UNIJERPS
Unizik Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies VOL.19 (1);
January-June, 2025 https://unijerps.org
2023 Impact Factor:* 6.834;** 2022 ***Impact Factor: 5.156; ***2021 Impact Factor: 5.641;***
2020 Impact Factor: 5.355. *Indexing and Impact Factor URL: http://sjifactor.com/passport.php?id=21363*

ACADEMIC STRESS AND COPING MECHANISMS AMONG FINAL-YEAR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS AT FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OYE-EKITI, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Stress management, which denotes the means used to objectively or subjectively respond to a stressful situation perceived by the individual, becomes a problem when it leads to the detriment of health. This study investigated the academic stress and coping mechanisms among the final year Library and Information Science (LIS) Students at Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria in order to identify the causes of academic stress among final year students, examine the impact of academic stress of final year students, and investigate coping mechanisms used by final year LIS students. The research design adopted in this qualitative research was a descriptive survey research design. The total population of final year LIS students was 160. Questionnaires were deployed as the research instrument and were administered to one hundred and sixty (160) final year student of Library and Information Science. The data collected for this study was analyzed and interpreted using simple percentages. The findings revealed that the genesis of academic stress were technologies, poor communication skill, incompletion of syllabus before

the examinations, lack of motivation and guidance from educators. The findings also discovered that respondents agreed that the coping mechanisms used were interacts with friends and family to help in managing stress. Finally, the findings discovered that the respondents agreed that the strategies to reduce academic stress were that students should refrain from over committing to academic and extracurricular activities. The study recommends that lecturers should embrace a training technique that will capture and enhance undergraduates studying capacity, and not burden them with school assignments.

Keywords*:* Academic Stress, Coping Mechanism, Library and Information Science, Stress Management, Students

Introduction

Stress is a natural reaction created by the body in response to a challenging or demanding situation. It is a physiological and psychological reaction that occurs when individuals perceive a threat or pressure that exceeds their ability to cope (Ellis, 2018). Adeoye (2010) defines stress as severe physiological and psychological tension. Ajagbe (2012) stated that stress is the body's reaction to any demand placed upon it, whether it is physical, emotional, or mental. It is a natural and inevitable part of life. In the view of Akinboye, Akinboye and Adeyemo (2012), stress is a response to undesirable mental, emotional, social, or environmental demands. Stress is the interference that affects the physical well-being of students. The incidence of stress among students is alarming due to the educational challenges that go with the school demands of the student (Ashaolu, 2011). When stress occurs, students can experience physical and psychological impairment (Murphy & Archer, 2018). Lee and Graham (2011) noted that high school students listed some of the stressors they encounter in the school setting as unannounced tests, the deadline for submitting homework, and educational and achievement expectations.

Academic stress is the pressures and strains that students experience as a result of their academic obligations and expectations (Shirom, 2019). This type of stress can stem from a variety of sources, including high expectations from themselves and others, rigorous coursework, fear of failure, and the pressure to succeed academically. Humphrey, Yow and Bowden (2020) reiterated that academic stress is the provocation to achieve well in school. Students often feel the need to meet high expectations set by their parents, lecturers, and peers. This pressure can help to desire of worry and overwhelm, especially when students feel that their entire future hinges on their academic success. Roberts and White (2019) averred that academic stress among students is a significant concern that can have detrimental effects on their mental health, well- being, and academic performance. It is caused by the pressure to excel academically, meet high expectations, and deal with the demanding workload of coursework. Murphy and Archer (2018) reported that academic stress can manifest in various ways, including anxiety, depression, lack of

motivation, and physical symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches. The authors further explained that it is the pressure to perform well in exams and assignments. Ng, Chiu and Fong (2016) asserted that students often feel the need to achieve high grades to meet the expectations of their lecturers. Workload and deadlines for coursework can create overwhelming levels of stress for students, especially when they have to juggle multiple responsibilities and commitments.

