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INFLUENCE OF STRESS AND ANXIETY ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, MALUMFASHI, KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of stress and anxiety on academic achievement among deaf students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi, Katsina State. Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses were stated and tested for the study. An ex-post-facto research designs was employed for the study. The population of the study comprises all secondary school students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi, out of which SSS II students with total number of eighty-two (82) were selected as sample using purposive sampling technique. The data were collected using two instruments; Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) with reliability index of 0.82 and 0.89 respectively. Also an average of Mathematic and English results of end of second term examination (2019/2020 session) were used as academic achievement. To analyze the data frequency and simple percentages were used to answered research question 1 and 2. T-test independent samples were used to test hypotheses 1 and 2. The study revealed that, majority of deaf students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi, Katsina have high level of stress and high level of anxiety. Significant difference existed in academic achievement between deaf students with high and low level of stress in favour of deaf students with low level of stress. Lastly, it was found that deaf students with low level of anxiety performed academically better than their counterparts. Based on these findings the study recommended that parents should find ways of reducing the level of stress among their children. Government, parents, and professional counselors should find measures for minimizing and controlling the level of anxiety among students. Teachers should employ and apply different teaching strategies that will balance the difference in academic performance among students. Expert should develop effective and standard means of sign language that can be use in teaching mathematic and other science subjects.

Keyword: Stress, Anxiety and Academic Achievement

Introduction

According to national policy on education (Federal Rep. of Nigeria, 2004) all citizens should be given equal chance to education, irrespective physical disability, location, tribe and home background. This policy implies that all Nigerian must be enroll in schools and attend all levels of education, at the same time this policy implies that special treatment must be given to students with special need in order to achieve the national objectives on education. Deaf students were among students with special need. Deaf or Student with hearing impairment are those students that loss or having hard in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplifications that affects a child's educational performance (Musa, 2017).

Academic achievement is of paramount importance, particularly in the present socio-economic and security challenges. Emphasis is place on academic achievement at all levels of formal education. The world is becoming more competitive. And quality of performance has become the key factors for personal progress. Parents hope for their children to climb the ladder of performance as high level as possible.

In Nigeria, researches have shown that students' academic achievement is declining at a disturbing rate, such as Adamu (2020), Kura (2019), Yusuf (2021) and host of others. All related the reason for such decline to students' factors such as individual's intelligence, knowledge, study habit, achievement motivation, emotional intelligence, self-esteem and locus of control. Likewise, poor academic achievement is the major problem that teachers are always complaining about in Government Secondary School for Deaf Malumfashi, Katsina State. This is because according to examination record of the school more than 45 percent of students are failing qualifying examination every year. This is what motivated the researchers to develop interest in finding out the reasons or factors that led to the poor academic achievement among deaf students Malumfashi. Is that as a result of their levels of stress or their levels of anxiety?
Stress can be seen as emotional pressure suffered by an individual that may resulted to high level of anxiety, examination failure and other problems. The first clear definition of stress was coined by Selye (1956), as "the common denominator of all adaptive reactions in the body" and the events that naturally produce stress are named as "stressors". A stressor is the stimulus for stress, and the body's response to the stressor includes the stress reaction and other responses, such as physical adaptations (Tachè & Selye, 1985). Apart from physical stimulus, every single life event could cause different levels of stress

that could trigger a stress reaction (Akram & Khan, 2012; Dow, 2014; Joëls, Pu, Wiegert, Oitzl, & Krugers, 2006). Selye (1985) claimed that stressors could be things other than natural physical stimuli, such as emotions (happy, fear, anger, etc.).

The most commonly used definition of stress was developed by Lazarus and Launier (1978), who regarded stress as a transaction between people and the environment and described stress in terms of 'person environment fit'. Baum (1990) defines stress as an emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioral changes. Moreover, Iwuji (1990) described stress as the invisible silent killer. She further maintained that the danger of unresolved stress would be only a symptom of the real "disease" which is stress. The treatment of an illness resulting from stress may mean treatment of symptoms and unless the source is removed may be persist or reoccur.

