

ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENTS OF PANJAB UNIVERSITY, CHANDIGARH, INDIA: A STUDY

Jyoti Devi and Ashu Shokeen

Ms. Jyoti Devi

Ph.D. Scholar,

Department of Library &
Information Science,
Kurukshetra University,
Kurukshetra, India

Email:

jyotimalik2604@gmail.com

Dr. Ashu Shokeen

Professor & Chairperson,
Department of Library &
Information Science,
Kurukshetra University,
Kurukshetra, India

Email:

shokeen_ashu@rediffmail.com

Corresponding Author

The aim of this research is to explore the academic stress among the Library and Information (LIS) Students of the Panjab University, Chandigarh situated in the Union Territory of Chandigarh, India. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data from LIS students through survey method and questions pertaining to the cause of academic stress were based on a 5-point Likert scale. A total of 55 responses were received with the response rate of 55.55%. The study found that 'stress of insecurity to start career after completion of current course/degree' ($M=3.84 \pm .958$), 'managing all the responsibilities' ($M=3.78 \pm .738$), 'poor time management' ($M=3.64 \pm .825$) and 'lack of concentration/retention during study hours' ($M=3.62 \pm .850$) are major factors of stress among the LIS students. LIS students strongly opined that 'trying meditation and other healing techniques' ($M=4.18 \pm .841$), 'making regular studies' ($M=4.11 \pm .832$) and 'seeking support of friends and family' ($M=4.11 \pm .712$) helps them to deal with academic stress.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Stress Management, LIS Students, Panjab University, Burnout, India.

INTRODUCTION

It is of paramount importance that students pursuing higher education should enjoy sound mental health without experiencing any debilitating effect on their psychological wellbeing due to stress emanating from academic burden and unhealthy competitiveness. Mental health issues are raising their ugly head among the students of College and Universities in a big way. There are numerous studies which reveal that students in HEIs suffer from high level of stress (Chen et al., 2013; Busari, 2012; Pidgeon et al., 2014; Pozos-Radillo, 2014).

Stress in academic life is becoming a universal phenomenon which is directly connected with uproar of emotions. Students have to deal with a number of burdens such as getting higher grades in a limited time of studies, academic competitions, burden of assignments and projects, insufficient

time to handle all academic needs and university requirements. These days academic stress is more generated as extra abilities are required to cope with the technical matters also. Further, unrealistic demands and expectations of parents and teachers stir enormous stress among students. Worry about career, financial limitations, peer relationship, social status, self-esteem, etc., are also stress inducers. These stress triggering factors have a devastating impact on the psychological and mental health of the students in HEIs. In this regard, the present study is an attempt to know the level of academic stress and to find out the main causes of the academic stress among the Library and Information Science (LIS) students at Panjab University, Chandigarh, India.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Crack & Doyle-Baker (2020) in their study entitled “Stress levels in university/college female students at the start of the academic year” looked into the stress level of female university students in Canada. There were 100 female undergraduates, with an average age of 20.3 years. At the beginning of the academic year 2018, students were approached in the hallways and requested to complete a student-life Stress Inventory using a cross-sectional design (SSI). The average stress score was 138.2 out of 255, with 53% reporting significant stress exposure and 80% reporting low behavioral responses to stress. Many students reported significant levels of stress at the start of the semester, but it was controllable, and stress ratings were comparable to those on other campuses that administered the SSI. Kennett et al. (2020) conducted a study

entitled “The indirect effects of academic stress on student outcomes through resourcefulness and perceived control of stress” and attempted to find out the mechanisms of resourcefulness and perceived stress control with respect to the relationships between students’ resilience and academic stress, physical health and university adaptation among the 586 undergraduate students through survey method. The study found that the individuals with high level of academic stress were less resilient if they had worse perceived stress control and less resourceful. The correlations between academic stress and physical health and the outcome variables university adaptability shown similar indirect effects. Further serial indirect effects testing, guided by existing theory, revealed that the perceived stress regulation and resourcefulness were best characterized as associated processes.

