THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TYPES, LEARNING STYLES, MOTIVATION, SELF-ESTEEM AND ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG DISTANCE LEARNERS IN IBADAN STUDY CENTER

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ABSTRACT: The study investigated the relationship between personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem and academic stress among the distance learners of Ibadan Study Centre. Six hundred (600) respondents were purposively selected from four randomly selected faculties. The age range of the respondents was between 25 and 46 years with a mean age of 35.5 and SD = 4.2. Three research questions were raised and answered in this study. Five instruments were utilized to elicit information from the respondents. The instruments include: Student Academic Stress Scale; Multi-dimensional Personality Inventory; Self-esteem Scale; Self-report Situational Motivational Scale and Learning Style Scale. The data collected were analyzed using Pearsons Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression analysis. The results obtained revealed that there were significant correlations among the independent variables. The independent variables (agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extroversion, general intelligence, learning style, motivation and self-esteem) made joint contribution to the prediction of academic stress among the distance learners. The result also shows that self-esteem made the most potent contribution to the prediction of academic stress among the respondents. The implication of this is that learners with high self-esteem and appropriate learning skills are not prone to academic stress because they must have overcome stress producing stimuli through adequate preparation.

KEYWORDS: Personality types, Learning styles, Motivation, Self-esteem, Academic stress, Distance learners

INTRODUCTION

Distance learning education is a mode of delivering education and instruction, often on an individual basis, to students who are not physically present in a traditional setting such as a classroom. According to Vaughan and Norman (2010) distance learning provides "access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both. According to Nwaocha and Inyiama (2013) Open and distance learning (ODL) has as its main objective, attaining of mass literacy and providing opportunities for those who could not gain admission through designed entrance examination agencies as well as those who could not afford to leave their job to attend fulltime educational programme. In the past open and distance learning was seen as an experimental alternative to traditional educational delivery, however, new technologies have now made it much more than an experiment. Open and distance learning has grown into a higher education industry on its own and has become one of the main pathways to global education (Steyn 2001).

According to Singh and Paliwa (2012) open and distance learning system has tremendous potential of inclusive growth of education because of its distinctive nature of being a user friendly system. It is not only cost effective but it also contributes in the sustainable development through learning processes that transcends distance, gender, regional, cultural and socio-economic barriers. The phenomenal development which open and distance education has undergone and is still undergoing around the world indicates its significance in contemporary education development and planning. Most developing countries, including Nigeria, having realized that the spread of education in a society is the foundation of success in countries that are latecomers to development, now use it as a potent instrument for human resources development.

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Distance education students with as many of the opportunities as possible as they would receive in in-person education because the distance educational increase in communication, particularly communication amongst students and their classmates is an improvement that has been made to provide for such opportunities. Learners aware of the variations in interpretation and construction of meaning among a range of people have been shown through research to [they] construct an individual meaning," which can help students become knowledgeable of a wide array of viewpoints in education (Francis Lee 2008). In order to overcome the influence of co-location on relationship building so as to increase the likelihood that students will build effective ties with one another during the course instructors should use similar assignments for students across different locations Yua and Connie (2006).   As opposed to traditional education distance education has been a more cost-effective form of learning, and can sometimes save students a significant amount of money. According to Tabor Sharon (2007) considerable amount is being saved financially in distance education which has been of great help to the students by removing the cost of transportation. Students in distance education might be saved from the economic burden of high-priced course textbooks.   Also, the increasing improvements in technology have resulted in many school libraries having a partnership with digital publishers that offer course materials for free, which can help students significantly with educational cost (Garrison, 2011).

Students are able to learn in ways that traditional classrooms would not be able to provide within the class. Stephen (2007) opined that students obtain higher satisfaction with their online learning because it is able to promote good learning experiences. Students for instance can review their lessons more than once according to their need. Students' coursework could be manipulated to fit their learning by focusing more on their weaker topics while breezing through concepts that they already have or can easily grasp (Orr, 2010). Distance education can lead students to higher satisfaction with their learning experiences when course design and the learning environment are at their optimal conditions. Studies have shown that high satisfaction correlates to increased learning. With high satisfaction in their online coursework students who enrolled in distance education are then motivated intrinsically to learn, which often means that their performance in class will improve (Lederman Doug 2013).Students feeling a greater sense of support, since they have ongoing and regular access to their instructors and other students (orr, 2010).

