

## Covid 19: Stress Management among Students and its Impact on Their Effective Learning

Hena Yasmin, [henayasminn@gmail.com](mailto:henayasminn@gmail.com), Swaziland, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1650-9381>

Salman Khalil, [salmankhalil23@gmail.com](mailto:salmankhalil23@gmail.com), Amity University, India, <https://orcid.org/0000-00031906-6088>

Ramsha Mazhar, [ramshagmazhar@gmail.com](mailto:ramshagmazhar@gmail.com), Allan Grey, South Africa, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3023-4775>

### SUMMARY

In today's date stress has been an integral part of life because there are many things which act as a stress catalyser. Covid-19 has caused significant distress around the globe. It is not limited to adults only, but stress is increasingly affecting children of all age group. Proper management of stress is really very difficult as parents don't have enough time to properly look after their children. Generally, people have a common mind-set that stress is only caused by a sad happening, but the truth is that stress can occur through a good experience as well. As far as stress for students are concerned, there are plenty of reasons which can cause stress in a student's life, some of these are; mismatch between the student and the teacher which can raise tension and cause stress. Lack of much family attention has also been a reason why it attacks to all students. Children generally don't take care of their eating habits as a result of which they are more prone towards to stress. In addition to that the other reason of stress is insufficient sleep is a common cause and students all across the world are getting affected by stress because of it. Stress management among students is a hit-or-miss matter. In order to tackle the horrible matter most of the educational institute schedule optional stress management classes, but students often lack the time to attend. An attempt is done through this paper to know the impact of stress among students and the necessity of managing it in order to make the learning effective.

**Keywords:** Stress Management, Health, COVID-19, Stress level, pandemic

### INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 entered into our lives at the end of 2019 in the whole world threatening the health of countless people and reached pandemic status as well. Since December 2019, there has been an outbreak of pneumonia of an unknown aetiology that was first reported in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China (Wang et al. 2020). Following the outbreak, a novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, was identified as the causative virus for the pandemic in China and other parts of the world by the World Health Organization (WHO). On March 11, 2020 (WHO) declared Covid-19 as a pandemic. Covid-19 has affected more than 4.5 million peoples worldwide (WHO, 2020). This new pandemic condition is fearful and stressful for everyone due to the mortality rate of COVID-19 and associated factors like economic instability, unemployment, stress, anxiety and insecurity. As the COVID-19 pandemic and its far-reaching implications continue to unfold globally and in our community, it's normal for people to experience a wide range of thoughts, feelings and reactions. Thus the main aim of this this paper is to know the impact of stress among students and the necessity of managing it in order to make the learning effective

We have to understand that pandemic is not just medical condition, it affects the population in social, emotional and psychological way also. The idea of being alone and wear masks is related to anxiety, sleep disturbances, panic, stress and other kind of mental illness. Due to this pandemic outbreak, lot of students developed psychological problems that are affecting learner's not only academics but all over personality (WHO, 2020).

Countries worldwide implemented strict precautions on its citizens in an attempt to control the spread. The country switched its in person educational system to virtual learning, closing public places of aggregation and invoking travel bans. Most stressing is quarantine.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines "quarantine as separating and restricting the movement of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they then become ill" (CDC, Report, 2020). Living in quarantine period which is also known as lockdown can be great mental toll for everyone. Quarantine affects mainly three components of mental health i.e. autonomy, competency and connectedness. People feel isolated as they get cut off by meeting their friends and perform their daily routine.

A recent study on "the psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it" by Samantha K Brooks showed that how COVID-19 is affecting people who are in lockdown. People mostly experienced fear, sadness, numbness, insomnia, confusion, anger, post-traumatic stress symptoms, depressive symptoms, low mood, stress, emotional disturbance, irritability and emotional exhaustion. Some of evidence proves that these consequences can be longer term also (Brooks et al, 2020). Stress is overtaking each and every problem.

Hans Selye defines stress as “Stress is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand”(Fink, 2009). Everyone experiences stress at some point in life. Hans Selye, a scientist who popularized the concept of stress, said, “Stress as a scientific concept suffers the misfortune of being too widely known and too poorly understood.” Despite the fact that stress is one of the most common human experiences, it is surprisingly difficult to define. Scientists say that stress is a force or event that impairs normal stability, balance or functioning. The following example may make stress easier to understand.

