Exploring the Sources of Academic Stress and Adopted Coping Mechanisms among University Students

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Article Info

Abstract

The primary objective of this research is to find out the origins of academic stress and the coping strategies employed by university going students. This research seeks to the find out the sources and causes of academic stress and explore the coping mechanisms adopted by students. This study utilizes a qualitative methodology. Thirty university students have undergone in-depth interviews (IDI). The data has undergone thematic analysis. Research findings uncover the various sources and underlying causes of academic stress among university students such as test anxiety, overloads of assignment, standards established by peers, lack of library resources, health issues during class tests and term final exams, virtual group discussions and works, unexpected course difficulty, clashes of deadline, difficulty regarding research proposal, lack of clarity in feedback. The study identifies and analyze coping strategies such as planning and prioritizing, study breaks, mindfulness and deep breathing, setting realistic goals healthy lifestyle choices, utilizing university resources use of time management apps and hobbies. The results are anticipated to provide valuable knowledge to both the academic community and student support services, assisting in the creation of focused interventions to tackle academic stressors and improve students' overall well-being. The primary objective is to establish a nurturing educational setting that promotes resilience and provides students with efficient techniques to effectively handle the difficulties encountered in higher education.

Introduction

Education is a life-changing experience that gives people the information, abilities, and exposure necessary for both professional and personal growth. But pursuing a higher education is not without its difficulties; university students frequently deal with a wide range of stressors that can affect both their mental health and academic performance. According to Kasey et al. (2021) one-third of students on campus experience signs of severe or extremely severe anxiety, depression and stress. It was discovered that faculty/staff and students both experienced similar levels of sadness, anxiety, and stress.

Academic stress is a big issue that affects negatively students all around the earth and has gained widespread recognition as a serious issue in higher education (Barbayannis et al., 2022). This issue is crucial, especially for

Bangladesh, a developing nation with a fast-expanding educational landscape (Phillips et al., 2020). According to Kasey et al. (2021), roughly one-third of students on campus exhibit signs of severe or serious anxiety, nervousness, stress, or depression. Nevertheless, there were students in terms of the mental health coping strategies employed and the perceived obstacles to seeking professional help for mental health care. The primary objective of the study is to ascertain the sources or causes of academic stress and investigate the techniques and strategies employed by students to manage it.

The current global higher education environment is characterized by a growing complexity, posing significant challenges for students who frequently encounter elevated levels of academic pressure and psychological distress. The aforementioned challenges have the potential to exert a detrimental influence on both academic results or achievement and overall personal welfare (Koppenborg et al. 2022). In developing nations, such as Bangladesh, the circumstances are particularly notable due to the scarcity of resources allocated to mental health assistance within academic environments (Phillips et al., 2020).

Numerous academic institutions in Bangladesh, there exists a dearth of all-encompassing, evidence-based information pertaining to academic stress, mental anxiety, their origins, coping strategies, and the potential association with academic achievement. Currently, there is insufficient documentation and comprehension regarding the stress levels encountered by students, their responses to these stressors, and the consequent effects on their academic performance. Furthermore, it is crucial to acknowledge that the existing literature has not adequately investigated culturally appropriate strategies for managing stress. This gap in knowledge significantly impacts the provision of mental health services, as effective strategies for addressing stress may not be adequately understood or utilized. In this study, the research objectives are

- To find out the Sources and causes of Academic Stress
- To Explore Coping Mechanisms Adopted by Students

Literature Review

To comprehend the complexities of academic stress among university students, it is necessary to thoroughly examine the existing literature on the subject. This literature review examines the origins of academic stress, its frequency and consequences, strategies for managing it, and its influence on academic achievement. Academic stress is a phenomenon, influenced by various internal and external factors. Numerous studies have delved into these stressors, providing comprehensive insights into what university students experience. This section dissects the primary sources of academic stress and mental anxiety, drawing upon established literature. One of the most frequently cited sources of academic stress is the pressure from assignments, projects, and examinations. In their study, Koppenborg et al. (2022) established that a considerable proportion of university going students experienced a sense of being overwhelmed as a result of the substantial workload associated with their academic obligations. The sensation of being overwhelmed frequently triggers anxiety among students, as they struggle to meet deadlines, maintain high standards in their work, and navigate extensive course outlines. In highly competitive academic institutions, there is a strong emphasis on achieving high grades. This culture frequently fosters a sense of immediacy and stress among students to attain excellent grades, as these are commonly

perceived as direct manifestations of their capabilities and future prospects. Baglione et al. (2022) emphasized in their study that this pressure can lead to increased levels of anxiety, as students consistently work to meet or exceed their own and others' expectations.