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) characterized by a combination of distance education and e-learning is extensively used   in the delivery of education and instruction and the use of synchronous and asynchronous online communication in an interactive learning environment or virtual communities, in lieu of a physical classroom, to bridge the gap in temporal or spatial constraints. Distance Education and e-Learning is a combination of the strengths and advantages of Distance e- Learning. According to Garrison (2011) "The focus is shifted to the education transaction in the form of virtual community of learners sustainable across time." Various strategies, techniques, and procedures are introduced by Distance Education providers to increase the amount of interaction between learner and teacher. The generic term for all technologically supported learning, e- Learning is being used by service providers to deliver online courses or tutorial services. Lederman Doug (2013) asserted that in order to close the gap in transactional distance for instance, more frequent face-to-face tutorials, increased use of Information and Communication Technologies including teleconferencing and the Internet, were designed. New era in course design and delivery of instruction in ways never before experienced in the mainstream model of Distance Education and traditional education paradigms ushered in the increase in utilization of ICT, particularly the Internet. A new strategy in delivering courseware for academic programmes and other learning resources developed by Open Universities and conventional educational institutions through the marriage of the two concepts of Distance education and e-Learning

PERSONALITY AND ACADEMIC STRESS

Personality is an area of study that deals with complex human behaviour, including emotions, actions, and cognitive (thought) processes. Personality is not a fixed state but a dynamic totality, which is continuously changing due to interaction with the environment. The conduct, behaviour, activities, movements and everything else concerning the individual are known as personality. It is the way of responding to the environment; the way in which an individual adjusts with the external environment is personality. Each individual's characteristically recurring patterns of behaviour are known as personality. The five personality types discussed in this paper includes; Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional stability, Extroversion and General intelligence.

In simple words, stress refers to pressures or tension people feel in life Smith (2010) explored how different personality types may use different coping mechanisms, which would influence how an individual handles stress. Individuals that are considered extraverted are characterized as sociable, energetic, and assertive. Due to their sociability, extraverted people tend to have stronger support systems in times of difficulty. Also, extraverted people oftentimes view stressful events as challenges and opportunities to problem solve. Conscientious individuals, characterized as self-disciplined and persistent,

also engage in problem -solving as a proactive method of coping. In addition, conscientious people tend to be less impulsive and avoid engaging in risky behaviour that could lead to stress. In comparison, neurotic individuals are prone to feeling anxious, sad, and distressed when problems arise. Rather than dealing with problems head on, neurotic individuals tend to avoid finding solutions. Since neurotics tend to be more introverted, they do not have as strong as a support system to rely on. These differences in coping mechanisms could play a large role in the perceived stress of an individual. The creative and imaginative nature of open individuals may sometimes be a disadvantage in academic settings, particularly when individuals are required to reproduce curricular content rather than produce novel response or creative problem solving.

Goldberg opined that openness to Experience (sometimes called Intellect or General Intelligence) refers to how willing people are to make adjustments in notions and activities in accordance with new ideas or situations. Traits like having wide interests, being imaginative, insightful, attentiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, and intellectual curiosity are part of openness (Costa, & McCrae, 1992). Researchers such as Jost, (2006) have demonstrated that people who are highly open to experience tend to be politically liberal and tolerant of diversity. The consequence of this is that they are generally more open to different cultures and lifestyles. Their ethnocentrism and right-wing authoritarianism is very low. There is no correlation between openness and neuroticism, or any other measure of psychological wellbeing. Being open and closed to experience are simply two different ways of relating to the world (Butler 2000).

It has been found that conscientiousness consistently predict academic achievement from preschool through high school, the postsecondary level and adult-hood. This factor predicts college grades even after controlling for high school grades and SAT scores which suggests that it may compensate for lower cognitive ability. Personal attributes necessary for learning and academic pursuits such as being organized, dependable and efficient, striving for success and exercising self-control may be associated with high conscientiousness. For example, in one study this factor was found to predict early completion of independent credit assignments, and signing up early to participate. Conscientiousness might even affect achievement through its effect on the sleep schedule — high Conscientious individuals rise and retire earlier. Motivational processes such as expenditure of effort, persistence, perceived Intellectual ability, effort regulation and attendance may be the effects of conscientiousness on academic performance. There is some evidence that particular facets of Conscientiousness — achievement-striving, self-discipline, diligence, achievement via independence — may be particularly strong predictors of academic achievement, perhaps stronger than the broad Conscientiousness factor itself.

Neuroticism has an inherent negative denotation (Bradshaw 1997)although (sometimes reversed and called Emotional Stability), an enduring tendency to experience negative emotional states and such feelings such as anxiety, anger, guilt, and depressed mood (Matthews & Deary 1998). Similarly, Goleman (1997) found that they respond more poorly to environmental stress, are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. They are often self-conscious and shy, and they may have trouble controlling urges and delaying gratification. Neuroticism is associated with low emotional intelligence, which involves emotional regulation, motivation, and interpersonal skills. It is also a risk factor for "internalizing" mental disorders such as phobia, depression, panic disorder, and other anxiety disorders traditionally called neuroses (Hettema, Neale, Myers, Prescott, & Kendler 2006).Individuals that are high in neuroticism may show more emotional reactions whenever confronted with stressful situations (Van Heck, 1997). Moreover, they seem to use avoiding and distracting coping strategies, such as denying, wishful thinking, and self-criticism, rather than more approaching strategies. Ineffective coping with stressful situations in the work environment makes individuals who are high in neuroticism more vulnerable to the symptoms that are typically associated with burnout (Bakker, Van der Zee, Lewig & Dollard 2006).

