

A study on Academic stress among B.Ed college students in Kancheepuram District

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Abstract

Stress and its manifestations, such as anxiety, depression, and burnout, have always been as a common problem among people in different professions and occupations. In the last few decades, alarm has already been provoked by the proliferation of books, research reports, popular articles and the growing number of organized workshops, aiming to teach people how to cope with this phenomenon. The purpose of the study is to find out the level of academic stress among B.Ed college students. The present study consists of 100 College students studying in B.Ed College students situated in Kancheepuram District of Tamil Nadu, India. The sample was selected by using simple random sampling technique. The present study reveals that the B.Ed college students are having moderate level of academic stress and irrespective of sub samples of the B.Ed college 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 Aided school student's academic stress is less than Private school students.

Keywords: Academic stress, B.Ed College students, Sources of Stress

INTRODUCTION

Stress is viewed as a negative emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physiological process that occurs as a person tries to adjust to or deal with stressors (Bernstein, et al 2008). Stressors are defined as circumstances that disrupt, or threaten to disrupt, individuals' daily functioning and cause people to make adjustments (Auerbach & Grambling 1998). Auerbach and Grambling (1998) regard stress as an unpleasant state of emotional and physiological arousal that individuals experience in situations that they perceive as dangerous or threatening to their well-being. However, stress is perceived in different ways and may mean different things to different individuals. It is perceived as events or situations that cause individuals to feel tension, pressure, or negative emotions including anxiety and anger. Moreover, other people define stress as the response to existing situations, which includes physiological changes (increased heart rate, and muscle tension), emotional and behavioural changes (Bernstein, et al 2008). Stress is always regarded as a psychological process that involves an individual's personal interpretation and response to any threatening event. It is important to note that stress can have both positive and negative effects on people. It means that stress may be a normal, adaptive reaction to threat. Its role is to signal and prepare individuals to take defensive action. Take for instance, fear of things that present realistic threats motivates individuals to deal with them or avoid them. Most psychologists assert that moderate stress motivates individuals to achieve and

fuels creativity, although stress may hinder individuals from performance on difficult tasks (Auerbach & Grambling 1998). Auerbach and Grambling (1998) argue that stress can lead to serious problems if it is not managed effectively. Moreover, when a person is exposed to chronic stress, she or he is likely to experience both physical illness (including heart disease), and mental illness (e.g., anxiety disorders). The field of Health Psychology focuses in part, on how stress affects bodily functioning and on how people can use stress management techniques to prevent or minimize disease (Grambling and Auerbach 1998). Stress can be imposed on an individual by unusual physical condition such as excessive heat or cold, illness, deprivation of oxygen, or exposure to strong light. Standing at attention a long time, climbing a mountain, or continuous immersion in water can also place strong demands for adaptation on the individual.

SOURCES OF STRESS:

Bernstein et al. (2008) define the sources of stress as every circumstance or event that threatens to disrupt people's daily functioning and causes them to make adjustments. These sources of stress are called "Stressors". Stressors are demands made by the internal or external environment that upset balance, thus affecting physical and psychological well-being and requiring action to restore balance (Lazarus & Cohen, 1977). However, they differ from the degree of severity and duration of stress; what is stressful for an individual may not be a stressor for another. For example, missing some lectures may be stressful for the first year undergraduate students, but may not be stressful for another student depending on his or her degree of expectations. Taking his final exam or sitting in rush hour traffic is not equivalent to being attacked by an angry lion, where high arousal could facilitate fighting or fleeing. Catastrophic events, major life changes, and daily hassles are regarded as major categories of stressors that create demands to which people must adjust. Auerbach and Grambling (1998) view catastrophes as an unexpected life-threatening calamity or disaster that cause individuals to be unable to cope with it. For instance, wars, floods, hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, sexual assaults and tornadoes are common catastrophes. Major life changes (e.g., losing a job, divorce, illness, death of a spouse or family member, and imprisonment) can be regarded as stressful situations for every adult. Most stress people experience in their everyday lives is caused by daily hassles. Daily hassles can also be viewed as the irritations, pressures, and annoyances that might not be significant stressors by themselves but whose cumulative effects can be significant. This can be related to individuals' jobs, every day living circumstances and personal relationships (Bernstein et al., 2008).

ACADEMIC STRESS: The definition of academic stress is the anxiety and stress that comes from schooling and education. There is often a lot of pressure that comes along with pursuing a degree and one's education. There is studying, homework, tests, labs, reading, and quizzes. There is the stress of doing all of the work, balancing the time and finding time for extra-curricular activities. Academic stress is especially hard on school students who are often living away from home for the first time.

