



Research Paper

# A Study of Stress Management and Causes of Stress Among Youth

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## ABSTRACT

Stress represents a state of mental strain experienced by individuals due to challenges in their environment and social interactions, often leading to various health issues. Adolescence is a critical phase marked by significant life changes, during which young people are expected to excel in society. Therefore, they should develop effective stress management skills to ensure a healthy transition into adulthood. As young individuals navigate through this period, they encounter numerous adjustments in their lives, including new relationships, experiences, and responsibilities, contributing to their stress levels. Recognizing the sources of stress and learning coping mechanisms are crucial for their well-being. Studies reveal that stress among youth commonly stems from academic pressures, social relationships, life transitions, and career decisions, resulting in psychological, physical, and behavioral challenges. Addressing these stressors requires a focus on positive developmental approaches, fostering supportive environments, promoting outdoor activities, and minimizing negative influences on learning. These findings offer valuable insights for students, educators, counselors, and career advisors.

**Keywords:** Stress, Indicators, Triggers, Adolescence

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## I. INTRODUCTION

According to Selye (1956), stress is characterized as "any external occurrence or internal urge that threatens to disrupt the equilibrium of the organism." It manifests as a state or sensation when an individual perceives that the demands placed upon them exceed the resources, both personal and social, that they can access. In today's highly competitive era, there is an increasing prevalence of stress among the younger generation. Reports indicate instances of depression, suicidal tendencies, and various psychological symptoms among youth. Awareness of stressors affecting college students has grown, prompting efforts to foster a positive mindset among them. Both individuals and organizations have initiated various programs to mitigate stress. Adolescence is a critical period marked by self-discovery and identity formation. Stress for young individuals often stems from academic pressures, interpersonal relationships, financial concerns, and career exploration, leading to psychological, physical, and behavioral issues. Understanding the stressors and emotional adjustments of today's youth can facilitate better adaptation and academic performance.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies (Schafer, 1996; Fisher, 1994; Altmaier, 1983; Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980) have highlighted a strong correlation between stress and college students. Lazarus & Folkman (1984) posit stress as a mental or physical response resulting from one's cognitive evaluation of stimuli and interactions with the environment. Stressors, defined by Feng (1992) and Volpe (2000), encompass anything that challenges adaptability or stimulates the body and mind, arising from environmental, psychological, biological, or social factors. Academic stress among students has been extensively studied, with stressors including heavy workload, competition, failure, financial constraints, and interpersonal conflicts. Institutional stressors such as overcrowded lecture halls, semester systems, and inadequate resources further exacerbate stress levels. When confronted with such challenges, individuals may become disorganized and less capable of coping, leading to stress-related health issues.

Academic pressure to excel in exams within constrained time frames further adds to the stress within the academic environment.

Very stressful situations (Erkutlu and Chafra, 2006; Polychronopoulou and Divaris, 2005; Misra and McKean, 2000) are likely to impact social relationships both within and outside the university (Fairbrother and Warn, 2004) due to conflicts arising from the social aspect of one's life.

Researchers (Malach Pines and Keinan, 2007; Ongori, 2007; Ongori and Agolla, 2008; Agolla, 2009) have extensively identified stress symptoms such as lack of energy, reliance on over-the-counter medication, high blood pressure, depression, increased appetite, difficulty concentrating, restlessness, tension, and anxiety, among others. Individuals experiencing any of these symptoms are likely to be experiencing stress, although the extent of its negative effects may vary depending on how the situation is appraised and the individual's resilience.

Perception plays a crucial role in determining whether a stressor has detrimental effects, leading to physical or psychological symptoms (Jaramillo et al., 2005; Stevenson and Harper, 2006).

Limited attention to student stress may be attributed to the lack of direct correlation between students' presence in institutions and the quality of education they receive. Without appropriate measures prioritizing students' well-being, their health may compromise the quality of education they should receive (Daniels and Harris, 2000; Smith et al., 2000; Finlayson, 2003). Extensive research by Gibbons and Gibbons (2007) and McCarty et al. (2007) highlights the association between stress, individual appraisal of situations, and coping strategies.

### **III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Stress management is a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of and for the motive of improving everyday functioning. Stress produces numerous physical and mental symptoms which vary according to each individual's situational factors. These can include a decline in physical health, such as headaches, chest pain, fatigue, and sleep problems, as well as depression. The process of stress management is named as one of the keys to a happy and successful life in modern society. Life often delivers numerous demands that can be difficult to handle, but stress management provides a number of ways to manage anxiety and maintain overall well-being.

