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EFFECTS OF STRESS AND IT'S IMPACT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study is to examine the stress level of college students and to identify the relationship between stressors and coping strategies of the students. The Students Stress Scale (SSS) was the instrument used to assess the stress level of college students which consists of four major factors such as emotional, social, Academic and Financial stressors. Both positive and negative coping was the instrument used to validate the coping strategies of the students. The Questionnaire was administered on 356 college students both from Arts and science stream. The study revealed that academic stress is highly correlated with social and financial stress and it also found out positive coping strategies helps to combat academic stress

KEYWORDS

coping skills, college students, social support, stress, students, positive coping, negative coping.

INTRODUCTION

College students have many obstacles in order to perform and achieve their optimal academic performance. College life is the one of the most memorable experience of Adolescents life. College students face different kinds of stressors in their path of curriculum studies & in life. They experience a number of challenges in their day to day life. They are exposed to considerable amount of stress which necessitates with coping strategies. Previous researchers found that the college students perceive a high level of stress during their academic education. According to Lazarus stress is the result of an individual's perception that they do not have the resources to cope with a perceived situation from the past, present & future. Stress is a situation that occurs when an individual is confronted with a situation which is perceived as overwhelming. Many studies found that too much of stress or chronic stress can cause & harm physical & mental health of the students & increase the risk of effects in our body. Coping strategies are classified into active & avoidant coping strategies. Avoiding coping strategies either be behavior or psychological response designed to change the nature of stressors. Active coping is considered as a better way to deal with the stress while avoiding coping I considered as a psychological factor for stressful events. Therefore, ineffective coping can lead to Anxiety, depression, stress, using of drugs, smoking, a lot of mental illness among college students.

According to Carver: Active Coping strategies include active Coping which means taking action or exerting efforts to remove the stressors, planning, thinking about how to confront the stressors & planning ones coping efforts, acceptance, accepting the fact that the stressful event has occurred and is real & positive reframing. Approaches in coping with stress are influenced by ethnic, cultural & socio- economic characteristics.

Thus elevated stress level of college students can lead to decline in Academic performance and can affect both physical and mental health of the students. Stress among students has not gained with attention in comparison to work related stress. Only a few studies have assessed the perception of stress among students & coping strategies. In recent times, many study found that students encounter all kinds of stressors such as Vague future, unattainable target and goals, problems in adapting new college environment etc. The learning abilities are often affected when they encounter challenges as social, academic, emotional, physical and family problems [Fish & Niles, 1996]

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kamarudin Rafidah, (2009) found in the research the relationship that exist between stress factors, Perceived Stress & Academic performance. Perceived stress scale (PSS) developed by Cohen, Kmarack & Mermelstein, (1983) were the instrument used for the study. The result of the study indicates many of the students experience stress but at moderate level. But significantly between the level of Perceived stress at the beginning of the semester. The study also suggested parents must in better position to give advice, motivate the students & to have moral support to reduce & to overcome stress.

Archer & Lamnin (1955) examined and identified tests, grade competition, lack of time, are the primary causes of academic stressors while intimate relationship, parents relationships and finance related ranked as the highest personal behavior.

Levin, Ilgen & Moos (2007) examines the mediating effect of Coping, personal belief & Social support which is directly or indirectly associated with stress, depression & coping strategies.

Vamadevappa (2009) examined the study revealed there is a positive and significant relationship between parental involvement and academic stress among students. The study found good parental involvement to higher Academic stress.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

The Structured Questionnaire is used as the research instrument for the study. To validate the study students stress scale (SSS) questionnaire were used. Folkman & Lazarus Coping response (1988) were the instrument used to measure the coping both positive and negative response of the students.

DATA SET

The source of data is collected from the primary data through Questionnaire.

SAMPLE SIZE

The populations for the study were 356 undergraduate students from top five Arts and Science colleges in Chennai city. The response rate for this study is 78%. Convenience Sampling is used for this study.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

- 1) Demographic Analysis
- 2) Descriptive Analysis
- 3) Correlation Analysis

MEASUREMENT SCALE

A Likert Scale is used & the respondents can select a numerical score ranging from 1 to 5 for each statement.

1) Demographic Analysis**TABLE 1**

Gender (Variable)	Number	Percentage
Male	210	60%
Female	146	41%

2) Descriptive Analysis (level of stress)

TABLE 2

Stressors Domain	Mild (0-1.00)	Moderate (.01-2.00)	High (2.01-3.00)
Emotional Stress	0%	0.5%	87%
Social Stress	3%	1.6%	45%
Academic Sources	3%	87%	23%
Financial Sources	2%	35%	7%

3) Interrelationship between Academic stress and other stressors

stress	Social stress 'r' value	Emotional Stress 'r' value	Financial Stress 'r' value
Academic Stress	0.170	00.567	0.213

D) Correlation Analysis: Association of Academic stress with coping strategies of students.

S.NO.	COPING STRATEGIES	ACADEMIC STRESSORS 'R' VALUE
	positive coping	0.112
1	Mediate & pray	0.67
2	Sleep	3.56
3	Listening to music	-0.34
4	Talking to parents	-0.009
5	Yoga/ meditation	0.098
6	Hobby/interest	3.56
	Negative Coping	
1	Spending time	0.055
2	Using drugs	-0.79
3	Smoking	-0.21
4	Alcohol	0.022

FINDINGS

The main findings of this study therefore concluded that Academic stress was highly correlated with social and financial stress. Coping techniques such as proper utilization of time, involving in leisure related activities, optimistic appraisal and support from friends and family often relieves in stress of students. Different coping strategies such as finding help, solving problems, leisure, exercise, found to be beneficial (Donaldson & Prinstein et al, 2000)

RECOMMENDATION

It is highly recommended that parents should support & inspire students. They should support, motivate & develop self- confidence & self-discipline & the students need to develop balance state of mind. On the part of teachers, they should develop & inculcate interest among students. Better guidance should be provided to develop confidence among the students. Planning plays a major role in Academic work. Therefore, planning during examination & Time Management of students play a vital role to reduce stress.

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