

Stress and its Effects on Students Appearing for Exams in Teaching Health Care Institution

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Abstract: Stress can either negative or Positive influence academic achievements. This study is to explore stress levels, various factors affecting stress and the sources of stress among exam going students.

Keywords: stress, student's exams

1. Introduction

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. Anxiety is a feeling of apprehension or worry [4]. Examinations are a part of academic curriculum and after tiresome and stressful for students at any level of education [4]. Nowadays stress levels in all aspects of life is going at an exponential rate but stress levels in exam going students is alarming. Stressful feelings can alter the ability to think during exams. Exam stress in students associated with changes in the mental and physical health such as increased anxiety, increase the negative mood and affect the performance of students [3]. During exam students are also exposed to real stress of exams and to perceived stress of fear of failure or low score due to high level of competition [1]. Long hours, distance from families, family expectations along with undergoing transition from a free care youth to a profession who must work in a competitive and also advancing medical field adds to life stresses [4].

Studies conducted in Karachi revealed high levels of stress in medical students 54.6 % range, compared to 20.6% engineering and arts, 32% commerce students [4].

Prior conducted studies have focused on stress levels in the students and identification of various stressors. Study conducted in 2014 at Maharshi Markandeshwar college indicated high levels of stress and anxiety among exam going students showing need of anxiety reduction programmes [2].

The need of the study is to determine the sex predominance in stress levels among exam going students and to explore the group of students who are under great deal of stress among exam going students, to determine various factors affecting stress among exam going students.

2. Methodology

A cross-sectional questionnaire-based study involving 200 students from Mamata Dental College in Khammam from 10-7-2019 to 31-7-2019 for a period of 20 days. Permission was taken from the head of the department of public health dentistry. Self-structured questionnaire was prepared. Informed consent is taken prior to the study from study objects. Information included in the questionnaire was demographic data like age, sex, course, year of study and 15 questions. All these questions are provided with multiple choice answers. Questions are related to the experiences regarding stress levels among exams.

Pilot survey was conducted among 20 students through self-prepared questionnaire to know the feasibility of the study. All the final year undergraduates, second year undergraduates, interns and postgraduates who are willing on the day of the study are included in the study. Those who are not interested to participate on the day of the study are excluded in the study. Survey was conducted among 200 students. Questionnaires are distributed in the classes to the students in the working hours from 9 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Students are asked to select an option for the respective options. All the data collected was entered the Excel sheet by giving codes respectively for each aspect and sent for analysis.

3. Statistical analysis

Statistical analysis was done by using SPSS25. Descriptive statistics was performed; chi-square test was used to find association among variables.

4. Results

Number of students included in the study are 250. Mean age of the study group is 23.20 and standard deviation is 1.828. In the study females are 170 (68%) and males 80 members (32%). Majority are interns 90(36%). In the study second year undergraduates are 20(8%), fourth year undergraduates are 70(28%), postgraduates about 70 (28%).

Table 1
Demographic data of study participants

	Gender	Male	Female	Valid Percentage
Male		80	32	32%
Female		170	68	68%
	Total	250	100	100%

Majority of the interns 40 and postgraduate 40 responded that they are under great deal of stress. Few of the final year undergraduates 50 agreed that they are under a great deal of stress. Very few second-year undergraduates 20 agreed to be under great deal of stress.

Table 2
Year and percentage

Year of study	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Interns	90	36	36%	36%
Postgraduates	70	28	28%	64%
IV BDS	70	28	28%	92%
II BDS	20	8	8%	100%
Total	250	100	100%	

Statistically significant difference was observed $p < 0.05\%$.

Majority of the students 135 (54%) feel high levels of stress during exams in females. Few students 100(40%) agreed high levels of stress in both males and females. Very few students 5 (2%) agreed high levels of stress in males.

Table 3
Year and gender

Year of study	Male	Female	Both	None	Total
Interns	0	50	40	0	90
Postgraduates	5	40	20	5	70
IV BDS	0	35	35	0	70
II BDS	0	10	5	5	20
Total	5	135	100	10	250

Statistically significant difference was observed $p < 0.05\%$

Majority of the students 145 (58%) think the college, money, relationships are the sources of stress. Few students 50(20%) think college is a source of stress. Very few students 35 (14%) think money is a source of stress. Very few students 20(8%) think relationship is a source of stress.

Table 4
Year, College, Money, Relationships

Year of study	College	Money	Relationships	All of these	Total
Interns	15	10	10	55	90
Postgraduates	20	15	5	30	70
IV BDS	10	10	5	45	70
II BDS	5	0	0	15	20
Total	50	35	20	145	250

Statistically significant difference was observed $p < 0.05\%$

Majority of the students 155 (62%) think anxiety, depression and fear are the factors affecting stress. Few students 45 (18%)

think fear is a factor affecting stress. Very few students 30 (12%) feel depression is a factor affecting stress. Very few students 20(8%) think anxiety is a factor affecting stress.

Table 5
Year, Anxiety, Depression, Fear

Year of study	Anxiety	Depression	Fear	All of these	Total
Interns	0	10	15	65	90
Postgraduates	15	5	5	45	70
IV BDS	5	15	10	40	70
II BDS	0	0	15	5	20
Total	20	30	45	155	250

Statistically significant difference was observed $p < 0.05\%$.

5. Discussion

Results of the study revealed that students experience relatively very high level of stress during exams. This is like other studies conductor in Karachi which have reported such findings. This study showed students with high level of stress with adverse consequences, competency and health. Study reported that 96% students alters performance in the exams due to stress and only few students doesn't after the performance in the exams. This might be since they must learn a massive amount of new information in a short period of time or due to the reason that they have little or no time to review what they have learnt.

Study reported that comparatively females experience high level of stress 96% than that of males 4%. This might be due to the reason that males have different factors to overcome stress in comparison with females.

Stress is an unavoidable part of our daily existence and it is highly individualized. People have different stressors and even different responses to the same stress. The study revealed that adults 80% are most stressful than children 10% and elders 10%, high levels of stress in adults due to current educational process which may have deleterious effects on the mental health with frequency of depression, anxiety and stress. Secondly due to the constant pressure on the students.

Major lifestyle stressors reported by students 60% in our study due to the factor's college, money and relationships. Students reported that disturb sleep, studying all night before exam also causing them to feel stressful. Some stress can be healthy as it keeps you on your toes and hone your skills, but it can damage one's health physically and mentally. Study reported that 60% students are affected with the health issues due to stress probably due to disturbed sleep and inadequate changes in the diet intake.

Students adopt a multi node of methods to alleviate stress. 39% students adopt listening to music, 30% students adopt sleeping, 19% students contacted their friends and 12% students adopted meditation.

6. Conclusion

Students are the important pillars of our young population

and regular monitoring of students should be undertaken to find stressed students at earliest. Awareness must be created among the students about the negative consequences of stress. Efficient relaxation therapies as well counselling services can be provided to the stressful students to enhance their skills on academic performance.

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