

A STUDY TO DEMYSTIFY CHANGING STATE OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN OMNITHON

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ABSTRACT

Omnithon is a 24 hours event which brings different students from various backgrounds together in order to solve a problem. The objective of the study was to monitor different parameters in individuals participating in omnithon.

An observational, descriptive questionnaire based study was conducted among students of different departments participating in various events for a continuous stretch of 24 hours organized by Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand. The study was designed to be for a period of 24 hours. Five time points (T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5) were set. This study included recording of Blood Pressure and Temperature as the event progressed.

Data was collected from 250 individuals but only 198 were included in the final result. After analyzing the results it was found that as the time progressed BP of the participants increased till time T3 and it further decreased as the event reached its completion (T5). Initially the stress level was low and as the event progressed it was at its peak but it further decreased as the event reached its completion. Confidence level was maximum, initially, but it was found to decrease in the mid way of the event. At the start of the event the efficiency level was high, decreasing gradually with time. Although a drastic increase in efficiency level was observed in the wee hours.

It can be concluded that the participants were able to maintain their mental stability and ability to work efficiently, while working under stressed conditions and limited time frame.

Key words: Omnithon, Blood Pressure, Stress, Confidence level

INTRODUCTION

Omnithon is a 24 hours event that brings students from various backgrounds together for decision making and problem-solving. They are typically organized in an intense, short-duration type of competitions where teams generate innovative solutions for different tasks given to them. The omnithon model integrates different collaboration, idea generation and group learning by bringing together different students from various departments in a mutually supportive setting.

For student participants, omnithon offer many promises like improving and acquiring programming skills, spending a short but relatively fun time with like-minded people, taking a project from beginning to its completion in a very short period of time, competition and prizes (though many events are noncompetitive), a stringent prototyping environment and direct contact with potential employers. Despite what many

individuals may perceive as positive attributes, omnithon also elicit strong negative reactions from some individuals due to many reasons, some known and others yet to discover.

Efficiency in simple terms is defined as the speed at which the individual achieves the goals under specific conditions, with a certain quality.

It has been proved since many time that success in various disciplines is strongly associated with a high self efficiency level and self confidence level [1]. Also, it has been shown that high self efficiency and self confidence is found to be positively correlated with poor level of academic performance among individuals[2].

Hence, it can be logically and precisely conceptualized that students having low efficiency level usually suffer academically and they even find it difficult to achieve good results in tests.High stakes testing has always been a very strong source of anxiety for many students where it can be seen that their performance is highly hampered due to their strong concern about their results [3].

Students tend to distinguish various time specific responsibilities as frightening and also, imagine the penaltyof getting low scores or even fear to fail sometimes. Such a distress results in cognitive fret and intensified arousing that has been discovered to lay as a hindranceto the test performance of students [4]. This circumstance is conceptualized as test anxiety in thr field of psychology literature. A very clear characterization of test anxiety is given by Sieber, O'Neil & Tobias (1977), as “a set of physiological and phenomenological responses that go together with concern over various possible negative outcomes or failure in an exam or similar kind of evaluative circumstances”. [5]

It seems as if everyone knows what stress is, but there are varying definitions of stress. For the most part, researchers agree that stress is a transactional process between person and environment [6] that includes stressors, stress mediators, and stress outcomes. Stress is also understood as the result of an imbalance between demands and the adaptive capacities of the mind and body [7]. A stressed individual has physical, mental, and/or emotional reactions resulting from the subject's response to environmental tensions, conflicts, and pressures. Stressors can be thought of as events, problems, or pressures that potentially produce stress [8]. Some common stress reactions include fatigue, negative thoughts, and anxiety [9].

Similarly, they are defined as events or conditions that require adjustmentsfurther than the normal wear and tear of daily livelihood discussed the three stages of anxiety as being

- (a) the alarm response
- (b) fighting phase, and
- (c) exhaustion

These above listed stages are the body's endeavor to restore equilibrium [10].

Everyone is exposed to stress at some time in their lives[11], that uncomfortable situation that affects our sense of well-being and quality of life [12]. According to the cognitive-transactional model of stress, stress is the dynamic relationship between an individual and the environment in which a stimulus (whatever it is) disturbs an individual's homeostasis, causing him/her to respond to the situation with all available resources [13]. When this occurs, we evaluate the demand relative to our available resources, and the amount of stress we experience is governed by the following rule: the more resources we have, the less stress we will experience [14].

