

Academic Stress, Academic Motivation, and Academic Performance among the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Junior High School Learners in the Schools Division of Dipolog City

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ABSTRACT: This study aimed to determine academic stress, academic motivation, and how they affect the learners' academic performance in the Alternative Learning System Program, Junior High School Level, in the Schools Division of Dipolog City during the school year 2023-2024. It employed descriptive survey and descriptive correlational research methods. There were one hundred six (106) respondents engaged. Weighted mean, standard deviation, and Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho) were the statistical tests used with Jamovi as the statistical software. The perceived level of academic stress was high in terms of external pressure and expectation, course/learning strand requirement overload and examination, and lack of self-efficacy. The perceived level of academic motivation was high. The level of academic performance in terms of presentation portfolio assessment was satisfactory. There was no significant relationship between the perceived level of academic stress and academic performance. There was no significant relationship between the perceived level of academic motivation and academic performance.

Keywords: *academic stress, academic motivation, academic performance, alternative learning system*

I. Introduction

Academic stress refers to students' psychological condition arising from persistent societal and self-imposed pressures within the educational setting, leading to the exhaustion of psychological resources (Zhang et al., 2022). Students may encounter stress from numerous sources, including academic stressors like examinations, assignments, and future decisions, alongside nonacademic factors such as financial constraints, excessive workloads, insufficient support, social pressures, familial conflicts, parental relationships, and peer interactions (Quinto, 2024). Monitoring stress responses is crucial due to the established correlation between stress and health. Notably, a correlation exists between work performance and the degree of induced stress (Naparota et al., 2020). Aafreen et al. (2018) further asserted that students consistently encounter pressure from many sources during their academic pursuits, which ultimately induces stress among them. This may impact the academic achievement of ALS learners.

Low amounts of academic stress can foster positive outcomes, including motivation and improved task performance, whereas excessive stress may lead to anxiety, despair, social dysfunction, and suicide ideation (Frank & Sharma, 2022). Consequently, school requirement is seen as an important risk factor for students who have experienced academic stress, and the mediator role of school requirements must be included in studies aiming

to lower academic stress and increase motivation (Veyis et al., 2019). Recent studies reinforce these perspectives. A correlational study in Psychology and Education conducted by Villan & Cunanan (2025) examined nursing students in the Philippines and revealed that high stress and burnout coexist with strong academic motivation, suggesting that motivation is a protective mechanism against psychological strain. Gao (2023) examined the correlation among academic stress, anxiety, and burnout, suggesting that academic self-efficacy may mitigate the adverse impacts of stress. Moreover, Cohen and Katz (2024) published a study investigating how students' confidence in their academic competence affect their sense of teacher autonomy support, which in turn influences academic motivation. The results indicate that students with robust views in their academic abilities are more likely to view their teachers as supportive of autonomy, resulting in elevated autonomous motivation and enhanced academic achievement. González-Arias et al. (2025), published in *Frontiers in Psychology*, finds that self-reported motivation and positive affect significantly contribute to academic success, reinforcing that self-determination and competence are crucial for sustained academic engagement.

Empirical research has established a significant association between academic stress and various developmental outcomes, including academic motivation and performance. Fereidooni-Moghadam et al. (2017) found a strong correlation between students' academic motivation and academic performance while Issah et al. (2023) determined that academic and demographic attributes significantly influence academic performance. This implies that demographic and academic attributes could influence ALS learners. Furthermore, teacher clarity impacts learning and student motivation. While Tus (2020) found that students' academic performance in school was unaffected by their academic stress and motivation, this underscores the need for context-specific investigation. Although many studies have investigated the relationship among academic stress, motivation, and performance, this connection is inadequately explored concerning Junior High School learners, especially those participating in Alternative Learning System (ALS) programs in the Zamboanga Peninsula. Existing literature has primarily focused on higher education and traditional academic settings, leaving a gap in understanding how different levels of stress and motivation impact ALS learners' academic performance. Moreover, while previous studies have established links between stress and burnout and motivation's role in overcoming academic challenges (Gao, 2023; Cohen & Katz, 2024), there is limited empirical evidence regarding how school requirements mediate these effects in ALS learners.

