AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS FACED BY UNDERGRADUATE BIOLOGY STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN EDO STATE

Tessy Esewi OBASOGIE

EDU2102032

THE DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGYFACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF
BENIN BENIN CITY

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A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN BIOLOGY EDUCATION B.Sc (ED) UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned hereby certify that this project work was carried out by **Tessy Esewi OBASOGIE,** in the department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, Faculty of education, University of Benin city under our supervision

PROF.(Mrs) E.O OKOBIA **DR.(Mrs) I. K.OTEZE**

_____ _____

Project supervisor
DATE /SIGNATURE

Project Coordianator
DATE/SIGNATURE

Prof. F.O IDEHEN

_____

(Head of department)
DATE/SIGNATURE

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty for his infinite mercy, grace, unwavering love, strength, kindness and provisions throughout this program me.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the assessment of the psychological factors faced by undergraduate biology students. Four research questions were raised and answered.

A descriptive survey research design was used and a questionnaire was adopted to solicit information from the respondents, four research questions were used as a guide to research and a sample of the study comprised of 60 Students, Mean, standard Deviation, criterion Mean we're used to analyze the Data collection to answer the research questions. The reliability of the instrument was calculated using the cronhbach's Alpha coefficient and the reliability stood at to be 00.85.

Findings of the Study revealed that these psychological factors self-efficacy, anxiety, depression and stress faced by these undergraduate biology students play a crucial role on each of their academic pursuits and was recommended that these students should build up High self-efficacy in order to attain good success and surpass challenging tasks ,Seek counselling services whenever feelings of anxiety, depression or stress becomes overwhelming and lastly the university should create policies that reduces excessive academic workload and provide a balanced learning environment for science students.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Background of the Study

The university education marks a significant transitional period in the life of a young adult. The time is typically accompanied by new changes, challenges, rising academic expectations, and several personal, social, and psychological adjustments. In some cases, this transition becomes increasingly challenging most especially undergraduates in the science fields like Biology where the academic environment is made up of rigid theoretical foundations, intensive laboratory activities, fieldworks, and high competition levels. Some of these factors may create pressures that can influence students' well-being and academic functioning. One of the major factor is that of the "psychological" which influences ones mental, emotional and behavioural processes, affecting the way one thinks feels or act. This psychological factor is seen as a essential factor that helps reveals the way man thinks and relates to things around him in his environment and one of such factor is known as self-efficacy, the most relevant positive psychological factor related to students' academic life.

Self-efficacy, according to Bandura (1997), is described as an individual's belief in his or her capability for a successful performance and management of challenges. Within the academic environment, the belief shapes the way students approach difficult subjects, their response to academic obstacles, and their sustained effort in the event of challenges. Students with strong self-efficacy engage confidently with coursework and practical

activities, while those with low self-efficacy may exhibit avoidance behaviors such as reluctance to participate in laboratory exercises, presentations, or group activities. As pointed out by Martins and Santos (2020), such a lack of confidence may decrease students' motivation and thus make them less satisfied academically. Anxiety another powerful psychological factor influencing students, is a feeling which emerges among them when they encounter academic challenges. Coates and McDowall (2025) explain anxiety as a state of apprehension or worry that affects an individual's emotional and cognitive functioning. The roots of anxiety for undergraduate biology students can be related to the fear of failure, difficult course content, performance expectations, and the high cognitive load arising from exams. Sustained anxiety might interfere with focus, diminish confidence, and make learning even more difficult. Depression is also identified as a major psychological concern for university students. As Emmanuel (2013) observes, manifestations of depression among learners occur in the form of sadness, lack of interest in school work, and fatigue, as well as an inability to concentrate. These symptoms make students lose motivation, fail to attend classes, or even submit assignments. Zhang et al. (2025) observe that depression usually accompanies anxiety, thereby posing an even greater burden on learners in such demanding fields as biology.

In addition to these, stress is among the most frequent psychological reactions among university students. Stress occurs when the actual academic and environmental demands surpass a student's coping ability. Chegg (2023) indicates that university students

increasingly report high levels of academic stress, which in most cases relates to heavy workloads, tight deadlines, long practical sessions, and course makes stress a frequent companion in biology students academic sojourn. Emmanuel (2013) argues that demanding laboratory schedules, numerous tests and assignments, and challenges in balancing schoolwork and personal life can all trigger stress. These four psychological factors-self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress-constitute the emotional and academic experiences of undergraduate biology students and how these factors influence the student's well-being becomes an important understanding, as they are the major predictors of academic performance, motivation, engagement, and quality life.