Salmani et al. (2020) in their study entitled “Prevalence of sleep disorders among university students and its impact on academic performance” found that Sleep disturbances can have a significant impact on one’s health as well as on academic achievement. The main aim of this study was to determine the prevalence of various sleep disorders and their academic impact on 637 University students. 368 (57.8%) respondents were female and 455 (71.4%) were over the age of 20. Insomnia, narcolepsy, obstructive sleep apnea and restless leg syndrome were the most common sleep disorders, whereas nightmares and sleepwalking were uncommon. Sleep problems were found to be linked to a low GPA among the female students. Sleep difficulties were common among university students, and they were linked

to lower academic performance in females. Mehfouz et al. (2020) conducted a study entitled “Burnout and its associated factors among medical students of Jazan University, Jazan, Saudi Arabia” to assess the pervasiveness of burnout syndrome and its factors among the randomly selected 440 medical students of Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. Burnout was shown to be prevalent in 60.2 percent of the population (95 percent confidence interval: 55.6–64.8). Females had a higher prevalence (64.1%) than males (56.2%), although there were no statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$). The personal burnout category had the highest averages among students, followed by burnout related to study and client. Being female ($\beta = 0.896$, $p = 0.016$), younger age ($\beta = 3.17$, $p = 0.026$) and having well burnout awareness ($\beta = 0.710$, $p = 0.025$) predicted significantly higher personal burnout in the multivariate analysis. The study suggested that for the sake of the quality life of future doctors, efforts must be implemented to lower the prevalence of burnout among the medical students as burnout is extremely common among medical students in Jazan.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study would be following:

1. To find out the level of academic stress among the different categories of LIS students.
2. To enquire about the effects of stress among LIS students.
3. To know about the main causes of academic stress among LIS students

4. To find out the impact of academic stress on academic performance
5. To enquire about the techniques to control the academic stress and enhance academic performance

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research is based on a survey conducted online through a self-structured questionnaire via Google Form due to COVID-19 pandemic. Questionnaire link was sent via different channels such as WhatsApp, Gmail, etc. to all the students of B. L. I. Sc., M. L. I. Sc. and PhD, session 2020-21, Department of Library and Information Science, Panjab University Chandigarh. A total of 55 responses were received back with the response rate of 55.55%. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS®) version 25.0. and Microsoft® Excel Spreadsheet 2019 were used to analyze the data which has been presented in tabular form.

Table 1 shows that 37 (67.3%) respondents are female and 18 (32.7%) are male. 25 (45.5%) respondents are between the age group of 23-25 years, 11 (20%) are up to the age of 22 years, 10 (18.1%) are between the age group of 26-28 years and 9 (16.4%) are in 29 years and above age group. 32 (58.2%) respondents are B. L. I. Sc. students, 17 (30.9%) are M. L. I. Sc. students and 6 (10.9%) are PhD students. 33 (60%) respondents are satisfied for being a library and information science students and 11 (20%) are highly satisfied with the same.

Table 1: Data analysis and interpretation

Demographic Variable		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	18	32.7
	Female	37	67.3
Age	Up to 22	11	20
	23-25	25	45.5
	26-28	10	18.1
	29 and above	9	16.4
Courses	B. L. I. Sc.	32	58.2
	M. L. I. Sc.	17	30.9
	PhD	6	10.9
Satisfaction level with regard to being a LIS student	Dissatisfied	1	1.8
	Neutral	10	18.2
	Satisfied	33	60
	Highly Satisfied	11	20

Reasons for choosing LIS profession

Table 2 reveals that majority of the respondents i.e., 38 (69.09%) have chosen the LIS profession because of the availability of multiple

career options followed by its very close to their ideal profession (25.45%) and their family wished to choose this course (10.90%).

Table 2: Reasons for choosing LIS profession(Multiple Answers Permitted)

Response	Number	Percentage
Anxiety	24	43.63
don't feel like studying	20	36.36
Tiredness	19	34.54
Cannot sleep properly	19	34.54
Headache	18	32.72
occasionally do not feel well	8	14.54
Depression	7	12.72

Feeling when stressed

Table 3 reveals that 24 (43.63%) respondents feel anxiety when in stress followed by 20 (36.36%) who don't feel like studying, 19

(34.54%) feels tiredness and same number of the respondents cannot sleep properly. Only 8 (14.54%) and 7 (12.72%) respondents 'occasionally do not feel well' and 'feel depression', respectively, when in stress.