The stress of a strong wind might alter the balance of a suspension bridge so that the bridge swings from side to side. Usually people do not even notice the gentle swaying as they drive across the bridge. When the wind increases, the swaying of the bridge becomes obvious to everyone. Although this swaying might make someone uncomfortable or anxious, it is actually the way that the bridge copes with stress. If the bridge did not sway at all, it would be brittle and more likely to be damaged by the stress of the wind. If the strength of the wind increased dramatically, so that the limits of the bridge were exceeded, the bridge could actually collapse. Stress in our lives is like that wind. Although stress is often present, it usually goes unnoticed. Sometimes the stress that people experience makes them feel shaky or frightened, as if they, like that bridge, were at risk of collapse. Usually this fear is unrealistic, and people’s foundations are much sturdier than they think. Occasionally, one truly is at risk of collapse; it is critically important to recognize this risk. Most often, however, the real risk that comes from stress is that, over many years, it will damage people’s health and detract from their quality of life.

In today’s date stress has been an integral part of life and the body’s reaction to a challenge because it is not limited to adults only, but stress is increasingly affecting children of all age group. Current situation of COVID 19 act as a catalyst in increasing student’s stress. Undoubtedly, stress has become the number one reported impediment to academic performance. Some levels of stress can actually be good for us, as the right kind of stress can sharpen the mind and reflexes and encourages us toward change and growth. It is your fight-or-flight response to challenges you see in the world. This natural reaction has certain physical effects on the body to allow you to better handle these challenges, such as increased heart rate and blood circulation. While it can manifest differently for each individual, it is noted that everyone feels stress at some point in their lives, regardless of age, gender, or circumstance (Currie et al, 2016). However, when stress exists for an extended period of time, they can become a burden or even a health risk.

A certain amount of stress is an inevitable and useful part of studying. It assists students to work harder, be focused and return to study rather than doing other things. However, if students are too stressed, they cannot study effectively (Gale et al, 2018). It is important to distinguish between stress that assists students to study and stress that prevents students from studying effectively. Everywhere we go, we hear people complaining that students don’t concentrate on learning. We see several consultants, trainers, and life coaches assist other people with attaining it. Beyond doubt, stress management has been one of the catchphrases for student’s commitment towards their performance on academics, student’s relation with fellow students, the more they try or worry the less they can study effectively.

### Symptoms and Signs of Stress

Stress isn’t just a physical reaction; it can also affect your emotions, behaviour, and cognition (Dangi et al, 2020). Just as everyone is stressed by different things, everyone experiences its effects in different ways. Depending on the individual and the cause of the stress, the number of symptoms from each category can vary. An overview of types of symptoms that may be present in someone suffering from stress is given in Table 1. Certain signs of stress can be confused with other ailments. Be sure to understand how it affects you so you can correctly identify when you are experiencing stress. Some of the most common signs and symptoms according to American Psychological Association are:

Table 1: Signs and Symptoms of stress among students.

• Physical Symptoms	• Emotional Symptoms	• Cognitive Symptoms	• Behavioral Symptoms
• Irregular bowel movements	• Less than normal patience	• Impaired concentration	• Change in eating habits
• Involuntary twitching or shaking	• Feelings of sadness and/or depression	• Trouble with remembering things, such as homework assignments or deadlines	• Change in sleeping habits
• Irregular or missed periods	• Feelings of being overwhelmed	• Chronic worrying	• New or increased use of drugs, tobacco or drugs
• Getting sick more often than normal	• Restlessness	• Anxious thoughts or feelings	• Nail biting
• Reduced libido	• Reduced or eliminated desire for activities once	• Reduced or impaired judgment	• Pacing
			• Abnormal failure or delay to complete everyday responsibilities
			• Significant change in school or work performance

---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chest pain with or without tachycardia</b></li> <li>• <b>Headaches</b></li> <li>• <b>Nausea</b></li> <li>• <b>Muscle aches</b></li> <li>• <b>Trouble sleeping</b></li> <li>• <b>Heartburn or indigestion</b></li> <li>• <b>Fatigue</b></li> <li>• <b>Flushed skin</b></li> <li>• <b>Clenched teeth</b></li> <li>• <b>Unusual changes in weight.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enjoyed or regularly done</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Sense of isolation</li> <li>• Trouble coping with life's issues</li> <li>• More frequent or extreme pessimistic attitude</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impaired speech (mumbling or stuttering)</li> <li>• Repetitive or unwanted thoughts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusual desire for social isolation</li> <li>• Frequent lying</li> <li>• Trouble getting along with peers, such as co-workers, classmates or teacher.</li> </ul>
--	---	---	---

---

Source: (Hunsley et al, 2020)

Though, it is a universal human experience, it was revealed that defining and measuring stress is difficult because “there has been no definition of stress that everyone accepts” and “people have very different ideas with respect to their definition of stress.” They also state that a definition of stress is incomplete without mention of good stress (called eustress), its physical effects, or the body’s instinctive fight-or-flight response. Based on current situation stress can be differentiated into different levels (Veena, 2016).