This research examined the relationship between academic stress, academic motivation, and academic performance among Junior High School learners enrolled in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) within the Schools Division of Dipolog City during the academic year 2023–2024. This study aimed to determine the differing degrees of academic stress and academic motivation among ALS learners and assess how these elements affect their academic performance, specifically as evaluated using Presentation Portfolio Assessment. Therefore, this study aimed to identify significant differences in academic stress, motivation, and performance when categorized by respondents' demographic profile, including gender, age, civil status, year level completed in the formal school system, number of years not attending formal education before enrollment in ALS, and employment status. By assessing these relationships, the study provides empirical insights that could support the development of targeted interventions to enhance learners' resilience, motivation, and academic success within the ALS framework.

II. Literature Review

Academic Stress

Academic stress refers to students' attitudes and behaviors in reaction to difficulties meeting academic demands and attaining educational goals. Students' expectations of academic success influence their feelings of academic stress (Zhang et al., 2024). Stress is defined as any factor that challenges or jeopardises an individual's well-being. It can be encountered in various settings, including domestic and educational environments. Academic stress predominantly impacts students due to their exposure to several stressors, such as academic pressure and the imperative to achieve success. (Noson & Shastri, 2016). Stress negatively impacts academic achievement and may create a detrimental cycle of escalating stress and diminishing performance. Academic

stress is the anxiety and tension arising from educational pursuits and performance. They include studies, assignments, examinations, laboratory work, reading, and quizzes. There is the pressure of completing all tasks, managing time, and allocating time for extracurricular activities. Academic stress significantly impacts students who are often experiencing independent living away from home for the first time. Educators expect the prompt submission of assignments. Students may undervalue the time necessary to complete reading and writing assignments and generate printed versions of their work (Prabu, 2015). Academic obstacles are regarded as the principal source of stress for pupils (Chawla & Sachdeva, 2018). Yang et al. (2021) indicated that pupils recognized academic expectations, such as ongoing studying, essay composition, examination preparation, and uninspired instructors, as their principal daily obstacles. Examinations, test preparation, grade-level competition, and substantial information acquisition within a limited period all contribute to academic stress. Academic stress has been associated with numerous adverse impacts, including poor health, anxiety, depression, and diminished academic achievement. Academic stress significantly affects a student's mental health and overall well-being (Deng et al., 2022).

External pressure and expectations

Students may encounter pressure to conform to certain academic or social norms or to meet the expectations of their classmates, professors, or families. Such demands may result in stress, worry, and sadness, impairing a student's capacity to concentrate, study, and succeed (Filade et al., 2019). Social pressure can adversely affect a student's self-esteem and self-confidence, resulting in diminished belief in their capabilities and competencies (Smith, 2021). Social pressures denote the external expectations or factors that affect an individual's behavior or actions. These pressures may originate from several sources, including classmates, family, and the broader academic environment. Social pressure may emerge in several forms, including the compulsion to adhere to society standards, peer persuasion to engage in certain activities, and the expectation to attain scholastic achievement. These pressures may have both beneficial and detrimental consequences on pupils (Garcia et al., 2024). External pressure is experienced not only in academic contexts but also socially, influenced by the standards and expectations of family and friends. This pressure may manifest in many ways, such as the urge to conform to social standards, peer influence to participate in activities, and the expectation to achieve academic achievement. These pressures may provide both advantageous and adverse consequences on HUMSS students (Garcia, et al., 2024). The want to adhere to societal norms may compel people to engage in activities, such as sports or groups, that improve their social skills and cultivate connections. Conversely, the pressure to excel academically may result in kids experiencing feelings of overwhelm and stress, adversely affecting their mental health. Moreover, the compulsion to engage in activities may result in children experiencing isolation and exclusion if they cannot sustain elevated performance levels in these endeavors. HUMSS students must recognize the impact of social pressure and discern effective coping strategies. HUMSS was presumed to be straightforward but demonstrated considerable difficulty (Mora et al., 2020).

