



Impact of Academic Stress on Academic Achievement: A Systematic Review of Literature.

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ABSTRACT

Stress is viewed as a negative emotional, cognitive, behavioral and physiological process that occurs as a person tries to adjust to or deal with stressors. Academic stress refers to the unpleasant psychological situations that occur due to the educational expectations from parents, teachers, peers and family members. Academic achievement is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic achievement is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment. There is great impact of Academic Stress on Academic Achievement. In This Paper we will discuss the review of literature of Academic Stress impacted on Academic Achievement of students. The main aim of the present study was to examine, provide the Knowledge regarding the impact of academic stress on academic achievement and provide recommendation for its further studies.

Keywords: *Academic Stress, Academic Achievement, competition. Future worries.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is not a new event actually, “stress has been around and has been noticed for ages” (Neil, 1994 ¹). Stress is viewed as a negative emotional, cognitive, behavioral and physiological process that occurs as a person tries to adjust to or deal with stressors (Bernstein, et al 2008 ²). Stress is widely accepted to have two opposite effects on individuals – good stress (eustress) and bad stress (distress). . A person's response towards stress depends on whether an event is appraised as a challenge or a threat (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984 ³). Stress has become an important topic in academic circle as well as in our Society. Extreme stress results in increased prevalence of psychological problems like depression, anxiety, substance abuse and suicide ideation (Bansal and Bhawe, 2006 ⁴). The various types of stress are, Acute stress, Episodic acute stress, Chronic stress. Academic stress refers to the unpleasant psychological situations that occur due to the educational expectations from parents, teachers, peers and family members, pressure of parents for academic achievement, present educational and examination system. Academic Stress among students have long been researched on, and researchers have identified stressors as too many coursework. Academic stress is a mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even an awareness of possibility of such failure (Gupta and Khan, 1987 ⁵). Stress in family like divorce, intrapersonal conflicts and maternal depression leads to stress in the adolescents which deteriorates functioning (Rex Forehand et al, 1991 ⁶). Students experienced academic stress arising from both their own expectations to excel as well as expectations arising from their parents and teachers (Ang and Huan, 2006 ⁷). Some resort to avoidant coping; alcohol/drug abuse, denial and behavioral disengagement; while others cope actively through acceptance, planning, and positive



reframing and taking the necessary steps to overcome the academic stress (Sree rama reddy *et al.*, 2007⁸). 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, 1977⁹). Parents are very concerned about their children's academic achievement and moral behaviors. Family is also one of the important sources of academic stress which includes the pressure placed upon students due to the expectations of parents for their child to do well academically (Deb *et al.* 2011¹⁰). Academic achievement is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic achievement is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important- procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. Academic achievement of student is the ability of the student to study and remember facts and being able to communicate his knowledge orally or in written form even in an examination condition. Secondary education plays a crucial role in laying the foundation for the further education of students. Lawton and Gordon (1993¹¹) posited that it is quite possible to have a high ability coupled with a low attainment, achievement or performance. Thus, academic performance is the demonstrated achievement of learning as opposed to the potential for learning. Academic achievement can be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extracurricular activities. Academic achievement is the outcome of education as it indicates the extent to which the student, teacher, curricular and indeed the educational institution has achieved the predetermined educational goals". Clift and Thomas (1983¹²) reported that course work assignment was a major source often keeping the students under continual examination puts to stress. Academic achievement is commonly measured with examinations that assess important procedural knowledge such as skills, and declarative knowledge such as facts which student have learnt (Engel, 2002¹³). The learning outcome changes the behaviour pattern of the student through different subjects. Academic stress induces anxiety and fear among children which affects the academic performance of the students. It is a regular activity of person to adjust between the internal state and external environment. The failure of a person in this adjustment leads that person to fail everywhere. A stressed person cannot show efficiency in this adjustment and so failure becomes expected. Masih and Gulrej (2006¹⁴) have listed following sources of stress in students i.e. admission procedure, high expectation of parents, curriculum comprised of complex concept, unsuitable school timings, unbalanced student teacher ratio, physical environment of classroom, unhealthy students teachers interaction, hard and fast rules of discipline, too many or complex assignment, teaching methodology, teacher's unconcerned attitude and over emphasis on weakness rather than acknowledging strengths.

II.IMPACT OF ACADEMIC STRESS ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

2.1 Seema Altaf and Hafsa Kausar (2013¹⁵) explored the effect of academic stress on students' performance and the impact of demographic variables like gender, age and educational level. They analysed the significant effect of academic stress on student's performance. There was a non-significant difference between male and female university students on scores on the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). A significant difference between junior and senior students was found on the Perceived Stress Scale PSS. Academic stress was found to be higher in younger students than older students.



2.2 Tung and Chahal (2005¹⁶) examined relationship between stress and adjustment and found no significant causal relationship between stress and the adjustment. However direction of the results implied that level of adjustment influences the number of stress full events and amount of stress experienced by them.

2.3 Sohail (2013¹⁷) was conducted a study to determine the relationship of stress and academic performance in first year medical students and to identify sources of stress, levels of stress and relevant coping strategies. The results also show that higher level of stress is associated with poor academic performance.

2.4 (Hussain *et al*, 2008¹⁸) examined the level of academic stress and overall adjustment among Public and Government high school students and also to see relationship between the two variables (academic stress and adjustment). The results indicated that magnitude of academic stress was significantly higher among the Public school students. Significant relationships between academic stress and adjustment were found for both the group of students and for each type of school.

