Perspective On The Academic Stress Of Higher Education Level Students At Jadavpur University: A Critical Analysis

Dr. Prakash Kumar Sahoo

Tic Of Saha Alimuddin College Of Education Narayanpur, Nadia,741165

Email:bimalduari67@gmail.com

Abstract

The researchers conducted a study at Jadavpur University to find out if academic stress is prevalent among tertiary students. The participants were categorized based on gender, caste category, prior test results, and their siblings' number. An on-campus survey and a hands-on sampling procedure were used to collect data from 121 students at Jadavpur University. For the purpose of collecting their own data, the researchers created a survey. The Chi-Square test is an inference-based statistic. Further, the proportion of female students who reported high levels of school stress was statistically significantly higher than that of male students (21.62% versus 8.51%).

Keyword : *prevalent, Chi-Squaretest, Stress.*

1.Introduction

According to Bernstein et al. (2008), stress comes third in terms of burdens in life behind death and taxes. It applies to everyone, but its application may vary according to the situation (Yumba, 2008). As a result of higher education, everyone has access to the immense body of knowledge because distinctions have been clearly merged. Many students experience significant amounts of stress at specific times during the semester because of their financial obligations, academic obligations, and lack of time management skills (McKea et al., 2000). Physical and mental health as well as academic performance can be negatively affected by extreme stress or when it exceeds what can be tolerated. In order to cope effectively with difficult situations, students at a higher level must develop effective coping skills. In the current study, male and female higher education students' views regarding academic stress are compared on the basis of their caste group, how many siblings they have, and their prior test-taking skills. We are capable of handling a stressful situation very efficiently when we have the ability to cope with stress. Sinha, Muktipada, and Ghoshal, Chandikaprasad (2015) suggest that while we strive to maintain balance in our daily lives, when we are not able to do so, we become stressed. Occasionally, stress is characterized by the stimulus-response cycle.

Stress as a Transactional Process

It has been found that stress affects both individuals and the environment in which they live, according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984). People's responses to and management of stress determine how much stress they experience, not the initial trigger of the situation. In terms of how middle school teenagers perceive and respond to stress, this methodology suits the study perfectly since these individuals have an enhanced dynamic relationship between the individual and their environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers found that all types of stress are positively related to shyness and all aspects of shyness in a study entitled "Relationship between shyness and academic stress in adolescents" conducted in 2016. A study by Essel,

George, and Owusu, Patrick (2017) titled "The Causes of Student Stress, Its Effects on Academic Achievement, and Student Stress Management" (2017) identified many variables that affect students' stress levels. According to the study, the variables were divided into four categories: academic factors, relational factors, and environmental factors. Relationships were most difficult to form when students had to work with unfamiliar people. As for stress related to external factors, it was mainly caused by school-related variables, such as the workload in the classroom. Students are most concerned about their finances. The effects of stress management training and extracurricular activities can be reduced through training and involvement in extracurricular activities. Because of their emotional instability, female students experience more stress than male students. In order to support these conclusions, two studies were conducted: "Academic Stress: A Case of Undergraduate Students" by Yamba, W. In this study, Banu, Deb, S. Vardhan, V., and Rao, T. examined perceived academic stress among university students across gender, academic streams, and semesters (2015). However, Dr. Prabhu, P.S.'s study entitled "A Study of Academic Stress in Upper Secondary Students" (2015) made a number of discoveries. One of the main conclusions of his study is that male students experience more stress than female students. Medical students worry more than other undergraduates, according to researchers who studied stress at the University of Putra in Malaysia in 2011.
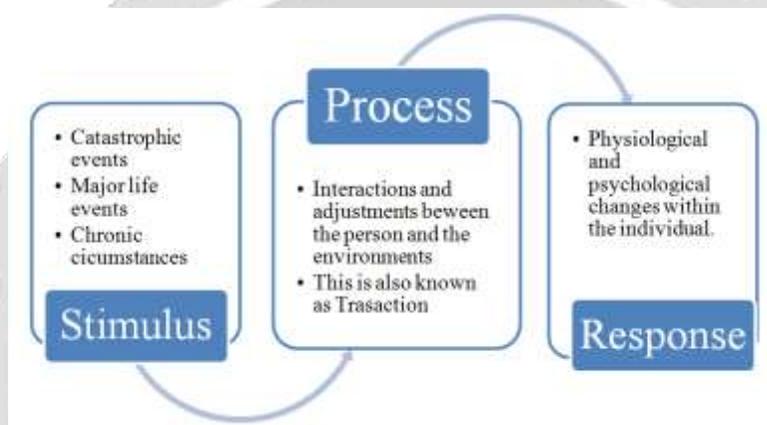

Figure 1. Stress as the stimulus response process.

