



ABSTRACT

This study investigated psychosocial variables and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior special secondary schools in Rivers State. The study adopted correlational research design. The study was guided by six research questions and six null hypotheses. The population of the study comprised three

PSYCHOSOCIAL VARIABLES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN JUNIOR SPECIAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

It is in the interest of stakeholders, researchers, parents and governments that students should have high academic performance in their various subjects and in internal and external examinations. Okoma (2018) defined academic performance as what a learner is able to accomplish by execution of class work in the school. Okoma added that academic performance refers to achievement of individuals' objective to various types of knowledge and skills. Suh (2016) added that at its highest potential, academic performance involves a student's psychological investment in learning, comprehending, and mastering knowledge. Academic performance is determined by



hundred and seventy-two (372) students with hearing impairment in the area. The sample size was 92 students with hearing impairment. The convenience sampling technique was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, titled: “Psychosocial Variables and Academic Performance Questionnaire” (PSVAPQ)”. The reliability of the instrument was determined through test re-test reliability method which yielded a reliability index of $r=0.86$ for depression subscale, $r=0.79$ for stress subscale, $r=0.75$ for self-concept subscale, $r=0.80$ for interpersonal relationship subscale, $r=0.75$ for social support subscale, $r=0.74$ for peer pressure subscale and $r=0.82$ for academic performance scale. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to answer research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed there was a positively strong correlation between depression, depression, stress, self-concept, interpersonal relationship, social support, peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State. It was recommended among others that; teachers, peers and families should be encouraged to provide avenue for social support to students with hearing impairment through social clubs, meetings, field trips and class activities.

Keywords: Hearing Psychological, Social, Performance, Impairment.

many factors which include psychological and social factors both of which are contextually referred to as psychosocial factors. The term “psychosocial” is coined from two words: psychological and social.

In relation to psychological factors, Thanga (2020) noted that psychological factors can be positive, such as happiness, affection, and vitality, or negative, such as fear, perceived stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms. Thanga added that psychological factors include individual-level processes and meanings that influence mental states. Yumone (2021) disclose that depression as a psychological factor holds strong influence on an individual’s behaviours



as most individuals may feel less motivated to work, learn and participate in social activities. As though the menace of depression is not enough, Boxern (2020) noted that students can be stressed due to different reasons or stressors such as; lesson over-load, heavy workload, difficulty understanding contents, financial problem, relationship with teachers and fellow students, among others which can inhibit and suppress learning and academic achievement. Similarly, Wender (2020) believed that little is known about students' perceptions of their academic experience and the kind of self-concepts they construct, based upon these experiences, as well as the extent to which they are motivated to do their best in academic work.

Aside studying the psychological factors that influences student's performance in school, it is also important to examine some social factors that significantly influences students' academic performance. Social factors has become an important subject in psychology, sociology, education and humanities because of its influence on behaviour. Prestone (2020) maintained that several social factors acts as predictors on students' performance and adjustment in school. Prestone observed that quality of students interpersonal relationship contributes to their success in school as good interpersonal relationship enhances peer tutoring/mentoring. Crazor (2022) highlights social support as another important social factor that has strong influence on the performance of students. In this case, Crazor maintained that social support is the access to and use of individuals, groups, or organizations in dealing with life's vicissitudes while Houe (2018) explained that peer pressure is the ability of people from the same social rank or age to influence another of same age bracket as peer pressure is usually associated with teens although its influence is not confined to teenagers alone. Bountu (2023) asserted that peer pressure is commonly associated with episodes of adolescent risk taking (such as delinquency, drug abuse, sexual behaviours), because these behaviour commonly occur in the company of peers. It can also have positive effects when youth are pressured by the peer toward positive behaviour such as volunteering for charity work or excelling in academics (Bountu, 2023). This was the background that motivated the researcher to investigate psychosocial