Table 3: Feeling when stressed(Multiple Answers Permitted)

Response	Number	Percentage
Anxiety	24	43.63
don't feel like studying	20	36.36
Tiredness	19	34.54
Cannot sleep properly	19	34.54
Headache	18	32.72
occasionally do not feel well	8	14.54
Depression	7	12.72

Feeling during stress

Table 4 shows that how the respondents feel during stress. 24 (43.63%) respondents have replied that they experienced increased worrying, 22 (40%) replied that they feel nervousness and

lose concentration, 11 (20%) used to lose interest in leisure activities, 9 (16.36%) respondents become more prone to error, 8 (14.54%) feel in confident and 8 (14.81%) respondents feel loss of appetite during stress.

Table 4: Feeling during stress(Multiple Answers Permitted)

Response	Number	Percentage
Increased worrying	24	43.63
Nervousness	22	40
Lost concentration	22	40
Lost interest in leisure activities	11	20
More prone to error	9	16.36
In Confident	8	14.54
Lost appetite (hunger)	6	10.90

Reasons/Factors behind taking stress

Table 5 shows that the employment situation is a major factor behind taking stress which has been ranked 1st (\bar{x} =4.20, σ = \pm 1.026) followed by study conditions (\bar{x} =3.69, σ = \pm .767), personal factors (\bar{x} =3.45, σ = \pm 1.051), interpersonal communication (\bar{x} =3.44, σ = \pm 1.014), economic conditions (\bar{x} =3.42, σ = \pm 1.066), and family conditions (\bar{x} =3.16, σ = \pm 1.085) which have been ranked 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th respectively.

Stress triggered by study-related issues

Table 6 is regarding the stress triggered by study-related issues and shows that “Lack of concentration/retention during study hours” has been ranked 1st (\bar{x} =3.62, σ = \pm .850), “Stress regarding the tests, assessment, grades & evaluation and meeting the deadlines for the same” has been ranked 2nd (\bar{x} =3.53, σ = \pm .959) and “Difficulty in grasping heavy syllabus” has been and 3rd (\bar{x} =3.49, σ = \pm 1.086). On the other

Table 5: Reasons/Factors behind taking stress

Reasons	Mean	Std.	Rank
Employment situation	4.20	1.026	1
Study conditions	3.69	.767	2
Personal factors	3.45	1.051	3
Interpersonal communication	3.44	1.014	4
Economic conditions	3.42	1.066	5
Family conditions	3.16	1.085	6

hand, “Stress of presentation in classroom”, “Not enough discussion in the class or lack of clarity” and “inadequate space or room for study at home” have the least mean perception score and have

been ranked 11th ($\bar{x} = 3.20$, $\sigma = \pm 1.129$), 12th ($\bar{x} = 3.07$, $\sigma = \pm .959$) and 13th ($\bar{x} = 2.91$, $\sigma = \pm 1.191$) respectively.

Table 6: Stress triggered by study-related issues

Statements	Mean	Std.	Rank
Lack of concentration/retention during study hours	3.62	.850	1
Stress regarding the tests, assessment, grades & evaluation and meeting the deadlines for the same	3.53	.959	2
Difficulty in grasping heavy syllabus	3.49	1.086	3
Fear of lagging behind in some subjects	3.42	1.031	4
Lack of mutual help among classmates	3.38	.991	5
Lack of adequate material for study	3.35	1.004	6
Poor interest in some subjects	3.31	1.069	7
Attending the class regularly	3.25	1.109	8
Handling academic workload and keeping up with regular reading	3.22	1.013	9
Choosing specialization/research topic/elective subject during the study (Career/interest point of view that you couldn't determine)	3.20	.803	10
Stress of presentation in classroom	3.20	1.129	11
Not enough discussion in the class or lack of clarity	3.07	.959	12
Inadequate space or room for study at home	2.91	1.191	13

Stress caused by the issues of time-management

Table 7 is regarding the stress caused by the issues of time-management which shows that “Managing all the responsibilities”, “Poor time management” and “Too much study material to learn in a small time period” have been ranked 1st

($\bar{x} = 3.78$, $\sigma = \pm .738$), 2nd ($\bar{x} = 3.64$, $\sigma = \pm .825$) and 3rd ($\bar{x} = 3.56$, $\sigma = \pm .938$) respectively.