In early studies Neuroticism was found to predict poorer academic performance among school-aged children. In the study of emotional stability and academic success, emotional stability was shown to be related to academic success. Studies suggest a correlation between Neuroticism and academic achievement, particularly for the anxiety and impulsiveness facets. This relationship may be due to Neuroticism's correlation with study attitudes. However, some studies of both school children and university students have failed to find any significant correlations between Neuroticism and academic attainment. Such inconsistencies may reflect the role of moderating factors, such as self-control and motivation, in compensating for negative emotionality.

Extraversion (sometimes called Surgency), also referred to as social adaptability, though the popularity of this term seems to be waning (Zuckerman, 1991). Extraversion is the act, state, or habit of being predominantly concerned with and obtaining gratification from what is outside the self, defined as "a trait characterized by a keen interest in other people and external events, and venturing forth with confidence into the unknown (Ewen, 1998).The broad dimension of extraversion encompasses such more specific traits as talkative, energetic, gregarious and assertiveness. In general, there does not seem to be a relationship between Extraversion and college performance, although some studies have found evidence for a small,

negative correlation. Age may moderate the effect of Extraversion on academic success. Before the age of 11–12, extraverted children outperform introverted children; among adolescents and adults some research has shown that introverts show higher achievement than extraverts.

This change in the direction of the correlation has been attributed to the move from the sociable, less competitive atmosphere of primary school to the rather formal atmospheres of secondary school and higher education, in which introverted behaviours such as avoidance of intensive socialising become advantageous. Extraverts and introverts also differ in parameters of information-processing such as speech production, attention and reflective problem-solving, with performance varying along meaningful dimensions. For example, extraverts have been shown to be better at oral contributions to seminars but poorer at essay-writing than introverts. Although the temperamental precursors of Agreeableness, such as prosocial orientation, relate to better social adjustment, relations between this factor and academic attainment are consistently non -significant. However, antisocial personality traits associated with low Agreeableness may have detrimental effects. In addition, several unclassified factors may be particularly relevant to educational outcomes.

DISTANCE LEARNERS AND ACADEMIC STRESS

Stress is a necessary and unavoidable concomitant of daily living--necessary because without some stress individuals would be listless and apathetic creatures, and unavoidable because it relates to any external event, be it pleasurable or anxiety -producing. A person's response towards stress depends on whether an event is appraised as a challenge or a threat (Lazarus & Folk man, 1984). Challenging stimulus can lead to positive outcomes such as motivation and improved task performance while threatening ones or distress can result in anxiety, depression, social dysfunction and even suicidal intention. In fact, a certain amount of stress is actually necessary for survival. Stress thus adds flavour, challenges and opportunity to life.

Academic stress implies pressure and causes tension of worry resulting in various problems. Academic stress is common phenomenon among   students. Academic stress results from a complex interaction between the events of life and the perception of those events by the students. The element of perception indicates the personality of an individual. As the personalities of individuals are distinctive, the reaction to stress of individuals is too. It is unique and personal to each of the students. The response to stress varies with the individuals, gender, streams of study, family income and locality.Academic stress is an individual's physical and mental reaction to environmental demands or pressures. It comes from mental or emotional activity, as well as physical activity. Stress condition is relative in nature. Extreme stress conditions are detrimental to human health but in moderation it is normal and, in many cases, proves useful. Environmental stressors affecting academic works include; peers treating fresher unlike the way treat each other, faculty treating different peer groups differently, need to mingle with peers of different race/ethnicity on campus, finding support groups sensitive to specific needs, living in the local community and adjusting to the campus environment. Other academic stressors include participating in class,   handling the academic workload, meeting deadlines for course assignments, fear of failing to meet programme expectations, fulfilling responsibilities at home and school, taking examinations and handling relationships. Monetary Stressors that could affect academic works are; Family having money problems, paying monthly expenses, arranging childcare, being obligated to participate in family functions and being obligated to repay loan.

The following physical stressors could affect academic works; sleep disorder, poor diet, drug misuse, alcohol misuse, excess heat excess caffeine, excess cold, illness, smoking, lack of relaxation, surgery and chronic fatigue.

Psychological stressors militating against academic works are; peer pressure, excess anger, unrealistic beliefs, health worries, unrealistic expectations,   excessive worrying, unhappy childhood, Unemployment, perfectionism, loneliness, low self esteem, people pleasing, boredom, negative self-talk, personality, right thinking style, excessive self-criticism and examination pressure.