Academic stress is the hurtful physical and detrimental reaction that happens when the prerequisite of the educational environment does not meet the capacity and resources of the students. Stress can come from multiple sources, such as routine class work, lecturers, academic demands, environmental challenges on campus, and interpersonal challenges. The result of this is that the students end up not being motivated (Braateen, 2020). Bellani and Furlani (2016) noted that a lack of resources, increased workload, and reduced academic accomplishment can cause academic stress. Stress is unavoidable, and everyone has to deal with stress.

Gbolade (2012) defined coping as an adaptive or constructive way of reducing stress. Omolehin (2017) defined coping as an inbuilt ability and capability of an individual, which is either inborn or developed by personal effort through cooperation with other forces. The researchers further said that the choice of coping strategy depends on the appraisal of the situation in which a person finds themselves. Carver (2019) distinguished between problem and emotional-focused coping mechanisms. Bellani and Furlani (2016) have shown that students respond to stressors with different stress reactions and coping mechanisms. Asonibare (2016) expressed that students cope by being assertive. These help students to ask for what they want. Bancroft (2011) noted that students have various ways to cope with academic stress. Ajagbe (2012) explained that students cope with academic stress by taking time off to rest and eating a good meal. Arthur (2018) states that the coping mechanism adopted by a student depends on factors such as age, gender, type of environment, etc. Coping mechanisms are the reactions and behaviors one adapts to fight difficult situations. Coping mechanisms come in many forms. Some are helpful, while others are hurtful (Hooper, 2013). Therefore, this study aims to investigate academic stress and coping mechanisms among final-year Library and Information Science students at Fuoye, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Objective of the study

The aims of this study are to:

i. identify causes of academic stress among final year LIS students at Fuoye;
ii. examine the impact of academic stress of final year students of LIS at Fuoye;
iii. investigate coping mechanisms used by final year LIS students in managing academic stress at Fuoye;
iv. examine the level of coping mechanism used by final year students of LIS in managing the causes of academic stress; and
v. identify strategies to reduce academic

stress among final year students of LIS at Fuoye.

Research Questions

1. What are the causes of academic stress of final year students of LIS at Fuoye?
2. What is the impact of academic stress among final-year library and information science students at Fuoye?
3. What are the coping mechanisms used by final year LIS students in managing academic stress at Fuoye?
4. What is the level of coping mechanism used by final year students of LIS in managing the genesis of academic stress?
5. What are the strategies deployed to reduce academic stress among final year LIS students at Fuoye?

Statement of the Problem

Stress becomes a problem when it leads to the detriment of health situation due to some factors such as environmental, monetary, physical and psychological stressors. Existing studies showed that when undergraduates are under stress, they are likely to cope by eating junk food which can lead to obesity, while academic stress can lead to sleep disorder. However, when students find it hard to cope with stress, their behavior may change and cause physical symptoms such as pain, anxiety, and emotional frustration. Academic stress can lead to the development of unhealthy habits. Perhaps not many study on this type of work has been done on academic stress and coping mechanisms among students.

Literature Review

According to Shirom (2019), academic stress is the pressures and strains that students experience as a result of their academic obligations and expectations. This type of stress can stem from a variety of sources, including high expectations from themselves and others, rigorous coursework, fear of failure, and the pressure to succeed academically. Humphrey, Yow and Bowden (2020) averred that academic stress is the provocation to achieve well in school. Students often feel the need to meet high expectations set by their parents, lecturers, and peers. Roberts and White (2019) averred that academic stress among students is a significant concern that can have detrimental effects on their mental health, well-being, and academic performance. It is caused by the pressure to excel academically, meet high expectations, and deal with the demanding workload of coursework. Murphy and Archer (2018) reported that academic stress can manifest in various ways, including anxiety, depression, lack of motivation, and physical symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches. The authors further explained that it is the pressure to perform well in exams and assignments. Ng, Chiu and Fong (2016) asserted that students often feel the need to achieve high grades to meet the expectations of their lecturers. Workload and deadlines for coursework can create overwhelming levels of stress for students, especially when they have to juggle multiple responsibilities and commitments.

