



## A STUDY OF STRESS LEVEL AMONG JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

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### **Abstract:**

*In today's world the concept of stress has gained too much attention because there are many factors prevailing in today's world which act as a catalyst in increasing it. Stress is not confined to age these days; the fact is that it is increasingly affecting children of all age groups including those who are going to colleges as well. Proper stress management is required in order to deal with it effectively. As far as college going students are concerned, there are plenty of reasons which cause stress, employment status could be one of those. Employed students tend to face many challenges like maintaining balance between work and college, academic achievement and work deadlines, etc. The objective of the current study was to understand the stress level among male and female students from junior college and also, among those who are employed and unemployed. Results indicated that stress was not affected by gender whereas, employed students had a higher level of stress compared to those who were unemployed.*

**Key word:** *Stress, Junior College Students, Employment, Employed Students, Unemployed Students*

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### **Introduction**

For too long, people thought that the number of students was significantly affected by any type of stress or problem. Depression is now understood to be a lifestyle disorder (Masih and Gulrez, 2006) that affects anyone other than the developmental stage (Banerjee and Chatterjee, 2016). The only work students were expected to do was to read, and reading was not considered stressful. Particularly distressing were the expectations of parents for their children, who also grew up to be burdensome children. Depression, anxiety, behavioral problems, irritability, etc. few of the many problems reported for students with high academic stress (Deb, Strodl and Sun, 2015; Verma, Sharma and Larson, 2002).

Stress as an inevitable part of life often affects large groups of people regardless of their age, gender, education status or socioeconomic status. Despite this fact, depression, depression and anxiety are common health problems among college students (Kitzrow, 2003; Marthoenis et al., 2018). College students face many academic, social, environmental and psychological challenges in a new campus environment that may affect their mental well-being and learning outcomes. This is because the new higher education system has significant differences in its teaching



methods, educational needs, the nature of the relationship between the skills and the relationships between the students themselves (Thawabieh and Qaisy, 2012). In short, stress seems to be very common in the lives of college students because college students need to make sure they survive in their studies and are prepared to continue their careers. Not surprisingly, most academic stress at college level is associated with what students learn and how they learn (Yikealo et al., 2018). According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress is defined as a person's physical and mental reaction to an event or thing or perceived as a threat. Similarly, according to Campbell (2006) as quoted in Bataineh (2013), stress is a negative reaction that people experience when they experience excessive stress or other types of demands placed on them. Stress arises especially when people are under stress and believe that they are unable to cope. Definitions suggest that stress is a state of mind resulting from the constant interaction between the individual and the environment. In contrast, when college students, for example, often have to deal with stress related to finding a job or a potential partner, such pressures do not cause anxiety or conflict in themselves. Instead, a sense of oppression arises from the interaction between oppressors and the students' perspective and the reaction of those oppressors (Romano, 1992).

Unemployment is a major problem in India. Everyone wants to meet our needs the way they want, but unemployment faces many problems. When a person is actively looking for a job but fails to get a job then there is unemployment. Unemployment rates have doubled in the last two years in India, with young graduates being particularly affected. Unemployment affects individuals physically and mentally. weakness, sleep problems, headaches, stomach aches, high blood pressure kidneys, and heart disease are included in the physical effects of unemployment while fear, anger, loneliness, anxiety, depression, social isolation, and depression, lack of self-esteem, are low. Health satisfaction, lack of concentration, low levels of desire, lack of personal knowledge, are included in the psychological impact of inactivity. Depression is a very common problem in today's world, especially among the unemployed. Pressure is a reaction to the right level of pressure. Depression can be thought of as a response, as an interactive variation and as a motivator and with emphasis on interpersonal interactions with the environment (Singh et al. 2020). The education system also plays a positive role in leading to increased levels of stress that students experience. Other sources include overcrowded teaching halls, semester grading program, inadequate resources and resources (Awino and Agolla, 2008), syllabus quantity (Agrawal and Chahar, 2007; Sreeramareddy et al., 2007), long hours and memorization expectations (Deb et al., 2015). Parents and institutions instill a fear of failure that affects their self-esteem and confidence. Ang and Huan (2006) reported an increase in expectations as one of the main causes of stress levels. Therefore, as the sources of stress vary despite the same responses to physical stress, previous insights will help to develop interventions aimed at reducing student stress levels, which will contribute to the overall well-being of the individual.

