

Impact of Academic Stress on Perceived Employability of Management Professional students

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Abstract

Academic stress featured by psychological distress that arise from academics related demands and expectations has emerged as a substantial and serious concern among students who are pursuing higher education. Such stress does not only affect their mental and emotional health but it can also impact they perceive their readiness and capabilities for securing the employment post-graduation which is known as perceived employability. Academic stress refers to the anxiety and pressure related with education. It involves the stress that is felt by students to perform best in examinations and include mental distress associated with the expected academic challenges, failures and awareness of probable academic failures. Academic stress can be manifested in various aspects of student's environment that include home, neighbourhood, school, and friendship. Such stress usually arises from the imbalance between social performance and academics, time management for extra-curricular activities. Academic stress is very common among students who struggle in balancing their academic activities with family, friends and social engagement. The stress level of a student is influenced significantly by their relations with tutors, the burden to perform in examinations, and the requirement to complete their school and homework on time, and the overall environment of school and college. Management professional institutes with inventive teaching pedagogy are evolving. However, expectation of corporate from professional candidates are very high in this corporate world. With the establishment of venture for nurturing that venture, a professional is needed to have particular skills.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Perceived Employability, Management Professional, Environment, Academics

Introduction

The structure of education in India is workbook oriented that focus mainly on cramming of lessons that need studying for long hours and studying regularly every day. There is diverse meaning for every other individual under distinct situations. Over the years, stress sources among students have been studied by many scholars. The main source identified by scholars were examinations, tests, future worries, grades, and requirement to perform best. Other reasons are parent's expectations and competitive environment. All these results are harmful impact on students, society, parents as well as on the nation at large. It also identified that high number of students are unable to cope with stress because of heavy and difficult syllabus, high expectations of parents and teachers, high level of competition in the market that all lead to mental health problems like anxiety, depression and suicides. There is a requirement to revive management education system in India to meet the demands of stakeholders like students, parents, employers, society, faculty as well as government along with global community. The purpose of stress management is to control stress level of students mainly to encourage them to enhance their level of performance in examinations. Management of stress improves every day functions of life. This new concept is the main reason of happiness and also provides a wide range of anxiety management that maintains overall health of students. The academic pressure has risen its level in the past years due to difficult system of examinations, projects and assignments. Not just the design of academics but also the teachers and parents along with the burden is making lot of pressure to get high grades. The pressure of

studies in terms of academics, co-curricular activities, assignments, and many more has increased. Students are expected by their parents to participate in rat race and outshine their competition, in order to improve their social status in society. Time management effectively that ensures at least one physical exercise to be done every day becoming warning towards stress and enhancing the span if attention and thus, becomes productive with academics (Jain & Singhai, 2018). Students encountering complications interrupting them being unkind, academic stress is methodical, adaptive mental process taking place in classrooms. Academic stress impacting mental is a big issue. Once the thought to be highly carefree and casual time, the period of study is under strain from lot of responsibilities that lead to stress increasing risk of depression of students, including heart attack, suicides, and strokes. Academic stress is highly prevalent towards physical, mental and behavioural issues. The issues that are observed frequently among students facing academic stress are due to poor academic performance, helplessness, and focusing issues, health issues, abuses and reduced peer popularity, low level of self-esteem, and dependency (Jan & Mattoo, 2022). A student must have the ability to deal with the pressure from distinct directions. When the level of pressure exceeds the capacity of student, it becomes highly stressful.

Students might experience stress because of many factors such as study workload, academics, relations with friends, parents, teachers, jobs and career aspirations, and financial issues. Workload can be one of the main reasons of stress among students.