### Levels of stress

#### Acute stress

Acute stress is the most common form that every person experiences during the course of their life and is the result of recent or anticipated stressors. It can be both positive and negative. It arises quickly in response to unexpected or alarming events. Typically, it fades quickly, either on its own or once the stressful event is over. Acute stress doesn’t often lead to serious health problems. For example, the pre conceived stress learners experienced just before writing test or exams; riding a roller coaster can cause acute stress, but in a thrilling way. The excitement before a fun event is a type of positive acute stress. Getting into a car accident is negative acute stress. As long as the acute stress doesn’t last for extended periods or occur too frequently, there is nothing wrong with suffering from acute stress. This type of stress occurs frequently and is easy to identify. Some signs of acute stress include (Will, 2006):

- Stomach pain, such as heartburn, diarrhoea, or acid stomach.
- Heightened blood pressure and heartbeat.
- Shortness of breath or chest pain.
- Headaches, back pain, jaw pain.

Because it is so common and lasts for a short amount of time, acute stress is usually simple to manage and treat.

#### Episodic stress

Episodic acute stress is a recurring type of stress, happening over and over. Essentially, people with episodic stress are often overwhelmed by it and have difficulty managing it. This is the kind of stress that continuously pops up, sometimes in a pattern. People who suffer from episodic stress are almost always in “crisis mode,” are often irritable and anxious, and may be prone to constant worrying. It is accompanied by worry and angst about things that are happening to you or around you. You might be especially prone to this if you have a “type A” personality. **Type A** individuals are outgoing, ambitious, rigidly organized, highly status-conscious, impatient, anxious, proactive, and concerned with time management. People with **Type A** personalities are often high-achieving "workaholics". As you can have a sense of urgency and a need to get things done that might actually become overwhelming. For example, learners studying on the night before a test instead of studying consistently throughout the period. This kind of stress is episodic because it is building up into a habit.

Symptoms of episodic stress are the same as acute stress, but they can be more extreme or occur constantly. Some signs of long-term episodic stress according to the APA American Psychology Association (2020), are: Constant headaches or migraines, Hypertension and Heart disease. People who suffer from episodic stress typically accept this kind of stress as a normal part of life and may not be aware of how detrimental its effects can be. It has

been noted that it may be difficult for sufferers of episodic stress to get treatment because they are so used to feeling its effects and accept them as normal.

### **Chronic acute stress**

Chronic acute stress can be thought of as never-ending stress that relentlessly wears away at you. If you don't see an end in sight, if you are facing something that has no way out, then you are likely to begin suffering from chronic stress. It often arises in response to situations that feel hopeless and beyond your control, such as a troubled marriage, a toxic job, or poverty.

This type of stress eventually begins to affect your health, and can lead to heart problems, strokes, or even cancer, among other issues. Chronic stress definitely requires reaching out for help. Treating chronic stress can be challenging, and almost always necessitates the help of a professional to make long-term progress in recovery (WHO, 2020).

### **Types of stress**

Whether students attend college online or in-person, they will most likely face new stressors during their time at school. As they begin to notice how they and their body react to it, they may come to recognize symptoms that only appear in certain situations. Understanding the type of stress they are experiencing, when they encounter these challenges can help themselves overcome them without feeling drained.

Dr. Karl Albrecht, a social scientist, and management consultant outlined four main varieties of stress: time, anticipatory, situational, and encounter (Kraag et al, 2006). While these different types can be experienced in many different situations, from the workplace to the home, they are especially relevant to the life of a student.

#### ***Time stress***

Time stress occurs when you feel worried about time, and more specifically when you don't have enough time to accomplish all necessary tasks. People often experience this when they fear they can't meet their deadlines or will be late to a meeting or appointment.

As a student, you may feel time stress in several different ways. You may worry about being late to your classes as you learn the geography of your campus or if you have to get home and log onto your computer for a lecture after finishing your home chores. You may also panic about the heft of your workload or the quality of your work for class, which can be a difficult adjustment, whether you're attending college or class for the first time or returning after a break.

#### ***Anticipatory stress***

You may feel this kind of stress in both a vague and concrete way during your studies. If you feel anxious about a forthcoming test, assignment, or presentation, you are experiencing a more concrete form of anticipatory stress. If you have a sense of dread or fear of uncertainty about your future in general, that is a more vague manifestation. Students may feel this kind of stress more frequently as they get nearer to graduation and are making decisions about their life after college.

#### ***Situational stress***

You experience situational stress when you are in an upsetting or alarming situation that you cannot control like present situation of COVID 19. Unlike time-related and anticipatory stress, this kind of stress happens suddenly and with little — if any — warning. In fact, you may not have anticipated the situation at all.

For students, this type of stress can arise in a number of different circumstances. It may come from something as minor as forgetting your words during a presentation, or as major as a phone call about a family emergency. This kind of stress can occur during a number of situations, from receiving a poor grade on an assignment, to arguing with a friend, to nearly hitting a car in front of you on the road.

