

Etiology, Nature and Upshot of Academic Stress on Fresh Science Degree Students in Tertiary Institutions, an Extrapolation

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Abstract: The paper examined the etiology, nature and upshot on Fresh (year one) science students in higher institutions in Port Harcourt. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to establish the perceived sources of stress on fresh university science students. A population of 6000 students was used; out of it, a samples size of 200 was selected through a stratified random sampling for the study. The study was guided with 2 research questions and 2 hypotheses. Academic stress rating scale (ASRS) was the instrument used after it was validated and its reliability was known using the Cronbach alpha $r=0.87$. The data collected was analyzed using the mean(x) and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the ANOVA and t-test were used to test the hypotheses. The result showed that; the sources of stress on fresh degree student varied from, personal, facilities, financial and other social factors. The stressors experienced by fresh students was categorized on the bases of strength into low, medium and high. The major sources of stress on fresh students came from three (3) main clusters of issues which borders around (1) environmental factors (2) social and (3) financial factors. In addition to the above, the result showed a significant difference in the sources of stress among the various department. On the other hand, the severity of stress does not differ between male and female students. Based on these, some recommendations were made.

Keywords: Academic stress, etiology, academic achievement, tertiary institution, fresh students, science.

INTRODUCTION

At every level of life, there is/are an accompanied challenge(s) that poses problem(s) to the individuals. The problems could be diverse and may be emanating from the person's engagements, environment, ambitions and psychosocial issues as well as academics. Consequently, handling these psychobiological challenges take divers' methods as well. To some, the problems are adequately resolved without causing any harm, and could be managed for a short period of time. To others the problem may linger for a long period of time and the consequences may lead to stressful situation. These issues differ in degree and direction from one individual to another and from one level of development to another irrespective of the persons' status, sex, age, class and so on. In the same vein, students experience different levels of stress at the different levels of their academic pursuit due to so many factors ranging from the individual difference, environment, workload, background, academic arrangement and so on [1]. The stress and stressors pupils experience at the primary or elementary schools may differ in size and strength or degree from the one they may experience when they move to the junior secondary school (Basic Education level) and also different from the types they may meet at the senior secondary and the tertiary education. Also, the effects

may differ in magnitude and direction between individuals and the level of education. Students in the tertiary institutions, especially university fresh (year one) students are a group particularly prone to stress; the stress experienced is usually due to the transitional nature of secondary setting to the university life [2, 3]. The causes of these stress experienced by the students may be due to so many factors which may include but not restricted to the adjustment mechanism- to being away from home for the first time, initiating a new life style as a result of the new environment, economic realities of the time, how to cope and maintain a high level of academic excellence and adjust to a new social environment and financial realities,. University students regardless of year in school, age, sex, the school location, students background and academic pressures often deal with pressures related to finding new friends and in so many occasions tries to identifies potential life partner. These stressors do not cause anxiety or tension by themselves. Instead, stress results from the interaction between stressors and the individual's perception and reaction to those stressors [3]. The amount of stress experience may be influenced by the individual's ability to effectively cope with stressful events and situations [4]. If the identified stress is not dealt with effectively, feeling of loneliness and nervousness as well as sleeplessness and excessive

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worrying, may result and might cause some grave effects on the academic progress of fresh students in the university [3]. It is important therefore, that we identify early causes of stress and possible intervention programme be designed to 'mitigate them so that they would achieve the purpose of going to the school. In order to design an effective intervention, the stressors specific to fresh university students must be determined which was why this study was raised. The dynamic relationship between the person and environment in stress perception and reaction is especially magnified in fresh university students. The problem and situations encountered by university students may differ from those faced by their non-students peers [5]. The environment in which university students live is quite different from the one outside. The continuous evaluation that university students are subjected to, such as weekly tests and term papers and several assignments which are not often experienced by non-students. The pressure to earn good grades and to earn a good degree is very high. Earning high grades is not the only source of stress for university students, other potential source of stress include excessive homework, unclear assignments and uncomfortable classroom [6].