Researchers have found that scientific students suffer from more academic stress than arts students according to Dr. Prabhu. PS (2015). The researchers discovered that, together with Banu, P. Deb, S. Vardhan, and T. Rao (2015), business and humanities students are more in demand than scientists. There are a variety of opinions about academic stress among university students depending on their gender, course of study, and academic performance, according to their study, "Perceived Academic Stress of University Students Across Gender, Academic Streams, Semisters, and Academic Performance.". In their 2015 book "Life Skills Education for Adolescents," Dr. Muktipada Sinha and Chandikaprasad Ghoshal explain that all stress-related variables have psychological foundations. In a particular situation, how we interpret or perceive it determines how anxious we are. The same scenario might not be stressful to you, but to someone else it might be. Jain, Geeta, and Singhai, Manisha's 2017 study "Academic Stress Among Students: A Literature Review" states that academic stress is always perceived as a subjective process that encompasses the individual's perception of the situation. Stress can cause a variety of negative disorders, including depression and anxiety. There is no denying that stress occurs in nature on a regular basis, and it's not always harmful. You can find out how to manage stress by using key communication skills by visiting stress.org on December 23, 2020. According to a 2013 study by Sandesh Dhakal, "An Assessment of Academic Stress in Undergraduate Students" looked at the effects of stress on students' academic performance, and found that stress can either be beneficial or negatively impactive. Symptoms of extreme stress, however, can include sadness, anxiety, social dysfunction, and even suicidal feelings. The flip side of mild stress is that it can boost productivity and motivation in the workplace. Furthermore, we observe that stress can become a hidden gem when expertly controlled. To help children cope with challenging life situations, we must successfully integrate the teaching of life

skills. A study by Blackburn, Tida (2020) reveals that engaging in mindfulness practices. Higher levels of mindfulness are associated with lessened academic stress, according to the study's findings.

Rationale of the Study

Academic stress is associated with specific demographic traits. In spite of the fact that little is known about the relation between academic stress in higher education and several demographic factors, such as gender, caste, number of siblings, and siblings' performance in their prior exams, the authors of the study concluded that these factors are related.

Statement of the Problem

Thus, the researchers described their research problem as "A Study on Academic Stress of Higher Education Level Students at Jadavpur University".

Objectives

Study objectives were identified as follows:

1.   An investigation was conducted to determine if students at higher education levels suffer from academic stress at a higher rate.

2.   This study examined gender, family income, number of siblings, and previous academic performance at the university level in relation to academic stress.

Hypothesis:

 H1: Academic stress does not differ significantly between female and male students at higher education levels.

H2: The academic stress of students in higher education is not significantly different across caste categories.

H3: High Education students' stress levels are not significantly different based on their marks on previous exams.

H4: Higher Education students' stress levels are not significantly different from those at the undergraduate level when they have siblings.

METHODOLOGY

Surveys were conducted using a cross-sectional design in this study. Undergraduates and graduates make up the study population at Jadavpur University. Hence, samples of Jadavpur University students were effectively selected at random in order to gain information from the target demographic. In total, 121 appropriate respondents from various socioeconomic levels participated in the study. Independent factors may have an impact on them. Prior test grades (greater than 60%/60%), gender (male/female), caste (general/SC/ST/OBC-A/OBC-B), and other factors, such as the number of siblings (none/a few siblings/sister), and the number of siblings, are all considered independent factors. In the study, the dependent variable was how academic stress affects pupils. Study participants were intended to discover whether the independent variables affected the dependent variables.

Tools - To detect potential indicators of students' academic stress, the researchers developed 30 questionnaires that tested seven latent stress traits. Academic stress among college students can be attributed primarily to the seven elements. A few examples of these types of anxiety are anxiety that is triggered by low self-esteem, anxiety that is triggered by parental expectations, anxiety caused by peer pressure, anxiety that is triggered by romantic interactions, and anxiety that is triggered by financial concerns. A worry about academic performance is also

included in these types of stress. School has a demanding atmosphere. Each of these requirements was addressed with four to five questions taking sufficiency into account. Based on Kohn and Frazer's questionnaire from 1986, the questions were asked. Researchers created questions after consulting with supervisors and subject matter experts. A survey in English may have been created originally or copied directly from an English survey in the past. With the help of bilingual subject matter experts (English and Bengali), the Bengali version was subsequently produced. Respondents were scored using a four-point Likart scale, with four representing agreement and one representing opposition. There is a correlation between less stress and better outcomes.

