned goals of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The Problems

Passing through NCE programme may come with many challenges exercises. Some students may experience certain pressure from the entry requirements, such as prerequisite credit units for graduation, passing prescribed examinations, complying with the rules and regulations of the colleges of education among others parental expectations from students such as graduating and acquiring moral values for their society. The Northern community counts on NCE students to graduate and contribute to the development of their communities. Students at individual level battle within themselves with issues such as interest in their courses of study viz-avis their aspiration after graduation, worry about their competence in their labour market whether it would earn them good job after graduation as well as financial constraints, finding life partner and a host of others may create condition for stress among the students. However, it is observed that students become more aware of these problems because they have gathered experiences from their past and have seen the consequences from their academic results and demands. Any attempt to reconcile these demands placed on them which create stressful conditions may be overwhelming. The pressure to meet these demands and expectations may in turn interfere with students' academic performance and may serve as a stimulating factor to enhance academic performance.

It is on this note that the researcher deems it fit to investigate into the area of psychological and academic stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in northwest geo-political zone with a view to finding out whether students' academic performance is supported or distracted by stressful conditions of academic and psychological stress.

Objectives of the Study

For the purpose of this study the following objectives are stated.

- 1 To find out the influence of psychological stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.
- 2 To determine the influence of academic stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.
- 3 To investigate the difference on gender in terms of psychological and academic stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.

- 4 To investigate the difference between Arts and Science courses in terms of psychological and academic stress on Academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.

Research Questions

The study found answers to the following questions.

- 1 Is there any influence of psychological stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone?
- 2 Is there any influence of academic stress on academic performance NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone?
- 3 Is there any difference on Arts and Science courses in terms of psychological and academic stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study.

- 1 There is no significant influence of psychological stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.
- 2 There is no significant influence of academic stress on academic performance NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.
- 3 There is no significant difference on gender in terms of psychological and academic stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.
- 4 There is no significant difference between Arts and Science courses in terms of psychological and academic stress on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.

Methodology

This study employed survey design in investigating the influence of psychological and academic stress as well as differences in gender and course on academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone. The population was 6,635 with a sample size of 364 students. A purposive sampling technique was used while four objectives and four null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study. The instruments used in this study were adopted from Academic stress scale and psychological stress scale which were reliable and valid for use. The data collected were being subjected to statistical analysis, using descriptive and inferential statistics.

This is to determine the mean and standard deviation which were used to answer the research questions and the null hypotheses rose. For the hypotheses one and two Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient is used, while t-test was used to test hypotheses three and four, the findings and recommendations were also presented at the end of the study.

The Results of the Research Questions Are As Follows:-

- RQ1 The outcome of research questions shows that the mean of psychological stress and that of academic performance scores are 2.53216 and 2.8636 respectively. This implies that student's psychological stress has significance influence on their level of Academic performance.

- RQ2 The outcome of research questions shows that the mean of Academic stress and that of academic performance scores are 2.497496 and 2.8636 respectively. This implies that student's Academic stress has significance influence on their level of academic performance.
- RQ3 The result of the research questions shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of male and female students are 50.4809 and 49.4056 as well as 7.22 and 6.96 respectively. This signifies that gender do not differ in their level of academic performance.
- RQ4 The result of the research questions shows that the mean and standard deviation scores of Arts and Science students are 49.6354 and 50.2849 as well as 7.02 and 7.18 respectively. This signifies that students do not differ in their level of academic performance.

Result of the Null Hypotheses

- 1 There is no significant influence of psychological stress on Academic performance among NCE II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.

Table 1: Shows the Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient between psychological stress and Academic performance.

Source	N	r	P
Psychological Stress Academic performance	364	138	0.008

The above table shows that the computed correlation between psychological stress and academic performance is significant and inversely correlated with 1.138 P= 0.008 level. Since P=0.008 is less than the level of significance 0.05. The correlation co-efficient indicates that as psychological stress increases. Academic performance decreases and vice versa. The null hypothesis that says there is no significant influence of psychological stress on Academic performance among N.C.E. II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone is hereby rejected.

- 2 There is no significant influence of Academic stress and Academic performance among N.C.E. II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone

Table 2: Shows the Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient between academic stress and academic performance.

Source	N	r	P
Academic Stress	364	255	0.000

The above table shows that the computed correlation between academic stress and academic performance is significant and inversely correlated with r.255 at 0.000 level. Since P=0.000 is less than the level of significance 0.05. The correlation co-efficient indicates that as Academic stress increases. Academic performance decreases and vice versa. The null hypothesis that says there is no significant influence of Academic stress on Academic performance among N.C.E. II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone is hereby rejected.