#### ***Encounter stress***

Encounter stress results when you feel anxious about seeing certain people, either alone or in a group. You may not enjoy spending time with them or have difficulties communicating with them. Whatever the reason, there is something about this person or group that makes you anxious. Encounter stress can also occur if you have spent too much time with others and feel burnt out, even if you like being around them.

Students may feel encounter stress in situations ranging from intimidating professors to unfamiliar classmates. Further, you might only experience this feeling with a person for a limited amount of time. For example, you might dread seeing your roommate for the first time after an argument, but the stress may disappear after you resolve the issue

### **Different stressors among students during COVID 19**

Though, everyone experiences it differently and has their own distinct stressors. The common stressors revealed in the current study by the authors are:

## Academic

This may be the most common long-term cause of stress for college students. Student life has many benefits, but it also imposes inevitable stresses. For those who are already battling depression or have an existing vulnerability to it, these stresses can trigger anxiety and episodes of depression. Academic pressure related stress has been identified as one of the prime types in the stress in student learning process. It is undoubtedly one of the biggest problems faced by the current student force during COVID 19. It is also becoming an escalating nerve-racking problem for both teachers and students. Beyond doubt, stress management has been one of the buzzwords for student's commitment towards their performance on academics, student's relation with fellow students, the more they try or worry the less they can study effectively (Albers et al, 2017). Their mind is racing everywhere they try to relax but all they can think about is study when they try to study you cannot. There are individuals tormented by the educational stress and are unable to spend time with their own. Even though it seems manageable, after a while if it is not saddled it will create adverse effects on the student's performance. It is just not the physical presence in the educational institution but also the pre- and post- time of studies need to gear up for and travel to the colleges and back home to. So it is absolutely imperative to understand the reasons for stress among students and its impact on their effective learning

Among the significant factors that affect student's ability to adapt to the stresses of studying epoch is academic vitality (Jennings, 2009). Academic vitality means an adaptive response to various challenges and barriers experienced during education (Folkman, 2015). It means exuberant physical strength or mental vigour, capacity for survival or for the continuation of a meaningful or purposeful existence. When a person does things instinctively, does not feel not only frustrated and tired, but also constantly feels the strength and increased energy, and overall has a sense of inner vitality (Jennings, 2009). Therefore, the academic life has a relationship with the individual's adaptation to the various situations of the academic period, feelings of self-efficacy and empowerment in the face of challenges, experiencing less anxiety and depression, a sense of responsibility in dealing with the academic tasks and better academic success (Folkman, 2015).

### *Class scheduling and credit load.*

Scheduling your classes of different subjects may stress you out. Trying to sign up for the courses at times that work well for you, and making sure you're taking all your necessary prerequisite classes, are just a couple of the many factors that you need to consider. For some students, this may be the first time they have to create their own schedules. You may not know how many credits you should be taking, or what class times are best for your academic performance. You might get frustrated with yourself after a few weeks of classes if your schedule is not what you hoped it would be.

### **Ways to handle stress from class scheduling and credit load**

If your schedule is overwhelming, remember that it isn't permanent. Your current classes will end, and you will have to build an entirely new schedule in a few short weeks or months. Use that opportunity to make a schedule that's better suited to fit your needs. Make your schedule flexible.

### *Grades and exams*

Academic performance is another stressor that you may encounter as a student. You may feel pressure to get certain grades in your classes due to a number of factors, such as meeting the expectations of teachers, parents and even self. Good grades fulfil your desire to go on to another programme and your desired career. You may study frequently, but get so anxious about taking an exam, that you find yourself unable to do well (or in some cases, to even take the test). One of the causes of test stress is the fear that you didn't study enough. Further, balancing your classes, family responsibilities, work schedule, and social life can be hard due to the increased workload and greater difficulty of courses. In some classes, tests or projects also make up a large percentage of students' grades. So, this is also a stressor.

### **Ways to overcome grade and exam stress**

Conquering school-related stress can be tricky, as you are constantly surrounded by your stressors and equally stressed classmates. However, you are at school to learn and grow, not to get straight A's on your report card. Focus on getting your education instead of getting certain grades. Grades will come in automatically if you will take your learning seriously. Study as much as you can. Focus on one exam at a time. Avoid think of an exam ahead of you. Think about subject matter not Exam. Don't visualise the exam during studies. Study in the same classroom or building where you will be taking the test or doing practice problems under timed conditions. Get a tutor to help explain concepts, someone to double check your work or using something as simple as flashcards to study, but finding someone to help you study more effectively can make all the differences.

