CHAPTER 2
Review of Literature

Stress that occurs mainly due to pressure of academic is known as academic stress. Students these days are under more stress as compared to students who studied few decades back it is because of the fact that competition is growing day by day in school, colleges as well as in jobs. These stress further results in mental health problems among adolescents. Our study mainly focuses on identifying the effects of positive psychology variables like optimism, resilience, self efficacy, attachment etc. For this purpose the previous studies on similar variable were reviewed. The following studies were found to be useful in our study’s perspective.

Optimism and Academic Stress

Rashid, Arif, and Hussain (2012) explored the relation between stress and optimism, stress and life satisfaction along with the relation of optimism with life satisfaction in college students. For this purpose sample taken was one hundred students (50 boys and 50 girls) enrolled in 4 institutes in Lahore. A demographic survey was conducted with all the participants. The tests used for this study were Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelestein, 1983), Life Orientation Test Revised (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994), Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, Graffin, 1985). Results indicated that stress is significantly negatively related with optimism and life satisfaction in the sample.

Shearman et. al. (2011) compared the levels of optimism and life stress in collegiate athletes and non athletes. The samples consist of 332 athletes and non
Review of Literature

athletes. Result showed that athletes having high optimism face comparatively low stress than athletes with low optimism.

Tan (2010) conducted a research to examine the relation of dispositional optimism gender on high ability students’ perception of academic stress. It also sought to understand the relationship of dispositional optimism with other psychological variables such as self-esteem, academic self-efficacy, academic resilience, hope and satisfaction in school among high-ability students. Lastly, this study investigated the academic program and gender differences in these psychological factors. The sample consists of 298 high ability junior college level students of Singapore. Data was collected using the self-report Optimism, Stress, and other Psychological Traits questionnaire. Results indicated that optimism is significantly negatively related with academic stress among students as well as dispositional optimism and gender significantly predicts academic stress.

Huan, Yeo, Ang and Chong (2006) investigated the effect of dispositional optimism and gender on adolescents’ perception of academic stress. The sample of study was 430 students between the age of 13 to 16 years enrolled in 7th & 8th class of secondary schools of Singapore. The measures that were involved in this research were Life Orientation Test, Academic Expectation Stress Inventory. Data was evaluated by using multiple regressions. Results indicated a significant negative relation between dispositional optimism and academic stress which states that adolescents having higher optimism face lower academic stress on the other hand adolescents having lower level of optimism faces higher academic stress.
El-Anzi (2005) investigated in the study the relation of academic achievement with anxiety, self esteem, optimism and pessimism. For this purpose 400 participants were selected from Basic Education College of Kuwait. Results revealed that academic achievement is significantly positively related to self esteem and optimism, on the other hand academic achievement is negatively related with anxiety and pessimism.

Research conducted by Ben-Zur (2003) was to identify the role of dispositional optimism in African-American student’s perception of stress. The data was collected from 121 students (15 to 19 years of age). Results showed that there is negative correlation between optimism and level of perceived stress. Individuals having high scores in the optimism scale indicated lower level of perceived stress as compared to those who scored less on optimism scale.

Chang and Sanna (2003) conducted study on optimism, accumulated life stress, psychological and physical adjustment. In this they investigated role optimism and pessimism as a moderator between negative life stress and psychological and physical adjustment. For this purpose, responses from 560 college students were taken. Results revealed that optimism, pessimism and negative life stress are significant predictor of outcome. Also there is an Optimism-Pessimism x Accumulated Negative Life Stress interaction was seen. Along with a plot of the significant interaction showed optimism aggravate the connection of accumulated negative life stress with poor psychological and physical outcome.

Baldwin, Chambliss and Towler (2003) investigated in their study the effect of life event stress among college students as a function of optimism. The sample
comprises of one hundred and six African-American college students studying in Historically Black College. The results revealed students having high optimism indicated less stress.

Malik and Rehman (2003) conducted a study to investigate the effect of optimism/ pessimism on vulnerability to physical and psychological stress. Further they also examined the relation of academic achievement and other variables of the study. 100 participants both boys and girls belonging to various colleges of Rawalpindi, age ranging from 17 to 19 years were taken. The results revealed the individuals having optimistic thinking face less stress and achieve high in academics as compared to their pessimist counterpart.

Study conducted by Segerstrom, Taylor, Kemeny, and Fahey (1998) examined the impact of dispositional; and situational optimism on mood as well as on immune change. For this purpose 90 participants were taken whereas for effect on immune change 50 participants were taken from first semester Law College. Results revealed optimism is connected with good mood, high number of helper and higher natural killer cell cytotoxicity.

**Resilience and Academic Stress**

Study conducted by Shilpa and Srimathi (2015) investigated variation in perceived stress in Pre University and Undergraduate students and also exploring the relation of perceived stress with resilience in Pre University and Undergraduate students. For doing so, within group and between group designs was used. For these purpose 50 participants from Undergraduate and 50 Pre University participants were taken. The results revealed that Pre university students face more stress than Undergraduate students. Perceived stress is highly negatively related with resilience.
Cole et. al. (2014) conducted a study to examine the effects of ego resilience and mindfulness on the relation academic stress with psychological well-being. For this purpose 431 participants (college students) were taken. The salient findings of the study were that academic stress has positive association with depression and anxiety. Mindfulness and ego resilience both has negative association with the anxiety and depression. Ego resilience buffers the positive association of academic stress with anxiety.

