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Assessment of Stress Management Strategies among Students

Kavitha Srinivasan 1

1 Professor, VIT Business School, VIT University, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India

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ABSTRACT

Stress is an irritating condition where excess of work and overload which reduces the concentration and the normal working condition of any person. Generally, stress is defined as a person's psychological and physiological response to the perception of a demand or challenge. Students are most frequently affected by stress due to their academic life. Students face various challenges and a whole lot of pressure in today's competitive environment. Students need to be trained in handling stress. This study mainly focuses on the stress management of students. This will help in understanding the symptoms, sources and effects of stress among the student community.

KEYWORDS: Physiology, Psychology, Stress, Student, Workload.

INTRODUCTION

Every human being in today's fast paced world is plagued by stress every day. The means of tackling stress are differ from person to person. The need of the day is to help people successfully to combat stress. Facing stress is unavoidable, but effectively tackling it is a necessity. A group of people who are most frequently affected by stress are students. Throughout their academic lives, students face various challenges and a whole lot of pressure in today's competitive environment. Students need to be trained in handling stress. Handling stress is an art by itself and it needs some proven scientific methods to manage it.

Several demands are placed during the life of a student. These demands are environmental conditions requiring effort on the part of the student to mobilize and manage requisite resources. When the student is unable to do so stress occurs. Stress thus refers to a condition of perceived tension between demands and resources during student life. When the student feels that he/she cannot meet the demands thrust on him/her, then he/she is stressed. Stress is inevitable in the life of a student. A major anxiety that is affecting them is how to achieve balance in life. When the student is unable to do so stress occurs. Stress thus refers to a condition of perceived tension between demands and resources during student life. When the student feels that he/she cannot meet the demands thrust on him/her, then he/she is stressed. Stress is inevitable in the life of a student

At times stresses on students are forced by letting people down by teachers, parents, etc. Generally students are more stressed on daily test and their works. It is common knowledge that there are large numbers of students whose examination performance continually fails to do justice to their ability, training and commitment, and whose results appear to be almost incompatible with talent and promise.

This article attempts to focus on issues, like identifying causes, symptoms, and outcome of stress in students' community, role of parents, friends and faculty members in managing stress of the students, ways to reduce and manage the stress. Through survey, necessary data from the students are collected and analysed

This article is divided into four parts. The first gives information regarding student stress. The second part deals with the literature review. The third part presents the data analysis and interpretations. The fourth part gives discussion and suggestion about student stress and to how to tackle academic stress.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A report by the Royal College of Psychiatrists (2003) observed that a student faces important challenges in late adolescence due to increased independence and responsibilities. For students leaving home for the first time life is difficult. It involves separation from family and friends, adjusting to new environment, need to face new responsibilities and an unknown future. Similar reports have been made by other researchers too. According to

D'Zurilla and Sheedy (1991) college students, especially fresher, are prone to more stress due to their transition from home to college life. **Ross et al., (1999)** argues that most of the students are stressed because of some compulsory adjustments viz. 1. Being away from home for the first time, 2. Maintain high academic achievement, and 3. Adjust to a new social environment. Besides these, a student also encounters a pressure to earn good grades (**Bunn et al., 2007**).

Excessive homework, unclear assignments, uncomfortable classrooms (**Frazer and Kohn, 1986**), assessment deadlines (**Misra and Mckean, 2000**), relations with faculty members, time pressures (**Sgan-Cohen and Lowental, 1988**), financial pressures, relationship with peers, opposite sex, family and friends (**Wright, 1967**), new eating and sleeping habits, loneliness and bleak future career prospects are other stressors identified by researchers. An issue associated with study load related stress is the fear of failure. Gender differences surface quite naturally in the area of stress. Depression is considered to be a greater problem among women than men. The American Psychiatric Association (2000) reported that women experience depression twice as often as men. These differences arise perhaps on account of increased family pressures experienced by women as against men.

In Indian society colleges, poor infrastructure and faculty, adds on to the stress in the students. On account of these push factors; those who are more academically inclined often opt to pursue higher education outside India. This has resulted in brain drain (**Shah, 2001**). In the test site in India, parents should realize that their children should seek a course and career according to his or her liking and aptitude and not select them based on social or family pressures. Professional education, namely engineering, medicine or management degree, is an important component in the overall education system in India. Obtaining such a professional degree is regarded as very prestigious amongst the middle classes (**Agrawal and Chahar, 2007**).