The results of earlier studies suggest that financial burdens could be a potential stress factor for college students which contribute to low academic performance (Omigbodun et al., 2004; Seyedfatemi et al., 2007; Smith & Renk, 2007). Pfeiffer (2001) highlights that there are many students who have to work while they are attending school in order to pay for their fees. There are many times when students have to work late at night and then do not have the time to study. This can be hazardous for students as worrying about their financial issues and grades can be an immense stressor in their academic life. Academic problems have been reported to be the most common source of stress for students (Aldwin & Greenberger, 1987; Blumberg & Flaherty, 1985; Clark & Rieker, 1986; Evans & Fitzgibbon, 1992; Felsten & Wilcox, 1992; Kohn & Frazer, 1986; Mallinckrodt et al., 1989; Struthers et al., 2000 Busari, 2011, 2013). Schafer (1996) asked college students about their most stressful daily hassles. He observed that the most irritating daily hassles were usually school-related stressors such as constant pressure of studying, too little time, writing term papers, taking tests, plans, and boring instructors. Among the

stressors, test or examination anxiety is one of the main causes of academic stress and most students seem to be more emotionally vulnerable to examination (Fisher, 1994). Another frequently reported source of stress that most college students experience is receiving a lower grade than they expected (Evans & Fitzgibbon, 1992; Kohn & Frazer, 1986; Mallinckrodt et al., 1989; Ratana, 2003). Students have a fear of failure in relation to their grades and academic work.

To fall short of their own or others' expectations in school, job, athletics, or any other activity, one risks both external and internal costs: threat to academic or career prospects, disapproval, rejection, humiliation, guilt and blow to the self-esteem (Schafer, 1996). Stress associated with academic activities has been linked to various negative outcomes such as poor health (Greenberg, 1981; Lesko & Summerfield, 1989), depression (Aldwin & Greenberger, 1987), and therefore poor academic performance (Clark & Rieker, 1986; Linn & Zeppa, 1984). For example, Lesko and Summerfield (1989) found a significant positive correlation between the incidence of illness and the number of examinations and assignments. Similarly, Aldwin and Greenberger (1987) found that perceived academic stress was related to anxiety and depression in college students. Nevertheless, while too much stress can interfere with a student's preparation, concentration, and subsequently performance, but positive stress can be helpful to students by motivating them to peak performance (Pfeiffer, 2001). In conclusion, the literature indicated that perceived stress and the presence of the stress factors might influence the academic performance of students. In addition, it is also hypothesized that perceived stress and these stress factors present in different levels during the beginning, middle and end of semester.

LEARNING STYLES

The term "learning styles" speaks to the understanding that every student learns differently. Technically, an individual's learning style refers to the preferential way in which the student absorbs processes, comprehends and retains information. For example, when learning how to build a clock, some students understand the process by following verbal instructions, while others have to physically manipulate the clock themselves. This notion of individualized learning styles has gained widespread recognition in education theory and classroom management strategy. Individual learning styles depend on cognitive, emotional and environmental factors, as well as one's prior experience. In other words: everyone's different. It is important for educators to understand the differences in their students' learning styles, so that they can implement best practice strategies into their daily activities, curriculum and assessments.

Learning style or skills used in study defined as how student deal with their study approaches through perception towards their surrounding and how they can adapt to the task given into producing good end result (Richardson, 2011). Student mostly applies suitable strategies to acquire new material knowledge which help them further understand the topic and these strategies proved to be effective during their learning (Chen, 2009). Chen (2009) studies showed that there was significant relationship between grade level and language learning strategies. Learning styles proves to be significant when samples taken from 86 males and 93 females shows that most study techniques generate improvements in their Grade Point Average. Some of the technique used by the sample students was time management and procrastination factor which contributes Mean of 18.38. Concentration and memory along with note taking covers a mean of 20 while organizing and processing info scores mean of 19 which is quite high in the results (Hassanbeigi et al., 2011). Studies from Paisey and Paisey (2010) have resulted in 70 percent of respondent from University of study agreed on the importance of student ability to extract and analyze information from different kind of sources. Besides that, time management also becoming part of the type of learning where 66 percent respondent from University believed strongly about the traits that should be posed by students while in the other University 34 percent also feel the same way (Paisey and Paisey, 2010).

Studies from Fuente and Cardelle-Elawar (2009) have cemented the perception on how the students approach can affects their examination results outcome. The study further evidenced that that there is a significant correlations between how student put their learning strategy whether they are prone to be hardworking or used to the study smart approach. Fuente and Cardelle-Elawar (2009) have also made conclusive findings that student study planning and strategy have been the best option for top scorers' student to study because of their effectiveness. In the other hand, studies from Indreica et al., (2011) showed that time wasting have been the most defining difference that makes student struggle before the final examination. From the study, approximately 73 percent student started to struggle in last minute for final examination and this has caused information overload and student failed to be organized in their study which leads them to perform badly than previous examination performance (Indreica, et. al, 2011). Hence, good learning skills are very much a main concern in order to avoid student performance to decrease even more.

Self-esteem According to Rosenberg and Simmons (1975) is an individual's overall attitude, either positive or negative towards himself or herself. Harmon-Jones et al. (1997) define self-esteem as somebody's beliefs concerning how well they live up to the value standards set by the society which they live, while according to Branden, (2001) self-esteem refers to a

perspective compromising an individual's value while postulating his or her self-evaluation and self- description in a variety of fields. Moreover, Baumeister et al. (2003) considered successful performance in a learning task as an essential component to achieve a considerable rise in one's self-esteem. Byrne (1984) and Marsch (1990) concluded that self-esteem is tightly linked with academic performance while the results of the research of Lane et al. (2004) on the relationship between self-esteem, self-effectiveness and academic performance revealed significant correlations between self-esteem and academic performance. In addition, self-esteem was considered by Peixoto and Almeida (2010) as a strong outcome predictor regarding the academic performance. Moreover, self-esteem was devised as a significant factor as it is tightly linked to psychological well-being (Neff, 2011). Griffiths, Sharkey and Furlong (2009) have considered self-esteem as a fundamental factor which might affect student engagement. Self-esteem has been associated with the satisfaction that learners get from the course, too. Individuals with high levels of self-esteem have been considered to be more satisfied with the course that they attended as well as with their personal life in general.