### *Future:*

For many students — traditional ones in particular — being in school is comfortable. The prospect of life after college can be daunting simply because it is unknown and unfamiliar. For even the well-prepared student, the

unpredictability of life outside of school can be stress-inducing. Your stress may be amplified if it seems like all of your friends and peers already have a future plan that they seem confident about. You might feel anxious if you don't have any idea what you want to do; on the other hand, you may question decisions you've already made about your future. Facing poor employment opportunities when they finish their programs, feel stress associated with the uncertainty of their career choice and future prospects.

### **Ways to plan your future and avoid stress**

The uncertainty of the future can be difficult to handle, but you aren't alone. Don't hesitate to reach out to your friends, family, professors, or advisors career and guidance team and councillors for help and advice as you start to think about what you want to do after graduation. Go for aptitude test if you are confused with your career choice. This test results will be your path guide. Discuss with your career and guidance teacher.

### *Health*

In a survey conducted by the APA (2020), 63 percent of adults cite "health-related concerns" as their number one source of stress after academic stress. For college students, in particular, worries about or issues with health might be a major stressor because according to them it impact academic performance (Albers et al, 2017). It was further reported that the academic performance of nearly 30 percent of students was impacted by a physical ailment, ranging from allergies to bronchitis (Almojali et al, 2017). Regardless this, if the cause is a simple cold, mental health condition, or chronic illness, one thing remains the same: when you're sick, it can be difficult to keep up with your studies. If you are contagious, you should avoid attending class (unless you are a distance learner or can sit in on the lecture at home), which means missing out on important information from your teacher. Even if you aren't contagious but are simply feeling under the weather, you may not have the energy to focus on the teaching, learning and assignments.

### **Tips to maintain your health as a student**

If a particular illness is going around your campus or community, try your best to avoid contact with anyone who is contagious and wash your hands frequently and follow other precautionary instructions. In the present scenario of COVID 19, wear mask, social distancing, sanitising or washing your hands, not sharing your articles and not having party. Everyone gets sick on occasion; accept that, despite your best efforts, you might too. If you do catch something, take care of yourself and rest and as much as possible and medication before resuming your normal activities. Watch your diet. Eat well and eat properly. For example too much caffeine can exacerbate the physical symptoms of test stress.

### *Personal*

Another source of stress is the difficulty of achieving social intimacy. Your relationships with friends, family members, and significant other can change after you start college. Students tend to lack the time and/or the opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships. School may be a bigger priority than ever before, and as you navigate the challenges associated with that, you may have less energy to give to your loved ones. Feeling like you aren't as close to your support system, in addition to dealing with the pressures of school, can create tension in your life (Bayram et al, 2019).

### **Tips to balance relationships in college**

Make an effort to only befriend people whose company you enjoy. Your time at college is too short to spend interacting with people who you don't get along with. Whether you are working in a group project online, or engaging in a class discussion via chat, you have the opportunity to be selective about whom you give extra energy to. You can make lifelong friends in college, so try your best to only invest your time and attention into the relationships that matter to you. For alleviating distress include improved orientation for new graduate students, more flexibility in core requirements, and expanding the role of faculty advisors/councillors

### *Finances*

Over the past few decades, the cost of education at traditional schools has risen notably. Combined with other expenses — like the cost of housing, food, and books — students may feel stress over their finances while they're in school. Even if you qualify for aid, receive help from your family members, or work during the school year, you may still feel stressed about money. Students may feel further stress because of loans they have to pay off after graduation. The debt you acquire can be a burden before you complete school because it can affect your finances for years after, as well as during, college. In addition to being on your own physically and may be even emotionally, you may also be on your own financially. Everything from rent and food to gas and entertainment is now your financial responsibility. You might find that you need to take on a part-time job when you are not in class. Even if you have a scholarship or a loan, or have a "full ride" that helps you pay for it all, there are still the required phone calls, questions, paperwork and deadlines that have to be met in order to ensure the funds keep coming (Eisenberg et al, 2007).

### **Ways to overcome stress from finances.**

Research has shown that positive thinking may improve physical well-being, produce lower feelings of depression and produce lower levels of distress. Always keep in mind why you chose to pursue a degree in the first place, and remind yourself that it can lead to better job opportunities after you graduate. Experts still believe that, in the long-term, education is worth the investment.

### *Family life*

For many students, college is the first time they have lived away from home or been away from their family for any significant period of time. Besides that, it's a very unfamiliar environment. Everything is different – the food, the people and the living accommodations. Even though most students eventually get used to these new things without a problem, the first few weeks of college can create a stressful environment. This is true even if you are truly excited about the changes. Remember that even positive changes can induce stress (Kessler, 2012). In college or during student life, you have to figure out the right balance between school, family, and other chores. The academic load at different levels of education will often increase and involves more complicated work. Attempting to keep up with that, on top of your job and family responsibilities can add additional stress to your daily life — especially if your family and work obligations are so demanding that you fall behind with your academic work. For non-traditional students, in particular, achieving that balance can be difficult. While traditional students may be worried about missing another call from their parents, if you are a non-traditional student, you may have children of your own to take care of. You may have to focus your energy on financially supporting your family or caring for your sick parents or children if you have one, instead of school.