#### Types of stress

According to pestonjee stress can be categorized into four major types such as, eu stress, distress, hypostress and hyperstress. Generally distress and hyper stress are effecting the Chennai traffic police.

#### 1. Eustress

Eustress is a type of short term stress that provides immediate strength. This stress arises at points of increased physical activity, enthusiasm, and creativity. Eustress is a positive stress that arises when motivation and inspiration are needed. It raises the level of employee performance.

#### 2. Distress

Distress is a negative stress. It is brought out by constant readjustment or routine alternations. Distress creates feelings of discomfort and unfamiliarity. This stress effects job performance adversely and creates many types of physical , physiological and behavioral problems.

There are two types of distress such as :-

#### a. Acute stress

Acute stress Is an intense stress that arrives and disappears quickly.

#### b. Chronic stress

Chronic stress is a prolonged stress that exists for weeks or even years . This type of stress is experienced by some one who is constantly relocating or contemplating job changes.

#### 3. Hyper stress

Hyper stress occurs when an individual is pushed beyond what he or she can handle. The overload or overwork leads to hyper stress. If someone is hyper stressed, even little things can trigger a strong emotional response. It is important for persons who think they might be experiencing hyper stress to take measures to reduce stress in their lives, because hyper stress can lead to serious emotional and physical repercussions.

4. Hypo stress

Hypo stress is the opposite of hyper stress. Occurs when an individual is bored by an unchallenged job, such as a worker performing the same task over and over. The effect of hypo stress is a feeling of restlessness and lack of inspiration.

**Causes of Stress Among Students**

Stressors encompass various situations, from physical danger to academic challenges. Some major stressors among students include:

**Academics:** Concerns about academic performance, exam anxiety, and heavy workloads contribute to stress. Poor study habits and last-minute cramming exacerbate stress levels.

**Finances:** Financial stress arises from the desire to maintain a certain lifestyle and fulfill material demands such as gadgets, vehicles, etc. Inadequate income sources lead to stress.

**Relationships:** Difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships, whether friendships or romantic, contribute to stress.

**Career:** Job-related stress stems from competition, job insecurity, and fear of unemployment among students entering the job market.

**Time Management:** Balancing academic, social, and work responsibilities poses challenges for students, leading to stress, especially when time is limited.

**IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The tool employed for generating responses was questionnaire based survey of young candidates who are students or some are working under different organization. The Information was collected from both primary and secondary data.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To study the symptoms of stress among Youth.
- To know the causes of stress and types of stress.
- To measure the level of stress among the Youth.
- To know the activities to reduce stress by the Youth.

**V. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The sample is collected from the young male and female from the Ernakulam region of India on a random basis. The questionnaire was distributed among 100 young people and got 50 responses.

Tools for data collection

In order to achieve the objective both primary and secondary sources of information are relied upon. The primary data was collected through structured questionnaires apart from discussions with students.

Data Collection:

Data Sources:

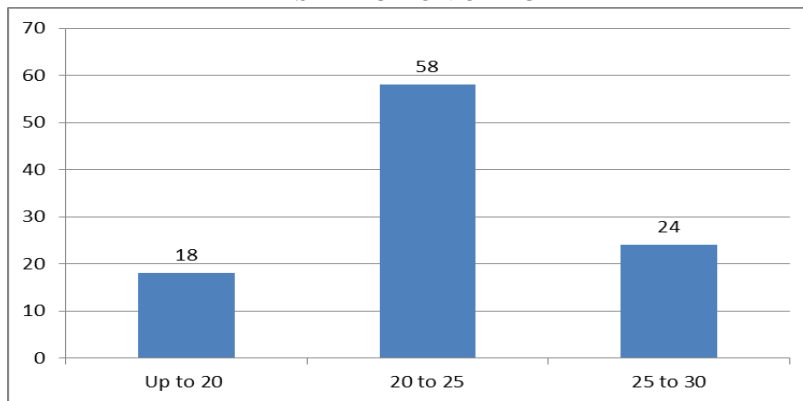
- (i) Secondary Data through Internet, Magazine, Journals, Books etc
- (ii) Primary Data through Questionnaire
- (iii) Contact Method
- (iv) Personal Interaction

**VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**TABLE 1 DISTRIBUTION OF AGE**

Age	Number	Percentage
Up to 20	9	18
20 to 25	29	58
25 to 30	12	24
Total	50	100

**CHART 1  
DISTRIBUTION OF AGE**

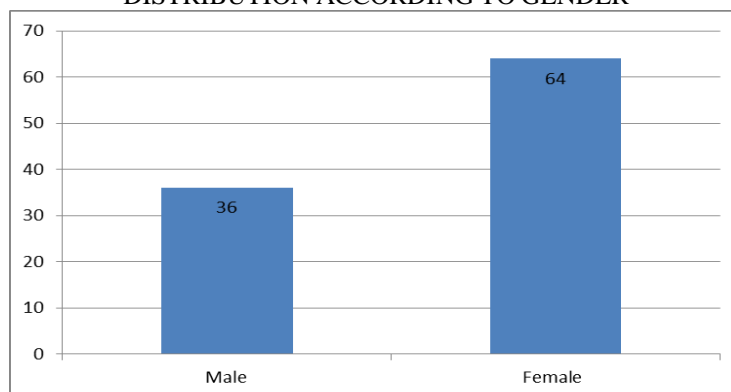


INTERPRETATION

**TABLE 2  
DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO GENDER**

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	18	36
Female	32	64
Total	50	100

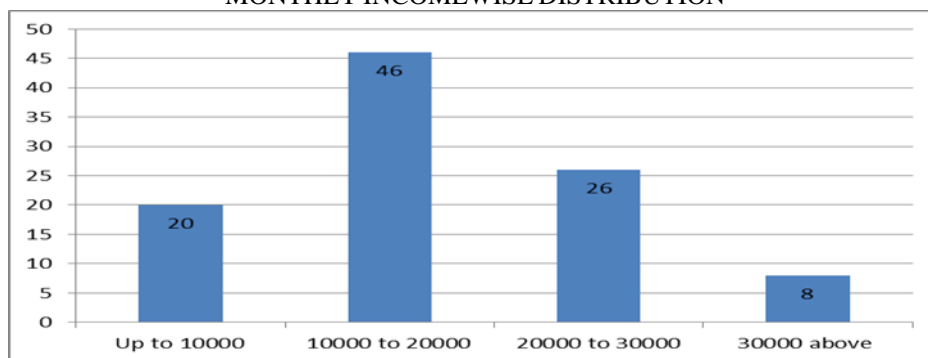
**CHART 2  
DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO GENDER**



**TABLE 3**  
MONTHLY INCOMEWISE DISTRIBUTION

Income	Number	Percentage
Up to 10000	10	20
10000 to 20000	23	46
20000 to 30000	13	26
30000 above	4	8
Total	50	100

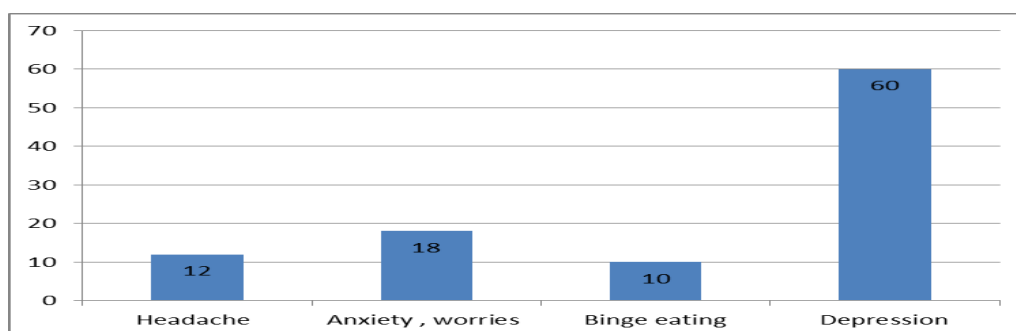
**CHART 3**  
MONTHLY INCOMEWISE DISTRIBUTION



**Table 4**  
SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

Symptoms	Number	Percentage
Headache	6	12
Anxiety , worries	9	18
Binge eating	5	10
Depression	30	60
TOTAL	50	100

