

## Academic Stressors and Effects on Academic Performance among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone, Adamawa State

Stephen Tizhe Kojigili<sup>1</sup> & Namuya Peace Tabilla<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Science Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Educational Foundations, Adamawa State University, Mubi.

\*Corresponding Author: Stephen Tizhe Kojigili

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23386511>

| Article History                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Original Research Article</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p><i>This study examined academic stressors and their effects on academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone, Adamawa State. The population comprised 28,874 students in 75 public senior secondary schools, from which 400 students were selected from 18 schools across Yola North, Yola South and Fufore LGAs using stratified proportionate and systematic random sampling techniques. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled Academic Stress and Academic Performance Questionnaire (ASAPQ), which was pilot tested and had a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings showed that students experienced academic stress from heavy workload, examination pressure, limited time for assignments, difficulty in understanding some subjects and parental pressure and financial difficulties. Excessive assignments, examinations, parental and teachers' expectations, and inadequate learning materials were identified as major sources of stress. The study also found that academic stress affected students' emotional well-being and relaxation. It was therefore concluded that academic stress is a major concern among students in the study area. The study recommends manageable academic workloads, proper examination scheduling, stronger counselling services and greater parental support.</i></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Academic stress, academic stressors, students' academic performance, secondary education, stress management.</p> |
| <b>Received: 09-08-2026</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Accepted: 19-09-2026</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Published: 15-10-2026</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p><b>Copyright © 2026 The Author(s):</b> This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.</p> <p><b>Citation:</b> Stephen Tizhe Kojigili &amp; Namuya Peace Tabilla. (2026). Academic stressors and effects on academic performance among senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone, Adamawa State. UKR Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, 2(10), 113-120.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

### Introduction

The foundation of societal advancement is education, which acts as a lighthouse pointing people in the direction of opportunity, empowerment, and enlightenment. Education, which has its roots in the quest for information, goes beyond simple instruction to include the development of critical thinking, creativity, and character. It is the transforming power that ignites learners' aspirations and changes their brains and futures. Fundamentally, education is the means by which people negotiate the complexity of the world, opening doors to both individual and societal success.

The academic achievement of secondary school pupils has drawn a lot of attention in the contemporary educational climate, which is marked by increasing competitiveness.

Due to the complexity and diversity of the elements that influence academic achievement, a great deal of study has been done to examine the complex interrelationships between various components. Stress is one of the important variables that have been shown to have a significant impact on pupils' performance. It is well known that stress affects pupils' academic performance. Secondary school kids may experience higher levels of stress due to societal norms, personal obligations, high-stakes assessments, and the expectation of achieving academic success. Long-term stress has been shown to have a detrimental impact on memory, cognitive function, and general academic performance.

Furthermore, there are many different sources of stress in an academic environment. Academic pressure may come from parents, teachers, peers and the demands of schoolwork. Bedewy and Gabriel (2015) identified academic expectations, workload and examinations, and students' academic self-perceptions as important sources of academic stress. Similarly, Leung et al. (2022) found that academic stress among students was associated with expectations from parents, teachers and the students themselves, as well as frequent comparison and excessive academic demands. These pressures can make students feel overwhelmed, particularly when they are expected to complete a large amount of schoolwork while also preparing for tests and examinations.

As students progress through senior secondary school, the demands placed on them can become more challenging. They have to cope with examinations, assignments, different subjects, competition among classmates and the expectations of their parents and teachers. For some students, these demands may be manageable, but for others, they may become a source of worry and pressure. When such pressure becomes too much, it may affect how students concentrate in class, prepare for examinations and perform academically.

The researcher is of the view that academic stress should not be considered only in terms of how much stress students experience, but also in terms of what causes the stress and how it affects their academic work. Students may respond differently to the same academic demands. While one student may be motivated by the pressure to perform well, another may become worried, discouraged or unable to cope effectively. It is therefore important to understand the major stressors students experience and the main sources of their academic stress.