Course requirement overload and examination

The academic burden of a student is a vital component of their educational experience, influencing their learning outcomes, academic achievement, and general well-being. Workload is typically defined as the volume of academic assignments a student must complete within a designated timeframe, such as a week or a semester. This paper will examine the impact of excessive workloads on student learning outcomes, particularly in relation to academic achievement, motivation, and mental health (DepEd Tambayan, n.d.). Conley and French (2014) discovered that modest academic expectations enhance motivation and academic achievement in high school pupils. Nonetheless, an excessive workload might adversely impact academic achievement. An excessive workload results in stress, burnout, and diminished academic performance in college students. Philippine Statistics Authority (2024) also indicated that close to 11 million Filipino youth are out of school due to workload, financial pressures, and family obligations as main reasons. This supports the notion that excessively emphasized academic pressures—especially among ALS learners—are contributing factors to dropout and poor academic motivation.

Lack of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy profoundly influences an individual's cognitive processes. The greater a person's self-belief, the easier it becomes to attain their goals. Students with a lack of self-efficacy tend to concentrate on negative aspects, making it more probable to encounter challenges and failures in reaching their objectives. Self-efficacy enables a student to self-motivate by establishing personal goals and surmounting obstacles to pursuing those objectives (Tus, 2020). Students who encounter others facing challenges may exhibit a lack of self-efficacy and motivation. While individuals can gain insights from those who differ from them (female teachers and a male), social comparisons appear to exert a greater impact on academic performance (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021).

Academic Motivation

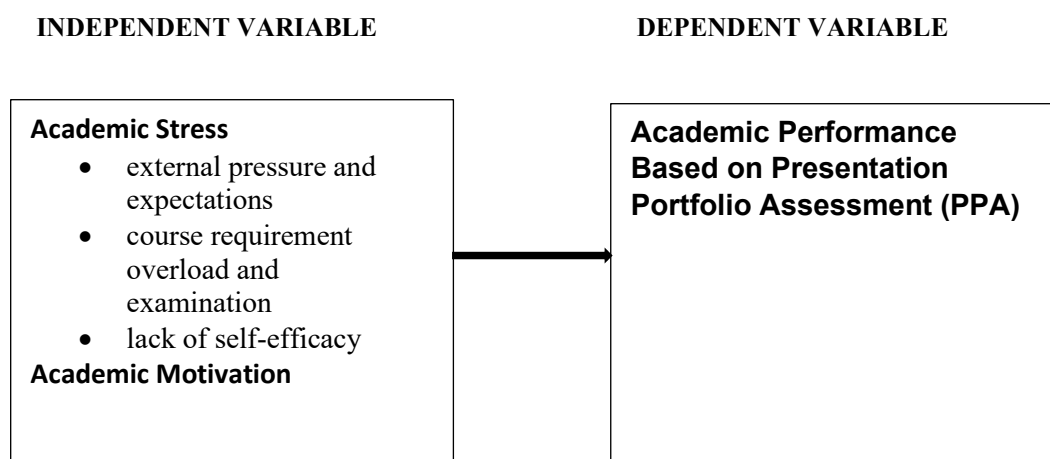
Academic motivation is defined as a student's inclination, demonstrated by approach, tenacity, and interest, towards academic subjects when their competence is evaluated against a standard of excellence or performance. Academic motivation is a broad phrase that encompasses several themes explored by scholars, such as self-efficacy, determination, and resilience. All of these concepts include traits associated with motivation. While correlations have been made between academic motivation and some of these terms, for the sake of this study, the definition of academic motivation will include these terms (Heather & Petrelli, 2018). Academic motivation refers to students' inclination or enthusiasm for participating in learning and their educational experience (Hulleman et al., 2016). Multiple studies demonstrate that students with robust academic motivation are more likely to value education and learning, enjoy the learning process, and get happiness from educational activities (Larsen & Puck, 2020).

