

A study on Academic Stress and its impact among students in Nizwa College of Technology (NCT)–2019

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ABSTRACT

At Current scenario, academic stress is mental stress and it is common. This study sample size is 210 and collected from various academic departments. It focuses on demographic profile such as gender, age, education level and marital status. The study analyzed stress in various approach, stated to academic stresses are namely fear in writing exam, assignments, attending exam, English communication and relationship with faculty members. Academic stressors are majority in female respondents facing the said factors than male respondents. On the other hand, physiological stress such as feeling sad, not able to concentrate, excessive fear, extreme attitude and headache/backache are common issues between male and female respondents. Furthermore, emotional stress factors are depression, anxiety and moodiness irritability, feeling overwhelmed, loneliness and other mental/emotional health issues are faced equally by male and female respondents. This century young generation either male or female students are generally in front of the academic stress, psychological stress and emotional stress during their studies. As per the analysis observed that effective direction and general counseling and other academic care to earn qualitative, talented and professional young minds, it also create the more competitive advantages. This study confidentially says that these factors actively promote superior self-reliance to students

Key words

Academic stress, psychological stress, emotional stress

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic stress is mental distress among the students today due to frustration associated with academic. Excessive levels of academic stress can result in an increased occurrence of psychological and physical problems like depression, anxiety, nervousness and stress related disorders, which in turn can affect their academic results. Students are affected by the adverse causes of academic stress.

Most of the study reveals that uncontrolled stress can lead to exhaustion, depression and several other illnesses. In reality universally college students are lying to episodic stress. This happens when exams are around the corner. Stress and depression also occur when getting ready for a presentation or an interview. According to a recent research depicts mental health study by the eight in 10 college students say they have sometimes or frequently experienced stress in their daily lives over the past three months. This is an increase of 20% from a survey five years ago.¹ Hence, this study to identify academic stress and its impacts on students in Nizwa College of Technology. In addition, the study was conducted during a couple of weeks before final exams.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Number of researches was conducted on academic stress among students. The researchers similarly identified that Stress and education, **Mental and Emotional Stress balanced by college students**. Most of the reviews are based on responses to questionnaires and the research objectives. A few valid researches in this perspective are presented below:

2.1 Reviews on academic stress

Hasan Hasan, Dwi Yuwono Puji Sugiharto, Sunawan Sunawan (2019) Study titled on Group Counseling of Cognitive Behavior with Self Instruction Technique On Self Efficacy and Academic Burnout aims to prove that group counseling with self-instruction technique is effective to enhance self-efficacy and reduce academic stress. They conducted design of hired pre-test – post-test control group and which was selected by using purposive sampling technique. The result of test proved that group counseling with self-instruction effectively enhanced self-efficacy and reduced academic stress. In addition, there

¹ www.researchgate.net

was enhancement of self-efficacy and significant decrease in academic weariness among in the experimental group. This study obtained the findings that group counseling with self-instruction technique effectively enhances self-efficacy and reduces academic burnout.²

Misra, R., & Castillo, L. G.(2004) **study** titledacademic stress among College Student Comparison of American and International Students. The study focus on five categories of academic stressors (i.e., frustrations, conflicts, pressures, changes, and self-imposed) and four categories describing reactions to these stressors (i.e., physiological, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive) were examinedAmerican students reported higher self-imposed stressors and greater behavioral reactions to stressors than international students. Furthermore, the study respondents' status (American or international) and interaction of status and stressors emerged as the 2 strongest predictors of their behavioral, emotional, physiological, and cognitive reaction to stressors. Five stressors attained statistical significance in the regression model. The findings emphasize the need to recognize cultural differences in stress management. Implications for mental health providers in the university arena are discussed.³

Alan Reifman (2011) during the Doctoral degree **study titled on**Stress in College Students with all that happens, how could students NOT be stressed? As per One's emotions, e.g., by putting things in perspective, when one cannot or chooses not to address the underlying source of the problem also he suggests with the help of family, friends, and perhaps campus stress-management resources, many students are able to keep their stress levels relatively under control or even thrive in the college setting. However, for some students, the challenges and frustrations of campus life appear to lead to severe emotional problems.⁴

²<https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jubk/article/view/27663>

³ International Journal of Stress Management, 11(2), 132-148. (Misra, R., & Castillo, L. G)
<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2004-13300-003>

⁴ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-campus/201110/stress-in-college-students>