Workman and Stenard (1996) underlined the important role of self-esteem in distance learning. They claimed that rising students' levels of self-esteem is very important in distance learning courses and they related this rise with reduction of the possibility of academic drop out. Kurtz et al. (2009) reported that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and students' attitude toward online learning. It should be noted that Pullmann and Allik (2008) suggested that low self-esteem is not necessarily a sign of poor academic performance. Angelaki and Mavroidis (2013) concluded that both tutor-student and student-student communication play an important role in alleviating the intensity of negative emotions such as loneliness and solitude experienced by distance learning students.

According to Schunk, Pintrich, and Meece (2008) motivation is "the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained". Motivation can influence what individual learn, how they learn, and when chosen to learn. Contemporary views link motivation to individuals' cognitive and affective processes, such as thoughts, beliefs, and goals, and emphasise the situated, interactive relationship between the learner and the learning environment (Brophy, 2010). Studies that explore motivation to learn in online contexts are relatively limited both in number and scope (Artino, 2008; Bekele, 2010). Existing research has had a tendency to adopt a limited view of motivation that does not acknowledge the complexity and dynamic interplay of factors underlying and influencing motivation to learn (Brophy, 2010). Instead, designing motivating learning environments has received attention (ChanLin, 2009; Keller, 2008). More frequently, motivation has been viewed as a personal characteristic that remains relatively stable across contexts and situations. Studies adopting this model have focused on identifying lists of traits of successful online learners (Wighting, Liu, & Rovai, 2008; Yukselturk & Bulut, 2007) and indicate that intrinsic motivation is a common characteristic (Shroff, Vogel, & Coombes, 2008; Styer, 2007). Findings from comparative studies between online students and on-campus students (Rovai, Ponton, Wighting & Baker, 2007; Shroff & Vogel, 2009; Wighting et al., 2008) also suggest that online students are more intrinsically motivated across the board than their on-campus counterparts at both undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Viewing motivation solely as an effect of the learning environment or as a learner attribute does not recognize that individuals can be motivated to a greater or lesser degree, and in different ways, in any given context and time (Turner & Patrick, 2008). Few studies of online learning environments have acknowledged this contemporary "person in context" situated view of motivation and have done so only in a limited way (Shroff, Vogel, Coombes, & Lee, 2007; Xie, DeBacker, & Ferguson, 2006). Together, these factors point to the need to reconsider motivation to learn in technology-mediated environments. From the foregoing it could be observed that even though studies abound on personality type, self- esteem and motivation but none has combined these variables with academic stress. It is on the basis of this that the current study sought to investigate the relationship between personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem, and academic stress among the distance learners of university of Ibadan.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between personality type, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem, and academic stress of the distance learners. The specific objectives of the study includes to;

1. Determine the relationship between personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem, and academic stress of the distance learners

2. Find out the joint contribution of personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem, and academic stress of the distance learners

3. Examine the relative contribution of personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem and academic stress of the distance learners.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What is the relationship between personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem, and academic stress of the distance learners

2. What is the joint contribution of personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem, and academic stress of the distance learners

3. What is the relative contribution of personality types, learning styles, motivation, self-esteem, and academic stress of the distance learners

METHOD

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive type which was *"ex-post-facto"* in nature. This design is appropriate because the researcher collected data to describe the situation that exists. It does not involve the manipulation of variables in the study. It is therefore, after the fact study. It neither adds to nor subtracts from the existing fact. However, it is carefully observe and record information as it naturally occurred at the time the study was conducted.

POPULATION

The population for the study comprised all the distance learners of University of Ibadan Ibadan, Nigeria.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study was conducted on a group of six hundred (600) purposively selected distance learners from four randomly selected faculties of Arts, Education, Science and Social Sciences. The sample included 330 (55%) males and 270 (45%) females aged between 25 and 46 years (mean age 35.5 years and SD= 4.2). Almost half 282 (47%) of the respondents were employed while 318 (53%) were without employment. Concerning parental educational status 111 (18.5%) of the respondents' parents were literate and 489 (81.5%) of their parents were illiterate.