Academic Performance

Academic performance refers to the evaluation of a student's accomplishments in their educational endeavors. Ostermann et al. (2022) provided that one of the strongest predictors of students continuing studies is the Grade Point Average (GPA) due to how past performance determines future performance. GPA is also associated with resilience and personality traits, moderated by student motivation. Assessment can be conducted through multiple methods, including grades, test scores, or alternative evaluation forms. Academic achievement is frequently regarded as a synthesis of various elements, including the student's aptitude, motivation, effort, and education quality.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework includes academic stress which consists of twelve (12) items with three (3) indicators, namely: external pressure and expectations, course requirement overload and examination, and lack of self-efficacy, academic motivation, which consists of twenty-four (24) items, and the learners' academic performance based on Presentation Portfolio Assessment (PPA) taken from the ALS West District Community Learning Center.



Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the academic stress, academic motivation, and how they affect the academic performance of Junior High School learners in the Alternative Learning System of the Schools Division of Dipolog City during the school year 2023-2024.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' perceived level of academic stress in terms of:
 - 1.1 external pressure and expectations;
 - 1.2 course requirement overload and examination; and
 - 1.3 lack of self-efficacy?
2. What is the respondents' perceived level of academic motivation?
3. What is the respondents' level of academic performance in terms of Presentation Portfolio Assessment?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of academic stress and academic performance?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of academic motivation and academic performance?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of academic stress and academic performance.
2. There is no significant relationship between the respondents' perceived level of academic motivation and academic performance.

III. Research Methodology

Method Used

The study included survey and descriptive-correlational approaches. The researcher used a survey methodology to collect data on academic stress and motivation using a questionnaire. Clark et al. (2021) characterized a survey as a study methodology for collecting data from a specific population using standardized instruments, such as questionnaires or interviews, enabling researchers to obtain information regarding individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and characteristics. Correlational research is a non-experimental research method in which a researcher measures variables, understands, and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence from any extraneous variables (Bhat, 2019). Therefore, a correlational analysis was conducted to ascertain the relationship between academic stress, academic motivation and academic performance.

Research Environment

The research was carried out in the Alternative Learning System within the Schools Division of Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines, during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Respondents of the Study

The two hundred fifty-five (255) junior high school students enrolled in Dipolog City's Alternative Learning System for the 2023–2024 school year served as the respondents. Only 106 individuals, however, finished the survey questionnaires. Due to the limited number of ALS Junior High School students who could be

surveyed and the availability of student data from the ALS West District that would be used in the study, convenience sampling was used.

Data Gathering Procedure

The adviser requested authorization to field the study's instrument in a letter addressed to the Dean's office at the Graduate School of Andres Bonifacio College, Inc. in Dipolog City. In order to obtain ethical clearance for the study's instrument for field distribution, the researcher's correspondence and the Dean's endorsement were then sent to the Dipolog City Schools Division Superintendent. The approved endorsement was then sent to the DepEd Research and Ethics Committee. In the end, the supervisor and principal received the ethics clearance, requesting permission to distribute the tool.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

The statistical techniques used for the treatment and analysis of the collected data are shown on the next page.

Weighted Mean. This is used to quantify the respondents' ratings on academic stress, academic motivation, and academic performance.

Standard Deviation. This is used to determine the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the respondents' scores, where $SD \leq 3$ is homogenous and $SD > 3$ is heterogeneous. Aiken & Susane (2001); Refugio et al., (2019).

Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho). This is used to determine the relationship among academic stress, academic motivation, and academic performance. This research used the correlation value interpretation guide established by Cohen et al. (2014):

Value	Size	Interpretation
± 0.50 to ± 1.00	Large	High positive/negative correlation
± 0.30 to ± 0.49	Medium	Moderate positive/negative correlation
± 0.10 to ± 0.29	Small	Low positive/negative correlation
± 0.01 to ± 0.09	Negligible	Slight positive/negative correlation
0.0	No correlation	