Universities are structured in such a way that they welcome a great number of students with different background, abilities, capabilities, needs and behavioural disposition. These students are drawn away from their various communities and massed or nested together creating a social environment within which the children operate, interacts and relate. The environment is such that it involves social influence and interaction among students. Higher institution is the programme of study, training or training for research at the post-secondary level provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by competent state authorities' state and or through recognized accreditation system [7]. The activities in higher institution are different from other levels of education, consequently, the stress and stressors found in this level also are higher, the academic activities, expectations and demands expected a fresh student to face are of higher dimension especially when he/she faces a new environment

The concept of stress

The concept 'stress was derived from a Latin word *stringere*, it means to 'draw tight'. Based on the etymology, different authorities have defined, conceptualized and explained it in different ways and dimensions. For instance [8], conceptualized stress to mean a negative emotional, cognitive, behavioral and physiological process that occurs as a person tries to adjust to or deal with imbalance he/she experiences in life. In other words, so many areas of one's life can introduce stress to someone especially when it becomes

negative in itself and this is particularly proven in fresh students in the university due to the new environment and other variables that are not hitherto experienced. Stress is a necessary and inescapable associated with daily living-necessary because without some stress we would be listless and apathetic creatures, and unavoidable because it relates to any external event, it is agreeable an anxiety producing. Stress is defined as a feeling of tension that is both biological and psychological. That is an imbalance in the students or person's homeostasis it refers to the consequence of the failure of an organism human or animal to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats, whether actual or imagined. Stress consists of any event in which environmental demands, internal or external demands or both tax or exceed the adaptive resources of the individual, social system or tissue system.-

Citing the definition of Smeltzer and Bane, Abara [9] said that stress is viewed as a state produced by a change that is perceived as challenging, threatening or demanding in the person's dynamic balance or equilibrium. They added that there is an actual or perceive imbalance in the student's ability to meet the demands of the new situation. While, Keman [10] viewed stress as the perception of discrepancy between environmental demands and individual capabilities to fulfill his/ her demands, While to Cambel [11] in his view, defined stress as the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demands placed on them especially in situation where deadlines are placed, especially for fresh students in the university where the demands and pressures are novel due to the new environment and academic pressure to cope with the present challenges and attaining an excellent result.

The concept of academic stress

Academic stress is the total feeling of angst or trepidation or worries over the expected performance in one's academic activities such as semester examination, class test, and continuous assessment test and or seminar presentation or other academic engagements which result in an imbalance in the body system piled up for the purpose of academic excellence during the academic year. Academic stress also, may refer to the unpleasant psychological situations that occur due to the educational expectations from parents, teachers, peers and family members, pressure of parents for academic achievement, present educational and examination system, burden of homework and so on. Academic stress is a mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even an awareness of possibility of such failure [12].

Bisht in Lai [13] defines academic stress as a demand related to academics that tax or exceed the available resources resulting in anxiety.

According to Lai [13] academic stress is a mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic demands. These demands may be numerous, tax, or exceed available resources of the students. Consequently, the students can be under stress, since the demands are related to academic goals attainment. While the author views academic stress as the anxiety, pressure and the imbalance experienced by students during their academic engagement arising from high expectation, family pressure and goal fulfillment.

Stressors are demands made by eternal or external environment that upset balance, thus affecting Physical and psychological well-being and requiring actions to restore balance [14]. In the views of [15] Academic stress is linked with stressors such as the student's perception of the extensive knowledge required and the perception of an inadequate time to develop it for a positive result.

Sources of Academic Stress

Bernstein *et al.* [8] defined the source of stress as every circumstance or event that threatens or provoke and tends to disrupt people's daily functioning and may cause them to make adjustments. These sources of stress are called stressors. In relation to university, fresh students are not exempted, they faced events that poses threat or likely to disrupt their daily functioning in their academic progress due to their new environment they found themselves and other academic pressure such as assignment, financial challenges and coping with the new environment. The source of stress for fresh science students varies. According to Sorita [16] fresh students in the university have three major sources of stress the school, the family and the social factors. Although, these sources differ from degree of severity to duration. What this means is that what may be a stressor to one student may not be noticed or seen to be for another student no matter the age, level of socio-economic status and so on.

Sorita [16] further opined that many factors contribute to the stress being experience by fresh science students in the university. They emanate from so many areas such as too much homework, unsatisfactory academic performance in terms of their semester result arising from poor CGPA. Lack of interest in the course or field of study, that is, a situation where students are admitted into a course of not their choice, but the institution has to give them to fill the spaces where few candidates applied. Consequently, the students do not have much interest in the choice. Stress from high expectation of parents. When the students do

not met the expectation of the teacher, parents and sponsors in terms of their academic achievement, they get so much worried an the consequence is the academic stress they will experience.