Against this background, the study focuses on the major stressors experienced by senior secondary school students, the primary sources of their academic stress and the effect of such stress on their academic performance. Understanding these issues is important because it can provide useful information for teachers, parents, school counsellors and other stakeholders in supporting students to cope better with academic demands.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Academic stress is a common experience among senior secondary school students. Examinations, assignments, heavy workloads, pressure to earn good grades, and expectations from parents and teachers can leave students feeling overwhelmed. When this pressure becomes too much, it may affect their concentration, motivation and academic performance. Tindle (2022) noted that stress and other psychosocial factors can influence students' academic performance, while Ncheke et al. (2023) found that

academic and environmental stress were associated with students' academic achievement.

However, students do not experience or respond to academic stress in the same way. Some may be more affected by examinations and schoolwork, while others may experience greater pressure from parents, teachers or personal expectations. The main concern, therefore, is the need to understand the major stressors students experience, where their academic stress mainly comes from and how it affects their academic performance. This study is aimed at addressing these concerns.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate academic stressors and their effects on academic performance among senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone, Adamawa State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Identify the stressors experienced by Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone.
- ii. Identify the sources of stress among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone.
- iii. Examine the impact of academic stress on Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What stressors are experienced by Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone?
2. What are the sources of stress among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone?
3. What is the impact of academic stress on Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses will be tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

- H01: There is no significant differences in the stressors experienced by Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone based on school location.
- H02: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of respondents on the primary sources of stress among senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone.
- H03: There is no significant difference in the impact of academic stress on senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone.

### **Methodology**

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. According to Kojigili (2023), this design mainly describes

few samples in terms of simple percentages and proportions of respondents' opinions. This design was chosen because it is suitable for obtaining information about current phenomena and for exploring correlations among variables. The population of the study is made up of all senior secondary school students in the public secondary schools in Yola Education Zone. The zone comprises of Yola North, Yola South and Fufore Local Government Areas (LGAs). The zone has 75 public senior secondary schools with a total number of 28,874 pupils (Adamawa State Post Primary Schools Management Board, 2025). In particular, there are 25 secondary schools in Yola North LGA, 32 schools in Yola South LGA and 18 secondary schools in Fufore LGA.

A sample of 400 senior secondary school students was obtained using stratified proportionate sampling technique to ensure fair representativeness across the three LGAs in the education zone. Therefore, the proportional allocation of the sample size to each LGA was based on the number of schools in each LGA. A total of 18 schools was obtained using also stratified proportionate random sampling technique where 5 schools were selected from Yola North LGA, 6 schools from Yola South LGA, and 7 schools from Fufore LGA. Furthermore, using a systematic random sampling technique, 112 students were selected from Yola North LGA, 120 students from Yola South LGA, and 168 students from Fufore LGA; all were drawn from the senior secondary classes. The number of students sampled per school was proportionate to the total number of the respective LGA sampled for equitable distribution across the selected schools.

### Research Instrument

The instrument used for the data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Academic Stress and Academic Performance Questionnaire (ASAPQ)". The questionnaire has four sections labeled Section A – D. Section A consist of demographical data of the respondents while Section B consists of items relating to the stressors experienced by secondary school students; Section C has items relating to the sources of stress among secondary school students; section D contain items relating to the impact of academic stress on Senior Secondary School Students. The questionnaire is based on a 4-point modified Likert's scale type with response options as Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 point, Agree (A) = 3 point, Disagree: (D) = 2 point, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point for research questions 1, 2 and 3. This was administrated to the respondents to provide their

responses by ticking (✓) what most describes their opinion.

### Validation of the Research Instrument

To ensure the validity of the instrument, it was given to some from the Faculty of Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi. Their feedback were used in the refinement of the questionnaire which enhanced its clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the content that measured the constructs under study.

### Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was confirmed utilising the test-retest approach. To this end, pilot testing was undertaken on 50 senior secondary school students in Numan LGA of Adamawa State which is outside the study area but having similar features. Internal consistency of the questionnaire items was examined using Cronbach's Alpha. Analysis yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82 which was deemed appropriate for the study.

### Method of Data Collection

The data were collected by two research assistants. Permission from the school authorities was acquired before delivering the questionnaire and the participants gave their informed consent. The copies of the questionnaires were delivered to the respondents and the copies of the questionnaires were collected promptly after their response so that the response rate is high.

