

STRESS, PRESSURE & ANXIETY OF COMPETITIVE EXAMS – AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON STUDENT’S PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

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Abstract

Hard work and dedication are rewarded by higher test scores in competitive examinations. A lot of the time, this extra effort ends up being a source of tension that eventually gets in the way of the learning process as a whole. As a result, overall exam performance suffers. The vast amount of material that needs to be learned in a short amount of time can make studying for any competitive examination a very stressful experience. We tend to view stress as something universal and manageable. However, chronic stress is the first symptom of mental disease since it slows down the brain's metabolism. The impact on productivity is devastating. In order to better understand stress, pressure, and anxiety and their social aspects, as well as to identify the various factors that are responsible for stress, pressure, & anxiety, and the ill effects of stress, pressure, and anxiety on their health and daily lives, a t-test was conducted on students preparing for various competitive exams. The aim of this study is to find out the competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety among students of higher education institutions (HEIs) during exam & secondly to compare the level of (degree/diploma/any courses) competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety students of higher education institutions (HEIs) during exam.

Keywords : Stress, Pressure, Anxiety, Psychological Approach, Competitive Exams

Introduction

Environmental stresses, the student's cognitive evaluation & coping strategies for those stressors, and the student's psychological or physiological response to those stressors all combine to create a student's experience of academic stress "(Lee & Larson, 2000) & (Lou & Chi, 2000)". Examining the causes and effects of academic stress in different countries, cultures, and ethnic groups is essential "(Wong, Wong, & Scott, 2006)". Every kid wants to do well in school so that they can bring glory to themselves and their families and advance in society (Gow, Bella, Kember, & Hau, 1996). As a result, academic standards are set excessively high, and students, especially adolescents, are put under incredible strain. Students' academic lives become joyless and burdensome as a result of pressure to succeed on tests and other assignments.

Review Literature

Anxiety and stress "(G Manjula and Vijaylaxmi A.H.M. 2012), (Edmund 1984), (Joost, 2007)". Studies have shown that children can be motivated and sometimes even show improved performance with a reasonable degree of stress "(Moore, Burrows & Dalziel, 1992)". But when it's used excessively, it can have serious effects for college students. According to Kohlon's (1983) research, students experience stress due to a variety of circumstances, including a lack of parental support, a friendly testing system, the pressure to live up to high parental expectations, a negative classroom climate, and an overwhelming fear of failing a test. S. Joint work by "Jiandong Sun (2012)". Private Indian secondary school pupils' concerns about their education and to identify any correlations between these phenomena and demographic and contextual variables. Three-fifths of respondents experienced high levels of academic stress, while 37% experienced high levels of exam anxiety. All students reported feeling overwhelmed by schoolwork, but those with lower grades felt it more acutely. Exam anxiety was more common among students who participated in extracurricular activities.

The Late "Marwan Zaid Bataineh (2013)", Undergraduate students at King Saud University and their experiences of academic stress as seen by faculty in the field of education. This research looked into the factors that cause university student's stress. The findings revealed that moderate levels of stress among students were caused by many factors such as awkward tests, a lack of enthusiasm, and high family expectations. It was also discovered that stress among undergraduates is primarily caused by worry about failing. Last but not least, the research concluded that there were no statistically significant positive differences in academic stress across students of varying levels of education and fields of study.

Rajasekar (2013). Insight into the effects of school pressure on AMET's management majors. The effects of academic pressure on management students were analysed. Managing stress involves learning and implementing strategies that help you feel more in control when faced with challenging situations. Students have a wide range of hopes, dreams, and ideals that they hope their educational experience will help them realise, but this can only happen if

those beliefs and aspirations are mirrored within the school's own mission and culture. The research aims to help management students cope with stress by identifying their current levels of stress, the causes of that stress, and effective methods for reducing stress. Physical, psychological, individual, demographic, and environmental aspects are all considered alongside one another in this analysis of management students' stress. One hundred students from AMET University's Business School in Chennai make up the sample. A structured questionnaire and a sample strategy based on convenience were used to collect the data.

Need & Significance of the Study

Exam anxiety, a lack of motivation to attend class, and confusion over course material are just some of the issues that modern students encounter. The stress associated with taking a competitive examination is the worry or unease one feels about how well they will do academically. In extreme cases, it can prevent students from giving their very best on tests. The academic pressure that students at higher education institutions feel can stem from a variety of sources, including a desire for excellence, concern over grades, parental pressure, competition, sports, or a demanding course load. Many younger pupils also show signs of nervous breakdown, panic attacks, burnout, and depression. All people react differently to stress; not everyone experiences the same negative emotions or ideas when faced with the same stressful scenario. It was once widely held that today's students would one day shoulder the weight of leading our nation towards its brighter future.

