

FACTORS AFFECTING STRESS LEVEL IN RESEARCH SCHOLARS

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Abstract

Stress is very common in today's busy life. Everyone, no matter at what stage they are at, all suffer from some sort of stress. Everyone has some source of stress in their life. For example, people who work or are at some job have stress of completion of their work within stipulated time, college students have stress related to their future, and one another group is of PhD students or research scholars who have various sources of stress like research article publication, completion of thesis within stipulated time, meeting supervisor guidelines, etc. The objective of this article is to identify the factors which leads to stress among research scholars, and also to study the relationship between demographic factors and stress level among the research scholars. This article also studied the impact of the stress on the performance and health of the research scholars. To collect the data both primary and secondary sources are used. To identify the factors that affect the stress among research scholars of different departments in different universities a sample of 150 scholars has been used. To analyze data correlation and factor analysis methods are being used. It was identified that most of the factors are moderately correlated. In factor analysis, six components were identified which are classified under three dimension which are Research work dimensions, family and Affective dimensions of stress.

Key words: Research Scholar, Career, Satisfaction, Stress, Health.

INTRODUCTION

Research work is a contribution to the future of the society. It brings both educational and research value to the current society. It contributes in various aspects of the people such as knowledge, innovation, development of personal skills, etc. Today research work is not easy process and it is also not important that the work done by researchers will give them satisfactory work. And the assessments of the achievements are not that much transparent and easy. Research process is a long term process whose results starts to appear after a long time and not important to have satisfactory results.

Cognitive translation model has defined stress as a dynamic relationship between individual and environment in which a stimulus (whatever it is)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions of Stress

Authors	Definitions
Seyle (1936)	The non specific response of the body to any demand for change.
Lazarus (2000)	Defines the term stress as being a well complex and multidimensional and complex emotion. Coping with stress will lead to the reduction of demands (internal and external).
Naturale (2007)	stress is a situation when one person reacts or faces something different to a new opportunity.
Robins and Judge (2013)	Stress is unpleasant psychological response that is due to environmental pressure.
Luke Seaward (2016)	Stress is any sort of change that is experienced by the people.
WHO	have when presented with work demands and pressure that are not matched to their knowledge and ability and which challenges their ability to cope.

Bazrafkan, et al. (2016) Study found that the main source of stress and anxiety among PhD students are relationship with supervisors, socio economic problems and educational atmosphere where tasks and duties of an individual are not clear. To cope up with stress and anxiety proper communication with superior is needed, and with other concerned people who will help in finalizing the topic of thesis, provides proper guidance on research methodology and writing conclusion of thesis and also who can help in improving writing. Mazumdar, et al. (2012) found that there is more stress in post-graduate students and females are more affected by this stress. The main factor behind this stress is future orientation as this stress lead to bring anger, disturbed relationships, and give rise to headache problems in students. Rajarathinam (2015) parents and family arrangement of married students are biggest reasons of stress for PHD students. Selection of topic for thesis acts as the main reason behind stress in PHD students. Whether stress is high level or low level it lead to decline performance after some time. Waghachavare (2013) found that students from each field of education faces stress. A cross-sectional studies results shows that out of the survey done on twelve hundred students approximately three hundred students exposed to stress and from these students maximum are from dental and medical area whereas engineering students faces less stress. The only way to short out this problem is to introduce stress management education in the curriculum. Bhargava and Trivedi (2018) identified that youth feels more stressed due to their financial, relationship status for which youth try to connect with more and more people to increase their relationship status they use technology which creates stress. And next most important factor which causes stress is their career related which make them worry about

their future career opportunities. It is suggested that youth should use technology in limited way and should share their emotions with their loved ones so that this stress can be met up.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the various types of factors influencing stress level in research scholars.
- To study the relationship between variables.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, various factors such as demographic data of the respondents (age, gender, department, marital status, family income), conditions of work (ventilation facilities, privacy, support from co-researchers, support from supervisors, etc.) and types of stress (physical stress, psychological stress, life event stress, etc) that are associated with research work are taken into account. The study is descriptive in nature. A sample of 200 research scholars is collected, further SPSS is used to analyze the data. Secondary data is collected through magazines, journals, websites, etc. Data collection period was three months i.e. from March 2022 to May 2022 from research scholars who are doing research in different departments of various universities.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