Taylor (1999) stated that stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand to what he or she desires for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress is a negative emotional experience accompanied by predictable physiological, behavioral and cognitive changes that are directed either towards altering stressful circumstances or accommodating to its effect. Zuccolo (2013) identified four principal sources of stress;

1. Environmental Source of Stress.
2. Cognitive-Emotional
3. Physiological Source of Stress
4. Social Source of Stress.

Theory of stress named Transactional Model of Stress and Coping Theory was developed by Lazarus and Folkman, (1984). The theory emphasizes appraisal to evaluate harm, threat and challenges, which result in the process of coping with stressful event. The level of stress experienced in the form of thoughts, feelings, emotions and behaviors, as a result of external stressors, depends on appraisal of the situation which involves a judgment about whether internal or external demands exceed resources and ability to cope when demands exceed resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to Lazarus and Cohen (1977), stressors are demands made by both internal and external environments that upset the balance of an individual, thus affecting both physical and psychological well-being and requiring action to restore balance. The model of stress they proposed was based on the consideration that stress is a transactional phenomenon which is dependent on the meaning the perceiver gives the stressor or stimulus. In other words, the person under stress firstly appraises the situation and gives it a meaning, thereafter; he considers the resources at his disposal for the management of the situation. The resources according to Lazarus and Cohen (1977) could be social or cultural. Generally speaking, when one is faced with environmental impacts both from within and outside the body, the natural instinct

is to evaluate the source of the impact. Whatever meaning we give to what is influencing us determines the reaction to it. The appraisal given to such impact could be either positive or negative. It could be interpreted to mean danger or potential threat or it could be seen as something necessary. According to Cohen (1984), the appraisal could be in two folds: primary and secondary. Primary appraisal is a person's judgment about the significance of an event as stressful, positive, controllable, challenging or irrelevant, while a secondary appraisal is an assessment of peoples coping resources and option.

Table 1: Basic assumptions of Transactional model of Stress and Coping.

Concept	**Definition**
Primary Appraisal	Evaluation of the significance of a stressor or threatening event
Secondary Appraisal	Evaluation of the controllability of the stressor and a person's coping resources
Coping efforts	Actual strategies used to mediate primary and secondary appraisals.
Problem management	Strategies directed at changing a stressful situation.
Emotional Regulation	Strategies aimed at changing the way one thinks or feels about a stressful situation.
Meaning-based coping	Coping processes that induce positive emotion, which in turn sustains the coping process by allowing reenactment of problem or emotion focused coping
Outcomes of coping	Emotional well-being, functional status, health behaviors
Dispositional coping styles	Generalized ways of behaving that can affect a person's emotional or functional reaction to a stressor; relatively stable across time and situations.
Optimism	Tendency to have generalized positive expectancies for outcomes
Information seeking	Attention styles that are vigilant (monitoring) versus those that involve avoidance (blunting)

Source: (Glanz, Rimer & Viswanath 2008)

Anxiety on the other hand can be consider as a common phenomenon of every day's life. It plays a crucial role in human life because all of us are victims of anxiety in different ways. The word anxiety is derived from Latin word "angere," meaning to cause distress (Sharma & Sharma, 2015). Anxiety is an emotional state in which the individual feels tension, worry, and lack of self-esteem and self-confidence in their ability to meet goals or deal with problems (WHO, 2005; Xie, 2013).

The concept of anxiety refers to the body's way of telling individual that there is something in the environment that needs the individual's urgent attention. It is basically a series of biochemical changes in the brain and the body, such as increase in adrenaline (causing the heart to beat faster) and a decrease in dopamine (a neurotransmitter that helps block pain and increase the feeling of pleasure and elation). These changes result in a state of heightened attention to the source of anxiety. High levels of anxiety cause one's body to prepare to fight or flight from the perceived threat commonly called "the fight or flight responses" (Naylor, 2004). Anxiety is a feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and a kind worry associated with arousal of the nervous system (Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, & Jacobs, 1983). Spielberger (1972) defined anxiety as an emotional state consisting of feeling, tension, apprehension, and it effects on nervous system. There are two types of anxiety according to him. They are trait anxiety and state anxiety. Trait anxiety is a stable characteristic or trait of the person. State anxiety is one which is aroused by some temporary condition of the environment such as examination, accident, punishment, bullying and other aspect of substance abuse. Zung (1979) classified symptoms of A-States into cognitive, and somatic or physiological. According to them**,** cognitive symptoms include anxiousness and nervousness, fear, panic, mental disorientation and apprehension; and somatic symptoms include tremors, body aches and pains, insomnia and nightmares among others.

Cognitive theory of anxiety was developed largely as an explanation and treatment approach for depression caused by anxiety. The theory has been applied to the field of anxiety where there was emphasis on the relationship between anxiety and health status of victims (Tobias, 1979). Cognitive theorists (Tobias, 1986) believed that it is not events or problems, which cause anxiety or stress rather it is the individual's interpretation or perception of these events that may lead to these problems. Though different theorists offer slightly different emphasis, cognitive theories in general state that anxiety is maintained by the mistaken or dysfunctional appraisal of a situation leading to perception of danger. Empirical studies were conducted by different researchers in an attempt to find out influence of stress and anxiety on academic achievement of secondary schools students. Among which include Mehfouz and Haider (2017) in their research which investigate the effect of stress on academic performance of undergraduate medical students in Pakistan. Also, Agolla and Ongon (2009) did a study on assessment of academic stress among undergraduate students on Botswana. Ibrahim (2018) carried out a study on effect of stress and anxiety on academic performance among senior secondary school students in Nassarawa Education Zone, Kano State. Nigeria. Furthermore, Adeoye-Agboola and Evans

(2015) conducted a study on relationship between anxiety and academic performance of Postgraduate International Students in a British University. Musa (2017) conducted a study on influence of stress and anxiety on academic performance among senior secondary school students in Gummel Education Zone, Jagawa State. Nigeria.