IV. Results

Level of Academic Stress

Table 1

Perceived Level of Academic Stress in Terms of External Pressure and Expectation

A. External pressure and expectations. I am stressed because	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. I am ashamed of my friends if I will get low grades.	3.54	1.17	Agree	High
2. I don't want to be looked down on by my teachers, friends, and parents.	3.90	0.93	Agree	High
3. I do not want to fail my parent's expectations.	4.07	0.97	Agree	High

4. I am worried about my future if I fail my studies.	3.91	1.09	Agree	High
Overall	3.85	0.89	Agree	High

The perceived level of academic stress in terms of external pressure and expectation is manifested in Table 1. The result articulates that the respondents agree that they are ashamed of their friends if they get low grades, they don't want to be looked down on by their teachers, friends, and parents, they do not want to fail their parents' expectations, and they worried about their future if they fail their studies. Overall, the respondents agree that the level of their academic stress in terms of external pressure and expectations is high. This finding can be linked to the fact that they are no longer in formal education. The present finding is supported by Quinto's (2024) study, which indicated that most respondents generally exhibited a relatively high extent level of External pressure and expectations.

Table 2
Perceived Level of Academic Stress in Terms of Course/Learning Strand Requirement Overload and Examination

B. Course/Learning Strand requirement overload and examination. I am stressed because	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. I enrolled in many subjects/strands and each subject/ strand has requirements.	3.73	1.05	Agree	High
2. I am rushed to finish my many assignments.	3.63	1.04	Agree	High
3. I am worried that I cannot meet the deadline.	3.97	1.01	Agree	High
4. I am afraid if I fail the coming examination.	4.20	0.80	Agree	High
Overall	3.88	0.74	Agree	High

Table 2 discloses the perceived level of academic stress in terms of course/learning strand requirement overload and examination. The data shows that the respondents agree that they enrolled in many subjects/strands and each subject/strand has requirements, they rushed to finish their many assignments, worried that they could not meet the deadline, and were afraid they fail the examination. Altogether, the respondents agree that the level of their academic stress in terms of course/learning strand requirement overload and examination is high. This finding can be attributed to the fact that more than a quarter of the respondents are already working. The present finding is supported by Quinto's (2024) study, which indicated that most respondents generally exhibited a relatively high extent level of Course/Learning Strand Requirement.

Table 3
Perceived Level of Academic Stress in Terms of Lack of Self-Efficacy

C. Lack of Self-Efficacy. I am stressed because	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. I am worried if I can answer the examination correctly.	3.99	0.94	Agree	High
2. I am not confident that I can finish my study.	3.74	1.12	Agree	High

3. I am not confident that I can focus on schoolwork when faced with many distractions.	3.83	1.05	Agree	High
4. I am not confident that I can meet the deadline with few reminders from teachers.	3.83	1.02	Agree	High
Overall	3.85	0.79	Agree	High

Exhibited in Table 3 is the perceived level of academic stress in terms of lack of self-efficacy. As seen in the table, the respondents agree that they are worried if they can answer the examination correctly, are not confident to finish the study and focus on schoolwork when faced with many distractions, and meet the deadline with few reminders from the teachers. In general, the respondents agree that the level of their academic stress in terms of self-efficacy is high. This finding entails that the respondents' self-efficacy contributed to their academic stress. The present finding is supported by Quinto's (2024) study, which indicated that most respondents generally exhibited a relatively high extent level of lack of self-efficacy.

Table 4

Summary of the Perceived Level of Academic Stress

Academic Stress	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
A. External pressure and expectations	3.85	0.89	Agree	High
B. Course/Learning Strand requirement overload and examination	3.88	0.74	Agree	High
C. Lack of Self-Efficacy	3.85	0.79	Agree	High
Overall	3.86	0.90	Agree	High

Table 4 summarizes the perceived level of academic stress. The result shows that the respondents agree that the level of their academic stress is high. This finding asserts that the JHS ALS learners of Dipolog City are experiencing a high level of stress. This finding can be associated with the fact that these learners drop drop-out of formal education due to several justifiable reasons. Thus, they are expected to experience academic stress. This finding further entails that ALS teachers need to employ strategies that would lessen academic stress. The present finding is supported by Quinto's (2024) study, which indicated that most students generally exhibited a relatively high extent level of academic stress.