Balancing multiple academic responsibilities while also participating in extracurricular activities, maintaining a social life, and fulfilling personal commitments can pose significant challenges. According to Baglione et al., (2022), many students cite time management as a significant stressor. The constant juggle between these varied roles can create a continuous sense of urgency and tension, leading to feelings of being overwhelmed. Ridwan et al. (2021) conducted a study on the prevalence of anxiety ,mental stress and depression among Bangladeshi university students during the pandemic. He asserted that a substantial proportion of students are experiencing psychological distress, anxiety, and depression as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on their education and daily routines. The implementation of lockdown measures and the subsequent isolation have had detrimental impacts on individuals' mental well-being, manifesting in heightened levels of anxiety, depression, self-inflicted harm, and suicidal tendencies. The primary impediments to online education in Bangladesh include inadequate internet and technical infrastructure, exorbitant internet expenses, sluggish internet connectivity, financial instability within families, and the mental strain experienced by students. According to Shifa et al. (2020), a notable proportion (79.5%) of university students experience a substantial occurrence of anxiety, depression, and stress. The elevated incidence of mental health disorders can result in subpar academic achievement, diminished quality of life, severe health complications, and potentially even suicide attempts. According to a Chan et al. (2021), it was found that university going students who had elevated levels of irrational and illogical beliefs were more prone to experiencing stress depression and anxiety. In addition, he disclosed that male students, students from low-income families, Law students, individuals pursuing 5-year programs, or those in their second year of study exhibited a higher propensity for irrational beliefs. Furthermore, it was observed that male students, medical students, and individuals enrolled in 5-year programs exhibited notably elevated levels of depression, anxiety, and stress. Arévalo et al.(2019) examined the occurrence of depression and anxiety among university going students, investigated the factors linked to these conditions, and assessed their impact on academic performance. The university environment is a melting pot of relationships – with peers, faculty, administration, and even family. Muhnia et al., (2019) underscored the importance of these relationships in shaping a student's academic experience. Conflicts, misunderstandings, or even the sheer pressure of maintaining these relationships can be a source of stress. Especially when interpersonal issues intersect with academic challenges, the mental toll on students can be profound.

Especially relevant in contexts like Bangladesh, socio-cultural expectations play a pivotal role in academic stress. Family expectations about academic performance, societal views on suitable career paths, and cultural norms about success and failure can exert immense pressure on students. Phillips et al. (2020), cultural pressures and external societal in Bangladeshi universities can worsen the already present academic stressors, resulting in increased levels of anxiety. The academic setting, with its inherent difficulties, tends to impose substantial pressure on students, resulting in heightened levels of stress and anxiety for many. In recent years, the increasing occurrence of these problems among college students has become a subject of concern and investigation.

A study by Koppenborg et al., (2022) encompassing university students across diverse backgrounds and countries found that a considerable proportion of them reported high levels of stress and anxiety. Notably, the prevalence rates among university students were found to be higher than non-university going population. According to Phillips et al. (2020) in their study focusing on Bangladeshi university going students found that the unique socio-cultural dynamics of the country significantly influenced the prevalence rates, with many students reporting overwhelming stress related to academic expectations. While academic stress is a significant factor, it is crucial to understand its magnitude in comparison to other stressors. Martiny et al. (2021) found that, among the sample of college students they studied, academic stressors consistently ranked among the top sources of stress, even when compared to personal or familial issues.

