

Extent to Which Various Academic Factors Cause Stress in Undergraduate Students at a University in Karachi and What Unhealthy Coping Strategies They Use

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Abstract : This research investigated how much stress is induced by various study-related factors, in undergraduate students belonging to a renowned university in Karachi along with the unhealthy coping strategy the students use to manage the stress. The study related factors considered for the purpose of the study were curriculum and instruction based stress, teacher-student relationship, assessment system and different components related to academic work. A survey in which questionnaires were administered to hundred students was conducted. The data were analyzed quantitatively to determine the percentages of stress induced by the various factors. The study found that student-teacher relationship is the strongest factor that causes stress in the undergraduate students specifically when teachers do not deliver the lectures effectively and give assignments and presentations to students without clear guidelines and instructions. The second important factor that causes stress was the different components of academic life, such as, parental expectations and pressures to achieve one's goals. Assessment system was found to be the third key factor inducing stress and affecting students' cognitive and psychological functioning. The most commonly used unhealthy coping strategy for stress management was procrastination. In light of the findings, it is recommended that importance be given to teacher training to ensure that instruction is proper and healthy teacher student relationship exists. Effective support programs, workshops, seminars, and different awareness programs should be arranged for promoting awareness regarding mental health in educational institutions. Moreover, additional zero credit courses should be offered to teach students how to learn stress management and healthy coping skills. Sumara Khanzada Clinical Psychologist Sumara.khanzada@gmail.com

Keywords : Stress, coping strategies, academic stress, relationship

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