### Method of Data Analysis

The acquired data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Research questions were answered using descriptive statistics of simple percentages, means and standard deviation. Any items with mean less than 2.50 ( $\bar{X} < 2.50$ ) will be rejected and items with mean equal or greater than 2.50 ( $\bar{X} \geq 2.50$ ) will not be rejected for the choice of the means of the analysed research questions. The hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics: T-test was used to test Hypothesis 1 while One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test Hypothesis 2 and 3. All hypotheses were examined by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 at 0.05 level of significance.

### Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the stressors experienced by senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Stressors Experienced by Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone**

| S/No | Statement                                                                                 | N=400 | Mean        | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| 1    | Heavy academic workload is a major source of stress for me.                               |       | 3.58        | 0.75      | Agree    |
| 2    | Pressure to perform well in examinations causes me stress.                                |       | 3.37        | 0.90      | Agree    |
| 3    | Lack of sufficient time to complete school assignments causes me stress.                  |       | 3.21        | 0.92      | Agree    |
| 4    | Difficulty in understanding some subjects makes me feel stressed.                         |       | 3.29        | 0.87      | Agree    |
| 5    | Pressure from parents or guardians to achieve high academic performance causes me stress. |       | 3.10        | 0.90      | Agree    |
| 6    | Financial difficulties, such as lack of money for school needs, cause me stress.          |       | 3.29        | 0.98      | Agree    |
|      | <b>Grand Mean</b>                                                                         |       | <b>3.31</b> |           |          |

The result in Table 1 shows the mean response of the student to the items and with a grand mean of 3.31, which is above the benchmark of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agreed that the listed factors are stressors experienced by them in Yola Education Zone. Among the items are heavy academic workload which has the highest mean score of 3.58, while pressure from parents or guardians to achieve high academic performance has the lowest mean score of 3.10. Therefore, the result shows that

the students experience stress from academic workload, examination pressure, limited time for assignments, difficulty in understanding some subjects, parental pressure, and financial difficulties.

**Research Question 2:** What are the sources of academic stress among senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone?

**Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Primary Sources of Academic Stress among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone**

| S/No | Statement                                                                                        | Mean        | Std.Dev. | Decision |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|----------|
| 1    | Excessive school assignments and classwork are sources of academic stress for me.                | 3.51        | 0.73     | Agree    |
| 2    | Frequent tests and examinations are sources of academic stress for me.                           | 3.16        | 0.88     | Agree    |
| 3    | High expectations from teachers contribute to my academic stress.                                | 3.04        | 0.90     | Agree    |
| 4    | Pressure from parents or guardians to obtain high grades contributes to my academic stress.      | 3.06        | 0.94     | Agree    |
| 5    | Competition with other students for good academic performance contributes to my academic stress. | 2.42        | 0.95     | Disagree |
| 6    | Inadequate learning materials and resources contribute to my academic stress.                    | 3.32        | 0.91     | Agree    |
|      | <b>Grand Mean</b>                                                                                | <b>3.09</b> |          |          |

The result in Table 2 shows the mean responses of the students and a grand mean of 3.09, which is above the benchmark of 2.50. This indicates a general agreement by the respondents that the identified factors are sources of academic stress among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone. Excessive school assignments and classwork recorded the highest mean score of 3.51, while competition with other students for good academic performance recorded the lowest mean score of 2.42 and

was rejected. Therefore, the major sources of academic stress identified include excessive assignments and classwork, frequent tests and examinations, high expectations from teachers, parental pressure for high grades, and inadequate learning materials and resources.