Teachers expect work to be completed on time. Students may underestimate the amount of time it takes to complete reading and writing assignments, to print out copies of their work. Stress and its manifestations, such as anxiety, depression, and burnout, have always been seen as a common problem among people in

different professions and occupations. In the last few decades, alarm has already been provoked by the proliferation of books, research reports, popular articles and the growing number of organized workshops, aiming to teach people how to cope with this phenomenon (Keinan & Perlberg 1986). Keinan and Perlberg (1986) argue that the feelings of frustration, anxiety, and depression are among the potential consequences of high degree of stress. Mckean et al. (2000) maintain that stressors alone do not produce anxiety, depression or tensions. Instead, the interaction between stressors and the person's perception and the reaction to these stressors cause stress. Environmental stress occurs as a result of environmental stimuli or demands apprehended by a person that are exceeding his or her ability to deal with them (Shirom, 1986). Academic stress among students have long been researched on, and researchers have identified stressors as too many assignments, competitions with other students, failures and poor relationships with other students or lecturers (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003). Academic stressors include the student's perception of the extensive knowledge base required and the perception of an inadequate time to develop it (Carveth et al, 1996). Students report 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 (Abouserie, 1994). When stress is perceived negatively or becomes excessive, students experience physical and psychological impairment. Methods to reduce stress by students often include effective time management, social support, positive reappraisal, and engagement in leisure pursuits (Murphy & Archer, 1996). The pressure to perform well in the examination or test and time allocated makes academic environment very stressful (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006). This is likely to affect the social relations both within the institution and outside which affects the individual person's life in terms of commitment to achieving the goals (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aikens et al., (1992) The study of stress hypothesized stress as the interaction between the three fundamentals perceived as the perception of coping ability, and the perception of the importance of being able to cope with its demand. Different from many previous definitions of stress, this formulation clearly integrates the transactional process that is believed to be central to current theories of academic assessment. Stress is simply seen as a mismatch between demand and capacity on the difference, the insight of these two elements, and the most important the desire or the motivation that one feels to answer all the requests are at the heart of the construction

Gunnar (1998), defined the explanation of academic stress is the anxiety and stress that comes from schooling and education. There is regularly a lot of compressions that comes along with following a degree and one's education. There is studying homework, tests, labs, reading, and quizzes. There is the stress of doing all of the work, balancing the time and finding time for extra-curricular activities. Academic stress is particularly hard on school students who are often living away from home for the first time. Its study shows that teachers expect work to be completed on time. Students may miscalculate the amount of time it takes to complete reading and writing tasks, to print out replicas of their work. Stress and its displays, such as

stress, depression, and tension, have always been seen as a common problem among people in different businesses and occupations. In the last few times, the alarm has previously been motivated by the proliferation of books, research reports, popular articles and the growing number of organized workshops, aiming to teach people how to handle with this individuality. Researchers are randomly in their actions on this subject, in some cases associating and unique in others. While one can say that each stress factor has immediate effects, each can also have side effects. For example, time pressure limits the time available for the success of a particular task. This limit is a physical limit that does not require psychological explanation to sympathize with its immediate effects on achieving performance. This limitation, however, often causes an emotional reaction, for example nervousness that has side effects or indirect effects on success. Given the effort of unravelling these two extensions and scarcity in which this was done in the main literature (Trochel et al., 2000).

Baumeister and Exline (2000) description of stress provides a complex concept of stress, it says little about how stress affects human academic and other performance. There is important variation between researchers about the direct and indirect properties of several suppose different factors which have to create stress in any situation. Direct stress special effects are those experienced by the mission capacity alone unrelatedly of any psychological stress that may also be generated. According to Rees and Redfern (2000) indirect stress effects are developed from psychological stressors related to task load requirements. There is an acceptable line that is mutual with these two, and they can sometimes not be distinguished. This fact made their departure and measurement extremely difficult.

Ashcraft and Kirk (2001) shows that students with high stress tend to be slower and more considerate in their action of various aspects of specialized purposes. For example, these persons give the impression to have particular difficulty with the carryover role. With the connection between this function and work memory, scientists have imagined that the extra stress present in highly nervous subjects probably withdraws resources that can then be used in work memory for activation and rehearsal as needed for the carrying operation. Although it has been challenged that high stress individuals may simply be less qualified to be subject to inability and not stress different studies have given an indication that professional competence is not satisfactory to explain the phenomena. Instead, it has directed our sympathetic towards resource reduction models. Specifically, it has been said that concern and disturbing thoughts compete for the limited pool of resources.