Parents in India share lot of significance towards the performance of their children in tests and examination. Parents also expect their children to work hard and fulfil their dreams; such expectations of parents can be stressful for children. Employability signifies skills and features making individual wanted as a potential employer. Owing to the affected rise in the rate of enrolment in higher education, a diploma is no longer a security of employment and higher education institutions are anticipated to prepare students with the skills and attributes of employability. Employability is not as essential as attributes of students for academic publication. Employability skills and capabilities are considered as highly essential and linked directly with the requirement of employers, the obligatory presence of employability skills in higher education has encouraged debated and controversy. Although the association between employability and employment is well recognized, it is not clear if skills of employability have the potential influence of the academic performance of students (Pan & Lee, 2011). Academic stress is emotional and physical stress that is faced by students due to pressure and demand of academic life. This stress can appear due to many reasons like peer pressure to perform well in academics, the competition for good grades and recognition, and the outlook set by seniors, family and society. In coping with such stressors, the most frequently chosen mechanism among students includes physical activities, talking to friends and parents, and listening to music. Such outcomes highlight the deep influence in academic responsibilities on mental health of students and overall academic performance. Implementation of strategies such as stress management workshop, services of counselling, and balanced academic approach is vital. More investigation needs to be done into particular reasons and impact of academic stress for development of targeted intercessions enhancing resilience of students and mental health (Sudiksha, Verma & Anchal, 2024). Many students in higher education institutes in India are experiencing moderate and low level of academic stress. Management education is essential medium facilitating improvement of leadership qualities turning out excellent future managers. Students who pursue professional education face many challenges to which they were not explored earlier. Academic institutes have distinct settings of work associated with non-academic and therefore, one would expect the difference in symptoms, reasons and situations of stress in two set-ups. Stress seems to be very common in the life of students. They have to live academically and to prepare themselves for future career. It is not surprising to know that much of the academic stress is associated to what and how students learn. They face lot of pressure for management students of present generation to learn from past generation. Essential thing about stress that needs to be remembered is that some of its types are normal as well as important. As the body give response to different types of physical or mental stress, some predictable transformation that occurs.

Effective management of stress include learnings for setting the limits for the issues creating stress. Feeling stress is a normal reaction to a situation feeling out of control or irresistible. Any issue can create stress but students also face certain worries due to pressure. Some of the common causes that become the reason of stress among students are burden of course, pressure of exam, financial worries and problems related to relations (Rajasekar, 2013). Management education must produce people with such value orientation, through example of dedication hard work in a service spirit can alter the attitude of people they are managing towards work as well as towards each other ensuring life's quality and work life.

The main reason of stress among students was job and career. The next essential element of stress was financial complications, academics and load of work. Competition with peers for good marks, lack of sufficient time for relaxing after lectures, lacking confidence of teachers, sense of not being able to gratify parents' expectations and cost of education were some other sources of stress among higher education students of India. In view of such results, it is essential to develop some avenues of employment for youth. As higher education has become more costly, colleges and universities must organize scholarships helping students who are deserving. Teachers and parents must play supportive role in order to deal with stress. Teachers must develop confidence in the minds of students. They must provide needed help and guidance. To deal with the stress of students it is essential to start management of stress and mental well-being and counselling in every higher educational institute (Goyal, Chakrawal & Banerjee, 2021). In management education, quality has become a requirement. To make India an intelligent capital of the world, we have to make a dynamic environment, encouraging superior quality of management education colleges and efforts must be made to breathe life into management education.

An essential role is played by management education in present dynamic business environment. The rapid trend of globalization and changes in technology have made difficult for organization surviving in competitive world. As an outcome, the significance of management education has been increased in many folds. Management education in India has yet to be made context particular that can be done through exercise, cases, sharing, and experience. It will need willingness on the part of Indian group of business to share materials for case preparation problem solution and imitations preparing for the respective context of business. As management is practice-oriented, management education needs to be incorporated as an element of on-the-job training. The management education is based on industry and market is changing continuously that results in the need of distinct skill type and knowledge at different time, it is recommended to frequently analyse academic curriculum and to design it according to the demand and requirement of the market. As knowledge is deeply required in this sector, faculty are considered as the main asset of business schools. Thus, it is essential for business schools to establish and develop faculty as well as retain them. Management education can be described as an institutional arrangement that would provide competencies in the application of different tools and techniques in the business field and ever-changing nature. Post liberalization and globalization, India has seen changes in the form of new policies to be adopted giving rise to private business corporations and changes coming and flooding the nation with MNCs due to huge consumer base.