Therefore this present study seeks to examine in detail these psychological variables and the unique experiences of biology undergraduates, who often face these arduous academic conditions in the university environment.

Statement of the Problem

In the recent decade, there has been an increased concern for the well-being of university students. Undergraduate biology students, particularly, are confronted with strong academic pressures, heavy laboratory schedules, and high levels of expectations with regard to academic accomplishment. These pressures expose them to various psychological risk factors, such as low self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress, all of which may impede their learning, lower academic performance, and adversely impact their overall well-being. While the issues become highly visible, less is known about how these

psychological factors collectively influence the experiences and academic outcomes of undergraduate biology students. Therefore, there is the need to investigate these psychological variables of self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress, how they interact through influencing the well-being, motivation, and academic success of students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide how the study:

1. What is the level of self-efficacy among undergraduate biology students?
2. what is the extent to which these undergraduate biology students experience anxiety.
3. To what extent do these undergraduate biology students experience depression.
4. What is the level of stress experienced by these undergraduate biology students.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the psychological factors (self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress) faced by undergraduate biology students.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the level of self-efficacy among undergraduate students in biology
2. To Determine the extent to which undergraduate biology students experience anxiety,
3. To know the extent to which these undergraduate biology students experience depression. .

4. To determine the level of stress experienceed by these undergraduate students in biology.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant to several groups within the educational system, particularly undergraduate students, lecturers, academic counselors, university management, policymakers, and future researchers. Each of these groups stands to benefit from the Study in ways that promote psychological well-being and enhance academic success.

Scope and Delimitation

This study is specifically designed to assess the major psychological factors — self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress that affect 400l undergraduate science students in biology education of the University of Benin Edo state, Nigeria.

Definition of Terms

Self-Efficacy: The belief in one's ability to effectively perform academic tasks or overcome challenges.

Anxiety: Persistent feelings of fear or worry, especially related to academic performance or social evaluation.

Depression: A mental state characterized by sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in normal activities.

Stress: A physical and emotional reaction to pressures that exceed an individual's coping

ability.

Undergraduate Science Students: Students enrolled in science-related programs such as biology, chemistry, physics, or mathematics.

Psychological Factors: Emotional and mental conditions (self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress) that influence students' behavior, performance, and well-being.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature were reviewed under the following subheading.

Concept of Psychological factors

Level of self-efficacy among undergraduate biology students

The extent to which undergraduate biology students experience anxiety.

The extent to which undergraduate biology students experience depression.

The level of stress experienced by undergraduate biology ststudents.

Summary of reviewed of related literatures

Concept of Psychological factors

The term "psychological" is deeply rooted from the word psychology which means the scientific study of the mind and behavior. Psychology is a discipline concerned with the study of the mental process, thought, feelings and behaviours of an individual. While Psychological factors refers to the variables that influences the internal emotional, cognitive, and behavioral processes and the manner in which individuals think, feel, and act in response to life experiences (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Psychological factors define how individuals view issues, make decisions, manage stress, and maintain motivation. In colleges and universities, psychological factors play a vital role in defining how students manage academic works, adapt to school environments, and pursue personal and professional growth. For science-oriented students

in Biology psychological stability serves as a key in handling the massive workload, technical subjects, and constant testing that are part and parcel of their course work. These variables encompass a broad range of affective factors which includes self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress — all influencing students' learning behaviors, academic performance, and psychological well-being (Bandura, 1997; Yusuf & Busari, 2021)..

Self-efficacy — one's belief in his or her capabilities to plan and execute tasks needed to attain a particular goals. within the academic context, it reflects students confidence in their abilities to succeed in their academic works such as completion of assignments, dealing with examinations and solving scientific problems. It is a personal trust in one's capability to successfully plan and execute the actions required for achieving specific performance outcomes (Bandura 1997). Self-efficacy is seen as a positive psychological trait that acts as buffers ensuring students achieve good academic goals. self - efficacy influences students strategies for coping with obstacles, efforts in studying and persistence they show in the face of hindrances. According to (schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021) Students with High-self-efficacy are seen to be more optimistic, persistent with their studies and able to solve problems, they are able to engage in challenging tasks, gain mastering of them rather than see them as threat. Among undergraduates biology students self-efficacy is particularly crucial given the demanding nature of biology courses which requires constant focus and confidence. students with strong self perception on their ability to understand and answer biology questions perform academically well compared to their other counterparts with low self-efficacy (Adewale & Eze, 2023). Low self-efficacy also known as reduced efficacy is often linked to students having low belief and confidence in their abilities. It makes students procrastinate, avoid school work, be demotivated and perform less in their studies.(Okafor & Bello 2022). According to (Musa and Ibrahim 2023) low self-efficacious students experiences self - doubt, fear, lose of concentration which may hinder their learning and ultimately lead to poor performance.