Fairbrother and Warn (2018)

identified various sources of stress such as time constraints, workload, and examination pressure. They found that a significant percentage of undergraduates experienced high levels of stress, impacting their mental and physical well-being. Furthermore, undergraduates experienced high levels of academic stress and employed various coping strategies, such as seeking social support and time management, to manage their stress. Carveth, Akinmayowa & Kadiri (2014) revealed that academic stress was significantly associated with health complaints, and perceived social support played a mediating role in mitigating the negative effects of academic stress on undergraduates' well-being. They reported a high prevalence of suicidal ideation among undergraduates experiencing academic stress and highlighted the mediating role of psychological distress in the relationship between academic stress and suicidal ideation. Murphy and Archer (2018) identified factors such as financial constraints, workload, and examination anxiety as significant contributors to academic stress among undergraduates. They highlighted the need for targeted interventions and support service. Kadapatti and Vijyaluxmi (2017) demonstrated the prevalence of academic stress among undergraduates and underline the need for targeted interventions, support services, and coping mechanisms to address the significant impact of academic stress on the mental and physical well-being of university students.

Akinboye, Akinboye and Adeyemo (2021) revealed that academic stress led to a decline in social interactions and relationships among the students, affecting their overall social well-being and sense of connectedness. The authors further said that students experiencing high levels of academic stress tended to have a fear of failure, leading them to avoid risk-taking and hindering their personal and career growth Alsentali and Anshel (2015) found that academic stress often strained the relationships between students and their families, leading to a breakdown in communication and support systems. The author further submitted students experiencing academic stress tended to feel disengaged and less motivated to learn, which negatively impacted their academic performance and overall well-being.

The following are the causes of academic stress among students (Oxford learning, 2018);

Lack of organization: Students with poor organizational skills tend to experience more stress in school. This is usually because they aren't properly prepared with the tools, or the understanding needed to learn. If those organization skills don't improve they may continue to fall behind, leading to more stress and frustration about school.

Poor time management: Students with busy schedules can quickly become overwhelmed because they are left with no free time to relax. As the student progresses from elementary school to high school, the amount and difficulty level of schoolwork increases—and students without good time management skills can experience even more stress.

Poor sleep schedule: Not getting enough sleep makes it difficult for students to concentrate and learn effectively. This can lead to feelings of stress for the student when he or she isn‘t able to perform well in class or on assignments. In fact, studies have shown that students who don‘t get the required 8-10 hours of sleep each night are more likely to feel stressed than students who do.

Lack of support: Lack of support from parents or teachers, even if it‘s only perceived, can add a lot of stress to students. They may feel that a lot is expected of them, but that they don‘t have a strong enough support system (whether emotional or practical) to achieve their goals. This is another cause of stress can affect high-achieving students in particular.

Transitioning to a new environment: Making a major move can be a stressful time for many students, whether it‘s starting at a new school or making the transition from elementary school to high school. New classes, new teachers, and new routines can all be stressful for students, and take time to adjust to.

Changes to routine: A routine including dedicated homework time and a consistent sleep schedule helps guide students through their day. When changes to the usual routine start to happen, the student may find it more difficult to manage his or her time, leading to more stress.

Reddy, Menon & Thattil (2018) suggested that schools should develop counseling centers and implement upgraded services such as social support groups for students by the counseling experts periodically. This will allow students to feel at ease and free to express their emotions. It is also vital to educate students on the negative consequences of stress. Teachers can also help students choose the best stress reduction strategies by mentoring and guiding them. Interactive academic sessions on stress management can further encourage medical students to identify each and every problematic issue. This would achieve the goal of reducing academic stress, adopting healthy academic stress coping behaviors, improving academic performance, and minimizing anxiety among those considering future professional careers. Jayasankara, Karishma and Anjana (2018) revealed that academic stress still continues to be a devastating problem that affects a student's mental health and physical health. Stream wise differences have also been highlighted in the experience of depression. Managing the situation at every level - personal, social and institutional - is fundamental. Techniques such as biofeedback, yoga, life skills training, memory meditation, and psychotherapy have been found to be effective in reducing stress in students. The researcher has stated that improving the overall well-being of the student will ultimately be beneficial not only to the individual but also to the overall productivity of the institution.