Stress can manifest itself either as eustress or sometimes as distress. Eustress is literally translated as 'good stress', which is a constructive form of stress that motivates an individual to continue with his work efficiently. It is when this type of stress is no longer tolerable and/or manageable that the other type of stress termed as distress comes into play. Distress is very often termed as 'bad stress', is the point at which the good stress becomes too much to bear or cope with for the individual. Some signals that this change has occurred are when tension starts to build up and there is no longer any fun left in the challenge or there seems to be no relief or end in sight. This kind of stress is usually well-known and may often lead to poor decision-making.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

An observational, descriptive questionnaire based study was conducted among students of different departments participating in various events for a continuous stretch of 24 hours organized by Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand. The study was designed to be for a period of 24 hours.

The study population was randomly selected.

Five time points (T1,T2,T3,T4 and T5) were set at intervals of around 4.5 hours in which the data was collected from the study population.

The raw data that was collected during the course of the study was entered onto Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and then specific coding was done to allow the data to be analyzed by SPSS for Windows, for statistical analysis.

This study included recording of Blood Pressure and Temperature as the event progressed. The participants were asked to state their stress level, confidence level and efficiency level at different time intervals. Participants were also asked to depict their state of mind.

RESULTS:

Data was collected from 250 individuals but only 198 were included in the final result analysis as 52 participants were not available for the entire 24 hours period.

After analyzing the results it was found that as the time progressed BP of the participants increased till time T3 and it further decreased as the event reached its completion(T5).

Initially the stress level was low and as the event progressed it was at its peak but it further decreased as the event reached its completion.

Confidence level was maximum, initially, but it was found to decrease in the mid way of the event. Confidence level further increased as the event progressed to its completion.

At the start of the event the efficiency level was high, decreasing gradually with time. Although a drastic increase in efficiency level was observed in the wee hours. This efficiency level was maintained till the end of the activity.

It was found that the participants were happy and excited at the start of the activity, but at the mid-way they were stressed and sleepy. However, as they approached the completion of their challenge, they were feeling happy and satisfied by their work.

DISCUSSION:

Hence, from the study, it can be concluded that round the clock activities like Omnithon has been very successful in demonstrating that “Efficiency of the participants was maintained with time”.

In other words, the participants were able to maintain their mental stability and ability to work efficiently, while working under stressed conditions and limited time frame.

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TABLES AND FIGURES:

Table 1: Blood pressure level with time

BP Level	No. of individuals at T1	No. of individuals at T2	No. of individuals at T3	No. of individuals at T4	No. of individuals at T5
Normal	91	85	102	107	123
Above	58	62	47	48	16
Below	49	51	49	43	59

Figure 1: Sense of worry about completing the task

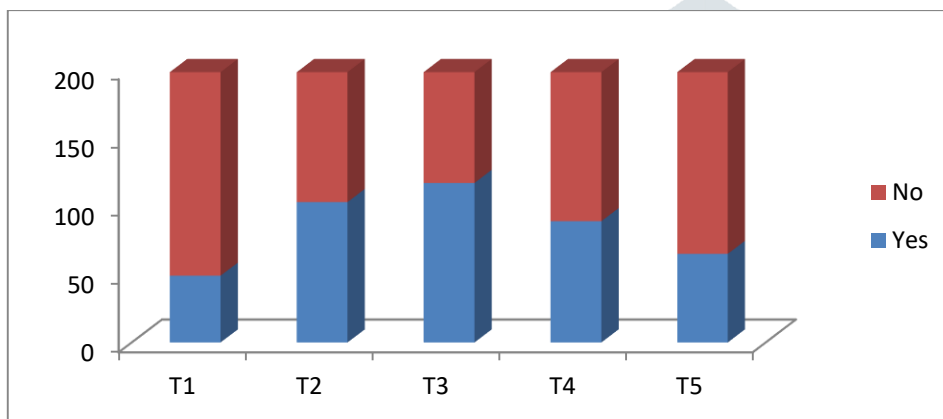


Figure 2: Do you feel like taking a break now?