Anxiety - an emotional and psychological condition characterised by increased worry, fear and apprehension typically in anticipation to threats or stressful situations (speilberger 1983). Anxiety in schools takes the form of academic or test anxiety where students experience worry or nervousness concerning exams, class presentations, test, or rating performance. Excessive anxiety impairs attention, problem-solving, and memory (Yusuf & Oduwaiye, 2021). Whereas low levels of anxiety might serve to improve alertness and motivation of students. High levels of anxiety undermine the ability of students to remember things, lose concentration hinder their problem solving abilities which in turn affect their academic performance. (ogunleye & ojo, 2022; Bello & Adekunle, 2023).The undergraduate biology student may experience this during practical examinations, fear of failing and also performance pressure in large courses, complex laboratory sessions and other experiments.

Depression can be described as a mental state characterized by a continuous feeling of sadness, hopelessness and loss of interest in daily or academic activities. This is manifested poor concentration, lack of motivation, absenteeism, and withdrawals. (Akinola & Adeyemi, 2022). According to the (American psychiatric Association (APA) 2022) Depression is a serious mood disorder with recurrent sad and hopeless feelings and a loss of interest or pleasure in activities. It is characterized by either cognitive or somatic symptoms which includes concentration difficulties, tiredness, sleep disturbances and changes in appetite. As Emmanuel (2013) observed students experiences depression typically as a result of academic stress, lack of academic resources, financial hardship, social isolation, personal and family issues. This makes them to lose interest in their studies becoming sad and lose concentration as well. Prolonged depression have been found to reduce students learning engagement, affect memory retention and may lead to academic failure.

Stress an emotional and physiological response people have when demands exceeds the limit of their coping ability. It is a response that occurs when one perceives environmental demands to be greater than their adaptive capacities (Lazarus& Folkman, 1984). Stress is virtually unavoidable in universities because students are greatly faced with academic, financial, and social demands which are inevitable. Stress among undergraduates biology students results from rigorous curriculum, constant testing, Examinations, laboratory experimentation, Tight deadlines, overexcessive parental expectations and expectations for academic performance (okoro & Eze, 2023;Udo & Chukwu, 2023). Heavy course loads, Excessive test, laboratory reports and competition for high scores. It has been believed that Stress experienced in moderate levels has the ability to enhance alertness and motivation in students enabling them perform better at an optimum level. chronic or Higher levels of stress leads to emotional exhaustion, irritability and dulled thinking, which are harmful to the effectiveness of learning and academic engagement (Maslach & Leiter, 2016;Bello & Adekunle, 2023). Students in science particularly undergo higher severity of stress compared to those studying in social sciences or arts as they carry the dual burden of Theoritical studies and experimental laboratory practice (ogunleye & ojo, 2022).

Level of self-efficacy among undergraduates biology students

According to (Bandura 2020) Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in his ability to organize and execute a course of action required to produce specific performance attainment or Goals. It is the confidence students have in themselves that enables them achieve the set tasks and goals placed before them. . In biology self-efficacy influences how students approaches complex learning materials, laboratory experiments, and Group works and according to (Adewale & onifade 2022) the level of efficacy one has matters, He says students who have high efficacy are likely to perform Better as they can apply more perseverance, better problem-solving skills, and motivational drive to overcome challenging

biological concepts. Also a recent study has revealed a moderate to high levels of efficacy among biology students who were more engaged actively in learning, with their lecturer receiving continuous feedback from them after the learning process. So also Ekanem and Yusuf (2024) indicated that female biology students were more likely to possess higher levels of academic self-efficacy in practical courses when complemented with collaborative group work and mentorship programmes than the males. While On the other hand, students with avoidance behavior, procrastination, and lack of confidence during laboratory assessments have been known to exhibit low self-efficacy.

The Extent to Which Undergraduate Biology Students Experience Anxiety.

