



## ACADEMIC STRESS AND ADJUSTMENT OF XII STANDARD STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT :

Stress is simply the body's non-specific response to any demand made on it. Stress is not by definition synonymous with nervous tension or anxiety. Stress provides the means to express talents and energies and pursue happiness; it can also cause exhaustion and illness, either physical or psychological, heart attacks and accidents. The important thing to remember about stress is that certain forms are normal and essential. As the body responds to various forms of physical or psychological stress, certain predictable changes occur. These include increased heart rate, blood pressure and secretions of stimulatory hormones. These responses to stress will occur whether the stress is positive or negative in nature. It is known as the 'flight or fight' mechanism.

Claude Bernard (1878) emphasized that an animal's life depends on the milieu interior that is, "on extracellular fluids, which provides the physico-chemical conditions for the correct functioning of cells".

Cannon (1935) identified the sympathetic nervous system as an important orchestrator of responses to challenges. He emphasized the role of epinephrine secreted from the adrenal glands, "since it is carried everywhere in the body by the blood and has the same effect on the internal organs as the sympathetic impulses".

Various researches have been conducted to investigate the effect of academic stress on academic achievement of College students. (Hatcher et. al.1991; Hammer et. al. 1998; Trocetelet. al. 2000; Calderon et. al. 2001; Kelly et. al. 2001; Quaye et. al. 2005; Watering and Rijt, 2006). There are two types of stress, eustress and distress. Eustress is an important and motivating factor and is considered normal and necessary for students' progress activity. It is not only our thoughts and feelings but also our behavioural mode as well. Distress causes negative phenomenon and discomfort, and can have serious effects on students which can lead to physical illness and psychological disorders. (Mcvicar A. et. al. 2003).

Gillihan, (2005) pointed out that if student fails to cope effectively with academic stress, then psychological and emotional problems may occur. If the stress becomes chronic, then students, coping process collapses. According to Pfeiffer, (2001) severe to chronic academic stress can influence students' preparation and concentration of study and subsequently academic performance.

**KEYWORDS :** academic stress, College students

### INTRODUCTION

Stress produces both biological and psychological consequences. The effect of stress both biological and psychological is described by a model developed by Hans Selye. The model, General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) has three stages (Selye 1976). The first stage, the alarm – occurs when an individual becomes aware of the existence of stressors. In the alarm stage, number of physiological and biochemical reaction arise, such as increased pituitary secretions, respiration, heart rate and blood

pressure. If the stressors don't exist, the second stage of GAS occurs; during which people prepare themselves to fight the stressors. Finally, if an individual is not able resist a stressor, the exhaustion stage is reached. During the exhaustion stage, a person's ability to adapt to the stressor declines and severe physical illness arises.

Stress is a necessary and unavoidable concomitant of daily living because without some stress we would be listless and apathetic creatures and unavoidable because it related to any external event, is it pleasurable or anxiety-producing. A person's response towards stress depends on whether an event is appraised as a challenge or a threat (*Lazarus and Folkman*1984). Challenging stimulus can lead to positive outcomes such as motivation and improved task performance while threatening ones or distress can result in anxiety, depression, social dysfunction and even suicidal intention.

### **EFFECT OF ACADEMIC STRESS ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:**

Academic stress mainly affects the cognition of students. Cognition is the process, in which we first receive information through our five organs, interpreted it, store it and recall it when needed. Stress affects these processes. Students get disturbed and can't properly pay their attention on lectures, practical's, home assignments and study. It could be observed that students, who were under stress effects, often complain that they could not satisfactorily answer in examinations. Memory is another cognitive function affected by academic stress. Cognitive psychologists clearly explain that students do not recall properly under the stressful situations. The process of recall may be interrupted by the stress factors. Consequently, the academic achievement of students may suffer badly. Too much academic stress can contribute to depression, anxiety disorders and physical illness among college students. If the academic stress has long been existed or retain in whole academic year, then students get frustrated about their future and do not perform very well at their examination, hence, they can lose their earlier grade or they can fail in examination.

Prolonged stress is most responsible for suicides among students. According to research report in a newspaper, the rate of suicides among students have rapidly increased due to academic stress.

Thus, physical, psychological, behavioural and academic achievements are affected due to academic stress of college students (*Vikas Kamble, 2011*).

### **DEFINITION OF STRESS:**

Defining stress is a very vast and complex matter. It is a subject of critical and analytical debate among investigators. Beyond this debate, consensus has been made on definition of stress, which is centered on the theme of disequilibrium between individual and environment.

One of the most common definitions is given by *Lazarus. R.S. and Folk man (1984)*. "Stress arises when individuals perceive that they cannot adequately cope with the demands being made on them or with threats to their wellbeing". This definition implies that actual situation doesn't cause the stress, but the beliefs and thoughts which are held about the situation cause the stress.

According to *Humphery. D. N. and Manion. W. P. (1992)* stress can be considered as any factory, acting internally or externally that makes it difficult to adopt and that induces increased effort on the part of the person to maintain a step of equilibrium both internally and with the external environment. This definition indicates the failure of efforts of an individual while maintaining adjustment with the external stimulus.

According to *Selye (1974)*, stress is a "nonspecific response of the body to any demands made upon it". He further states that there is a series of physiological reactions that occurs in response to environmental demands or any noxious stimulus.