Stress emanating from personality traits

Table 8 is regarding the stress emanating from personality traits and shows that “Procrastination (postponement) and laziness”, “Fear of failing or lagging behind others” and

Table 7: Stress caused by the issues of time-management

Statement	Mean	Std.	Rank
Managing all the responsibilities	3.78	0.38	1
Poor time management	3.64	.825	2
Too much material to learn in a small time period	3.56	.938	3

“Difficulty in public speaking specially in language other than the mother tongue” have been ranked 1st (\bar{x} =3.36, σ = \pm .969), 2nd (\bar{x} =3.29, σ = \pm 1.048) and 3rd (\bar{x} =3.15, σ = \pm 1.096) respectively. Whereas, “Stress of family expectations for getting better grades” and

“Hesitation while interacting/discussing with parents, teachers & senior fellows” have the least mean perception score and have been ranked 6th (\bar{x} =2.95, σ = \pm 1.145), and 7th (\bar{x} =2.89, σ = \pm .975) respectively.

Table 8: Stress emanating from personality traits

Statements	Mean	Std.	Rank
Procrastination (postponement) and laziness	3.36	.969	1
Fear of failing or lagging behind others	3.29	1.048	2
Difficulty in public speaking specially in language other than the mother tongue	3.15	1.096	3
Lack of confidence and unclear thinking	3.13	.883	4
Stress of family/personal problems & their effects on study	3.00	1.122	5
Stress of family expectations for getting better grades	2.95	1.145	6
Hesitation while interacting/discussing with parents, teachers & senior fellows	2.89	.975	7

Stress encountered during interpersonal and social equations

Table 9 is regarding the stress encountered during interpersonal and social equations which shows that “Lack of support system” and “Competing with other students” have been ranked 1st (\bar{x} =2.98, σ = \pm .913) and 2nd (\bar{x} =2.93,

σ = \pm .920) respectively. While, “Handling personal relationships with others” and “Conflicts with friends/college authorities” have the least mean perception score and have been ranked 3rd (\bar{x} =2.91, σ = \pm .908), and 4th (\bar{x} =2.78, σ = \pm 1.013) respectively.

Table 9: Stress encountered during interpersonal and social equations

Statements	Mean	Std.	Rank
Lack of support system	2.98	.913	1
Competing with other students	2.93	.920	2
Handling my personal relationships with others	2.91	.908	3
Conflicts with friends/college authorities	2.78	1.013	4

Stress emanating from pedagogical factors

Table 10 is regarding the stress emanating from pedagogical factors and shows that “Monotonous (boring/tedious) teaching style of the teachers”, “Delays in marking and feedback”

and “Inappropriate use of teaching aids” have been ranked 1st (\bar{x} =2.95, σ = \pm 1.061), 2nd (\bar{x} =2.91, σ = \pm 1.023) and 3rd (\bar{x} =2.85, σ = \pm 1.096) respectively. Whereas, “Lack of support/encouragement/ interest from teaching staff” and

“Inadequate subject knowledge of the teachers” have the least mean perception score and have

been ranked 6th (\bar{x} =2.60, σ = \pm 1.047), and 7th (\bar{x} =2.53, σ = \pm 1.136) respectively.

Table 10: Stress emanating from pedagogical factors

Statements	Mean	Std.	Rank
Monotonous (boring/tedious) teaching style of the teachers	2.95	1.061	1
Delays in marking and feedback	2.91	1.023	2
Inappropriate use of teaching aids	2.85	1.096	3
Fast paced teachers	2.78	1.066	4
Lack of communication between teachers & students	2.62	1.009	5
Lack of support/encouragement/interest from teaching staff	2.60	1.047	6
Inadequate subject knowledge of the teachers	2.53	1.136	7

Stress attributable to career concerns

Table 11 is regarding the stress attributable to career concerns and shows that “Stress of insecurity to start career after completion of current course/degree”,

“Stress of getting poor results even after hard work” and “Stress of family’s high expectations regarding career issues” have been ranked 1st (\bar{x} =3.84, σ = \pm .958), 2nd (\bar{x} =3.58, σ = \pm .937) and 3rd (\bar{x} =3.47, σ = \pm 1.136) respectively.