Within the student body at the undergraduate level, anxiety is now a looming corcern due to the increasing academic pressure and competitive environment. In a study carried out by Afolabi and omole (2022), it was discovered that 45% to 55% of Nigerian university students suffered from moderate to severe academic anxiety, particularly during examination periods. This accords with the world Health organization's (WHO, 2023) approximation that roughly 1 in every 3 students in universities globally experience high anxiety levels, and more in-low and middle - income countries due to the unavailability of counselling and psychological care.

For biology students at the undergraduate level, worry is compounded by the challenging nature of science - related assignments like laboratory experiments, data analysis and quantitative examinations. The stress of having to keep high grades in courses characterised by stringent grading can generate continuous anxiety. According to Musa and Eze(2024), students of science have a higher anxiety rate than students of arts and social sciences, primarily due to the persistent assessment system and rigorous thinking involved in their subject matter. Chronic anxiety may result in physiological symptoms like rapid

heartbeat, headache, and insomnia as well as behavioural effects like procrastination and avoidance of study habits (udo & chukwu, 2023).

The Extent to which these undergraduate biology students experience depression.

Globally, the prevalence of depression among university students hasbecome very alarming. According to the world Health Organisation (Who, 2023), one in four university students across the world develops moderate to severe depressive symptoms during their higher education. Prevalence is much greater in low- and middle-income countries where access to mental health care is poor. For instance, global estimates show that only 15% of students belonging to developing countries receive professional mental health care compare to 45% from industrialised countries (WHO, 2023: Rahman et al., 2024)

Depression among undergraduates is a serious mental health problem in Nigeria. From studies, the rate of depressive symptoms among Nigerian University students has increased by approximately 30%since 2020, primarily because of economic insecurity, unemployment fear, and learning disruption after covid-19 (Adeyemi & salami, 2023). A cross-sectional study by musa and Ibrahim (2024) showed 58% of Nigerian undergraduate students had mild to severe depressive symptoms, and a higher percentage among the science and medical students compared to arts and humanities students. Okafor and Bell (2022) further stated that depressive symptoms were strongly associated with low self-efficacy and poor academic motivation among science students, and this supported a complex interplay between cognitive beliefs and emotional well-being.

Socioeconomic status and gender have also been known to influence depression in students. A Study by Onuoha and yusuf (2023) recently discovered that female undergraduate students exhibited 1.5 times as many depressive symptoms as their male counterparts primarily on the basis of gender-related issues,

social pressures, and academic stress. Financial challenges are also another important predictor as poor background students are most risk of depression due to the inability to increase tuition fees and living costs (Nwankwo and Adebayo, 2024).

The level of stress experienced by undergraduate biology students.

Current research indicates that one of the most widespread psychological problems among undergraduates students is stress. The World Health Organisation (WHO,2023) estimated that close to 60% of university students worldwide suffer from moderate to extreme levels of academic stress, but just 25% of them utilize professional help. In Nigeria, over 65%of undergraduate science students have been reported by Uche and Adeyemi (2024) to experience chronic academic workload and examination-related stress, while 48% experience frequent fatigue and sleep disturbances as an aftermath. Similarly, findings from a study by Nwankwo and Adebayo (2024) indicate that financial constraints erratic electricity supply - both affecting study times - are key determinants of stress among Nigerians university students.

The effect of stress transcend emotional tension to physical and behaviour impacts. Physiological signs such as headache, gastrointestinal disorder, and impaired immunity are common among stress students (Eze & lawal, 2023). Physiological symptoms consist of irritability, decrease focus, and despair, while behavioral outcomes may vary from disconnection from friends, use of drugs or procrastination (Okon & Edem, 2022). If unaddressed, chronic stress may lead to academic burnout - a state of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced sense of accomplishment (Maslach & Leiter, 2016;Adediran & Yusuf, 2023)

Also more recent studies show that stress among undergraduates has increased exponentially by 28% rise in the period of 2020-2023 (Adeyemi & salami 2023) stress symptoms among Nigerian

undergraduates is normally caused by academic pressure and financial insecurity. The female students were not left out as they slightly more experienced stress compared to the male students, primarily due to role strain and societal expectations (onuoha & yusuf, 2023).

Summary of Review of Related Literature

The reviewed literature highlights that psychological factors — self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress — significantly influence undergraduate science students' academic and emotional well-being. While self-efficacy enhances resilience and performance, anxiety, depression, and stress undermine students' ability to cope with academic challenges. Studies conducted in Nigeria and other developing countries consistently show a rising trend of mental and emotional health challenges among undergraduates, worsened by limited institutional support (Adewale & Eze, 2023; Okon & Edem, 2022).