The term stress has been derived from the Latin word 'stringer' which means 'to be drawn tight'. Stress was popularly used in the seventeenth century to mean hardship, strain, adversity or affliction.

Some authors have defined the term stress by giving stress on biochemical processes in human being. According to *Bowman*, stress is the body's automatic response to any physical or mental demands placed upon it. When pressures are threatening, the body rushes to supply protection by

turning on 'the juices' and preparing to define it. It is the 'flight or fight' response in action. According to *Levine and Ursin* (1991) "Stress is a part of an adaptive biological system, where a state is created when a central processor registers an informational discrepancy". According to *Steinberg and Ritzmann*, (1990) stress can be defined as an under load or overload of matter, energy or information input to, or output form, a living system.

### Sources of Stress:

Vulnerability of different sources of stress may be determined by an individual's personality characteristics, past experience and cultural background and so on.

### Environmental Stress:

Living or working in an uncomfortable physical environment may be stress inducing Excessive noise, heat, lack of ventilation, crowd an environment with strong smell and bright light.

Through environmental factors may not induce stress directly, they may increase vulnerability to stress. Organic solvents like carbon monoxide, carbon disulphide, pesticides, adversely affect t individual's physical and psychological functioning. It is found that stress induced by exposure to carbon monoxide leads to symptoms like und irritability usual fatigue, lack of energy and mood irritability.

### Change - Induced Stress:

As early as 1967 *Holmes and Rahe* identified 43 life events (later revised to 63) inducing major stress. Most of the events were found to demand readjustment to life because of change. They arrived that the weightage of stress for each event depending upon the severity and duration that change demands.

The main reason for changed induced stress is the fear of the unknown. The best coping strategy is to move from known to unknown.

### Personality Related Stress:

The personality characteristics of an individual to a large extent are responsible for appraising a situation as stressful or otherwise.

An individual self - esteem with its need for power, locus of control and value system play a key role in cognition mediation of appraisal of the situation.

### Interpersonal Issues Causing Stress:

There are several interpersonal situations causing stress. It can be observed that more often than not, the extreme negative stress reaction have origin in interpersonal issues. In close interpersonal relationships deep emotions are involved.

### Stress Caused By System Issues:

'System' refers to any organization, family, school, clubs and other social enterprises in which an individual functions. An average individual distributes his / her time between these systems. Life becomes tough, if any of these places, is excessively stress inducing. The stress related to 'system' has highly relevant in Indian society in the context of changing demands in the family of workplace.

### Types of Stress:

The Major Types of Stress Can Be classified into four different categories.

### Eustress:

Eustress can also apply to creative endeavors when a person needs to have some extra energy / creativity, Eustress kicks in to bring them the inspiration they need.

When the body enters the flight or fight response, it will experience Eustress. The eustress prepares the body to fight with or flee from an imposing danger. This type of stress will cause the blood to pump to the major muscle groups, and will increase the heart rate and blood pressure. If the event or danger passes, the body will eventually return to its normal state.

### **Distress:**

Distress is one of the negative types of stress. This is one of the types of stress that the mind and body undergoes when the normal routine is constantly adjusted and altered. The mind is not comfortable with this routine and craves the familiarity of a common routine. There are actually two types of distress.

#### **I. Acute Stress:**

Acute stress is the type of stress that comes immediately with a change of routine. It is an intense type of stress, but it passes quickly. Acute stress is the body's way of getting a person to stand up and take inventory of what is going on, to make sure that everything is ok.

#### **II. Chronic Stress:**

Chronic stress will occur if there is a constant change of routine for week after week. Chronic stress affects the body for a long period of time. This is the type of stress experienced by someone who constantly faces moves or job change.

### **Stress Symptom:**

Stress physical symptoms and sign form a long and an exhaustive list. The sign and symptoms of stress could be physical, physiological or psychological. Usually a combination of all the three occurs. It is not necessary that all the symptoms should be present in the affected individual. Moreover the severity may not be same in all the persons exposed to similar kind of stress.

There are several categories of symptoms by which stress can be recognized. Firstly there are the emotional manifestations: irritability, anxiety, depression, nervousness. Secondly there may be behavioural aspect: for instance, aggressiveness, over-impulsiveness, sometimes an excessive dependence on alcohol. Thirdly there are the interrelated cognitive and physiological aspects: anxious thinking- patterns which results in psychosomatic conditions such as excessive fatigue, high blood pressure, susceptibility to infection.

The physical ailments induced by stress can be of a short- term nature. For example: regular headaches or they may be of a more long - term character: for instance high blood pressure.

The sign and symptoms of stress are manifestations of the functional adjustment that happens in the body. It varies with the type of stress whether it is acute, chronic or delayed. The functional changes are physiological changes and are the reasons for signs and stress physical symptoms to be manifested. The changes that occur are diversion of the blood from less vital to more vital organs, increase in the heart rate to supply more blood quickly, increase in the blood pressure to supply blood efficiently, increase in the respiratory rate to gate more oxygen from the atmosphere, breakdown of glycogen stores in liver and muscle to get more glucose, formation of more glucose from non carbohydrate substances.

The above mentioned functional changes manifest both stress physical symptoms and stress psychological symptoms.