Much of the research on academic stress and anxiety is based on Western and developed nations' student populations. Although studies like those by Philips et al. (2022) have shed light on the experiences of Bangladeshi students, there remains a gap in in-depth, context-specific research that considers regional, cultural, and institutional nuances within Bangladesh. Although literature touches upon coping mechanisms adopted by students, there's a limited understanding of their efficacy, especially in the context of different cultural and regional settings. More in-depth exploration into what works, why it works, and for whom it can provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals. In conclusion, while the existing literature provides a foundation for understanding academic stress and mental anxiety, there is a pressing need for more nuanced, contextual, and longitudinal research, especially in diverse settings like Bangladesh. Addressing these research gaps can offer a richer understanding of the challenges faced by students and inform more effective interventions and strategies to promote their mental well-being.

Method

This study utilizes a qualitative methodology. A total of thirty university students from different university from Bangladesh were subjected to in-depth interviews (IDI) in order to ascertain the origins of academic stress and examine the methods employed by students to cope with it. Purposively, a total of thirty university students (15 females and 15 males) from six different universities (Dhaka University, Khulna University, University of Rajshahi, University of Barishal, Shahjalal University of Science & Technology, and University of Chittagong) from Bangladesh was subjected to in-depth interviews (IDI) in order to ascertain the origins of academic stress and examine the methods employed by students to cope with it." instate of "A total of thirty university students from different university from Bangladesh were subjected to in-depth interviews (IDI) in order to ascertain the origins of academic stress and examine the methods employed by students to cope with it. The data has been analyzed using thematic analysis. Common themes refer to the recurring subjects, concepts, and patterns of meaning. The researchers meticulously analyze the data in order to identify these recurring patterns.The methodology employed in this study utilizes the thematic analysis approach, which encompasses six distinct stages: becoming acquainted with the data, assigning codes, developing themes, assessing themes, defining and labelling themes, and documenting the findings. Through the implementation of this methodology, the researchers have effectively mitigated the occurrence of confirmation bias in the analysis .

Results

Test Anxiety

Taking the midterm exam for students, panic is a difficult and regular element of academic stress. Term examinations are an important part of academic life, and they frequently serve as pressures that add significantly to the overall academic stress faced by students. One respondent shared *"It seemed like there was a perfect storm of deadlines for the midterm examinations last semester. Exams for several topics were scheduled for days apart, and there was an excessive amount of material to cover. I felt so panicked."* Another respondent added *"Exam times tend to be when people are most stressed. It's not only about studying for exams; it's also about the anxiety of slipping behind or not living up to expectations set by peers and teachers. Not only is the intensity academic, but it's also mental and emotional."*

Overloads of Assignment

When faced with numerous assignments, tests, or projects that have overlapping deadlines, students may feel stressed. Students sometimes face an overwhelming load of assignments, which is a major source of academic stress. One respondent stated *"One week in particular, there were unforeseen assignments added to the usual workload. Major projects seem to have been assigned concurrently by professors teaching various courses."*

Standards Established by Peers

University students' stress levels can be impacted by a number of things, including what are occasionally thought of as "standards" established by the academic environment. One respondent shared *"It is more than simply learning; it involves establishing your worth in a competitive environment. You feel as though you have to live up to this unmentioned standard, and that can be quite stressful."*

Technical Issues during Online Exams

Unexpected challenges such as internet connectivity issues, platform failures, or computer errors can cause significant stress and anxiety for students taking online tests. A respondent shared *"A technological issue occurred during one of my online exams, causing significant disruptions to the entire procedure. A stressful scenario resulted from the exam's time constraints and the worry of handling the malfunction."*

Group Coordination Anxiousness

Collaborative projects and group assignments are frequent in academic contexts, and the necessity for good group management can bring a new source of. Academic stress and mental discomfort can be exacerbated by the difficulties of managing schedules, balancing varied opinions, and ensuring equitable contributions within a group dynamic. One respondent stated *"When members of the group had to make last-minute compromises and alterations due to clashing schedules and different work styles, organizing a cooperative project became*

extremely difficult and anxious for me."