Steinhardt and Dolbier (2008) investigated the potency of four weeks resilience intervention designed to develop resilience, coping and protective factors, along with reduced symptoms during the time of high academic stress. Sample consists of 57 college students. Further divided into experimental and control group. The results revealed that resilience programmed can be helpful in managing stress among students.

A study by Wilks (2008) examined the relation of academic stress with perceived resilience in social work students, and also to determine social support as a protective element of resilience in the relation. The sample consisted of three hundred and fourteen social work students of USA. Results revealed that academic stress is negatively relationship with social support and resilience. Social support has positive influence over resilience. Academic stress is responsible for the maximum variation in resilience scores.

Li (2008) examined the relation of stress, coping, secure attachment, and the trait of resilience in college students of Taiwan. For this purpose a sample of 350 students (age 18 to 22 yrs) registered in Institute of Technology in Central Taiwan.
The findings indicate that resilience is negatively correlated with stress. The reason for such results can be that resilience reduces the stress and also decreased stress increases resilience.

**Self Efficacy and Academic Stress**

Another study by Chýlová and Natovová (2012) examined the levels of self-efficacy and satisfaction with life in relation with stress coping strategies among university students. For this purpose data from 387 students were taken. Statistical analysis included correlation, coefficient. The results revealed that self efficacy is significantly correlated with stress coping strategies among students.

McKay, Kuntz and Naswall (2013) conducted a cross-sectional research to investigate the differences due to gender in the area of stress, self-esteem and self-efficacy beliefs. Along with this they also investigated the relation among stress, self efficacy and self esteem. For this purpose data from 610 adolescents belonging to UK were taken. Selection process of the participants was random. The findings of the study states that females have high score in 7 areas of stress and lower scores in self esteem and social self efficacy. Further it was identified that gender and self esteem does not moderate the relation of stress with self efficacy.

Khan (2013) conducted a study to investigate the relation between academic self-efficacy, stress coping skills, and academic performance. For this purpose a sample of 66 students doing graduation was taken. Results revealed that academic self efficacy have a positive correlation with positive reinterpretation and growth, acceptance and planning subscales of COPE inventory whereas academic self efficacy has a negative correlation with substance use subscale of COPE inventory.
Santurri (2012) conducted a study to examine the relation of stress, self-efficacy, social support, and health-related quality of life in females suffering from interstitial cystitis (IC). Further this research investigated self efficacy’s mediating role in the relation of stress and health related quality of life and social supports moderating role on self efficacy and health related quality of life in the females having IC while regulating stress. 1387 women participated in the study. Statistics used were descriptive statistic, correlation, regression. Results indicated a significant correlation between social support, stress, self efficacy and health related quality of life.

Pooley, Cohen, O’Connor, and Taylor (2012) conducted a study with the sample of 512 respondents suffered through a traumatic stressful situation. The findings state that stress has a negative correlation with self efficacy. Particularly, result indicated that people involved emotion focused coping have low self efficacy.

Rayle, Arredondo, and Kurpius (2005) examine the relation of personal and family valuing of education, self-esteem, academic stress, and educational self-efficacy. For this purpose responses from 530 girls doing graduation were taken. The results revealed that there is a relation between personal and family valuing of education, self esteem with educational self efficacy.

**Attachment and Academic Stress**

Dorin (2014) conducted research to examine the relation of attachment with perceived stress level in college student. Data was collected from 727 students, age between 18-30 yrs. They were asked to give their responses on scales measuring attachment style and perceived stress. Results revealed secure attachment is significantly related to perceived stress. Secure attachment has a significant negative relation with perceived stress.
Brar (2013) conducted research to identify the relation among academic stress, coping strategies and parental attachment in adolescents. For this purpose 700 participants were taken. Sample consisted of science stream students belonging to government and public school. The findings indicated coping strategies and parental attachment is significantly related with academic stress and also significantly predicts academic stress.

Berry and Kingswell (2012) conducted a study to investigate the relation of adult attachment and coping strategies for exam-related stress. The sample consisted of 57 university students. Results indicated that individuals having avoidant attachment relation reported less use of helpful problem-focused and emotion-focused strategies to deal with exams. It was also seen that individuals having high anxiety attachment relation use dysfunctional coping strategies.

Petroff (2008) conducted a study to investigate the predictors of stress, adult attachment, and their association on the resultant variables of grade-point average and course completion. Sample consisted of 160 community college students. Demographic surveys along with 3 other surveys were done. The tests used in the study were the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1989), the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983), and the Cultural Congruity Scale (Gloria & Kurpius, 1995). Results indicated that stress is negatively related with attachment as well as in girls’ attachment moderates the effect of stress in course completion.

A study by Howard and Medway (2004) investigated about the method through which senior school students, deal with stress as a function of attachment
style. For this purpose 75 pairs of adolescents and their parents were selected. Results revealed that there is a positive relation between adolescents’ attachment security and family communication where as adolescents attachment security has negative relation with negative avoidance behaviour. There is a positive relation between attachment insecurity and negative avoidance.

Bernier, Larose, Boivin and Soucy (2004) examined in their study the relation of attachment state of mind with adjustment to college. Alongwith another aim is to investigate attachment state of mind as moderator in the relationship of parental control and school adjustment. Sample of one hundred and two college students were taken. Results indicated that preoccupation and attachment has relation with poor adjustment. Preoccupation with attachment also enhances the negative relationship of parental psychological control with social adjustment. Dismissing attachment tendencies were found to be unrelated to college adjustment.

After reviewing the previous studies it was seen that positive psychological variables i.e. optimism, resilience, self efficacy and attachment are negatively correlated with academic stress. This indicates that higher level of these variables result in lower level of academic stress and vice versa.