### **Effect of Stress:**

Stress and mental health has close affinity. Stress has adverse effects on all parts of human life. Following are some consequences.

**Impaired Task Performance:**

Every person in the world is facing some or other kind of stress. We cannot do our work properly with full force and energy. There are many obstacles in the way. We cannot concentrate or remember thing when actually we want, we cannot create something new, lose confidence and we even cannot do daily routine duties properly.

**Description of Cognitive Functioning:**

Stress affects higher abilities of human being quickly. Many research found that human abilities such as remembrance, cognitive, comprehension can be affected by stress.

*Kaynan* (1987) studied how a person reacts in stressed and stress free situation.

- A. Obstruction in remembrance process results increase in oblivion.
- B. Acute stress develops restfulness, confusion, disorder.
- C. Lack of emotion.
- D. Passivity or inactiveness.
- E. Loss of flexibility in thought and roughness in behaviour.
- F. Person becomes undirected.

**Burnout:**

Stress related work causes human body, mind, feelings upset. Negativity about self efficiency / capacity, fatigue / tiredness, weariness, loss of power, unenthusiasm such symptoms can be seen. Negativity about self, doubts about ability and confidence so a person become negative. Such negativity results people don't attempt.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder:**

Stress in personal and social life causes disorder and confusion in life. Such trauma wormwood longs last in brain that cans results into disorder. Hurtful impact never be forgotten such life changing incidents can disturb human mentality i.e. rape, terrorist attack and accident. When person experiences such trauma. Impact of such trauma is deep inside. Consequences of such experience are as follow:

- A. Experience trauma in sleep and sudden waking from sleep.
- B. Such experience can coagulate mind.
- C. Emotion coldness.
- D. Loneliness.
- E. Stiffness in behavior.
- F. Obstruction in social relationship.
- G. Over anxiety, feeling of being culprit.
- H. Addiction of drugs.
- I. Prone to suicide.
- J. Melancholia.

As time passes few symptoms get less but it is not possible to forget particular experience.

**Psychological Problem and Disorder:**

Psychologist thinks that age – old stress creates psychological problems and mental disorder. For example: setback in educational development improvement from rape is not easy. Few get alcoholic, some other get drug addict, acute frustration, broken mind, stress, mental disorder such mental deficiencies are created because of stress.

**Physical Illness:**

Symptoms of much physical illness are found in psychological development. Person causes of such physical illness can be in the mind. Medicine has a little effect on such diseases. Psychiatrists find causes of such illness deep in mind.

Indigestion, blood pressure, heart diseases, diabetes, arthritis etc. Reasons of such diseases are found deep in mind. Little mental disorder starts because of stress. Mental stress is one of the reasons to develop mental disorder such as schizophrenia, depression.

### **Positive Stress:**

Stress is always not disastrous. Stress at some point is wrathful. Person becomes ready alert. So coming dangerous situation can be avoided. Person reaches to his goal. Person becomes successful.

### **Academic Stress:**

Globalization in every sphere of society has important implications for education. We are witnessing the increasing commercialization of education. The increasingly competitive environments into which schools are being drawn aspirations of parent place a tremendous burden of stress and anxiety on children. Now a day's students experience a great amount of stress. Stress in its positive form – eustress – is necessary, healthy and enjoyable. However, the negative form – distress – can be damaging if left unmanaged. The stress which is experienced by students may adversely affect their academic achievement and personal well being. It can lead to mental stress and it can have a negative impact of their cognitive functioning and learning.

According to *Chrousos and Gold* (1992), stress is a state of disharmony between the student's needs and the resources in his environment to meet them. As the stress is perceived by a student in his academic achievement, it is described as academic stress every student has his unique nature with respect to his capacities, attitudes, interests, approaches etc. and such he reacts in his unique way to the demands of his environment. Stress occurs when there is substantive imbalance between his environmental demands and his capacities to meet them. The stress may be experienced by the student as frustration, conflict, pressure or anxiety.

### **Definition of Academic Stress:**

The term academic stress has been researched by various investigators. If review of literature on academic stress is taken into consideration, it seems that this is not enough old concepts.

According to *DeDeyn Rachel* (2008) "Academic stress is defined as a mental and emotional pressure or tension that occurs due to the demands of college life".

If the pressure is prolonged and perceived as unmanageable, this experience causes to mental and emotional imbalance among students, which affects health and academic achievement.

According to *Wilks* (2008) "Academic stress is the product of a combination of academic related demands that exceed the adaptive resources available to an individual".

According to *MacGeorge Samter and Gillihan* (2005) "Academic stress viewed as a chronic stress due to the nature of academic demands associated with negative health outcomes of depression and physical illness".

Above mentioned researchers in their definitions have given full stress on academic demands and the individual's ability to fulfill it successfully. Academic stress includes student's perceptions regarding the challenging demands and the perception of inadequate time to accomplish it. Stress results from anticipation or perception of situations. If students are forced to complete these demands in stipulated period, the students may feel the pressure or tension.

### **Sources of Academic Stress:**

There is not a single source of academic stress for college students. Various sources cause stress among educational setting. Some of them are describe under.