Academic stress is a common form of stress which is featured by mental state of suffering that results from anticipated displeasure of facing academic failure. By improving attitude, consciousness and outlook of an individual with regards to the necessary strategies and action such stress can be reduced for overcoming every obstacle. Attitude and behavior of students towards the pressure to satisfy expectation and achievements of academics are referred to as stress related to academics. Students deal and face struggle related to academic pressures and expectation that also include examination, subject progress, giving responses to questions in class, as well as financial issues. Additionally, expectations of parents regarding the success of their children also brings stress among students. This stress is shaped by the

line of work, background of education and students who have self-imposed pressure to give best performance and to improve future opportunities

Literature Review

Gautam & Mishra (2023) stated that the higher social and economic status of students gives a satisfactory perception towards their discipline. Such trend of outcome is reinforced by correlational examination where career perception was considerable and associated positively with social and economic status. The influential the impactful graphical figure is represented with social and economic student's background in various disciplines were identified to be making influence on career perception of students with respect to various disciplines. The academic stress further gets increased at the level of pre-university as getting an admission to good college is dependent on marks or grades that are being obtained in the qualifying exams. In system of Indian education, attainment of good grades is important than to acquire knowledge. This system also leads to over-burden in the life of young students. The study indicates the significance of social and economic status in perceiving the career in satisfactory as well as positive manner. It is contingent that students belong to medical, engineering, education and management discipline who have showed improved social and economic status in comparison to students from arts group.

Mallick & Pramanik (2023) study stated that the past few years, Indian has achieved highest economic growth. However, there are some elements that are slowing down the growth of economy. Unemployment of educated candidates is considered as one of them. It shows a high number of candidates in the workforce who want a job but are not able to achieve it. It is also identified that unemployment rate of students are refers to those who are at the age of 15 to 24 years if the age and do not have any kind of job, but are looking for the same actively. Usually, the unemployment rate of young candidates is higher in comparison to adult candidates. According to recent reports the growth rate on increasing by some initiatives. Male as well as female both are literate favourably, still the statics report shows that unemployment rate of young candidates is increasing constantly and nation unemployment rate is not that high. It is also observed that matrimony and negative attitude of society, female candidates are not seeking for the job, there are many other reasons of unemployment in the society among youth.

Mianga et al. (2022) examined that Development of employability for a graduate is a complicated undertaking that need multiple approaches and inputs from various stakeholder like government, students, employer association, employers, parents, alumni, etc. The contribution of career services at an institutional level in coordination with schools, colleges, faculty, departments etc would play a vital role to assist higher education institutes focusing on their efforts to improve employability of graduates. Other factors and contribution made towards improvement of employ ability of graduates, which is outside the control if higher education system must be addressed at a priority. On the basis of survey conducted administering final year graduates of business management course, the four highly important skill of employability to recruit entry-level candidates are learning skills, communication skills, positive behaviour and attitude, and problem-solving skills. The result shows that learning skills was considered as the second most essential skill for employability of candidates. As soon as business management student approach graduation, it becomes essential for them to focus on areas where they need improvement and must emphasis life-long learning which are self-directed throughout their career.