S.NO.	Particulars	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Below 25	11	7.3
		Between 26 -35	126	84.0
		Between 36-45	13	8.7
2	Gender	Male	60	40.0
		Female	90	60.0
3	Department	Engineering	20	13.3
		Science	31	20.7
		MBA	50	33.3
		Other	49	32.7
4	Marital Status	Single	66	44.0
		Married	77	51.3
		Other	7	4.7
5	Family Income	Below 25000	33	22.0
		Between 26000-35000	28	18.7
		Between 36000-45000	30	20.0
		Above 45000	59	39.3

Table 1. Shows that majority of respondents belongs to age group of 26-35 (84%), married (77%). No major difference between male and female. Major group of research scholars belongs to monthly salary of above 45000. There is no such difference in the research scholars studying in MBA department and other department.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am satisfied with my Research	150	3.31	1.069
There is a structured mechanism for Ph.D program followed in this institution	150	3.30	1.403
I am under to pressure to do a research for a certain set standard	150	3.38	1.364
I am not able to feel lot of scope for the career growth in my department line that creates less interest in research	150	2.95	1.413
Because of lack of time and 4 work given by the department I am unable to do the research to my satisfaction	150	2.75	1.479
Unable to take decision in time	150	2.95	1.279
I receive support from my guide	150	3.92	1.261
I am unable to carry out my research work to my satisfaction on account of deadlines drawn by my guide	150	2.80	1.361
Internal and external experts give contradictory instructions regarding my research	150	2.75	1.238
New rules and regulations framed by the institution are difficult to implement in middle of the research work	150	3.15	1.378
There is no team spirit in the Department	150	3.15	1.560
I feel unhealthy communication gap existing at all level in the department and College	150	3.25	1.456
I set deadlines and work at my own pace peacefully	150	3.70	1.104
Physical Working conditions are satisfactory in my department lab from the point of student's welfare and convenience	150	3.04	1.418
Lack of resources slow down the research	150	3.75	1.296
Lack of sufficient accommodation space, privacy and amiable ambience for the Scholars	150	3.25	1.497
I have too much of responsibility	150	3.57	1.200
I have to leave the college early because of my family commitments	150	2.37	1.329

The time spent on research is less enjoyable and more Pressurized	150	3.15	1.250
While at college I am bothered about my family	150	2.55	1.150
I feel that my family responsibilities slow down my research	150	2.77	1.265
I have physical stress because of my research work (headache, disturbed sleep, BP, Exhaustion, Insomania etc)	150	3.13	1.353
I feel psychological/ emotional stress due to my research work (anxiety, frustration, excitement, etc)	150	3.42	1.244
I have life events stress due to my research work (death, marriage, health issue, etc)	150	2.85	1.370
OVERALL	150	3.13	0.123

There were previously 24 statement from which two statements factor loading was below .5 so they were removed so remaining 22 statements whose factor loading was above .5 were taken for further analysis.

It is found that most of the respondents supported the statement “I receive support from my guide” with a mean score of 3.92 ± 1.261 , this may be because there are previous observations that guides are quite supportive to their scholars in their work. Many research scholars support the “lack of resources slow down the research work” with a mean score of 3.75 ± 1.29 , this may be because of non-availability of resources which are needed for research work. Research scholars also feel that they can achieve their target when they set it by themselves that’s why research scholars’ support the statement “I set my deadline and work at my own pace peacefully” with mean score of 3.70 ± 1.1 . Overall mean was $3.13 \pm .123$ which states that most of the scholars believes that stress affects their research work.