### **Personal Inadequacy:**

Some students were unaware of their own abilities and limitations. Such students tend to keep such goals which they never complete or reach near it. Consequently, they become stressed and depressed. Personal inadequacy means lack of qualities and abilities necessary to do something to cope

with challenges in life. In the academic life this term can be considered with lack of ability to complete the course work, lack of easily understanding the curriculum or syllabus and inability to adjust in to academic environment. Personal inadequacy is most responsible source of academic stress. Some students are unable to complete the course requirements within a stipulated period as well as some students do not tolerate the excessive overload of assignments and project work. Hence, such students may face academic stress due to personal inadequacy.

### **Interactions with Peers and Teachers:**

In the present situation there is a rat race among the students to score good marks and to get selected in the campus interview. As a result of this, many students try to create some problems with each other. Even some incidents of ragging take place in peers. Ultimately, it results into heavy academic stress. Taunting and teasing (Ragging) by peers is the common source of academic stress among college students. (Wenz, Gross, Untch and Widaman, 1997; Struthers Perry and Mence, 2000). Michie, Glachan and Bray, (2001) found that students who believed that they were judged by peers experienced higher level of academic stress. Another common problem among peers originates from the unhealthy and excessive competition. A problem with roommates is another factor contributing to stress and it affects the academic performance. (Kamarudin. Et. al.2009).

Teachers are always aware about to complete the curriculum well in time. Similarly, students are always aware about to complete their projects, home assignments and practical. Due to this there are constant interpersonal relations between the students and their teachers. In the Indian education system, there is 10+2 system and up to this level there is one class teacher who controls the class and provides personal guidance or direction for every student. When these students enter in senior colleges where they are no more closely monitored, they are likely to experience stress in the initial stage.

### **Fear of Examination:**

Among the stressors, test or examination anxiety or fear is the main sources of academic stress and most students seem to be more emotionally vulnerable to examinations (Fisher,1994). Research on fear of failure in examination originates from the work of McClelland, Atkinson, Clark and Lowell (1953) and Atkinson (1957) on the achievement motives. These theorists suggest that there is an inherent need to avoid failure of examination. According to Heckhausen, (1991) fear of failure in examination is a set of experience such as emotional, cognitive and behavioural that is associated with failure in achievement situations. Research conducted by Conroy, Willow and Metzler, (2002) had shown that fear of failure is an avoidance based motive and that is linked with stress.

The stress level of high achieving students is relatively high because of their fear of losing their rank and facing the disapproval of parents and friends (Hariharan and Rath, 2008). Some students have fear about their future; they don't have assurance of getting a job on the basis of what type of education they are taking. Hence some kind of stress level arises in the whole academic year.

### **Inadequate Facilities at College:**

Today's academic environment is quite different with respect to the sources of stress, such as the tight schedule of lectures and practical, the continuous evaluation such as weekly test, assignment, project work, semester paper etc. Continuous flow of information leaves a minimal opportunity to relax and refresh. In this way today's academic environment causes severe stress among students.

Many studies underscore the roll of college environment as a source of stress for students. (Dyrbye et al. 2009; Supe. A. N.1998). It is very essential to all the academic institutions that they should maintain well-balanced academic environment, committed for providing better learning with the focus on the students' personal needs. Different academic institutions have different infrastructures. Some colleges provide all the facilities to students and faculty, hence students become happy and they enjoy their academic life. On the contrary most colleges do not provide sufficient facilities for the students. Administrative staff is a great source of stress for students. If clerical staff is unsupportive, always

harassing the students and making delay for students, then severe feeling of anger may arise in students.

### THE CONCEPT OF ADJUSTMENT:

The dictionary meaning of the word 'adjustment' is, to fit, to make suitable, adopt, arrange, modify, harmonize or make correspondent. Thus, when we make an adjustment between two things, we adopt or modify one or both of them to correspond to each other. In some situations, One of the factors may not be changeable and so the one which is, has to be modified in some way to suit the other. Wearing of cloths according to the requirements of the seasons is a good example of such an adjustment. It is beyond our capacity to change the seasons according to our cloths. Modern technology has, of course, made it possible to adjust the temperature inside dwelling houses and workplaces to harmonize with our needs.

There has been a continuous struggle between the needs of individual and the external forces since time immemorial. According to *Darwin's* (1859) theory of evolution, those species which adapted successfully to the demands of living, survived and multiplied while others who did not, died out. Therefore, the adaptation or changing of oneself or one's surroundings according to the demands of the external environment became the basis need for our survival. It is as true today with all of us as it was with the Darwin's primitive species. Those of us who can adopt or adjust to the need of changing conditions can live happily and successfully, while others either vanishes lead miserable lives or prove a nuisance to society.

### Definition of Adjustment:

After having discussed so much it is better to through the various definitions of adjustment.

*James Drever* (1952) "Adjustment means the modification to compensate for or meet special conditions". This definition states, the individual can either change him according to the needs of the environment or change his environment to suit his own needs.

*Shaffer* (1961) "Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs". This definition underlines one's needs and their satisfaction. Human tries to maintain a balance between his needs and as long as this balance is maintained, he remains adjusted. As soon as this balance is disturbed, he drifts towards maladjustment.

*Gates and Jersild* (1948), Adjustment is a continual process in which a person varies his behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment.

*Crow and Crow* (1950), an individual's adjustment is adequate, wholesome or healthful to the extent that he has established harmonious relationship between himself and the conditions, situations and persons who comprise his physical and social environment.

