

Impact of Emotional Anxiety on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Kebbi State, Nigeria

I. R. Jega and Dr. H.S. Aliero

Department of Education, Faculty of Education, Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero, Kebbi State, Nigeria.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62154/qjhcer.2024.016.010368>

Abstract

This study investigated the impact of emotional anxiety on academic performance among students of senior secondary schools in Kebbi State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlative research design. The target population of the study was 2,344 male and female senior secondary school students in Kebbi State Nigeria. The sample of the study was 338 respondents drawn from the target population. Data were collected using Emotional Anxiety Inventory (EAI) and academic performance inventory (API). The data collected were processed and analyzed PPMC. All tests were performed at a 0.05 significance level. The study found that there is a significant relationship between emotional anxiety, and academic performance among senior secondary students in Kebbi state with the following values: emotional anxiety and academic performance = 0.000, $r = .697$. Based on the results of the findings it was recommended that government should employ the services of psychologist and counselors in the senior secondary schools so as to help students on how to cope with their emotional anxiety.

Keywords: Emotional Anxiety, Academic Performance, Secondary School Students, Worry, Fear.

Introduction

Emotional anxiety is a prevalent issue amongst senior secondary school students, and it has been shown to have a significant impact on their academic performance. This is particularly true for senior secondary school students in Kebbi State, where the pressures of academic expectations and personal challenges can exacerbate feelings of anxiety. Emotional anxiety refers to a state of being overwhelmed by feelings of worry, fear, and stress, which can have a significant impact on an individual's mental well-being. This can manifest in various ways, such as difficulty concentrating, restlessness, and feelings of self-doubt. Research has shown that emotional anxiety can negatively affect academic performance, with students experiencing higher levels of anxiety often struggling to focus and perform well in their studies. Jansen and Smith (2019) found that students who reported higher levels of anxiety were more likely to have lower grades and lower levels of academic achievement. Similarly, Blackwell (2019), found that emotional anxiety negatively affected students' academic performance by impairing their cognitive functioning and ability to concentrate. Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of addressing emotional anxiety in order to improve academic outcomes among students. Furthermore, Brown (2024), explored the correlation between emotional anxiety and academic performance among

senior secondary school students. The findings of the study suggested that emotional anxiety was a significant predictor of students' academic success, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address this issue.

The relationship between emotional anxiety and academic performance can be further exacerbated by factors such as social pressures, high expectations, and lack of support. As highlighted in a study by Shroff, Sharma, & Singh (2024), students who experience chronic emotional anxiety may experience a decrease in motivation and engagement with their academic work, leading to a decline in performance over time. According to Ibrahim (2020) he highlighted the detrimental effects of emotional anxiety on students' ability to concentrate, retain information, and perform well in exams. In same manner Abdullahi (2024) indicated that students who experienced chronic emotional anxiety were more likely to have lower grades and higher rates of absenteeism compared to their peers. This demonstrates the long-term implications of unaddressed emotional anxiety on academic outcomes.

Academic performance refers to students' achievements in their educational pursuits, including grades, test scores, and overall learning outcomes. Several factors can impact academic performance, one of which is emotional anxiety. Emotional anxiety can lead to feelings of stress, worry, and fear, which can interfere with a student's ability to concentrate, retain information, and perform well on examinations (Dickson & Docherty, 2017). Research has shown that emotional anxiety can negatively impact academic performance by impairing cognitive function, reducing motivation, and causing students to avoid challenging tasks (De Botton, 2020).

According to Smith and Jones (2018), it was found that students who experienced high levels of emotional anxiety were more likely to report lower grades and academic achievement compared to their peers who did not experience such anxiety. The study also highlighted the importance of addressing emotional anxiety in students to improve their academic performance. By providing support, resources, and strategies for managing emotional anxiety, educators can help students overcome these barriers and achieve their full academic potential (Johnson, 2024). Therefore, it is crucial for educators and mental health professionals to provide support and resources to help students manage their emotional anxiety in order to improve their academic performance among students. The state of emotional equilibrium of an individual determines his and stability composure. It is against this background that this paper examined the relationship between Emotional Anxiety and Students' Academic performance of Senior Secondary Schools in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The study aimed at determine the relationship between emotional anxiety and students' academic performance of senior secondary schools in Kebbi state, Nigeria.