The findings of the above study indicated that, stress and anxiety has significant influence and/or relationship with academic achievement of student. The rational of this study this to justify whether or stress and anxiety equally influence academic achievement of deaf students, as well as to find out the key of solving existing problem of academic achievement in Government senior secondary school for deaf Malumfashi, Katsina State.

Purpose of the Study

Generally this study was conducted to find out whether levels stress and anxiety have an influence on academic achievement of the Deaf student. Specifically this study achieved the following objectives:

1. To determine the levels of Stress among deaf students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi, Katsina State. Nigeria.
2. To determine the levels of anxiety among deaf students in the study area.
3. To find out whether there is difference in academic achievement between student with low and high level of Stress among participants of the study.
4. To find out whether there is difference in academic achievement between student with low and high level of anxiety.

Research Questions

This study answered the following questions:

1. What are the levels of stress among participants of the study?
2. What are the levels of anxiety among deaf students in the study area?

Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested by this study;

1. There is no significant difference in academic achievement between students with low and high levels of stress among deaf students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi, Katsina State. Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in academic achievement between student with low and high level of anxiety among participants of the study.

Method

Research design: An ex-post facto research design was adopted for this study. The design entails the collection and use of data systematically from a sample out

of a population to describe certain characteristics and features of the population. The design was considered to be appropriate for this study being that the work intended to collect data from a portion with the view of describing the entire population and based on the assumption that the variables under investigation cannot be manipulated.

Participants of the Study: This study covered all secondary school students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi, Katsina State**,** with a total of four hundred and eighty eight (488) students. The population comprised two hundred and forty eight (248) male students and two hundred and forty (240) female students. S.S.S. II students were purposively selected as sample of the study using purposive sampling techniques with total number of eighty two (82). The rationales for the selection of S.S.S. II students are: they are students approaching qualifying examination and great number of students fails qualifying examination almost every year. And this study intended to address the issues of poor academic achievement, so that it is important to address the problem from the grassroots.

Instruments

Data used for this study were collected using adaptations of two instruments; namely: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) developed by Cohen and Williamson (1988) and Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) developed by Beck, Epstein, Brown and Steer (1988). Both instruments were face validated by experts and pilot tested to ensure content validity and reliability of internal consistency. The reliability coefficients for Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and Beck Anxiety Inventory were 0.82 and 0.89 respectively.

Beck anxiety inventory is designed to provide an empirical measure of the anxiety level of an individual. The instrument is made up of two sections: Section A of the instrument consists of students' bio data, while Section B consist of twenty one (21) items, each with 4 Likert response scale to solicit information in relation to one's feelings of anxiety. The maximum score a participant can get is 63, with minimum of 0. Any participant who scored 32 and above was described as having high level of anxiety and any person scored below 32 was described as having low anxiety level.

The PSS is a self-report instrument consisting of 10 items. Each item on the PSS-10 is rated on a 5 point Likert response scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 4 (very often). The PSS-10 consisted of 6 negatively worded items (1,2,3,6,9 and 10) which were negative factor and 4 positively worded items (4,5,7, and 8) which were positive factors. The minimum score a participant can obtain from this instrument is 0, with maximum of 40. In this study any person scored 20 below was described as having low level of stress and a participant with 21 and above

was describe as having high level of stress.

Data Collection Procedure

The data used for this study was collected during students' break periods. Both instruments were administered to the participants at the same time and participants were required to fill and return the instruments instantly. Mathematic and English results of end second term examination (2019/2020) were collected from examination office of the school. An average mark of two results of each participant was found and used as academic achievement. Data collected from the study were analyzed using SSPS. Frequency and simple percentage were used to answer Research Question 1 and 2 while t-test for independent data was used to test Hypotheses 1 and 2 that seek to find out difference among the variables.

Results

This study have answered the stated research question and tested the hypotheses of the study, the result was presented and discussed as follow:

Answer to Research Question 1; What are the levels of stress among participants of the study?