Coping mechanisms are strategies undergraduates use to deal with stressful situations. These can be conscious strategies that undergraduates use to tolerate, minimize or adapt to stressful events or emotions. Folkman and Moskowitz (2021) stated that such strategies can vary widely from

undergraduate to undergraduate, and can range from healthy and adaptive ways of dealing with stress to harmful or maladaptive mechanisms. They include activities such as exercise, meditation, deep breathing, and seeking support from others. These strategies can help undergraduates manage their stress and emotions in a constructive way. They can also include problem-solving methods and seeking professional help when necessary.

De Boer, Buwalda and Koolhaas (2017) reiterated that coping mechanisms are psychological strategies and behaviors that humans use to manage stress, anxiety, and emotions. These mechanisms can be conscious or unconscious and are often developed in response to difficult situations. It can be healthy or unhealthy, and they play a crucial role in how undergraduates deal with adversity and maintain their mental well- being. Furthermore, there are various types of coping mechanisms, including problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance coping.

Bakhsh and Sayed (2015) found out that students utilized a range of coping mechanisms such as problem-solving, seeking social support, and positive reframing. These coping strategies were found to be effective in reducing stress and promoting academic success. Alharbi and Smith (2018) revealed that students who engaged in active coping strategies such as seeking social support and problem-solving had better academic outcomes and reported lower levels of stress. They further discovered that students who utilized adaptive coping strategies such as seeking social support and positive reframing had higher academic performance. Mason (2017) reported that students often utilized problem-focused coping strategies such as time management and planning. The authors further disclosed that students who engaged in mindfulness practices such as meditation and relaxation techniques had better coping abilities and reported lower levels of stress.

Furthermore, students who utilized adaptive coping strategies reported better psychological well-being and lower levels of stress, while those who employed maladaptive coping strategies reported higher levels of distress. Alharbi and Smith (2018) found that the program significantly improved students' coping abilities and reduced their levels of academic stress. The authors further observed that adaptive coping strategies such as seeking social support and positive reframing were associated with better psychological and academic outcomes, while maladaptive coping strategies were linked to poorer mental health and lower academic performance. Azila-Gbettor, Atatsi, Danku and Soglo (2015) discovered that students who engage in adaptive coping strategies such as problem-solving, seeking social support, and positive reframing tend to have better mental health and academic outcomes.

Methodology

This qualitative research adopted descriptive survey design. The total population of the study consisted of one hundred and sixty (160) final year students of library and information science of Federal University Oye Ekiti. This design was used because it described the situation

of the academic stress and coping mechanisms among final-year library and information science students. The research instrument used to collect data was questionnaire. The purpose was to collect adequate data which would give accurate and vivid description between variables. This study adopted total enumeration along with the sample size of one hundred and sixty (160) of the final year LIS students.

Research Question One: What are the causes of academic stress among final-year students of LIS at Federal University Oye-Ekiti?

Table 1: Causes of Academic Stress among Final Year LIS Students

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Criterion Mean
1	Technologies	3.40	0.691	
2	Poor Communication Skill	3.39	0.754	
3	Incompletion of syllabus before the Examinations	3.35	0.955	
4	Lack of motivation and guidance from educators	3.35	0.765	
5	Do not understand the syllabus	3.22	0.541	
6	Parents' demand for academic achievement	3.17	0.523	**2.50**
7	Frequent Test	3.12	0.822	
8	Manage time schedule for study	3.10	0.767	
9	Self-efficacy beliefs	3.10	0.912	
10	Assignment	3.07	0.974	
11	Interaction problem with lecturers	3.07	0.704	
12	Performance pressure	3.01	0.752	
13	Changing in housing situation	3.00	1.007	
14	Lack of Library accessibility	2.97	1.029	
15	Discrimination between Students	2.95	0.738	
16	Rules and Regulation of the Institution	2.94	0.975	
17	Frequent special class	2.84	0.831	

