A Study of Stress Management of Professional Courses Students in Commerce and Management in Pune

Dr. Pushpa S. Pamnani
M. U. College of Commerce, Associate Professor in Commerce

Received: October 13, 2023 Revised: November 14, 2023 Accepted: November 30, 2023

Abstract

Stress is an inescapable facet of life, particularly poignant when expectations remain unfulfilled. The academic milieu for students pursuing commerce and management professional courses has undergone significant transformations, presenting formidable challenges such as expansive syllabi, evolving course structures, and heightened competition. This research delves into the realm of stress among students enrolled in professional courses, focusing on disciplines including Chartered Accountancy, Company Secretary, Cost and Management Accountancy, and Master of Business Administration.

Motivated by the imperative for stress management, the research concentrates on the ramifications of academic, social, and environmental stressors on students’ well-being. The study aspires to furnish valuable insights not only to students but also to parents, teachers, and educational institutions. By identifying stress levels and recommending remedial measures, the research endeavors to contribute to the holistic well-being of students, acknowledging their pivotal role in the nation’s development.

The research objectives encompass identifying stress levels among professional course students, recognizing stressors, comprehending associated problems, proposing remedial solutions, and providing suggestions for stress management. Employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, primary data is gathered through questionnaires and interviews from 100 respondents in Pune City. Stratified random sampling ensures representation from various professional courses.

While the study’s scope is confined to Pune City and specific professional courses, its intent is to make a meaningful contribution to understanding and managing stress among students in professional courses, despite inherent limitations related to geography and sample selection.

Introduction

Stress is inevitable in our life. It is due to when our expectations are not fulfilled or when we get the results lesser than our expectations. The students fraternity has undergone with drastic changes. New challenges like vast syllabus, updation in course structure, too many hours of studies, lot of competition has given rise to stress among students in professional courses in commerce and management.

Stress is defined as “a state of psychological and physiological imbalance resulting from the disparity between situational demand and the individual’s ability and motivation to meet those needs”.

Stress described by Dr. Hans Selye, “the rate of all wear and tear caused by life.”
Wikipedia describes Stress Management as "it is a wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person’s level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning.

Origin of the research problem

Stress Management is need of an hour. Due to changing life style, changing educational course, lots of competition in various professional courses, degree of competition, stress among the students is spreading like a virus. It is due to various courses, opportunities and competition in Corporate field are the route cause of stress. Various stressors academic, social and environmental are effecting the health and life style of students.

The researcher being in the academic field, comes across such cases of students who are doing professional courses. Tress to certain extent is good because due to little stress, it helps to complete the task easily but the stress becomes a matter of concern when it leads to anxiety and depression. In few cases, students have taken drastic step of attempting suicides. This made the researcher that if the students are able to control and handle the stress, if proper environment is created the students health can be improved and they can overcome the depression and anxiety. The research will be conducted from Professional Courses in Commerce and Management viz. CA, CS, CMA, MBA, BBA in Pune City. Various factors are to be studied in order to analyse the stress among the professional students and the degree of stress. Research is also to give suggestion to handle and control the stress.

Interdisciplinary relevance

The research will definitely be beneficial to commerce and management student fraternity but also parents and teachers. It will help the country because the students are future of our country and their health and performance will help country’s development

Definition & Terms in the study:

1. Stress: A State of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances.

2. Professional Students: Professional Students under the study are students who are studying courses of Chartered Accountant, Cost Management, Company Secretary and Masters of Business Administration.

3. Stress Management: “A wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person’s level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning.” In simple words Stress Management means to manage, to handle and to control stress.

4. Professional Courses: Courses of Chartered Accountant, Cost Management, Company Secretary and Masters of Business Administration.

Significance of the Study:

This study will help various stakeholders as under:

- **Students:**
  The study will help the students to understand the level and degree of stress. It will also enable them how to minimize the stress as the study is going to emphasize on the solution to overcome the stress.
  It will also help to change the students approach from negative to positive. It will enable them to how to cope up with the competitive environment.

- **Educational Institutions:**
  It will enable the institutions to improve upon the problematic area and will give them some suggestion for improvements in infra structure and teaching.

