

Original Research

Assessment of Stress Level among College Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: College students undergo numerous educational, social, environmental and psychological stress. The present study was conducted to assess cases of stress among college students. **Materials & Methods:** The present study was conducted on 280 students of both genders. A self structures questionnaire was used to assess stress level in college students. **Results:** Out of 280 students, males were 120 and females were 160. Males (50) and females (60) were coming from their home. 70 males and 100 females were hostellite. 10 males and 15 females were married while 110 males and 145 females were unmarried. 60% males and 55% female parents were literate. 40% males and 45% female parents were illiterate. 78 male students and 90 females students had less than 5 siblings. Family expectation was seen in 20 males and 53 females. Competition was other stress level in 35 males and 45 females, teacher expectation was seen in 20 males and 12 females and excessive work load in 45 males and 50 females. The difference was significant ($P < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** females had more stress cases as compared to females. Excessive work load was most common cause of stress among college students.

Key words: Stress, Students, Work load

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INTRODUCTION

Stress is the wear and tear our bodies experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment; it has physical and emotional effects and can create positive or negative influence on us.¹ As a positive influence, stress can help to compel us for action. As a negative influence, it can result in feelings of distress, rejection, anger, and depression, which in turn can lead to health problems.²

College students undergo numerous educational, social, environmental and psychological adjustment difficulties in the new campus atmosphere which may affect their psychosocial well-being and learning outcomes.³ These happen because the new tertiary educational system has a big difference in its methods of teaching, academic requirements, type of relations between faculties and even relations among students themselves.⁴ In short, stress seems to be very common in college students` life because college students need to ensure their academic survival and prepare themselves for the further career. It is not a surprise that

much of the academic stress at the college level is associated with what students learn and how they learn it. Studies revealed that students experience a relatively high level of personal distress, with adverse consequences on academic performance, competency, professionalism, and health.⁵ The present study was conducted to assess cases of stress among college students.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The present study was conducted in the department of Psychiatry. It comprised of 280 students of both genders. The study protocol was approved from institutional ethical committee. All subjects were informed and written consent was obtained.

Data such as name, age, gender etc. was recorded. A self structures questionnaire was used to assess stress level in college students. Results thus obtained were subjected to statistical analysis. P value less than 0.05 was considered significant.

RESULTS

Table I Distribution of subjects

Total- 280		
Gender	Males	Females
Number	120	160

Table I, graph I shows that out of 280 students, males were 120 and females were 160.