Table 1 above presents the causes of academic stress among final-year students of Library and Information Science in Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The criterion mean is 2.50. Any individual mean of the items equal to or greater that criterion mean shows the agreement of the respondents with the cause of academic stress among final-year students of Library and Information Science in Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The respondents agreed that the cause of academic stress among final-year students of Library and Information Science in Federal University Oye-Ekiti were technologies (Mean = 3.40, SD = 0.691), poor communication skill (Mean = 3.39, SD = 0.754), incompletion of syllabus before the

examinations (Mean = 3.35, SD = 0.955), lack of motivation and guidance from educators (Mean = 3.35, SD = 0.765), do not understand the syllabus (Mean = 3.22, SD = 0.541), parents' demand for academic achievement (Mean = 3.17, SD = 0.523) and frequent test (Mean = 3.12, SD = 0.822).This study is in line with Kadapatti and Vijyaluxmi (2017) who revealed that high aspiration, poor study habits, more study problems, change in medium of instruction and low socio-economic conditions are the factors responsible for academic stress. The authors further found that many of school life's demands cause stress especially academic burden, financial problems, adjustment to the school environment, high expectations, limited opportunities and fear of examinations and when a student feels academically stressed, it can affect everything he does.

Research Question Two: What are the impacts of academic stress among final-year Library and Information Science students at Federal University Oye-Ekiti?

Table 2: Impacts of Academic Stress among Final Year Students of LIS

S/N	STATEMENTS	Mean	SD	Criterion Mean
1	Inability to manage time	3.55	0.617	
2	Could not give best to class test	3.29	0.524	
3	Unable to score high on semester exam	3.29	0.522	
4	Unable to attend university properly	3.29	0.850	
5	Unable to write examinations better	3.18	0.630	
6	Unable to cope up with a lesson	3.16	0.579	
7	Poor academic performance	3.15	0.841	
8	Fear of job opportunities	3.15	0.992	**2.50**
9	Attention difficulties	3.14	0.884	
10	Unable to focus on classes	3.13	0.704	
11	Drowsiness in the classroom	3.10	0.954	
12	Affect decision-making	3.10	0.741	
13	Difficulty with online learning environment	3.05	0.927	
14	Sleeping in the classroom	2.99	0.990	
15	Diminished peer popularity	2.96	0.794	
16	Increase likelihood of making mistake	2.91	0.764	
17	Change in sleeping habit	2.91	0.884	
18	Unable to expose our extra-curricular activities	2.82	0.640	

Table 2 shows the impact of academic stress among final-year Library and Information Science students at Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The criterion mean is 2.50. Any individual mean of the items equal to or greater than the criterion mean shows the agreement of the respondents with the impact of academic stress among final-year Library and Information Science students at Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The respondents agreed that the impact of

academic stress among final-year Library and Information Science students at Federal University Oye-Ekiti were inability to manage time (Mean = 3.55, SD = 0.617), could not give best to class test (Mean= 3.29, SD = 0.524), unable to score high on semester exam (Mean = 3.29, SD = 0.522), unable to attend university properly (Mean = 3.29, SD = 0.850), unable to write examinations better (Mean= 3.18, SD = 0.630), unable to cope up with a lessons (Mean = 3.16, SD = 0.579), poor academic performance (Mean = 3.15, SD = 0.841) and fear of job opportunities (Mean= 3.15, SD = 0.992). This study is in line with Sinha (2020) who revealed that poor academic performance, diminished peer popularity, depression, attention difficulties, somatic complaints and substance abuse are commonly observed problems among the victims of academic stress without being aware of how to cope with them.

Research Question Three: What are the coping mechanisms used by final year LIS students in managing academic stress at Federal University Oye-Ekiti?