Many researchers have also noted that stress is not always bad. It also plays an encouraging role in people's lives. For example, take the pressure of exams or academic burden that may encourage and strengthen a college student to cope with his / her academic responsibilities and improve his / her academic achievement and creativity. However, if people fail to use effective coping strategies to cope with stress, their depression can continue over time and, at greater risk of serious physical and psychological problems (Auerbach and Gramling, 1998) the transition from high school to college stress naturally students. It may cause them mental, academic, and social



upheaval. With this in mind, this study was intended to investigate the level of stress within the College of Education.

#### **Review of Related Literature**

Deb, Strodl and Sun J (2014) conducted a study on 400 male students from five private secondary schools in Kolkata who were studying in grades 10 and 12. 35% students were found to have high academic stress and 37% were found to have high anxiety levels. Students with marginal grades were said to have higher levels of stress as compared to students with better grades. Also, students involved with extra-curricular activities were noted to be more stressed as related to those students who were not involved with it.

Khan and Kausar (2013) in their study revealed stress is considered a medical condition when it continues for an extended period and can lead to the diagnosis of depression, anxiety, or other severe mental health problems. Freshmen college students could face new teaching methods, new academic requirements, new facilities, and new relationships among other students, which may then become stressors in their lives. Their study also revealed that academic stress is higher among freshmen students than seniors because senior students have been in college for a longer period and have already adjusted to academic stress as compared to freshmen students who are just starting to experience a heavier academic workload. Leung, Yeung and Wong (2010) indicated that academic stress was a risk factor that heightened student anxiety levels and that parental emotional support was a protective factor that contributed to better mental health among children. However, paternal informational support delivered to children during times of high academic stress appeared to heighten student anxiety levels

Nandamuri and Gowthami (2011) studied the stress among students of professional studies and claimed that curriculum and instruction parameters were most responsible for stress with 86% , followed by 63% for placement related issues, assessment and team work issues accounted for 41% and 24% respectively. The study further identified various micro issues responsible for stress, and listed twelve sub issues related to curriculum and instruction. Once the sub issues of each parameter are identified, it provides improved vision to the academic administrators for initiating efforts to reduce the gravity of academic stress. SivaGiri and Reddy (2017) state that it's known to everyone that education at corporate institutions, especially residential colleges is highly stressful. They suffer silently until they crumble under the intense stress and pressure. Owing to professional competition, the managements and colleges are conducting instruction of teaching both in the evening and morning without offering recreation and holidays ignoring their physical psychological and recreational needs of the child. The recent educational developments are driving many students to frustration due to laying too much of emphasis on examinations, marks, ranks and awards rather than making productive and good human beings. Subramani and Kadiravan (2017) have revealed the link between academic stress and mental health among students. He endorsed that academic stress and mental health are correlated and that students are cramped with the academic structure. Parents and schools pressurize the students way too much for the higher grades that disheartens the students, further to add on there is not enough support from the parents and school in terms of guidance. The students are mentally healthy when they perform constructively in the academic forums. They also propounded that students from private schools are more pressurized as compared to students from government schools due to the excess of homework and other academic related assignments. Significant difference in mental health of students from private and



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government schools was found. He asserted that students from private schools have a different nurturing and vast exposure as compared to government school students who belong to poor socio-economic background and lack of exposure. This is one of the reasons for the escalation of stress.

In another study, gender-related interactions also revealed that women found themselves in more stressful situations than men (Matud, 2004). A factor that makes women feel more depressed is the way they perceive health events and obligations to take on social roles. Also, women are often more affected by the stress and energy of those around them. Another reason women have higher levels of depression is that they are more prone to emotions than men while men are experiencing depression and frustration at a reasonable non-emotional level. Researchers have suggested that coping with stress is less effective and may be associated with psychological stress than coping with stress (Matud, 2004). In contrast to these findings, Khan et al. (2015) found that school boys were more stressed than school girls. This may be due to the high expectations and responsibilities parents place on the boys and the high goals the boys want to achieve in their programs (Khan et al., 2015). Similarly, in a study conducted in Ghana, male students were found to have a higher rate of depression than female students (Azila-Gbettor et al., 2015). On the other hand, some studies have reported that there is no significant difference between men and women in academic stress (e.g., Bhosale, 2014; Omoniyi and Ogunsanmi, 2012). Bali (2019) examined the level of personal stress of Jammu district unemployed student of physical education. The total 60 subjects were selected for study. In this study, the data was analyzed and interpreted by using Chi-square test. The findings of this study showed that there is no personal stress level found among the trained unemployed Jammu students of physical education due to unemployment. Singh et al. (2020) in their paper mainly presents the personal stress among unemployed graduate students of Art, Science, Commerce, and Technical stream. The sample comprised one hundred twenty unemployed graduates with the age range of 20 to 25 at only Aligarh district. The sample was divided into four groups, each group had been 30 unemployed graduate students. The data was taken by using Personal stress source inventory (PSSI) developed by A. K. Singh, A. K. Singh, and A. Singh. To analyze the data, the Mean, standard deviation (SD), and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used. The findings of this study show that unemployed graduate students of Art, Science, Commerce, and technical stream were different significantly on personal stress at 0.05 level of significance and concluded that a significant stress level being experienced by unemployed.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

A Study of Stress Level among Employed and Unemployed Junior College Students.

