

# Stress Management: Tools Techniques & Strategies with Reference to Happiness

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**Abstract:** Stress is a condition of mental pressure for a particular individual facing problems from environmental and social well-being which leads to so many diseases. Young age is the critical period because at this time youth faces lots of changes in his / her life. They are expected to be the elite in society. Thus, they should enhance their stress management abilities so as to live a healthy life after entering society. When a child enters into the youth age, they need to not only adapt themselves to the new life and new environment but also be familiar with many new people, events and things. The life stress on them is considerable. Therefore, understanding the sources of stress among them and how they can cope with stress is very important. Stress nowadays is --- not something new, not anything unknown. The leading problem is about the reasons for stress in the various age group of students and their family. The second, but not the less important problem, will be investigated in my study, includes a question: How to reduce the level of a stressful situation, prevent its appearance and overcome with stress feelings and how to convert it into happiness. The main objective of the present research work is to study the academic anxiety, over expectation from parents, high rank, excess use of mobile & internet among the students, analyze stress among the students, understand the coping strategies adopted by the students and apply the different methods, tools, and techniques of reducing stress among the students. Our study depends on important concepts which will be described models of stress management for the different age group of students: Transactional Model. This model help to choose the correct way to develop an effective Stress Management Program Additionally to theoretical view on the subject, suggest some main tools and techniques how to avoid, reduce or overcome with stress at the time of study span as well their lives. Stress management starts with identifying the source of stress in life. This isn't as easy as it sounds. The true source of stress isn't always obvious, and it's all too easy to overlook your own stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Since everyone has a unique response to stress, there is no --- one size fits all solution to managing it. No single methods work for everyone or in every situation, so experiments with different techniques and strategies. Focus on what makes the students feel calm and in control. The word "coping" has two implications in stress literature.

It has been used to denote the way of dealing with stress or effort to master conditions of harm, threat, or challenge when a routine or automatic response is not readily available. According to Moos and Billing (1982), there are many ways to classify the coping process but three main categories are:

- Appraisal-focused coping strategies
- Problem-focused strategies
- Emotion-focused strategies

The consequences of stress can cause specific disorders in both mind and body. Recent cases of farmers, students, and other suicidal cases are also a result of stress. Many people suicide because of stress. Stress effect their health, family, relationships, work. Stress leads to breakups, family fights, road rage, suicide, and violence. Stress accounts for 80 percent of all illnesses either directly or indirectly. So Stress management is the need of the hour. It's necessary for long happy lives with a trouble that will come about.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Keywords:** Stress Management, Transactional Model, coping - strategies

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Stress and overcome with stress are phenomena closely intertwined with human life. They relate to all minor and major events in life. Even in our day to day life, stress is the topic of many conversations, people talk about the stress of balancing home and work life, the stress of being hard pressed for time, of living in a mechanical society. Modern life is full of hassles, deadlines, frustrations, and demands. For many people, stress is so commonplace that it has become a way of life. In small doses, it can help you perform under pressure and motivate you to do your best. But when

you're constantly running in emergency mode, your mind and body pay the price. Stress accounts for 80 percent of all illnesses either directly or indirectly. Stress weakens the immune system and has other serious effects on the brain and body such as cardiovascular problems, and mental illness such as depression. In the time of economic crises, high competition, continuous broadcastings of negative news from the whole world and appearance of new incurable and fast-spreading illnesses, people run the risk of having stress more and more frequently. Stress

nowadays is —not something new, not anything unknown.

