

A Study of migration status and type of courses on academic stress

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Abstract

Academic stress is considered to be the vital source of stress among the students. Academic stress is the result of a combination of academic related demands that surpass the adaptive assets accessible to a person. The present study is an attempt to assess the academic Stress among migrated students pursuing technical and conventional Courses. Migration is an important concept that is always associated with the stress and is defined as the movement of people from one place to another especially in search of suitable environment. Of the total sample of 300 students 3x2 factorial design structure involving six potential categories was used to select equal number of students who differed in terms of their three levels of migration status and pursuing two types of courses technical and conventional. The major ANOVA results revealed that students who have migrated from Kashmir to Bhopal reported higher levels of Academic stress as compared to their Counterparts. Furthermore, the results indicate that students who opted for conventional course reported significantly higher levels of academic stress than students who were enrolled in technical courses. Of the seven components of academic stress no significant difference was found on five components of academic stress across students who were pursuing different type of courses. Implications of the study were discussed.

Keywords: stress, Academic stress, migration, education, technical, conventional

1. Introduction

Stress is a stimulus process that brings thoughts such as increased rate of depression, anxiety, cardiovascular disease, and other potentially life-threatening issues to one's mind. Stress is observed in both biological as well as psychological environment which is viewed as a feeling of tension or fear of failure and is also defined as any change in the equilibrium of the body (Keil 2014) ^[15]. Academic stress is considered to be the vital source of stress among many students (Hashim, 2003) ^[12]. Academic stress is the result of a combination of academic related demands that surpass the adaptive assets accessible to a person. Serious psychosocial-emotional health consequences may result if a student is unable to cope effectively with academic stress (Wilks, 2008) ^[26]. Today's world is very competitive and the expectations are very high, thereby, the education expectations related to academic stress also arises due to parents, teachers, peers and family members etc. The mental distress or frustration caused due to academic failure or even fear of failure is the main cause of academic stress (Gupta and Khan, 1987) ^[10]. The reason behind the academic stress has also been identified by some researchers as competition with other students, too many academic assignments, failures and poor relationship with other students and teachers. The academic stress among the students is caused by both the expectations arising from their parents and teachers as well as their own expectations (Ang and Huan, 2006) ^[4]. Migration is an important concept and is defined as the movement of people from one place to another especially in search of suitable environment. Migration is a universal concept for the betterment of life and affected by push as well as pull factors. The factor of push that influences the migration includes lack of employment opportunities and fears of disorder or of persecution on

grounds of race, religion or politics in the areas people live. While as, the factors of Pull comprises favorable employment opportunities, good health and educational facilities, public order and freedom, and a favorable climate, particularly for the retirement in the areas people move to. The lack of quality and higher education facilities in rural and backward areas has been the major cause of migration from rural to urban areas. Furthermore, large number of rural people settles down in the cities for earning a livelihood after completing their education.

Academic stress is the product of a combination of academic related demands that exceed the adaptive resources available to an individual (Wilks, 2008) ^[26]. Academic stress has been defined as a student's perceived feelings of stress related to academic events (Akram & Khan, 2012) ^[3]. Academic stress is caused by academic events as perceived by students and is associated with health effects both physically (somatic symptoms) and mentally (depression) (MacGeorge, Samter, & Gillihan, 2005) ^[18]. The university level stressors are overcrowded lecture halls (Ongori, 2007; Awino & Agolla, 2008), ^[20, 5] semester system, and inadequate resources to perform academic work (Erkutlu & Chafra 2006) ^[8]. Academic stress is conceptualized as a disturbance encourage by student's appraisal of academic stressors which is common in children and often leads to psychological and somatic distress (Lee & Larson, 2000) ^[16]. Tung & Chahal (2005) ^[25] examined the relationship between stress and adjustment and found no significant causal relationship between stress and the adjustment. Busari (2014) ^[6] indicated that stress immunization technique is an effective method of encouragement and adjustment to academic stress among university students. Agarwal (2011) ^[2] discovered that there is no significant difference between academic stress of male

and female adolescents. Razia (2016) [21] reported from her study that private school students experienced higher academic stress than their counterparts in government schools. Academic stress can cause negative impact on undergraduate students, such as mental health illnesses (Kaur, 2012) [14]. Over time, it may affect their daily life and well-being (Chan, 2009) [7]. Such test and examination overloads, as well as too many assignments, are causing academic stress (Shkulaku, 2015) [24].

2. Methods

2.1 Objective

One of the major objectives of this research is to examine the effects of migration of J&K students who are pursuing technical and conventional courses outside their state on academic stress.