Variables

1. I am satisfied with my Research
2. There is a structured mechanism for Ph.D. program followed in this institution
3. I am under to pressure to do a research for a certain set standard
4. I am not able to feel lot of scope for the career growth in my department line that creates less interest in research
5. Because of lack of time and other work given by the department I am unable to do the research to my satisfaction
6. Unable to take decision in time
7. I receive support from my guide

8. I am unable to carry out my research work to my satisfaction on account of deadlines drawn by my guide
9. Internal and external experts give contradictory instructions regarding my research
10. New rules and regulations framed by the institution are difficult to implement in middle of the research work
11. There is no team spirit in the Department
12. I feel unhealthy communication gap existing at all level in the department and College
13. I set deadlines and work at my own pace peacefully
14. Physical Working conditions are satisfactory in my department lab from the point of student's welfare and convenience
15. Lack of resources slow down the research
16. Lack of sufficient accommodation space, privacy and amiable ambience for the Scholars
17. I have too much of responsibility
18. I have to leave the college early because of my family commitments
19. The time spent on research is less enjoyable and more Pressurized
20. While at college I am bothered about my family
21. I feel that my family responsibilities slow down my research
22. I have physical stress because of my research work (headache, disturbed sleep, BP, Exhaustion, and Insomniaetc.)
23. I feel psychological/ emotional stress due to my research work (anxiety, frustration, excitement, etc.)
24. I have life events stress due to my research work (death, marriage, health issue, etc.)

Table 3. Correlation

Correlations																								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	1																							
2	.255**	1																						
3	-.0119	-.0123	1																					
4	-.198*	-.313**	.206*	1																				
5	-.214**	.317**	.320**	.366**	1																			
6	-.307**	.264**	.246**	.273**	.596**	1																		
7	.402**	.412**	-.197*	-.330**	-.403**	-.402**	1																	
8	-.0123	-.197*	.446**	.228**	.282**	0.16	-.217**	1																
9	-.0158	-.0153	.328**	.261**	.380**	.318**	-.237**	.488**	1															
10	-.0031	-.193*	.392**	.314**	.440**	.382**	-.217**	.431**	.297**	1														
11	-.173*	-.351**	.456**	.503**	.536**	.566**	-.424**	.403**	.461**	.574**	1													
12	-.317**	-.434**	.307**	.541**	.434**	.501**	-.453**	.438**	.310**	.524**	.755**	1												
13	.268**	0.058	-.178*	0.028	-.338**	-.249**	.310**	-.286**	-.292**	-.227**	0.146	0.104	1											
14	.319**	.314**	-.216**	-.230**	-.475**	-.299**	.287**	-.316**	-.277**	-.336**	-.421**	-.450**	.359**	1										
15	-.228**	-.345**	.264**	.385**	.405**	.409**	-.386**	.196*	0.056	.303**	.473**	.520**	-.204*	-.334**	1									
16	-0.07	-.202*	.233**	.504**	.428**	.407**	-.206*	.258**	.331**	.353**	.545**	.526**	0.105	-.425**	.541**	1								
17	-.193*	0.099	0.124	.354**	.326**	.326**	-.413**	0.12	0.144	0.014	.177*	.191*	0.067	-.203*	.409**	.227**	1							