Lack of Library Resources

Access to appropriate and diverse learning materials is critical for education, and a lack of library resources can exacerbate stress. Students' ability to satisfy academic objectives can be hampered by a lack of key documents, research materials, or outdated resources. One respondent shared *"I discovered that some essential books I needed to finish my research paper weren't available at the library. Finding substitute sources at the last minute caused a great deal of worry."*

Health Issues during Class Tests and Term Final Exams

Having health problems during important exams might worsen academic stress and anxiety. Physical discomfort, illness-related disturbances, or anxiety about health setbacks during tests can all have a substantial impact on students' concentration and performance. One respondent shared *"It was a nightmare to become ill just before a test. I had not anticipated the additional layer of stress that came with trying to study while unwell."*

Virtual Group Discussions and Works

While virtual group discussions and collaborative work provide chances for academic involvement, they can also be pressures for students. The transition to virtual platforms creates new hurdles such as technical difficulties, communication barriers, and a sense of isolation, all of which may contribute to increased academic stress and mental discomfort. One respondent shared *"Making the switch to online group discussions presented difficulties for me. Collaborative work was more difficult than face-to-face contacts due to technical difficulties and miscommunications. Which is stressful for me."*

Unexpected Course Difficulty

Unexpected course difficulties can considerably contribute to students' academic stress and mental distress. When students face problems that exceed their initial expectations in a course, it can lead to emotions of inadequacy, self-doubt, and increased pressure to perform. One respondent shared *"I had assumed that one particular course would be easy to do but as the semester went on, the degree of difficulty suddenly increased. Adapting my study techniques to the increased complexity caused me stress."*

Clashes of Deadline

Deadline clashes are a significant source of stress for students in the academic setting. When several assignments, projects, or tests all have tight deadlines, students are typically overwhelmed and under pressure to manage their time. One respondent shared *"On the same day, several significant assignments were due. Due to conflicting deadlines, even with careful planning, there was a period of heavy effort around the clock to provide high-quality*

work for each assignment. Which was a total nightmare for me."

Lack of clarity in Feedback

When students receive ambiguous or vague feedback on their assignments, tests, or general performance, it can cause them to be unsure about their strengths and flaws, hindering their ability to grow. In the absence of precise instruction, students may get frustrated, worried, and unsure of how to meet their teachers' expectations. One respondent shared *"My teacher's ambiguous or inconsistent response on an assignment left me unsure of the path I should go with my work. The uncertainty made meeting deadlines more stressful."*

Limited Access to Lab Equipment

Students pursuing scientific subjects may experience academic stress and emotional distress as a result of limited access to lab equipment. The inability to get sufficient instruments and resources for practical experiments might cause irritation and impede students' ability to achieve academic requirements. One respondent shared *"My assignment was delayed, uncertain, and stressful due to limited access to critical lab equipment."*

Miscommunication with Faculty Members

When clear and effective communication fails in the educational environment, children may experience confusion, uncertainty, and frustration. Misunderstood instructions, confusing expectations, or inconsistent feedback can all contribute to academic difficulties, affecting a student's performance and self-esteem. The concern of making mistakes owing to little or confusing knowledge can increase stress and contribute to anxiety. One respondent shared *"Different standards for a group assignment resulted from a miscommunication between two faculty members. It took more work to resolve the problem, and it added needless stress to everyone in the group."*

Balancing Work and Studies

The pressures of combining academic and professional obligations can result in emotions of overload, time constraints, and a constant fight to priorities one task over the other. One respondent shared *"I attempt to maintain a full course load while working a part-time job, but it gets stressful during busy times. However, it was chaotic."*

Coping Mechanisms Adopted by Students
Planning and Prioritizing

Students who develop good planning abilities may build realistic plans, designate adequate time for learning, and set attainable goals. Prioritizing work based on priority and deadlines allows students to focus on key assignments while feeling less overwhelmed. One respondent shared *"I priorities assignments according to priority and deadlines when organizing my study sessions and assignments. I can divide the workload into more manageable portions with its assistance"*

Study Breaks

Scheduled and deliberate study breaks allow pupils to recuperate both physically and psychologically. Short breaks during study sessions aid in preventing burnout, improving concentration, and increasing overall productivity. One respondent shared *"For me, it's essential to take short breaks during study sessions. I take use of that opportunity to stretch, take a walk, or just do something fun. It refreshes my mind.'*