2.2 Reviews on Stress and Education

Michael R.SladekLeahD.DoaneLindaJ.LueckenNancyEisenberg (2016) **their study titled on Perceived stress, coping, and cortisol reactivity in daily life**, A study of adolescents during the first year of college found that the adolescents change how they cope with stress across different situations, but also differ from one another in their general capacity to cope. The current study examined reactivity to perceived daily stress varies with both situational (within-person) and individual (between-person) differences in coping. Their results depicts regarding individual differences, perceiving greater stress than usual was significantly associated with elevations in only for adolescents.⁵

Vivek B. Waghachavare,* Girish B. Dhumale, Yugantara R. Kadam, and Alka D. Gore(2013) A Study of Stress among Students of Professional Colleges from an Urban area in India says that, when the students undertaking professional courses, such as medical and dental studies, are subjected to higher stress. Excessive stress could lead to psychological problems like depression and anxiety. They assessed among students of various professional colleges and its association with various academic, social and health-related factors. Also they found that the students from all the three fields studied were exposed to stress. Academic factors were one of the most important stressors. The introduction of stress management education into the curriculum could prove useful in combatting this problem.⁶

Marwan Zaid Bataineh (2013) the study explored, academic stressors experienced by the students at university. A total sample of 232 subjects participated in this study were obtained from faculty of education at King Saud University. The result showed that academic overloads, difficulties in course, inadequate time to study, workload every semester, exams schedule and low self-motivation expectations were drive moderately stress among students. It was also found that fear of failure is the major source of stress among undergraduate students. Lastly, the study found that there were

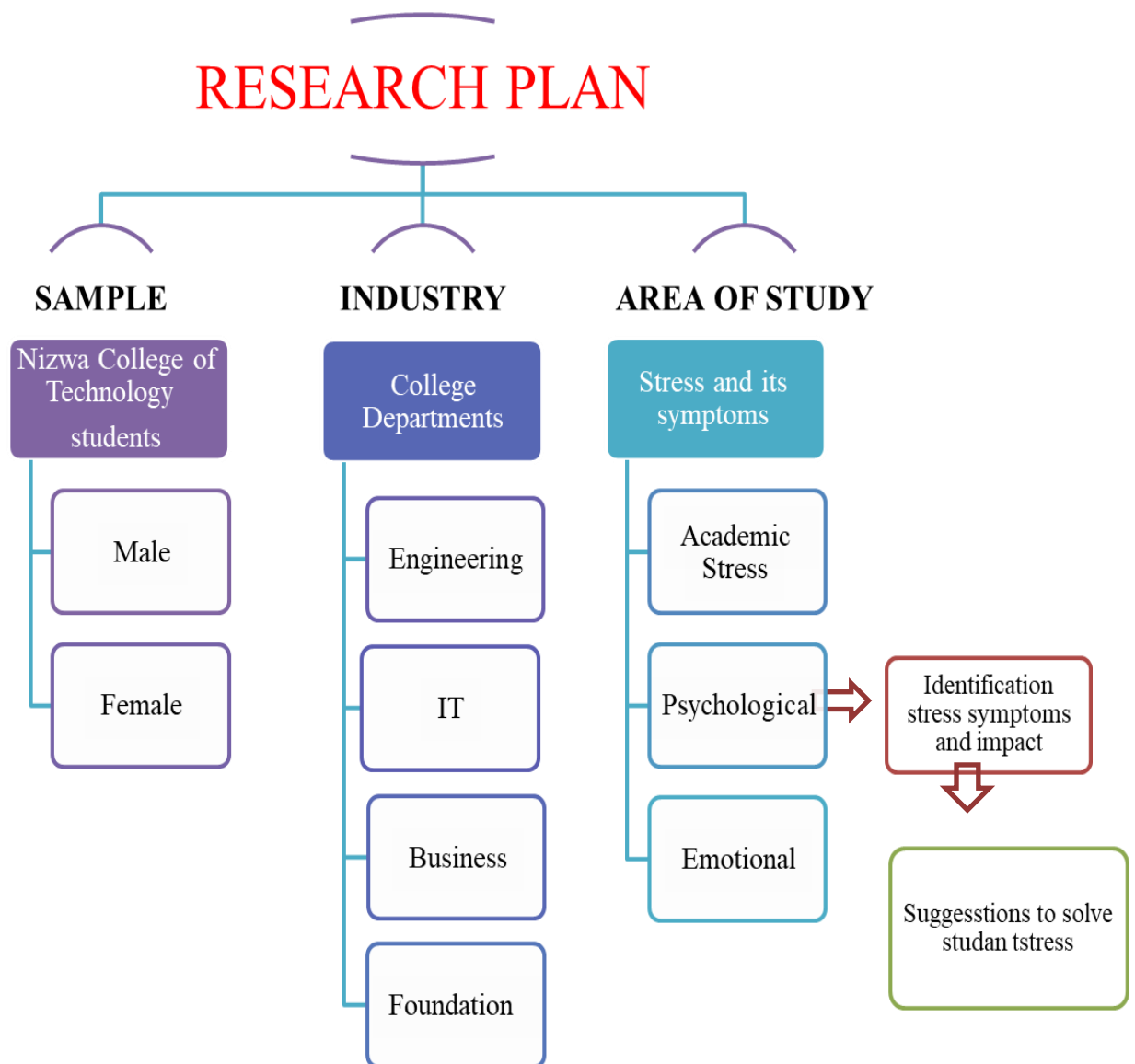
⁵<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301051116300321>