**Research Question 3:** What is the impact of academic stress on the different level of senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Impact of Academic Stress on Various Levels of Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone**

| S/N | Statement                                                                                         | Mean        | Std.Dev | Decision |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|---------|----------|
| 1   | As a Student I feel overwhelmed by the number of assignments and workload given in my school.     | 3.32        | 0.80    | Agree    |
| 2   | Preparing for exams causes me a lot of significant stress and anxiety.                            | 3.43        | 0.83    | Agree    |
| 3   | Deadlines for submitting assignment add to students' stress in school.                            | 3.25        | 0.94    | Agree    |
| 4   | My parents' pressure on me to perform well academically increases my stress levels.               | 3.19        | 0.98    | Agree    |
| 5   | The fear of failing exams affects my emotional well-being.                                        | 3.18        | 0.97    | Agree    |
| 6   | Insufficient time for relaxation due to academic demands affects my overall stress levels.        | 3.25        | 0.92    | Agree    |
| 7   | Male students experience high levels of academic stress compared to female students in my school. | 2.31        | 1.02    | Disagree |
| 8   | Female students report higher stress due to academic workload than male students in my school.    | 2.43        | 1.037   | Disagree |
| 9   | The pressure to perform academically affects male students a lot.                                 | 2.47        | 1.11    | Disagree |
| 10  | My gender differences influence how I cope with stress caused by examinations.                    | 2.43        | 1.10    | Disagree |
| 11  | Female students feel more academic stress due to societal expectations in my school.              | 2.73        | 1.01    | Agree    |
| 12  | My gender plays a significant role in how I perceive and respond to academic stress.              | 2.79        | 0.99    | Agree    |
|     | <b>Grand Mean</b>                                                                                 | <b>2.91</b> |         |          |

The results in Table 3 shows that factors as feeling overwhelmed by assignment, preparing for examinations, dateline for submitting assignment, parents pressure on student to perform well, fear of failing exams, insufficient time for relaxation among others are the impact of academic stress on the different level of senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone but they disagreed that the pressure to perform academically is not a factor that affects

male students more significantly. Despite that, the grand mean of 2.91 shows that the level of students' academic stress is high.

**H01:** There is no significant difference in the stressors experienced by Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone based on school location.

**Table 4: Summary of t-Test on the Stressors Experienced by Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone based on School Location**

| Variable | N   | Mean  | Std.Dev. | df  | t      | Sig. (Two-tailed) | Decision        |
|----------|-----|-------|----------|-----|--------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Urban    | 168 | 19.57 | 2.819    |     |        |                   |                 |
|          |     |       |          | 398 | -1.360 | 0.179             | Not Significant |
| Rural    | 232 | 20.02 | 3.802    |     |        |                   |                 |

$P > 0.05$

Table 4 reveals that the t-value is -1.360 and the t p-value is greater than the 0.05 level of significance ( $P > 0.05$ ). The p-value (0.179) is greater than the level of significance (0.05), we failed to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in the stressors experienced by senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone based on school location.

**H02:** There is no significant difference in the mean responses of respondents on the primary sources of stress among senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone.

**Table 5: One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Respondents to the Primary Sources of Stress among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone**

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | D   | Mean Square | F     | Sig.  | Decision    |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Between Groups      | 182.811        | 2   |             |       |       |             |
| Within Groups       | 3640.187       | 398 | 91.405      | 9.969 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Total               | 3822.998       | 400 |             |       |       |             |

**P<0.05**

The result of the analysis of variance in Table 5 show that  $F = 9.969$ ,  $P = 0.00$ . This means, it is significance ( $F = 9.969$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and conclude that there is a significance differences in the mean responses of respondents on the

primary sources of stress among senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the impact of academic stress on senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone.

**Table 6: One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the Impact of Academic Stress on Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone**

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig   | Decision    |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Between Groups      | 20.964         | 2   |             |       |       |             |
| Within Groups       | 4664.813       | 398 | 10.482      | 0.892 | 0.411 | Significant |
| Total               | 4685.777       | 400 |             |       |       |             |

**P<0.05**

The result of analysis of variance in Table 6 shows that  $F = 0.892$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $P = 0.411$ . This means the probability level is (p) of 0.411 less than 0.05 level of significance ( $F = 0.892$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). Therefore, reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significance difference in the impact levels of academic stress on senior secondary school students in Yola Education Zone.

identifying heavy academic workload as the dominant stressor. This difference may be related to the different locations, populations and variables examined in the two studies.

The findings of Research Question Two in Table 2 show that the respondents generally agreed that the identified factors are sources of academic stress, as indicated by the grand mean of 3.09, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50.