Mindfulness and Deep Breathing

Mindfulness practice entails fostering awareness of the present moment without judgement, which allows pupils to detach from overwhelming pressures. Deep breathing techniques supplement awareness by boosting calm and lowering physiological stress signs. One respondent shared *"My practice includes deep breathing exercises and mindfulness exercises to help me relax. For me, it's a fast method to refocus and lower anxiety."*

Group Study

Collaborative learning not only enhances knowledge exchange, but it also gives emotional support and a sense of camaraderie among students facing similar academic obstacles. Group study sessions enable the exchange of viewpoints, insights, and study tactics, providing a collaborative environment that can decrease academic stress. One respondent shared *"I may share the workload and pick up knowledge from others by participating in study groups. It offers more than simply academics; it also fosters a sense of solidarity and emotional support."*

Setting Realistic Goals

Academic stress is frequently caused by unrealistic expectations and pressures to accomplish impossible goals. Setting realistic goals generates a sense of accomplishment and progress, which boosts students' self-esteem and drive. One respondent shared *"I try very hard to set reasonable and doable goals. One way to avoid feeling overwhelmed is to divide harder tasks into smaller, more manageable pieces.*"

Healthy Lifestyle Choices

A holistic approach to well-being, which includes both physical and mental health, enables students to negotiate academic challenges with greater vigor and a more positive mentality. One respondent shared *"Regular exercise, a well-balanced diet, and enough sleep are all important aspects of my healthy lifestyle. The resilience of my mind is much enhanced by my physical health."*

Utilizing University Resources

Counselling, mental health resources, and academic assistance are common support services provided by universities. Students who are stressed or anxious can benefit from obtaining help from these options. One

respondent shared *"I've benefited from many of the university's resources, such as the counselling service."*

Use of Time Management Apps

Time management tools can help you organize chores, make reminders, and create effective calendars. Students gain control over their time by using these tools, which reduces the likelihood of feeling overwhelmed. One respondent shared *"I set reminders and schedule my study sessions using time management applications. I make sure to manage my time well and maintain organization."*

Positive Self-Talk

Using optimistic affirmations and constructive thoughts to encourage oneself helps build a more positive mindset, reducing the effects of stress. Students can increase confidence and lessen the negative impact of pressures by reframing problems as opportunities for growth and success. One respondent shared *"Using positive self-talk is powerful. Rather than getting bogged down in self-doubt, I remind myself of my accomplishments in the past and concentrate on my abilities*."

Hobbies

Outside of the classroom, students can relieve stress by engaging in activities that bring them joy and fulfilment. Hobbies serve as a beneficial distraction, allowing people to momentarily disengage from academic expectations and immerse themselves in things they enjoy.

A. Riding a motor Bike, Bicycle

One respondent shared *"Riding a motor bike is one of my favorite ways for relaxation after class. One feel refreshed by the freedom of movement and the closeness to nature."* Another respondent also shared *"Cycling is an amazing way for me to spend time relaxing after studying. The ability to move and the connection with outdoors provide a sense of freshness."*

B. Travelling

One respondent shared *"My favorite stress reliever is travelling to new areas. It helps me to get out of my routine, learn new perspectives, and make long-lasting memories."*

C. Reading

One respondent shared *"Reading has provided me with comfort. It's a method for me to decompress, learn something new outside of my academic subject, and become immersed in compelling stories."*

D. Watching Movies

One respondent shared *"Watching movies are my favorite way for relaxation. They transport me to other worlds, providing a little respite from the monotony of university life."*

E. Sports

One respondent shared *"My go-to stress reliever is team sports like football or hoop. The sense of teamwork among teammates fosters a supportive environment, and the shared objective of winning on the field helps distract me from academic stress."*

Taking One Step at a Time

Academic stress is frequently caused by a perception of onerous tasks and future uncertainties. By breaking down larger goals into smaller, more achievable steps, students may focus on immediate priorities while feeling less overwhelmed. Individuals can navigate through obstacles incrementally by focusing on one activity at a time, providing a sense of accomplishment and control. One respondent shared *"I tell myself to go one step at a time when the task seems too much to handle. Stress management involves concentrating on the current task at hand."*

