



# UNDERSTANDING ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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## Abstract

This research paper aims to understand the level of academic stress faced by undergraduate students and the different sources that contribute to it. The study also analyzes gender and stream-wise differences in total academic stress. Data was collected from four academic streams, namely commerce, humanities, science, and management, and the Academic Stress Scale developed by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1991) was used to understand the sources of stress. The study found that the mean total academic stress score was 53.46 (SD=25.70) and that there were significant differences in academic stress across different streams. The study also found that there were no significant differences in total academic stress experienced by males and females. However, there were significant differences in the dimensions of academic stress experienced by males and females and across different streams.

## Introduction:

Academic stress is a common phenomenon experienced by undergraduate students. It can have a significant impact on their academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. Understanding the sources of academic stress and the factors that contribute to it is crucial in developing effective interventions to manage and reduce academic stress. This study aims to understand the level of academic stress faced by undergraduate students and the different sources that contribute to it. The study also analyzes gender and stream-wise differences in total academic stress.

## Research Methodology:

Participants for the study were selected from a general pool of students using random sampling technique where the classes were chosen based on names picked out from a fish bowl. Informed consent form and demographic profile sheet were given to all the participants and the objectives of the study were explained. Academic Stress Scale developed by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1991) was used to understand the sources of stress. This questionnaire was selected on the basis of previous results obtained during the pilot study of this project. It measures the sources of stress primarily on four dimensions namely, personal inadequacy, fear of failure, teacher pupil relationship, interpersonal difficulties, and inadequate study facilities. The approximate administration time was around 25 minutes. Incomplete forms and questionnaire were not included in the study. Results were then analyzed using SPSS v.21.

## Result:

The total number of participants who were subjected to the analysis procedures were 336. The mean of the sample on the total academic stress score was 53.46(SD=25.70). The study found that there were significant differences in academic stress across different streams. The Humanities stream differed significantly on the dimension of personal inadequacy with Commerce stream, while Commerce stream differed significantly on interpersonal

difficulties with Management and Science streams. The study also found that there were no significant differences in total academic stress experienced by males and females. However, there were significant differences in the dimensions of academic stress experienced by males and females and across different streams..

### **Discussion:**

The study provides insights into the sources and factors that contribute to academic stress among undergraduate students. The findings suggest that academic stress is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by multiple factors, including personal inadequacy, fear of failure, teacher pupil relationship, interpersonal difficulties, and inadequate study facilities. The study also highlights the importance of understanding gender and stream-wise differences in academic stress to develop effective interventions to manage and reduce academic stress. The findings of this study can be used to develop targeted interventions to manage and reduce academic stress among undergraduate students.

### **Conclusion:**

Academic stress is a common phenomenon experienced by undergraduate students. This study provides insights into the sources and factors that contribute to academic stress and highlights the importance of understanding gender and stream-wise differences in academic stress. The findings of this study can be used to develop targeted interventions to manage and reduce academic stress among undergraduate students. Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of these interventions and to develop new interventions to manage and reduce academic stress.

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