Problem Statement

The justification for focusing on college students in this study is the paucity of research on the connection between exam stress and anxiety. Focusing on the effects of academic pressure on college students is the primary objective of this research. Education policymakers in India may find it useful to learn more about the causes and effects of test stress and anxiety among Indian students. This knowledge could help them better utilise and manage the education system to help students achieve their full academic and personal potential. The other purpose of this research is to lay forth a theoretical structure that takes into account the connections between exam stress and anxiety in Indian universities. This could be helpful in pointing the way for future researchers in India to investigate the causes of and potential solutions to stress and anxiety in the classroom.

Objective of the study

- 1 To find out the competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety among students of higher education institutions (HEIs) during exam.
- 2) To compare the level of (degree/diploma/any courses) competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety students of higher education institutions (HEIs) during exam.

Hypothesis of the Study

H01: There is no significant relation competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety among students of higher education institutions (HEIs) during exam.

Ha1: There is a significant relation competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety among students of higher education institutions (HEIs) during exam.

Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive by nature. The data was collected both from secondary & primary sources. A total sample of 180 higher education institutions (HEIs) students was selected in Delhi (NCR) by utilising Stratified random sampling technique. All the degree & diploma students were chosen for the study. A self-structured questionnaire was constructed for data collection.

What is Stress?

Before we dive into strategies for dealing with stress when studying for a competitive exam, let's define stress. Stress is a sensation of high pressure accompanied by bad feelings that affects the overall functioning. It's accompanied by feelings of mental and physical exhaustion, as well as a lack of confidence and self-esteem.

Exam Stress: The Mental and Emotional Toll Taken on Students

Exam-related stress, pressure, and anxiety, which are commonly traced back to the student's fear of failing, can have long-lasting, detrimental effects on the student's sense of self-worth. Disabling cognitive consequences, such as problems with memory and recall, have been attributed to exam anxiety. Achievement drive significantly predicts academic success, while anxiety predicts academic failure (Alam, 2001). Insomnia, exhaustion, feelings of isolation or sadness, bodily aches, stomach discomfort, agitation, and forgetfulness are all symptoms of stress in the lead-up to and duration of an examination. Feeling of terror brought on by being confronted with a question to which you have no solution. It's common among regular college students, and the causes and treatments aren't hard to figure out. If you stick to a plan of action consisting of useful recommendations, you'll have no trouble handling it.

Higher Education & Examination System in India

A good education is essential for a flourishing economy and society. Important for empowering people and expanding possibilities. Education is crucial to the success and longevity of any development effort. After gaining independence, India's government gave education a high priority, setting goals like expanding access and ensuring equity at every level of schooling. But because of the constitutional mandate for elementary school universalization and the international community's focus on "Education For All" (EFA), the primary level of education has been given the highest priority based government policies and programmes. Increasing access to and quality of higher education has been a secondary focus. The primary function of elementary school is to lay the groundwork for further learning, whereas the secondary function of secondary school is to serve as a bridge between elementary school & higher education. In contrast, the higher education system increases the

value of human capital by fostering the development of future leaders and innovators in industry, the professions, government, and the arts.

Exam Stress Reduction through Reforms in Higher Education

Academics felt firmly that the current system of higher education examinations needed to be revamped. They argued for the use of the CBC system, which is widely used and recognised around the world. In this model, students have more leeway in selecting their coursework and can schedule exams at their convenience. In the “credit based choice (CBC)” system, students are not mandated to take any particular courses or sit for any particular exams. “Credit-based choice (CBC)” systems have been in use in a number of nations for some time, but only a small number of Indian colleges have adopted them.

How Does Stress Affect One's Productivity?

- A student's physical and mental health might be negatively impacted by stress. This has the opposite effect of reducing efficiency during the examination.
- We already know that stress kills off healthy brain cells and that it causes a negative surge of adrenaline, which leaves us exhausted and unable to function optimally in daily life. One cause of students' inability to focus is this.
- It has been shown to have a depressing effect on students, leading them to lose interest in their studies.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) established Manodarpan to give pupils emotional help. This unit conducted multiple surveys to assess student emotional health. Read on to see the most important takeaways from the poll. According to the results, 41% of students reported feeling very comfortable with the variety of environments they were exposed to. About eighty-one percent of students cited tests and grades as a major source of anxiety. Among those interviewed, 51% said they have trouble concentrating while studying or working online, and 28% said they are too shy to ask follow-up questions.