Table: 2

Levels of stress among Deaf students

Variable	Level	N	Percentage
Stress	Low	34	41%
	High	48	59%
Total		**82**	**100%**

Table 2, presents the levels of stress among deaf students in Government Secondary School for Deaf Malumfashi, Katsina State. The table reveals that 34 (41%) of the deaf students were found to have low level of stress and 48 (59%) of them were found to high level of stress. Thus, based on result from descriptive statistic, Majority of Deaf students in Government Secondary Schools for Deaf Malumfashi, Katsina State were found to have high level of stress.

Answer to Research Question 1; What are the levels of anxiety among deaf students in the study area?

Table 3: Levels of Anxiety Among Deaf students

Variable	Level	N	Percentage
Anxiety	Low	31	38%
	High	51	62%
Total		**82**	**100%**

Table:3 presents the levels of anxiety among deaf students in Government Secondary Schools for Deaf Malumfashi, Katsina State. The table reveals that majority of deaf students in Government Secondary Schools for Deaf Malumfashi were found to have high level of anxiety (62%) as against those that had low anxiety (38%).

Hypothesis One (Ho_1) There is no significant difference in academic achievement between students with low and high levels of stress among deaf students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi, Katsina State. Nigeria.

Table 4: T-test analysis on Difference in Academic Achievement Scores of Deaf Students with High and Low Level of Stress

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	P-value (2-tailed)
High level of stress	48	66.63	12.389	2.088	80	.002
Low level of stress	34	72.54	12.935			

The result from table 4 indicates that the mean score of academic achievement of students with low level of stress is 72.54 with SD of 12.935 while that of those with high level of stress is 66.63, with SD of 12.38. The calculated value of t is 2.088. At df of 80 and alpha level of 0.05, then null hypothesis is rejected ($p<0.05$). This implies that there is significant difference in academic achievement between students with low and high levels of stress among deaf students. The deference was in favour of students with low level of stress. This is evident in the fact that the mean academic achievement recorded for students with low level of stress (M= 72.54) is significantly higher than that of students with high level of anxiety (M= 66.63)

Hypothesis Two (Ho_2) There is no significant difference in academic achievement between student with low and high level of anxiety among participants of the study.

Table 5: T-test analysis on difference in academic achievement of Students With High and Low Levels of Anxiety

Variables:	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Df	P-value (2-tailed)
High level of anxiety	51	64.87	11.886	3.685	80	.000
Low level of anxiety	31	74.74	12.204			

From Table: 2 the mean score on academic achievement of students with low level of anxiety is 74.74 with SD of 12.204, while that of those with high level of anxiety is 64.87 with SD of 11.886. The p-value is 0-000 and calculated is 3.685. At df of 80 and alpha level of 0.05. Thus, based on the obtained result, the null

hypothesis is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is upheld. That significant difference exist in the academic achievement of Deaf students in Government Secondary School for Deaf, Malumfashi with regard to their levels of anxiety and according to the result students with low levels of anxiety perform better academically than their counterparts with high level of anxiety.

Discussion

The findings of this study are discussed and these discussions are carried out based on the issues relevant with the research question and null hypotheses that guided the study.

The first finding of the study showed that there was significant difference in Academic achievement between deaf students with high and low level of stress. According to this study, students with low level of stress were found to have performed better compared to their counterpart with high level of stress. The finding of this study tends to agree with the opinion expressed by Ibrahim (2018) who indicated that students with low level of stress had high academic achievement and mastery in psychomotor activities. This may be as a result of the fact that the participants of the two different studies shared the same geographical location and culture. The finding of this study also agrees with the finding of Mehfouz & Haider (2017) who found that there is a relationship between stress and academic achievement.

The second finding of the study shows that, there was significant difference in academic achievement between deaf students with high and low levels of anxiety, in favour students with low level of anxiety. According to this finding pupils with low level of anxiety performed better academically than their counterparts. The finding of this study supports the findings of Ibrahim (2018) who concluded that students with low level of anxiety perform academically better that those with high level of anxiety. Furthermore, the finding of this study is in line that of Musa (2017) who found that there was a significant difference in academic achievement between students who had high and low level of anxiety. According to his study, students with low level of parental anxiety performed better than students with high level of anxiety.

Conclusion

Form the above finding of this study, following conclusions was made by the researchers.

1. Majority of deaf students in government secondary school for deaf, Malumfashi, Katsina have high level of stress.
2. Also most of deaf students in the study area have high level of anxiety.

3. It was also concluded that, level of stress influence academic achievement of the students.
4. Lastly, anxiety levels also influence students' academic achievement.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should find ways of reducing the level of stress among their children.
2. Government, parent, and professional counselors should find measures of minimizing and controlling the level of anxiety among students.
3. Teachers should employ and apply different teaching strategies that will balance the difference in academic performance among students.
4. Experts should develop effective and standard means of sign language that can be used in teaching mathematic and other science subjects.

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