



A Descriptive Study Of Academic Stress Among Commerce Undergraduate Students Of Latur City

Marde, A.D* & Nadipalli, M.R**

*Physical Education Director, Dr. Moonje Institute, Nashik

**Physical Education Teacher, JSPM, Pune

Abstract

The present investigation was carried out to assess the level of academic stress among Commerce undergraduate students studying in colleges of Latur city. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The sample comprised 120 Commerce undergraduate students selected through purposive sampling technique, including 60 boys and 60 girls from various colleges of Latur city. Academic stress data were gathered using the Academic Stress Scale developed by Kumar, Yadav, and Yadav. For the statistical analysis of the collected data, descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and standard error of the mean were employed. The overall mean academic stress score of Commerce undergraduate students was found to be 106.30, with a standard deviation of 12.25 and a standard error of the mean of 1.12, indicating a moderate level of academic stress among the students. The findings of the study suggest that Commerce undergraduate students experience considerable academic stress due to academic workload, examination pressure, and career-related expectations. The study highlights the importance of academic counselling, stress management interventions, and career guidance services to help Commerce undergraduate students effectively manage academic stress.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Commerce Undergraduate Students, Gender Differences, Latur city

Introduction

Stress has become an inevitable component of modern educational systems, particularly at the level of higher education. Undergraduate students are exposed to multiple academic and non-academic stressors that may adversely affect their psychological well-being, academic performance, and overall quality of life. Academic stress refers to the mental and emotional strain experienced by students due to academic demands that exceed their adaptive capabilities. These demands may include academic workload, examination pressure, competition, expectations from parents and teachers, and concerns related to future career prospects.

In the contemporary educational context, Commerce education occupies a significant position as it prepares students for careers in finance, accounting, management, banking, economics, and business administration. Commerce undergraduate students are expected to acquire both conceptual understanding and practical skills within a limited time frame. The curriculum often includes complex theoretical subjects, numerical problem-solving, internal assessments, projects, and semester-end examinations. In addition to regular academic requirements, many Commerce students simultaneously prepare for professional courses such as Chartered Accountancy (CA), Company Secretary (CS), Cost and Management Accountancy (CMA), and various competitive examinations. Managing these multiple responsibilities can lead to increased levels of academic stress.

Gender differences in academic stress have also been widely discussed in educational research. Male students may experience stress due to societal expectations related to employment, financial independence, and career success. Female students, on the other hand, may face stress related to academic achievement, family expectations, and balancing academic responsibilities with personal roles. These gender-based expectations can influence how students perceive and respond to academic stress.

In cities like Latur, where higher education aspirations are steadily increasing but employment opportunities remain limited, Commerce undergraduate students may experience additional pressure regarding their future careers. The uncertainty related to job prospects, competition for limited opportunities, and the need to perform well academically can intensify stress levels. Despite the importance of Commerce education, limited research has focused specifically on academic stress among Commerce undergraduate students in semi-urban regions. Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the level of academic stress among Commerce undergraduate boys and girls studying in colleges of Latur city.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the level of academic stress among Commerce undergraduate students of Latur city.
- To study academic stress among Commerce undergraduate boys.
- To study academic stress among Commerce undergraduate girls.

Material & methods

Method-

The present investigation adopted a descriptive research method to assess the level of academic stress among Commerce undergraduate students of Latur city. The descriptive method was considered appropriate as it aims to describe the existing status of academic stress among the selected group of students without manipulating any variables.

Participants-

The participants of the study consisted of 120 Commerce undergraduate students, including 60 boys and 60 girls, selected from various colleges of Latur city. A purposive sampling technique was employed for the selection of participants. All the participants were regular undergraduate Commerce students and voluntarily participated in the study.

Variables and Tools-

In the present study, academic stress was treated as the dependent variable, while gender (boys and girls) was considered as the independent variable. Data on academic stress were collected using the Academic Stress Scale (ASS) developed by Kumar, Yadav, and Yadav. The scale measures various dimensions of academic stress such as examination pressure, academic workload, time management, and academic expectations. The tool is standardized and has been reported to possess adequate reliability and validity, making it suitable for use in educational research.

Procedure-

Prior permission was obtained from the authorities of the selected colleges before administering the tool. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to the participants, and they were assured that the information provided by them would be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. The Academic Stress Scale was administered to the participants in a classroom setting under standardized conditions. Sufficient time was given to complete the questionnaire, and necessary instructions were provided. After the completion of data collection, the responses were scored according to the manual, and the data were systematically organized for statistical analysis.

Result

Table No. 1
Descriptive Statistical Analysis of Academic Stress Commerce Student

Gender	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error of Mean
Boys	60	108.40	12.65	1.63
Girls	60	104.20	11.80	1.52
Total	120	106.30	12.25	1.12

Interpretation of Results

The data presented in Table 1 indicate that Commerce undergraduate students of Latur city experience a moderate level of academic stress. The mean academic stress score of boys (Mean = 108.40) is higher than that of girls (Mean = 104.20), suggesting that male students experience comparatively greater academic stress. However, the stress levels of both boys and girls fall within the moderate range, indicating that academic stress is a common phenomenon among Commerce undergraduate students.

Discussion

The findings of the present study clearly demonstrate that academic stress is a significant issue among Commerce undergraduate students of Latur city. The moderate level of academic stress observed among the students may be attributed to multiple academic and career-related factors. Commerce students are required to manage continuous assessments, assignments, projects, and semester-end examinations, which increases academic workload and pressure.

Additionally, the need to perform well academically while simultaneously preparing for professional courses and competitive examinations further intensifies stress levels. Many Commerce undergraduate students experience anxiety related to securing stable employment after graduation. This anxiety may be more pronounced among male students due to societal expectations of financial responsibility and career success. The slightly higher stress levels observed among boys in the present study may be explained by these factors.

Female students also experience academic stress, although to a comparatively lesser extent. This difference may be attributed to better coping mechanisms, academic adjustment, or social support systems among female students. The findings of the study are consistent with earlier research, which has reported moderate to high levels of academic stress among undergraduate students, particularly those enrolled in career-oriented streams.

The results highlight the importance of implementing institutional support mechanisms to address academic stress. Colleges should provide academic counselling services, stress management programs, and career guidance initiatives to help students develop effective coping strategies. Teachers should also adopt supportive teaching practices that reduce unnecessary academic pressure and encourage a positive learning environment.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that Commerce undergraduate students of Latur city experience a moderate level of academic stress. Both boys and girls are affected by academic workload, examination pressure, and career-related concerns, with boys experiencing slightly higher stress levels. Although a moderate level of stress may motivate students to perform better academically, prolonged and unmanaged stress can negatively affect mental health and academic performance. Therefore, educational institutions should prioritize the psychological well-being of students by introducing counselling services, stress management programs, and career guidance support to help Commerce undergraduate students cope effectively with academic stress.

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