⁶<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3749028>

no significant differences in academic stress among students with different, level of study and specialization⁷

The above research studies provide a general view of academic stress among students.

3. Conceptual framework



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4. Statement of the Problem

Academic stress is one of the recent issues reported by many professionals. A Stress affects performance, managing of the time, relationship with health of the person. So the research is to study the impact of academic stress among NCT students.

5. Objective of the study

1. To find out the various components of academic stress experienced by students.
2. To examine the relationship between stress and academic performance of students.
3. To study the impact and causes of stress among students.

5.1 Methods

This study utilized the quantitative method of research and it involves adequate and accurate interpretation of findings. Hence it aims to describe thorough condition of academic stress because the study was conducted couple of week before student's final exam. Simple analysis method was used to evaluate respondents' population.

5.2 Participants

This research is confined to the area of Nizwa College of Technology - Ministry of Technology, Sultanate of Oman. The present study attempts to find out stress among college students of 210 samples selected randomly from the existing departments such as English Language Centre, Engineering, Information Technology and Business Studies.

5.3 Data collection

1. Primary data – Collected through questionnaire
2. Secondary data - Collected from various journals, periodicals, websites and reports.

5.4 Questionnaire design

The questionnaire includes the Demographic profile of the respondents and the questions that assess the defined objectives: namely

1: The profile of the respondents:

The questionnaire contains questions such as gender, age, educational qualification and marital status of the respondents.

2: Questions assessing the objectives of the study: Most often, Always stressful/Never- stressful

Questions:

This part contains twenty questions based the defined objectives. **Likert’s Five-point scaling technique** was adopted in the construction of the questions ranging from least favorable to the most favorable responses such as Always Stressful, Often Stressful, Occasionally Stressful, Rarely Stressful, Never Stressful.

Statistical Analysis used

➤ **Simple percentage analysis:** It is used to summarize the description of the collected data.

Part: 1 -Demographic profile of the Respondents:

S. No	Demographic profile	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	70 33.33%
		Female	140 66.66%
2	Age	Less than 19	19 9%
		19-23	173 82%
		More than 23	18 8.6%
3	Education Level	Foundation	21 10%
		Diploma First year	29 13.8%
		Diploma 2 nd Year	42 20%
		Advanced Diploma	52 24.7%
		B.Tech	66 31%
4.	Marital Status	Married	37 17.6%
		Single	173 82.4%

To understanding the students stress as per gender out of 210 respondents, 70(33.33%) respondents are male and 140(66.66%) respondents are female. However, exploring the age aspect of respondents, 19(9%) respondent is less than 19 years, between age group of 19-23 are 173(82%) and respondents' age group more than 23 years are 18(8.6%).

The respondent's education level begins from Foundation level i.e. after completion of higher secondary they must study foundation in English language, after this turn, they are eligible to pursue post foundation as per the students' choice and required marks. Post foundations departments are namely Engineering, IT and Business studies. In this study foundations level respondents are 21(10%), Post foundations respondents from various departments studying in Diploma First Year 29(13.8%), after completing Diploma 1st year students are eligible to choose their specialization. It is called as Diploma 2nd year. These respondents are 42(20%), respondents from Advanced Diploma are 52(24%) and respondents studying Bachelor degree named as B.Tech are 66(31%). While looking into the marital status out of 210 respondents, 37(17.6%) respondents are married and 173(82.4%) respondents are unmarried.

Therefore, the above table concludes female respondents (students) are more than male respondents. As on age factor shows that between age group of 19-23 are more than other various age group. In education level respondents from Bachelor level are higher than Advanced Diploma and other mentioned educational level. Finally, unmarried students are more than married respondents.