In addition to academic requirements, creating and establishing new relationship with faculty members and managing the time pressures may also be sources of stress to fresh students [17]. Other researchers like Towbes and Cohen [18] have assessed the level of stress on college students and have created the college chronic life stress survey in which they focused on the frequency of chronic stress in the lives of college students and the effect on their health, social and academic life. The scale contains items that persist across time to create stress such as interpersonal conflicts, self-esteem problems and others that borders on financial problems. They examined these stressors in relation to how many times a students had to deal with them on a weekly basis. They found that with regard to chronic stress. Fresh students (first year) scored higher than other students. While many specific events and situations have been implicated as stressors for university students, more research is needed to investigate the nature and sources of these stressors for university students and which stressors are mostly prevalent in university students lives. It is unclear whether most stressors result from interpersonal relationships or academics. Knowing the sources of students stress will make the university administrator know how to monitor and control the stress factors that are responsible for the students stress. This stressor may differ in strength and degree depending on the following characteristics and conditions.

1. The background of the student. Academic activities in the high institution have different work load and environmental setting compared to the secondary school setting where the students were coming from the school background. The students background may act as an appropriate signal to initiate and cause stress on the students
2. The students' experience, strong stress reactions sometimes are traceable to past traumatic experience and events one has encountered. For instance, when a student performs poorly when in the secondary school, it becomes an experience which he/she would not like to pass through again. The same is true of students who at one time or another had experience academic failure when at the higher level of education and when a similar situation rears up, the tendency to be stressful is very high. These stressors may be as a result of some inherent factors that manifest at different levels of education due to the experience the individual learners undergoes
3. The socio- economic status of the students. Reuben [2] identified that financial problems was a major source of students stress in the university, this

implies that the ability of fresh students to satisfy certain financial needs could lead students to being less stressful and that, can only be achieved by those from high socioeconomic status. Whereas those whose SES are poor and are threatened are always at the risk of being stressful due to their financial standing

4. The sex of the students: The attitude of males and females towards science study in the university has in addition, to the achievement, great effect in the internal balance they have. Female student looked down on the science subject as a male affair and not meant for them. In any endeavor including scientific studies, the student feeling, emotions, motives, interest and attitude must be fully invested in order to make great achievement. This assertion was reinforced by Oginyiriofo [19] who said that the greatest difference between sexes is responsibility and values. Obanyi [20] again corroborated that the male students are far better than female students in basic science learning. Therefore if the sex differences are not primarily considered in the study of science, academic stress may set in and the expectation of the student in term of their achievement may be dashed. Aba-or [21], in his study, revealed that sex of the student greatly affects the interest and achievement of the student in science.
5. The priorities. Students admitted to the university with the aim of acquiring the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes that would make them informed citizens and help them to independently and self-reliant, sometimes misplace their priorities by driving frivolous such that their primary reason for coming to the university is misplaced. His misplaced priorities do conflicts with the academic activities and when the conflicts are not properly managed, stress sets in and the consequence is usually very grievous which might end up in the students poor academic achievement which may lead to frustration and eventual dropping out of the university.
6. The age and biochemistry of the students. Cortisol, the primordial hormone that elicits stress in the body is a factor and determines the level of stress a student received during the schooling period in the university. The hormones increase sugar in the bloodstream, enhances your brains use of the glucose and increase the availability of substances that repairs tissue. The control, release of these hormones, differs from one person to another and among different age brackets. Consequently, the level of stress induced as a result of the effect of the hormones and age in the person differ.
7. Psycho-chemical status of the students. The genetic makeup of the students determines the level of stress on fresh university students. The genes that control the stress response keep most people on a fairly steady emotional level only occasionally priming the body for fight and flight. Overactive or underactive stress response may stem from slight deficiencies in these genes and thus moderate or mediate the level of stress on fresh university students observed during their academic or schooling years.
8. Perception of students about stress. Academic stressors include the student's perception of the extensive knowledge base required and the perception of an inadequate time to develop it [15]. Stress occurs when an individual is confronted with situations that they perceived are overwhelming and cannot cope with. The perception of stress by student at the tertiary levels of education differs and the causes and effects also varied. Therefore, different individuals perceived stress and the stressors differently in that, the levels, effect and the ability to cope, makes the difference in fresh student's life.
9. *Health conditions of the students*: chronic ally elevated level of academic stress hormones may exert damaging effect on the neural and other body system. Brain area that are involved in stress response such as the prefrontal cortex, may be particularly vulnerable to heightened level of cortisol, implicating executive function as a neurocognitive system that is particularly likely to be affected by chronic stress [22].
10. Academic environment. Stress in higher institution can generate two sides of actions; the positive and negative actions. According to Tweed [13]. Intricate academic environment sometimes pose un-estimated medical or health problems to the students which in turn affects their academic progress. Therefore, it is important to maintain a well-balanced academic environment conducive for better learning with focus on reducing academic stress that students may likely face. Turkeimer and Gottesman in Aba-or [21] explained that the normal environment are largely irrelevant for different among children intelligent. According to the author, below a certain threshold of environmental quality, intelligence increases sharply with the better environment. In the contrary, above a certain threshold of environmental quality, the reaction planes are essentially flat. Where the environment is normal and above a particular tolerance threshold, it stimulates stressful situation which in turns contributes to the academic stress of the student in the university. This environment might be in-situ or ex-situ meaning that even in the university where the student finds him can offer environment which may be above the normal threshold and the obvious is the stress added to the student.