2.5 Mathur and Bhavnagar (2012¹⁹). Examined that there significant difference of the academic stress on the male and female students is tested by t test and it is seen that there is no significant difference of the academic stress on male and female students. The significant difference of the academic stress on different classes is tested by F- test (ANOVA) and it is seen that the academic stress depends on classes and the Pearson's coefficient of correlation between the academic stress and self-efficacy is calculated and it is -0.70061 and by t test it is seen that the correlation is significant. The regression analysis has also been done to estimate the dependence of self-efficacy on the academic stress.

2.6 Qurrat Ul Ain Mehfooz *et al*, (2017²⁰) Examined that the stress is related to issues including, financial issues, health problems, social issues and academic difficulties. Stress can either negatively or positively influence academic achievement, the aim of their study is to explore the relationship between stress and academic performance of medical students and identify sources of stress effecting academic performance. All domains of MSSQ are reliable showing Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.7. Female students showed higher level of stress than males before and after exams. They suggested that It is important that students should be counseling and trained to manage stress effectively otherwise it can adversely influence their health and academic performance.

2.7 Manju Mishra (2017²¹) investigated the effect of academic stress on college students' achievement and the difference in stress level of male and female students. Academic stress scale was used to measure the stress level and students' marks in last exams were taken as measure of academic achievement. The students scoring above 55% of marks were taken in high achiever group and students scoring below 55% of mark were taken in low achiever group. Statistical analyses were conducted to analyze the obtained data. The results revealed the significant effect of academic stress on students' achievement. Highly stressed students scored lesser marks while less stressed students scored higher marks in the examination. A significant difference in academic stress level of male and female student was also found. The results and implications of the study have been discussed.



2.8 Siraj *et al* , (2014 ²²) investigated the association between stress level and academic performance in medical students. They found that respondents with a high and severe stress level score higher grade point average (CGPA). Students were able to cope with stress effectively; the negative effect of stress could not influence their academic performance.

2.9 Dusselier *et al* (2008 ²³) have found a strong relationship between students stress level and decreased academic performance.

2.10 Saipanish (2003 ²⁴), found that stress influence negatively learning and memory.

2.11 Dwyer and Cummings (2001 ²⁵) have found that the stress was the most common factor affecting students academic performance.

2.12 Manju Mishra, (2017 ²⁶) Mishra investigated the sources of stress experienced by college students. this study investigates the stress in government and private college students. 200 male and female students studying in intermediate class in a government and in I S E Board Inter College participated in the study. Results revealed that both groups of students reported many sources of stress, including academic stress and personal stress. But there was no significant difference found in the sources of stress in government college students and private college students. Increased work load, fear of getting lower marks, time pressure, inflective teaching method were found to be main sources of academic stress in the both group of students.

2.13 Omomia *et al*, (2014 ²⁷) According to Omomia et al, student under stress can become tired, sick and unable to concentrate or think clearly. This study examined the perceived impact of stress on the academic achievements of Biology students in Education District IV of Lagos state. The research design used is the descriptive survey design method. Some of the findings are that students experience stress most at the end of the term and that students perceive stress as having negative impact on academic achievement. It was recommended that teachers should pace their work adequately in order not to rush students at the end of the term. Also students should be taught stress management skills.

III. CONCLUSION

From the available Review of Literature mentioned above it is concluded that academic stress among university students, first year students experienced the most stress from the perception of academic overload. This was attributed to the fact that these university students must deal with the transition into university life as well as meet the academic demands. **(Misra and McKean 2000 ²⁸)** confirmed these findings as they emphasized that students experienced stress because of the pressure to meet assessment deadlines amidst other responsibilities. In terms of these parenting practices, the literature Review studies mentions that The current trend in society appears to be a “cut-throat” approach where the theme seems to be for individuals to do what they must to get ahead of the next person **(Johnson, 1997 ²⁹)** Academic stress has a positive impact on students’ academic performance. Shortage of science laboratories was affected negatively to academic performance. This causes poor academic performance of students in science subjects in most secondary schools the research studies



indicate that authoritative parenting style to be positively associated with students' academic achievement across all school level. However, some of the studies have concluded that this association is not consistent across ethnicity, culture and socioeconomic status (**Dornbush et al.,1987**³⁰; **Steinberg et al. 1992**³¹). From review of literature it is concluded that If academic failure is to be forestalled and standards improved, it is inescapable that schools from elementary level should provide relevant values and stimulating academic environment (**Siahi.E. A,2015**³²). Students should not be condemned but be encouraged and linked to teachers with whom they can establish reflective intellectual companionship that will help improve study habits At upper school level schools are large and complex, students have multiple teachers and it becomes difficult for parents to build warm relation with each teacher and spend sufficient time in school. Moreover at upper school level students become more independent and responsible so they do not want their parents to visit the school (**Stevenson & Baker, 1987**³³). The Undergraduate students experience considerable stress in their third year. Academic related factors are the major cause of stress in students. It is important that students should be counseling and trained to manage stress effectively otherwise it can adversely influence their health and academic performance (**Qurrat Ul Ain Mehfooz et al, 2017**²⁰). Overall, most of the view of authors and finding of the studies in this literature review have concluded that parental involvement, whether at home or at school, have a positive relationship with students' academic performance. the impact of this positive relationship tend to fall as students get older or as they entered in college level but we can't reject the importance of Academic stress practices during the entire period of students' higher schooling to ensure their positive development and better academic performance.

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