Impact Of Scholastic Stress Among Academic Learners: A Pragmatic Study Of Ug & Pg Students In R.R. District

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ABSTRACT: For many young adults, college is the best time of life. These critical years can also be undetermined by depression, anxiety and stress. Students are very likely to experience some or many stressors which may test their ability to cope: adapting to a new environment, balancing a heavy work load, making new friends, becoming more independent. Looking from a closer perspective, the college students' encounters a number of challenges in his day to day life. The present paper examines the sources and effects of stress on the professional college students. It is hoped that the findings of the present study will assist college students to deal with stress and help advance knowledge on coping strategies to face life stress. This paper is to investigate the sources of stress among college students pursuing B. Tech, B. Pharmacy, MBA, MCA etc., in select colleges from Moinabad mandal, R.R. District, Telangana State. A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect research data. Research findings suggested that male students feel stronger stress from family factor than female ones; students in higher grades feel more stress from physical/mental and emotional factors.

Keywords: Stress, Academic Stress, Professional Colleges, Professional Students.

1. INTRODUCTION:
Stress is a technique that measures an individual facing demanding situations and how hard he/she influencing by the demands in one's job/personal life/academic life etc. The reasons that cause stress are technically called as 'stressors' which are classified in a variety of factors depending on contexts. And these, stressors mostly show impact on both physical and emotional conditions of a human being. Countless individuals experience stress in various areas of their life. But, most of the persons band together their personal life and demands of study/work and in this race of balancing both personal and professional commitments an individual has to countenance the stressful situations.

I.1. An Overview of Stress Management:
Stress is physiological and psychological imbalance. It arises due to the demands on a person and that person's inability to meet these demands. They handle stress by planning work, taking regular breaks and rejuvenating them. Stress can be positive or negatives. Positive stress is called eustress and negative stress is called distress. There is a difference between the ways in which eustress and distress affect the body. Eustress triggers the body alarm,

enhances attention, performance, and creativity. It has temporary effects. For instance, a person applying for a visa to the US may be under eustress, and once he or she obtains the visa his or her stress levels come back to normal. Distress has a negative effect on the body. For instance, an individual who has lost his or her job may become depressed, which is a result of distress. Distress, if left unchecked, can have a serious effect on the body over a period of time. There are many times of significant change in our lives but leaving home for the first time is an especially important hurdle. The student years are times of oscillating emotions, with contradictions and conflicts as well as excitements and explorations. With new freedoms, enthusiasm can easily spill over to excess whether in work, play, sex, drink, or street drugs. Any one of these, if indulged in irresponsibly, can trigger health problems. Sorties into taking street drugs can change lives forever. It is only in retrospect that the hazards of taking street drugs are evident. Stress is seen as modern society's illness by professionals from different sectors. According to Kolko, David J. (1980), stress is a negative emotional experience, accompanied by predictable physiological, cognitive and behavioral changes that are directed either toward altering stressful circumstances or accommodating to its effects.

1.2. Components of Academic Stress among UG & PG learners:

According to Purna Prabhakar Nandamuri and Gowthami (2012), stress in academic institutions can have both positive and negative consequences if not well managed. Academic institutions have different work settings compared to non-academic and therefore one would expect the difference in symptoms, causes, and consequences of stress in the two set up. Stress seems to be very common in college students` life. They have to survive academically and to prepare themselves for further career. Not surprisingly, much of the academic stress at graduate level is related to what students learn and how they learn it. There's a lot of pressure for the present generation management students to learn more and more than the past generations. Just as it can be stressful to handle a heavy and challenging workload, some students can experience stress from regular academic work that isn't difficult enough. For the purpose of the present study, the components of academic activity are identified as – curriculum and instruction; team work; assessment and placement. The present study attempts to find out which of these aspects are creating stress among management students. However, overstress causes problems that can have serious effects on people. Being a student can be the most interesting time of one's life. New friends, new places, new challenges can make a student life stressful. Stress management encompasses techniques to equip a person with effective coping mechanisms for dealing with physiological stress. Students have different expectations, goals, and values that they want to fulfill, which is possible only if the students expectations, goals, and values are integrated with that of the institution (Goodman, 1993). Stress management Techniques include self-management, conflict resolution, and positive attitude, self-talk, breathing, meditation, exercise, diet and rest. Effective stress management also involves learning to set limits for the issues that create stress.