However, most previous studies have focused on general university populations, neglecting the unique experiences of science students who face intensive academic workloads. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by assessing how these psychological factors interact to influence the academic performance and mental well-being of undergraduate science students in the University of Benin

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Population of the Study

Sample and Sampling Technique

Research Instrument

Validity of the instrument

Reliability of the instrument

Method of Data collection

Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect data from a sample of respondents and allows the systematic description of the psychological factors as they naturally occur among undergraduate biology education students. this was also suitable because it provides an opportunity to gather opinions, attitudes, and self-reports from the respondents within a real-life educational setting.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all 400 undergraduate students enrolled in

the Biology Education program at the University of Benin during the 2024/2025 academic session. These students were selected because they represent a population actively involved in science-related coursework, which often demands rigorous mental and emotional engagement. This population was deemed adequate to provide meaningful insights into the psychological factors being examined.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample consists of 60 undergraduates biology students. All students in 400level biology programme were sampled.

Research Instrument

The major instrument used for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire titled Psychological Factors Assessment Questionnaire (PFAQ). The instrument was designed by the researcher to measure the key constructs of the study, which include self-efficacy, anxiety, depression, and stress. The questionnaire was divided into five sections. Section A obtained demographic data such as age, gender, and level of study. Section B measured self-efficacy through items that assessed students' confidence in completing academic tasks successfully. Section C focused on anxiety and included statements about tension, worry, and nervousness during academic activities. Section D addressed depression by assessing feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest in studies, while Section E measured stress by examining workload, academic pressure, and emotional strain. Each item was structured on a five-point Likert scale

ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree,” allowing for the quantification of psychological responses.

Validity of the Instrument

To ensure that the questionnaire accurately measured what it was intended to assess, both face and content validity were established. The initial draft of the questionnaire was reviewed by the project supervisor Examining the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of each item in relation to the study’s objectives. The feedback was used to refine ambiguous statements, eliminate irrelevant items, and improve overall coherence.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot test conducted among ten undergraduate students from another department within the Faculty of Education who were not part of the main study. The responses obtained were analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha to determine internal consistency. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.85, which indicates a high level of consistency among the questionnaire items. This confirmed that the instrument was reliable and suitable for the main data collection.

Method of Data Collection

The Questionnaire were distributed to the selected students personally by researcher and were administered during lecture-free periods to avoid disrupting academic activities. Respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and informed that

participation was voluntary.. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately to ensure a high retrieval rate.

Method Of Data Analysis

After data collection, all responses were carefully coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 27 for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, percentage, standard deviation and criterion Mean where used to summarize the demographic data and to determine the general levels of self-efficacy, anxiety, depression and stress experienced by these students. when criterion mean is above 3.00 it is said to be on a higher level.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected with the interpretation and discussion of findings. The data obtained from the Study were used to answer the research questions

Presentations of results

Research questions 1: What is the level of self-efficacy among undergraduates biology students?

Table 1: Self-Efficacy of Undergraduate Biology Students

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. D	Criterion Mean	Decision
1	I am confident in my ability to understand difficult science concepts.	60	**3.78**	**0.92**	3.00	**Agree**
2	I can achieve good academic results through personal effort.	60	**4.05**	**0.81**	3.00	**Agree**
3	I always find ways to solve academic challenges when they arise.	60	**3.70**	**0.88**	3.00	**Agree**
	I believe I can complete my academic tasks successfully even under pressure.	60	**3.52**	**0.95**	3.00	**Agree**
5	I feel capable of handling any academic obstacle that comes my way.	60	**3.60**	**0.90**	3.00	**Agree**
Grand Mean			**3.73**			

The analysis of the self-efficacy items revealed that undergraduate biology students demonstrate a generally high level of academic confidence. This is reflected in the grand mean score of **3.73**, which is clearly above the criterion mean of 3.00. This suggests that

most of the students perceive themselves as capable, competent, and able to handle the academic demands of their programme.

Among the individual items, the statement *"I can achieve good academic results through personal effort"* recorded the highest mean score of **4.05**. This indicates a strong belief among students that personal commitment, hard work, and determination play a significant role in their academic success. It further shows that they attribute their academic achievements to their own efforts rather than external factors.