variables and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior special secondary schools in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria and Rivers State in particular like in many other countries of the world, students with hearing impairment have consistently trailed behind their normal counterparts in academic achievement. Keen observation by the researcher's indicates that students with disabilities continue to have poor academic performance in national examinations like West African Examination Council (WAEC), which may be an indicator of several negative psychosocial influences. The researcher observed that majority of these learners rarely make 6-Credits including English Language and Mathematics. The problem in the researcher's view may be linked to psychosocial factors which is central to special education, educational psychology and has been the subject of interest and inquiry for some time now. The researcher observed that mental health disorders among students with hearing impairment may lead to alarming level of anxiety, depression and stress which is believed to be accelerated by lack of finance, family crises, low self-concept, stigmatization, lack of emotional support, and hostile school climate.

The researcher observed that students with hearing impairment who find themselves in the midst of hearing students may often feel humiliated, inadequate and may be exposed to contempt as the hearing ones may call them names in relation to their disability. In addition, the normal student(s) whether in the classroom or outside may discriminate against the hearing impaired students which may create the problem of social acceptability. Hence, the study investigated psychosocial variables and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior special secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate psychosocial variables and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior special secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study intended to;



1. Determine the relationship between depression and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
2. Examine the relationship between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
3. Ascertain the relationship between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
4. Find out the relationship between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
5. Determine the relationship between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
6. Examine the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the relationship between depression and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State?
4. What is the relationship between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State?



5. What is the relationship between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State?
6. What is the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses further guided the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between depression and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
2. There is no significant relationship between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
3. There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
4. There is no significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
5.]There is no significant relationship between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State
6. There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State

Method

The study employed a Correlational research design. The population of the study comprised three hundred and seventy-two (372) junior secondary school students with hearing impairment in Rivers State. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample of 92 students with hearing



impairment for the study. The research instrument was a self-designed instrument titled “Psychosocial Variables and Academic Performance Questionnaire” (PSVAPQ). The PSVAPQ instrument contained seven (7) sections. Section A contained Bio-data, Section B; contained item statements on depression, Section C; contained item statements on stress, Section D; contained item statements on self-concept, Section E; contained item statements on interpersonal relationship, Section F; contained item statements on social support, Section G; contained item statements on peer pressure. The “Psychosocial Variables and Academic Performance Questionnaire” (PSVAPQ) had 40 items structured on a four point modified Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. The English Language Performance Test (ELPT) contained 20 items with four options in which one was the correct answer, while the rest three options were distractors. Five (5) marks was awarded to each correctly answered question. To determine the reliability of the instruments, the researcher used test re-test reliability method which yielded a reliability index of $r=0.86$ for depression subscale, $r=0.79$ for stress subscale, $r=0.75$ for self-concept subscale, $r=0.80$ for interpersonal relationship subscale, $r=0.75$ for social support subscale, $r=0.74$ for peer pressure subscale and $r=0.82$ for academic performance scale. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used in answering the research questions and testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The data collected were analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0.

Results

Research Question: What is the relationship between depression and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between depression and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.



Table 1: *Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Depression and Academic Performance of Students*

		Depression	Academic Performance
Depression	Pearson Correlation	1	-.201
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	92	92
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.201	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	92	92

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

Table 1 of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation results reveal that r-value of -.201 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a negatively weak correlation between depression and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools. Since the p-value is less than the chosen significant level, the null hypothesis **is rejected**. The implication of the result is that there is significant relationship between depression and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.



Table 2: *Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Stress and Academic Performance of Students*

		Stress	Academic Performance
Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	-.229
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	92	92
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.229	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	92	92

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

Table 2 of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation results reveal that r-value of -.229 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a negatively weak correlation between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools. Since the p-value is less than the chosen significant level, the null hypothesis **is rejected**. The implication of the result is that there is significant relationship between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.