INSTRUMENTATIONS

Five research instruments were used in carrying out this study. They are;-

MULTI -DIMENSIONAL PERSONALITY INVENTORY (MPI)

Multi- Dimensional Personality Inventory (MPI) developed by Busari (2013) was utilized to measure the personality type based on self-report responses to 168 items tapping the appraisal and expression of personality type in self and utilization of personality type in solving academic problems. Participants responded by indicating their agreement to each of the 168 items using a five point rating scale ranging from 1 (Inaccurate), 2 (Moderately accurate), 3 (Neither inaccurate nor accurate), 4 (Moderately accurate), 5 (Very accurate). The instrument had an internal consistency alpha of 87. MPI consists of two sections with Section A consisting of demographic information of respondents such as age, sex , marital status, religion, type of family, parents' level of education etc. Section B has five sub -sections consisting of items tapping variables such as Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Extroversion and General Intelligence.

SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

In an attempt to measure self esteem of the students, the Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (1965) was used. This instrument consists of ten (10) short questions. Responses were anchored on four rating points (Strongly Agree = 3, Agree = 2, Disagree = 1 and strongly disagree = 0) and had an internal consistency alpha of .75.Items with asterisk are reversed. The score of the items are summed up .The higher the score, the higher the self –esteem.

ACADEMIC STRESS SCALE

Student Academic Stress Scale developed by Busari (2011) was used as a measure of academic stress of respondents. It has two parts, part A consists of the demographic data such as age, sex, marital status etc. It is a ten (66) items scale with responses anchored base on the five likert rating points of (5= very much like me, 4= like me, 3=sometimes like me ,2=unlike me ,1==very much unlike me).High score in any of the sub- section indicates high level of academic stress. As indicated by author, the instrument total item has a Cronbach's Alpha of .92. The higher the score, the higher the academic stress experienced by the respondents.

SELF- REPORT SITUATIONAL MOTIVATIONAL SCALE (SIMS)

Learner motivation was measured using the self-report situational motivational scale (SIMS) developed by Guay, Vallerand, and Blanchard (2000), which operationalises elements of the SDT continuum. It measures situational intrinsic motivation, extrinsic forms of motivation (external regulation and identified regulation), and a motivation. Participants were asked to respond to these questions in relation to a specified assignment, and its associated online activities, within each course. Each of the four motivation subtypes was measured using 7-point Likert scales, with four questions for each motivation subscale. For each participant, these subscale scores were then used to calculate a single motivation score called the self-determination index (SDI). This follows the weighted calculation described and used in previous research (Ratelle, Baldwin, & Vallerand, 2005; Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992; Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002). SDI scores can range from a minimum of -72 to a maximum of +72. While the calculation of the SDI is a useful indicator of overall motivation, subscale scores were also analysed as the SDI may not account for participants' endorsement of more than one type of motivation for engaging in an activity (Vallerand, Pelletier, & Koestner, 2008).

LEARNING STYLE SCALE

Felder and Silverman introduced a learning style assessment instrument that was specifically designed for classroom use and was first applied in the context of engineering education. The instrument consists of 44 short items with a choice between 2 responses to each sentence. Learners are categorized in 4 dichotomous areas: preference in terms of type and mode of information perception (sensory or intuitive; visual or verbal), approaches to organizing and processing information (active or reflective), and the rate at which students progress towards understanding (sequential or global). The instrument associated with the model is known as the Index of Learning Survey (ILS). The ILS is based on a 44-item questionnaire and outputs a preference profile for a student or an entire class. The researchers administered the ILS twice and the Learning Style Type Indicator (LSTI) once to 138 residents (86 men, 52 women). The LSTI has been previously compared to the ILS by several investigators. Cook found that the Cronbach's alpha scores for the ILS and LSTI ranged from 0.19 to 0.69. They preliminarily concluded that the ILS scores were reliable and valid among this cohort of residents, particularly within the active-reflective and sensing-intuitive domains. The authors found that the ILS active-reflective and sensing-intuitive scores as well as the LSI active-reflective scores were valid in determining learning styles. Examples of items of the scale are:

1. I understand something better after I _____ (a) try it out   (b) think it through

2. I would rather be considered _____ (a) realistic   (b) innovative

3. When I think about what I did yesterday, I am most likely to get

   (a)   a picture word   (b) words

4. I tend to_____

   (a)   understand details of a subject but may be fuzzy about its overall structure.

   (b)   understand the overall structure but may be fuzzy about details

5. When I am learning something new, it helps me to _____

   (a)   talk about it   (b) think about it

PROCEDURE

After obtaining permission from the deans of faculties of Arts, Education, Science and Social Sciences, the researcher then contacted the respondents through their course representatives. The researchers first explained to the respondents the

purpose of the study and all the relevant details concerning the study. The researchers also answered any concerns related to the study. The researcher explained to the students the purpose of the study so as to motivate them to participate in the study. The researcher also emphasized that their responses were going to be handled with confidentiality during the data collection, report writing, and dissemination of findings. The research instruments containing a brief preamble explaining the purpose of the study was given to the respondents to complete. The researcher was present during the data collection process to rectify any concerns raised by the respondents. Completed questionnaires were collected from the respondent with his/her signed consent form. The researcher rescreened the questionnaires for any unanswered items. Only 600 completed questionnaires were used for analysis.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected were analyzed using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis at 0.05 level of significance. Multiple regression analysis was used to find the combined and relative contribution of the independent variables on the dependent variable. PPMC was used to determine if the relationship between the variables were statistically significant.