On the other hand, the statement *"I believe I can complete my academic tasks successfully even under pressure"* had the lowest mean score of **3.52**, although this value is still above the acceptance threshold. This suggests that while students generally feel confident in their abilities, some may experience reduced self-efficacy when confronted with stressful or high-pressure academic situations.

With the results ascertained it showed that the students possess a solid sense of efficacy regarding their academic activities. Therefore their confidence in overcoming academic challenges and succeeding in biology-related tasks will serve as a protective psychological factor, helping them manage academic demands and cope more effectively

Research questions 2: What is the extent to which these undergraduate biology students experience anxiety?

Table 2: Anxiety

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. D	Criterion Mean	Decision
1	I often feel tense and anxious before examinations.	60	**3.45**	**0.82**	3.00	Agree
2	Fear of failure makes me nervous during academic activities.	60	**3.60**	**0.78**	3.00	Agree
3	I worry excessively about meeting academic expectations.	60	**3.55**	**0.85**	3.00	Agree
4	I find it hard to concentrate on my studies due to nervousness.	60	**3.28**	**0.91**	3.00	Agree
5	I feel anxious during class participation and learning	60	**3.50**	**0.88**	3.00	Agree
	Grand Mean		**3.48**			

The results show that undergraduate biology students experience a moderate level of academic anxiety, as indicated by the grand mean score of **3.48**, which is above the criterion mean of 3.00. This suggests that anxiety is a noticeable factor influencing their academic experiences.

The highest mean score (**3.60**) was recorded for the statement *"Fear of failure makes me nervous during academic activities."* This implies that many students feel pressured by the possibility of poor performance, which heightens their anxiety during academic tasks.

Similarly, students reported considerable worry about meeting academic expectations, with a mean score of **3.55**. This indicates that concerns about academic demands contribute significantly to their stress levels.

The mean score for the item *"I feel anxious during class participation and learning"* was **3.50**, showing that anxiety not only affects emotional well-being but may also interfere with active engagement in classroom activities.

The lowest mean score (**3.28**) was observed for the statement *"I find it hard to concentrate on my studies due to anxiety."* Although still above the criterion mean, this suggests that concentration problems exist but are less severe compared to other anxiety-related challenges.

Therefore the findings suggest that while students experience moderate anxiety across different academic situations, This still has practical implications on their learning, participation, and overall academic performance. Understanding these patterns is important for developing strategies that reduces anxiety and promote better academic outcomes

Research questions 3: To what extent do these undergraduate biology students experience depression?

Table 3: Depression

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. D	Criterion Mean	Decision
1	I sometimes feel hopeless about my academic future.	60	3.40	0.88	3.00	Agree
2	I often lose interest in activities I previously enjoyed.	60	3.25	0.91	3.00	Agree
3	I feel sad or down most of the time due to academic pressure.	60	3.50	0.95	3.00	Agree
4	I experience a lack of motivation to study or attend classes.	60	3.60	0.90	3.00	Agree
5	I experience high symptoms of sadness which affects my concentration	60	3.70	0.85	3.00	Agree
Grand Mean			**3.49**			

The analysis of depression among undergraduate biology students shows a moderate level of depressive symptoms, with a **grand mean of 3.49**, which is above the criterion mean of 3.00. This indicates that students occasionally experience feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and reduced motivation due to academic pressures.

Among the individual items, the statement *"I experience high symptoms of sadness which affects my concentration" r*ecorded the highest mean score of **3.70**, suggesting that students perceive their depressive feelings as significantly impacting their academic achievements.

Similarly, *"I experience a lack of motivation to study or attend classes"* had a high mean of **3.60**, reflecting that diminished motivation is a common challenge affecting students' engagement with their studies.

The statement *"I feel sad or down most of the time due to academic pressure"* also scored notably high at **3.50**, indicating that persistent feelings of sadness are present among students facing academic demands. On the other hand, the lowest mean score (**3.25**) was observed for *"I often lose interest in activities I previously enjoyed,"* showing that while students do experience reduced interest in activities, this is slightly is less pronounced than other depressive symptoms.

Research question 4: What is the level of stress experienced by these undergraduate biology students?

