RELATIONSHIP AMONG ACADEMIC STRESS, SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT WITH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, ZARIA

Julius Samson; Mohammed Ibrahim and Shehu Jamila Shika

Abstract
This study investigated the relationship among academic stress, social adjustment with academic achievement of female students in Federal College of Education, Zaria. The study adopted a correlation research design. The target population of the study was six thousand, six hundred and thirty five (6,635) female students in F.C.E, Zaria. The sample of the study was 351 respondents drawn from NCE I-III students. Data was collected using Academic Stress Inventory (ASI), Social Adjustment Inventory (SAI), and CGPA of the female students respectively. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive (frequencies, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson product moment correlation and t-test). All tests were done at a 0.05 level of significance of the study indicates that positive relationship exist between academic stress and academic achievement among F.C.E, Zaria female students, with the following values; academic stress and academic achievement of female students in F.C.E, Zaria, with p=0.00, social adjustment with Academic achievement of female students in F.C.E, Zaria with p=0.002, academic stress differences offemale students in F.C.E, Zaria with p=0.000, t value 5.144, critical t value 1.96. Based on the results of the findings it is recommended that the college management should encourage the science female students or set aside a social programme week for the science female students, this will encourage them to participate in social activities thereby reduce their academic stress.

Keywords: Academic stress, Social Adjustment, and academic achievement of girl-child education.

Academic stress according to Hashin (2003) refered to academic pressure the school poses on students. Academic related stress have included fear of failing behind the course work, finding motivation to study, time pressures and concern about academic ability. Tyrrell (1992) defined academic stress as struggle to meet academic standards, time management worries and concerns over grades. Olphin (1997) opined 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 student deal with academic stress.

For Altback (1970) academic stress is student perception of school as exerting great influence over their lives and they feel that they live in a state of substantial powerlessness. Academic stress could also be inform of difficulty of achieving social intimacy due to excessive studies. If for this reason students lack time and opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships, such students are said to be experiencing academic stress (Hartshorn, 1976). In the words of Kjerulfff & Wiggins (1976), academic stress refers to facing such tasks that produce tension such as preliminary exams, semester system, fear of academic failure etc.

According to Hirsch & Keruston (1970) a measure of academic stress in tertiary institution students is the dropout rate. Although, according to them, reliable figure is difficult to obtain, an estimated 20% new students do not finish four years later in the tertiary institutions, studies of tertiary institution dropout associated dropping out with aversive side of fight or flight formula that is students feeling a mismatch between themselves and their institution, which is to distance themselves from the school which is the source of stress. Hirsh & Keniston (1970) relates academic stress to when students experience tasks beyond their capacity; this situation makes them to manifest hyper vigilance excessive alertness to a stressful situation resulting in panic for example, over studying for exam, a premature closure, quick in choosing a solution to end a stressful situation for example, rushing through an examination.
Academic stress according to Falk (1995) is the students’ reaction to school challenges; for some, tertiary institution is stressful because it is an abrupt change from secondary school. For others, separation from home is a source of stress. The academic stress faced by most students is attributed to poor study habits such as poor time management (Macan, Shahani, Dipboye, & Phillips, 1990), studying for exams (Baldwin, Wilkinson, & Barkley, 2000), and coursework (Robotham, 2008), which may eventually lead to poor academic performance. In order to overcome the pressure from academic stress the students have to employ suitable coping strategies like in any other stressful situation (Smith & Renk, 2007). There are various coping strategies used by students when experiencing academic stress. Some resort to avoidant coping; alcohol/drug abuse, denial and behavioral disengagement; while others cope actively through acceptance, planning, and positive reframing and taking the necessary steps to overcome the academic stress (Sreeramareddy, 2007).

Adjustment refers to an individual’s general adaptation to his environment and the demands of life such as the way he relates to other people, that is interpersonal behavior, handle his responsibility, deals with stress and meets his own need and life satisfaction. The society is dynamic and change is the only constant thing, so the individual’s ability to review his attitude and behavior is an essential ingredient of adjustment. Gerders, H & Mallinckrodt B. (2007). Social adjustment is an effort by an individual to cope with standards, values and needs of the society in order to be acceptable. It involves coping with new standards and values. In technical language of psychology, getting along with the members of the society as best one can be is regarded as social adjustment. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied. Hungry individuals, for instance are stimulated by their physiological state to seek food. Therefore, they reduce the stimulating condition that impelled them to activity, and thereby adjust to this particular need. (Baker & Sriyk, 2007).

