



**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MENTAL DISORDER AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE  
OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SABON GARI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA  
OF KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

This study examined the relationship between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria. Two objectives, research questions and one hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. Correlational design was adopted and purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of three hundred and eighty one (381) students according to Research Advisor 2006 table of sample size from the total population of forty nine thousand five hundred and ten (49,510). Two research instruments were used: Mental Disorder Questionnaire and English language Achievement test. Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation, Pearson product moment correlation and independent t-test statistics were used to analyze the data collected. The findings revealed that there is no significant relationship between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students ( $r = 0.034$ ,  $p = 0.507$ ), there is no significant mean difference between male and female students of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study therefore recommends the school authorities should have functional counselling and psychological testing centres for attending to students with mental disorder problems in order to attain better academic performance, also teachers should seek support from colleagues and collaborates with other counsellors to address the issue of mental disorder, these will go a long way in reducing anxiety among students of secondary school in Sabon Gari Local Government, Kaduna State and Nigeria in general.



**Keywords:** Mental Disorder, Isolation, Mental Health, Motivation, Academic Performance

## Introduction

Mental disorder refers to pattern of thought, emotion, or behaviour that significantly impact daily life. Psychological distress impaired functioning or increased risk of harm. However mental disorder issues among secondary school students are increasingly recognized as a significant concern in Nigeria. Adolescence is a crucial developmental period marked by physical, emotional and social change, making students vulnerable to mental health issues. However, academic pressure and stress, social challenges such as bullying, peer pressure, family dynamics (such as parental expectations and conflicts) and socio-economic factors (such as poverty and insecurity) can lead to anxiety disorders, depression and hyperactivity disorder among students of secondary school (Adewuya et al., 2018). Keyes (2014) identifies three components of mental disorder or mental health: emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being. Emotional well-being includes happiness, interest in life, and satisfaction; psychological well-being includes liking most parts of one's own personality, being good at managing the responsibilities of daily life, having good relationships with others, and being satisfied with one's own life; social well-being refers to positive functioning and involves having something to contribute to society (social contribution), feeling part of a community (social integration), believing that society is becoming a better place for all people (social actualization), and that the way society works makes sense to them (social coherence). Globally, about 10-20% of adolescents experience mental health issues, in Nigeria, studies indicate high rates of anxiety, depression, and substance abuse among secondary school students.

School-based stress is the anxiety that comes from schooling and education. It refers to the pressure experienced by students to perform well in any given examination. It involves mental distress regarding anticipated academic challenges, failures and awareness of the possibilities of academic failure. During school days, academic stresses may show in any aspect of the child's environment; be it home, school, neighbourhood or friendship. There are lots of stresses related to studies which occur due to imbalance of academic and social performance and management of time for extracurricular activities from education. Academic stress is found maximum among those students who cannot balance their academic activities, family, friends and social activities of their life. Student's stress depends a lot on their relationship with teachers, pressure to perform well in the examination, completion of school work on a limited time period as well as school environment. Involvement of students in co-curricular activities such as debate, quiz, speech, music and dance, arts, helps to level down the stress and improve the performance of students in school (Hetrick & Parker, 2020).

School-based stress in adolescents has been linked to a variety of physical and emotional problems as well as to poor school performance. Because of these negative effects, school-based special services providers need to implement stress management education programme if optimal learning and development are to occur. Behavioural and cognitive behavioural coping skills training have been effective in helping students deal with school-related stressors (Forman & Mallett, 2018). School-based stress, historically educational psychology has long explored the effects of stress on learning and cognitive development. Furthermore, the specific study of school-based stress gained more attention in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, coinciding with increased awareness of mental health issues among students. It largely depends on one's temperaments, environmental conditions, experiences and situations. It is experienced by every individual in any one situation or the other. It is a part of life and it is generated by constant changing situations that one has to face. It refers to an internal state, which results from frustration or under dissatisfactory conditions. To a certain extent in every one's life, it is unavoidable, because it is complex in nature. It is a part of fabric of life. But it can be managed to some extent (Vijaya & Karunakaran, 2013).

World Health Organisation (2014) mental disorder it can be inter woven with mental health is 'a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.



However, secondary school students are faced with this psychological problem as a result of anxiety and peer group influence as a result of drugs.