2.. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Stress was found to be a part of students' life and could give impact on how students cope with the demands of academic life. Students reported experiencing academic stress at predictable times each semester with the greatest sources of academic stress resulting from taking and studying for exams, grade competition, and the large amount of content to master in a small amount of time (Rawson, Bloomer, & Kendall, 1999). One model that is useful to study in understanding stress among students is the person environment model (Misra & McKean, 2000). According to this model, individuals can appraise stressful events as challenging or threatening. When students perceived their education as a challenge, stress can

bring them a sense of competence and an increase capacity to learn. However, when education is perceived as a threat, stress can elicit feelings of hopelessness and a foreboding sense of loss, thus leading to lower academic achievement. Research shows that there exists a relationship between stressful life events and poor academic performance among college students and there is a connection between health-related quality of life and stress (Dusselier et al., 2005; Misra & McKean, 2000). Because stress adversely affects psychological and physical health, undergraduate students reported that stress was the most common health factor impacting their academic performance (Dwyer & Cummings, 2001).

Demakis and McAdams (1994) found that undergraduate students who reported heightened levels of stress had significantly more physical health problems and less satisfaction towards academic achievement compared to those reporting lower levels of stress. The perception of the stress by the students could play significant roles on its seriousness. When stress is perceived negatively or becomes excessive, students experience physical and psychological impairment (Murphy & Archer, 1996). Excessive stress among students was found to reduce effectiveness of their study which contributes to bad habits, and results in negative long-term consequences, including absenteeism, poor academic performance, and school dropout.

Wintre and Yaffe (2000) found that increases in stress during the first year predicted decreased overall adjustment and made the students more vulnerable to many social and psychological problems, thus contributed lower grade point average (GPA) in the final year. Social situation is another important factor in causing psychological problems. A more recent study showed that that social situation of the students could activate stress (Dusselier et al., 2005). It was found that timid individuals feel and sense stress more compared to their outgoing friends. There is a possibility that the students will not become active in their academic life. The same study showed that stress together with sleep loss and substance abuse will lead to college depression.

According to Dr. Bhavin U Pandya, Ms. Revati C Deshpande and Ms. AnushreeKarani, (2012), stress in academic institutions can have both positive and negative consequences if not well managed. Academic institutions have different work settings compared to nonacademic and therefore one would expect the difference in symptoms, causes, and consequences of stress. By identifying the sub issues of each component of academic stress among the MBA students of Gujarat Technological University affiliated colleges, the study could provide better insights to the academic administrators for initiating efforts to reduce the intensity of academic stress. Single cross sectional study was conducted to examine the relationships of independent and dependent variable by applying the self-administered survey questionnaire. With the help of literature review the various hypotheses to examine the relation between dependent and independent variable were also used. The procedure which is adopted is quantitative approach. Respondents were 116 students taken from all the five zones of Gujarat Technological University affiliated Master of Business Administration Colleges.

As observed by Lauren Bigham, Helen W. Bland, Bridget F. Melton (2012), College years has been deemed as one of the most stressful periods of a person's life. The millennial generations of college students are unique in characteristics, including the manner in which they handle stressors. An epidemiological cross-sectional study of randomly selected college students (N=246) completed the Stress Tolerance Questionnaire (STQ), which was comprised of checklists for stressors, symptoms, and coping strategies. Stress tolerance ratios (STRs) were calculated, and subjects divided into high or low stress tolerance groups. Ten lifestyle/coping factors (out of 29) were significantly associated with high stress tolerance (HST): one was a protective factor (feeling supported) while the nine others put a person at risk for low stress tolerance (cleaned apartment, prayed, called mom, used internet social network (among others) ($p<0.05$). Coping mechanisms and lifestyle habits currently

employed by the millennial college students are not only ineffective for alleviating stress, but also have the effect of putting these students at risk for low stress tolerance. In previous research on psychological stress recovery, recovery activities and recovery experiences have been studied separately rather than jointly.