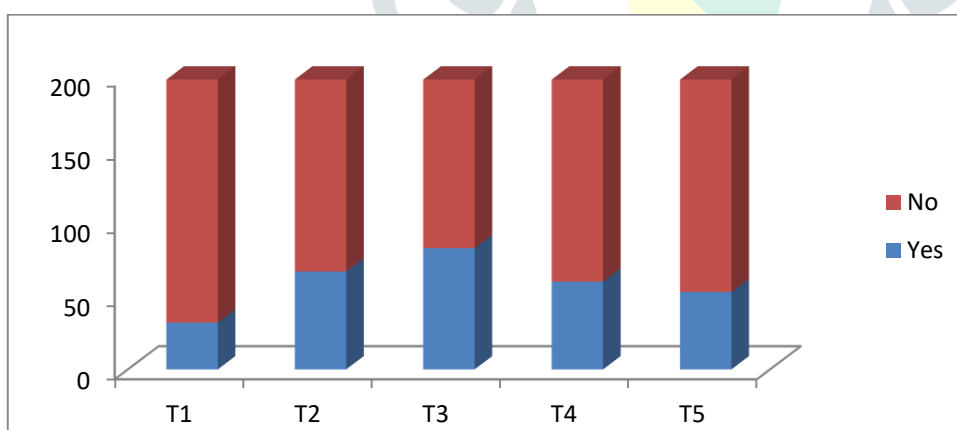


Figure 3: Level of stress with time

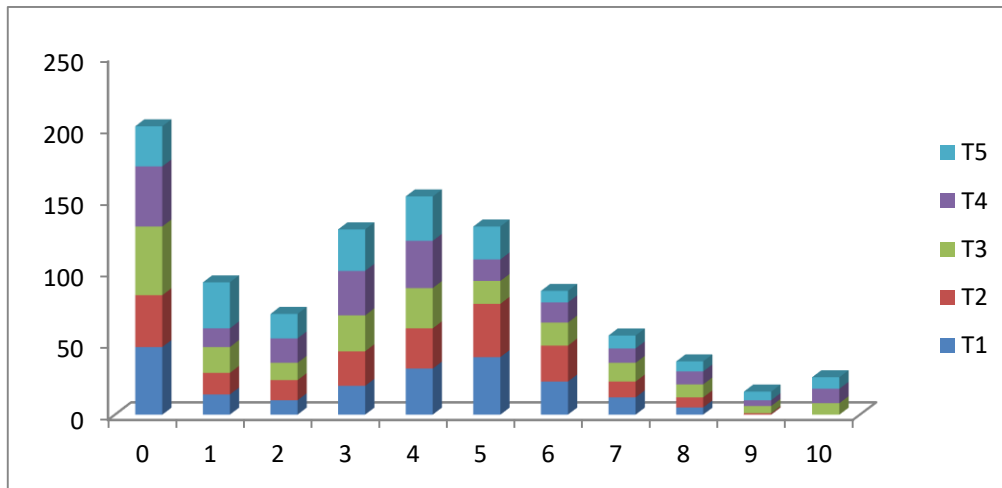


Figure 4: Confidence level for completion of the task in the specified time

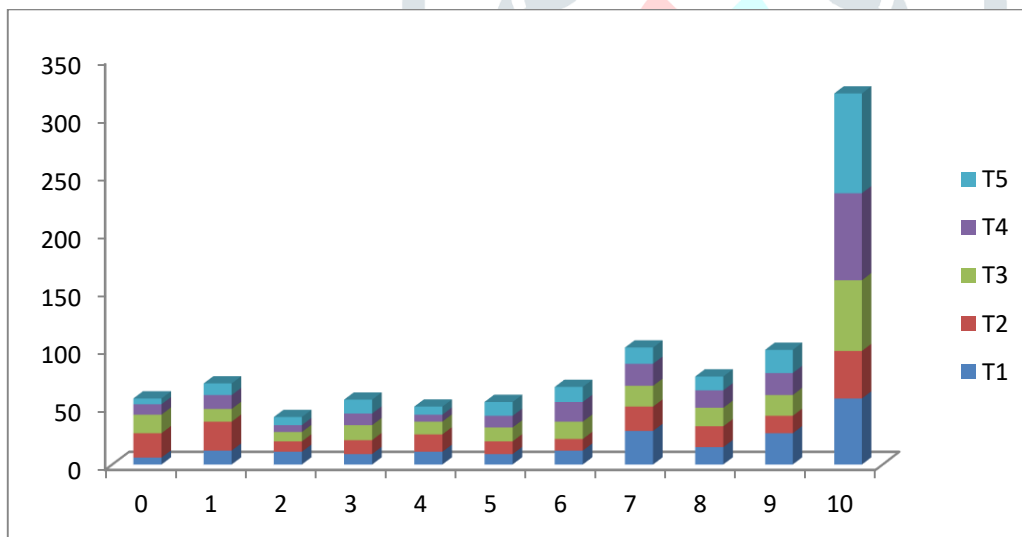


Figure 5: Efficiency level of individuals