Table 11: Stress attributable to career concerns

Statements	Mean	Std.	Rank
Stress of insecurity to start career after completion of current course/degree	3.84	.958	1
Stress of getting poor results even after hard work	3.58	.937	2
Stress of family’s high expectations regarding career issues	3.47	1.136	3

Information and technology-related stress generating factors

Table 12 is regarding the information and technology-related stress generating factors and shows that “Stress of higher workload because of increased technology complexity” “Undesirable add-ons/ advertisements during the net surfing while searching the information which creates irritation & distraction” and “Study/reading habits changing forcibly to adopt new technology

directly or indirectly” have been ranked 1st (\bar{x} =3.44, σ = \pm .877), 2nd (\bar{x} =3.42, σ = \pm 1.066) and 3rd (\bar{x} =3.35, σ = \pm 1.004) respectively. Whereas, “Lack of sufficient IT tools/IT skills to access the information” and “Feel personal life is affected by this invasion of technology” have the least mean perception score and have been ranked 7th (\bar{x} = 3.07, σ = \pm .959), and 8th (\bar{x} =2.96, σ = \pm .942) respectively.

Table 12: Information and technology-related stress generating factors

Statements	Mean	Std.	Rank
Stress of higher workload because of increased technology complexity	3.44	.877	1
Undesirable add-ons/ advertisements during the net surfing while searching the information which creates irritation & distraction	3.42	1.066	2
Study/reading habits changing forcibly to adopt new technology directly or indirectly	3.35	1.004	3
Spending lot of time every day on social networking tools	3.25	1.004	4
Competition with younger techno savvy students	3.20	1.026	5
Don't find enough time to study & upgrade technological skills to meet the needs of changing environment globally	3.11	1.066	6
Lack of sufficient IT tools/IT skills to access the information	3.07	.959	7
Feel personal life is affected by this invasion of technology	2.96	.942	8

Administrative factors triggering stress

Table 13 is regarding the administrative factors triggering stress and shows that “Indifferent attitude of administrative staff”, “Lack of recreational activities on campus” and “Inadequate departmental library facilities” have

been ranked 1st ($\bar{x} = 3.07$, $\sigma = \pm 1.120$), 2nd ($\bar{x} = 2.96$, $\sigma = \pm .922$) and 3rd ($\bar{x} = 2.93$, $\sigma = \pm 1.086$) respectively. Whereas, “Adjusting to the campus environment” and “Lack of campus facilities” have the least mean perception score and have been ranked 4th ($\bar{x} = 2.82$, $\sigma = \pm .945$), and 5th ($\bar{x} = 2.75$, $\sigma = \pm 1.075$) respectively.

Table 13: Administrative factors triggering stress

Environmental/Campus related Stressors	Mean	Std.	Rank
Indifferent attitude of administrative staff	3.07	1.120	1
Lack of recreational activities on campus	2.96	.922	2
Inadequate departmental library facilities	2.93	1.086	3
Adjusting to the campus environment	2.82	.945	4
Lack of campus facilities	2.75	1.075	5

Team-work related stress inducing factors

Table 14 is regarding the team-work related stress inducing factors. and shows that “Completing group assignments/research articles” and “Stress of communicating with classmates/team members in group discussions, formal talks & joint presentations” have been ranked 1st ($\bar{x} = 3.15$, $\sigma = \pm .951$) and 2nd ($\bar{x} = 2.78$, $\sigma = \pm .937$) respectively.