Level of Academic Motivation

Table 5

Perceived Level of Academic Motivation

Academic Motivation	AWV	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. Because I need at least a high-school degree to find a high-paying job later on.	4.15	0.80	Agree	High
2. Because I experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things.	4.23	0.80	Strongly Agree	Very High
3. Because I think that a high-school education will help me better prepare for the career I have chosen.	4.17	0.82	Agree	High
4. Because I like going to school.	4.07	0.85	Agree	High

5. For the pleasure I experience while surpassing myself in my studies.	4.02	0.87	Agree	High
6. To prove to myself that I am capable of completing my high-school degree.	4.08	0.82	Agree	High
7. To obtain a more prestigious job later on.	3.99	0.87	Agree	High
8. For the pleasure I experience when I discover new things never seen before.	4.02	0.78	Agree	High
9. Because eventually, it will enable me to enter the job market in a field that I like.	4.05	0.77	Agree	High
10. Because for me, school is fun.	4.02	1.00	Agree	High
11. For the pleasure that I experience while I am surpassing myself in one of my accomplishments.	3.92	1.01	Agree	High
12. Because when I succeed in school, I feel important.	3.91	0.89	Agree	High
13. Because I want to have "the good life" later on.	4.05	0.94	Agree	High
14. For the pleasure that I experience in broadening my knowledge about subjects/strands that appeal to me.	4.06	0.92	Agree	High
15. Because this will help me make a better choice regarding my career orientation.	4.01	1.03	Agree	High
16. For the pleasure that I experience when I am taken by discussions with interesting teachers.	3.99	0.98	Agree	High
17. For the satisfaction I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult academic activities.	4.03	0.81	Agree	High
18. To show myself that I am an intelligent person.	3.91	0.87	Agree	High
19. To have a better salary later on.	4.02	0.83	Agree	High
20. Because my studies allow me to continue to learn about many things that interest me.	3.85	1.10	Agree	High
21. Because I believe that my high school education will improve my competence as a worker.	4.05	0.81	Agree	High
22. For the "high" feeling that I experience while reading about various interesting subjects/strands.	4.08	0.91	Agree	High
23. Because high school allows me to experience personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence in my studies.	4.17	0.86	Agree	High
24. Because I want to show myself that I can succeed in my studies.	4.30	0.75	Strongly Agree	Very High
Overall	4.05	0.60	Agree	High

Table 5 conveys the perceived level of academic motivation. The data avers that the respondents strongly agree that they experience pleasure and satisfaction while learning new things and want to show themselves that

they can succeed in their studies. The respondents also agree that they need at least a high school education in order to find a high paying job later on, think that a high school education will help them better prepare for the career they have chosen, they really like going to school, they have pleasure of the experience while surpassing challenges in their studies, prove to themselves that they are capable of completing my high school education, to obtain a more prestigious job later on, have pleasure of the experience when they discover new things never seen before, enter the job market in a field that they like, school is fun, they have pleasure of the experience while they are surpassing their personal accomplishments, when they succeed in school, they feel important, want to have "the good life" later on, they have pleasure of the experience in broadening their knowledge about subjects/strands, make a better choice regarding their career orientation, have pleasure of the experience when they are taken by discussions with interesting teachers, have satisfaction when they are in the process of accomplishing difficult academic activities, show themselves they are intelligent, have a better salary later on, their studies allow them to continue to learn about many things that interest them, believe that their high school education will improve their competence as a worker, have "high" feeling that they experience while reading about various interesting subjects/strands, high school allows them to experience a personal satisfaction in their quest for excellence in their studies, and want to show themselves that they can succeed in their studies. Overall, the respondents agree that the level of their academic motivation is high. This finding suggests that the level of academic motivation of JHS ALS Learners of Dipolog City is high. The present finding is supported by Tus's (2020) study, which indicated that most respondents generally exhibited a relatively high extent level of academic motivation.