The finding is in agreement with Eneogu et al. (2024), who examined academic stress among rural community secondary school Economics students in Southeast Nigeria. Their study confirmed the presence of academic stress among secondary school students and showed that an intervention programme was effective in managing such stress. The finding supports the present study because both studies recognise academic demands as an important issue affecting secondary school students.

On the other hand, the finding disagrees with Nwafor et al. (2025), who studied academic stress and students' achievement in Chemistry among secondary school students in Anambra State. Their study found that academic stress was not a significant predictor of students' Chemistry achievement. While the present study identified several school-related factors as important sources of students' academic stress, Nwafor et al. focused on whether academic stress could predict academic achievement and found no significant predictive effect. The difference may be explained by the fact that the two studies examined

## Discussion

The result of Research Question One in Table 1 shows that the grand mean for the stressors experienced by Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone is 3.31 which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50.

This finding is in line with the work of Anierobi et al. (2024) who explored academic overload, academic stress and social development among secondary school pupils in Anambra State. Their study reported that students were exposed to excessive academic demands and overload, particularly in preparation for examinations. The authors noted that the pressure associated with excessive academic work could contribute to students' academic stress. This agrees with the present finding, where heavy academic workload recorded the highest mean score of 3.58.

However, the present finding disagrees with Ncheke et al. (2023), whose study of secondary school students in Nsukka Education Zone focused on academic and environmental stress. Their findings showed that academic and environmental stress significantly predicted academic achievement, but the emphasis of their results was on the relationship between stress and achievement rather than

different aspects of academic stress and used different research designs and outcome measures.

The findings of Research Question Three in Table 3 show that academic stress has a considerable impact on Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone, as indicated by the grand mean of 2.91, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. The finding is in agreement with Eneogu et al. (2024), who found that academic stress is a significant challenge among secondary school students and that appropriate interventions can help students manage such stress. However, the finding disagrees with Nwafor et al. (2025), who reported that academic stress did not significantly predict students' achievement in Chemistry. The difference may be due to the fact that the present study focused on the perceived impact of academic stress, while Nwafor et al. examined its predictive effect on academic achievement.

The finding of Hypothesis One in Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference in the stressors experienced by Senior Secondary School Students based on school location. The t-value of -1.360 and significance value of 0.179, which is greater than 0.05, led to the retention of the null hypothesis. This means that students in urban and rural schools experienced similar levels of stressors. The finding is in agreement with Sarkar and Mandal (2024), who found that academic stress among secondary school students did not differ significantly between urban and rural students. However, the finding disagrees with Onukwufor and Izuchi (2017), who reported a significant difference between urban and rural secondary school students' stress, with rural students tending to experience higher stress. The difference may be due to variations in the educational environments, available resources and geographical characteristics of the different study areas.

The finding of Hypothesis Two in Table 5 shows that there is a significant difference in the mean responses of respondents on the primary sources of academic stress. The ANOVA result produced an F-value of 9.969 and a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This indicates that the respondents did not view all the identified sources of academic stress in the same way. The finding is in agreement with Imasuen and Ighodaro (2025), who reported that secondary school students experienced different contributors to academic stress, including heavy workloads, frequent examinations, and high expectations from parents and teachers. However, the finding disagrees with Ikechukwu-Ilomuanya and Nnamani, whose study examined academic stress among secondary school students and found that different dimensions of emotional intelligence had varying predictive relationships with academic stress rather than establishing significant

differences among the sources of stress. The difference may be explained by the different objectives, variables and statistical procedures adopted in the two studies.