RESULTS

Table 1: Zero Order Correlation Showing the Significant Relationship among the Independent Variables and Academic Stress

	Academic Stress	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional Stability	Extroversion	General Style	Learning Style	Motivation	Self-esteem	Mean	SD
Academic Stress										32.45	7.35
Agreeableness	496** .000	1								16.72	4.52
Conscientiousness	273** .000	.337** .000	1							58.55	11.45
Emotional Stability	.261** .000	.191** .000	.453** .000	1						27.49	6.93
Extroversion	257** .000	.186** .000	.449** .000	.531 .000	1					14.15	3.83
General Intelligence	.133** .015	.215** .000	.297** .000	.535** .000	.533* .000	1				29.67	7.44
Learning Style	.164** .002	.251** .000	.419** .000	.537 .000	.534** .000	.528** .000	1			21.87	6.36
Motivation	.117* .029	.222* .000	.321** .000	.403** .000	.247** .000	.505** .000	.526** .000	1		26.37	7.07
Self-esteem	.151** .004	.213** .000	.356** .000	.377** .000	.278** .000	.296** .000	.347** .000	.561** .000	1	28.78	7.85

** Significant at 0.05 level (z-tailed).

Table 1 contains descriptive statistics and inter-correlations among the study variables. As shown in Table 1, academic stress is significantly correlated with agreeableness (r=496**, p(.000) < .05), conscientiousness (r=273**, p(.000)<.05), emotional stability (r=261**, p(.000) < .05), extroversion (r=257**, p(.000) < .05), general intelligence (r=133**, p(.015) < .05), learning styles (r=.164**, p(.002) < .05), motivation (r=117*, p(.029) < .05) and self-esteem (r=.151**, p(.004) < .05). There were also significant correlations among the independent variables.

Table 2: Summary of Regression Analysis Showing the Combined Prediction of the Independent Variables to Academic Stress

R = 0.543
R Square = 0.288
Adjusted R Square = 0.273
Std. Error of the Estimate = 6.3870

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	P	Remark
Regression	6461. 800	8	807.725			
Residual	12703 .023	291	43.653	18.187	0.000	Significant
Total	19164. 823	299	851.378			

Table 2 reveals that there was significant joint contribution of the independent variables (agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extroversion, general intelligence, learning styles, motivation and self-esteem) to the prediction of academic stress. The table also shows a coefficient of multiple correlation of R=.543 and multiple R^2 Adjusted of .273. This means that 27.3% of the variance was accounted for by the predictor variables when taken together. The significant of the composite contribution was tested at $p<.05$. The table also shows that the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the regression yielded on F-ratio of 18.187 (significant at 0.05 level). This implies that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not involved in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

Table 3: Relative Contribution of the Independent Variables to the Prediction of Academic Stress

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contribution		
Constant	15.671	2 .165		7 .137	0.00
Self –esteem	.763	.081	.472	9.867	.000
Motivation	.419	.071	.315	6.233	.000
General Intelligence	-3.08	.062	-.031	-4.920	.623
Emotional Stability	.247	.067	.216	3.605	.000
Conscientiousness	-5.06	.070	-.043	-.728	.467
Learning Styles	.513	.076	.372	.7.113	.000
Extroversion	-5.39	.064	-.051	-.836	.404
Agreeableness	-1.30	.111	-.067	-1.180	.239

Table 3 shows that each of the independent variables (agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extroversion, general intelligence, learning styles, motivation and self-esteem) made significant contribution to the prediction of academic stress of distance learners. In terms of magnitude of contribution, self-esteem made the most significant contribution ($\beta=.372$; t=7.113; p<.05) followed by motivation ($\beta=.315$; t=6.233; p<.05) and emotional stability ($\beta=.216$; t=3.605; p<.05) while general intelligence ($\beta=-3.08$; t=-4.92; p>.05), conscientiousness ($\beta=-.043$, t=-.728; p>.05), extraversion ($\beta=-.057$; t=-.836; p>.05) and agreeableness ($\beta=-.067$; t=-1.180; p>.05) had no relative contribution to academic stress of distance learners.

DISCUSSION

The result obtained from the first research question revealed that academic stress of distance learners was significantly correlated with the independent variables (agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extroversion, general intelligence, learning styles, motivation and self-esteem). The indication of this is that students who feel competent and self-determined in the school context develop an autonomous academic motivation which in turn, had a positive impact on school performance. This finding corroborates the study carried out by Murphy (1989) cited in Aleburu, Lagoke, Opoola, Busari and Oladejo (2014) that psychological variables and motivation characteristics are very important in distance learning. Again, this means that environmental and psychological variables such as personality type, self-esteem, learning styles and motivation are determinants and intervening mechanism that govern the selection, activation and sustained direction of behaviour. Deficits in these variables could result in academic stress among the distance learners.