*Gates and Jersild* as also *Crow and Crow* define adjustment as the maintenance of a harmonious relationship between man and his environment. An individual needs to change or modify himself in some way or the other to fit into or accommodate himself with his environment. As the conditions in the environment are changing all the time, adjustment is also a continuous process.

### Adjustment as Achievement (Process):

Adjustment can be interpreted as both, process and the outcome of that process in the form of some attainment or achievement. When a poor child studies under the streetlight because he has no lighting arrangement at home he is said to be in a process of adjustment. What he attains in term of success in his examination or the fulfillment of his ambition or pride in his achievement is nothing but the result of his adjustment to his self and his environment. Thus, adjustment as an achievement means how the effectiveness with which an individual can function in changed circumstances and is, as such, related to his adequacy and regarded as an achievement that is accomplished either badly or well.

Adjustment as a process describes and explains the way and means of an individual's adaptation to his self and his environment without reference to the quality of such adjustment or its outcome in



terms of success or failure. It only shows how individuals or a group or groups of people cope under changing circumstances and what factors influence this adjustment. Let us now consider some salient features of adjustment as an interaction between a person and his environment.

### **Continuous Process:**

The process of adjustment is continuous process. It starts at one's birth. A person as well as his environment is constantly changing as also are his needs in accordance with the demands of the changing external environment, consequently, the process or terms of an individual's adjustment can be expected to change from situation to situation. According to *Arkoff* (1968), there is nothing like satisfactory or complete adjustment which can be achieved once and for all time. It is something that is constantly achieved and re-achieved by us.

### **Two - Way Process:**

Adjustment is a two - way process and involves not only the process of fitting oneself into available circumstances but also the process of changing the circumstances to fit one's needs.

### **Area of Adjustment:**

Adjustment is the case of an individual should consist of personal as well as environmental components. These two aspects of adjustment can be further subdivided into smaller aspects of personal and environmental factors. Adjustment, although seems to be a universal characteristic or quality may have different aspects and dimensions.

Through the numerous efforts at measuring adjustment through inventories and other techniques, these aspects have been identified and various tests have been conducted to assess their dimensions. For example: *Bell* (1958) has taken five areas in his adjustment inventory namely, home, health, social, emotional and occupational.

*Arkoff* (1968) in his book: adjustment and mental health has enumerated the family, school or college, vocation and marriage as the important areas of adjustment.

*Joshi* (1964) and *Pandey* in their research study covering school and college students, have given 11 areas or dimensions of an individual's adjustment:

1. Health and physical development.
2. Finance, living condition and employment.
3. Social and recreational activities.
4. Courtship, sex and marriage.
5. Social psychological relations.
6. Personal psychological relations.
7. Moral and religious.
8. Home and family.
9. Future - vocational and educational.
10. Adjustment to school and college work.
11. Curriculum and teaching.

In this way, adjustment of person is based on the harmony between his personal characteristics and the demands of the environmental of which he is a part. Personal and environmental factors work side by side in bringing about this harmony.

### **Academic Adjustment:**

According to *Friedlander*, (2007) "Academic adjustment means how well students deal with educational demands". These demands include satisfaction with college environment, active involvement in various activities and successful completion of coursework. *Baker* and *Siryk*, (1984) explain academic or college adjustment as students positive attitude towards their academic work and positive evaluation of their efforts and the quality of their academic environment.

Academic adjustment or college adjustment begins with the beginning of college life. As soon as student enters in college, he has to adjust to the college environment. Because of the vast difference between the school and college environment, student must make radial and rapid adjustment, failure to adjust this higher educational environment threatens their college life.

During college years, students' adjustment problems are related with being regular or punctual and doing homework. Later on, they are concerned about maintaining social relations i.e. friendship with other boys and opposite sex members. Students' final adjustment problems in college are related to getting good marks in examination and anxiety about their career.

The first six months of college for students are very challenging. Among these months students experience a wide range of problems that could contribute to poor academic adjustment. These include inability to understand the lectures and also syllabus, fear of teachers, conflicts among friends. These problems, may lead to the decision of leaving the college. Therefore, attention must be paid on adjustment difficulties of students; otherwise it can lead to their failure to complete their coursework.

### **Health Adjustment:**

Continuous high level of academic stress tends to make one tired or ill. It is often accompanied by specific issues such as absentee in college and skipping home works on pending. High level of stress is especially common among students at the time of examination. Once student imposed academic pressure or when the stresses are constant, it can take a toll in the kind of mental and physical health problems.

Depression and anxiety are the common mental health problems among college students. Sign of depression includes low interest in college, negative attitude towards college. Sometimes depression leads to suicidal tendencies in some students. Many students enter into college with a history of psychological problems. Every college needs to initiate the counseling counter. For such students to adjust in college life and getting good grades or marks in their examination.

Students today are under more stress than the previous generation. Present areas are full of cut – throat competition and uncertainty. Hence students have to perform with continuous hard work and full of patience. Students who are studying long hours at night may experience sleep deprivation and other problems, such as day time sleepiness, difficulty to concentrate on lecture and study. As well as feeling of weakness, headache, chest pain, nausea among college students. Lack of physical exercise is a significant health problem for such students keeping regular exercise and healthy diet is a powerful way of maintaining the health adjustment.