Exam Anxiety: How to

Anxiety about an upcoming performance, a negative way of life, or significant amounts of external pressure can all contribute to an overly anxious state of mind. The next section features advice from high achievers on how they dealt with anxiety when studying for tests. Do something active, anything at all. If you're not a fitness fanatic, walking or cycling on a regular basis can be a great option. Taking part in any kind of outdoor sport, be it cricket, football, or badminton, will also do the same thing. Respect the rules for keeping a clean environment, and make sure your desk stays tidy. One further way in which decluttering can help keep your mind sharp is as a form of therapeutic activity.

A Stress-Free Strategy for

- Here are some strategies you can use to succeed in competitive exams without putting undue pressure on yourself: Make a study schedule, taking the relevant exam syllabus into account.
- Review the test questions from the previous year and put in lots of time at practise tests.
- Take some time each week to focus on your own education and interests. Artistic expression can take many forms, including writing, painting, playing, etc.
- Keep up your enthusiasm and optimism; have faith in yourself, your approach, and your study plan. Put in long hours, and never lose faith in your own abilities or the value of your own hard work.
- Maintaining motivation over the long term requires a focus on the good.

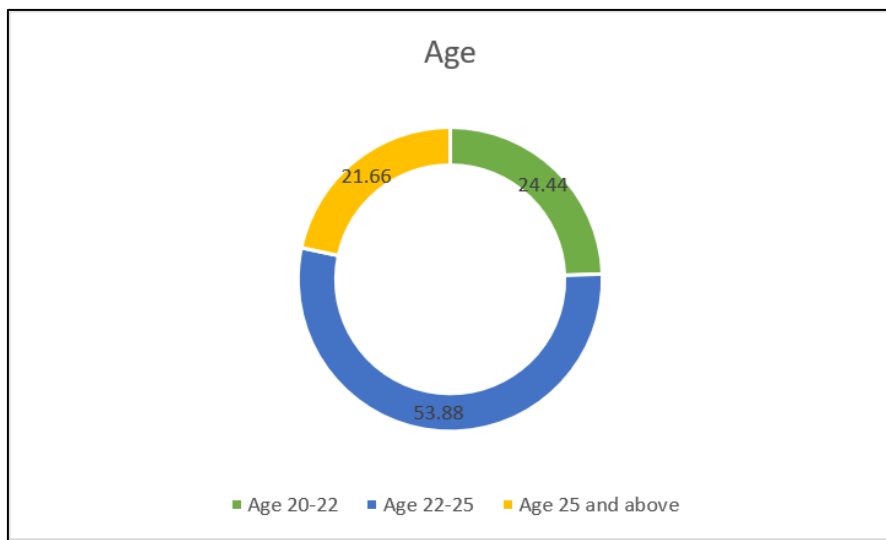
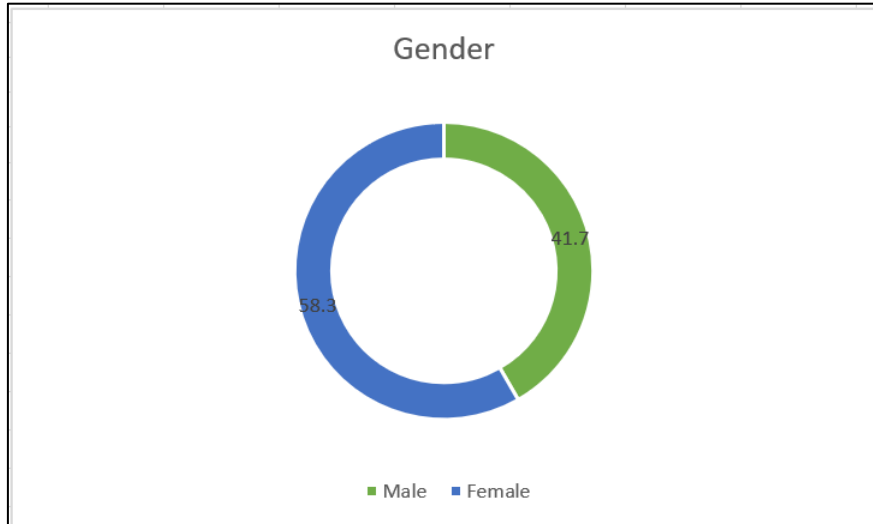
Demographic Analysis