The major argument has been that, students stress has not gained much attention since most scholars were preoccupied with the conventional work place stress as opposed to students' academic stress. Institutions of higher learning worldwide have not taken serious steps to find out the health of students, this could be attributed to the fact that students who stay at the university is based on short period and therefore the effect of their stresses have little direct impact on the activities or operations of the institution. Another plausible reason little attention has been given to students stress could be attributed to their short period of stay in the institutions. The argument was that when the stress students experienced is allowed to linger, it might affect the students' health and when the student's health is affected, the psychological component of the student's health may be affected as well and this may compromise the quality of education they are supposed to receive [23, 1, 19]. Consequently, it might influence their academic achievement negatively. The objective of this research therefore, is to examine the etiology of stress among fresh science students in the universities and to identify the causes and effect and coping mechanism early so as to help the university administrators and other stake holders to come up with the best strategies to mitigate these stressors while pursuing their academic careers. More research is needed to be carried out on the nature and sources of these stressors for university students and ascertain the stressors that are mostly prevalent in university students lives. It is unclear whether most stressors result from interpersonal relationships or academic activities. Therefore the knowledge and better understanding of the sources of students stress would assist the university administration understand how to monitor, control, and plan its academic activities to help the students cope with the stress factors that are responsible for the students stress.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the Nature of academic stress on fresh science students in the university?
2. Do the stressors of fresh science students differ among the different departments?

HYPOTHESES

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the sources of academic stress between male and female in science.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the sources of stress based on the department.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted an Ex-post facto design to investigate the etiology, nature and upshot of students' academic stress. The population of the study consisted of all fresh (year one) students who were admitted to the degree programme in the university. Sample size of 150 students were selected through a stratified random sampling, where the 15 departments in the university produced 10 students each. The selection by the simple random sampling method produce a total of 150 participants with a clear representation of male and female groups in the study. A self -structured questionnaire entitled Academic Stress Rating Scale (ASRS) was used for data collection after it was well validated and the reliability tested using the Cronbach alpha $r=0.87$. Two research questions were raised to guide the study and were answered using descriptive statistics, the mean (\bar{x}), and SD) while the three null hypotheses were formulated and tested using ANOVA.

RESULTS

Research question 1 what are the sources of academic stress among fresh (year one) degree students in the universities.

Table-1: The mean causes of academic stress among fresh (year one) degree students in the universities

s/no	Perceived stressors	Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
1	Too much course load for year one students	2.85	.92	S
2	Difficult process of clearance	3.41	.86	S
3	Long period of registration before learning	3.01	.86	S
4	Nigh cost of books and other reading materials	3.11	.72	S
5	No resting period during the day due to excess lecture period on the time table	3.21	.72	S
6	Inadequate resources to tackle assignments that require internets	3.09	.74	S
7	Overcrowded lecture halls	3.13	.83	S
8	Non availability of laboratory to perform practical	3.06	.77	S
9	Excess academic workload	2.93	.76	S
10	High tuition fees	2.97	.78	S
11	Poor financial background	3.11	.77	S
12	Compulsory textbooks by lectures	2.52	.92	S
13	Unconducive, hostel and lecture environment for students	3.09	.76	S
14	Intimidation/harassment from lectures	3.11	.81	S
15	Poor hostel facilities	3.07	.72	S
16	Short semester	3.23	.73	S
17	Continuous poor performance	3.17	.78	S
18	Lack of sponsor	3.11	.83	S

