

## **Contemplating Distress Factors among College Students**

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### **Abstract**

Physical wellness of students deteriorating after the covid-19 and their learning remotely is a new normal today. Today students are striving through learning online, submitting assignments, studying in isolation, competing with handset, computation system gives them immense pressure reflecting on their mental and physical health. Anxiety and stress leads to low immune system and further illness. The students' feelings strain on their eyes, head, brain, heart and digestive system to workload pressure, exam pressure, technical knowhow pressure and peer pressure. They symptoms neither noticed nor addressed and therefore more prone to get ill if it persist for a long time. The responsibility lies on every stakeholder from the community to address unobserved anonymity to prevent the permanent damage to the society. This paper address the factors caused distress the students and measures should be taken for improving the mental and physical wellness of the students.

**KEY WORDS: Physical Health, Mental Health, Stress Factors, Students' Distress**

### **INTRODUCTION**

India has showed slight improvement in the overall wellness 2.1-4.0% (Signa'S wellbeing Survey,2012), despite the fact that the 74% are suffering from the stress and almost 88% from anxiety as per the study conducted by Delhi based The Center of Healing(TCOH) and this has been increased since COVID-19. The pandemic has created the opportunity to work from home as much possible along with new methods and ways to complete the job as per requirements. This does not mean to completely replace the physical offices and the environment where we created the infrastructure for the seamless integration of various process.

Online education is one of the panacea in this pandemic, which initially liked by everyone and soon got rid of daily classes, classroom assignment, daily commutation to school and attendance. Students are now relaxed with the attendance part which was the major concern for a few of the students. If we analyse the overall scenario of the education at intermediate school and higher studies the gross enrolment ratio is only 26.3% in 2019-20 [AISHE, 2019]as compared with 27.4 in 2017-18. The colleges which are in the rural areas are 60.53% i.e. 39.57 % colleges are there in the urban area where we expect that infrastructure required for online education is moderately fined. Similarly students studying in the colleges of urban area and residing in the rural area are still struggling with the

poor infrastructure like laptop, mobile, computer and related gadgets along with the poor connectivity by the service provider. Even if they could able to manage, the learning new apps, its training the adoption of the new method of teaching and learning is challengeing. The has extended the gap among the upper, middle class and lower middle class along with urban and rural population. The economic slow-down, losses of so many jobs, closed market aggravated the situation to worse ever and impose more stress on the parents and learner both.

As we all know the understanding the concepts of physics, chemistry or even maths required to have extra attention in the physical class and to be taught in the respective labs. Students need to pay extra attention sometimes by the teacher or they can learn in groups. Group learning and peer learning are absolutely not possible in online learning where they simply sit alone and try to understand the concept by their own. If they miss the class, now no chance to cover it from their peers. Finding from the internet is also not easy for the novice where the content of related topics are abundant and selecting the correct one is also challenging for most of the students. The students which understand and doing it own are the only who is participating in the class and the rest of the students are not able to clarify their doubt. Theses doubt will be pending and not clarify ever due to the time and space constraints which lead to unemployable students and increase the current percentage of 80% to even more. This leads to more unemployment in the country and loose the faith in the Indian education system. The stress related to academic performance affects the students' physical health and mental health (Nalini et. al., 2016)

Peer pressure is another area where students gets stress, due to lack of sharing and learning. Students learn more from their peer and share their difficulty among themselves rather than the teacher and therefore things will be getting correct if they are learning in groups. Some students are slow learner, some of them are fast, and some of them are practically oriented. The study reported that the there is no difference in the perceived stress of online and offline learning (Hendrix, 2016). There may be the types of stress are different as far as both online and convention learning is concerned. The online system gives more flexibility in terms of space, environment and sometimes time but conventional learning is better where peer or group learning is important criteria. The teaching method and pedagogy is different for the courses rather than topics. Some of the determinant like finding time to study, access of learning materials, social stress and expectation from your family and friends are having the significant difference between online and offline. This in contrast with the online learning environment imposes less stress on less stress due to the flexibility of online learning activities (B. LAZAREVIC et. al., 2020). The emotional intelligence is also associated with the metal, physical and social health (NatalioExtremera et. al., 2006) and it shows that high level is related to anxiety and depression whereas low level emotional, social interaction and general health.

Stress affects the students in multiple way and there is a question of their physical fitness. The physical fitness has an impact on the mental health and the academic performance of the students. The intervention for promoting stress recovery and social interaction may be useful for the relieving the stress and in-turn the physical health and academic performance (Mathewson et al., 2012). The students of the college are having more stress and not able to share with others due to a number of factors, peer pressure and more prone towards untoward activity. The colleges are having the counsellor who counsels them with reference to their grievance, issues so that they will be more stable and come out with the issues. This need to be addressed by the university level, administration, parent and faculty member so that the student achieve academic success (Talib et. al, 2012). The other source of the distress coming from the work problem and money, worries about the money seems to affecting their studies in higher education (S.S. Brown et. al., 2000). The Higher level of anger and self-forgiveness also affect the students' physical and mental health along with academic performance (Wilson et. al., 2016)

## Methods and Discussion

The data collected is the secondary data and literature available to identify the factors involved to manage the stress in the student life. The most common types of stress are faced by the students are final examination, their unit test, academic workload, plans for the future, assignments, financial pressure, grades, guilty for not doing better, lack of exercise, career opportunity, eating habits, dealing with the emotions, personal appearance, difficulty in decision making are there among others. The stress factors, their priority and ranks are different (Bush et al., 1985) for male and female students and top 20 factors are as per the table below.