2.2 Sample & Design

The sample consists of 300 students who were pursuing their higher education in different technical and conventional colleges in Bhopal and Kashmir. The purposive random sampling technique involving 3x2 factorial design was used to select equal number of students who differed in terms of their migration status (migration of Kashmiri students to Bhopal, migration of Non-Kashmiri students to Bhopal and No-migration of Kashmiri students pursuing two types of courses professional and non-professional. The age range of the sample was 18-25 years.

2.3 Instrument

Demographical Assessment: The survey instrument consisted of some preliminary questions regarding age, gender, marital status, type of family, duration of the course, parents income, year of migration, major sources of financial support.

A questionnaire was developed by Jain and Dikshit (2016) was used for assessment of academic stress among the students. The scale comprised twenty eight items and the respondents were asked to read each of the 28 items one by one and record their response for each item on a 5 point likert type scale where a response of '1' would mean low while the response of '5' would mean that the academic stress is perceived as highest. The test re-test reliability co-efficient was 0.86 and reliability index was 0.93. The reliability co-efficient for split half was 0.79 and reliability index was 0.89. This scale is comprised of seven (7) components of academic stress labelled as Worry about grades, Incomplete study Material, Pressure to perform well, Study work overload, Unfair treatment by Peers, Competition with Peers and Pressure of Final Exams. A brief description of these components is given below:

- a. **Worry about grades:-** This component consists of six items and these items are used to measure the stress among the students who are worried about making the right academic decisions for better future career. The range of score on this scale varies from 0 to 30.
- b. **Incomplete study Material:-** This component of academic stress consists of twelve items and these items are used to measure the stress among the students who

are availed with incomplete study materials. The score on this scale ranges from 0 to 60.

- c. **Pressure to perform well:** This component consists of two items and these items are used to measure excessive stresses from the competitive peer pressures, parent's expectations, and teacher's critical comments on student's performance. The range of score on this scale varies from 0 to 10.
- d. **Study work overload:** This component consists of three items and these items are used to measure stresses related to excessive workload, lengthy assignments, and fear of failing examinations. The range of score on this scale varies from 0 to 15.
- e. **Unfair treatment by Peers:** This component consists of two items and both items are used to measure stresses when the students are targeted in classes by other peers, incapable to finish their homework, lagging in catching power, having limited time to relax. The range of score on this scale varies from 0 to 10.
- f. **Competition with Peers:** This component consists of one item and is used to measure stresses related a academic competition with colleagues or peers. The range of score on this scale varies from 0 to 10.
- g. **Pressure of Final Exams:** This component consists of two items and both items are used to measure stresses related to final exams. The range of score on this scale varies from 0 to 10.

3. Procedure

The data was collecting by administering the scale in a group to the student participants. The respondents were instructed to complete the scale. Informed consent was taken and all the respondents were assured that the data would be kept confidential. After getting data scoring and analysis were done.

4. Results

The means, standard deviation and F-ratio across migration status on academic stress are presented in Table 1. Inspection of ANOVA results revealed that of the seven components of academic stress significant mean differences was found among all the components namely worry about grades, incomplete study material, pressure to perform well, study work overload, unfair treatment by peers, competition with peers and pressure of final exams. In other words Kashmiri students who have migrated to Bhopal reported significantly more suffering from incomplete study material, worry about grades, more pressure to perform and more study work overload than their counter parts. Furthermore, the kashmiri students who have migrated to Bhopal reported significantly more facing unfair treatment by peers, more competition with peers and more pressure of final exams followed by Non- kashmiri students who migrated to Bhopal and kashmiri students who do not migrate from Kashmir. Finally, students who migrate from Kashmir to Bhopal reported significantly more total academic stress followed by Non-kashmiri students who also migrated to Bhopal while minimum stress was reported by students who were residing in Kashmir.

Table 1: ANOVA results depicting mean differences and F- ratio of the components of academic stress as a function of main effects on migration status.

| Factors related to Academic stress | Migration of Kashmiri students to Bhopal | | Migration of Non- Kashmiri students to Bhopal | | No-Migration of Kashmiri students | | F |
|------------------------------------|--|------|---|------|-----------------------------------|------|----------|
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | |
| Worry about grades | 44.06 | 3.80 | 24.02 | 4.28 | 17.81 | 2.73 | 360.43** |
| Incomplete study Material | 24.39 | 2.37 | 20.04 | 3.96 | 12.32 | 2.57 | 315.34** |
| Pressure to perform well | 11.62 | 1.52 | 8.57 | 3.43 | 5.09 | 1.21 | 205.11** |
| Study work overload | 11.21 | 1.95 | 10.70 | 2.27 | 6.08 | 1.88 | 203.11** |
| Unfair treatment by Peers | 7.37 | 1.28 | 5.85 | 2.53 | 4.90 | 2.07 | 40.26** |
| Competition with Peers | 4.13 | 0.80 | 3.43 | 1.14 | 2.87 | 1.47 | 28.78** |
| Pressure of Final Exams | 7.97 | 1.15 | 7.13 | 2.00 | 5.89 | 2.00 | 35.12** |
| Overall Academic stress | 107.96 | 4.64 | 77.00 | 6.28 | 53.38 | 4.38 | 3.05** |