Graph I Distribution of subjects

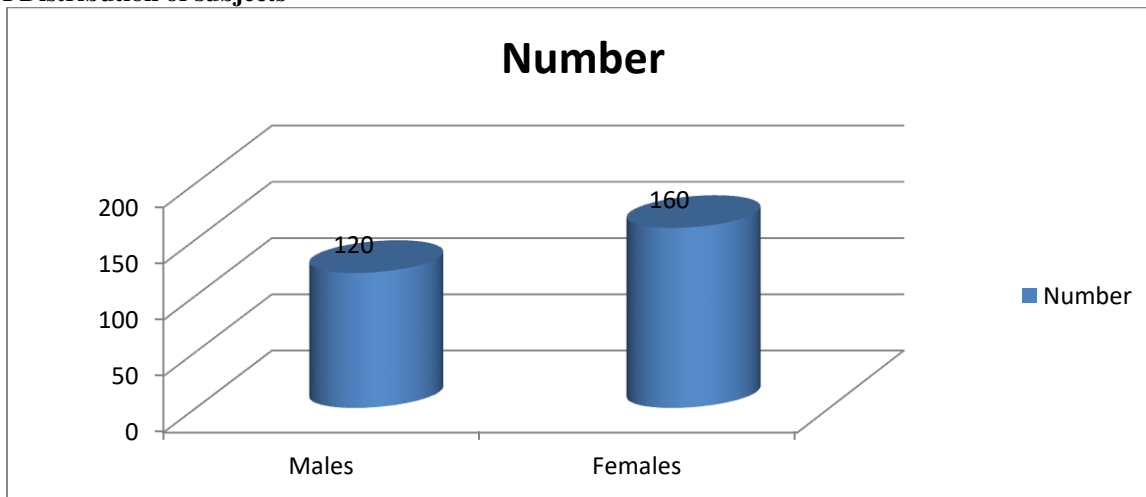


Table II Demographic data of patients

Parameters	Gender	Male	Female	P value
Residence	Home	50	60	0.2
	Hostel	70	100	
Marital status	Married	10	15	0.1
	Unmarried	110	145	
Parents literacy rate	Literate	60%	55%	0.5
	Illiterate	40%	45%	
Siblings	<5	78	90	0.4
	>5	42	70	

Table II, graph II shows that males (50) and females (60) were coming from their home. 70 males and 100 females were hostellite. 10 males and 15 females were married while 110 males and 145 females were unmarried. 60% males and 55% female parents were literate. 40% males and 45% female parents were illiterate. 78 male students and 90 females students had less than 5 siblings.

Graph II Demographic data of patients

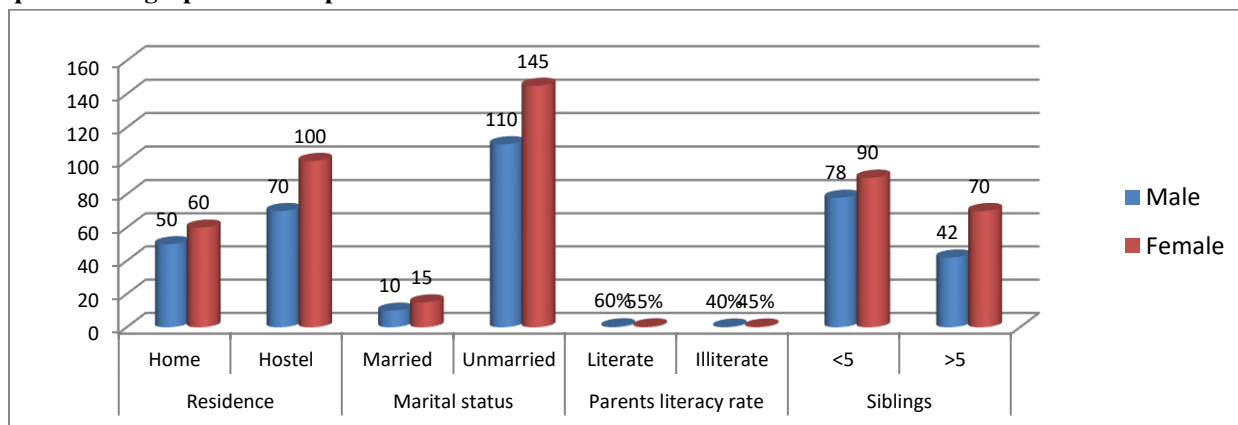
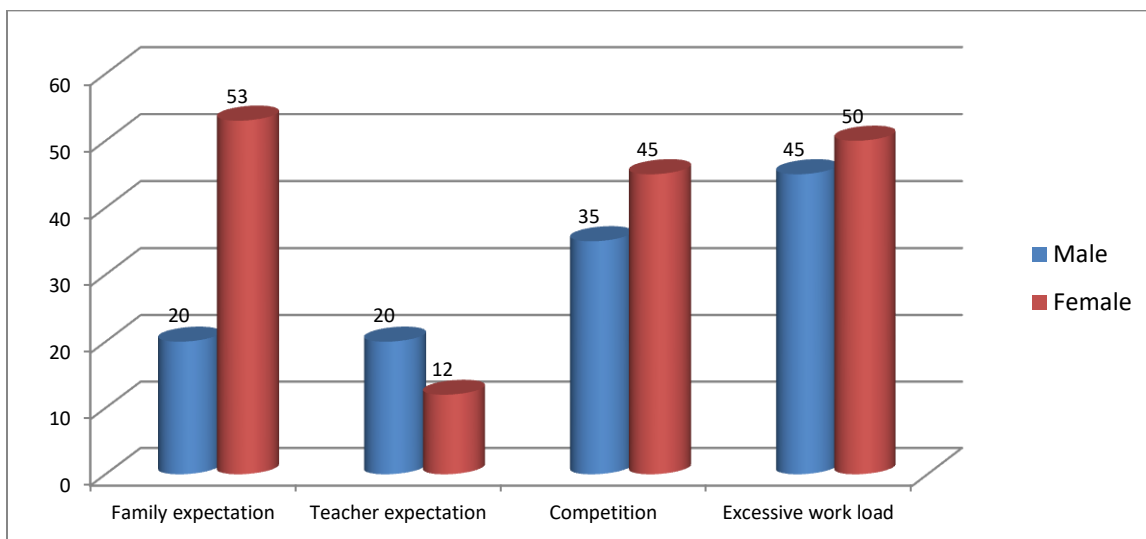