The result as revealed by the second research question shows that there was significant joint contribution of the independent variables (agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extroversion, general intelligence, learning style, motivation and self-esteem) to the prediction of academic stress. This finding is not surprising considering the fact that personality connotes the conduct, behaviour, activities, movement and everything else concerning the individual. It also involves the way of responding to the environment and the way an individual adjust to the external environment. For instance, Just (2006) study demonstrated in personality indicated that there was no correlation between general intelligence (openness) and other measures of psychological well-being. It was also observed by Smith (2010) that individuals considered to be extraverted tends to have stronger support systems in times of difficulty. It simply means that extrovert individuals may use different coping mechanisms to handle stress and such ameliorate their level of academic stress.

Again, academic stress results from a complex interaction between the events of life and the perception of those events by the distance learners. The element of perception indicates the personality of an individual. It follows therefore that as the personalities of individuals are distinctive, the reactions to stress of individuals is. This study lend support to the findings of Smith and Renk (2007) which found that financial burden could be potential stress factor to the distance learners which contributed to low academic performance. Pfeiffer (2001) also made some contributions which supports the findings of this study when he found that many students have to work while they are attending college in order to pay their fees. He went further to say that there are many times when students have to work late at night and then do not have time to study. This he said can be hazardous for students as worrying about their financial issues and grades can be an immense stressor in their academic life. Stress associated with academic activities has been linked to negative outcomes such as frustrations, financial problems, conflicts, pressures, changes and perceived stress and the presence of the stress factors might influence the academic performance of the learners.

The result of third research question shows that each of the independent variables (agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extroversion, general intelligence, learning styles, motivation and self-esteem) made a significant contribution to the prediction of academic stress strong distance learners. In order of magnitude, self-esteem made the most significant contribution, followed by learning styles, motivation and emotional stability. General intelligence, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness had no relative contribution to academic stress among distance learner. This finding is in line with the study of Kurtz et al (2009) who reported that there was a positive correlation between self-esteem and students' attitude toward online learning. Angelaki and Mayroidis (2013) buttressed this when they concluded that both tutor-student and student-student communication play on important role in alleviating the intensity of negative emotions such as loneliness and solitude experienced by distance learning students.

Learning styles also made significant contribution to academic stress among distance learners. This finding is so because style of learning helps the students to perform better in their academic works. Learning styles consist of time management, concentrations and memory, study aids, note taking and group work. If all these aspects of learning styles are deficient, it creates a sort of worrying and stress to the distance learners and therefore could affect their academic performance. Corroborating the findings of this study Fuente and Cardelle-Elawar (2009) found that there was a significant correlation between how students put their learning strategy whether they are prone to be hardworking or used to the study smart approach. This means that students who struggled in the last minute for final examination cause information overload and such students failed to be organised in their study as a result of excessive stress which in turn leads them to perform badly in their examinations.

Motivation is another contributory variable to the prediction of academic stress among the distance learners. This finding implies that motivated learners are more likely to undertake challenging activities, to be actively engaged, to enjoy and adopt a deep approach to learning and to exhibit enhanced performance, persistence and creativity. Brophy (2010) lend credence to findings of this study when he found that contemporary views link motivation to individuals' cognitive and affective processes, such as thoughts, beliefs and goals and emphasise the situated, interactive relationship between the learner and the learning environment.

The results obtained from this study indicated that general intelligence, conscientiousness, extraversion and agreeableness had no significant contribution to the prediction of academic stress among the distance learners. The implication of this is that general intelligence has a positive correlation with standardised measures of knowledge and achievement and is modestly correlated with cognitive ability. General intelligence may facilitate the use of efficient learning strategies which in turn affects academic success.

Furthermore, that conscientiousness, had no significant contribution to the prediction of academic stress among distance learners could be as a result of personal attributes necessary for learning and academic pursuit demonstrated such as being organised, dependable and efficient, striving for success and exercising self-control which is associated with conscientiousness.

The findings of this study also reveal that there was no significant contribution of extraversion to the prediction of academic stress among the distance learners. This may be because the broad dimension of extraversion encompasses such more specific traits as talkative, energetic, gregarious and assertiveness. In general there does not to be a relationship between extraversion and college performance, although some studies have found evidence of a small negative correlations. The result have shown significance trend of students or difficult task given them during their stint as a distance learners. This study agreed with that of Habibah et al (2012) who found that students with high confidence level can succeed in the examination and that self-efficacy plays a big role producing academic excellences.

It follows therefore that learners with high confidence and high self-efficacy are not likely to be pre-occupied with academic stress. Also learners with intrinsic motivation, high self-esteem and appropriate learning skills are not prone to academic stress because they must have overcome stress producing stimuli through adequate preparation, belief in their abilities and exhibit enhanced performance, persistence and creativity.

CONCLUSION

The study attempted to provide a better understanding of some variables (psychological and environmental) and its relationship with academic stress among the distance learners. It attempted to provide the sources of academic stress among the distance learners. All the eight variables (Agreeableness, Contentiousness, Emotional stability ,Extroversion, General intelligence, Learning styles, Motivation and Self- esteem) contributed differentially to the academic stress of distance learners

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