Social work /Volunteering

Engaging in endeavors that contribute to the welfare of the community or others not only imparts a sense of meaning, but also offers a crucial outlook beyond academic obligations. One respondent shared *"Participating in community engagement programs gives me a unique perspective. It reminds me that there is a world outside of textbooks, and assisting others gives me a sense of purpose in the middle of scholastic stress."* Another respondent also shared *"Participating in social advocacy campaigns gives me power. Working for positive social change is a great motivator for me, and it allows me to channel my stress into something productive".*

Discussion

The research's one of the specific aims is to assess the Source and causes of Sources of Academic Stress University going students. The current study found that deadlines and workloads are major sources of academic stress, according to survey data. Exams, teaching methods, and deadlines contribute to stress levels, while assignments and workload also contribute to stress. According to Leslie et al. (2021) workload, research, prioritization, lack of support, feedback, balancing school life, stress, and lecturer expectations emerged as the Source of Sources of Academic Stress. A separate investigation revealed that stress can be induced by organizational elements such as inadequate dissemination of information and challenging examinations (e.g., repeated exams, perceived unjust grading ,scheduling issues), subpar theoretical and practical instruction, performance demands, time constraints, social interactions, and personal traits like self-imposed expectations and apprehension of failure (Weber et al., 2019).

The study found academic stress is a prevalent issue among students, with 74.0% experiencing frequent overwhelm. This stress is exacerbated by their academic duties, with 13.7% experiencing occasional overwhelm and 8.2% experiencing regular overwhelm. Leslie et al. (2021) discovered that graduate school can be a source of stress and overwhelm. The academic stress and pressure experienced by university going students was complex and primarily attributed to the inflexible curriculum. The contributing factors include an augmented workload, limited time availability, the demands of the research course, insufficient support and prompt feedback from supervisors, and delayed responses from the teachers.

The evident from the current study, academic stress, particularly during the Midterm Exam, is a significant issue for students, as the imminent nature of these tests, the need for intensive preparation, and the pressure to perform well can cause exam panic. Doğan et. All (2018) evaluated one of the stressors is university students' poor academic performance. Anxiety rises before an exam, even in non-anxious students. Growing up with exam anxiety, it affects later. Exam anxiety is linked to more negative, off-task self-dialogue, which lowers cognitive performance, according to studies.

The present Study found overloads of assignments, tests, or projects can cause students stress, leading to academic stress and mental anxiety. Balancing deadlines, maintaining academic excellence, and completing multiple tasks can be challenging and time-consuming. According to Bataineh (2013) academic overloads, course discomfort, insufficient and low study time, assignment, low motivation, workload every semester, exam awkwardness, and high family expectations can all contribute to stress among students.

The study found university students grapple with increasing reliance on online exams, facing technical issues like internet connectivity, platform failures, and computer errors, causing stress and anxiety. Elsalem et al. (2020) found that remote E-exams induce higher levels of stress in 33% of medical science students. The data showed University students face stress due to collaborative projects, group assignments, and scheduling challenges, which can exacerbate mental discomfort and exacerbate academic stress. Group projects can be both rich and frustrating for students, resulting in grades that are unrelated to their work (Mertler, 2016).

According to this present study Education requires suitable and diverse learning materials, and a lack of library resources can cause stress. A lack of important documents, research materials, or outdated resources can impede students' ability to meet academic objectives. This deficiency irritates not only the quality of academic work, but it also adds an added degree of stress linked with library resources limitation. Sharma, (2018) found inadequate academic resources can cause stress and anxiety, particularly among male students and urban students.

This research investigation established that Health issues during exams can exacerbate academic stress and anxiety, impacting students' concentration and performance due to physical discomfort, illness-related disturbances, or anxiety about health setbacks. According to Revannasiddaiah et al. (2013), health problems experienced during exams can worsen academic stress and anxiety, as demonstrated in the case of a fourteen year-old boy with generalized anxiety disorder. The study showed that unexpected course difficulties can significantly increase students' academic stress and mental distress, leading to feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, and increased

pressure to perform. Kausar (2010) investigate that unexpected course difficulties, such as grade competition, time constraints, and new learning environments, can significantly increase students' academic stress.