Table 3: Coping Mechanisms used by Final Year Students in Managing Academic Stress among Final Year

S/N	STATEMENTS	Mean	SD	Criterion Mean
1	Interacts with friends and family to help in managing Stress	3.46	0.795	
2	Get professional help.	3.45	0.952	
3	Problem-solving	3.44	0.842	
4	Social and familial support	3.35	0.702	
5	Better study habits	3.31	1.003	
6	Guidance on career choices	3.25	0.921	**2.50**
7	Time management	3.22	0.910	
8	Modifying with the physical study environment	3.19	0.894	
9	Engage in exercise	3.09	0.764	
10	Learning new hobbies/ skills	2.93	0.848	
11	Engage in relaxing activities	2.78	0.745	
12	Use of social networks like Whatsapp, Facebook, YouTube, etc. to reduce stress.	2.75	0.789	
13	Lessen down emotions by screaming, crying etc.	2.70	0.770	

Table 3 shows the coping mechanisms used by final-year Library and Information Science students in managing academic stress at Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The criterion mean is 2.50. Any individual mean of the items equal to or greater that criterion mean shows the agreement of the respondents with the coping mechanisms used by final-year Library and Information Science students in managing academic stress at Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The respondents agreed that the coping mechanisms used by final-year Library

and Information Science students in managing academic stress at Federal University Oye-Ekiti were interacts with friends and family to help in managing stress (Mean = 3.46, SD = 0.795), get professional help (Mean = 3.45, SD = 0.952), problem-solving (Mean = 3.44, SD = 0.842), social and familial support (Mean = 3.35, SD = 0.702), better study habits (Mean = 3.31, SD = 1.003), guidance on career choices (Mean = 3.25, SD = 0.921) and time management (Mean = 3.22, SD = 0.910). This is in line with Bakhsh and Sayed (2015) who revealed that managing academic-related stress should include but not limited to building a student support system, social support, not procrastinating, and having leisure tasks or hobbies. The authors further revealed that the management of stress should involve adequate coping mechanisms.

Research Question Four: What is the level of coping mechanism used by final year students of LIS in managing the causes of academic stress?

Table 4: Level of Coping Mechanisms used by Final Year Students of LIS in Managing the Causes of Academic Stress

S/N	STATEMENTS	Very High	High	Average	Low	Not at All
1	Better study habits	44 (28.8%)	28 (18.3%)	46 (30.1%)	30 (19.6%)	5 (3.3%)
2	Guidance on career choices	55 (35.9%)	38 (24.8%)	45 (29.4%)	10 (6.5%)	5 (3.3%)
3	Social and familial support	40 (26.1%)	61 (39.9%)	47 (30.7%)	5 (3.3%)	-
4	Interacts with friends and family to help in managing stress	40 (26.1%)	67 (43.8%)	36 (23.5%)	5 (3.3%)	5 (3.3%)
5	Engage in exercise	44 (28.8%)	32 (20.9%)	57 (37.3%)	10 (6.5%)	10 (6.5%)
6	Engage in relaxing activities	39 (25.5%)	53 (34.6%)	46 (30.1%)	10 (6.5%)	5 (3.3%)
7	Learning new hobbies/ skills	39 (25.5%)	40 (26.1%)	44 (28.8%)	30 (19.6%)	-
8	Lessen down emotions by screaming, crying etc.	29 (19.0%)	33 (21.6%)	19 (12.4%)	57 (37.3%)	15 (9.8%)
9	Use of social networks like Whatsapp, Facebook, YouTube, etc. to reduce stress.	10 (6.5%)	67 (43.8%)	53 (34.6%)	23 (15.0%)	-
10	Modifying with the physical study Environment	39 (25.5%)	52 (34.0%)	47 (30.7%)	10 (6.5%)	5 (3.3%)
11	Time management	37 (24.2%)	53 (34.6%)	33 (21.6%)	20 (13.1%)	10 (6.5%)
12	Problem-solving	62 (40.5%)	68 (44.4%)	18 (11.8%)	5 (3.3%)	-
13	Get professional help.	52 (34.0%)	28 (18.3%)	48 (31.4%)	25 (16.3%)	-

From Table 4 above, the level of coping mechanism used by final year students of Library and Information Science in managing the causes of academic stress is seen. A total of 68 (44.4%) respondents indicated that the level of problem-solving was high, 67 (43.8%) respondents indicated that the level of use of social networks like Whatsapp, Facebook, Youtube, etc. to reduce stress and interacts with friends and family to help in managing stress were high and 61 (39.9%) respondents indicated that the level of social and familial support was high. This study is not in line with Mason (2017) who revealed that academic stress can be minimized or overcome by disassociation from unnecessary stressing situation/s, accepting situations one cannot control or change and create relaxation and fun time.