Rajasekar (2013). Impact of academic stress among the management students of AMET university – An analysis. 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. The sample comprises of 100 students of AMET Business School, AMET University in Chennai. Data was collected through structured questionnaire by using convenient sampling method

Sibnath Deb, Esben Strodl and Jiandong Sun (2012). Academic-related stress among private secondary school students in India. The purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence of academic stress and exam anxiety among private secondary school students in India as well as the associations with socio-economic and study-related factors. Participants were 400 adolescent students (52 percent male) from five private secondary schools in Kolkata who were studying in grades 10 and 12. Participants were selected using a multi-stage sampling technique and were assessed using a study-specific questionnaire. Findings revealed that 35 and 37 percent reported high or very high levels of academic stress and exam anxiety respectively. All students reported high levels of academic stress, but those who had lower grades reported higher levels of stress than those with higher grades. Students who engaged in extra-curricula activities were more likely to report exam anxiety than those who did not engage in extra-curricula activities

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The investigator present the study framed the following objectives:

1. To find out the level of Academic stress among B.Ed., College students
2. To find out the level of academic performance among B.Ed., College students
3. To find out whether there is significant difference between the following subsamples with respect to academic stress
 - a. Gender (Male / Female)
 - b. Locality (Urban / Rural)
 - c. Management (Govt.Aided / Private)

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The investigator of the present study framed the following hypotheses:

1. There is significant mean difference between male and female students with respect to academic stress.
2. There is significant mean difference between rural and urban area students with respect to academic stress.
3. There is significant mean difference between Government and private school students with respect to academic stress.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

In the present study, the investigator applied normative survey as a method. The normative survey method studies, describes and interprets what exist at present

Sample

A sample is a small proportion of a population selected for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of the sample, one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it is drawn. The present study consists of 100 B.Ed college students studying at Kancheepuram District . The sample was selected by using simple random sampling technique.

Tool Used

The investigator of the present study selected and used the academic stress scale which was constructed and standardized by R. Balaji Rao for data collection

Description of Academic Stress Scale

One of the important objectives of the present investigation is to find out the level of academic stress among college students for this purpose the investigator used the academic stress scale constructed and standardized by R. Balaji Rao. This scale consists of as many as 40 items and each item has five alternative responses i.e. “No Stress”, “Slightly Stress”, “Moderate Stress”, “Highly Stress”, and “Extremely High Stress”. So the scoring to the response given by the college student should be like the following

Response	Weightage
No stress	0
Slightly stress	1
Moderate Stress	2
Highly stress	3
Extremely high stress	4

High score are an indication of high stress and low scores on the scale are an indication of low

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

For the Analysis of the data, the following statistical techniques have been used.

- Descriptive Analysis (Mean & S.D) and
- Differential Analysis ('t' test)

HYPOTHESIS TESTED

Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D	T - Value	P - Value	Significant at 0.05 level
Gender	Male	8	56.25	15.67	0	0.5	Not Significant
	Female	92	60.32	24.6	0.0023	0.499	Not Significant

Locality	Rural	63	64.69	24.99	0.0026	0.498	Not Significant
	Urban	37	52	20.03	0	0.5	Not Significant
Management	Private	50	52.62	22.94	0	0.5	Not Significant
	Govt.Aided	50	67.38	22.89	0	0.5	Not Significant

* P<.05 level of significance

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following are the main findings of the present investigation.

1. The B.Ed College students are having moderate level of academic stress and irrespective of sub samples of the B.Ed college students are having moderate level of academic stress.
2. Male and female students do not differ significantly in their academic stress scores.
3. Rural and Urban area students do not differ significantly in their academic stress scores.
4. Government Aided and Private B.Ed College students do not differ significantly in their academic stress scores

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The result of the study shows that the level of B.Ed college students about academic stress, being in touch with daily classes is a good idea. Try to be regular in attending and concentrating in lectures. Last minute studying should be avoided and remember that a regular seven hours of sleep is mandatory for the body to function well. One should identify the best time and place for studying and this varies with each individual. The college students are aware of the exact topics that are going to come for the exams and previous year's question papers should give you an idea about the exam pattern. Taking regular short breaks while working helps one relax and concentrate for longer. One should always set 'realistic' goals in life and never let negative thoughts get into one's mind. On the day of the exams one should remain calm and stop being nervous.

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