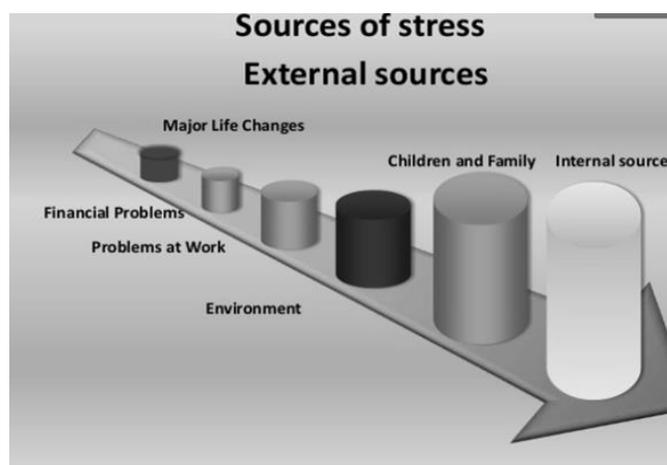


Figure 1: General Sources of Stress

Students' stress is considered to be a transactional process between the new and stressful situation they have to face e.g. beginning from primary to the middle, middle to high school, high school to higher secondary and then to university and their personal and social resources. These university students are considered to be in the last period of transition before adult life and their psychological and physical discomfort can manifest itself in various ways, including mood, sleep, and eating disorders. Although there has been little research proving pathology, it appears that many students present discrete sub symptomatic forms of

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

There have been many studies (Schafer, 1996; Fisher, 1983; Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980), which have reported strong relationship between stress and college students. According to Lazarus & Folkman (1984), stress is a mental or physical phenomenon formed through one's cognitive appraisal of the stimulation and is a result of one's interaction with the environment. The existence of stress depends on the existence of the stressor. Feng (1992) and Volpe (2000) defined stressor as anything that challenges an individual's adaptability or stimulates an individual's body or mentality. Stress can be caused by environmental factors, psychological factors, biological factors and social factors. Academic stress among students have long been researched on, and researchers have identified stressors as too many assignments, competition with other students, failures, lack of pocket money (Fairbrother and Warn, 2003), poor relationships with other students or lecturers, family or problems at home.

Institutional (university) level stressors are overcrowded lecture halls, (Ongori, 2007; Awino and Agolla, 2008), semester system, and inadequate resources to perform academic work. Erkutlu and Chafra (2006) for instance opines that, when these

discomfort that are seldom the subject of consultation. In a recently conducted study, approximately 15% of students indicated having had suicidal ideas, the second leading cause of mortality (after road accidents) among individuals aged 18 - 24 years, and 30% presented depressive symptom logy during the previous 12 months (Lafay, Man- zanera, Papet, Marcelli, & Senon, 2003). Other risk factors include the consumption of psychoactive substances, which tends to increase over time, with alcohol consumption consultations planned to become an integral part of medical visits to first-year students.

events take place, an individual becomes disorganized, disoriented and therefore less able to cope up, thus resulting in stress relating health problems. The pressure to perform well in examinations or test and time allocated makes academic environment very stressful (Erkutlu and Chafra, 2006; Polychronopoulou and Divaris, 2005; Misra and McKean, 2000). This is likely to affect the social relations both within the University and outside (Fairbrother and Warn, 2004) since there is conflict with the social aspect of one life. Researchers (Makach Pines and Keinan, 2007; Ongori, 2007; Ongori and Agolla, 2008; Agolla, 2009) have long identified stress symptoms as lack of energy, taking over the counter medication, high blood pressure, feeling depressed, increase in appetite, trouble concentrating, restlessness, tensions and anxiety among others. An individual experiencing one of these factors is likely to be a victim of stress. Although this may also depend on how the individual appraises the situations and hoe resilient is the person. While the negative effects of stress on an individual may vary considerably from one student based on their previous encounter with the situations and the resilient of the individual student. In their findings (Jaramillo et al., 2005; Stevenson and Herper, 2006) point out that, the perception of the individual determines whether or not the stressor has a detrimental effect; that is whether

it causes physical or psychological symptoms of stress in the individual.

Another reason why little has been done on student stress could be due to the fact that students' presences in the institution have no direct relationship to the quality of education they get. We argue that, unless the university puts appropriate measures that take care of well being of the students, the student's health may compromise the quality of education they are supposed to get (Daniels and Harris, 2000; Smith et al., 2000; Finlayson, 2003). Gibbons and Gibbons (2007) and McCarty et al. (2007) have carried out extensive research on the stress and found out that, stress is

### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The main objectives of the present study are as follows-

- To study the academic anxiety among the students.
- To analyze stress among the students.
- To understand the coping strategies adopted by the students.
- Apply the different methods, tools, and techniques of reducing stress.
- The effect of stress on the health of students.
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- he impact of stress management on students.