### **Tips to balance family, school, and work**

These strategies can help you establish boundaries between the different areas of your life, in order to give each one the attention it needs. Keep in mind that it's also important to be able to adapt to new concerns and demands. You may feel stressed to a greater extent if you feel like you can't make necessary adjustments to your plans.

### **Managing stress as a student: Recommended approach**

*“Instead of rushing unconsciously into your day set aside a few minutes to sit quietly with yourself. Make sure you are calm, centred with your intention for the day. This way you are prepared for a harmonious positive experience”*

In college, stress is inevitable, but it doesn't have to dominate your life. Do your best to understand what kind of stress you're feeling, what's causing it, and how you can respond to it productively. By addressing your stress in a healthy way, you are doing all that you can to make the most of your college education. There are many ways you can manage your stress as a student. Just as everyone experiences stress in their own way, we all have our preferred methods of coping with it. However, not all stress management strategies are healthy, and some may leave you feeling even worse than you did before. To overcome stress as a student it's crucial to learn how to cope with it productively. After all, you can't control the stressors in your life, but you can choose how to respond to them.

Eliminating distress without attempting to maximize eustress is the way by which most of the stress management theory work. By removing distress you can create a vacuum in your life which you will unconsciously fill with either the same distress you previously pushed aside or from some other negative source of pressure. If you will work effectively to produce eustress, you won't have to worry about defaulting to negative feelings and drained energy when you find yourself with some free time. In addition to that there are also several other reasons which will lead to stress for a college student.

*Academic Stress:* Increase in workload over insufficient time, new responsibilities, difficult exams, challenging classes, low grades, deadlines to meet, scheduling issues to coordinate and a more independent nature are the various academic reasons which will prompt a student's towards stress.

*Social Stress:* Creating a new social network, separation from home and finding less parental support, living with a roommate, balancing school work with friends or part-time jobs and dealing with the demands of young adult relationships are the elements of social stress.

*Other Stresses:* Daily hassles, financial crisis, studying long, hard hours and waking up early for classes, logistics of living independently (i.e., laundry) new students deal with abrupt change from one college to another college are the major cause of stress. There are two different ways of managing stress; Unhealthy ways to manage stress and healthy ways to manage stress.

### **Unhealthy ways to manage stress.**

#### **Smoke, use drugs or drink**

Though it may be tempting to reach for a cigarette or glass of wine after a difficult day, it may not be the best way to unwind. Smoking, drinking, or using drugs may offer stress relief in the short-term, but after their effects wear off, you may find yourself feeling more stressed than before. For instance, researchers have found that drinking alcohol can actually exacerbate stress. Though turning to drugs and alcohol might seem to relieve stress in the short term, it is a recipe for disaster. The negative problems that quickly result will turn your future into a

nightmare. Any sort of addiction can quickly spiral into something you can't handle. Avoid anything that might seem to be an addictive trigger for you, including substances, gambling, and the like.

### **Spend compulsively**

When you're feeling down, your instinct may be to go buy yourself a treat as a pick-me-up. Buying yourself a gift every once in a while is fine, but if shopping or spending money is your go-to method of relief, you may be creating more stress for yourself by putting a strain on your finances or adding objects you don't really want to your home.

### **Over and under eat**

When stressed, you likely either crave comfort food or find that your appetite is gone altogether. Either way, you should try to maintain your regular eating habits when you feel stressed, as eating too much or too little can have a lasting negative effect on your physical health.

### **Ignore the stressor**

It's okay to take a break from your problem to cool off and think of a new solution, but ignoring it altogether may not be the best idea. You may not be able to let it go entirely and the stressor will likely linger in the back of your mind until you can't neglect it anymore.

### **Procrastinate with social media, streaming services, etc.**

There is no shortage of digital distractions you can lose yourself in to avoid stress. While it's healthy to find a balance between work and relaxation, it's important to place limits on your use of digital media. The more time you spend streaming content or scrolling through your social feeds, the more you'll fall behind in your work and add to your overall stress, which will feed this negative cycle of avoidance.

### **Healthy ways to manage stress.**

#### **Confront the stressor**

Perhaps one of the best ways to manage your stress is to simply deal with the cause of it directly. If your busy schedule is making you anxious, sit down and see what you can change. If you're attending a traditional university, and are finding that it just isn't going to fit with your scheduling needs, consider transferring to an online university that may be a better fit.

