A STUDY ON RELATION BETWEEN PROFILE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF ANGRAU AND THEIR ACADEMIC STRESS

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to explore the correlation between the profile of three faculties' undergraduate students of Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University and their perceived Academic stress. Many researchers have identified the components of Academic stress and different stressors which impact the students. This study further tries to analyses the relationship if any among each component of academic stress such as personal, family environmental, college environmental, pre examination and examination stress and their independent variables. A total of 123 undergraduate students of Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University, Andhra Pradesh and three faculties were included in the present study. The academic schedule of undergraduate students of professional course makes severe demands in terms of achievement and time and responsibility as a result student may experience stressful situations frequently during the study period. The findings clearly indicate that number of backlog courses, number of study hours per day, educational qualifications of parents, family monthly income and social status had shown negative and significant relationship with overall academic stress of undergraduate students of ANGRAU.

Key words: stress, educational institutions, academic stress, stress at college level)

Introduction: Stress is a perceived imbalance between demand and response capability under conditions, where failure to meet demand has important consequences. Stress can refer to experiencing events perceived as endangering one's physiological, physical or psychological wellbeing or a combination of these and when there is excessive pressure its intensity and chronic nature can lead to mental and physical ill health including depression, nervous breakdown and heart disease (Quick, Nelson and Hurrel, 1997).

Impact of Academic Stress: Andrews, B. and J. M. Wilding (2004) an apparent increase in seriously disturbed students consulting student health services in the UK has led to concern that increasing financial difficulties and other outside pressures may affect student mental health and academic performance` Students entering into the professional education needs to face many challenges to which they have never been exposed earlier. The pressure to earn good grades and to earn a degree is very high (Hirsch & Ellis, 1996). The source of stress and intensity of stress differ from individual to individual and from time to time. The effect of stress on students is well documented and is responsible for a high toll on academic achievement and mental health of students. Undergraduate students of ANGRAU who experience stress develop physical, intellectual and emotional problems which show adverse effects on their studies. With this perspective, the present study was taken up as an attempt to explore the relationship between the academic stress and independent variables.

Methodology: Ex-post facto research design was followed in the investigation. One college from each faculty, i.e., Veterinary Agriculture and Home Science was purposively selected based on the maximum number of enrolled undergraduate students. The selected colleges include College of Veterinary Science, Rajendranagar, College of Agriculture, Rajendranagar and College of Home Science, Saifabad, Hyderabad. All the second year undergraduate students of three faculties were included for the present investigation as they were having better exposure to the university atmosphere compared to first year students.. A total of 123 undergraduate students of i.e., 60 from agriculture (30 boys and 30 girls), 43 from veterinary (28 boys and 15 girls) and 20 from Home science (20 girls) were selected for the study. A structured scheduled was framed, pre tested and data were collected from individuals. Academic stress causing items were identified and grouped into five areas namely, personal stress, family environmental stress, college environmental stress, pre-examination stress and examination stress. The final schedule consists of 94 items. The responses from students were measured five point continuum i.e., extreme stress, high stress, medium stress, low stress and very low stress with a corresponding score of 5,4,3,2 and 1. The scores obtained on each area of the academic stress were pooled to find out the total score obtained by a respondent. Correlation coefficient was used to find out the relationship between scores of the independent variables (except sex) and dependent variable academic stress.

Results and Discussion: The findings of the Table

revealed that the independent variables namely medium of instruction up to intermediate (r=-0.2370) had shown negative and significant relation with personal stress of undergraduate students of ANGRAU. The reason might due to the fact that students who did their educaton in English medium had less personal stress as they might have high scholastic attainment. Increased number of study hours per day (r=0.2176) results in lower stress. Educational qualifications of parents (r=0.2710) had shown negative and significant relationship with personal stress. Educational qualifications were greatly associated with the academic stress of students as parents were more involved in their children's academic life to reach the desired target for which lot of tension and anxiety was experienced by the respondents.