19	Unfair treatment by parents/guardians	2.89	.78	S
20	No e-library in the school	2.99	.79	S

The table revealed that twenty items were the major sources of academic stress on fresh (year one) students in the institution. Due to its severity implicitly demonstrated by the responses of the students, the academic stress experienced by the students were categorized by their strength into three main domains; low, medium and high. The low level include such sources as- too much course load, compulsory text books imposed on students, excess academic activities or work load, high tuition fees, absence of e-library to handle assignments and term papers, unfair and unfriendly treatment either by teacher and or parents.

The factors are rated low because the effect on students' academic engagement was not grave. The medium includes- long period of registration before proper lectures, non-availability of libraries facilities at either faculty or departmental levels, learning and residential environments not conducive, inadequate facilities or resources for core science learning and the high level category include the following poor financial background, continuous poor performances of students, short semester period and non-provision of resting period on the time table and programme of activities in the semester

Table-2: The mean causes of academic stress among fresh (year one) degree students in university of education

s/no	Perceived stressors	Mean	Standard deviation	Rank
1	Too much course load for year one students	2.85	.92	21 st
2	Difficult process of clearance	3.41	.86	1 st
3	Long period of registration before learning	3.01	.86	16 th
4	high cost of books and other reading materials	3.11	.72	7 th
5	No resting period during the day due to excess lecture period on the time table	3.21	.72	3 rd
6	Inadequate resources to tackle assignments that require internets	3.09	.74	11 th
7	Overcrowded lecture halls	3.13	.83	6 th
8	Non availability of laboratory to perform practical	3.06	.77	15 th
9	Excess academic workload	2.93	.76	21 st
10	High tuition fees	2.97	.78	18 th
11	Poor financial background	3.11	.77	7 th
12	Compulsory textbooks by lectures	2.52	.92	22 nd
13	Unconducive, hostel and lecture environment for students	3.09	.76	11 th
14	Intimidation/harassment from lectures	3.11	.81	7 th
15	Poor hostel facilities	3.07	.72	14 th
16	Short semester	3.23	.73	2 nd
17	Continuous poor performance	3.17	.78	4 th
18	Lack of sponsor	3.11	.83	7 th
19	Unfair treatment by parents/guardians	2.89	.78	20 th
20	No e-library in the school	2.99	.79	17 th

Table 3 above presented the most common stressors among the fresh science students. The stressors are ranked in order of effect and magnitude.

The summary of the categorization is shown in figure 1 below.

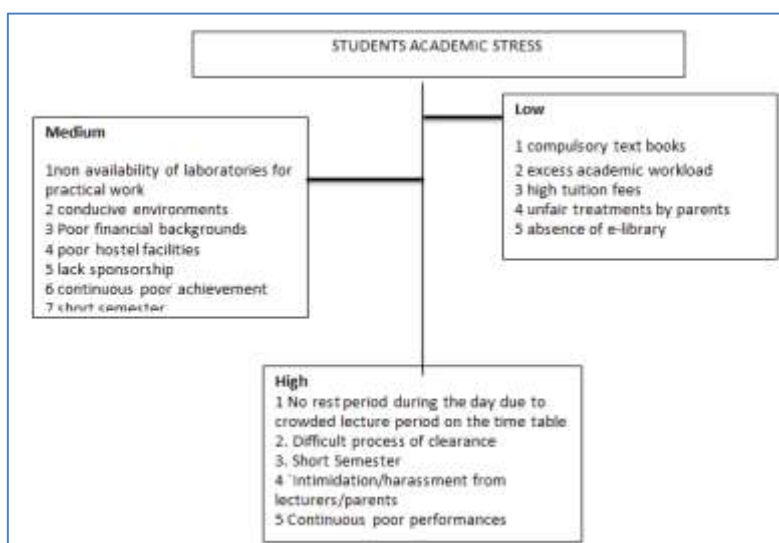


Fig-1: Category of the source of academic stress for fresh students

The diagram above represents conceptual frame work on academic stress and the categorization of academic stress experience by fresh science student in the university. The categorization was due to the students’ response and the mean rating of the items as it affects the student and the impact on their academic programme. The low level depicts the stressors that affect students mildly. For example, the effect of non-availability of laboratories causes academic stress to students. The impact of these stresses on the students’ academic programme can be easily coped by virtually all the students, no matter the department and sex.

