

“A Study of Academic stress with reference to Demographic Variables (Gender and Age) in Indore District”

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at the level of Academic stress based on demographics variables of male and female students in colleges. For the purpose of the study the data has been collected of 188 students in which 77 are male and 111 are female students. To collect the data researcher used a scale developed by Dr. Abha Rani Bisht. Independent T-test and One way Anova were used for data analysis. The study reveals that a significant difference exists between gender, age and student's Academic Stress and no significant difference exists between mother's occupation, Income and student's Academic Stress.

Key words- Demographic Variables, Academic Stress, Male and Female students

I. INTRODUCTION:

In today's highly competitive world, college students face various academic problems including exam stress, disinterest in attending classes and the inability to understand a subject. Academic stress involves mental distress regarding anticipated academic challenges or failure or even the fear of the possibility of academic failure. Academic stressors show themselves in many aspects in the students' environment: at school, home, in their peer relations and even in their neighborhood.

According to Richard S. Lazarus "stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demand exceed the personal and social resources". The academic stress is mainly connected with two elements; constraints and demand. The stress is not only a word but has been defined in context to psychological, emotional, physical and mental. In the Indian constitution

education is made mandatory as well as free to all its citizens, and it is a fundamental right too.

Every nation invests lot of money on education. However, research survey on college students reports at any given time there will be 10 to 20 % of student population suffering from psychological problems (Stress, Anxiety & Depression). Stress has become an integral part of student's academic life due to the various internal and external expectations placed upon their shoulders. Stress is an important factor in the lives of university or college students. Stress is a state of mental strain or discomfort brought about by adverse situations.

Every person experiences stress in a different way, it is something that is experienced by every human being throughout their life time. College students in particular experience stress regularly, and for that reason, in this paper, I will explore stress in the lives of college students. University students are a group that is particularly prone to stress due to the transitional nature of university life (Towbes and Cohen, 1996). Stress among university students has been a topic of interest for many researchers and teachers for several years because it affects physiological and psychological health as well as academic performance (Struthers et al., 2000; Gadzella, 2004; Misra et al., 2000).

University students experience many stressors from different sources on their academic life. Due to difference in personality characteristics, they respond to those stressors differently. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress as a pattern of negative physiological responses occurring in situations where people perceive

threats to their well-being which they may be unable to meet. According to Bisht (1989) academic stress is defined as a demand related to academics that exceeds the available resources (internal or external) as cognitively perceived by the student involved.

According to her, academic stress reflects perception of individual's academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety. Academic stress is classified under three components and is as follows: Academic frustration is a state caused by harm of some academic goals wherein students tend to feel irritated when they are required to do a heavy workload. Academic Pressure is defined as when the student is required to spend heavy demands of time and energy to meet academic goals. And Academic Anxiety is the apprehension of harm because of worry to some academic goals.

Major Causes of Academic Stress:

Today College students are facing many problems in comparison to last few years, some of the major causes of Academic Stress are new environment, changes in family relations, changes in social life, Increased Workload Language difficulties, Examinations, deadlines, exposure to new people ideas and temptations.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Clabaugh, Duque and Fields (2020) in the research paper entitled Academic Stress and Emotional Well-Being in United States College Students Following Onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic we provide a brief report on 295 students' academic perceptions and emotional well-being in late May 2020. Female students reported worse emotional well-being compared to males, and the students of color reported the significantly higher levels of stress and uncertainty regarding their academic futures compared to White students.

Bhargava (2020) in the research paper entitled The academic stress among the senior secondary students enrolled in different streams. However, there was no significant difference found between the levels of academic stress of students enrolled in science and commerce stream. It can be concluded that students enrolled in science and commerce streams come across a variety of stress-inducing situations like- lack of adjustment, worries about future, poor administration etc. which increases the stress particularly in academics.

Karaman et al (2019) Predictors of Academic Stress Among College Students The purpose of this study was to examine factors predictive of college students' academic stress. Three hundred seven undergraduate students (179 men, 128 women) participated in the study. Results indicated that female college students had higher academic stress than did male college students. Bivariate correlations and multiple regression analyses revealed that life satisfaction, locus of control, and gender were significant predictors of academic stress.

Dimitrov (2017) A study on the impact of Academic Stress among college students in India. This study utilized the quantitative method of research. The present study attempts to find out stress among college students in various fields of arts and science streams. The study comprises of 200 students selected randomly from various academic institutions in and around Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu.

Prabhu (2015) in the research paper entitled "A Study on Academic Stress among Higher Secondary Students. A Study on Academic Stress among Higher Secondary Students" The purpose of the study is to find out the level of academic stress among higher secondary students. The present study consists of 250 XI standard students studying in higher secondary schools situated in Namakkal District of Tamil Nadu, India. The sample was selected by using simple random sampling technique. The present study reveals that the higher secondary students are having moderate level of academic stress and irrespective of sub samples of the higher secondary students are having moderate level of academic stress. The male student's academic stress is higher than female students. The urban student's academic stress is higher than rural student. The Government school student's academic stress is less than private school student. The science subject student's academic stress is higher than arts student. The students

whose parent's education as literate level academic stress is higher than their counter part.