Table 3: *Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Self-Concept and Academic Performance of Students*

		Self-Concept	Academic Performance
Self-Concept	Pearson Correlation	1	.700
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	92	92
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.700	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	92	92

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

Table 3 of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation results reveal that r-value of .700 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools. Since the p-value is less than the chosen significant level, the null hypothesis **is rejected**. The implication of the result is that there is significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Four: What is the relationship between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.



Table 4: *Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Interpersonal Relationship and Academic Performance of Students*

		Interpersonal Relationship	Academic Performance
Interpersonal Relationship	Pearson Correlation	1	.811
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	92	192
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.811	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	92	92

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

Table 4 of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation results reveal that r-value of .811 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools. Since the p-value is less than the chosen significant level, the null hypothesis **is rejected**. The implication of the result is that there is significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State in Rivers State.

Research Question Five: What is the relationship between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant relationship between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.



Table 5: *Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Social Support and Academic Performance of Students*

		Social Support	Academic Performance
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.741
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	92	92
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.741	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	92	92

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

Table 5 of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation results reveal that r-value of .741 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools. Since the p-value is less than the chosen significant level, the null hypothesis **is rejected**. The implication of the result is that there is significant relationship between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Question Six: What is the relationship between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Six: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.



Table 6: *Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Peer Pressure and Academic Performance of Students*

		Peer Pressure	Academic Performance
Peer Pressure	Pearson Correlation	1	.891
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.001
	N	92	92
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.891	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	
	N	92	92

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

Table 6 of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation results reveal that r-value of .891 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools. Since the p-value is less than the chosen significant level, the null hypothesis **is rejected**. The implication of the result is that there is significant relationship between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Depression and Academic Performance among Students with Hearing Impairment

Data in table 1 of Pearson Product Moment Correlation results revealed that r-value of -.201 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a negatively weak correlation between depression and academic performance among students



with hearing impairment. The study revealed that as depression increases, students' academic performance decreases. Similarly, as depression decreases, students' academic performance increases. The finding is in tandem with the study of Preston (2020) who revealed that students with hearing impairment and other areas of disabilities often feel depressed as a result of their disability which affects their performance, social skills and interpersonal relationship behaviours. The finding is not surprising to the researcher as ordinarily depression as a psychological construct holds negative connotations and breeds negative impact which would ultimately negatively affect the interpersonal relationship behaviours and academic performance of students with hearing impairment.

Stress and Academic Performance among Students with Hearing Impairment

Data in table 2 of Pearson Product Moment Correlation results revealed that r-value of $-.229$ with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a negatively weak correlation between stress and academic performance among students with hearing impairment. The study revealed that as stress increases, students' academic performance decreases. Similarly, as stress decreases, students' academic performance increases. The finding is in line with the study of Bountu (2023) who revealed that when students are subjected to unbearable stressful conditions, it interferes with their attitude towards learning which affects their performance and general adaptation within the school system. The finding is consistent with the study of Crazor (2022) who revealed that stress which is a complex pattern of emotional state, physiological reactions and related thoughts in response to external demands results primarily in deviations from normal states or performance and for students alters their interpersonal relationships behaviours and school grades. The researcher opines that the result could be so because hearing impairment just as other categories of disability puts extra burden on the individual which those of the normal hearing counterparts seem not to be experiencing which reduces their motivation, interest and desire to maintain a good academic grades.



Self-Concept and Academic Performance among Students with Hearing Impairment

Data in table 3 of Pearson Product Moment Correlation results revealed that r-value of .700 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between self-concept and academic performance among students with hearing impairment. The study revealed that as negative self-concept increases, students' academic performance decreases. Similarly, as negative self-concept decreases, students' academic performance increases. The result of this study suggest that students who have negative self-concept are less likely to perform well academically. In the same vein, students who are have positive self-concept are more likely to perform well academically. The finding is in agreement with the study of Wender (2020) who revealed that one's self-concept also called self-construction, self-identity, or self-perspective is a collection of beliefs about oneself that includes elements such as academic performance, gender roles, sexuality, and racial identity which all together affects ones social skills and academic performance. In collaboration, Okoma (2018) maintained that personality traits were transferrable as students tend to learn through imitation and observation. Hence, when significant others who sit as role models are unable to transmit positive self-concept/self-esteem, it influences the students even in their academic journey and success.

