Original Research Article

Psychosocial Problems and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Aba Educational Zone

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Abstract: This study focused on investigating impact of psychosocial problems on academic achievement of students in Aba educational zones. The study posed 3 three research questions and three hypotheses to guide the study. The researchers used a sample of 300 students in public senior secondary schools in Aba educational zones. Three (3) instruments on psychosocial problems were used for data collection and they were: stress level rating scale, anxiety level inventory scale and peer relationship rating scale. The internal consistencies of the instruments were established through Cronbach alpha statistical tool estimated at 0.79, 0-81, and 0.86 respectively. Using the Person Product Moment Correlational Coefficient (PPMCC) to analyze the data collected from respondents, the finding from the study shows that: psychosocial problems such as stress, anxiety and peer relationship correlate with student's academic achievement. This implies that psychosocial problems contribute to student's poor performance in examinations. Based on the findings, the study recommended that teachers should first identify causes of student's poor performance before providing intervention programmes to foster proper adjustment and enhance academic performance.
Keywords: Academic Achievement, students, Stress, Anxiety, Psychosocial.

INTRODUCTION

Learning is a critical aspect of development during students. The critical nature of learning especially at the secondary school level required physical, emotional, and social environment to enable healthy functioning of students expressed in achievement in educational outcomes. In Nigerian schools however, the reverse is the case. Some students are subjected psychosocial problems which affect their adjustment and lead them to anti-social behaviors. Psychosocial problems according to Chikwe (2014) are those psychological and social factors affecting students healthy functioning in the school environment. These factors include learning problems, anxiety, fear, vision and speech problems, attention problems, and memory related problems. Others are emotional problems such as: anxiety, fear, anger, depression, poor affective responses, frustration and general feeding of dissatisfaction in school environment. Social problems are not left out and they include poor communication skills, social status problems, insecurity at home, social stigma and peer rejection. This problem prevents student from performing well in their school tasks.

Akinade (2007) evaluating the effect of these psychological is of the view that most anti-social behaviors comes from the influence of psychosocial problems on students. The research has observed that when students are faced with learning difficulties they tend to display signs of frustration inform of aggression and other violence behaviors.

When students are confronted with negative emotions such as anger, depression and general dissatisfaction at school environment, they tend to manifest these problems through truancy, sullying, isolation problems and poor academic achievement. Emotional problems do not only affect students well-being but lead them to destructive lifestyle such as excessive alcohol intake, smoking and other hard drugs like cocaine and heroin (Chikwe, 2014). Hard drugs taken in any form affects the health and leads students to other criminal activities such as armed robbery,

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kidnapping, murder and human trafficking (Enakponye, 2006).

The school socialization process pressures students to be like their peers or risk social rejection. Relationships students experience with peers in school have much greater influence on their behaviors than the research had previously assured (Akinlola, 2009). Many students through peer association have been introduced to anti-social behaviors such as cultism leading to poor academic achievement.

Students confronted with these problems behave differently because they are faced daily with overwhelming problems that result in adjustments difficulties. Lack of attention accompanying social problem could affect students negatively. Psychosocial problems hinder student wellbeing by lowering their self-esteem (Anderson, 2017). These problems are often ignored while shames are shifted to other factors as causes of student's poor achievement in school.

Research conducted by Chikwe (2014) considered factors such as prostitution, cultism, examination malpractice and social class of parents as problems facing students. Other factors ignored in that study such as stress, anxiety and peer rejection were x-rayed as factors causing psychosocial problems in this study. This study was carried in Aba educational zone while chikwe's was used in owerri educational zone.

The researchers in this study correlated three psychosocial problems of students in senior secondary school such as stress, anxiety and peer rejection to student's academic achievement. This study is significant because it revealed to stakeholders in education sector the nature of psychosocial problems faced daily by students.

Students are daily faced with problems that tend to deprive them of good grades in achievements tests. These problems include: stressors such as frustration, anger, fear, anxiety and peer rejection all this problem weigh heavily on the psychology of the students resulting to poor performance in school. It is proper to say that these problems do not allow students to have full concentration even in the classroom while lessons are going on. Some students out of frustration decides to stay away from school while others dropout. An important question here is what is the relationship between this psychosocial problems and students academic achievement? The finding of this study will reveal the extent of the association between psychosocial problem and academic achievement of students in senior secondary school in Aba educational zone.