#### **Time management**

Proper time management is one of the most effective stress-relieving techniques (Macan et al., 1990). Whether it's relaxation, work or study, time must be spent wisely. Students must be able to design and stick to a timetable. Choose a relaxing break between work and study, even if it's just taking out time to breathe. Developing a schedule and managing time properly indicates goals and priorities. Always students should try to plan ahead and avoid procrastination, and then they can manage stress effectively. However if they are stretching too thin and running behind, then it is always advisable to stay calm and focused. Hence, make a 'To Do list' or a planner and keep track of deadlines and schedules and learn to say 'No' so that they can beat stress.

#### **Being organised**

Organization is very important in academic life for dealing with stress (Sinha, 2014). By keeping academic notes organized, turning in assignments on time, and keeping track of all deadlines, stress can be reduced to a great extent. Always make a habit of keeping the system of organization of note-taking, keeping track of assignments, and other important papers. As a result of which they can develop a good study environment where they can concentrate, focus and get things done. Moreover if they are well organized, they can bring the peace of mind that comes from knowing where everything is, remembering deadlines and test dates, and clearing mind of some of the mental clutter.

#### **Exercise, Nutrition and Sleep**

A proper exercise, healthy diet and enough sleep can beat stress to a large extent. They have to be to be well-rested, for a great stress relieves action. So make all work and live a stress free life.

#### **Spend time with loved ones**

Surround yourself with people who you like to spend time with and enjoy their company. Being around someone who makes you feel comfortable can relieve a great deal of stress, even if you don't talk about what's troubling you. A cup of coffee with family or friends is all you need to bring your stress levels back to normal. Stress can also get worse if a person feels lonely. By letting out all your thoughts to someone you trust, you immediately feel a lot better. In addition to the health benefits of stress management and relaxation, Students can also enjoy the benefits of improved relationships with friends family, parents and teachers. When they are stressed their family feels the effects of that stress, and it is common to take out some of the anger and frustration on family. Family can feel like they are walking through a mine field, never knowing when stress level will trigger an explosion of frustration. If stress is reduced it leads to more relaxation making them happy, and in turn, family friends teachers



will be happier. Stress management and relaxation should be practiced by everyone, especially those who work from home. Reducing stress can lead to many benefits including improved health and improved relationships. Using stress management techniques like knowing your triggers, exercising, meditating, organizing and taking vacations are essential ways to de-stress and learn how to relax

*“Happiness is not about getting all you want, it is about enjoying all you have.”*

### **Take a break**

Between your classes, homework, and other obligations, you may find most of your days booked solid with plans, activities, and tasks that need to be done. If you feel overwhelmed by all that you need to do, take a break. Schedule an afternoon where you don't have to do anything but read your favourite book or watch a movie. You may not be able to drop everything on your to-do list at once, but don't hesitate to spend some time not doing anything. *“Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day. Try to find that”*

### **Get professional support**

You may find yourself needing more support than your loved ones can offer or grappling with stressors that are too much for you to deal with. Don't hesitate to reach out for help from a professional. Your school likely has many support resources available to help, even if you are an online student.

## **CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION**

COVID-19 affected everyone at global level. Previously 100 years ago this lockdown was implemented to fight with Spanish Flu. Now in this COVID-19 people are also feeling tired and anxiety due to lockdown. Students are facing loss in their studies. These all things lead to cause disturbance in their mental state. The conclusion of the study is that students are having the stress level at severe level and by the increasing days stress level is also increasing. Students are also using the coping strategies like yoga, exercise, diversion therapy such as spending time with family and watching television. Academic, environmental, social and health problems all play an important role in the development of stress. Academic factors are the most important stressors; hence the need for specific and targeted measures to decrease substantially the burden of stress on the students. Teaching techniques and college environments should be adapted to the needs of the students. The productive utilization of existing student welfare systems, development of more 'student-friendly' environments and regular periodic extracurricular activities with universal participation can prove to be useful stress-busters. Similarly, students living in hostels were observed to be prone to develop stress; thus, a periodic review of hostels, with feedback from the students, should be conducted and the complaints of students should be promptly addressed. The majority of students were in favour of stress management education being included in the curriculum, and hence steps should be taken for its incorporation. Health is a major concern of students, and therefore the promotion of healthy dietary and lifestyle habits should be encouraged. Additionally, teachers, parents and even students themselves should be aware that undue expectations about academic achievement can lead to stress. Finally, regular study habits and adequate preparation can help students to avoid stress and make their learning effective.