Vijayashree & Srinivasa (2021) study examined that Certainly, stress can be considered as a big term, but it can be dealt by making some modifications in our daily life. Stress is found more prevalent among managers, government officers, teachers, politicians, and even house-wives. It has become essential to recognize the reasons of stress to deal with it easily and effectively. Effective and careful involvement can be highlighted. Stress is considered as a subjective process encompassing the personal examination counteracting the threat of an occurrence. Stress leads to anxiety, depression, and many other health issues. Stress has become critical at personal, social as well as institutional level. Yoga, life teachings,

settlements, feedbacks, giving attention to details, psychotherapy and meditation would be helpful on dealing with the stress, which is also called as stress management. The easiest trick to deal and cope with the stress is to identify the root cause of the stress. Personalized stress management techniques must be developed by the professionals. The student's integrated health is not just essential for the participation but also for the institute.

Moneva & Moncada (2020) study stated that the Parental pressure made by parents on children for the achievement of some particular goals. Self-efficacy of students is the belief of student that they can do some work successfully as a task. It is revealed that parents have high expectations from children in terms of academic results. It is also revealed that parents have a low level of attention in which the contradictorily visit schools for checking the grades and performance of their child. On the other hand, in terms of self-efficiency of student, they are found to handling difficult situations, and problems in tough times. Parental pressure is the situation where parents keep stressing their children to do well in every aspect of their life. They even sometime force their child to exceed in every situation mainly in academics. Self-efficiency is the belief that an individual has their own capabilities, particularly the capability to meet issues and challenges and complete the task in successful manner. In a crucial way, candidates who have experienced such situations have the chance of excelling in academics as liked by the parents. Candidates would do best as their return of hard work and sacrifice made by their parents.

Patel & Bulsari (2015) examined that Unemployment has become one of the biggest concerns in India these days. The policy makers are already addressing the unemployment related issues in five-year plans. Increase in education helps in reduction in the rate of unemployment. Some studies have revealed that influence of education on unemployment shows that increasing education reduced the unemployment rate. In developing countries, it is observed that demand for higher education is more. The education supply in developing countries is less as compared to its demand. Thus, in most of the developing countries, the concerns related to educated candidates who are unemployed has become a biggest issue.

Srouf et al. (2013) Career spectrum of a management graduate is broad; it encompasses the role in various sectors as well as functions. Some of the common paths include human resource, project management, management consulting, and marketing. Some particular role can range from senior manager that defines strategies of business to practitioners to deliver technical skills. Additionally, the demand is rising for specialists in some areas such as social media management, and technology management. For a successful development of career there is a need to increase self-management of career and contemporary career orientation. Accordingly give stress on the importance of being value-driven, self-directed and flexible. While taking the decision regarding choosing the advanced degree, majority of students choose management studies instead of specializing in technical course. Varma (2023) Students are affected by stress academically, physically, emotionally and socially. Students suffer from stress because of various reason like examinations, tests, competitions, financial, projects and future employment, etc. Stress is feeling unhappy, improper sleeps, pain in stomach, issues related to mental health, depression and anxiety. It is observed that the main cause of stress among students is Academics, means any anxiety derived from education or academic institution. Tests, projects, studying, quizzes, assignments, and exams are some of the main reasons of academic stress. Family and health issues are also common causes of stress among students. Advancement of technology are making skills obsolete and reducing the number of candidates required for the job. For female candidates it has become more challenging to find a perfect job in urban regions as compared to rural regions. Different hiring process, work conditions, and salary succeeds. High level of growth can be achieved if a nation get success to reduce the discrimination of gender in the labour market. Encouraging female entrepreneurs would help in this situation. Applying laws against gender discrimination is highly required