Interpersonal Relationship and Academic Performance among Students with Hearing Impairment

Data in table 4 of Pearson Product Moment Correlation results revealed that r-value of .811 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between interpersonal relationship and academic performance among students with hearing impairment. The study revealed that as poor interpersonal relationship increases, students' academic performance decreases. Similarly, as poor interpersonal relationship decreases, students'



academic performance increases. The finding agrees with the observation of Yumone (2021) who indicated that students who experienced smooth, friendly and cordial relationship with the school heads, teachers and students demonstrated better learning attitude and academic performance than their counterparts who were in a state of hostility with their superiors, colleagues or teachers.

Social Support and Academic Performance among Students with Hearing Impairment

Data in table 5 of Pearson Product Moment Correlation results revealed that r-value of .741 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between social support and academic performance among students with hearing impairment. The study revealed that as social support decreases, students' academic performance decreases. Similarly, as social support increases, students' academic performance increases. The finding is in line with the study of Suh (2016) who stated that support from teachers, peers, family members and therapist focuses on helping students with hearing impairment maintain success in their academics and social skills. It can be illustrated by how much teachers, peers, family members, and therapist care about students with hearing impairment education and the kind of support that are delivered by them. When family members, and therapist form a good collaboration with their children's school, it influences their children's interpersonal relationships behaviour and enhance their academic goals. The finding is also in agreement with the study of Boxern (2020) who revealed that the general public, teachers, peers, family members and therapist provides emotional, physical, material and informational needs as they spend time to share their feelings and accompany the students maintain high academic grades.



Peer Pressure and Academic Performance among Students with Hearing Impairment

Data in table 6 of Pearson Product Moment Correlation results revealed that r-value of .891 with its corresponding p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significance was gotten. This shows a positively strong correlation between peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment. The study revealed that as negative peer pressure increases, students' academic performance decreases. Similarly, as negative peer pressure decreases, students' academic performance increases. The finding is in tandem with the study of Thanga (2020) who revealed that students influences each other in several ways which may be negative or positive as positive peer influences stimulates, sustains and enriches learning and academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the researcher concluded that there was a positively strong correlation between depression, depression, stress, self-concept, interpersonal relationship, social support, peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State. It further revealed that there was significant relationship between depression, depression, stress, self-concept, interpersonal relationship, social support, peer pressure and academic performance among students with hearing impairment in junior secondary special schools in Rivers State.

Recommendations

1. Since the study has revealed that peer pressure relates to academic performance of students with hearing impairment, peers among others should develop the zeal and enthusiasm to accept, love and care for hearing impaired students in order to enhance their continual academic success;



2. It is further recommended that Government in collaboration with the Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) should set-up counselling units in all public and private special schools in the state to help combat the problem of depression and low self-concept among students with hearing impairment;
3. Teachers, peers and families should be encouraged to provide avenue for social support to students with hearing impairment through social clubs, meetings, field trips and class activities. Also members of the community should be encouraged to show social support to this young ones as it has been proven to have positive impact on their academic performance;
4. In helping students with hearing impairment improve in their academic performance, policy makers, curriculum planners and teachers should help in simplifying the curriculum to meet the needs of students with hearing impairment in order to reduce the incidence of stress experienced by the students which will boost their academic performance;
5. In addition, students with hearing impairment should thrive to maintain good and cordial relationship with their teachers and peers to guarantee a conducive learning environment since good interpersonal relationship was a major factor in enhancing academic performance;
6. In order to enhance the academic performance of students with hearing impairment, it is further recommended that teachers and school counsellors should provide a stimulating academic environment that would promote positive self-concept among the students.

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