Family monthly income (r=0.2821) had shown negative and significant relationship with personal stress. It was found that higher the family income, lower the personal stress, it may be due to the fact that respondents whose family income was low experience more stress in order to meet their expenses which in turn put a lot of stress on students to achieve their goal. Main occupation of family (r=0.2140) had shown negative and significant relationship with personal stress of undergraduate students of ANGRAU.

The selected characteristics such as number of backlog courses (r=0.3931) had shown positive and significant relationship with family environmental stress as the students with more number of backlog courses undergone more stress the reason could be that the students have to put more efforts to complete the backlog courses as they have no chance to enter in to higher classes. On the other hand the variables namely number of study hours per day (r=0.4367) had shown negative and significant relation with family environmental stress. Students who had a habit of studying syllabus regularly do not have parental pressure. Present grade point average (r=0.7788) had shown negative and significant relation with family environmental stress. Students who have the habit of studying 4-6 hours per day have less pre- examination stress. Average expenditure per month (in Rs) (r=0.2498) and family monthly income (r=0.6188) had shown negative and significant relation with family environmental stress. It may be due to the fact that respondents whose family income was low experience more stress on order to meet their expenses which in turn put a lot of stress on students to achieve their goal.

Number of backlog courses (r=0.3699) had shown negative and significant relation with college environmental stress.

Only number of study hours per day (r=0.1669) had shown negative and significant relation with pre-examination stress. The reason could be that the students who spent most of their time in academic activities experience less academic stress. Whereas Students with more number of back log courses (r=0.2317) and number of study hours per day (r=0.2871) had shown negative significant relation with examination stress.

The findings clearly revealed that number of back log courses (r=0.1671) number of study hours per day (r=0.2170), educational qualifications of parents (r=0.2320) and family monthly income (r=0.2094) had shown negative and significant relationship with overall academic stress of undergraduate students of ANGRAU.

Table1: Correlation between academic stress of under graduate students of ANGRAU and selected independent variables

S.No	Independent variable	r- Values					
		Personal stress	Family environ mental stress	College environ mental stress	Pre-examinat ion stress	Examinati on stress	Overall academic stress
1.	Place of education	-0.0203*	-0.1290	-0.0340	-0.0010	-0.0630	-0.1540
2.	Medium of instruction up to intermediate	-0.2370**	-0.1130	0.0020	-0.0230	-0.1590	-0.1740
3.	Post academic record	-0.0680	-0.0130	0.0040	-0.0780	0.0200	0.0020
4.	Number of backlog courses	-0.0624	-0.3931**	-0.3699**	-0.1178	-0.2317**	-0.1671*
5.	Number of study hours per day	-0.2176**	-0.4367**	0.2710**	-0.1669*	-0.2871**	-0.2170**
6.	Present Grade Point Average	-0.1463	-0.7788**	0.5054**	0.0018	-0.0674	-0.0869
7,	Average Expenditure per month (in Rs)	-0.0867	-0.2498**	0.1659	-0.1066	-0.1330	-0.0987
8.	Environment in the hostel/residence	-0.4400	-0.1690	-0.0550	-0.1450	-0.0440	0.0000
9.	Socio-economic status of family						
	a. Educational qualification of parents	-0.2710**	-0.0730	-0.0850	-0.1420	-0.1140	-0.2320**
	b. Family monthly income (in Rs)	-0.2821**	-0.6188**	0.2861**	-0.0246	-0.1112	-0.2094**
	c. Main occupation of family	-0.2140*	-0.0380	-0.1460	0.0310	0.1040	-0.1590
	Social status of family	-0.1840*	-0.2090*	0.0080	-0.1460	-0.1520	-0.2130*

* Significant at 5% level , * * Significant at 1% level , NS – Non Significant

Conclusion: The findings of the study could be useful for the parents, college administrators to provide congenial family and college environment to reduce the amount of academic stress of the students. The administrators have to concentrate more on stress causing areas of academic stress so as to create a favorable academic atmosphere in the university.

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