121 students provided anonymous data to an Excel file. This study utilized SPSS, version 20.0, statistical software for social sciences, and the Chi-Square test.

Analysis and Interpretation

Non-parametric Inferential Statistics, such as descriptive statistics with graphical representations. Analyzing and interpreting the data was done using Chi Square tests.

Table 1. Overall percentage distribution of stress among the higher education level students

Over all stress			Total
Academic stress level of the students	Low	Total number	8
		% of total	6.61%
	Moderate	Total number	93
		% of total	76.85%
	Severe	Total number	20
		% of total	16.52%
Total		Total number	121
		% of total	100%

There were 20 students, or 16.67%, out of 120 total students who scored at a severe stress level (N=120). We need to provide support for these students. It was determined that 93 students (77.5%) were under moderate stress. A total of seven more students (5.783%) reported that they were only under mild stress. Students who are not stressed out are seen as ordinary students, not stressed-out students.
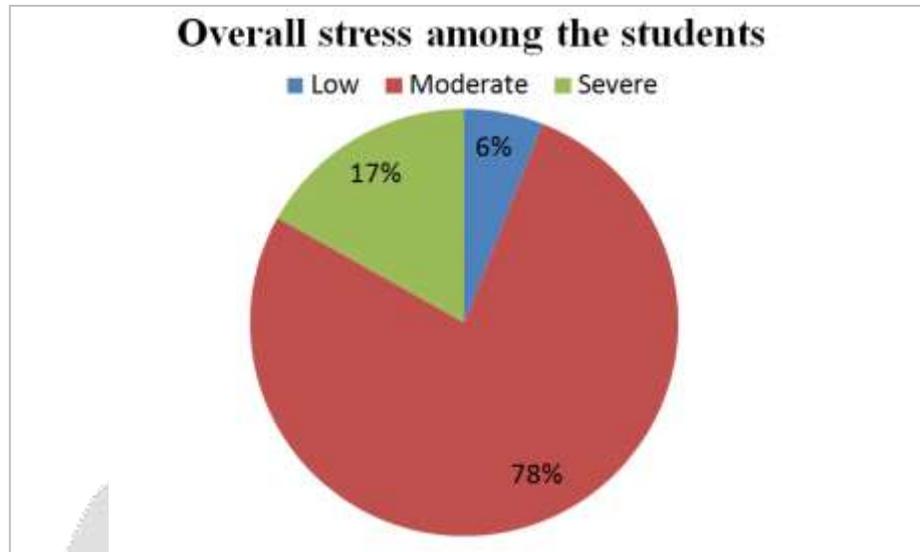
Figure 2. Overall stress level among the Students at Higher Education

Table 2. Percentage wise distribution of stress among the higher education students

on the basis of their gender

Overall Academic Stress			Gender of the Students		Total
			Male	Female	
Academic stress level of the students	Low	Total no.	1	7	8
		% within gender	2.13	9.45	6.61
	Moderate	Total no	42	51	93
		% within gender	89.36	68.91	76.85
	Severe	Total no	4	16	20
		% within gender	8.51	21.62	16.52
Total		Total no	47	74	121
		% within gender	100%	100%	100%
		% of total	38.84	60.15	100

H1: Students at higher education levels do not exhibit significant differences in academic stress between males and females.

Variable	Category	N	df	χ^2	Level of significance	Remarks
Gender	Male	47	2	6.889	0.032	S*
						P<0.05
	Female	74				

S*- Significant

A Chi-Square value of 6.889 was calculated based on the aforementioned table, P was 0.032, and df was 2. Chi-Square values with df=2 are 5.991 and 9.210 respectively at the 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels. This results in a significantly higher estimated chi-square value than the chi-square table value at the 0.05 level. In summary, the null hypothesis (p 0.05 at the 0.05 level) cannot be accepted. Therefore, male and female students in higher education experience different levels of academic stress based on an unlikely coincidence.

Table 3. Percentage wise distribution of Stress among the Higher Education

Students on the basis of their Caste Category.