in the labour market. Speeding up the process of generating employment comes with high economic growth. But it is seen, particularly in India that despite of high rate of GDP, unemployment still prevails. Employability and field of study is still under-studied in relation with project management. Factors like rejection fear, self-doubt related to academics, social expectations, peer pressure, peer-competition, and perceived difficulties in the process of recruitment are analysed. Exploring such impacts, the work seeks providing a deep understanding of how such factors syndicate to create depression and anxiety. Offers potential strategies mitigating such fear. Eventually, the purpose is to develop a supportive environment helping management students in navigation of placement opportunities with confidence, reduction in psychological burdens related with the transition from university to professional lives. Sanjana & Seshadri (2020) Generally, employer branding is reputation of employer as a place for working of a candidate and it is how an organization represent themselves to the potential and current employees. It is identified that employer branding in the form of awareness to job and features of company is correlated positively to attractiveness of employer. It is also observed that branding of employer makes an influence on attractiveness of employer. Employers must develop a unique brand to stand out from rival companies in order to gain human capital and importantly select the best talent from market of employees. Companies need to make fair investment to identify the right strategies of branding and tactics for establishment of attractive brand employer and for creation of positive influence on the mind of candidates therefore increase the chance of candidates to choose the company. Employer branding develops the foundation of attractiveness of employer and it is important for the modern world of companies to make investment in employer branding as an attractive employer in order to gain competitive benefit over the rival companies. Parents also expect principal to be inventive, empathetic, consistent, visionary and disciplined to become a role model for students.

Research Methodology:

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The Problem undertaken by investigator is stated as “To know the Impact of Academic Stress on Perceived Employability of Management Professional students.”

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The investigator of the present study framed the following objective:

- To find out the differences among respondents on basis of Gender.
- To find out the differences among respondents on basis of streams.
- To find out the level of Academic Stress on Perceived Employability of Management Professional Students in Chitrakoot district, India.”

METHODOLOGY:

Study survey was conducted among 201 management professional students to know the Impact of Academic Stress on Perceived Employability. “Random sampling method” along with “T-test” were used to collect and analyse the data.

DESCRIPTION OF SCALE:

In the present study the scale consists of 16 items and each item has five alternate responses i.e. “SA (Strongly Agree)”, “A (Agree)”, “UD (Un Decided)”, “D (Decided)”, “SD (Strongly Disagree)”. So, the scoring to the response given by student should be like the following:

RESPONSE	CODE
SA	5
A	4

UD	3
D	2
SD	1

Data Analysis

In the total population of study survey males are 51.7% and females are 48.3%. 44.3% of them are below 25 years, and rest 55.7% are above 25 years of age. 30.3% students are from finance stream, 30.8% from marketing, 23.9% from HR, and rest 19.9% from other professional management streams.

“Table 1 General Details”

“Variables”	“Respondents”	“Percentage”
Male	104	51.7
Female	97	48.3
Total	201	100
Age (years)		
Below 25	89	44.3
Above 25	112	55.7
Total	201	100
Stream		
Finance	61	30.3
Marketing	62	30.8
HR	48	23.9
Others	40	19.9
Total	201	100

Table 2 Impact of Academic Stress on Perceived Employability of Management Professional students

“S. No.”	“Statements”	“Mean Value”	“t value”	“Sig.”
1.	Academic stress reduces self-confidence among the students	3.13	1.875	0.031
2.	Stress might hamper performance of students in difficult task that affects their employability perceptions	3.16	2.323	0.011
3.	Stress affects the readiness and capabilities for securing the employment	3.20	2.950	0.002
4.	Stress shows deep influence on academic responsibilities	3.19	2.746	0.003
5.	Academic stress affects mental health of students and overall performance	3.15	2.203	0.014
6.	Academic stress reduces problem-solving skills among students	3.18	2.599	0.005
7.	Communication skill is influenced by academic stress	3.21	3.061	0.001
8.	Positive behaviour and attitude are strongly affected	3.14	2.050	0.021
9.	Fear of failure regarding careers increases due to stress	3.17	2.459	0.007
10.	Stress leads to over-burden in the life of young students	3.12	1.766	0.039

Table 2 shows Impact of Academic Stress on Perceived Employability of Management Professional students. The respondent says that Communication skill is influenced by academic stress with mean value 3.21, Stress affects the readiness and capabilities for securing the employment (3.20), Stress shows deep influence on academic responsibilities (3.19), Academic stress reduces problem-solving skills among students (3.18). The respondent also says that Fear of failure regarding careers increases due to stress with mean value 3.17, Stress might hamper performance of students in difficult task that affects their employability perceptions (3.16), Academic stress affects mental health of students and overall performance (3.15), Positive behaviour and attitude are strongly affected (3.14), Academic stress reduces self-confidence among the students (3.13), and Stress leads to over-burden in the life of young students (3.12). All statements pertaining impact of academic stress exhibit statistical significance, with p-values below 0.05 following the application of a t-test.