The study of Jennifer M. Ragsdale, Terry A. Beehr, Simone Grebner, Kyunghee Han, advanced previous knowledge about stress recovery by integrating the effects of these separate recoveries constructs within a single study and examining them outside the work context. It proposed and tested an integrated model of the stress-recovery process that includes weekday stressors and weekend recovery activity behaviors, psychological recovery experiences, and recovery outcomes. Undergraduates (n = 221) from a Midwestern university reported on Friday about stressors experienced during the week, followed by a weekend during which recovery could occur. On Monday they reported their weekend activities and their current well-being. Results suggested that participating in specific recovery activities during a weekend and accompanying specific subjective recovery experiences reduced negative psychological outcomes.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To find out the level of stress among graduate and post graduate students in their academics.
2. To find out whether there is significant difference between the sample respondents with respect to academic stress as a major stressor for causing stress among students
    a) Gender (Male/Female)
    b) Course of Study (PG/UG)
    c) Category of Student (Junior/Senior)

4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

The following hypotheses were texted to test the significant differences among the respondents and their responses with respect to academic stress.

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between male and female students with respect to stressors related to academic stress and social stress.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between the courses (PG/UG) pursuing by the respondents with respect to stressors related to academic stress and social stress.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

5.1. Research design:

The researcher has undertaken the descriptive research design, as the primary data is planned to collect from the respondents with the method of viewing (observational) and recording the responses given by the participants or respondents. And the data thus collected can be taken as a primary data for the study to analyze the responses and find out the role of stress and its impact on professional students.

5.2. Sampling procedure:

A sample is a small part of a population which is selected for collecting primary data. With a thorough observation on attitudes, perceptions and opinions of selected sample units (respondents), we may give inference by analyzing the responses. The present study is restricted with a sample size of 105 professional students covering engineering, management and pharmacy courses. The researcher fixed with these three courses and finalized the sample size (i.e. n=105). The sample size consists of respondents pursuing their professional courses from various colleges located in and around Moinabad mandal, Ranga Reddy District, Telangana State.

5.3. Data collection tools:

As an open fact, the data is classified into two types. Which among, the secondary data has been collected with the help of internet, various articles published in national and international journals. The primary data has been collected only with the help of well planned questionnaire to extract the original opinions of students from professional courses about the concept of stress and how it affects their education, career etc. The questionnaire classified into various sections to know the respondents perception about stress among students in educational institutions offering professional courses.

5.4. Statistical tools applied:

To analyze the primary data, the following statistical techniques are applied to check to significance among the respondents.

1. Descriptive Statistics
2. Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficient
3. T-test for significance of two equal variances

To analyze the data, the researcher chose the IBM SPSS and MS EXCEL-2007 to conduct research analysis on the primary data collected.

6. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION:

The primary data has been collected from 105 students pursuing various technical and non-technical courses from engineering/pharmacy/degree/management colleges located in Moinabad Mandal, R.R. District. To justify the hypotheses framed, the sample responses are analyzed based on three major streams like "gender, type of graduation, and type of student in terms of seniority. For this, the researcher defined the descriptive statistics of Academic, Social and General Factors with respect to gender, graduation and student type. The SPSS formulated output of descriptive statistics is given below:

Table – 6.1: Descriptive Statistics of Students based on Gender, Course, and Category