Level of Academic Performance in Terms of Presentation Portfolio Assessment

Table 6

Perceived Level of Academic Performance in Terms of Presentation Portfolio Assessment

Range of Values	Description	Frequency	Percent	AWV	Description
52 & below	Did not meet expectations	0	0.00		
53-56	Fairly Satisfactory	34	32.08		
57-60	Satisfactory	49	46.22	58.08	Satisfactory
61-64	Very Satisfactory	23	21.70		
65-69	Outstanding	0	0.00		
Total		106	100.00		

Table 6 manifests the respondents' level of academic performance in terms of presentation portfolio assessment. The data attests that 46.22% of the respondents obtained satisfactory academic performance, 32.08% fairly satisfactory, and 21.70% very satisfactory. Altogether, the level of academic performance is satisfactory. This finding denotes that the JHS ALS learners in Dipolog City satisfactorily presented their portfolio assessment. The present finding contradicts that of Tus's (2020) study, which disclosed students' academic performance is very satisfactory.

Relationship between the Perceived Level of Academic Stress and Academic Performance

Table 7

Test of the Relationship between the Perceived Level of Academic Stress and Academic Performance

Variables	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Academic Stress vs Academic Performance	0.138	0.16	Not Significant

Table 7 portrays the test of the relationship between the levels of academic stress and academic performance. Utilizing the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho), the result declares that there is no significant relationship between the levels of academic stress and academic performance. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This finding denotes that the level of academic performance is not significantly affected by the level of academic stress. This finding further denotes that academic stress has no significant influence on academic performance. This finding can be attributed to the fact that even if the learners are academically stressed, they still need to pass all the subjects for promotion purposes. The current finding is supported by Tus's (2020) study, which found that academic stress has no significant relationship with students' academic performance.

Relationship between the Perceived Level of Academic Motivation and Academic Performance

Table 8

Test of the Relationship between the Perceived Level of Academic Motivation and Academic Performance

Variables	rho-value	p-value	Interpretation
Academic Motivation vs Academic Performance	0.119	0.225	Not Significant

Table 8 reflects the test of the relationship between the levels of academic motivation and academic performance. When the dataset is subjected to the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation Coefficient (Spearman rho), it yielded a p-value greater than 0.05 which implies that there is no significant relationship between the levels of academic motivation and academic performance. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This finding signifies that the level of academic performance is not significantly affected by the level of academic motivation. This further signifies that academic motivation has no significant effect on academic performance. This finding can be associated with the fact that whether or not the learners are academically motivated, they need to pass all the subjects for promotion purposes. The current finding is supported by Tus's (2020) study, which found that academic motivation has no significant relationship with students' academic performance

V. Discussion

The study's primary goal is to identify academic stress and motivation, as well as how they affect the academic performance of junior high school students in the Alternative Learning System Program of Dipolog City's Schools Division during the school year 2023–2024. The data show that the reported level of academic stress and motivation was high, while academic performance in terms of presenting portfolio assessment was satisfactory. There was no substantial correlation between perceived academic stress and academic performance. Perceived academic motivation and academic success did not significantly correlate. The study reveals that stress does not affect academic performance. Furthermore, learners in the Alternative Learning System Program who adeptly appreciate academic motivation within their classes demonstrate elevated academic performance, classified as satisfactory, very satisfactory, or outstanding. Based on the findings, the author recommends that DepEd Officials, through the Division ALS Focal and Education Program Specialist II for the Alternative Learning System, use the findings of this study as valuable input in the preparation of the ALS Teachers training proposal. ALS Teachers would utilize the findings of this study as a basis for reflecting on teaching practice.

VI Conclusion

The study concluded that there was a high level of academic stress due to external pressure and expectations, course/learning strand requirement overload, assessment, and a lack of self-efficacy. A high level of academic motivation was observed. A satisfactory level of academic performance in terms of presenting portfolio evaluation was observed. Furthermore, academic stress and academic achievement did not show a significant correlation. Academic motivation and performance did not show a meaningful correlation.

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