The medium involved stressors that are of higher severity compared to the low and the impact on student academic progress is higher in order and magnitude. The ability to cope is slim by all the students for example. Some students have abandoned their academic programme due to the bottlenecks in the process of clearance because the process was so

cumbersome. Another striking example is the challenge of finance. The trajectories of students financially are not the same, so is the impact on the academic. The high level is estimated to be chronic in the sense that, the stressor can affect the health, psychology, mental and social life the students and when the different part of the student body is compromised, the students may develop adverse health risk that can cause death. This condition was what led towbes and cohen [18], to create the college chronic life stress survey in the lives of college students. Findings of the survey revealed that the first year (fresh students) record higher than other students in other level of their studies. The findings above proponent confirmed the study of Iwandu [24] who discovered that chronic stress affect the health of the students and may cause the student to drop out of the programme.

Research Question 2 Do the stressors of fresh students different from the different department;

Table-2: Showing the means stressors scores of students based on the Departments

s/no	Department	Mean (x)	SD
1	Biology	38.29	.99
2	Chemistry	34.60	.72
3	Physics	40.80	.88
4	Agriculture	39.20	.91
5	Integrated Science	41.50	.97
6	Mathematics	42.20	1.01
7	Computer	37.50	1.10
8	Human kinetics	38.20	.99
9	English language	43.10	.80
10	French	37.70	.89
11	Political science	42.29	.79
12	Social studies	37.70	1.01
13	Economics	39.50	1.03
14	Geography	41.10	1.03

15	G&C	42.80	1.02
16	Primary education	41.10	1.02
17	Marketing	45.60	1.03
18	Accounting	45.92	1.03
19	Secretarial education	49.10	1.04
20	Business management	50.20	1.07
21	Technical education	38.40	.99
22	Fine and applied science	35.50	.89
23	History	41.00	1.02
24	Music	40.80	.88
25	Religion	44.20	.99

Table 2, revealed the mean stressors based on the department. The table further revealed that the stressors of the departments in the management sciences have higher mean (Business Management, X= 250, Secretarial Education X = 49.10, Accounting X = 48.92, Marketing X = 45.60). The other departments have almost the same range of mean of stressors. Indicating that the sources of academic stress

experienced by fresh students differ considerably by departments and this may be due to the characteristics of the programme and the effect on students.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference on the level of academic stress based on students Sex.

Table-3: T-test analysis of the difference between the levels of stress on degree students based on sex

Sex	N	X	SD		t.cal	t.crit	Result
Male	67	39.90	4.62	148	0.785	1.960	Ns
Female	83	40.45	4.13				

NS= Not significant

Since t-cal (0.785) < t-crit(1.960) at the df of 148 and 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. The result is that there is no significant difference in the level of stress on fresh (year one) degree students based on sex. The sources of academic

stress are the same for both male and female fresh students

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the level of stress of the students based on their department.

Table-4: ANOVA of the differences in the sources of stress among fresh (year one) degree students based on department

Source variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean	F.cal	F.crit	Sign.
Between groups	1004.25	16	62.77	4.54	1.67	S
With groups	1837.14	133	13.81			
Total	2841.39	149				

S=significant at p<.05 Ns=not significant of Pc05

Table 4 above show that F-cal (4.54)>F-crit (1.67) at 24 and 149 df and 0.05 level of significance the hypothesis was rejected. There is a significant difference in the sources of stress among fresh (year one) students based on their department.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed that fresh students in the university actually experienced academic stress and the sources of these stresses among fresh (year one) students are varied. Table one revealed that the sources of academic stress on university fresh students are of different degrees and are subsequently classified into three;- low, medium and high levels, for better understanding of the various levels of stress the students experienced in their academic programmes.

1 The low level or category of stresses included; i) too much course load for year one students (x=2.85). The result was in harmony with the findings of Thomas [25], and Timothy [3]. They all reported that the etiology of students stress in the university was due the excess course work and assignments (2) difficult process of clearance (x=3.42) corroborated the findings of Kohlons [26], Reuben [2] who asserted that one of the major sources of academic stress was the difficult process of clearance students experienced(3) Long period of unclear registration process(x=3.01) (4) High cost of books and other reading materials (x=3.11) (5) overcrowded periods of lecture on the timetable which poses stressful situations to students (3.21) the findings agree with the work of [5, 3, 9, 18, 27] who in their

separate findings agreed that fresh (year one) students in the university have some of the identified sources of stress as major stressors.