18	0.035	$\bar{0.003}$	.251**	.175*	0.115	.249**	-0.03	.197*	.303**	0.142	.274**	0.136	0.013	0.095	0.141	.254**	.231**	1						
19	$\bar{.441}^{**}$	$\bar{.236}^{**}$	.313**	.198*	.245**	.375**	$\bar{.427}^{**}$	.191*	.254**	.233**	.447**	.437**	$\bar{.274}^{**}$	$\bar{0.155}$	.383**	0.113	0.14	.238**	1					
20	$\bar{0.033}$	-0.07	.271**	0.142	.258**	.340**	$\bar{0.053}$	.260**	.321**	.232**	.306**	.215**	-.164*	$\bar{0.079}$	.203*	.240**	.308**	.619**	.303**	1				
21	0.013	.167*	0.132	$\bar{0.082}$	$\bar{0.055}$	0.046	$\bar{0.062}$	0.044	.190*	$\bar{0.008}$	0.061	$\bar{0.024}$	0.042	0.155	$\bar{0.056}$	$\bar{0.148}$	0.122	.542**	.195*	.378**	1			
22	$\bar{0.139}$	$\bar{0.154}$	0.119	0.021	.204*	.400**	$\bar{.340}^{**}$	0.094	0.136	0.105	.252**	.260**	$\bar{.334}^{**}$	-.167*	.340**	0.147	.174*	.250**	.434**	.295**	0.068	1		
23	$\bar{.236}^{**}$	$\bar{.257}^{**}$	.281**	.162*	.349**	.424**	$\bar{.363}^{**}$	.185*	.327**	.191*	.404**	.395**	$\bar{.264}^{**}$	$\bar{.272}^{**}$	.374**	.236**	.197*	.213**	.400**	.310**	$\bar{0.033}$	.742**	1	
24	$\bar{0.036}$	-0.15	0.082	0.152	.233**	.306**	$\bar{.302}^{**}$	0.127	0.155	.176*	.252**	.228**	-.208*	$\bar{0.062}$	.239**	.172*	0.152	.286**	.288**	.237**	0.154	.630**	.534**	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).																								
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).																								

Table 3 shows correlation between variables. All the variables are mentioned above and they are shown in numerical term in the table. The value of correlation is to be between -1 to +1. Variables whose value is closer to 1 are highly correlated. Psychological and physical stress is highly correlated i.e. .74. Lack of department team spirit and communication gap between department is also highly correlated i.e. .75. Unhealthy communication gap and lack of career growth opportunities are moderately correlated i.e. .54. Lack of time and other work given by department and unable to do research of satisfaction level are also moderately correlated. Most of the variables are moderately correlated to each other.

Table 4. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.766	24

Cronbach Alpha value is .766 which is more than minimum value that is .7. Cronbach alpha is considered as a measure of scale reliability. It states that data is reliable. Reliability is the measure of internal consistency.

Table 5. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.807
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	1595.222
Sphericity Df	231
Sig.	.000

The value of KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) is .807 which is more than minimum requirement level i.e. .6 (Kaiser and Rice, 1974) and the value of Bartlett's test of Sphericity is .0 which is less than maximum level .05. It states that data is adequate for factor analysis.

Result of Factor Analysis

Table 6. Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
I am not able to feel lot of scope for the career growth in my department line that creates less interest in research	1.000	.627
Because of lack of time and 4 work given by the department I am unable to do the research to my satisfaction	1.000	.624
Unable to take decision in time	1.000	.530
I am unable to carry out my research work to my satisfaction on account of deadlines drawn by my guide	1.000	.567
Internal and external experts give contradictory instructions regarding my research	1.000	.606
New rules and regulations framed by the institution are difficult to implement in middle of the research work	1.000	.617
There is no team spirit in the Department	1.000	.800
I feel unhealthy communication gap existing at all level in the department and College	1.000	.815
Lack of resources slow down the research	1.000	.609
Lack of sufficient accommodation space, privacy and amiable ambience for the Scholars	1.000	.692
I have too much of responsibility	1.000	.789
I have to leave the college early because of my family commitments	1.000	.786
The time spent on research is less enjoyable and more Pressurized	1.000	.730
While at college I am b4ed about my family	1.000	.671
I feel that my family responsibilities slow down my research	1.000	.702
I have physical stress because of my research work (headache, disturbed sleep, BP, Exhaustion, Insomania etc)	1.000	.855
I feel psychological/ emotional stress due to my research work (anxiety, frustration, excitement, etc)	1.000	.726
I have life events stress due to my research work (death, marriage, health issue, etc)	1.000	.645
I am satisfied with my Research	1.000	.705
I receive support from my guide	1.000	.613
I set deadlines and work at my own pace peacefully	1.000	.705
Physical Working conditions are satisfactory in my department lab from the point of student's welfare and convenience	1.000	.605
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Table 6 shows the communalities which shows variances. To include the variables for factor analysis communality value should be more than .5 if it is less than it then variables are to be removed for further analysis. This table shows that 85% of the variance in “physical stress because of research work”, which 80% of variances in “no team spirit in the department” and

81% of variances in “I feel unhealthy communication gap existing at all level in the department and College”.