Academic performance of students refers to the student's ability to complete academic assignments, and it is assessed using objective criteria such as final course grades and grading point average (Carroll, & Garavalia, 2014; Naser & Hamzah, 2018; Olivier et al., 2019). Many scholars have identified several factors that affect a student's academic achievement (Kim et al., 2018; Lei, 2018). In this day and age of globalization, increasing economies, and rapid development, improving educational output and retention rates is critical to the prosperity of any nation. Thus, education is seen as extremely important for an individual because it is required for obtaining good jobs, achievement, and prospects for better living. However, English Language performance is the centre around which the whole education system revolves in secondary school and it is a prerequisite of entering high institution. The success and failure of any secondary school of learning is measured in terms of English language performance of students. Not only the schools, but parents also have very high expectations from students with respect to their academic performance, as they believe that better academic results may lead to better career options and future security (Alsheikh & Mishra, 2019).

The fallen standard of education is a big problem that is hindering the development of the Nigerian nation in terms of quality manpower resources. Most students in secondary school experience academic problem that manifests itself in various forms. Many researchers have sought to find out the reasons for the downward trend in the academic performance of secondary school students. Some of the reasons cited include nature and nurture negligence to provide the needed study materials for their wards, home environment, and inadequate use of instructional materials, among others. With these cited problems, many students in Nigerian secondary schools are at greater risk of poor academic performance. From the researcher's observation, the available records of SS II Qualifying Mock Examination result analysis from 2020-2025 shows a continuous decline in students' overall performance in school. The researcher suspect these poor performances to be as a result of the state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being of the students. The researcher explored the relationship between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government area of Kaduna State, Nigeria

### **Statement of the Problem**

Mental disorder as a psychological problem cannot be overemphasized due to the influence of parental pampering, peer group pressure and environmental factors. Many researchers have sought to find out the reasons for the downward trend in the academic performance of secondary school students. Some of the reasons cited include parental negligence of watching over their wards, monitoring them toward their academic pursuit and provide the needed study materials for their wards, home environment, and inadequate use of instructional materials, among others attention has not been paid, pertains to the mental health of the students (Nneji & Ekene 2018). With these problems, many students in Nigerian secondary schools are at greater risk of poor academic performance in both internal and external examinations. Thus, this paper intends to fill the gap in literatures on how to improve on academic performance most especially English language and does not account for other factors that might influence the relationship between mental disorder as a result of school-based stress, Therefore, this study seeks to find out the relationship between mental disorder as a psychological problem and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna state, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are;

1. To find out the relationship between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria.
2. To investigate the relationship between male and female on mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria.



## Research Questions

The following are the research questions of the study:

1. What is the relationship between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria?
2. What is the mean difference between male and female on mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria?

## Hypothesis

This hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria.

## Methodology

A correlational research design was adopted because the study examined the relationship between mental health status and academic performance of students without manipulating variables. The population of the study consist of SSS II students in public Senior Secondary Schools in Kaduna state with a population of forty nine thousand five hundred and ten (49,510) students (Ministry of Education Kaduna State). The sample size for this study was 381 SSSII students proportionately selected from the population under study. The sample of the study was determined through the use of Research Advisor sample size table (2006) proportional sampling technique were used for the study. Two instruments were used for this study. The instruments were Mental Disorder Questionnaire (MDQ) and Students Academic Performance English Language qualifying examination (MOCK). The MDQ was developed with ten items to assess the mental disorder of secondary school and it consist of four scale such as strongly agree (SA) which represents 4 points, agree (A) which represents 3 points, strongly disagree (SD) which represents 2 points and disagree (D) which represents 1 point. The academic performance of the students was measured using 10 questions which represent 2 marks each from the English language Qualifying examination (Education resource Centre 2023).

The face and content validity of the instruments were done by three experts, which include two Lecturers from Educational Psychology and counselling and one Lecturer from Test and Measurement from the same Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Federal College of Education (T) Bichi Kano State. The point of validation was to assess the structuring of the instruments, to verify the adequacy of the instruments as well as to weight the responses expected from the respondents. The researcher submitted the application for validation alongside with study objectives, research questions and hypotheses to guide the validation process, their corrections and comments were adopted in modifying the instruments for the conduct of the main study. In order to ascertain the reliability of the instruments, the researcher conducted a pilot study at Government Day Secondary School Bichi Kano State, apart from the sample of the study. This is because it has similar characteristics with the research population. Test re-test reliability was used for the interval of two weeks, and Cronbach's Alpha was used which resulted to 0.852 for Mental Disorder (MDQ), Meanwhile, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the reliability coefficient of English Language Performance Test (ELPT). Thus, a reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained for ELPT. This also showed that the instruments was found accurate, suitable and reliable for the study and would measure consistently over time.

## Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria?