Cohen & Garcia (2006) defined academic achievement as “Knowledge attaining ability or degree of competence in school. Task usually measured by standardized test and expressed in a grade or unit based on students’ performance/ achievement”. (Cohen & Apfel 2009) refer to academic performance as “the knowledge obtained or skill developed in the school subjects usually designed by the test scores or marks assigned by the teacher. Pekrun & Elliot (2009) defined academic achievement as both curricular and co-curricular performance of the student. It indicates the learning outcome of the student. The tertiary institution students perform their potential efficiently, as a result of it learning takes place: the learning outcome changes the behavior pattern of tertiary institution students through different courses and subjects.

Achievement of a student in the classroom and university takes a central role in the academic development of the student. Parent, teacher and school administrator alike take cognizance of the academic well - being of the student. Yardsticks are set by school authority to measure performance, the standard set by the tertiary institution will determine whether a student is performing well or not. In the assessment of performance Pekrun & Elliot (2006)argued that achievement is the behavior of an individual that can be directly observed by another individual therefore academic achievement has been seen as a term used for students based on how well they are doing in studies and classes. This definition tends to see academic achievement as the culmination of all the activities of the student in the school. Academic achievement for tertiary students is also seen as the extent to which a student has achieved his educational goals. This means the student’s academic performance is measured by the extent to which he has reached the educational goal he has set for himself. The tertiary institution measures academic achievement in several ways which include continuous assessment test (C.A.T.) and a number of standardize test and examination. By this method, areas of strength and weakness in a student’s academic performance is determined and evaluated in order to improve on the learning process of the student Pekrun R. & Parry R.P. (2007)

Statement of the Problem
The college is a social institution where learning takes place. However, the transition of individual students from different secondary school environment to the tertiary institution may come with a lot of anxiety, stress and difficulties. Most female students in colleges of education are faced with adjustment problem in terms of academic motivation and expectation from teachers, personal academic communication or interaction with new colleagues in pursuance of knowledge facing a new dimension or method of teaching, new academic institution, security challenges and many others that

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can create excessive pressure which may in turn have effect on social adjustment of female students as well as academic achievement.

The researcher’s engaged in an interaction with NCE female students in FCE, Zaria and it was observed that there was high increase of academic stress, poor academic adjustment and poor social adjustment are becoming more poorer by the day, among the female students of the FCE, Zaria, as a result of so much complaint of too much academic demands and expectations from female students, limited time allocation, problems, worries about future, career, financial problems, issues of school fees, poor school environment, poor time management, thoughts about families, back home and many more.

The communication as well, interaction with the female students of FCE, Zaria, at different schools and levels of the college have peculiar psychological problems and task that can create condition for stress which may affect the female students social adjustment. It is for this reason that empirical research to reduce the menace as it may have effect on girl-child education that may likely have poor academic adjustment. The educational problem lies in the fact that when female students continually experience excessive stress, they are likely to have poor academic achievement and social adjustment. However, the objective of educational system of such colleges will be jeopardized and this will affect the manpower production of the nation particularly in the teaching industries thereby causing unemployment problems as currently being faced today which is tied to many problems such as insecurity problem and the likes.

It is on the basis of this that the researcher deems it fit to investigate the relationship among academic stress, social adjustment with academic achievement of female students in Federal College of Education, Zaria with the view of proffering possible solution to the problem, in order to minimize stress, and improve on good social and academic achievement among female students in FCE, Zaria.

**Objectives**

1. To find out the relationship between academic stress and academic achievement among female students of FCE, Zaria.
2. To determine the relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement among female students of FCE, Zaria.
3. To determine whether difference existing between science and arts female students in their academic stress in F.C.E, Zaria.

**Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant relationship between academic stress and academic achievement among female students of FCE, Zaria.
2. There is no significant relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement among female students of FCE Zaria.
3. There is no significant differences exist between science and arts female students in their academic stress in F.C.E, Zaria.

**Methodology**

The design adopted in conducting this research was correlation. This design according to Abdullahi (2005), is a form of descriptive research undertaken when dealing with systematic collection of data or information from a population through the use of personal interview, opinion, scale, questionnaire and or observation. This study involves an investigation of entire population of people or items under study by collecting data from sample drawn from the population and assuming that these samples are true representation of the entire population. Since the population of this study is large, and samples are to be drawn to represent the entire population, correlation method is appropriate to that effect.

The population of this study was made up of all NCE I-III students of Federal College of Education, Zaria. Their number stands at six thousand, six hundred and thirty five (6,635) female students. This is the population of the entire NCE I-III female students of Federal College of Education, Zaria and the sample size was three hundred and fifty-one (351) female students.