Part: 2 Analysis on academic stress among students in NCT

S. No	Matrix on Academic stress	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	
1.	Fear of writing Assignments & presenting Seminars	Most Often	20	29%	30	21%
		Often	17	24%	52	37%
		Occasionally	15	21%	28	20%
		Rarely	11	16%	18	13%
		Never	7	10%	12	9%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
		Most Often	8	11%	16	11%

	Fear of Assignment/Seminar deadline	Often	27	39%	57	41%
		Occasionally	18	26%	39	28%
		Rarely	11	16%	18	13%
		Never	6	9%	10	7%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
3.	Fear of attending Exams	Most Often	16	23%	27	19%
		Often	15	21%	26	19%
		Occasionally	25	36%	50	36%
		Rarely	7	10%	19	14%
		Never	7	10%	18	13%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
4.	Participating in classroom activities	Most Often	10	14%	31	22%
		Often	13	19%	34	24%
		Occasionally	16	23%	31	22%
		Rarely	18	26%	28	20%
		Never	13	19%	16	11%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
5.	Fear to communicate in English	Most Often	9	13%	19	14%
		Often	16	23%	37	26%
		Occasionally	24	34%	26	19%
		Rarely	9	13%	29	21%
		Never	12	17%	29	21%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
6.	Lack of meeting program expectation	Most Often	7	10%	13	9%
		Often	13	19%	29	21%
		Occasionally	30	43%	60	43%
		Rarely	12	17%	21	15%
		Never	8	11%	17	12%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
7.	Relationship with Faculty members	Most Often	10	14%	28	20%

	Often	19	27%	28	20%
	Occasionally	19	27%	47	34%
	Rarely	14	20%	19	14%
	Never	8	11%	18	13%
	TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%

Generally, Students regularly come across academic stress in all level now a days environment and high competitive factors forcing them more stressful. This study carries 210 respondents and their findings are;

- Majority of respondents from female (58%) and male (53%) are most often they are having Fear of writing Assignments & presenting Seminars.
- Majority of respondents from female (52%) and male (50%) are most often they have Fear of Assignment/Seminar deadline.
- Majority of respondents from female and male (36%) are occasionally facing Fear of attending Exams. In addition, (44%) male respondents, (38%) female respondents most often/often facing fear to attending exams.
- Majority of female (46%), male (33%) respondents are often participating in class room activities.
- Majority of male (34%) occasionally fear to communicate in English, female (40%), male (36%) respondents are also often having fear to communicate in English.
- Majority of female and male (43%) respondents are lack of meeting program expectation.
- Majority of female (34%), male (27%) respondents are occasionally associating their Relationship with Faculty members.

Part: 3 Analysis on Psychological stress among students in NCT

S. No	Matrix on Psychological stress		Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage
1.	Feeling sad or down	Always stressful	14	20%	25	18%
		Often stressful	11	16%	36	26%
		Occasionally stressful	13	19%	20	14%
		Rarely stressful	24	34%	36	26%
		Never stressful	8	11%	23	16%
		TOTAL		70	100%	140
2.	Confused thinking or reduced ability to concentrate	Always stressful	6	9%	9	6%
		Often stressful	21	30%	37	26%
		Occasionally stressful	12	17%	28	20%
		Rarely stressful	27	39%	58	41%
		Never stressful	4	6%	8	6%
		TOTAL		70	100%	140
3.	Excessive fears or worries, or extreme feelings of guilt	Always stressful	4	6%	12	9%
		Often stressful	16	23%	34	24%
		Occasionally stressful	18	26%	35	25%
		Rarely stressful	27	39%	46	33%
		Never stressful	5	7%	13	9%
		TOTAL		70	100%	140
4.	Extreme attitude changes of highs and lows	Always stressful	7	10%	21	15%
		Often stressful	13	19%	33	24%
		Occasionally stressful	11	16%	26	19%
		Rarely stressful	31	44%	43	31%
		Never stressful	8	11%	17	12%
		TOTAL		70	100%	140
5.	Withdrawal from friends and activities	Always stressful	6	9%	13	9%
		Often stressful	20	29%	37	26%
		Occasionally stressful	21	30%	43	31%
		Rarely stressful	11	16%	26	19%
		Never stressful	12	17%	21	15%
		TOTAL		70	100%	140

6.	Significant tiredness, low energy or problems sleeping	Always stressful	10	14%	14	10%
		Often stressful	10	14%	36	26%
		Occasionally stressful	24	34%	45	32%
		Rarely stressful	17	24%	27	19%
		Never stressful	9	13%	18	13%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
7.	Headache / backache	Always stressful	10	14%	17	12%
		Often stressful	16	23%	36	26%
		Occasionally stressful	19	27%	49	35%
		Rarely stressful	20	29%	28	20%
		Never stressful	5	7%	10	7%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
8.	Not going to class	Always stressful	11	16%	10	7%
		Often stressful	10	14%	27	19%
		Occasionally stressful	16	23%	35	25%
		Rarely stressful	17	24%	33	24%
		Never stressful	16	23%	35	25%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%

There are various studies proved that, psychological stress arises due to uncertainty future events. In student's life psychological stress impacts are their high/low attitude, attention seeking, withdrawal from friends and not attending their regular classes. In these circumstances, this research identified that, the male (34%), female (26%) respondents are rarely stressful, and on the other hand (26%) female respondents said they are often feeling sad/down.