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender (Male/Female)	105	1.4857	.50219
Course of Study (PG/UG)	105	1.6000	.49225
Category of Student (Junior/Senior)	105	1.2286	.42193
Factors influencing Academic Stress: Passing written & oral examinations	105	3.4381	1.56846
Participating & Understanding classroom discussions	105	3.2762	1.57807
Conducting researches	105	3.2476	1.68009
Searching for reference materials	105	3.5429	1.45463
Completing & Submitting assignments	105	3.3524	1.58102
Factors influencing Social Stress: My family really tries to help me	105	3.1714	1.65516
My friend really tries to help me	105	3.1429	1.68379
I get emotional help and support I need from my family	105	3.4286	1.54955
I get the emotional help and support I need from my friend	105	3.2476	1.60995

Source: Questionnaire

6.1. **Analyzing the significant relation among male and female students experiencing Academic and Social Stress:**

Here, using MS EXCEL the significant difference between the opinions of male and female students with respect to academic and social stress is tested with the help of Karl Pearson's Correlation Co-efficient and the results are given below:

Table – 6.2: Academic and Social Factors influencing stress among male and female students

S. No.	Constant	Correlation (r)	Type of Correlation
Academic Factors Influencing Stress among Male and Female Students:			
1	Passing written & oral examinations	0.66	Positive
2	Participating & Understanding classroom discussions	0.34	Positive
3	Conducting researches	0.72	Positive
4	Searching for reference materials	0.76	Positive
5	Completing & Submitting assignments	0.65	Positive
Social Factors Influencing Stress among Male and Female Students:			
1	My family really tries to help me	0.59	Positive
2	My friend really tries to help me	0.45	Positive
3	I get emotional help and support I need from my family	0.68	Positive
4	I get the emotional help and support I need from my friend	0.60	Positive
5	I can talk about my problems with my family & my friends	0.61	Positive

Source: Questionnaire

Interpretation: From the Karl Pearson's Correlation, it was observed that there is no significant difference between the male and female respondents towards their opinions on sources of stress that influence them in their academics and society.

6.2. **Analyzing the significant relation among Post Graduation and Under Graduation students experiencing Academic and Social Stress:**

Using MS EXCEL, the t-test for equal variances has been applied to verify the significant difference between PG students and UG students towards their responses on academic and social stress that influence them.

Table – 6.3: Academic and Social Factors influencing stress among PG and UG students

S. No.	Constant	t-Stat. Value	Hypothesis
1	Passing written & oral examinations	0.75	Accept H_0
2	Participating & Understanding classroom discussions	0.81	Accept H_0
3	Conducting researches	0.65	Accept H_0
4	Searching for reference materials	0.98	Accept H_0
5	Completing & Submitting assignments	1.23	Accept H_0
1	My family really tries to help me	0.62	Accept H_0
2	My friend really tries to help me	0.62	Accept H_0
3	I get emotional help and support I need from my family	0.64	Accept H_0
4	I get the emotional help and support I need from my friend	0.70	Accept H_0
5	I can talk about my problems with my family & my friends	0.63	Accept H_0

Source: Questionnaire   **t-Critical Value: 2.31**

Interpretation: From the t-test for equal variances, it was observed that there is no significant difference between the male and female respondents towards their opinions on sources of stress that influence them in their academics and society and finally we can accept the null hypothesis.

7. CONCLUSION:

Stress in academic institutions can have both positive and negative consequences if not well managed. Academic institutions have different work settings compared to non-academic and therefore one would expect the differences in symptoms, causes, and consequences of stress. By identifying the sub issues of each component of academic and social stress among students pursuing Post Graduation and Under Graduation courses in professional institutions, the study provides an explanation that the students with respect to their gender, level of education (PG or UG), the seniority of education (junior or senior) are experiencing stress in their academics and social related factors. The findings of the study suggests that the academic institutions and its administrators should initiate better line of attack for the students to face academic and social related stress and make them to balance their stress and get succeed in their educational outcomes.

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