Table 7. Total Variance Explained						
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.946	31.573	31.573	6.946	31.573	31.573
2	2.295	10.431	42.004	2.295	10.431	42.004
3	1.909	8.678	50.682	1.909	8.678	50.682
4	1.461	6.640	57.322	1.461	6.640	57.322
5	1.319	5.997	63.320	1.319	5.997	63.320
6	1.092	4.964	68.284	1.092	4.964	68.284
7	.851	3.870	72.154			
8	.791	3.593	75.747			
9	.762	3.464	79.211			
10	.599	2.723	81.934			
11	.588	2.675	84.609			
12	.521	2.369	86.978			
13	.454	2.064	89.042			
14	.390	1.772	90.815			
15	.352	1.602	92.417			
16	.334	1.516	93.933			
17	.315	1.433	95.366			
18	.292	1.327	96.694			
19	.228	1.035	97.729			
20	.186	.845	98.574			
21	.162	.738	99.312			
22	.151	.688	100.000			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.						

Table 7 shows Eigen value (which reflects the number of extracted factors whose sum should be equal to a number of items that are subjected to factor analysis). Table shows that Eigenvalue of 1st component is 6.9 >1, 2nd component 2.2 >1, 3rd component is 1.9>1, 4th component is 1.4>1, 5th component is 1.3 >1, 6th component is 1.09 >1 and 7th component is .85<1. Thus, the set of 22 variable with 150 observations represents six components. Further, the extracted sum of squared loading % of variance depicts that the first factor account for 31.5% of the variance features from the stated observations, the second 10.43%, the third 8.87%, the fourth 6.64%, the fifth 5.99% and the sixth 4.96%.

Table 8. Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel unhealthy communication gap existing at all level in the department and College	.805					
There is no team spirit in the Department	.793					
I am not able to feel lot of scope for the career growth in my department line that creates less interest in research	.712					
Lack of sufficient accommodation space, privacy and amiable ambience for the Scholars	.709					
New rules and regulations framed by the institution are difficult to implement in middle of the research work	.631					
I have physical stress because of my research work (headache, disturbed sleep, BP, Exhaustion, Insomania etc)		.902				
I feel psychological/ emotional stress due to my research work (anxiety, frustration, excitement, etc)		.785				
I have life events stress due to my research work (death, marriage, health issue, etc)		.773				
I set deadlines and work at my own pace peacefully			.723			
Internal and external experts give contradictory instructions regarding my research			.621			
I am unable to carry out my research work to my satisfaction on account of deadlines drawn by my guide			.601			
I have to leave the college early because of my family commitments				.833		
I feel that my family responsibilities slow down my research				.805		
While at college I am bothered about my family				.697		
I am satisfied with my Research					.799	
The time spent on research is less enjoyable and more Pressurized					.678	
I receive support from my guide					.611	
I have too much of responsibility						.829

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 11 iterations.

Table 8 shows that the statements have a positive loading on six components. The factor loading of all variable is above .6. These are known as factor loading. Component 1 correlates with “I feel unhealthy communication gap existing at all level in the department and College”, “There is no team spirit in the Department”, “I am not able to feel lot of scope for the career growth in my department line that creates less interest in research”, “Lack of sufficient accommodation space, privacy and amiable ambience for the Scholars”, “New rules and regulations framed by the institution are difficult to implement in middle of the research work”. Component 2 correlates with “physical stress because of my research work (headache, disturbed sleep, BP, Exhaustion, Insomania etc)”, “psychological/ emotional stress due to my research work (anxiety, frustration, excitement, etc)”, “I have life events stress due to my research work (death, marriage, health issue, etc)”. Components 3 correlates with “I can set deadlines and work at my own pace peacefully”, “Internal and external experts give contradictory instructions regarding my research”, “unable to carry out my research work to my satisfaction on account of deadlines drawn by my guide”. Component 4 correlates with “I have to leave the college early because of my family commitments”, “I feel that my family responsibilities slow down my research”, “While at college I am bothered about my family”. Component 5 correlates with “I am satisfied with my Research”, “The time spent on research is less enjoyable and more Pressurized”, “I receive support from my guide”. Component 6 correlates with “I have too much of responsibility”. In this way rotated component matrix provides six components for factor loading. Hence, all the items mapped into three different dimensions. These dimensions are (i) research dimensions, (ii) affective dimensions and (iii) family dimensions of stress.