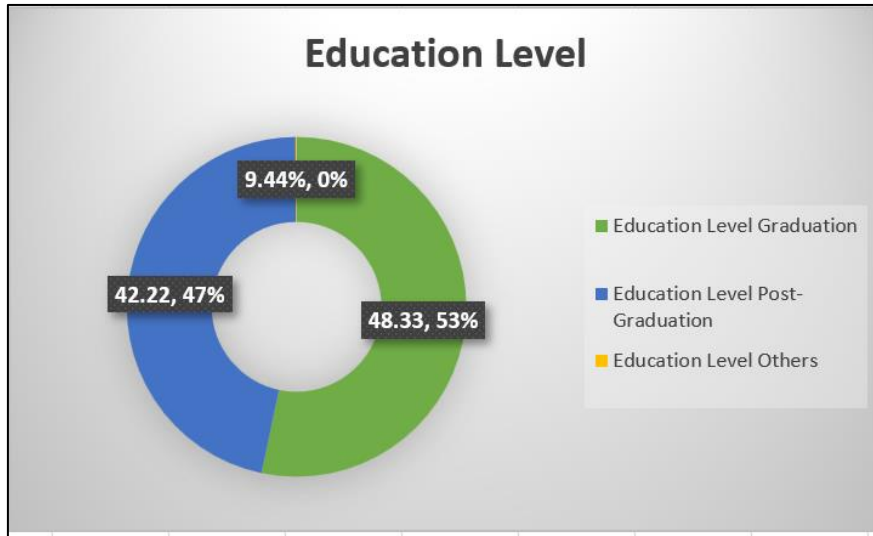
Result and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic Analysis

Demographic Analysis			
Gender		Frequency	Percent
	Male	75	41.7%
	Female	105	58.3%
Age	20-22	44	24.44%
	22-25	97	53.88%
	25 and above	39	21.66%
Education Level	Graduation	87	48.33%
	Post-Graduation	76	42.22%

	Others	17	9.44%
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Data Analysis & Interpretation

Table No: Correlation among Competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety among students of higher education institutions (HEIs)

	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	R
Stress	62.82	10.08	0.87
Pressure	36.82	8.49	
Anxiety	54.92	11.38	

Table No: Mean, S.D & T-test value of competitive examination stress among students of higher education institutions (HEIs)

	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	T- test
Stress	62.82	10.08	1.27

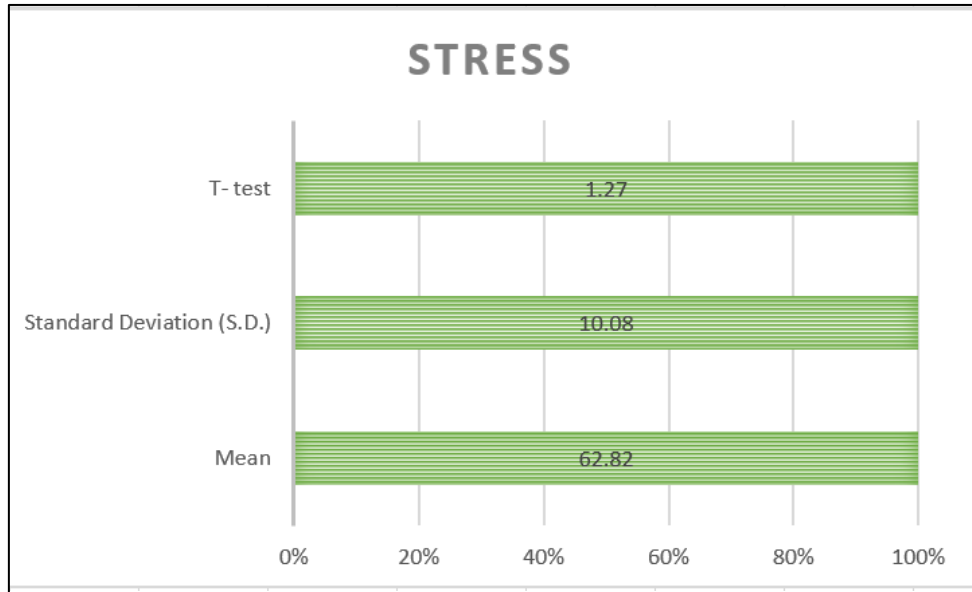


Table No: Mean, S.D & T-test value of competitive examination pressure among students of higher education institutions (HEIs)