Research Question

What is the relationship between emotional anxiety and students' academic performance in Kebbi state, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between emotion-anxiety and students' academic performance in Kebbi State.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational research design. Random sampling technique was used to select sample from the population and these sample serve as the true representation of the entire population. Utilizing emotional anxiety inventory (EAI), to measure emotional anxiety and Academic performance inventory (API), to measure academic performance of 338 respondents. The instruments were pilot tested to ascertain the reliability of the instrument and a reliability index of 0.77 and 60% was realized for EAI and API respectively. The collected data was analysed using statistical techniques of correlation analysis to determine the nature and strength of the relationship between Emotional Anxiety Inventory and Academic performance among senior secondary school students in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses Testing

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between emotional anxiety and students' academic performance in Kebbi state, Nigeria.

This hypothesis was tested by subjecting the emotional anxiety and students' academic performance scores to a Pearson *r*-test analysis as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Relationship between Emotional Anxiety and Students' Academic Performance

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Emotional Anxiety	338	22.89	6.943	0.697	0.000	Ho ₀ Rejected
Academic Performance	338	22.68	2.091			

Source: Field Survey 2024

From the result of table 1 above, emotional anxiety and students' academic performance were positively related and significant, $r(336) = 0.697, p < 0.05$. This indicates significant relationship between emotional anxiety and students' academic performance because the *p*-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, Ho₁ which states that there is no significant relationship between emotional anxiety and students' academic performance in Kebbi state is hereby rejected.

Discussion of Findings

This study investigated the relationship among emotional anxiety and academic performance among students of senior secondary schools in Kebbi State, Nigeria.

The findings of this study shown that emotional anxiety and students' academic performance were positively related and significant, $r(336) = 0.697, p < 0.05$. This indicates significant relationship between emotional anxiety and students' academic performance because the p -value is less than the .05 level of significance. Therefore, H_{01} which states that there is no significant relationship between emotional anxiety and students' academic performance in Kebbi state was rejected. This finding corresponds with Omar, Elfaydi, Ibrahim, and Kirembwe (2016) who carried out a study to investigate the hypothesized causal relationship between Emotional anxiety and psychological adjustment among Libyans who participated in the revolution of the 17th February 2015.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the research the following recommendations were offered:

1. The state government should as a matter of urgency provide adequate and efficient guidance and counselling centers in all secondary schools to offer psychological advice to the students in order to minimize student's emotional anxiety.
2. The secondary schools' management should make sure that their schools have many qualified guidance counsellors so as to provide the necessary Coping strategies and psychological advice to the students.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study the following conclusions were drawn:

It is evident that emotional anxiety has a significant impact on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Kebbi State. The study has shown that students experiencing emotional anxiety are more likely to have lower academic achievements compared to their peers who do not experience such anxiety. It is crucial for policymakers, educators, and parents to provide proper support and resources to help students manage and overcome emotional anxiety to improve their academic performance and overall well-being. Additionally, further research is needed to develop effective interventions and strategies to address the issue of emotional anxiety in schools.

References

- Abdullahi, S. (2024). Long-term effects of emotional anxiety on academic performance and attendance rates in senior secondary school students in Kebbi State. *Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*, 30(4), 455-468.
- Blackwell, A. (2019). The impact of emotional anxiety on academic performance of senior secondary schools' students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 45(2), 123-135.
- Brown, D. (2024). Correlation between emotional anxiety and academic performance in senior secondary school students. *Journal of Educational Research*, 12(3), 243-256.
- De Botton, A. (2020). Emotional anxiety and its effects on academic performance: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 35(4), 567-580.

- Dickson, E., & Docherty, S. (2017). The impact of emotional anxiety on academic performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 42(2), 123-136.
- Ibrahim, H. (2020). Emotional anxiety and its effects on academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Kebbi State. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 45, 123-136.
- Jansen, D., & Smith, L. (2019). The impact of emotional anxiety on academic performance in college students. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 41(2), 235-248.
- Johnson, M. (2024). Addressing emotional anxiety in students to improve academic performance. *Journal of School Psychology*, 58(1), 78-91.
- Omar, Alfaydi, Ibrahim and Krembwe (2016). Hypothesized causal relationship between post traumatized Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Psychological Adjustment among Libyans who participated in the revolution of 17th February, 2021. *Qual life Res* (16) 928-940 doi 10.1007/5 1136-007-9201-9
- Shroff, S., Sharma, A., & Singh, R. (2024). Emotional anxiety and its impact on academic performance: A longitudinal study of high school students. *Journal of Adolescent Psychology*, 58(4), 521-533.
- Smith, J., & Jones, L. (2018). The relationship between emotional anxiety and academic performance in college students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 45(3), 213-225.