Stress caused by lack of facilities and proper library infrastructure

Table 15 is regarding the stress caused by lack of facilities and proper library infrastructure and shows that “Lack of reading material”, “Lack of Library services” and “Lack of Training regarding use of library resources and services” have been ranked 1st ($\bar{x} = 3.07$, $\sigma = \pm 1.052$), 2nd ($\bar{x} = 3.05$, $\sigma = \pm 1.177$) and 3rd ($\bar{x} = 3.02$,

Table 14: Team-work related stress inducing factors

Team-work related Stressors	Mean	Std.	Rank
Completing group assignments/research articles	3.15	.951	1
Stress of communicating with classmates/team members in group discussions, formal talks & joint presentations	2.78	.937	2

$\sigma = \pm 1.209$) respectively. Whereas, “Space related issue in library/unavailability of Scholar’s Room” and “Inter Library Loan” have the least mean

perception score and have been ranked 6th ($\bar{x} = 2.85$, $\sigma = \pm 1.079$), and 7th ($\bar{x} = 2.75$, $\sigma = \pm 1.004$) respectively.

Table 15: Stress caused by lack of facilities and proper library infrastructure

Facility related Stressors	Mean	Std.	Rank
Lack of reading material	3.07	1.052	1
Lack of Library services	3.05	1.177	2
Lack of Training regarding use of library resources and services	3.02	1.209	3
Lack of IT facilities	2.96	1.088	4
Lack of E-resources	2.89	1.133	5
Space related issue in library/unavailability of Scholar’s Room	2.85	1.079	6
Inter Library Loan	2.75	1.004	7

Impact of academic stress on academic performance

Table 16 is regarding the impact of academic stress on academic performance and shows that “Reduces work performance”, “Reduces ability to learn in class” and “Lack of concentration in class/study” have been ranked 1st ($\bar{x} = 3.58$,

$\sigma = \pm .832$), 2nd ($\bar{x} = 3.55$, $\sigma = \pm .835$) and 3rd ($\bar{x} = 3.51$, $\sigma = \pm .960$) respectively. While, “Reduces ability to read and understand” and “Leads to failure in assessments, exams, etc.” have the least mean perception score and have been ranked 4th ($\bar{x} = 3.29$, $\sigma = \pm .896$), and 5th ($\bar{x} = 3.24$, $\sigma = \pm .942$) respectively.

Table 16: Impact of academic stress on academic performance

Impact of academic stress on academic performance	Mean	Std.	Rank
Reduces work performance	3.58	.832	1
Reduces ability to learn in class	3.55	.835	2
Lack of concentration in class/study	3.51	.960	3
Reduces ability to read and understand	3.29	.896	4
Leads to failure in assessments, exams, etc.	3.24	.942	5

Technique to control academic stress to improve academic performance

Table 17 is regarding the technique to control academic stress to improve academic performance which reveals that “Try meditation and other healing techniques”, “Regular studies” and “Seek the support of friends and family” have been ranked 1st (\bar{x} = 4.18, σ = \pm .841), 2nd (\bar{x} = 4.11,

σ = \pm .832) and 3rd (\bar{x} = 4.11, σ = \pm .712) respectively. Whereas, “Avoiding reading only when exams come close”, “Writing a journal/diary” and “Limit (or eliminate) the use of stimulants like Caffeine, Tea, etc.” have the least mean perception score and have been ranked 7th (\bar{x} = 3.82, σ = \pm 1.002), 8th (\bar{x} = 3.64, σ = \pm .969), and 9th (\bar{x} = 3.49, σ = \pm .960) respectively.

Table 17: Technique to control academic stress to improve academic performance

Technique to control academic stress	Mean	Std.	Rank
Try meditation and other healing techniques	4.18	.841	1
Regular studies	4.11	.832	2
Seek the support of friends and family	4.11	.712	3
Practice time management skills	4.04	.769	4
Plan leisure activities to give yourself a break	4.02	.871	5
Starting Academic tasks from simple to complex	3.91	.701	6
Avoiding reading only when exams come close	3.82	1.002	7
Writing a journal/diary	3.64	.969	8
Limit (or eliminate) the use of stimulants like Caffeine, Tea, etc.	3.49	.960	9

CONCLUSION

This study indicates that there is a strong need for motivation among the students so that they come forward to discuss their issues with teachers and fellows. A number of factors studied in this research such as study, time, personality traits, intrapersonal and social equations, pedagogical factors, information & technology, career, environmental, etc., play a vital role behind the academic stress among the LIS students at Panjab University Chandigarh. University authorities should make students aware of all such factors and prepare them to deal with them. Special events should be organized on improvement of mental and psychological health.

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