### Conceptual Framework:

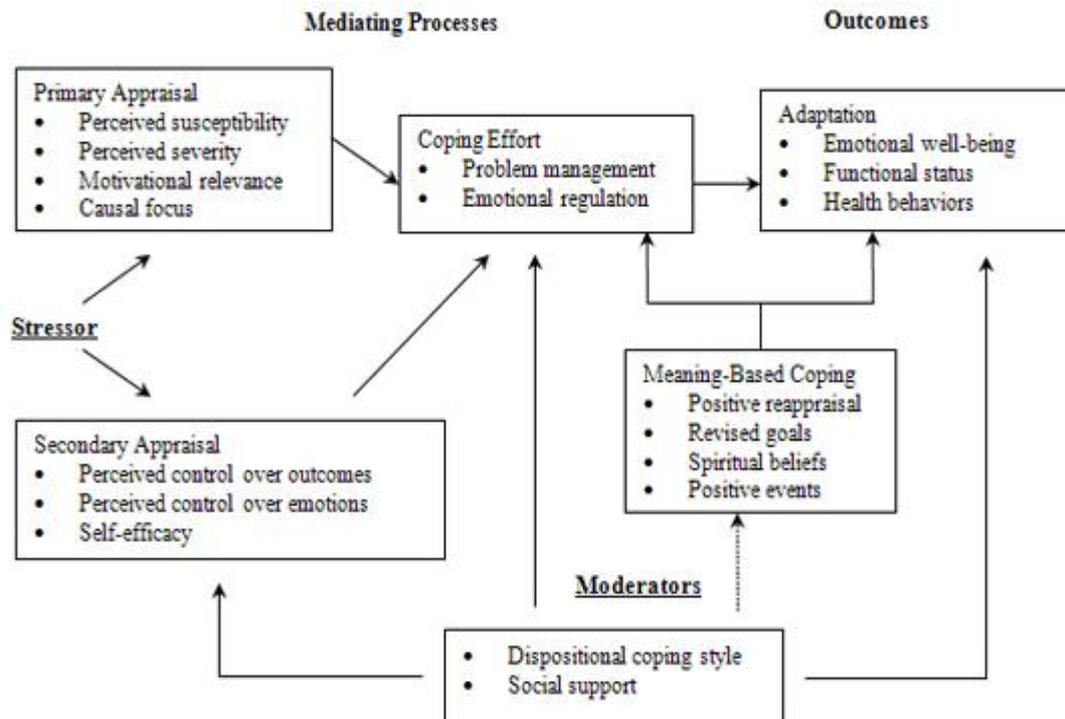


Figure 2: Diagram of the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

**Meaning of stress:** Stress is a normal physical response to events that make you feel threatened or upset your balance in some way. When you sense danger – whether it's real or imagined – the body's defenses kick into high gear in a rapid, automatic

associated with how an individual appraise situations and the coping strategies adopted,

This study presents immediate relaxation strategies that students can use to help moderate their stress response and activate their relaxation response. Utilizing these quick strategies can help students be less tense, feel calmer and perform better in what they do. Provided first in this project is concise explanation of the stress response and the beneficial effects associated with regular activation of it are covered next. Lastly, the relaxation strategies are presented along with tips on how to incorporate them into ones daily routine.

Transactional Model (Cognitive Appraisal), a model that emphasizes how stress becomes the result of the imbalance between what the situation demands and what the person possesses in relation to those demands. According to them, stress is not directly resulting from the source of the stress otherwise known as the stressors; rather, it emerges because of the individual's inability to satisfy demands. For these two researchers, therefore, stress management relates to the capacity of a person to utilize his resources in order to cope with the stress. The Transactional Model tells us that a stress management program can only become effective if the individual's ability to eliminate, reduce, or cope with stress is successful assessed and that the factors related to such capacity are put into consideration.<sup>[5]</sup>

strength to defend yourself, for example, or spurring you to slam on the brakes to avoid an accident.