The finding of Hypothesis Three in Table 6 shows that there is no significant difference in the impact of academic stress on Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone. The ANOVA result produced an F-value of 0.892 and a significance value of 0.411, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis should be retained. This implies that the impact of academic stress did not significantly vary among the groups of students considered in the study. The finding is in agreement with Okigbo and Ozumba (2025), who investigated academic stress among Senior Secondary School students in Awka Education Zone and examined its relationship with students' academic achievement. Their study provides evidence that academic stress does not necessarily produce the same academic outcome across students. However, the finding disagrees with Samuel and Nnoli (2025), whose study reported a relationship between academic stress and Chemistry achievement among Senior Secondary School students in Anambra State. The difference may be attributed to differences in the study locations, subjects, variables measured and the methods used by the researchers.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that academic stress is a common experience among Senior Secondary School Students in Yola Education Zone. Students are mainly stressed by heavy academic workload, examinations, assignment deadlines, difficulty in understanding some subjects, parental pressure and lack of adequate learning materials. The study also shows that academic stress affects students' emotional well-being and limits their time for relaxation. Therefore, there is a need for schools, teachers and parents to create a learning environment that reduces unnecessary pressure on students.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School authorities should ensure that students are given manageable academic workloads.
2. Parents should reduce excessive academic pressure on their children.
3. Government and relevant education authorities should provide adequate learning materials.
4. Students should be taught practical stress-management and study skills.
5. Schools should pay attention to students in both urban and rural locations.

6. Education authorities should monitor academic workload in secondary schools.

## References

1. Anierobi, E. I., Ezeonwumelu, V. U., Ufearo, F., & Okika, C. L. (2024). Academic overload, academic stress and social development among secondary school students in Anambra State in a period of economic uncertainty. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*.
2. Bedewy, D., & Gabriel, A. (2015). Examining perceptions of academic stress and its sources among university students: The Perception of Academic Stress Scale. *Health Psychology Open*, 2(2), 1–9.
3. Eneogu, N. D., Ugwuanyi, C. K., & Ugwuanyi, C. S. (2024). Efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy on academic stress among rural community secondary school Economics students: A randomized controlled evaluation. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 42, 245–262.
4. Ikechukwu-Ilomuanya, A. B., & Nnamani, F. C. (2024). Emotional intelligence as a predictor of academic stress among secondary school students in Udi Education Zone of Enugu State. *African Journal of Science, Technology and Mathematics Education*.
5. Imasuen, K., & Ighodaro, I. T. (2025). Exploring the impact of academic stress on junior secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria. *Benin Journal of Educational Studies*, 30(1–2), 18–25.
6. Kojigili, S. T. (2023). *Fundamentals of Educational Research Methods and Statistics* (1st Ed.) GTSMITH PRINTS, MUBI.
7. Leung, A. N. M., Shek, D. T. L., & Lin, L. (2022). Associations between academic stress, mental distress, academic self-disclosure to parents and school engagement in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(18), 11875.
8. Ncheke, D. C., Enejedu, E. E., Ogheneruemu, I. R., & Egenti, N. (2023). Academic and environmental stress as predictors of academic achievement of secondary school students in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education, Learning and Development*, 11(1), 61–70.
9. Ncheke, D. C., Enejedu, E. E., Ogheneruemu, I. R., & Egenti, N. (2023). Academic and environmental stress as predictors of academic achievement of secondary school students in Nsukka Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education, Learning and Development*, 11(1), 61–70.
10. Nwafor, S. C., Ibe, F. N., & Ezeanya, M. C. (2025). Academic stress and students' achievement in Chemistry: A predictive study. *International Journal of Educational and Life Sciences*, 3(9), 2811–2820.
11. Okigbo, E. C., & Ozumba, N. J. (2025). Academic stress as a predictor of secondary school students' academic achievement in Computer Studies in Awka Education Zone. *UNIZIK Journal of Educational Research, Science and Vocational Studies*, 1(1).
12. Onukwufor, J. N., & Izuchi, M. N. (2017). Factors, gender and locational differences of stress among secondary school students in Ikwerre and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State, Nigeria. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 5(12), 1212–1217. <https://doi.org/10.12691/education-5-12-7>
13. Samuel, N. N. C., & Nnoli, J. N. (2025). Academic resilience, academic stress, and emotional regulation as predictors of secondary school students' achievement in Chemistry in Anambra State. *Journal of Research in Industrial Technology and Educational Studies*.
14. Sarkar, N., & Mandal, H. K. (2024). Academic stress and academic achievement of secondary level school students of North 24 Pdns. District. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 13(9), 1107–1110.
15. Tindle, R., Abo Hamza, E. G., Helal, A. A., Ayoub, A. E. A., & Moustafa, A. A. (2022). A scoping review of the psychosocial correlates of academic performance. *Review of Education*, 10(3), e3371.