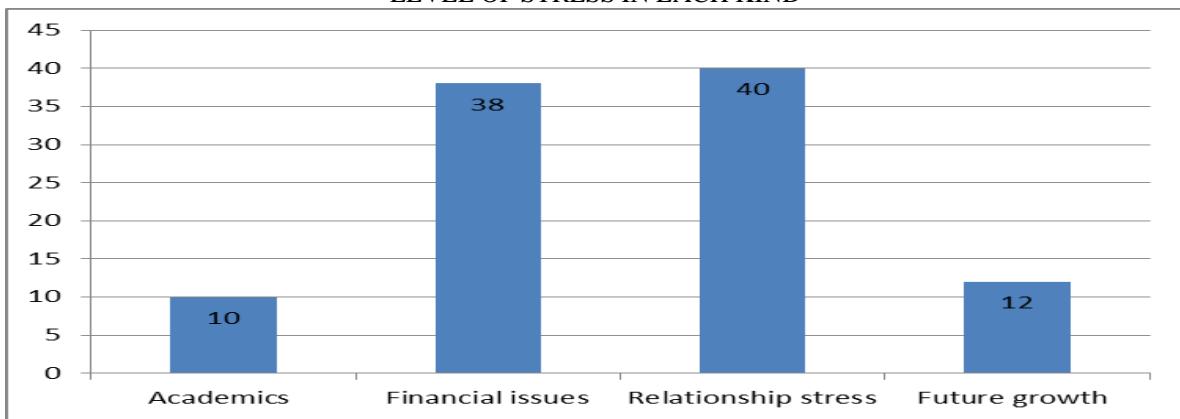
**CHART 4**  
SYMPTOMS OF STRESS



**TABLE 5**  
LEVELS OF STRESS IN EACH KIND

Kinds of stress	Number	Percentage
Academics	5	10
Financial issues	19	38
Relationship stress	20	40
Future growth	6	12
TOTAL	50	100

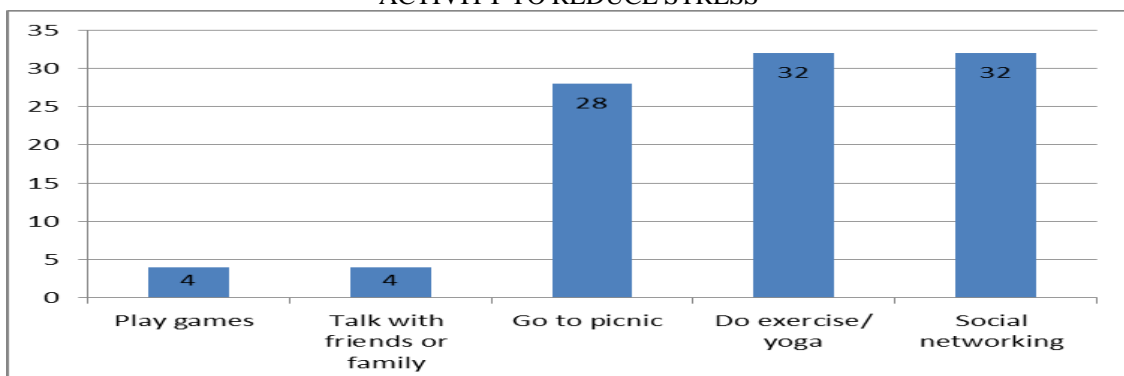
**CHART 5**  
LEVEL OF STRESS IN EACH KIND



**TABLE 6**  
ACTIVITY TO REDUCE STRESS

Action	Number	Percentage
Play games	2	4
Talk with friends or family	2	4
Go to picnic	14	28
Do exercise/ yoga	16	32
Social networking	16	32
Total	50	100

**CHART 6**  
ACTIVITY TO REDUCE STRESS



## **VII. FINDINGS**

- The distribution of Age is maximum between 20 to 25
- Distribution according to gender is female
- The income wise distribution is maximized at 20000-30000
- The symptoms of stress basically create depression
- The level of stress is maximize to relationship and financial aspects
- The yoga and exercise are the activity to reduce stress

## **VIII. SUGGESTION**

► Workshops to beat stress along with lectures motivating a positive lifestyle have become part of the academic curriculum, so that youngsters are being inspired to live a healthy life.

Workshops play an important role as they help an individual realize their inner strength.

- Set personal and professional objectives.
- Get involved with various activities.
- Maintain communication with family.
- Form healthy relationships.
- Share views and problems with someone.
- Get to know belongings.
- Positive thinking

## **IX. CONCLUSION**

From the findings, the results clearly show that youth are stressed toward high level. The symptoms identified are depression and headaches are more among students. It is identified that among all factors, the main causes of stress among youth is relationship stress, financial and psychological stress. They want to maintain the social network and they are increasing the networking with the use of technology. The next stress they are feeling is career related. They have fear of job opportunities and how they survive in the competitive environment. Young respondents were able to identify some strategies to cope with stress such as meditation, enough sleeping, going out with friends and counseling.

It is observed that due to the increase use of social media the young generation become self centered and only connect with the technology. It reduces the physical movement of the body and spending time with relatives and friends. All these create stress which increases the case of depression and suicide.

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