### **Social Adjustment:**

To what extent a student is adjust with social atmosphere, is also determined by his or her social adjustment. *Baker and Siryk*, (1984) described social adjustment as the extent to which students are involved in social activities and groups in campus and the existence of interpersonal relationships. Social adjustment requires the skill of interpersonal relationships and positive attitude towards others.

Social adjustment can be measured in many ways. One way of measurement of social adjustment is that a student must receive appreciation or moral support by parents and neighbours on what type of education he seeks. Developing new relationships in college is another important element of social adjustment. *Adams and his Colleague*, (2000) pointed out that students social adjustment within the college environment plays a major role in a student's overall adjustment.

Every student has to adjust with new friends. There are various groups, organizations, sport teams in college and students have to participate at least in one group. Failing to gain the membership of specific group creates adjustment problems for students. Therefore, it is important to all students to live amiably in friendship networks.

### **Emotional Adjustment:**

According to *Baker and Siryak* (1989) emotional adjustment means students state a psychological and physical well being.

Emotional adjustment is very necessary to all kind of development. College life is a full of experimentation and makes a foundation for an excellent achievement. During this period some students may experience some kind of emotional disturbance. Who have high academic stress may suffer lots of emotional problems, such as tension, confusion, depression, anxiety, anger and fatigue etc. Such students may possible give up college life or their academic performance could be badly affected. Some students behave with moody and childish pattern in college. They are avoided by classmates and inversely it may result in other emotional problems, such as low self – confidence and isolation etc. These problems lead to intake of alcohol or drugs in some students.

A satisfactory state of emotional adjustment may exit when psychological and physical drives and urges are satisfied and such state helps to enjoy to college life.

### **Home Adjustment:**

The home adjustment is very important to all students, otherwise it may cause to maladjustment in rest of all types of adjustment. Home adjustment is a process of maintaining the healthy relationships with all the family members. In the Indian culture, minimum one or two siblings live in every family. A healthy relationship between siblings provides energy and motivation for every student. If these relations disturbed, then mental and emotional life of students becomes maladjusted and inversely it affects the overall performance of college students. Age is another key component responsible for maladjustment of students. Adolescence period or college life is a period of negative mentality. Negative attitudes towards parents, especially father and conflict with them affects the adjustment in adolescent period. Expectations and restrictions imposed by the parents may also disturb the home adjustment of students. Some students have to perform small duties at home, such as taking care of brothers and sisters, duties regarding older people and other relatives as well as duties regarding the farming and other traditional family business. If anybody fails to maintain balance between these family responsibilities and college life, family as well as college adjustment may collapse.

### **Characteristics Of A Well – Adjusted Person:**

A well adjusted person is supposed to possess the following characteristics:

1. Awareness of his own strength and limitations: A well adjusted person knows his own strengths and weaknesses. He tries to make capital out of his assets in some areas by accepting his limitations in others.
2. Respecting himself and others: The dislike for one - self is a typical symptom of maladjustment. An adjusted individual has respect for himself as well as for others.
3. An adequate level of aspiration: His level of aspiration is neither too low nor too high in terms of his own strengths and abilities. He does not try to reach for the stars and also does repent over selecting an easier course for his advancement.
4. Satisfaction of basic needs: His basic organic, emotional and social needs are fully satisfied. He does not suffer from emotional cravings and social isolation. He feels reasonably secure and maintains his self – esteem.
5. Absence of a critical: He appreciates the goodness in objects, persons or activities. He does not try to look for weakness and faults. His observation is scientific rather than critical. He likes people, admires their good qualities, and wins their affection.
6. Flexibilities in behaviour: He is not rigid in his attitude or way of life. He can easily accommodate or adapt himself to changed circumstances by making necessary changes in his behaviour.
7. The capacity to deal with adverse circumstances: He is not easily discouraged by adverse circumstances and has the will and the courage to resist and fight odds. He has an inherent drive to master his environment rather than to passively accept it.
8. A realistic perception of the world: He holds a realistic vision and is not given to flights of fancy. He always plans, thinks and acts pragmatically.
9. A feeling of ease with his surrounding: A well adjusted individual feels satisfied with his surroundings. He fits in well in his home, family, neighbourhood and other social surroundings.

10. A balanced philosophy of life: A well – adjusted person has a philosophy which gives direction to his life while keeping in view the demands of changed situations and circumstances. This philosophy is centered on around the demands of his society, culture, and his own self so that he does not clash with his environment or with himself.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

1. To find out effect of academic stress and adjustment on academic achievement of XII standard students.
2. To study the influence of academic stress and adjustment on 'Reserved / outgoing' personality trait in XII standard students.
3. To search the effect of academic stress and adjustment on 'Affected by sense / emotionally stable' personality trait in XII standard students.
4. To explore the impact of academic stress and adjustment on 'Humble / assertive' personality trait in XII standard students.
5. To investigate the influence of academic stress and adjustment on 'Shy / venturesome' personality trait in XII standard students.