**P < .001

The means, standard deviation and F-ratio across two types of courses (technical and conventional) on academic stress are presented in Table 2. Inspection of ANOVA results revealed that of the seven components of academic stress significant mean differences was found on only two components namely incomplete study material and work overload. The students who opted for technical course expressed significantly more worry about their academic

grades as compared to students who were pursuing conventional course. In contrast, the students who opted for conventional course reported significantly more study work overload as compared to students who were enrolled in technical course. Finally, students who were enrolled in conventional course reported higher levels of overall academic stress than students who were pursuing technical course.

Table 2: ANOVA results depicting mean differences and F- ratio of components of academic stress as a function of main effects of type of courses.

| Factors related to Academic stress | Course pursuing | | | | F |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|--------------|-------|----------|
| | Technical | | Conventional | | |
| | Mean | SD | Mean | SD | |
| Worry about grades | 28.39 | 12.329 | 28.87 | 11.28 | 1.273 |
| Incomplete study Material | 18.39 | 5.689 | 12.82 | 19.44 | 9.132** |
| Pressure to perform well | 8.45 | 3.41 | 8.41 | 3.61 | 0.023 |
| Study work overload | 8.87 | 3.13 | 9.79 | 2.97 | 16.398** |
| Unfair treatment by Peers | 6.21 | 2.25 | 5.87 | 2.27 | 2.338 |
| Competition with Peers | 3.48 | 1.25 | 3.47 | 1.31 | 0.002 |
| Pressure of Final Exams | 6.98 | 2.06 | 7 | 1.96 | 0.027 |
| Overall Academic stress | 78.27 | 23.25 | 80.62 | 80.62 | 16.813** |

**P < .01

5. Discussion

The Present research explored the effect of migration status among students who are pursuing technical and conventional courses on academic stress. The results from two way ANOVA reveals that the main effect indicate that majority of the Kashmiri students who migrated to Bhopal for pursuing technical and conventional education, experienced high academic stress. However, in case of Non-Kashmiri students who emigrated Bhopal to achieve education the academic stress was found to be moderate with them in case of technical and conventional courses respectively. Whereas, in case of students who are receiving their education in Kashmir experienced low academic stress (technical and conventional courses) as compared to above mentioned two groups. Based on the 7 (seven) subscales, the results clearly showed that unfair treatment by peers is the top most reported source of academic stress among all the three categories of students followed closely by incomplete study material. Overall, in our study we found that academic stress is significant at 0.05 level of significance. A number of cross-cultural studies on academic studies support our results as put forth by (Mori, 2000) [19] who revealed that the differences may not necessarily indicate that international student participants have lower academic stress from pressure, conflict, or self-imposed stress but could be due to stigmatization of admitting to stress. Garret (2001) [9] in his

findings suggested that college students have been shown to possess a unique set of stressors which can affect their daily experiences. Acharya, (2003) [1] elucidated that parental pressure and teacher’s expectations were associated with stress around the time of examinations or about choosing particular academic study or a future career. In a number of studies, (Harikiran *et al.*, 2012; Hashmat *et al.*, 2008; Sansgiry *et al.*, 2006; Shah *et al.*, 2010) [11,13, 22, 23] it was found that the most frequently reported factors contributing to stress and anxiety around the examination periods were extensive course loads, lack of physical exercise, and long duration of exams, reported by the students.

6. Conclusion

Education is an important and basic need for every individual and it plays a key role in both individuals and economic development of the country. As we are aware about the fact, that the access of education is not universally guaranteed and due to this reason students are compelled for migration. It was observed from the findings that a low level of academic stress and distress symptoms was found among migrated students than no-migrated students. No differences were found on academic stress across students who were opted for technical course or were opted for professional courses. So it was concluded from the study that if academic stress were severe or delayed, it affects the academic

performance of students. There is a need to address these stressors by education institution as well as by psychologists thereafter; students should be helped with different strategies to improve their ability to cope with demanding academic setup.

7. References

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