Overall academic stress			Caste of the students					Total
			SC	ST	OBC-A	OBC-B	General	
Academic stress level of the students	Low	Total no	4	0	1	1	2	8
		% within caste	7.84%	0%	8.33%	7.7%	5.12%	6.61%
	Moderate	Total no	37	6	7	9	34	93
		% within caste	72.54%	100%	58.33%	69.23%	87.17%	76.85%
	Severe	Total no	10	0	4	3	3	20
		% within caste	19.60%	0%	33.33%	23.07%	7.7%	16.52%
Total		Total no	51	6	12	13	39	121
		% within caste	100%	100%	100%	100%	!00%	100%
		% of total	42.14%	4.95%	9.91%	10.74%	32.23%	100%

H2: Students at higher education do not experience significant differences in academic stress according to their caste categories.

Variable	Category	N	df	χ^2	Level of significance	Remarks
Caste	General	39	8	7.950	0.438	NS*
	SC	51				P>0.05
	ST	6				
	OBC-A	12				
	OBC-B	13				

The finding of a statistically insignificant difference between the caste categories of students is based on the fact that the results of the study are not significant.

Table 4. Percentage wise distribution of Stress among the Higher Education Students on the basis of the Marks of the students on Previous Examination

Overall Academic Stress			Marks of the Students		Total
			Below 60%	Above 60%	
Academic stress level of the students	Low	Total no.	0	8	8
		% within marks	0	7.14	6.61
	Moderate	Total no	8	85	93
		% within marks	88.9	75.9	76.85
	Severe	Total no	1	19	20
		% within marks	11.11	16.96	16.52
Total		Total no	9	112	121
		% within marks	100%	100%	100%
		% of total	7.44	92.56	100

H3: When compared with the marks on previous examinations of students at higher education levels, there is no significant difference in stress levels.

Variable	Category	N	df	χ^2	Level of significance	Remarks
Academic marks	Below 60%	9	2	.999	.607	NS*
	Above 60%	112				P>0.05

NS*- Not Significant.

Based onthe above table, academic stress does not differ significantly between students at different educational levels based on their marks in previous exams.

Table 5. Percentage wise distribution of Stress among the students on the basis of their Number of Siblings

Overall academic stress			Siblings of the students			Total
			No siblings	Having one siblings	More than one siblings	
Academic level of the students	Low	Total no	1	4	3	8
		% within siblings	4.34	7.14	7.14	6.61
	Moderate	Total no	19	43	31	93
		% within siblings	82.60	76.8	73.80	76.85
	Severe	Total no	3	9	8	20
		% within siblings	13.04	16.07	19.04	16.52
Total		Total no	23	56	42	121
		% within siblings	100%	100%	100%	100%
		% of total	19	46.3	34.71	100

H4: When comparing High Education level students with siblings, there are no significant differences in stress levels.

Variable	Category	N	df	χ²	Level of significance	Remarks
NO. of siblings	No Siblings	23	4	.707	.951	NS*
	One Sibling	56				P>0.05
	More than One Sibling	42				

NS*- Not Significant.   Statistically, the differences found here are not significant enough to reject the hypothesis.

Major Findings

- Ninety-three percent of the students reported mild to severe stress.
- There were significantly more female students reporting feeling stressed at school than male students (21.62% reporting severe stress, compared to 8.5% reporting mild stress).
- Students in OBC-A (33.33% having severe stress at school), OBC-B (23.70% having severe stress at school), and SC (19.60% having severe stress at school) are more likely to experience stress at school. All three student groups do not show many statistically significant differences. The severity level of 0% is scored by ST students, but it is 7.70% by children in the general group.
- Students with a score higher than 60% on their previous exam were more academically stressed than those with a score lower than 60% (26.46% at the severe level) despite the fact that this difference was not statistically significant.
- Students with siblings (12.14 % at the severe level) and those with sibling's sisters (15.47 %) experience more academic stress than students without siblings. However, even though the difference is statistically insignificant, children with multiple siblings have higher rates of academic stress.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our understanding of the academic stress faced by higher level pupils will be significantly enhanced by the study's major conclusions. School stress levels were compared with variables like gender, caste, number of siblings, and grades. There was a significant difference in school stress levels between male and female pupils. A similar conclusion was reached by Yamba, W. (2008) and Banu, P., Deb, S., Vardhan, and Rao, T. (2015). According to Allen and Heibert (1991), women are more prone to assessing negative events than men are. They may react less violently to pressures because they are socialized to believe that expressing emotions is a sign of weakness rather than strength (Davidson-Kariz, 1991). All teachers, administrators, and teacher educators can benefit from the knowledge offered by this study by utilizing some of the available resources. Universities should place a high priority on teaching life skills to students. Ensure that college students' mental well-being is a shared responsibility. Our goal should be to reach there as soon as possible.

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