Schafer (1996) describes fear of failure as natural and capable of motivating an individual to prepare and perform well. However, at times it can become so extreme that it can create unnecessary emotional and physical distress, a feeling that he/she cannot cope with the perceived situation. Students too experience similar fear of failure with study load related stress. Majority of the students are resilient and therefore are able to tackle these stresses. They are therefore able to accomplish their academic goals. Some students experience difficulty in adjusting to college social network and are stressed due to poor inter personal relationships with their peers and teachers (**Hughes et al, 2006**). Also students come from a homogeneous cultural background into a heterogeneous and diverse population with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. This causes them uneasiness and stress (**Clift and Thomas, 1973**).

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to identify the sources of stress and its effects on students' life.

- To identify the various symptoms of stress experienced by the students
- To identify the top most stress symptoms' through ranking
- To rank the destructive reaction of students' stress
- To suggest recommendations to minimize the students' stress.

DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTION

Stress is a condition when your mind says enough of it this is accompanied by lots of interest in doing it example too much of work load given by the professors here is unnecessarily. Stress is an over tension and physically affected. Stress is an irritating condition where excess of work and overload reduces the concentration of student. Stress is when a lot of comparison is present on me from all sources. As educational requirements get more stringent in all levels of education, students everywhere experience considerable school stress. Most students find that eustress (good stress) is a positive aide in school. Certainly, too much stress causes some students to freeze during exams, but appropriate amounts of eustress can coax the best from students.

While stress management for students must be geared to specific stressors, some of them are actually eustress stressors - or could be. Consider the following stressors,

Academics: Academic pressure can be distress if it is allowed to become such. Through stress management, however, it can be eustress that urges to greater accomplishments. In this case, stress management for students' demands building on academic successes. Awarding peak performance can encourage greater academic excellence.

Environment: The school environment can be a distress if students are left to handle it on their own. Planned activities geared toward initial adjustment, and intermittent periods of relaxation can go far toward introducing eustress into your stress management for students.

Extracurricular: Many students naturally seek out extracurricular activities, and find them a source of eustress. Others feel pressured to engage in them, and suffer distress instead. Stress management for students requires careful selection of activities, and balance among these activities, school life, family life, and part-time jobs.

Peers: Peer pressure can be a source of eustress or distress, depending on how readily students give in to it. Students who want stress management will want to establish firm convictions, and stick to them.

Time Management: Stress management for students must address scheduling, since a lack in this area can impinge on most or all other areas of a student's life. Easier for some, than for others, a habit of carrying a daily planner and adhering to it can drain away, cause much of the distress.

Parents: Sadly, parents themselves are to blame for a portion of student stress. It is well known that students, as they get older, seek greater degrees of independence from their parents. This is necessary if they are to become mature adults. At the same time, the struggle can cause great distress on both sides of the equation. If you want success from efforts at stress management for students, you will need to shine a spotlight on the eustress of the parent/student relationship.

Some stress relief tips and tools that students can use to learn study skills, prepare for exams and minimize their school stress levels to make learning easier, including an explanation of the importance of student stress management, and resources to help the students' to reduce the school stress they experience. It's important to give plenty of time to work on studies if the student want to do well, therefore they can save themselves a lot of stress if they plan ahead with good time management skills. Setting up a schedule for study, breaking up their studies into smaller chunks, and other time management skills are essential.

The students' should have a system of organization for note-taking, keeping track of assignments, and other important papers. Being organized can bring the peace of mind that comes from knowing where everything is, remembering deadlines and test dates, and clearing the mind of some of the mental clutter that disorganization brings. Keep a calendar, a schedule, and a filing system for your school assignments and then the student will find it prevents a significant amount of stress. Creating a soothing environment can reduce stress and help the students' to learn. Playing classical music as you study can also soothe you and help them to learn.

CONCLUSION

Visualizations and imagery are proven stress management techniques. This will also reduce student stress and improve test performance by imagining them achieving their goals. It is been proven that optimists—those who more easily shrug off failures and multiply successes—are healthier, less stressed, and more successful. So, the students' can develop the traits of optimism and harness. If the performance to be optimum, the students need to be well-rested. Research shows that, those who are sleep-deprived have more trouble learning and remembering, and perform more poorly in many areas. Students can do much for their own stress management simply by eating a balanced diet and getting sufficient sleep. They can add to that by maintaining a schedule, including regular waking and sleeping hours.

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