The respondents are confused thinking or reduced ability to concentrate declares that, female (41%), male (39%) are rarely stressful. Due to excessive fears or worries, or extreme feelings of guilt raised up for male (44%), female (31%). There are respondents in male category (44%), female (31%) also rarely stressful for their attitude changes either high or lows due to psychological stress. Mostly male (30%), female (31%) respondents fall under occasionally stress and stay away from their friends and activities.

There is also significant tiredness, low energy or problems sleeping arise for male (34%), female (32%) respondents. The respondents facing headache/backache are female (35%), male (27%) occasionally stressful and there are male (29%) rarely stressful in either headache or backache compare to female respondents. Psychological stress makes that, male and female (24%) respondents are rarely stressful and female (25%), male (23%) respondents are not attending the classes.

Part:4 Analysis on Emotional Symptoms among students in NCT

S. No	Matrix on Emotional stress	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	
1.	Depression or general unhappiness	Always stressful	13	19%	31	22%
		Often stressful	21	30%	39	28%
		Occasionally stressful	20	29%	37	26%
		Rarely stressful	8	11%	21	15%
		Never stressful	8	11%	12	9%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
2.	Anxiety and agitation	Always stressful	1	1%	17	12%
		Often stressful	19	27%	40	29%
		Occasionally stressful	32	46%	53	38%
		Rarely stressful	15	21%	18	13%
		Never stressful	3	4%	12	9%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
3.	Moodiness, irritability, or anger	Always stressful	9	13%	15	11%
		Often stressful	9	13%	41	29%
		Occasionally stressful	27	39%	40	29%
		Rarely stressful	21	30%	34	24%
		Never stressful	4	6%	10	7%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
4.	Feeling overwhelmed	Always stressful	3	4%	12	9%
		Often stressful	19	27%	37	26%
		Occasionally stressful	24	34%	52	37%
		Rarely stressful	16	23%	27	19%
		Never stressful	8	11%	12	9%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%

5.	Loneliness and isolation	Always stressful	8	11%	17	12%
		Often stressful	15	21%	27	19%
		Occasionally stressful	16	23%	51	36%
		Rarely stressful	18	26%	21	15%
		Never stressful	13	19%	24	17%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%
6.	Other mental or emotional health problems	Always stressful	7	10%	7	5%
		Often stressful	20	29%	42	30%
		Occasionally stressful	18	26%	44	31%
		Rarely stressful	15	21%	22	16%
		Never stressful	10	14%	25	18%
		TOTAL	70	100%	140	100%

Emotional stress can adversely affect health problems and it can manifest in different ways, including anxiety, depression, and aggression. Research shows women and men handle stress differently. In this study reveals the following;

- ❖ Majority of the respondents, male (30%), female (28%) are often stressful on depression or general unhappiness is their emotional feelings. But there are (29%) male, (26%) female respondents are also rarely stressed for the same reasons.
- ❖ Majority of male (46%), female (38%) rarely stressful for anxiety and agitation.
- ❖ Majority of male (39%) often stressful, female (29%) are both often stressful and occasionally stressful for moodiness, irritability, or anger.
- ❖ Majority of female (37%), male (34%) respondents are occasionally stressful due to feeling overwhelmed.
- ❖ Majority of female (36%) respondents are occasionally stressful, male (26%) respondents are rarely stressful due to loneliness and isolation.
- ❖ Majority of female (30%), male (29%) respondents often stressful for other mental or emotional health problems and there are female (31%), male (26%) are occasionally stressful for the same reasons.

6. CONCLUSION

At the end this research study carried academic stress and its various components such as psychological and emotional stress among students in NCT. This study identified the relationship between stress and its academic performance says that majority of respondents are having fear of attending exams, their participation in classroom activities also affects their academic acts. The study reveals that impact and causes of stress are confused thinking, extreme attitude changes, excessive fears are physiological based. The emotion impacts are anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, loneliness and isolation. This century young generation either male or female students are generally in front of the academic stress, psychological stress and emotional stress during their studies. As per the analysis shows that effective direction and general counseling and other academic care to earn qualitative, talented and professional young minds, it also creates the more competitive advantages. This study confidentially says that these factors actively promote superior self-reliance to students.

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