(i) Research Dimensions

The dimension is based upon twelve statements from which all are accepted for loading in this factor. The first statement talk about satisfaction with research work. Second statement talk about lack of scope in career growth in the department, third talk about support from the guide. Fourth statement focuses on the internal and external expert’s contradictory instructions regarding research work. Sixth statement is about new rules and regulations implemented by the institutions which become difficult to implement in middle of the research work. Seventh talk about lack of team spirit in the department. Eight is about unhealthy communication gap that exists at all levels of the department. Ninth focuses upon the peacefully setting the deadlines and doing work with own pace. Tenth is about higher responsibilities. Eleventh is all about availability of sufficient space, privacy and amiable ambience for scholars. And twelfth is about unable to carry out research work to satisfaction level as deadlines are drawn by guide.

(ii) Family Dimensions

These dimensions are based upon four statements. First statement states the family commitments lead to leave the college early. Second statement focuses upon the time spent upon research work is less enjoyable and more pressurized. Third statement is about bothered about family while at college. Fourth statement talks about slowdown of research work due to family responsibilities.

(iii) Affective Dimensions

This dimension is based upon three statements. First statement talks about physical stress of research work such as headache, BP, exhaustion, etc. Second statement focuses upon psychological/emotional stress due to research work such as frustration, excitement, anxiety, etc. Third statement talks about life event stress due to research work such as death, marriage, health issues, etc.

FINDINGS

Based upon the analysis it was founded that research work dimensions such as lack of scope of career growth in the department, lack of satisfaction from the research work due to standards set my guide, contradictory instructions of internal and external experts, new rules and regulations, lack of team spirit in the department, unhealthy communication gap at all levels of department, lack of sufficient accommodation, too much responsibilities; family dimensions such as leaving of college/university early due to family commitments, time spent upon research is more pressurized, bothered about family issues while at university, slowdown of research work due to family responsibilities; affective dimensions such as physical stress due to research work, psychological stress, life event stress due to research work are the various factors which lead to stress in researchers. Whereas some factors like guide support, satisfactory working conditions in department lab helps in research work to the scholars.

CONCLUSION

In order to find out various factors which affects stress level in research scholars various statements were taken. Firstly, mean and standard deviation was calculated which shows a positive result. Further, reliability of data was checked via Cronbach Alpha whose value is greater than .7 as per given standard which shows that scale is reliable for further testing. Further factor analysis was used. In factor analysis, KMO and Bartlett's test of Sphericity was used which shows that data is fit for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). On applying Principle Component Analysis on 26 statement for factor affecting stress level in research scholars , six variables were generated whose value is greater than .5 hence all the statements were kept for further analysis. Total variance explained of all variables was 70% which is shows a good percentage of variance and reliability of each variable is also above .7 which is good. The six factors which generated are Organizational factors, Affective Factors, Research work related factors, Family factors, personal factors, and inter personal factors. These six factors comes under three dimensions these are Research work Dimensions, Affective Dimension, and Family Dimensions.

SUGGESTIONS

Universities are suggested to provide proper communication between different departments so that rules and regulations are to be clear to all. If university wants to change any rule and regulation so it needs to change in the starting of the academic session as it becomes difficult for those scholars who are in mid-way of their research work to implement new rules and regulations. By providing good career opportunities to the research scholars their work can be improved. There need to be proper coordination between research scholars and guide while setting deadlines by this scholar will feel more confident about achieving their deadline. Instructions

given by the internal and external experts need not to be contradictory as it will create confusion for the research scholars.

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