CHAPTER – I

Introduction and Design of the Study

1.1 Introduction

Stress is an individual’s response to a disturbing factor in the environment and the consequence of such reaction. It is an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and/or behavioral deviations. Stressors originate at the individual, group, organizational and extra organizational level. Stress is associated with constraints and demands. Constraints prevent an individual from doing what he or she desires. But the demand refers to the loss of something desired. Lack of job security, organization policies, change of technology, excessive work load, management problems, physical conditions, cultural and geographical factors are some of the reasons for stress. The student’s stress exposed from various factors such as peer competiton, examinations, class tests, placement fears etc., affects the academic performance as proposed by Tatjana Atanasoska and Figen Eres (2011). Stress is a psychological response and it will reduce a person’s balance. The stress response will be felt like unusual heart beating, headache, tension, nail biting according to Abirami (2012). Stress is a dyanamic intrusion between an individual and the environment. Some of the major and common factors that influence stress are time pressure, workload, decisions making, contionus changes, and the mistakes at the work places as studied by Martos Pulido one decade ago.

The word stress was proponed by the first time endocrinologist Hans Selye in 1930’s. Later, he developed and popularized this concept. Stress includes inappropriate physiological response to any demands and it may be caused by good or bad experiences of a person. Stress can manifest itself in both positive and

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negative way. Stress is said to be positive when the situation offers an opportunity for one to gain something. Positive stress is called as Eustress. It is negative when stress is associated with heart disease, drug abuse, absenteeism, and other social, physical, organizational and emotional problems. Negative stress is called as distress. The effect of such stress leads to some health disorders such as heart disease, ulcer, caners, accidents, job dissatisfactions as per the study conducted by Jyoti Ahuja and Nidhi Kakkar (2013). If the impact of stress gives a favour or positive result, it is called as eustress where as it gives an adverse or negative result, it is called as distress as proposed by Kumar Senthil (2013).

1.2 Meaning of Stress

“Stress is an adaptive response, mediated by individual characteristics or psychological process, that is consequence of any external action, situation, or event that special physical and or psychological demands upon a person”.

Tancevich and Mattenson

The Penguin medical encyclopedia sees stress as any influence which disturbs the natural equilibrium of the body, and include within its reference physical injury explore, deprivation all kinds of disease and emotional disturbance (Marshall Jam Copper 1979).

1.3 Types of Stress

Stress may be classified into the following three types.

a. Acute Stress

Acute stress is the most common form of stress. It comes from demands and pressures of the recent past and anticipated demands and

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pressures of the near future. Acute stress is thrilling and exciting in small dose, but too much is exhausting.

b. **Episodic Acute Stress**

The symptoms of episodic acute stress are the symptoms of extended over arousal, persistent tension headaches, migraines, hypertension, chest pain, and heart disease. Treating episodic acute stress requires intervention on a number of levels, generally requiring professional help, which may take many months.

c. **Chronic Stress**

Chronic stress comes when a person never sees a way out of a miserable situation. It is the stress of unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable periods of time. With no hope, the individual gives up searching for solutions.

**1.4 Causes of Stress**

Specifically the causes of stress may differ according to the situations, person’s age, income level, environment, etc. The causes of stress may be classified into three broad categories such as environmental, psychological, and biological. In developing countries students’ mental health problems are caused by lifelong factors such as pressure of academic work, poverty, diseases, natural disasters and environmental hazards. According to 7Mundia Lawrence’s (2010) examinations, course work, assignment, procrastinating, excessive workload, as well as parents unrealistic expectations etc., are the causes for stress of the students.

**1.5 Impact of Stress**

The impact of stress has become a challenge for any organizations. It provides the output of low productivity, absenteeism, drug abuse, and hypertension

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among the employees as described by Jha and Ratnawat (2014). The academic stress may be classified into two types positive and negative. Academic stress has a major impact on the college students, and it reduces the student’s academic achievements, placements, work quality as well as their other performance related to their study.

1.6 Coping Strategies

Coping strategy is a way to reduce or avoid the impact of stress. There are several methods of coping strategies to reduce the stress such as distraction, social diversion, task, emotional avoidant, proactive, reative and nonproductive as said by Mundia Lawrence (2010). The coping strategies have been categorized into two different types-healthy coping strategies and unhealthy coping strategies. Compared with unhealthy coping strategies, healthy strategies are mostly supported by the students as studied by Shiferaw Henok (2015).

1.7 Need for the Study

This study will explore the insights of stress management among the college students. Further this study is concerned with the motives that are relevant to cause stress and its influence among the college students and how it will convert and affect the academic activities of the college students and the various coping strategies available to college students to reduce or get relieved from stress. Therefore this research report will provide the relevant solution of stress.

1.8 Scope of the study

Nowadays adolescents especially college students undergo stress and depression. Because of stress, they may not be able to bring out their talents, they may fail in tests and interviews for placement, they may fail to fulfill parental

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expectations, and may not show interest in learning. The reasons for the stress may be parental expectations, peer pressure, economic situation, media stress, etc. These causes of stress turn into a major barrier in students’ lives and academic achievement, so they need suitable relieving strategies for those causes of stress. Therefore this research report gives a better understanding for the students and educationalists regarding stress management in the area of Thiruvannamalai District.

1.9 Statement of the problem

Normally, college students face a variety of stresses in their day to day educational environmental. There are different reasons for causing stress to the college students such as their excessive workload, frequent examinations, continuous assignments, and physical fitness. Therefore this study carried out analyses the causes of stress, impact of stress, and the coping strategies of stress among the college students. Further it will help the students by providing them coping strategies to follow and to manage in the situations which give them stress.