The study found Deadline clashes in academic settings cause stress for students, as they are overwhelmed by multiple assignments, projects, or tests, requiring them to manage their time effectively. Academic workloads, difficulty balancing study and social activities, and assignment/project submission deadlines all contribute to academic stress among university undergraduates (Uyanne, 2022). According to this study uncertainty in students' performance can hinder growth and hinder their ability to meet teachers' expectations due to lack of precise instruction. There are some students who view feedback from their teachers as being unwelcome, uncomfortable, and even frustrating, which can lead to feelings of stress and anxiety (Listyani, 2021).

The study showed that Limited access to lab equipment can cause academic stress and emotional distress for students pursuing scientific subjects, hindering their ability to achieve academic requirements. Ram et al. (2019) showed that limited lab access can lead to academic stress for students because it restricts their ability to experiment beyond the experiments that are listed. Investigation established that combining academic and professional responsibilities can lead to feelings of overload, time constraints, and constant task prioritization, causing difficulties in concentration, sleep sacrifice, and feelings of guilt or anxiety. Winterdyk et al. (2008) found stress-related issues can arise for students when they are attempting to manage their time effectively, personal issues, academic pressures, and social pressures all at the same time.

The research's one of the specific aims is to find the Common Coping Strategies used by Students of University. The data reveal that student use various coping mechanisms to manage academic stress. Talking to someone, exercise, recreation, meditation, and taking breaks were the most common coping mechanisms. The findings highlight the importance of a holistic approach to well-being, including mental and physical health, for students to manage academic stress effectively. Educational institutions should promote a variety of coping mechanisms to support students' academic well-being. This present study found managing academic stress and mental anxiety requires a systematic approach to academic and personal duties. Planning skills help students create realistic plans, schedule enough learning time, and set achievable goals. Prioritizing work by priority and deadline helps students focus on important assignments and feel less overwhelmed. Popa et al. (2020) evaluated that in order to effectively manage stress during exams, medical students utilize coping mechanisms such as acceptance and planning. These mechanisms help them improve their ability to regulate their emotions and concentrate on finding solutions to problems.

As the study found students can rest physically and mentally with planned study breaks. Short breaks during study sessions prevent burnout, improve concentration, and boost productivity. Reyes-Zárate et al. (2022) as stated studies have shown that taking brief breaks while engaging in activities can be beneficial to people's health. According to this information, the tracking device and a predetermined schedule of breaks during the course of several hours spent working at a desk demonstrated a positive and good impact on the mental health of individuals. The present study demonstrated that mindfulness and Deep Breathing calms and reduces stress. These strategies help students stay calm and resilient when facing academic challenges. As per Agrawal et al. (2020)

practice relaxation techniques, including deep breathing exercises, to manage stress effectively, especially in busy individuals with high cognitive load. Mindfulness and deep breathing techniques, which are used in meditation, are effective in reducing stress and helping to calm the mind.

As per present research collaborative learning improves knowledge exchange and provides emotional support and camaraderie to students facing similar academic challenges. Group study sessions allow for the sharing of ideas, insights, and study strategies, reducing academic stress-related isolation and anxiety. Mertler (2016) argued It is possible for students to experience both richness and frustration when working on group projects, which can result in grades that are unrelated to their work. The study found students can avoid feeling overwhelmed by setting clear, achievable goals that help them break down larger tasks. Setting realistic goals boosts students' self-esteem and drive by fostering progress. Cheung (2004) demonstrated that goal setting can effectively improve autonomous learning as well as academic achievement in college students by instilling confidence in their abilities and encouraging goal commitment.

The research stated that prioritizing self-care through healthier lifestyle choices can help students overcome anxiety. A holistic approach to well-being, including physical and mental health, helps students tackle academic stress with more energy and positivity. Based on La Cascia et al. (2019) healthy lifestyles, such as a balanced diet, enough sleep, low stress, and regular physical activity have been linked to academic achievement among university students. The study revealed that universities provide counselling services, mental health resources, and academic assistance. These options can assist in managing stress or anxiety in students. Bhujade (2017) stated that college students frequently experience depression, anxiety, and academic stress. To tackle these problems, counselling centers and mental health professionals can provide assistance. The study explained hobbies help people escape academic pressure and focus on what they enjoy. Self-care can be done through art, sports, reading, or other hobbies. Hobby time helps students relax and balance their lives, improving their well-being. Mackenstadt et al. (2022) stated connecting with a creative hobby may improve mental health, but receiving recognition for it may have mixed effects.