2The medium level category of the sources of academic stress revealed by the findings include i) non availability of laboratories for practical and other experimental work ($x=3.06$), ii unconducive environment for hostels and lecture places ($x=3.09$) iii poor hostel facilities (3.07) iii poor financial background; socio economic issues, parenting style, family priority. The finding agrees with study of Iwundu [28] who also acknowledged, financial problems, broken homes and relationships, lack of useful textbooks, lack of easy transportation, lack of accommodations, behavior of some lectures, health problems, high costs of tuition fees and so on, are some factors or sources of academic stress on fresh (year one) university students. Furthermore, one of the stressors identified in this category was the family. The family background of the student constitute a source of stress on fresh students in that students from poor families have poor academic background which affect the students' performance. The findings were in congruence with the stance of Pope & Galloway [29] who also identified it as a stressor.

3 The high level category. The last category of academic stress was measured as high level because it was observed that the impact was high on students' achievement than the other two levels. They include, overcrowded lecture time table which does not allow student any rest all through the week thereby creating a source of tress to fresh science students. Also in this category is difficult process of clearance. Students often experience very clumsy and cumbersome process of clearance that poses tiresomeness resulting to occasional discouragement and the consequence was their poor achievemem.

While the present study categorized the sources of academic stress into three sub categories based on their strength or degree and the impact on students' academic achievement as fresh students, the study of Sorita and Sonia [16] rather classified the sources of academic stress of students into three factors –school, family and social factors. In their assertion school factors are equivalent of the low category of academic stress in this present study, while family and social factors correspond to the medium and high categories respectively.

The findings of this study where similar to the findings of Kohn and Frazer (1986), who discovered sources of academic stress on students to include excessive work load, unclear assignments and uncomfortable classrooms environment which corroborate the present findings. the sources of stress

shown in table 1 above are classified into three major groups which are seen to have contributed to the stressors and nature of new (fresh students) of any university. (1) the environmental stressors (2) the social stressors and (3) the financial stressors, Timothy [3] listed environmental issues such as food, housing, health freedom, and mobility while Reuben [2] also in addition found that social issues such as struggles with nonspecific, or difficulty individuals and social deviants, deception or break ups and major events such as birth and death, marriage and divorce, poverty, unemployment depression and so on are also causes of stress, which is in agreement with this work.

The work further revealed that source of stress does not differ in male and female. In respective of sex the sources of stress was seen to be the same in both sex in the university, that is, the severity of academic stress was not determine by sex. Though, the severity may not be the same due to some environmental background, maturity and financial comfortability. When the hypotheses were tested, the t-test on table 3 above revealed that $t\text{-cal} (0.785) < t\text{-crit} (1.960)$ at df 148 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted. The result was that there is no significant difference in the level or sources of stress based on students' sex.

Finally, the findings revealed that the level or sources of stress differ significantly based on departments. Finding from table 4 above showed that $F\text{-cal} (2.945) > F\text{-crit} (1.526)$ df 24 and 149 at 0.05 significance level. It was indicated that different departments in the same university experience stress at varied degrees. That is, the severity of stress level in one department was not exactly the same in the other department. Particular variation was shown in the faculty of Business Studies where Marketing x 45.60, secretarial studies = x 49.10, accounting 48.92 and management $x=50.20$. Those with mammal stress was seen in the faculty of sciences where Biology x 38.29, Chemistry x =34.60, Physics x =40.80, Mathematics $x=42.20$, Integrated science $x=$ 41.50, Computer science x =37.50 and HKHSE X = 38.20). What account for the difference in the severity was not shown in the work? However, it may be related to the ones Timothy [3], listed in his finding that lack or shortage of lecturer such that one lecturer handles more than requires. Since many students applied for courses in the faculty more than others, admission is higher in the faculty than other thereby making the facilities inadequate. We may conclude in the light of what Agolla [3] found that overcrowded lecture halls are potential sources of personal conflicts among the students which often lead to bitter exchange of words or worst still physical fights among students in view of scrambling for lecture space.

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