#### **Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

In the present study the data was collected from junior college students belonging to science, commerce and arts fields. Data was collected from both genders i.e. male and female. This data does not include school students. The data was collected from HSC board colleges. Other junior college boards like ICSE, CBSE, NIOS, IB, etc were not taken into consideration. This data does not include teachers, principals and other members of the educational institute's perspectives. This data was collected from South Mumbai only and other regions were not considered. The present study only focused on English medium colleges and vernacular medium colleges were not selected.



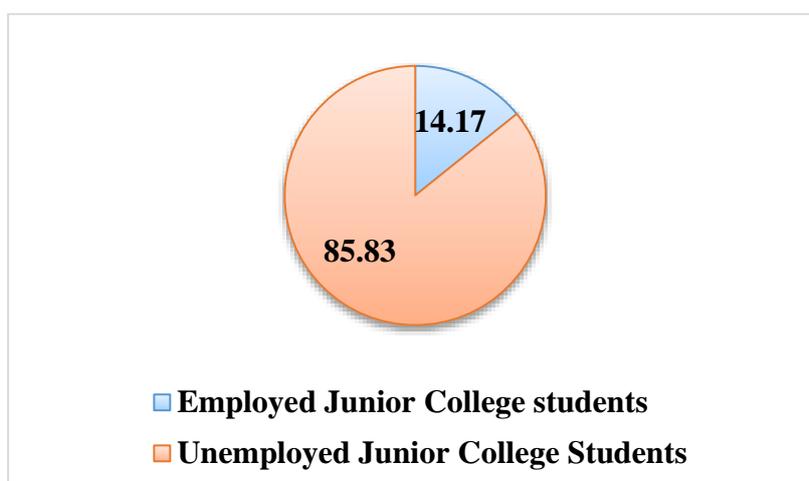
Factors that affect stress like anxiety, fear, economic status of family, examination fear, academic factors, etc were not considered.

#### Methodology and Sample of the Study

A descriptive survey method was used for the present study. The sample was collected using convenience sampling. Data was collected by circulating google forms due to the ongoing pandemic. A stress questionnaire designed by The International Stress Management Association (ISMA-UK) was used to collect data from junior college students. Total sample consisted of 240 junior college students belonging to all the three fields, science, commerce and arts. Among the total sample, 206 students were not employed and 34 students were employed. Among all junior college students 133 were male and 107 were females. Table 1.1 represents the sample for the study and Figure 1.1. represents a pie-chart depicting the sample size based on the percentage of students who are employed and unemployed. Figure 1.2 represents a pie-chart depicting the sample size based on gender considered for the present study.

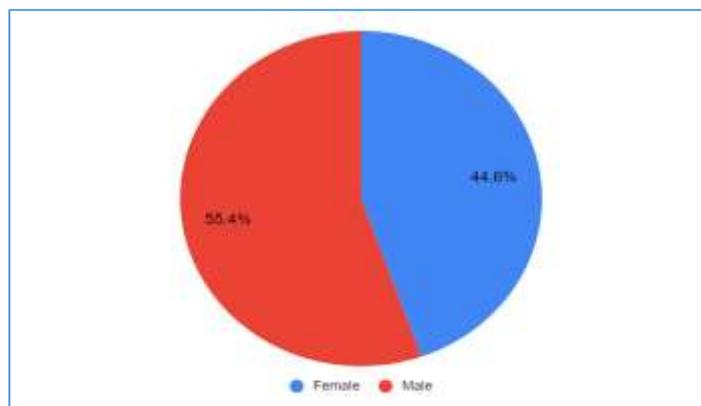
**Table 1.1: Sample Size for Present Study**

	N	Percentage	Total Sum
Male Junior College Students	133	55.42	240
Female Junior College students	107	44.58	
Employed Junior College students	34	14.17	240
Unemployed Junior College Students	206	85.83	



**Figure 1.1: Pie-Chart Depicting Employed and Unemployed junior college students**

The total sample consisted of 240 students out of which 14% students were employed and 86% students were unemployed.



**Figure 1.2: Pie-Chart Depicting Male and Female Junior College Students**

The total sample consisted of 240 students out of which 55% were Males and 45% students were females.