Table III Stress in students

Stress	Male	Female	P value
Family expectation	20	53	0.01
Teacher expectation	20	12	0.02
Competition	35	45	0.05
Excessive work load	45	50	0.41
Total	120	160	

Table III, graph III shows that family expectation was seen in 20 males and 53 females. Competition was other stress level in 35 males and 45 females, teacher expectation was seen in 20 males and 12 females and excessive work load in 45 males and 50 females. The difference was significant ($P < 0.05$).

Graph III Stress in students



DISCUSSION

Stress can be a healthy, and adaptive people’s response to the threat by mobilizing their energy towards the stressors. Thus, it is important to note that a certain level of stress is essential for the students in a way that it motivates students to progress in their academic journey actively, would otherwise be inactive and uninterested creatures.⁶ Many researchers have also noted that stress is not always negative. It also takes positive motivational contribution in people’s life. Take, for instance, exam stress or academic workload may motivate and strengthen a college student to successfully deal with his or her academic tasks and also enhances academic achievement and creativity.⁷

However, if individuals fail to employ effective stress coping mechanisms to handle the stressful situation, their feeling of stress can persist over time and, in turn, become at a higher risk of developing severe physical and mental problems.⁸ Although some degree of stress is accepted as a normal part and can be a motivator for some individuals, not all students find the stress manageable. Stress may give rise to feelings of fear, incompetence, uselessness, anger, and guilt and has been associated with both psychological

and physical disorders.⁹ The present study was conducted to assess cases of stress among college students.

In this study, there were 120 males and 160 females students. We found that 50 males and 60 females were coming from their home. 70 males and 100 females were hostelite. 10 males and 15 females were married while 110 males and 145 females were unmarried. 60% males and 55% female parents were literate. 40% males and 45% female parents were illiterate. 78 male students and 90 females students had less than 5 siblings.

Moffat et al¹⁰ in their study found that the majorities of the respondents (78%) were less than 20 years of age, female (54%), single (96%), belong to the Yoruba ethnic group (56%) and are Christians (91%). Also, 60% of the respondents belong to personality type A. Top ten stressors causing moderate to high stress among respondents were academic oriented. However, the major stressor was the fear of graduating. Policies and programmes geared towards enhancing effective stress coping strategies, especially targeting key stressors, should be put in place by appropriate educational ministries and by the University administration.

We observed that family expectation was seen in 20 males and 53 females. Competition was other stress level in 35 males and 45 females, teacher expectation was seen in 20 males and 12 females and excessive work load in 45 males and 50 females. Sayiner et al¹¹ found that meditation and talking to parents was most common positive strategies followed by sleep, listening music and yoga/ exercise in both males and females. Social network was significantly more in females than males (P- 0.01). Use of alcohol, smoking and alcoholism was more in males than females. Similar results are seen in various studies.

Dhalin et al¹² in a study conducted with the sample of 249 student participants, undergraduate university students were found to experience higher levels of stress as a result of academic commitments, financial pressures, and lack of time management skills. The students' health, emotional state, and academic performance can be devastated when they negatively interpret the stressful context or when the stress level intensifies

CONCLUSION

Author concluded that females had more stress cases as compared to males. Excessive work load was most common cause of stress among college students.

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