#### **HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:**

1. The academic stress and adjustment will not significantly affect the academic achievement of XII standard students.
2. The academic stress and adjustment will not significantly affect on 'Reserved / outgoing' personality trait of XII standard students.
3. The academic stress and adjustment will not significantly affect on 'Affected by sense / emotionally stable' personality trait of XII standard students.
4. The academic stress and adjustment will not significantly affect on 'Humble / assertive' personality trait of XII standard students.
5. The academic stress and adjustment will not significantly affect on 'Shy / venturesome' personality trait of XII standard students.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

##### **Academic Stress Scale for College Students (ASSCS)**

'Academic stress scale for college students' (ASSCS) is developed by Vikas Kamble (2011). It measures the level of academic stress experienced by students in the whole academic year due to various sources viz. personal inadequacy, interactions with peers and teachers, fear of examination, inadequate facilities of college, parent's expectations and socioeconomic status. The scale consists of 66 multiple choice items, like five point likert- type scale with response options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. High score on scale denote extremely high academic stress while low score shows very low academic stress.

Vikas Kamble (Author) has gone through various steps while constructing 'Academic stress scale for college students'. At the initial stage, the construct academic stress is defined through the review of literature, and discussion with various experts. An initial pool of 85 items was generated on the basis of seven sources of academic stress among college and university students. These initial sources are:

- (1) Personal inadequacy.
- (2) Interactions with peers.
- (3) Interactions with teachers and administrative staff.
- (4) Fear of examination.
- (5) Inadequate facilities at college.
- (6) Parents expectations.
- (7) Socioeconomic status.

Items on the scale were written in Marathi which is a regional language. Rough draft was then sending to three experts to assess these items. After expert assessment some items were reworded and instead of seven sources items were classified into five sources namely:

- (1) Personal inadequacy.
- (2) Interactions with peers and teachers.
- (3) Fear of examination.
- (4) Inadequate facilities at college.
- (5) Parent expectations and SES.

Dimension or source no 2 and 3 as well as 6 and 7 are grouped together. The scale was then given to 100 students studying Arts, Science, Commerce, Engineering; Medical, Law, M.S.W., B.Ed., Polytechnic, Architect, B.C.A., to give their responses. The response format for the ASSCS is likert type scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

Items were scored in such a way that higher score indicated extreme academic stress and vice versa. The item analysis and factor analysis were performed to find out the internal consistency among the items and to generate to create the factors. After this analysis 19 items were dropped out, because these items had less than 0.30 correlations. Thus the remaining 66 items were retained in the final form of the scale.

**Table 1**  
**ITEM ANALYSIS FOR ASSCS**

| Sr. No. | Scale                              | No of Items | Cronbach's Alpha | Item Retain |
|---------|------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1       | Personal Inadequacy                | 22          | 0.85             | 16          |
| 2       | Interaction with peers and Teacher | 20          | 0.80             | 17          |
| 3       | Fear of Examination                | 16          | 0.84             | 11          |
| 4       | Inadequate Facilities at College   | 13          | 0.81             | 09          |
| 5       | Parental Expectations and SES      | 14          | 0.84             | 13          |
|         | Total Item                         | 85          | -----            | 66          |

Table 1 depicts the clear picture of item analysis. Twenty two items were generated for first dimension personal inadequacy. But only 16 items are retained in the final form. The 06 items were excluded from the scale because these items having a correlated item total correlation was less than 0.30. 'Corrected item total correlation' is the correlation between the score on the item and the scores on the test as a whole multiplied by the standard deviation of that items (Brace Nicola and Collogues, 2003) The Cronbach's alpha for personal inadequacy is 0.85, as most acceptable value for a research instrument. A good test alpha is greater than 0.70.

Second dimension is 'Interaction with peers and teachers' and originally 20 items were pulled for it. But three items were excluded from the scale and retained only 17 items. Cronbach's alpha for this dimension is 0.80. Third component of academic stress scale is 'Fear of Examination'. Sixteen items were generated but only 11 items were retained and alpha is 0.84. Next dimension is 'Inadequate Facilities at College' which was retained with 9 items out of 13 and alpha value is 0.81. Last factor on the scale is 'Parental Expectations and SES' also having a Cronbach's alpha value is 0.84 which is also quite high. This dimension retains with 13 items out of 14.

**Table 2**  
**ALPHA FACTORING EMERGED FOR ASSCS**

| Factor No | Name of the factors                  | Eigen values | '% of ex-Plained variance | Cummulative % of explained variance |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1         | Personal Inadequacy                  | 11.19        | 43.05                     | 43.05                               |
| 2         | Interactions with Peers and Teachers | 4.86         | 18.72                     | 61.77                               |
| 3         | Fear of Examination                  | 2.06         | 7.93                      | 69.70                               |
| 4         | Inadequate Facilities at College     | 1.06         | 4.07                      | 73.78                               |
| 5         | Parental Expectations and SES        | 1.02         | 3.92                      | 77.71                               |

Alpha factoring of ASSCS with varimax rotation revealed five independent factors explaining more than 77.71% of the variance. The five Factors are five and sources of academic stress among college students. The Eigen values tell us how much of the variance in the 85 items was captured by the factors. Eigen values greater than one are considered as significant in determining the factors. (Brace Nicola and colleague, 2003) It is seen from table 3 that all Eigen values are greater than one. Factor first with an Eigen value of 11.19 has explained 43.05% variance in whole scale. Rest of four factors with significant Eigen value has explained respectively 18.72, 7.93, 4.07 and 3.92% variance in ASSCS.