This instrument is a standardized one that seeks to determine the aspects of academic stress, social adjustment and CGPA of students. The 20 items of each instrument concentrates on issues such as
speaking in public, meeting new people, answering question in class, relating with peers, attending occasions and many more. It has five points scale ranging from strongly agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Not Sure (NS), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD) which represent students’ feelings. However the social adjustment inventory was by Bell, (1994), and the academic stress inventory was adopted by Kelvin (2004)

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between academic stress and academic achievement among female students of FCE, Zaria.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on the Relationship between Academic Stress and Academic Achievement among Female Students of FCE, Zaria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>CORRELATION INDEX R</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>SIG (P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic stress</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>2.9525</td>
<td>.45233</td>
<td>.889</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic achievement</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>66.6895</td>
<td>10.03354</td>
<td>0.889</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The computed result of the above table 1, Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics revealed that significant relationship exists between academic achievement and academic stress. This is because the calculated significant (p) value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance at a correlation index r value of 0.889 at df of 349. This shows that academic stress significantly affects academic achievement. This implies that the higher the level of academic stress, the lower the level of academic achievement. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between academic stress and academic achievement among female students of FCE, Zaria, is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement among female students of FCE Zaria

Table 2, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on the Relationship between Social Adjustment and Academic Achievement among Female Students of FCE Zaria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>CORRELATION INDEX R</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>SIG (P)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social adjustment</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>50.2593</td>
<td>8.92115</td>
<td>0.469</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic achievement</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>18.7920</td>
<td>2.06869</td>
<td>0.469</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The computed results of the above table 4.3.4, Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics (PPMC) revealed that significant relationship exist between social adjustment and academic achievement of female students in FCE, Zaria. This is because the calculated significant (p) value of 0.002 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance at a correlation index r value of 0.469 this implies that the higher the level of social adjustment, the lower the academic achievement. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement among female students of FCE, Zaria is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There are no significant differences existing between science and arts female students in their academic stress in F.C.E, Zaria.

Justification for statistical technique: The Independent t-test sample statistics is used to test this hypothesis because the computed test quantitative variable mean academic stress (dependent variable) is being answered by the same group of respondents science and arts female students of FCE, Zaria.
Results of the above table 3, independent t-test statistics showed that significant difference exists between science and arts female students in their mean academic stress. Reason being the fact that the calculated p value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 level of significance while the calculated t value of 5.144 is higher than the 1.96 critical t value at df 349. Their calculated mean academic stress are 69.5460 and 64.2126 by science and arts female students, with a mean difference of 5.3332 between science and art female students. This implies that science female students had higher level of academic stress than the arts female students counterpart in the college. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant differences existing between science and arts female students in their academic stress in F.C.E, Zaria, is hereby rejected.

Discussions
The paper aimed at investigating the relationship among academic stress, social adjustment with academic achievement of female students in Federal College of Education, Zaria.

Hypothesis one: The findings of this research that significantly affects the academic achievement of female students in F.C.E, Zaria. The findings agree with that of Othman (2014) who established that is the most significant predictor of academic performance of undergraduate student with p= value of 0.000. Therefore, social adjustment was found to enhance the relationship between affective adjustment and academic achievement. The study also agreed with that of Osas and Muddi whose findings showed that social adjustment influences students academic achievement with p=0.000.

Hypothesis two: Research hypothesis investigated relationship between social adjustment and academic achievement among female students of F.C.E, Zaria. These findings agree with other researchers. According to Siryk, (2002), parent education is one of the strongest predictor of cognitive performance, academic adjustment with academic attainment of students in tertiary institutions.

Hypothesis three: Research hypothesis examined showed that significant difference exists between science and arts female students in their academic stress in F.C.E, Zaria. This is informed by the fact that the calculated (P) value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 level of significance while the calculated t value of 5.144 is higher than the 1.96 critical t value at df 349. Their calculated mean academic stress are 69.5460 and 64.2126 for science and arts female students respectively. With a mean difference of 5.3332 between them. This implies that the science female students had higher level of academic stress than the arts female students counterpart. The findings correspond with the findings of Yengimolki and Malekitabar (2015) who aimed at exploring the relationship between self-concept, academic stress with academic achievement of student. The research shows that significant difference exists between science and arts female students. There is also a significant difference in the overall academic stress between these two groups (science and arts) but there is no significant difference between their self-concept.

Conclusions
Based on the result of the hypothesis, the following conclusions can be deduced:
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1. High academic stress affect their academic achievement than those with low academic stress
2. Poor level of social adjustment affect their academic achievement than those with high social adjustment.
3. The calculated mean of academic stress indicate that science female students are academically stressful than their arts female students counterpart.

Recommendations
The following recommendations are given on the basis of findings of this research
1. The college management should have functional psychological testing and counseling centres to proffer solution to female students with academic stress for proper academic achievement.
2. College administrators should pay more attention to students with poor social adjustment and encourage them to be part of social activities in the school. This will improve their academic achievement.
3. College management should encourage the science female students or set aside a social programme week for the science female students. This will encourage them to participate in social activities thereby reduce their academic stress.

References


