

THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

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ABSTRACT

Being a student comes with its fair share of challenges, and one of the most common hurdles is dealing with academic pressure. The demands of coursework, exams, and assignments can often lead to stress and overwhelm. However, learning effective stress management techniques is crucial for students to navigate their academic journey successfully while maintaining a balanced and healthy lifestyle. In this article, we will explore the strategies tailored specifically to students to cope with academic pressure, how students can manage stress and achieve a sense of balance.

Keywords: Academic pressure, stress, stressors, time management, coping skills, healthy study habits.

Education plays an important role in human life as well as human resource development. According to the dictionary “Education” is the process of facilitating, learning, and acquiring knowledge, skills, development moral and beliefs”.

Students are taught the significance of a good academic record to become a stable, successful individual and to help pick out a fruitful career. It is important for a student to perform well in academics to secure university scholarships, have a choice of subjects to study at university and to ensure the stability of career and enjoy economic freedom during adulthood.

However, in today’s highly competitive world, students face various academic problems including exam stress, disinterest in attending classes and the inability to understand a subject. Academic stress involves mental distress regarding anticipated academic challenges or failure or even the fear of the possibility of academic failure.

As a teacher, I understand that stress is an inevitable part of life, and students are no exception. As students navigate through the demands of university, relationships, and future plans, stress can become a pervasive part of their lives. While some stress can be helpful in motivating students to manage their time and work towards their

goals, excessive stress can have serious consequences for their mental and physical health, as well as their academic performance. In this article, we will explore the positive and negative effects of stress on students, and provide strategies for managing stress effectively.

To understand academic stress, we first need to understand what the term “stress” really means. In simple terms, stress refers to a distressed state of mind caused by various factors. Mental stress manifests differently based on the person or level of stress.

In short, stress is defined as the physiological and psychological response to a perceived threat. It can be caused by a variety of factors, including academic pressure, relationship problems, financial concerns, and health issues. For students, the sources of stress can be especially overwhelming, as they face a number of challenges and decisions that can have long-lasting consequences.

Now that we have clarified what “stress” is, it will be pretty easy to understand what academic stress is. We use the term “academic stress” to refer to the kind of psychological distress caused by factors pertaining to one’s academic performance. The stressors that cause academic stress vary depending on the student, but they all have in common the fear of failure in some way or another.

Some of the most common causes of stress in students include:

- Exams and deadlines
- Time management issues
- Financial difficulties
- Relationship problems
- Health problems
- Family issues
- Homesickness

While stress can have negative effects, it can also have positive effects on students. Some of the positive effects of stress include:

- Increased motivation: Stress can increase motivation to succeed, as students may feel more driven to meet their goals.

- Better time management skills: Stress can also lead to improved time management skills, as students may become more focused on prioritizing their tasks and responsibilities.

- Improved coping skills: Stress can also help students develop effective coping strategies, as they learn to manage their stress levels and overcome challenges.

Stress can also have negative effects on students, including:

- Decreased mental and physical health: Stress can lead to decreased mental and physical health, as it can cause depression, anxiety, and physical health problems.

- Decreased academic performance: Stress can also lead to decreased academic performance, as students may struggle with memory and concentration problems and it can make it difficult for them to stay motivated. Some of the ways in which stress can affect academic performance include:

- Lower Grades: When students are stressed, they may struggle to perform to their full potential, resulting in lower grades.

- Reduced Motivation: Stress can reduce motivation and make it difficult for students to stay engaged in their coursework and extracurricular activities.

- Decreased Focus: Stress can also make it difficult for students to focus and concentrate, making it difficult for them to absorb new information and complete coursework.

- Increased substance abuse: Stress can also lead to increased substance abuse, as students may turn to drugs or alcohol to cope with their stress levels.

Fortunately, there are a number of effective strategies for managing stress in students. To manage stress effectively, students need to develop effective stress management strategies. Some of the most effective strategies for managing stress include:

- Exercise: Regular exercise can help reduce stress levels, as it releases endorphins and improves physical and mental health. Research has found that students who participate in regular physical activity report lower levels of perceived stress. While these students still grapple with the same social, academic, and life pressures as their less-active peers, these challenges feel less stressful and are easier to manage. Finding time for exercise might be a challenge, but there are strategies that one can use to add more physical activity to their daily routine. Some ideas that they might try include:

- Doing yoga in the morning

- Walking or biking to class

- Reviewing for tests with a friend while walking on a treadmill at the gym

- Taking an elective gym class focused on leisure sports or exercise.

Seeking support: Students can also seek support from friends, family, and mental health

professionals to manage their stress levels effectively. Having emotional support can help create a protective buffer against stress.¹² One way to combat feelings of loneliness, students should have people to lean on in times of need is to expand their support network and nurture their relationships. Also, they can look for opportunities to meet new people, whether it involves joining study groups or participating in other academic, social, and leisure activities.

- **Effective time management.** One of the keys to managing academic pressure is effective time management. Prioritizing tasks, setting realistic goals, and creating a structured schedule can help students make the most of their time. Avoiding procrastination and breaking tasks into smaller, manageable chunks can prevent overwhelm and improve productivity. Seeking assistance from online platforms that offer academic help, such as essay writing services, can also free up time for students to focus on other important aspects of their academic journey.

- **Developing healthy study habits.** Creating a conducive study environment is vital for effective learning. Students should aim to minimize distractions and optimize their study space. Implementing study techniques and strategies, such as active learning, effective note-taking, and regular self-assessment, can enhance retention and understanding of the material. Additionally, incorporating regular breaks, exercise, and relaxation techniques into study routines can help students recharge their minds and manage stress effectively.

Stress is an unavoidable part of student life, but it is important to understand the positive and negative effects of stress, and to develop strategies for managing stress effectively. By taking care of their mental and physical health, seeking support when needed, and practicing stress-management techniques, students can minimize the negative impact of stress and thrive academically, personally, and professionally. By adopting a holistic approach to stress management and striving for balance, students can optimize their academic experience and enjoy fulfilling student life.

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