As the study stated , by breaking big goals into smaller, more manageable steps, students can focus on immediate priorities and feel less overwhelmed. Focusing on one task at a time helps people overcome obstacles and feel in control. Popa et al. (2020) showed that medical students use coping mechanisms such as acceptance and planning to effectively manage stress during exams. These mechanisms assist them in improving their ability to regulate their emotions and concentrate on problem solving. The study mentioned volunteering improves mental health by fostering belonging and fulfilment. Social activity contacts can form a supportive network, giving students a sense of solidarity and a common goal. As Thoits and Hewitt (2001) demonstrated that volunteering improves personal well-being, with people who are happier spending more hours in helping the community.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this study has conducted a thorough investigation into the factors contributing to academic stress and the strategies employed by college students to manage it. The exploration of academic stress has revealed a wide

range of stressors that have a significant impact on students' mental health and academic work. By conducting a thorough examination of these stressors, we have determined that academic pressures, stress related to examinations, interpersonal difficulties, and various other factors significantly contribute negatively to the overall weight of academic stress.

The study emphasizes the significance of acknowledging and dealing with the complex characteristics of academic stress in order to carry out successful interventions. Clearly, academic stress is not a universally applicable phenomenon, and specific strategies are necessary to tackle the distinct challenges encountered by students. Knowledge of this nature can be utilized by higher education institutions, educators, and policymakers to create focused support initiatives that address particular sources of stress and foster a more supportive academic atmosphere. The investigation of coping mechanisms employed by students has yielded valuable insights into the adaptive strategies that contribute to resilience and well-being. Students utilize a wide array of coping strategies, such as effectively managing their time, seeking assistance from others, participating in physical activities, and adopting positive cognitive approaches. Acknowledging the efficacy of these coping strategies enables the creation of comprehensive support systems that encompass both proactive measures and reactive interventions.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the significance of promoting a culture that encourages transparency and consciousness regarding mental health concerns within the academic community. Universities can foster a supportive atmosphere for students to effectively cope with stress and seek aid by diminishing the negative perception surrounding help-seeking and promoting knowledge about mental health. Although this study has offered valuable finding and insights, it is crucial to recognize its limitations. The research was centered on a particular demographic of university students and may not comprehensively encompass the intricacies of academic stress in diverse cultural or institutional settings. Subsequent research efforts may broaden the range of participants to encompass a more varied sample and examine the long-term impacts of stress and coping strategies on academic progress. Ultimately, this research enhances the data in ongoing discussion on academic stress by providing a detailed comprehension of its origins and the adaptive techniques utilized by college students. The findings and analysis of this study have practical and real implications for creating specific interventions, raising awareness about mental health, and ultimately creating a supportive and stress free environment for academic that promotes both academic achievement and overall mental health and well-being of university student.

Recommendations

Implementation of Stress Management Workshops

Considering the multitude of sources that contribute to academic stress, it would be prudent for universities to contemplate the implementation of stress management workshops. These workshops have the potential to equip students with the necessary tools and strategies to accurately identify, comprehend, and effectively manage stressors.

Enhancement of Academic Support Services

Enhancing the efficacy of current academic support services, such as tutoring programs and counselling centers,

can provide students with valuable resources to effectively tackle academic difficulties. Facilitating access to proficient experts who can assist students in effectively managing their academic responsibilities and offering tailored assistance for particular subjects could help alleviate stress associated with academic performance.

Promotion of Holistic Well-being

Promoting a comprehensive approach to well-being can be advantageous. Universities ought to advocate for the significance of physical well-being, psychological well-being, and interpersonal relationships. Efforts such as fitness programs, campaigns to raise awareness about mental health, and activities aimed at fostering a sense of community can enhance the campus environment by promoting positivity and support.

Regular Assessment and Adjustment of Academic Policies

Institutions ought to conduct periodic evaluations of their academic policies in order to identify any elements that may be contributing to student stress. This entails evaluating the structure of exams, due dates for assignments, and the overall amount of work.

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