Male	Female
Death of a parent	Final exam week
Final exam week	Breaking off a relationship
Breaking off a relationship	Change in schools

Career opportunities after graduation	Making plans for my future
Loss of close friend	Finding someone acceptable to date
Financial pressures	Academic workload
Putting off assignments or Responsibilities	Deciding about or planning for marriage
Poor performance	Guilt for not doing better
Loneliness	Roommate adjustment
Emotions	Poor or inadequate advising
Unfair teachers	Lack of confidence
Incidence of discrimination	Off-campus job
Community	Shyness
Lack of energy	Expectations of friends or peers
Expectation from parents	Homesickness

Though the common factors are same for male and female but some of the factors due to changes in the social or biological difference the variation in the stress are found. As we understand that the graduate level students are facing so many varied challenges and one of them among is used to technology use and its disruptions, which is the currently the new normal after covid-19(Erin Gemmill et al., 2006). According to the number of researchers it is evident that average students are using the internet for their social relationship and now they need to stay more than 6-7 hours for their assignment and study. Twenty five percent of the students are facing the problem in doing schoolwork, assignment on time and leads to stress. Sometimes when students in stress tend to engage in the social interaction medium than the physically talking to the others. Also, it is important for colleges, Institution, academic advisors, residence hall, and counsellingcentre staff to play an important role to relieve the stress and reap the potential of technology use.

The stress related to the health, lack of exercise, obesity, appearance are related (Harris R. Lieberman et. Al). Generally, students are having poor nutritional choice and not less concern about dietary supplements. Some of the students are aware about the dietary supplements and using it by their own without consulting to proper consultants which leads to low yields. This school habits reached to the college level and further in the later life of the adolescent and may remain for life long contributing to the stress furthermore. As per the study enough evident are there that they feel stress of not doing the things properly in terms of physical exercise and dietary habits. The Exercise as a tool to reduce the stress is having the mixed reaction (Jennifer Thome et al.,2004) and the it is associated with both positive and negative affect but more affect towards the positive side rather than negative. There is a gender difference in result of exercise and psychological health is found in male and female. The more life satisfaction, lower depression, less negative energy, positive affect and reduced trait anxiety are found in the male as compare to the female counterpart where both positive and negative affect are found. The female are more association and effect on dietary disorder along with positive psychological health.

As another criteria of Internet addiction is also being major issues contributing to stress where social and mental health issues are reported poor performance, interpersonal problems and conflict with parents (Anderson, 2001). The behavior is categorized in three dimensions neuroticism (characterized by high levels of negative emotions i.e. depression and anxiety), extraversion (characterized by a talkative, positive effect and external simulation) and psychoticism (non-conformity, hostility, anger and impulsiveness) (Warsen Yen, 2013). This indicates that the lower internet addiction has lower value family functioning lower extraversion, higher neuroticism and psychoticism, and stressful life as compared to the higher addictive to the internet. Moreover the association of type of smartphone use and perceived stress are found more significant for the problematic smart phone users and leads to more stress (J.L. Wang et. Al.,2015). The unresolved real life problem leads to problematic smart phone use and reaches to the extent to cause problems in real life. There is a correlation between the parental attachment and perceived stress for the adolescents (C.J. McCarthy et al., 2001). The individual who had high levels of maternal and parental attachment reported the lower level of stress and greater confidence and ability to regulate the negative feelings. The difference of maternal and parental attachment is yielding the different results and both are important. This leads to the developing the coping strategies in the real life situation and perceived lower level of stress. The theory based online intervention can also be part of effective stress management for undergraduate students (Samual Hintz et. al.,2015). Internet based program for the students to relieve stress is also effective and having more

advantages of health workers, educator to design such program useful for the students to relive the stress in a better way (Emil Chiauzzi et. al, 2008)

College students are facing physical and psychological distress are coping with suggestive solution based on study (Welle et al., 2011) like feeling well supported with social interaction, regular contact with family are connected with strong social network, balanced diet, regular exercise, good sleep more than 8 hours and physical extra-curricular related to physical health and helps in relieving the stress. Those who are well cared of themselves are being managed high tolerance to the stress. The use of substance to solve the real life problem or reliving stress is more prone to get negative health effect and less able to handle the stress. The male and females are coping with stress differently. Males protective factors were related to personal life, satisfaction, getting good sleep more than 8 hours, and well supported are the major ones not including the physical factors, whereas the female counterpart using other factors to dealing with stress like satisfaction with environment, having regular contact with family, tend to be befriended are some of them. This leads to the different strategies with respect to the gender and race for coping with the stress. The physical exercise plays important role in psychological and physical health. The students who are exercising regularly will have better change to be physically fit, sound physical and mental health (P. Klainin-Yobas et. al.,2015).

## Conclusion

There are common factors like final examination pressure, their unit test, workload pressure, future prospects, assignments on time, financial pressure, grades, inferiority, lack of exercise, eating habits, emotional fluctuations, personal appearance, difficulty in decision making affect the students and lead to the distress. Apart from these male and female are affected by different factors and for female deciding about or planning for marriage, roommate adjustment, Shyness, expectations of friends or peers and appearance are differ from a male counterpart. The factors related to academic workload, internet addiction, problematic smartphone uses, dissatisfaction, peer-pressure, physical and psychological factors leads to distress among the students. This factor can be minimized with regular exercise, engage in extra-curricular activities, close contact with the family, social interaction and dietary control are some of the measures which help in relieving the stress up to some extents. Paternal and maternal parenting also helps in coping with the distress differently in the male and female counterpart. Apart from these the practicing yoga from the early childhood will boost immune system along with understanding our inner sense and organs to control their activity. Most of the time we are not able to understand the urge coming out and the reason behind the same. We also not in the habit of analysing out thoughts carefully which is suddenly coming out and contributing to the stress. Yoga practices helps us to analyse the individual thoughts, its origin, purpose and outcome to discard it or shaping the desire into positive director to keep away from becoming the component of stress.

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