- 3 There is no significant influence of gender in terms of psychological and academic stress on Academic performance among N.C.E. II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone.

Table 3: (a) Shows the T-test analysis comparing both gender on psychological stress and academic performance.

Source	N	Mean	r	P	
Male	183	50.5574	248	361	804

Female	180	50.7167
--------	-----	---------

Table 3 (a) shows that the p-value of 804 > 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses is therefore accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference on their experience in psychological stress and academic performance as a result of gender.

Table 3 (b) shows that t-test analysis is comparing both gender in academic stress and academic performance.

Gender	N	Mean	t	dr	P
Male	183	50.4809			
1.4433	361	150			
Female	180	49.4056			

Table 3 (b) shows that the p-value of 150 > 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses is therefore accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference on their experience in Academic stress and academic performance as a result of gender.

- 4 There is no significant difference on Arts and Science courses in terms of psychological academic and stress on academic performance among N.C.E. II students within state colleges of education in Northwest Geo-political zone

Table 4: (a) below shows the T-test scores comparing both arts and science students in their experience on psychological stress and academic performance.

Source	N	Mean	r	dr	P
Arts	192	50.5365			
.306.361		.760			
Sciences	172	50.7326			

The above Table 4 (a) indicates that the p-value 760 > 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypotheses which state that Arts and Science students do not significantly differ on their experience in psychological stress and academic performance is hereby accepted.

Table 4 (b) below shows the T-test scores comparing both Arts and Science students in their experience on academic stress and academic performance.

Source	N	Mean	r	dr	P
Arts	192	49.6354			
.871.361		.384			
Sciences	172	50.2849			

The above Table 4 (b) indicates the p-value 384 > 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypotheses which state that Arts and Science students do not significantly differ on their experience in Academic stress and academic performance is hereby accepted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Educational psychologists, administrators and planners, teachers and all stake holders in education should provide students with orientation conferences and symposia on the strategies for managing stress in order to reduce the stress that affect the academic performance due to its significance.
2. All NCE II students in our colleges of education should be sensitized towards various strategies on psychological and academic stress in order to perform effectively.
3. Emotion-Focused coping, problem focus coping stress inoculation coping, proactive coping and effective coping should be taught to the students irrespective of their differences in gender and course of study.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that both psychological and academic stress have significant influence on students' academic performance while gender, Arts or Science courses of students do not have significant difference in their psychological and academic stress on academic performance among the NCE II students of colleges of Education in Northern Nigeria.

REFERENCES

- Beck, R. (1999) Stress and the Effects to Memory. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 32 (4): 317-319.
- Elliot, A. J. (2000) Characteristics of Organizational Culture, Educational Res. Rev. Stressors and Well-being. The case of Taiwanese Organizations. *Journal of Manage Psychology*, 22(6): 549-568.
- Erkutlu, H.V. &Chafra, J. (2000) Relationship between Leadership Power Bases and Job Stress of Subordinates, *Examples form Boutique, Hotels Manage, Res. News* 29(5): 285-297.
- Gerda, Z. (1980). Academic Performace at School. Problems and Prospects *Educational Psychology*. 5,364-596).
- Hashim, I. (2003). The Role of Working Memory in Carrying and Borrowing, *Psychological Research*, 71, 467-483.
- Hussien, T. &Hussien S. (2006). Strategies for Coping Educational and Psychological Stress, *Dar Alfiker, Amman*.
- Michaud, S. Murray, M. & Bloom, T. (2011) College Students' Academic Stress
- Ongori, H. (2007). A Review of Literature on Employee Turnover. *Africa Journal of Education (2008). A Quest for Sustainable Quantity Assurance of Botswana, Education, Res. Rev.* 3(6)213-218 and *Anxiety Time Management and Leisure Satisfaction. Health Studies* 16(1):41 – 51.
- Munir, H. (2000). Academic Performance and Students Attitudes. *Journal of Psychology Studies*. 7, 394 – 400.
- Smith, A. (1993). The Scale of Perceived Occupational?Stress and Externally Targeted Control Strategies on European – Canadians. East, Asian Canadians and Japanese *Journal of Cross Culture Psychology*. (35). 652-681.
- Tammen, A. (2009). Stress and Anxiety. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospital Management*, (19): 32-42.
- Topper, E.F. (2007). Stress in the Library Workplace. *New Library World*, (11/12): 561-564).
- Tyrell, G. (1992). The Level of Stress among Students in Urban and Rural Secondary Schools in Malaysia, *European Journal of Social Sciences*. 10 (2). 43-65.