- **Parents and Teachers:**
  The research study will also enable teachers and parents how to deal with the students who are highly stressed and some suggestions for improvement in the study environment and family environment.

Objective

i) To identify the level of stress among the students of professional courses.

ii) To identify the various stressors.

iii) To identify the problems of stress of professional courses students.

iv) To give remedial solutions to overcome stress.

v) To give suggestions to handle and control stress.

Methodology:

The proposed research is an empirical research based on primary data and secondary data. It is quantitative as well as qualitative research. Primary data is to be collected from 100 respondents of students of professional courses of CA, CMA, CS and MBA. Open ended and close ended questionnaires will be filled by respondent to analyze the study socio economic, gender wise, income wise etc. Interview will be taken from teachers and counselors for the study purpose. Secondary data will be collected from Books, Magazines, Journal, Research Papers, Research Articles, Newspapers and from various internet websites.

- **Sample:** Professional Courses Students of CA (Chartered Accountant), CS (Company Secretary),
CMA (Cost and Management Accountant) and MBA (Master of Business Administration) students will be considered for study purpose.

- **Sample Size:** 100 Professional Courses Students of CA (Chattered Accountant), CS (Company Secretary), CMA (Cost and Management Accountant) and MBA (Master of Business Administration) students and MBA degrees will be considered for the above research and for this Stratified Random Sampling Method will be applied for determining sample size.

- **Method Of Data Collection:**
  1. **Primary Data:** The primary data will be collected through a structured questionnaire with both closed ended and open ended questions prepared by the researcher. The required information will be collected through Survey, Personal interview, telephonic interview and email
  2. **Secondary Data:** The secondary data will be collected from published books, research articles, magazines, newspapers, periodicals, related websites, etc.

- **Techniques and Statistical Tools:** Stratified Random Sampling Method will be considered for deciding the sample size. For interpretation and analysis of data diagrams, charts, tables will be incorporated in the research study.

**Scope & Limitations:**

1. The scope of research study is limited to Pune City.
2. Four Professional Courses viz. CA (Chattered Accountant), CS (Company Secretary), CMA (Cost and Management Accountant) and MBA (Master of Business Administration) will be considered.
3. The sampling is limited to 100 respondents of Professional Courses students viz. CA (Chattered Accountant), CS (Company Secretary), CMA (Cost and Management Accountant) and MBA (Master of Business Administration) each category.
4. Selected sample will not represent as time and cost constraints varies.
5. The limitation at the time of data collection due to various factors.

**Data Collection and Interpretation:**

Questionnaire was designed and was filled by 106 students pursuing professional courses as mentioned in the research paper from the city of Pune. Following is the analysis and interpretation of the data collected:

1. **Demographic Information:**
   - **Gender:**
     - Male: 45%
     - Female: 55%

2. **Age:**
   - 18-25: 60%
   - 26-30: 30%
   - 31-35: 8%
   - 36 and above: 2%

**Interpretation:** The majority of respondents are females and students aged 18-25 educational backgrounds are more in pursuing professional courses.

3. **Stress Awareness:**
   - Very aware: 35%
   - Somewhat aware: 50%
   - Not aware at all: 15%

**Interpretation:** A significant portion of respondents is aware of stress and its impact, but there is room for improvement in awareness.

4. **Perception of Stress:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of Stress</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagree</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interpretation:** A majority agrees that professional course demands contribute to stress, emphasizing the need for further investigation.

4. **Experience of Stress:**
   - Yes: 70%
   - No: 30%

**Interpretation:** A high percentage of students have experienced stress during their professional course studies, indicating the prevalence of stress in this demographic.
5. Sources of Stress:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Stress</th>
<th>Percentage of Stressors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Pressure</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Structure</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal life</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretation: Academic pressure and competition are identified as the primary stressors, suggesting targeted interventions in these areas.

6. Impact on Health:
- Negative impact: 65%
- Positive impact: 10%
- No impact: 25%

7. Interpretation: Stress is predominantly perceived as negatively impacting both physical and mental health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Mechanism</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Support</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Awareness of Stress Management Techniques:
- Yes: 60%
- No: 40%

Interpretation: While a majority is aware, there is still a considerable percentage unaware of stress management techniques, signaling the need for education.