**Table 1: Descriptive Analysis showing the Relationship between Mental Disorder and Academic Performance**

variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Academic Performance,	6.63	1.766	381
Mental Disorder	37.38	6.762	381

Table 1 indicated descriptive analysis showing the relationship between mental disorder and academic performance among secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Governemnt area of Kaduna State. Mental disorder with the mean of 37.38 and standard deviation of 6.762 while academic performances mean 6.63 and standard deviation of 1.766. Therefore, this implies that, there is no significant relationship between mental disorder and academic performance among students.

**Research Question Two:** What is the mean difference between male and female on mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Descriptive Analysis showing the Mean Differences between Male and Female Students on Mental Disorder and Academic Performance**

Variables	Students Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Academic Performance,	Male	192	6.59	1.885	.136
	Female	188	6.67	1.644	.120
Mental Disorder of Students	Male	192	27.29	5.318	.384
	Female	188	26.34	5.332	.389

Table 2 indicated the descriptive analysis showing the mean differences between male and female students on mental disorder and academic performance and also it's revealed the negative mean difference of males scored slightly lower than females. The academic performance mean of male is 6.59 and standard deviation is 1.885 while the female mean is 6.67 and standard deviation is 1.644. However, the mental disorder mean of male students is 27.29 and standard deviation is 5.318 while the female mean is 26.34 and standard deviation is 5.332 Academic performances do not differ significantly between male and female students. Therefore, this implies that, there is no significant difference between male and female on mental disorder and academic performance among students.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between mental disorder and academic performance of secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria.

**Table 3: Levene's Test for Equality of Variances Analysis showing the Difference between Mental Disorder and Academic Performance among Students**

Variables	t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	remark
Mental Disorder of Students	0.001	0.976	1.741	378	0.082	0.951	0.546	S
			1.741	377.787	0.082	0.951	0.546	
Students Academic Performance	5.266	0.022	-0.450	378	0.653	-0.082	0.182	
			-0.450	373.086	0.653	-0.082	0.181	

Table 3 indicated the levene's test for equality of variances analysis showing the difference between mental disorder and academic Performance among students. The result revealed that there is no significant difference between mental disorder and academic performance among students. The mean difference (-0.082) is very small and not meaningful. The confidence interval (-0.438 to 0.275) includes



zero, confirming no significant difference. Mental disorder  $t(378) = 1.741, p > 0.05$  while academic performance  $t(373.086) = -0.450, p > 0.05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between mental disorder and academic performance among students is accepted, this implies that, there is no significant difference between mental disorder and academic performance among students.

### Discussion of Findings

The finding in research question one indicated the significant relationship between mental disorder and academic performance among secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government of Kaduna State, Nigeria. Mental disorder with the mean of 37.38 and standard deviation of 6.762 while academic performances mean 6.63 and standard deviation of 1.766. The finding was supported by the finding of Forman and Mallett (2018) who found that School-based stress in adolescents has been linked to a variety of physical and emotional problems as well as to poor school performance. Because of these negative effects, school-based special services providers need to implement stress management education programme if optimal learning and development are to occur.

The finding in research question two indicated the mean difference between male and female on mental disorder and academic performance among secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government of Kaduna State, Nigeria. However, the mental disorder mean of male students is 27.29 and standard deviation is 5.318 while the female mean is 26.34 and standard deviation is 5.332 academic performances do not differ significantly between male and female students. The finding was supported by the finding of Keyes (2014) who found three components of mental disorder or mental health: emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being.

The finding in null hypothesis one indicated the significant difference between mental disorder and academic performance among secondary school students in Sabon Gari Local Government of Kaduna State, Nigeria Mental disorder  $t(378) = 1.741, p > 0.05$  while Academic performance  $t(373.086) = -0.450, p > 0.05$ . The finding contradict the finding of Nneji and Ekene (2018) who found the parental negligence of watching over their wards, monitoring them toward their academic pursuit and provide the needed study materials for their wards, home environment, and inadequate use of instructional materials, among others attention has not been paid, pertains to the mental health of the students.

### Conclusion

Based on the finding of this study, it is concluded that mental health predicts students' academic performance. It is also established that home background has a significant relationship with students' academic performance. Students coming from different family backgrounds are affected differently by such family conditions, which is why some children have good academic performance while some, on the other hand, have poor academic performance.

### Recommendations

The following are recommended based on the findings of the study:

1. School authorities should have functional counselling and psychological testing centres for attending to students with mental health problems in order to attain better academic performance.
2. Teachers should seek support from colleagues and collaborates with other counsellors to address the issue of mental disorder in a way to improve academic performance.
3. Educational psychologists and counsellors should as a matter of fact create an awareness/orientation for secondary school students on the dangers ahead or mental disorder toward academic decadence and provide a lasting solution therapy.

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