## **REFERENCES**

- Albers, B., & Pattuwage, L. (2017). *Implementation in education: Findings from a scoping review*. Melbourne: Evidence for Learning. doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.29187.40483
- Almojali, A. I., Almalki, S. A., Alothman, A. S., Masuadi, E. M., & Alaqeel, M. K. (2017). The prevalence and association of stress with sleep quality among medical students. *Journal of Epidemiology and Global Health*, 73, 169–174. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28756825>
- American Psychological Association (APA), (2020, May 30). Stress in the time of COVID 19. Retrieved on 07/07/2020.
- Bayram, N., & Bilgel, N. (2019). The prevalence and socio-demographic correlations of depression, anxiety and stress among a group of university students. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 438, 667–672.
- Blonna, R. (2005). *Coping with stress in a changing world*. U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill Companies Inc.
- Brooks SK, Webster RK, Smith LE, Woodland L, Wessely S, Greenberg N, et al. (2020). The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence. *Lancet*. 395(10227):912–20
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Information for healthcare professionals about coronavirus (COVID 19) [Internet]; 2020 [cited 2020 Jun 23]. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>.
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Coping with Stress [Internet]. Vol. 49, Center for Disease Control and Prevention Publication. 2020. p. 30. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress>

- Currie C, Molcho M, Boyce W, Holstein B, Torsheim T, Richter M. Researching health inequalities in adolescents: The development of the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Family Affluence Scale. *Social Science & Medicine*. 2016 ;66(6):1429–1436.
- Dangi RR, George M. Psychological Perception of Students During COVID-19 Outbreak in India Psychological Perception of Students During COVID-19 Outbreak in India. *High Technol Lett [Internet]*. 2020;26(6):142–78. Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342094992\\_Psychological\\_Perception\\_of\\_Students\\_During\\_COVID-19\\_Outbreak\\_in\\_India](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342094992_Psychological_Perception_of_Students_During_COVID-19_Outbreak_in_India)
- Eisenberg, D., Gollust, S. E., Golberstein, E., & Hefner, J. L. (2007). Prevalence and correlates of depression, anxiety, and suicidality among university students. *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 77(4), 534–542.
- Fink G. Stress: Definition and history. In: *Encyclopedia of Neuroscience [Internet]*. 2009. p. 549– 55. Available from: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285784528>
- Folkman S. (2015) A theoretical analysis. , *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 46, 839-852.
- Gale SD, Berrett AN, Erickson LD, Brown BL, Hedges DW. Association between virus exposure and depression in US adults. *Psychiatry Res [Internet]*. 2018;261(March):73–9. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres>.
- Hunsley, J., Elliott, K., and Therrien, Z. 2020. The efficacy and effectiveness of psychological treatments for mood, anxiety, and related disorders. *American Psychology* 55(3), 161-176.
- Jennings. ML (2009) Medical student burnout: interdisciplinary exploration and analysis. , *The Journal of Medical Humanities* 30, 253-269.
- Kessler, R. C. (2012). The costs of depression. *The Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 35(1), 1–14.
- Kraag, G., Zeegers, M. P., Kok, G., Hosman, C., & Abu-Saad, H. H. (2006). School programs targeting stress management in children and adolescents: A meta-analysis. *Journal of School Psychology*, 44(6), 449–472.
- Lewis, J. & Webster, A. (2014). *Sort Your Brain Out: Boost Your Performance, Manage Stress and Achieve More*. Capstone.
- Macan, T. H., Shahani, C., Dipboye, R. L. & Phillips, A. P. (1990). College Students' Time Management: Correlations with Academic Performance and Stress. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 82(4), pp. 760-768.
- Sinha, A. (2014). Stress vs Academic Performance. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, 11(4), p. 46.
- Thompson, A. & Gaudreau, P. (2008). From Optimism and Pessimism to Coping: The Mediating Role of Academic Motivation. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 15(3), pp. 269-288
- Veena. S. ( 2016) International Journal of Engineering Research and Modern Education (IJERME) ISSN (Online): 2455 - 4200 (www.rdmodernresearch.com) Volume I, Issue I, 2016
- Wang C, Pan R, Wan X, Tan Y, Xu L, Ho C, Ho R. Immediate psychological responses and associated factors during the initial stage of the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) epidemic among the general population in China. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2020; 17(5):1729. doi: 10.3390/ijerph17051729.
- Wang C, Pan R, Wan X, Tan Y, Xu L, Ho CS, et al. Immediate psychological responses and associated factors during the initial stage of the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic among the general population in China. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2020;17(5)
- World Health Organization. Novel Coronavirus Situation Report - 1 [Internet]. 2020. Available from: [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/wrindia/india-situation-report1.pdf?sfvrsn=5ca2a672\\_0](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/wrindia/india-situation-report1.pdf?sfvrsn=5ca2a672_0)
- World Health Organization. Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During COVID-19 Outbreak [Internet]. World Health Organization. 2020. Available from: [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-healthconsiderations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-healthconsiderations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2).
- WHO. Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard. Retrieved on June 3, 2020. From <https://covid19.who.int/>