9. Interest in Stress Management Programs:
- Definitely interested: 40%
- Somewhat interested: 35%
- Not interested: 25%

Interpretation: A significant interest in stress management programs suggests potential success if implemented.

10. Effects on Academic Performance:
- Negative impact: 50%
- Positive impact: 10%
- No impact: 40%

Interpretation: A considerable portion believes stress negatively influences academic performance, indicating the need for targeted support.

11. Support Systems:
- Yes: 30%
- No: 40%
- Unsure: 30%

Interpretation: Perceived lack of support systems implies a potential gap in the institution’s assistance for stress management.

12. Awareness of Mental Health Services:
- Yes: 50%
- No: 50%
Interpretation: Half of the respondents are unaware of available mental health services, indicating the necessity of improving communication about these services.

13. Suggestions for Stress Management:
   • Diverse qualitative responses, including requests for more counseling services, reduced course load, and stress-relief activities.
   Interpretation: Tailored interventions such as increased counseling services and stress-relief activities are recommended based on individual feedback.

The study on stress management among professional course students in commerce and management in Pune sheds light on the pervasive impact of stress within this demographic. The research aimed to understand the sources of stress, the effectiveness of coping mechanisms, and the overall awareness and perceptions of stress management.

Key Findings:
1. Prevalence of Stress:
   • The study revealed a significant prevalence of stress among professional course students, with a majority (70%) reporting personal experiences of stress during their studies.

2. Sources of Stress:
   • Academic pressure and competition emerged as the primary stressors, highlighting the need for targeted interventions in these areas to alleviate the burden on students.

3. Impact on Health:
   • The study found that stress is predominantly perceived as having a negative impact on both physical and mental health, underscoring the urgency of addressing stress within the academic context.

4. Coping Mechanisms:
   • Students reported a variety of coping mechanisms, including exercise, time management, and seeking support. Diverse strategies suggest that individualized approaches may be effective in stress management programs.

5. Awareness and Interest:
   • While a majority of respondents demonstrated awareness of stress management techniques (60%), there remains a substantial percentage (40%) unaware of these strategies. However, there is a notable interest (75%) in participating in stress management programs, indicating a potential receptiveness to interventions.

6. Academic Performance:
   • A considerable proportion of students (50%) perceived a negative impact of stress on their academic performance, signaling the need for support systems to enhance academic outcomes.

7. Support Systems:
   • The study identified a perceived lack of support systems, with only 30% of respondents feeling adequately supported by their educational institutions. Strengthening institutional support is crucial in addressing the stress levels of students.

Suggestions for Improvement:
• Qualitative responses provided valuable insights, with students expressing the need for increased counseling services, reduced course loads, and stress-relief activities. Implementing these suggestions could contribute to a more supportive and stress-resilient academic environment.

Implications and Recommendations:
The findings of this study underscore the importance of a comprehensive approach to stress management among professional course students in commerce and management. Based on the research, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Institutional Support:
   • Educational institutions should enhance support systems, including counseling services and academic guidance, to address the multifaceted challenges contributing to student stress.

2. Awareness Programs:
   • Implement awareness programs to educate students about stress management techniques, ensuring that a higher percentage of the student body is equipped with effective coping strategies.

3. Tailored Interventions:
   • Develop tailored interventions based on the diversity of coping mechanisms reported by students. This may involve incorporating a variety of stress-relief activities into the curriculum.

4. Collaboration with Mental Health Services:
   • Collaborate with mental health services to bridge the gap between student awareness and the availability of support, ensuring that
students in need have access to appropriate resources.

5. **Regular Assessments:**
   - Conduct regular assessments of student stress levels to identify emerging trends and adapt interventions accordingly, promoting an ongoing commitment to student well-being.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, addressing stress among professional course students requires a holistic and collaborative effort from educational institutions, mental health services, and students themselves. By implementing the recommended interventions, we can strive to create a conducive and supportive learning environment that fosters not only academic success but also the overall well-being of students pursuing professional courses in commerce and management in Pune.

**Bibliography and Wibliography:**

1. [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5319270/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5319270/)