1.10 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse the socio economic factors of the sample respondents.
2. To identify the causes of stress among the students of Arts and Science colleges in Tiruvannamalai District.
3. To analyse the impact level of stress on the students of Arts and Science colleges in Tiruvannamalai District.
4. To find out the coping strategies to reduce stress in college students.

1.11 Hypothesis of the study

The following hypotheses have been framed for achieving the above objectives.

1. There is no significant difference among the causes of stress in the students of Arts and Science colleges with regard to their socio economic variables.
2. There is no significant difference among the various causes of stress with regard to the type of the institution the students are studying.
3. There is no significant association between the impact levels of stress on the students of Arts and Science colleges and their socio economic variables.

4. There is no significant association between the coping strategies of stress in the students of Arts and Science colleges and the socio economic variables.

1.12. Methodology

1.12. a. Research Design

Descriptive research method has been used for this study. Descriptive studies aim at portraying accurately the characteristics of a particular group or situation. Descriptive research is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or a group. Here the researcher attempts to describe the existing facts through the existing data.

1.12. b. Sampling Design

N. Ross, K. (2005) said the convenience sampling elements have to be selected from the target population on the basis of their accessibility or convenience to the researcher. Convenience sampling sometimes is referred as an accentual sampling because those sampling sometimes collected by situational, or target populations are homogeneous. This research report has been based on convenience sampling under non-probability sample design.

1.12. c. Data Collection Method

The data collection is considered to be one of the most important aspects in the research methodology. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study in order to meet the requirements of the purpose. Under this study, primary data were collected by self-administered questionnaire, whereas, secondary data were collected from the websites, journal articles, books, and survey reports.

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1.12. d. Nature of Data

The purpose of this concurrent mixed methods study is to understand a research problem by converging both quantitative and qualitative data. The study is used to measure the relationship among the college students’ causes of, impact of and coping strategies for stress. The data will be explored using self- administered questionnaires with the participation of 475 students in Tiruvannamalai district.

1.12. e. Profile of the study area

The site of this study was Arts and Science colleges in Tiruvannamalai district. There are 47 government and self financing colleges in all disciplines in Tiruvannamalai district. It consists of 19 Arts and Science Colleges, 14 Polytechnic colleges, and 14 Engineering colleges. Only the students of Arts and Science Colleges are taken for this study. It includes the students of both government and self financing colleges. The total population in Tiruvannamalai district is 24,64,875, out of which 12,35,889 are male and 12,28,986 are female. In this district, the literacy rate of male is 83.11% and the female is 65.11% These informations are derived from the Indian census data 201111.

1.12. f. Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaire method to collect the primary data for this study. During the study period 530 questionnaires were distributed among the college students from which only 475 completed responses were accepted, whereas remaining 55 incomplete responses were rejected. Majority of the items were Likert–five point scale items based on a scale from “highly satisfied” to “highly dissatisfied”. Other relevant questions were asked for factual information’s, such as age, occupation, parental monthly income, area, and gender. All information used in this analysis were derived from the questionnaire.

11 http://www.census2011.co.in/census/district/26-tiruvannamalai.html
1.12. g. Pre-test and Pilot study

Pre-test was conducted with ten college students to ensure that all the printed information are relevant or not. Similarly, the researcher distributed 50 questionnaires among the college students to conduct the pilot study which ensured that more than 70 per cent of the students understood the embedded variables. Moreover the reliability was established through the coefficient alpha such as cause of stress consisting of 15 variables, impact of stress comprising of 16 variables and coping strategies including 25 variables. The obtained values are 0.885, 0.937, and 0.862 respectively. Normally sample adequacy 0.7 is recommended for social science research by many researchers. Therefore this result is adequate for analysis. Therefore the similar variables can be used for the main study.

1.12. h. Tools of Analysis

The data collected were analyzed by preparing suitable tables. The information’s collected with the help of questionnaire were tabulated and analyzed by using various statistical measures like,

1. Independent sample T-test,
2. One-Way (ANOVA),
3. Chi-Square Analysis,
4. Factor Analysis,
5. Confirmatory Factor analysis (CFA)

1.13. Limitation of the Study

- The researcher has taken the students of Arts and Science colleges only and students from colleges like engineering college, B.Ed. colleges, medical colleges and diploma colleges are not considered.
- The study carried out covers only Tiruvannamalai District.
- Due to paucity of time and fund, the size of the sample is restricted to 475.
1.14. Chapter Arrangements

The report is presented in eight chapters. The First Chapter gives an introduction of stress, causes of stress, impact of stress, coping strategies of stress, need for the study, scope of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, hypotheses of the study, methodology of the study, limitations of the study, and chapter summary. The Second Chapter relates to the Review of Literature. The Third Chapter provides the theoretical background of the study. The Fourth Chapter is related to the socio-economic profile of the respondents. The Fifth Chapter deals with the causes of stress. The Sixth Chapter is embedded with the impact of stress. The Seventh Chapter is related to the coping strategies of stress. The Eighth Chapter summarizes the major findings of the study, presents scope for further study, and gives suggestions.

1.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the introduction to the study, need for the study, scope of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, hypotheses of the study, methodology of the study, limitations of the study and chapters arrangement. The next chapter deals with the previous literature related to the causes of stress, impact of stress and the coping strategies of stress.