Kumaraswamy, N. (2013) Academic stress, anxiety and depression among college students: A brief review. This paper briefly describes the research carried out in the last 3 decades especially regarding stress, anxiety & depression. It focuses on stress among college students, nature of psychiatric morbidity, emotional problems and adjustment, psychological problems of college students. Emphasizing how counselling will help students with emotional problems and also suggested preventive measures to be taken by colleges such as setting up student counselling centers, create awareness among college students in seeking help with counselling centers. It is also suggested to have mentor mentee programmer compulsorily on all colleges. A student health committee should be formed in each college with mental health professionals as its members. There should be regular seminar & workshop for teachers & college students

According to Rajasekar (2013) the study examined the impact of academic stress among the management students. Stress management encompasses techniques to equip a person with effective coping mechanisms for dealing with psychological stress. Students have different expectations, goals and values that they want to fulfill, which is only possible if they are integrated with that of the institution. The objective of the study is to find out the present level of stress, sources of stress and stress management techniques that would be useful for management students. The study takes into account various criteria like physical, psychological, individual, demographical and environmental factors of stress among the management students.

Singh, A., & Upadhyay A. (2008). Age and sex differences in academic stress among college students. The purpose of this study was to examine the academic stress. Academic stress in context of age and sex differences among college students. The sample of the study was first year and third year male and female students (N = 400). Findings demonstrated that first year students experienced higher degree of academic stress in comparison of third year students. At the same time female students perceived more academic stress in comparison of their male counterparts.

on various issues of psychological problems and its coping mechanisms.

Misra, R., & Castillo, L. G. (2004). Academic Stress Among College Students: Comparison of American and International

Students. This study compared academic stressors and reactions to stressors between American and international students using Gadzella's Life Stress Inventory (B. M. Gadzella, 1991). Five categories of academic stressors (i.e., frustrations, conflicts, pressures, changes, and self-imposed) and four categories describing reactions to these stressors (i.e., physiological, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive) were examined. The sample consisted of 392 international and American students from 2 Midwestern universities. American students reported higher self-imposed stressors and greater behavioral reactions to stressors than international students. Respondent's status (American or international) and interaction of status and stressors emerged as the 2 strongest predictors of their behavioral, emotional, physiological, and cognitive reaction to stressors. Five stressors attained statistical significance in the regression model. The findings emphasize the need to recognize cultural differences in stress management.

Reddy, Menon and Thattil(1991) in the research paper entitled "Academic Stress and its Sources Among University Students" The study employed a quantitative research design where participants were screened using Academic Stress Scale (Rajendran & Kaliappan),1991 from four streams namely, commerce, management, humanities, and basic sciences and from these streams data has been collected. The five dimensions of sources such as personal inadequacy, fear of failure, interpersonal difficulties with teachers, teacher pupil relationship and inadequate study facilities were further analyzed and gender differences were also obtained. The students who responded to the questionnaire were currently in their final year of undergraduate programme. The total number of participants who were subjected to the analysis procedures were 336. According to the independent samples t- test results there exists no significant difference in total academic stress experienced by males and females.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study the Academic Stress with respect to gender among College Students.
- To study the Academic Stress with respect to age among College Students.
- To study the Academic Stress with respect to their mother's occupation College Students.
- To study the Academic Stress with respect to their parents Income College Students.

Hypotheses:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in Academic Stress with respect to gender among College Students.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in Academic Stress with respect to age among College Students.

Research Methodology:

Research type: Exploratory

Universe: College Students

Sampling unit: Male and Female students of colleges.

Sample size: 188 students (Male-77, Female-111)

Sampling Technique: Convenient

Tool for data collection:

Scale of Academic Stress has been used for data collection which was developed by Dr. Abha Rani Bisht (1987). Reliability of the scale is 0.90.

Tool for data analysis in this study, after collecting the data, the raw scores are tabulated and analyzed through appropriate statistics tools with the help of SPSS, t-test, One way Anova was used to test the hypothesis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The reliability of the data is 0.90, Since $p = .022$ (see Annexure 1) which is less than .05 which means that null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, H₀ (There is no significant difference in academic stress with respect to gender among students of colleges) is rejected.

It means that male and female students have variations in their academic stress level. The total number of male and female students were 77 and 111 with a mean score of 250.70 (22.485) and 254.27 (30.237). The study explores that female students have high academic stress as to male students as they are very ambitious, have high goals in their lives. Mehmet A. Karaman, Eunice Lerma, Javier Cavazos Vela, Joshua C. Watson (2019) Predictors of Academic Stress Among College Students results indicated that female college students had higher academic stress than did male college students. The another reason for having more of academic stress is they have to manage household activities along with the studies many times. Parents expectations are also very high with girls in comparison to boys. Suman kumari also finds that there is a gender difference in stress level among university students. Sulaiman et al (2009) have showed the rate and types of stress among the female students are more than male due to their emotional and sensitive nature. Mazumdar et al (2012) reported that the various symptoms which lead to stress mostly seen in more numbers in females as compared to males.