Table 4: Stress

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. D	Criterion Mean	Decision
1	My workload in the department causes me a lot of stress.	60	3.65	0.85	3.00	Agree
2	I often feel emotionally exhausted due to academic demands.	60	3.70	0.88	3.00	Agree
3	Lack of rest or relaxation increases my stress levels.	60	3.55	0.90	3.00	Agree
	Balancing academic and personal life gives me stress.	60	3.60	0.87	3.00	Agree
5	Prolonged stress affects my focus and academic performance.	60	3.75	0.83	3.00	Agree
	Grand mean					

S/N	Statement	N	Mean	Std. D	Criterion Mean	Decision
			3.65			

The findings indicate that undergraduate biology students experience a relatively high level of stress, with a **grand mean of 3.65**, which is above the criterion mean of 3.00. This suggests that academic and personal demands contribute significantly to their overall stress levels.

Among the items, the statement *"Prolonged stress affects my focus and academic performance" h*ad the highest mean score of **3.75**, indicating that sustained stress is perceived as having a notable impact on students' concentration and learning outcomes. Similarly, *"I often feel emotionally exhausted due to academic demands"* scored **3.70**, highlighting that the intensity of coursework and laboratory sessions can lead to emotional fatigue.

The statement *"My workload in the department causes me a lot of stress"* also scored highly (**3.65**), showing that the volume and complexity of academic tasks are major sources of stress. Other factors such as balancing academic and personal life (**3.60**) and lack of rest or relaxation (**3.55**) further contribute to students' stress levels, though to a slightly lesser extent.

Therefore the results indicate that stress is a significant psychological factor affecting undergraduate biology students that impacts both their emotional well-being and academic

performance, the need for strategies that promote effective stress management and support for students is necessary.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis to research question 1 revealed that students exhibit a relatively high level of self-efficacy, with a grand mean of **3.73**, exceeding the criterion mean of 3.00. This indicates that students generally perceive themselves as capable and confident in completing academic tasks successfully. In particular, they reported strong beliefs in their ability to achieve good academic results through personal effort and to solve challenges when they arise. These findings align with Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, which posits that confidence in one's abilities enhances motivation, persistence, and performance. Previous studies have similarly demonstrated that high self-efficacy is positively correlated with academic achievement among science students (Matovu, 2020; Nwankwo et al., 2019). However, slightly lower confidence under high-pressure situations suggests that some students may experience reduced efficacy when confronted with demanding academic tasks.

Regarding anxiety, the results indicate a moderate level, with a grand mean of **3.48**. Students reported feeling tense and nervous before examinations, worrying about meeting

academic expectations, and experiencing difficulty concentrating due to anxiety. These findings are consistent with global and local reports highlighting anxiety as a prevalent challenge among university students (Chegg, 2023; Adeyemo et al., 2023). Notably, fear of failure emerged as a prominent trigger, suggesting that students' academic self-perceptions and performance expectations contribute significantly to their anxiety levels. This underscores the importance of counseling services and interventions to reduce anxiety and prevent it from impairing academic performance.

The study also found a moderate level of depression among students, with a grand mean of **3.49**. Students reported feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and low motivation, which they perceived as negatively affecting their academic performance. These findings corroborate earlier research in Nigeria, which indicated high rates of depression among science undergraduates due to workload and academic pressure (Emmanuel, 2013). Persistent depressive symptoms may diminish students' engagement, motivation, and overall academic success, highlighting the need for mental health support within the university context.

Stress was identified as a significant psychological factor, with a grand mean of **3.65**, reflecting a relatively high level of perceived stress. Students indicated that heavy workloads, emotional exhaustion, lack of rest, and the difficulty of balancing academic and personal life were major stressors. These results align with findings by Chegg (2023), who

reported that nearly half of university students worldwide experience academic burnout and high stress levels. Stress was also perceived to negatively affect students' concentration and academic performance, suggesting that effective coping mechanisms are essential to mitigate its impact.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study Assessed the psychological factors faced by undergraduate biology students in the University of Benin Edo state. Four Research questions were formulated on each of the psychological factors self-efficacy, anxiety, depression and stress. A descriptive survey research design was employed in carrying out the Study, Data was collected from 60 students in 400l biology with the use of a structured questionnaire validated by experts in the University of Benin and it's reliability was confirmed. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to ensure clarity and Honest responses. The Data collected were analyzed using Descriptive statistics, Mean, criterion Mean, standard deviation and 3.00 as the Decision benchmark.

findings of the Study :

The findings revealed Each of the psychological factors faced by undergraduates students in biology as each play crucial roles in their academic experiences.

1. Self-efficacy a positive psychological factor was revealed to be exhibited in a higher level by these biology students indicating a higher level of confidence in their ability

to understand difficult science concepts, solve academic challenges, and achieve good academic results.