Research Question Five: What are the strategies to reduce academic stress among final- year LIS students at Federal University Oye-Ekiti?

Table 5: Strategies to Reduce Academic Stress among Final Year Students of LIS at Federal University Oye-Ekiti

S/N	STATEMENTS	Mean	SD	Criterion Mean
1	Students should refrain from over committing to academic and extracurricular activities	3.32	0.824	
2	Students should follow a healthy diet	3.21	0.936	
3	Adequate library accessibility	3.21	0.886	
4	Deep-breathing exercises to ease the tension	3.16	0.796	
5	Students should avoid artificial stimulants	3.12	0.755	
6	Adequate motivation and guidance from educators	3.12	0.866	
7	Provide an in-house advisor or recommend trusted practitioners for the students	3.10	0.741	**2.50**
8	Attend tutorial class	3.04	0.910	
9	Aligning sleeping routine with the normal resting time	2.95	0.923	
10	Seek the help of a massage therapist to enhance blood circulation	2.92	0.970	
11	Students should have break often from their busy schedules	2.88	0.827	
12	Always think positive thoughts	2.81	1.087	
13	Students should regularly exercise themselves	2.76	0.965	
14	Students should abstain from alcohol	2.71	0.985	

The strategies to reduce academic stress among final-year Library and Information Science students in Federal University Oye-Ekiti are shown in Table 5 above. The criterion mean is 2.50. Any individual mean of the items equal to or greater than the criterion mean shows the agreement of the respondents with the strategies to reduce academic stress among final-year Library and Information Science students. The respondents agreed that the strategies to reduce academic stress were that students should refrain from over committing to academic and

extracurricular activities (Mean = 3.32, SD = 0.824), students should follow a healthy diet (Mean = 3.21, SD = 0.936), adequate library accessibility (Mean = 3.21, SD = 0.886), deep-breathing exercises to ease the tension (Mean = 3.16, SD = 0.796), students should avoid artificial stimulants (Mean = 3.12, SD = 0.755), adequate motivation and guidance from educators (Mean = 3.12, SD = 0.866) and provide an in-house advisor or recommend trusted practitioners for the students (Mean = 3.10, SD = 0.741). This is in line with Galloway, Conner and Pope (2013) who revealed that an effective way to address academic stress among students is to refrain from over committing to academic and extracurricular activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the causes and impact of academic stress, as well as the coping mechanisms employed by final-year Library and Information Science students at Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The findings revealed that academic stress is a significant concern among students, caused by factors such as technologies, poor communication skills, incompletion of syllabus, and lack of motivation. The study also identified various coping mechanisms used by students, including problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance coping. The results of this study have implications for educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals seeking to support students in managing academic stress and promoting overall well-being. By understanding the causes and consequences of academic stress, as well as the coping mechanisms employed by students, we can work towards creating a more supportive and inclusive learning environment that fosters academic success and student well-being.

Based on the above conclusion; the following recommendations were suggested;

1. Students should be encouraged to manage their time effectively and work hard to avoid working under-pressure and procrastination.
2. Positive thinking should be encouraged among students to generate lower stress levels, reduce feelings of depression, and enhance students' overall physical well-being.
3. Lecturers should adopt a teaching methodology that will engage and improve students learning abilities and not overload students with a lot of school tasks.
4. University management should establish counseling units in the institution so that students and staff could report eventual stressors to receive counsel and other remedial assistance.
5. University management should provide workshops, seminars, training, and a conducive learning environment for the students.
6. Proactive measures should be in place at different levels of learning institutions in the form of trained mental health practitioners to manage and address stress-related issues.

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