Conclusion

Academic stress is an intellectual evaluation of students of any stressor related with academic, the association between environmental stressor and mental response to academic as well as environmental stressor. During demanding circumstances, the cognitive system of students has been burdened and reducing their resource of attention. Because of academic stress of students in India are found to have symptoms of anxiety, depression, phobia and other behavioural issues. India being one of the biggest countries of the world in terms of students passing graduation every year. Employers look around for job seekers looking for job opportunities. Students with higher education are unable to get desired jobs. The rising unemployment rate has become major issue in India. Lacking skills of employability is seen to be the main reason in getting a desired job. Candidates of management education are facing difficult challenges in getting a job and excelling in their career. Applicants of management education are facing the many challenges in getting jobs to excel in their career. A vital role is played by academic institutes in conveying modern and vibrant knowledge and honing the skills of management students. The reformations in system of management education are required for bridging the gap between expectations of corporates from management students as well as skills that they possess.

The main factor that develops students for indulging in risky behaviour is stress, which leads to habits like using alcohol, drugs, unhealthy sleeping habits, poor habits of eating, etc. Positive emotional coping strategies are used by Indian students to deal with stress, still they have low level of self-esteem. Often Indian students experience anxiety, and go into depression and many other clinics disorder as their self-worth is solely linked with their performance at studies instead of other strengths. The arrival of global business organizations and development and growth of national corporate houses brought transformation in educational scenario of country with more and more management education institutes and business schools for the production of good quality of managers for running the companies because good quality of workforce is highly required for the expansion of the business. With all such changes, new industry was observed to be growing in the crowd that industry of management education that were started to supply human resource to other industries as well, but then because huge market for returns and investment. In this highly competitive market, business schools are facing many challenges in realizing their goals. Indian business schools must revive management education to meet the demands and expectations of students, parents, faculty, society, government and industry at large level. Management education must be all-inclusive, personalized, and targeted with the goal of removing the gap that is present between requirements of industry and academic curriculum that focus on attitude awareness of corporates grooming and development of managerial skills. In India, if management education desires to extend its image internationally they need to enhance its educational quality. It is undoubtful that core business of education industry is teaching and learning, and it can surpass only by proper method of teaching and learning instead of anything else. Once this system is created and developed on knowledge instead than other elements it would help in resolving other challenges as well like placements and it would also attract sufficient grants for research and development at national as well as international level.

Flexibility and autonomy must be provided by teachers in terms of teaching so that they can give their best performance. Management education to be made practical must be re-engineered desired employment to young generation and skilled manpower. Success and efficacy in education system is dependent not only on quantity but also on quality. Students must be given extra attention by giving them extra classes where they might get success and learn more regarding subject as it would assist them in finding good jobs and to get hired by businesses and preventing needless enrolment in higher education.

Private, public and universities must be free from favouritism, political burdens, and money-making practices etc. Multidisciplinary approach must be adopted by higher education system for knowledge of students making it unlimited. Moderate stress encourages students for achieving and fuelling creativity is suggested by many psychologists, although stress might hamper performance of students in difficult task. Stress can be levied on an individual by uncommon physical condition like excess of heat or cold, disease, shortage of oxygen, or exposure to strong light. Climbing to the mountain, seeking attention for the long-time, and constant involvement in water can bring strong demand for the adaptation of an individual.

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