### ADJUSTMENT INVENTORY:

This inventory is developed by M.S.L.Saxena (2010) and intended for school, college and university students, ranging from eleven year to adulthood. It seeks to discriminate between well – adjusted and poor adjusted students. It consist of 90 items based of five subscales viz. Home, Health ,School, Emotional and college adjustment .Participants were asked to respond to each question by indicating that is either true or false as applied to them. The total scores on the inventory are derived from summing the number of answered items. The author of this inventory suggests high score indicates superior adjustment, while low score indicates poor adjustment.

### SCORING:

A set of five stencil keys is provided for scoring, there being a separate key for each element. To obtain the score on element A (Home adjustment), take relevant scoring stencil and arrange it on the answer sheets the four anchoring ( ) above and below the columns for page 1 and 5 will be found helpful in setting the stencil accurately, now count the number of response visible through the perforations. This is the column 'Raw Score' against 'A'. Score similarly for Element B, C, D and E. Find the total raw score by adding on these scores.

### RELIABILITY:

The coefficients of reliability of the inventory are as under:

**TABLE 3**  
**RELIABILITY OF THE INVENTORY**

| Sr. No. | Method X  | Reliability Coefficient | N    |
|---------|---|-------------------------|------|
| 1.      | Test – Retest                                     | 0.87                    | 122  |
| 2.      | Split – Half Corrected with S.B. Prophecy Formula | 0.89                    | 256  |
| 3.      | Rational Equivalence                              | 0.90                    | 2529 |

Reliability coefficient of the Elements of the inventory are reported in

**TABLE 4**  
**RELIABILITY OF TEST ELIMENTS**

| Sub - Tests | Rational Equivalence<br>(N 2529) | Test Retest<br>(N 122) |
|-------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Element A   | 0.62                             | 0.81                   |
| Element B   | 0.69                             | 0.79                   |
| Element C   | 0.73                             | 0.76                   |
| Element D   | 0.84                             | 0.86                   |
| Element E   | 0.57                             | 0.72                   |

**VALIDITY:**

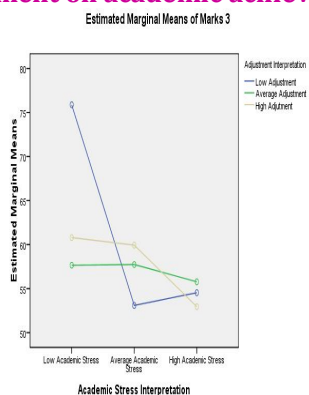
1. This inventory has been correlated with Dr. H.S Asthana's adjustment inventory and it has given a validity coefficient of 0.80 on a representative sample of 150 students.
2. The inventory has been validated against the criterion of teacher's estimate on adjustment each of their pupil. Two hostels, one was of boys and the other was of girls were selected for this purpose and three teachers, who lived in each hostel with the students, had known them closely for at least a year. The criterion was obtained in the shape of marks obtained out of hundred, awarded by the three teachers in a meeting after a mutual discussion. The coefficient of correlation between the teacher's marks and the scores obtained on this inventory are reported in Table 4.

**TABLE 5**  
**VALIDATION ON INVENTORY AGAINST THE CRITERION TEACHER'S ESTIMATE**

|       | N  | R    | Significance               |
|-------|----|------|----------------------------|
| Boys  | 55 | 0.63 | Significance at 0.01 level |
| Girls | 37 | 0.71 | Significance at 0.01 level |

3. Inventory's power to discriminate poor adjustment from good adjustment has been determined. The students reported by two or more teachers as having superior adjustment, 69% obtained grade A (Excellent Adjustment) or B (Good Adjustment) on the SD - unit norms of the inventory. Similarly, the students reported having inferior adjustment, 71% obtained grades D (Unsatisfactory Adjustment) or E (Very Unsatisfactory Adjustment) on the SD unit norms of the inventory.
4. A cross - validation study on a representative sample of 254 cases shows a close agreement in mean score, standard deviation, and norms on SD unit between the standardization sample and cross - validation sample.

**Figure 1 The interaction effect of academic stress and adjustment on academic achievement.**



The graphs are usually used to present results in a manner that it is easier to understand than the tabulated values. The figure 1 indicates the graphical picture of the effect of academic stress and adjustment on academic achievement score. It is seen that the main effect of academic stress and adjustment are significant because all points are located at different level. As well as, it is seen that the interaction between academic stress and adjustment is also significant because all lines are crossing each other.

### CONCLUSIONS:

1. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the academic achievement.
2. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Reserved / outgoing' personality trait.
3. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Affected by sense / emotionally stable' personality trait.
4. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Humble / assertive' personality trait.
5. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Shy / venturesome' personality trait.
6. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Tough - minded / tender - minded' personality trait.
7. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Practical / imaginative' personality trait.
8. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Conservative / experimenting' personality trait.
9. The academic stress and adjustment significantly affect the 'Undisciplined self - conflict / controlled' personality trait.
10. Male and female students are not significantly differ on academic achievement.
11. Male and female students significantly differ on 'Reserved / outgoing' personality trait.
12. Male and female students significantly differ on 'Affected by sense / emotionally stable' personality trait.
13. Male and female students significantly differ on 'Humble / assertive' personality trait.
14. Male and female students significantly differ on 'Shy / venturesome' personality trait.
15. Male and female students significantly differ on 'Tough - minded / tender - minded'

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