### Hypothesis Testing and Interpretation of Data

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of junior college students towards stress levels.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of male junior college students towards stress levels.
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude of female junior college students towards stress levels.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of employed junior college students towards stress levels.
5. There is no significant difference in the attitude of unemployed junior college students towards stress levels.
6. There is no significant difference between the stress levels among employed and Unemployed students of junior college.
7. There is no significant difference between the stress levels among Male and Female Junior College Students.

**8. Table 1.2: Relevant Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	S. D	Skewness	Kurtosis
Total students	240	14.38	15	17	5.51	-0.49	-0.01
Male Students	133	14.16	15	18	5.60	-0.29	-0.14
Female Students	107	14.66	16	17	5.42	-0.77	0.33
Employed Students	34	16.79	16	16	3.80	0.51	0.22
Unemployed Students	206	13.99	15	14	5.66	-0.45	-0.23

Hypothesis 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were tested using descriptive analysis

**Hypothesis 1:** The mean, median, mode and standard deviation value for junior college students was found to be 14.38, 15, 17 and 5.51 respectively. Skewness was negative and was found to be -0.49. Kurtosis was found to be -0.01, hence the data is platykurtic by nature.



**Hypothesis 2:** The mean, median, mode and standard deviation value for junior college male students was found to be 14.16, 15, 18 and 5.60 respectively. Skewness was negative and was found to be -0.29. Kurtosis was found to be -0.14, hence the data is platykurtic by nature.

**Hypothesis 3:** The mean, median, mode and standard deviation value for junior college female students was found to be 14.66, 16, 17 and 5.42 respectively. Skewness was negative and was found to be -0.77. Kurtosis was found to be 0.33, hence the data is leptokurtic by nature.

**Hypothesis 4:** The mean, median, mode and standard deviation value for employed students of junior college was found to be 16.79, 16, 16 and 3.80 respectively. Skewness was positive and was found to be 0.51. Kurtosis was found to be 0.22, hence the data is leptokurtic by nature.

**Hypothesis 5:** The mean, median, mode and standard deviation value for unemployed students of junior college was found to be 13.99, 15, 14 and 5.66 respectively. Skewness was negative and was found to be -0.45. Kurtosis was found to be -0.23, hence the data is platykurtic by nature.

**Table 1.3: Relevant Inferential Statistics**

	No	Mean	t value	p value	LoS
Male Students	133	14.16	-0.71	0.48	NS
Female Students	107	14.66			
Employed Junior college students	34	16.79	2.79	0.0057	S
Unemployed Junior college students	206	13.99			

**Hypothesis 6 and 7 was tested using inferential analysis.**

**Hypothesis 6:** The t value for Employed and Unemployed students of junior college was found to be 2.79. The p value was found to be 0.0057 which is lesser than 0.01 and 0.05, thus it is significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference between the attitude of Employed and Unemployed students of junior college. The mean score of Employed junior college students is found to be 16.79 which is greater than that of Unemployed junior college students which was found to be 13.99, having a higher attitude towards stress level.

**Hypothesis 7:** The t value for male and female students of junior college was found to be -0.71. The p value was found to be 0.48 which is greater than 0.01 and 0.05, thus it is not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is accepted. There is a no significant difference between the attitude of Male and Female students of junior college. The mean score of Female junior college students is found to be 14.66 which is greater than that of Male junior college students which was found to be 14.16, having a higher attitude towards stress level.

### Discussion and Conclusion

Work-related stress can arise from any type of situation - work content, work organization, work environment, lack of communication, etc. - and it varies from person to person. Employed students face many challenges: they have to balance work, school, outdoor activities, and personal health. Several studies have shown the fact that this



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measurement action is associated with a degree of stress. In addition to providing financial independence and satisfaction, the work provides both training and knowledge and helps students develop time management and self-confidence skills. Work teaches students responsibility and can emphasize what they learn in school. Experts, on the other hand, agree that students who work more than 15 to 20 hours a week are more likely to experience academic decline, which could lead to their leaving school altogether. Working long hours can also reduce the chances of building friendships and exploring interests that promote mental and emotional development. The present study also reflected results where in students who were working had a higher level of stress as compared to those who were not working. Stress increases as work load increases. This could be the probable reason for such findings.

With the help of teachers, family and friends, many working students can keep their stress levels relatively under control. Identifying students' interests and goals is an important part in helping them successfully pass-through college. At the same time, the college management and the professors themselves must take into consideration that stress is a factor that affects students' performance as well as behavior. Student support programs for reducing stress among the group of working students must be developed as well.

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