2. Biology Students have been reported to experience moderate levels of anxiety particularly before examinations fear of failure which negatively affect their concentration, memory and performanc
3. A moderate level of depression symptoms among these students have been observed such as feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and lack of motivation, affecting their learning and academic performance.
4. Stress was found as a negative psychological factor experienced by these biology students as a result of excessive workload, laboratory practicals, Tests, Emotional exhaustion, lack of rest, and difficulty in balancing academic and personal life. This was found in higher levels, affecting their concentration and overall wellbeing.

Conclusion

on the basis of the findings, the study concludes that self-efficacy is a positive psychological factor that enables students to cope with academic challenges, enhancing their confidence, abilities, academic motivation and performance. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to persevere and succeed despite academic pressure. while Anxiety, Depression and stress the negative psychological factors are found in varying

levels and these factors can impair concentration, reduce motivation, and negatively impact academic performance if not effectively managed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings it was recommended that :

.Students should adopt effective coping strategies such as time management, self-motivation, and participation in relaxation activities.

.Students should seek counseling services whenever feelings of anxiety, depression, or stress become overwhelming.

. Students should build self-confidence through academic preparation and gradual exposure to challenging tasks.

. Lecturers and staffs should identify early signs of anxiety, depression, and stress in students and provide guidance and support.

.Lecturers and staffs should foster a supportive classroom environment that encourages participation and reduces performance pressure.

. Lecturers and staffs should Integrate stress management and self-efficacy-building activities into the curriculum.

University and policy makers should Establish accessible counseling and mental health services within the university.

. University and policy makers should Organize workshops, seminars, and programs focused on stress management, emotional resilience, and psychological well-being.

University and policy makers should Create policies that reduce excessive academic workload and provide a balanced learning environment for science students.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study provides empirical evidence on the psychological factors affecting undergraduate biology students, highlighting the prevalence of anxiety, depression, and stress, as well as the protective role of self-efficacy. The findings underscore the need for institutional and individual strategies to promote psychological well-being contributing to improved academic performance and student success.

Suggestion for further studies

While the result of this study provide valuable insights into the Assessment of the Psychological Factors faced by undergraduates biology students. Further studies could incorporate larger and more diverse samples, as well as qualitative methods, to provide

deeper insights and also conduct longitudinal studies to examine changes in these psychological factors overtime among the undergraduate students.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY (C.I.T)

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY

QUESTIONNAIRE

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS FACED BY UNDERGRADUATE BIOLOGY STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN EDO STATE

Dear Participant,

My name is Tessy Obasogie a student of the above department, conducting a research study titled: "An Assessment on the Psychological Factors (Self-Efficacy, Anxiety, Depression, and Stress) Faced by Undergraduate Science Students (Biology Education)."

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on the psychological factors that influence the academic and emotional experiences of undergraduate science students, particularly those in Biology Education. Please respond to the items as honestly as possible. Your responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for research purposes.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

(Researcher)

Section A: Demographic Information

Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]

Age:

Less than 20 years [ ] 20 – 25 years [ ] 25 years and above [ ]

Section B: Respondents' Responses

Key:

SA – Strongly Agree A – Agree D – Disagree SD – Strongly Disagree

Research Question 1: Self-Efficacy

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1	I am confident in my ability to understand difficult science concepts.				
2	I can achieve good academic results through personal effort.				
3	I always find ways to solve academic challenges when they arise.				
4	I believe I can complete my academic tasks successfully even under pressure.				
5	I feel capable of handling any academic obstacle that comes my way.				

Research Question 2: Anxiety

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
6	I often feel tense and anxious before examinations.				
7	Fear of failure makes me nervous during academic activities.				
8	I worry excessively about meeting academic expectations.				
9	I find it hard to concentrate on my studies due to nervousness.				
10	I feel anxious during class participation and learning				

Research Question 3: Depression

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
11	I sometimes feel hopeless about my academic future.				
12	I often lose interest in activities I previously enjoyed.				
13	I feel sad or down most of the time due to academic pressure.				
14	I experience a lack of motivation to study or attend classes.				
15	I experience high symptoms of sadness which affects my concentration				

Research Question 4: Stress

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
16	My workload in the department causes me a lot of stress.				
17	I often feel emotionally exhausted due to academic demands.				
18	Lack of rest or relaxation increases my stress levels.				
19	Balancing academic and personal life gives me stress.				
20	Prolonged stress affects my focus and academic performance.				

Thank you for your sincere participation!