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A Study on Causes of Stress and its Management among Students

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ABSTRACT

Stress has become part of students academic life due to the various internal and external expectations placed upon them. Excessive stress could lead to psychological problems like depression and anxiety. For students, stress can be caused by a number of factors. Some of these may include how the university functions, exam periods, relationships with teachers, the pressure that parents put on academic achievement, competition with other students, financial problems, uncertainty about the future, and lack of self-confidence. Symptoms of stress are now well identified. Students suffering from stress report feeling unhappy, having stomach pains, difficulty relaxing and sleeping, mental health problems, and even depression. Students also claim to be stressed by the challenges of student life and the demands of the working world. They have a constant fear of failure and doubt themselves, their academic skills, and success in their careers after graduating. Our study is also an opportunity to discuss ways to better manage student stress.

Key Words – Stress, Sources of stress

Introduction

Stress is a condition of mental pressure on individuals facing problem from environmental and social well being which also leads to many diseases. Stress arises when students take tensions and that they cannot cope up with it in the present competitive age. It's found out that today's youth faces more stress as compared to elder ones. According to the American Institute of stress, 4 in 5 college students experience frequent stress. Unchecked stress can lead to physical side effects like trouble concentrating, irritability, a lack of energy, appetite changes, a weakened immune system, and trouble sleeping. Chronic stress can also lead to [poor academic achievement](#), increase the likelihood of dropping out of school, and diminish motivation. Therefore, both students and educators need to recognize what the triggers are and what they can do to better manage everyday school stress. Taking all these factors into consideration an effort is made to understand stress and emotional adjustments among students of today.

Causes of stress among students

The events, environmental conditions, external stimulus that increase the stress are called stressors, and they cover a wide variety of situations from making a class presentation, semester exams or natural hazard. Some of the main stressor among students are:

Academics-The tension related to academics can cause stress symptoms such as anxiety, changes in eating habit and mood swings. The fear of exams, competition and gaining big quantity of information in short period create stress among students.

Career- Excessive competition among today's generation for getting good job, lack of job security and inconsiderate work colleague increases stress among students. Students after spending a huge amount of money on education want a good package and failing to this leads to stress.

Life style – All students feel stress about having a good life style which require money. They want to maintain the lifestyle and fulfill the demand of articles like mobile, cars etc. If they fail to fulfill the requirement then it creates a stress.

Time Management- Lack of time management also causes stress on students. Balancing academics, peer activities, and home life can be difficult.

Building New Friendships – The friendship made in college lasts longer. Being exposed to people from different backgrounds can make things more challenging because it may force a student to associate with people outside their normal comfort zone.

Balancing Social Life - With the new experiences come new responsibilities and decisions. Some fail to adjust to not having their parents around to regulate the balance between academics and their social lives.

Objective of the study

- To study the symptoms of stress among students.
- To measure the level of stress among students.
- To know the strategies to cope up with stress.

Research Methodology

A questionnaire survey was adopted in this paper. Participants in this study were college students enrolled in reputed colleges of Lucknow, who were pursuing their studies in different streams namely Arts, Commerce and Science, were selected. They were in between the age group of 18-24 years of age.

Participants were briefed in their respective classrooms regarding the questionnaire and confidentiality of the data was assured to the participants. A total number of 180 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 180 completed the questionnaire in the presence of the investigators. The students were queried about reasons of stress and the different strategies they opt to manage the stress.

The questionnaire was designed with three sections. One section highlights the symptoms of stress, second highlights the stressor and third section highlights the coping strategies used by the students.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The respondents are from different colleges of Lucknow. The table shows that the total number of respondents was 180. The maximum respondents belong to the age of 23 which is 23 %. The students in the age of 18 are 11%, in 19 belong to 14% and in 20 are the second highest which is 18%. The students of both age 21 and 22 lie at 10% and in the age of 24 are 14 %.

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage
18	20	11
19	25	14
20	32	18
21	18	10
22	18	10
23	42	23
24	25	14

Table 1 – Distribution of students according to age

Out of 180 respondents 105 were male students thus forming 58% of the total population and 75 were female students.

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Male	105	58
Female	75	42

Table 2 – Distribution of students according to gender

Regarding the income of the respondents, the maximum of the respondents lie in the income of 3,00,000 to 4,00,000 which is 46% of the total population. The minimum of the respondent lie in the income group of more than 5,00,000.