Purpose of the Study
The main purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between psychosocial problems and academic achievement of students in senior secondary schools. Subsequently, the study will:
1. Determine the relationship between stress and academic achievement of students in senor secondary school students in Aba Educational Zone, Abia State.
2. Ascertain the relationship between anxiety and academic achievement of students in senor secondary school students in Aba Educational Zone, Abia State.
3. Examine the relationship between peer rejection and academic achievement of students in senor secondary school students in Aba Educational Zone, Abia State.

Research Questions
Three research questions guided this study:
1. What is the relationship between stress and academic achievement of senior secondary school student in Aba Education Zone Aba, Abia State?
2. What is the relationship between anxiety and academic achievement of senior secondary school student in Aba Education Zone Aba, Abia State?
3. What is the relationship between peer rejection and academic achievement of senior secondary school student in Aba Education Zone Aba, Abia State?

Hypotheses
Three hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05, level of significance.
1. There is no significant relationship between stress and academic achievement of senior secondary school student in Aba Education Zone Aba, Abia State.
2. There is no significant relationship between anxiety and academic achievement of senior secondary school student in Aba Education Zone Aba, Abia State.

METHODOLOGY
The study is a non-experimental type employing correlational design to determine the extent of relationship between psychosocial problem and student's academic achievement. The sample of the study was 300 students in SS3. The researcher adopted stratified random sampling techniques in selecting 300 students from thirty public secondary school in Aba, Educational zone in Abia State. Instruments used in data collection were: Stress Level Identification Inventory (SLII), Student's Anxiety Level Inventory (SALI) and Peer Relationship RATING scale (PRRS) all designed by the researcher. It was divided into two sections. Section A: borders on the bio-data of respondents; while section B: contains five questions from each instrument making it a total of 15 items. Responses were rated on 11 point like rating scale of strongly agree (SA) (4), agree (A) (3), disagree (D) (2)

and strongly disagree (SD) (1). The established coefficient (SLII r = 0.79; SALI r = 0.81; PRRS r = 0.86) of the instruments indicated a strong index to internal consistency, reliability and construct validity of the instrument. The three instruments were administered on the same day by the research with the help of an assistant the instrument was collected the same day. The research questions were answered using Pearson product moment correlational statistics whereas the hypothesis were tested using the t-test of significance correlational.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between academic stress and academic achievement?

Data in table 1 shows coefficient of the relationship between academic stress and academic achievement of students in Aba educational zone.

Table 1: Academic stress and academic achievement of students

Correlations			
Variables		**Stress**	**Academic Achievement**
Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	0.77
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	300	300
Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	0.77	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	300	300
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level			

Table 1 presents a test of the relationship between stress and educational achievement among senior secondary school students in the Aba educational zone, Abia State, Nigeria. The Pearson correlation between stress and academic achievement was found to be 0.77, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two variables. This suggests that as stress levels increase, academic achievement also tends to increase, and vice versa. With a calculated p-value of 0.001, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold, the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. This statistical analysis clearly reveals a significant positive association between stress and academic achievement, meaning that stress significantly affects the academic performance of senior secondary school students in the Aba educational zone of Abia State, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between anxiety and academic achievement of students?

This section of the study mirrored whether or not, there exist a significant relations between anxiety and academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Aba educational zone, Abia state, Nigeria.

Table 2: The relationship between anxiety and academic achievement of students

Correlations			
Variables		**Academic Achievement**	**Anxiety**
academic achievement	Pearson Correlation	1	0.82
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	300	300
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	0.82	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	300	300
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level			

Based on the statistical figures presented in Table 2, which examine the relationship between anxiety and academic achievement among students in the study areas of Abia State, a calculated R-value of 0.82 and a p-value of .000 were obtained. Since the calculated R-value of 0.82 is greater than the p-value of .000, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, while the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between anxiety and academic achievement among students. In other words, this finding indicates that anxiety is a strong factor affecting the academic performance of senior secondary school students in the Aba educational zone, Abia State, Nigeria.