Since $p = .017$ (see Annexure 2) which is less than .05 which means that null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, H₀₂ (There is no significant difference in Academic Stress with respect to age among College Students) is not accepted. Academic Stress is a phenomenon that varies with age. The study shows that students up to 22 years of age are much more stressed as compare to the students above this age, as they are entering in to their careers and jobs. This finding similar to Persaud & Persaud, (2016) where younger students experienced more stress. Globally, researchers agree that the transition from high school to tertiary education is quite stressful (Rajasekar, 2013).

IV. CONCLUSION:

The transition in life of an individual is very stressful similarly a transition from high school level to college level is naturally stressful for students. Academic stress has become a pervasive problem across countries, cultures, and ethnic groups (Wong, Wong & Scott, 2006). Stress is definitely a big word with even bigger impact, however this can be dealt with small changes that we bring in our day to day life. There is no stream and a person who remain untouched with Stress, Stress is experienced by managers, financiers, government officials, administrators, politicians, house wives and is most prevalent amongst students nowadays. The study elicited that, the female students academic stress is higher than male student and the age also strikes the academic stress of students. On the other hand, there is no impact of mother's occupation, parent's income on academic stress of students.

Academic stress may adversely affect the performance and their health condition of the students so it is very important to arrange some workshops at the beginning of each semester. Thus the students will be able to learn how they can overcome their stress while studying. Stress cannot be removed from any sphere of life, the solution is only to manage it.

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Annexure: 1

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Academic Stress	Male	77	250.70	22.485	2.562
	Female	111	254.27	30.237	2.870

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Academic Stress	Equal variances assumed	5.358	.022	-.880	186	.380	-3.569	4.054	-11.567	4.429
	Equal variances not assumed			-.928	185.063	.355	-3.569	3.847	-11.159	4.021

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.900	80

Annexure: 2

Group Statistics

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Academic Stress	Up to 22 years	164	253.59	25.576	1.997
	More than 22 years	24	247.50	37.401	7.635

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Academic Stress	Equal variances assumed	5.844	.017	1.019	186	.309	6.085	5.970	-5.692	17.863
	Equal variances not assumed			.771	26.238	.448	6.085	7.891	-10.129	22.299

ANOVA

Academic Stress					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3654.385	5	730.877	.979	.432
Within Groups	135916.722	182	746.795		
Total	139571.106	187			

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Academic Stress
 Tukey HSD

(I) Income	(J) Income	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Up to 30000	30000-50000	6.602	5.135	.792	-8.19	21.39
	50000-100000	.410	5.895	1.000	-16.57	17.39
	100000-150000	-7.739	8.440	.942	-32.05	16.57
	150000-200000	7.039	9.590	.977	-20.58	34.66
	More than 200000	11.011	8.440	.782	-13.30	35.32
30000-50000	Up to 30000	-6.602	5.135	.792	-21.39	8.19
	50000-100000	-6.192	6.566	.935	-25.11	12.72
	100000-150000	-14.341	8.922	.595	-40.04	11.36
	150000-200000	.437	10.017	1.000	-28.42	29.29
	More than 200000	4.409	8.922	.996	-21.29	30.11
50000-100000	Up to 30000	-.410	5.895	1.000	-17.39	16.57
	30000-50000	6.192	6.566	.935	-12.72	25.11
	100000-150000	-8.149	9.380	.953	-35.17	18.87
	150000-200000	6.628	10.427	.988	-23.41	36.66
	More than 200000	10.601	9.380	.868	-16.42	37.62
100000-150000	Up to 30000	7.739	8.440	.942	-16.57	32.05
	30000-50000	14.341	8.922	.595	-11.36	40.04
	50000-100000	8.149	9.380	.953	-18.87	35.17
	150000-200000	14.778	12.050	.823	-19.93	49.49
	More than 200000	18.750	11.156	.546	-13.38	50.88
150000-200000	Up to 30000	-7.039	9.590	.977	-34.66	20.58
	30000-50000	-.437	10.017	1.000	-29.29	28.42
	50000-100000	-6.628	10.427	.988	-36.66	23.41
	100000-150000	-14.778	12.050	.823	-49.49	19.93
	More than 200000	3.972	12.050	.999	-30.74	38.68
More than 200000	Up to 30000	-11.011	8.440	.782	-35.32	13.30
	30000-50000	-4.409	8.922	.996	-30.11	21.29
	50000-100000	-10.601	9.380	.868	-37.62	16.42
	100000-150000	-18.750	11.156	.546	-50.88	13.38
	150000-200000	-3.972	12.050	.999	-38.68	30.74