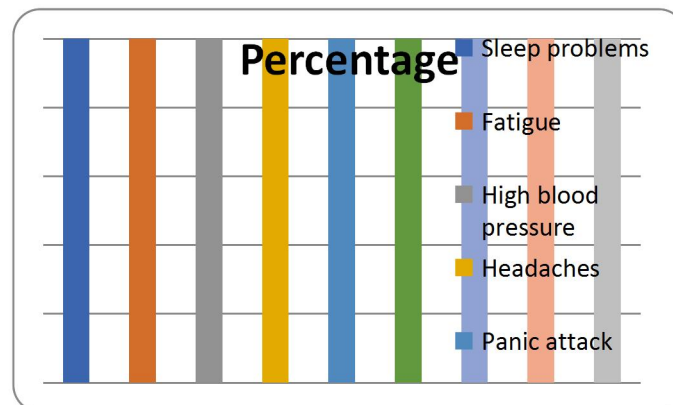
Income	Number of respondents	Percentage
Up to Rs. 1,00,000	10	6
1,00,000- 2,00,000	20	11
2,00,000-3,00,000	28	16
3,00,000 -4,00,000	84	46

4,00,000 -5,00,000	32	18
Above 5,00,000	6	3

Table 3 – Distribution of students according to income of family**Stress symptoms among students**

As per the data collected from the questionnaire, it indicates that students experience stress and the symptoms. The highest percentage is 82% having a habit of either being Over-burdened or overwhelmed, students with stress remains depressed which is the most common symptom and as the data it shows that 79% of the students suffer from depression. Many have sleeping problems and feel fatigue and have headache most of the time. Few also have panic attacks, feel irritated and have mood swings.

Symptoms	Percentage	Rank
Sleep problems	73	4
Fatigue	72	5
High blood pressure	74	3
Headaches	68	6
Panic attack	65	7
Depression	79	2
Over-burdened or overwhelmed	82	1
Irritation	63	8
Mood Swing	61	9

Table 4 – Symptoms of stress**Fig 1 - Symptoms of stress****Causes of stress**

There are various reasons of stress among students but the most common is the stress caused through relations. It is observed that due to the increasing use of social media the relationship stress is increasing. They have high stress due to career or growth opportunities, because of increased competition. Other causes include financial, psychological and also related to studies.

Kinds of stress	Percentage	Rank
Academics	58	5
Career	82	2
Financial	75	3
Relationship	84	1
Psychological stress	65	4

Table 5- Causes of stress

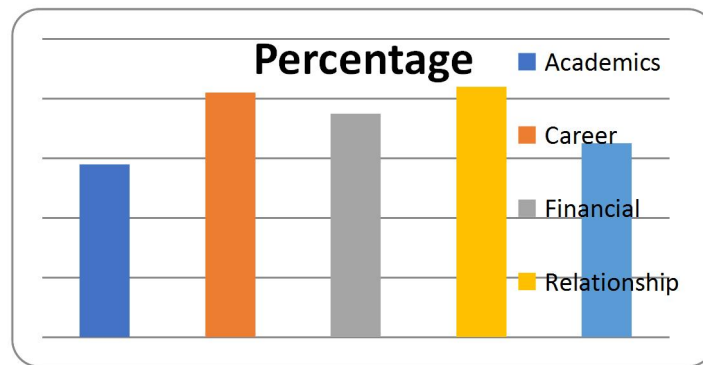


Fig 2 - Causes of stress

Strategies to overcome stress

The various strategies used by the students to cope up with stress include listening music, surfing social networking sites, playing games, doing yoga, watching movies or talking with friends and family members.

Strategies	Percentage	Rank
Playing games	76	3
Doing yoga	74	4
Watching movies	65	5
Talking with friends	62	6
Listening music	88	1
Surfing social networking sites	86	2
Talking with family members	58	7

Table 6 – Strategies to overcome stress

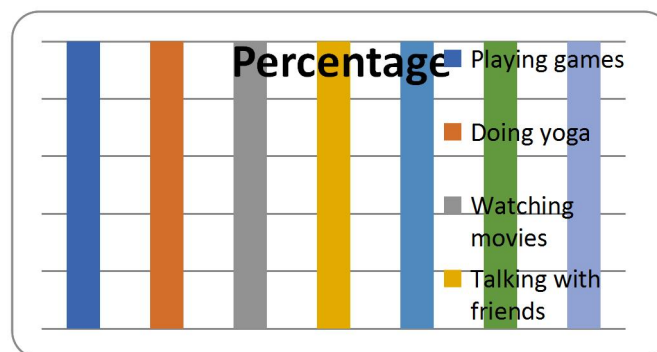


Fig 3- Strategies to overcome stress

Suggestions

The future of any nation lies heavily on the students as they are the tomorrow's leaders, therefore, it is important to identify the causes, symptoms, and the consequences of stress on students. The negative effect of stress on students is likely to create challenge to the individual, their colleagues, and the society as a whole. Some of the suggestions to reduce the stress among students are

- Set time bound objective
- Have positive attitude
- Proper time management
- Form healthy relations
- Share problems with friends and family members

- Exercise daily
- Should develop hobbies

Conclusion

From the findings, it is clear that students are stressed toward high level. The symptoms identified are being over whelmed or over burdened, depression and headaches which are common among most of the students. It is found out that among all factors, the main causes of stress among students is relationship stress, financial and career stress. The relationship do not last long because of many reasons thus creating stress. The next stress they are feeling is career related. They have fear of job opportunity and how they survive in the competitive environment. Students were able to identify some strategies to cope with stress such as listening music, surfing sites, going out with the friends and counseling. It is necessary and suggestions to the students that should develop time bound objective plan systematically, use technology within limit and share your emotions with your loved ones.

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