	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	T - test
Pressure	36.82	8.49	0.66

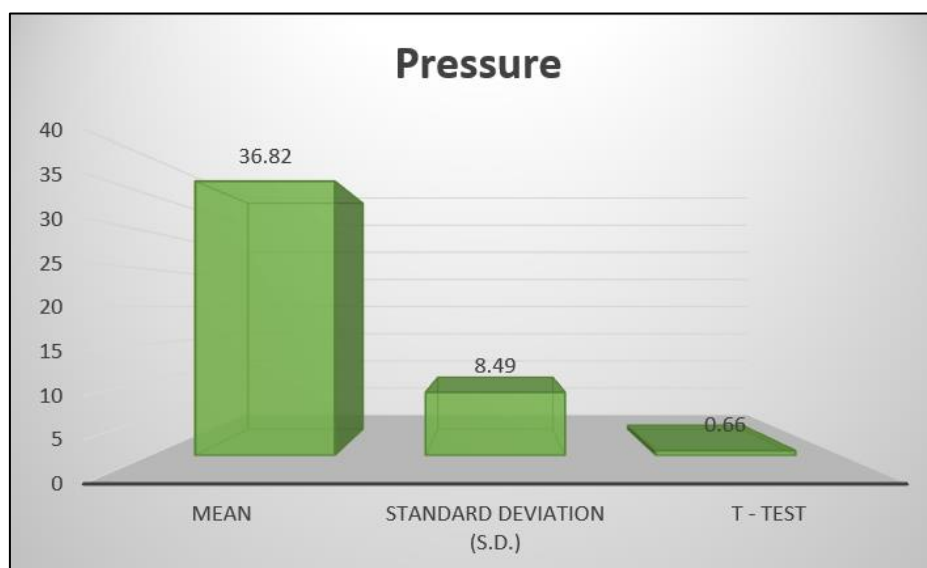
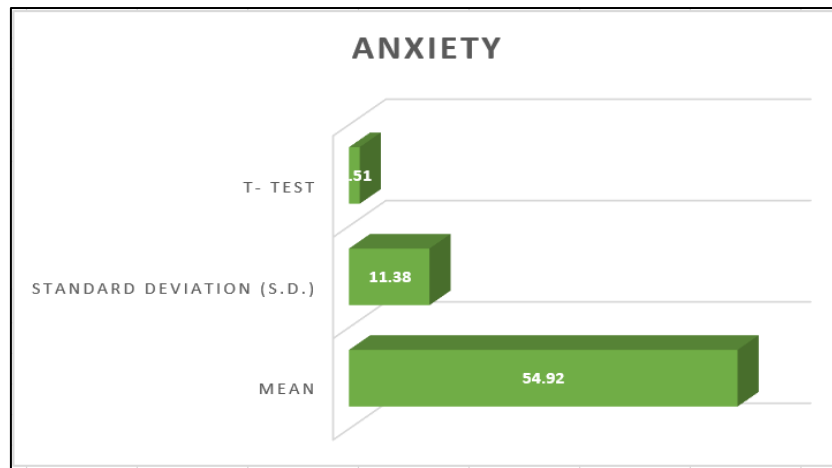


Table No: Mean, S.D & T-test value of competitive examination anxiety among students of higher education institutions (HEIs)

	Mean	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	T- test
Anxiety	54.92	11.38	1.51



It can be seen in the above tables that perceived competitive examination stress, pressure & anxiety for HEIs student’s irrespective of any level of degree/diploma courses always exist. Investigator did not find a statistically significant t value for. That suggests that students at HEIs don't feel significantly less exam stress, pressure & anxiety based on their educational background.

Conclusion

The outdated and embarrassing education assessment system in higher education institutions is just as accountable for students' high levels of stress as their own aspirations and their parents' expectations. Students' memorization and ability to repeat information verbatim are frequently put to the test. Good scores are guaranteed by memorization of solutions to problems asked in each of the three years before to this year (excluding the current year). Skills like analysis, knowledge application, problem solving, and creativity are rarely evaluated. There is no requirement for ongoing assessments, and instead, students are evaluated only on their results in a capstone project or exam. The material covered in class and that on the exam are completely unrelated. It stands to reason that a student's success in a given course would be best judged by the instructor who actually teaches the course. However, in the existing setup, the student's exam is graded by a remote evaluator thousands of miles away.

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