Research Question3: What is the relationship between peer rejection and academic achievement?

The data in Table 3 represent data on the relationship between peer rejection and academic achievement in Aba educational zone.

Table 3: The relationship between peer rejection and academic achievement

Correlations			
Variables		**Academic Achievements**	**Peer Rejection**
academic achievements	Pearson Correlation	1	0.58
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	300	300
Peer Rejection	Pearson Correlation	0.58	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	300	300
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level			

Table 3 revealed that the Pearson correlation coefficient between academic achievement and peer rejection was 0.58, indicating a moderate positive correlation. This means that as one variable (academic achievement) increases, peer rejection also tends to increase. Since the p-value of 0.001 is below the typical significance level of 0.05, along with the calculated r-value of 0.58, it suggests that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two variables tested. In conclusion, there is a meaningful moderate positive association between academic achievement and peer rejection in this sample. This indicates that as academic achievement increases, peer rejection tends to increase as well, and vice versa.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES
Hypotheses 1: There is no significant relationship between stress and academic achievement of students.

Data in table 4 represent result on the test of hypothesis on the relationship between stress and academic achievement of students in Aba educational zone.

Table 4: Relationship between stress and academic achievements of student

Correlations			
		Academic achievements	**stress**
Academic Achievements	Pearson Correlation	1	.182[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
stress	Pearson Correlation	.182[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level, N=300, p-value=.002, r-value = .182			

Based on the table figures, there is a weak positive correlation between academic achievement and stress. The calculated r-value (.182) was statistically significant, as the obtained p-value (.002) was less than .05. This implies that as students' academic achievements increase, stress levels also tend to rise, although the relationship is not strong. Thus, there is a significant weak positive relationship between stress and academic achievement among students in senior secondary schools in the Aba educational zone of Abia State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: Test of relationship between anxiety and academic achievements of students in Abia educational zone senior secondary schools.

Table 5: Relationship between anxiety level and academic achievements of student

Correlation			
Variables		**Academic Achievement**	**Anxiety**
Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	1	.340
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.055
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.340	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.055	
**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level, N=300, p-value=.340, r-value = .055			

The table projected a calculated r-value of 0.340 and a calculated p-value of 0.055. Therefore, since the calculated r-value is greater than the obtained table value, the alternative hypothesis was adopted, and the null hypothesis was rejected. This simply implies that there exists a statistically significant relationship between anxiety and academic performance in the study areas. By implication, the academic performance or achievements of senior secondary schools in the Aba educational zone is greatly influenced by anxiety.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS
The findings reveal that academic stress correlates positively and strongly with students' academic achievement. This finding means that high

level of stress is a problem to students that it affects them negatively. This implies that students with high stress level may perform poorly to examination. The reason for this result according to Akinade (2007) is that stress inhibits good performance in school. When students interpret their workload wrongly it becomes stress rather than tasks through hard work could be accomplished. Wrong interpretation of work load induces stress. This study is in line with the findings of Omotayo and Igwe (2015) whose works maintains that stress "threaten" students wellbeing.

The anxiety level of students was found in this student to correlate with academic achievement. Anxiety has been noted by psychologists as one of the psychological problems students face in school. This implies that anxiety is a psychological problem to students and it affects their academic achievement. Anxiety affects processing skills of students making it difficult for them to respond positively in examination conditions. The findings of this study in line with that of Nwagwu (2012) whose study determined the relationship between text anxiety and students stress academic achievement.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Psychosocial problems facing students has not been given a proper investigation because intelligence Quotient has been taken as the yardstick for students' academic achievement. Not minding other social factors which spell doom to many students whose problems in school go beyond the intelligence ratings. This work has thrown more light on the fact that academic achievement of students also depend on some psychosocial factors in and out of school environment.

Based on the findings, it is therefore recommended that:
- ➤ Counselors should endeavor to know the actual cause of poor performance of students in school before judgment.
- ➤ Parents and school authorities should endeavor to float intervention programmes that will help students who have this problem in schools and at home to access adequate counseling modalities set in place.

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