Stress words also defined as:

S - Sorrow

**Effect of Stress on the human body:**

When you perceive a threat, your nervous system responds by releasing a flood of stress hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones rouse the body for emergency action. Your heart pounds faster, muscles tighten, blood pressure rises, breath quickens, and your senses become sharper. These physical changes increase your strength and stamina, speed your reaction time, and enhance your focus – preparing you to either fight or flee from the danger at hand. In the modern age, stress problem is not only an adult or responsible person's problem but also it is student common problems.

Students are one of the most common victims of stress. Factors such as financial expenses, over commitment, family expectations, deadlines, workload and excess use of mobile and internet all induce stress in students. While a mild amount of stress is very useful and acts as

T - Tension

R - Rivalry

S - Success Fear

S – Exit Suspense

a motivation for students, too much stress can interface with their daily life and career. Parents, teachers and family members can play a vital role to reduce stress in student life. The various age group of the students can be categories in the following manner <sup>[4]</sup>

- Stress management in Primary Students:
- Stress management in Middle Students:
- Stress management in High School Students:
- Stress management in College-Going Students:
- Stress management in teenagers:
- Stress management in youth:
- Stress management in the family:

**Table 1: Causes and Symptoms of Stress in Students <sup>[1]</sup>**

Causes	Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining high GPA</li> <li>• Lack of Sleep</li> <li>• Financial worries</li> <li>• Planning for the future</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> <li>• Over expectations</li> <li>• Negative thought</li> <li>• Excess of mobile and internet</li> <li>• Over home work scolded to the students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stomach and digestive issues</li> <li>• Headaches and other aches/ Pain</li> <li>• Fluctuating weight</li> <li>• Sadness/ Depression</li> <li>• Moodiness</li> <li>• Cutting Classes</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Sleep Problems</li> <li>• Feeling overwhelmed</li> <li>• Social isolation</li> <li>• Ignoring responsibilities</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Suicidal thoughts</li> </ul>

**Different forms of Stress:** Stress can be of two forms- Positive stress and Negative stress. Positive stress is the feeling of relief and also motivates the person. Negative stress is an emotion that leads to diseases. This type of distress is generally caused by an event in one's life, for example, failure in exams, divorce, tax and etc. Positive stress set off by a positive event in one's life. Its example may include winning a championship, planning or attending a wedding, winning a lottery, or receiving an unexpectedly good result in an exam. Stress allows individuals to engage in the challenges of life. [Holahan & Moos, 2001]

**Stress Management and Coping Strategies:**

Managing stress is all about taking charge-: taking charge of your thoughts, your emotions, your schedule,

your environment, and the way you deal with the problems. The ultimate goal is the balanced life, with time for study and work, relationships, relaxation, and fun – plus the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges head-on.

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress life. This isn't as easy as it sounds. The true sources of stress aren't always obvious, and it's all too easy to overlook your own stress- including thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. Since everyone has a unique response to stress, there is no – one size fits all solutions to managing it. Neither single method works for everyone nor in every situation, so experiment with different techniques and strategies. Focus on what makes the students feel calm and in control.

The word "coping" has two implications in stress literature. It has been used to denote the way of dealing with the stress or effort to master conditions of harm, threat, or challenge when a routine or automatic response is not readily available. [Park and Adler, 2003] Coping refers to mastering condition that tax or exceed adaptive resources. [Lazarus, Arnold, 1997] Lazarus emphasized the key role of the cognitive process in coping activities and the importance of coping in the determination of quality and intensity of emotional reactions to stress. According to him, we are constantly self-regulating our emotional reaction in various ways. We either postpone unpleasant situation or change the threatening conditions or simply detach ourselves from an unpleasant situation. Therefore, Lazarus emphasizes that the individual actively considers the solution and the unforeseen environmental conditions which manipulate the individual's behaviour. [Lazarus, 1977] Coping strategy refers to a technique of coping adopted in a specific context. Over a period of time the individual develops a specific coping style. This refers to the manner in which an individual responds to any stressful event. According to Moos and Billing (1982), there are many ways to classify the coping process but three main categories are:

- Appraisal-focused coping strategies occur when the person modified the way they think.
- Problem-focused strategies are efforts to do something active to ease the stressful circumstance. People, who use problem-focused strategies, try to deal with the cause of the problem. They do this by finding information on the problem, learning new skills to manage the problem and rearrange their lives.
- Emotion-focused strategies involve realizing pent – up emotions, distracting oneself, managing hostile feeling, meditating, using systematic relaxation procedures, etc. This involves efforts to regulate the emotional consequences of stressful or potentially stressful events.

In addition to above categories, in a qualitative, our project depends on important concepts which will be described models of stress management for the different age group of students: Transactional Model This model helps to choose the correct way to develop an effective Stress Management program. Additionally to theoretical view on the subject, suggest some main tools and techniques on how to avoid, reduce or overcome with stress at the time of study span as well their lives.<sup>[2]</sup>

**Scope and Methodology:** As per psychological view primary education shows a very important role of the students, it is decided to the career of the students, in this stage child feels stress from the family as well as from teachers.

Teachers are giving more homework and parents desire a child's performance should be very good in class. A child is taking growth physically, mentally and biologically in the higher class.

Secondary Education is an important stage of education from an individual as well as social point of view. From the individual point of view, this stage determines or leads to the future planning of an individual's life. It is the turning point of the students where have to make their career and life choices. It is also within the adolescent stage which is regarded as one of the most crucial stages of life. If the student intends to continue his education beyond this stage, and find a suitable vocation or occupation, then this stage provides him with the needed academic background. Therefore, from the individual's point of view, this is the crucial stage.

Secondary education plays an important role in training the youth of the country to take part in social reconstruction and economic development. It is secondary education on which the social, economic, cultural and technical efficiency of the nation depends since this stage marks the final stage of education for so many students. Secondary schools supply students for universities and other centres of higher learning. Hence they should be of the highest quality. [Education & Development Report]. At this stage, there is an increase in a number of students suffering from "masked depression" across the country apart from an increased number of cases of students taking their own lives or suffering from a nervous breakdown. Recognizing the alarming situations caused by exam stress and academic stress which are the most relevant topic of study in the present system of education. Therefore there is a need to find out how far students able to cope with the stress – chain. There is also a need to inquire into whether the demand for continuous high performance leads to negative and positive stress.

In this study, a questionnaire was designed with the three sections. One section highlights the symptoms of stress, the second section highlights the stressor and the third section highlights the coping strategies used by the Youth. In order to achieve the objective, both primary and secondary sources of information are relied upon. The primary data was collected through structured questionnaires apart from discussions with students.

The questionnaire has main three parts, the first part covers the different symptoms on a seven-point scale, the second part covers the causes of stress through 20 statements on a five-point scale and last section covers the ten coping strategies. Sometimes we will use statistical terms to analyses the data of the students.

For these students may attend the seminars and workshops for managing the stress and an effective way to use relaxation techniques to moderate the stress response and activate the relaxation response. Also go through the yoga, meditation and psychotherapy techniques to reduce stress and approaches to happiness.

#### **4. CONCLUSION:**

Reducing stress in students' everyday life is vital for maintaining overall health and education as it can improve mood, boost immune function, promote longevity and allow being more productive. There are plenty of good reasons to learn some stress management techniques. It'll save you more than it will cost you. Stress management is important because it can save your life and your relationships. Due to stress people, attention on their aims in life is diverted to another direction. The consequences of stress can cause

specific disorders in both mind and body. A recent event of farmer's suicide is also a result of stress. Suicide occurs in because of the stress in many people and students. Stress effect their health, family, relationships, work Stress leads to marriage breakups, family fights, road rage, suicides, and violence. Stress accounts for 80 percent of all illnesses either directly or indirectly. So Stress management is the need of the hour. It's necessary for long happy lives with less trouble that will come about.

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