CHAPTER – V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Stress is a physiological, psychological and behavioural response to change. This change may be positive or negative and one’s responses may be helpful or maladaptive. A moderate level of stress motivates one to meet the challenges of life. A temporary burst of adrenaline helps one to study for an important exam or face an intimidating situation. Ideally this physiological and mental arousal will subside when the stressful event is over. However prolonged stress can interfere with one’s health and performance, leading to physical and mental exhaustion and illness.

Student encounter stress for a variety of reasons. Academics, family issues, social situations, work and financial problems are just some of the sources of stress. While students often cope successfully with the demands of college life, the pressures can become overwhelming and unmanageable stress can manifest itself in many ways.

The present study focuses on the various aspects such as: Professional and non-professional college students and stress. 2) Gender and stress 3) Socio-economic status and stress 4) Age and stress 5) Religion and stress. These factors were studied in depth in the present study.

Type and trait theories of personality focus on an individual’s personal characteristics. One of the first type theories was proposed by
Hippocrates in 400 BC, a Greek physician. He grouped people into four temperament type which are as follows-

1) Sanguine (cheerful, vigorous, confident, optimistic), 2) Melancholic (depressed, morose), 3) Cholerie (hot tempered), 4) Phlegmatic (slow moving, calm, unexcitable).

Personality has been studied in different ways. Some psychologists have developed broad theories of personality, while others have focused on the influence of heredity on personality. Most of the theories of personality can be grouped into four categories –

1) Type and trait approaches
2) Dynamic approaches
3) Learning and behaviour approaches
4) Humanistic approaches

R.B. Cattel's factorial approach emphasis on personality is "that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation". It was all based on the equation : $R = f(st)$ which explains about individual's responses in relation to environmental forces. According to Cattel the traits of individual's are more or less relatively permanent. He classified the trait into surface traits and source traits. Surface traits are revealed by correlating "trait elements" or "trait indicators" which, in turn, are essentially behaviour samples that go together. It is observed that the traits described by Cattel are bipolar opposites. Factor analysis has led to the emergence of source traits
which represent deeper, less variable and more significant aspects of personality and usually source traits are more of descriptive in nature. Sometimes these are classified as environmental - mould traits and some are called as constitutional - traits as they are heredity determined ones.

Cattel points out that the emphasis will be more on environmental objects, emotional aspects, goal satisfaction initiatives and an innate preference for certain path leading to the goal. According to him the development of personality is a process of unfolding of maturational process through learning and experience hence impact of environmental stressors have greater significance in production of varieties of personality traits. They are all emerging out of social context. The present research is venturing upon making use of the trait approach as well as making use of the questionnaire developed by R.B. Cattel.

According to Rosenberg (1979) self-esteem reflects the perceived discrepancy between an individual’s actual self state and an ideal or desired self state. “It is not simply how good a person thinks he is with regards to quality, but how good he wants to be that counts.” He also suggested that self evaluation occurs within an individual’s unique frame work of evaluative guides on standards.

Although education may superficially appear to be a purely cognitive domain, academic achievement is a function of a tangled skein of variables of many of a non-cognitive characters.

A study consisted of stratified random sample of a total of 300 college students 150 professional and 150 non-professional students.
The colleges selected for the study were Dental, Medical, Arts and Science colleges. A general proforma was used to collect detailed information from college students. Along with the other psychological tests were used which are as follows –

1) 16 personality factor questionnaire.

2) The socio-economic status scale

3) Self-concept questionnaire.

4) The IPAT anxiety scale

5) Previous year’s Examination marks were considered for academic achievement scores.

The present study consists of 150 professional students (medical and dental) and 150 non-professional students (arts and science). The four colleges selected for the study were medical, dental, arts and science colleges. The students from all the years of the courses were selected. A random survey was undertaken of the students belonging to different age groups and having varied socio-economic status. Both males and females were included in the study and a general Proforma was given to them in a comfortable period of time. Along with the general Proforma the test materials were distributed and explained to be filled in a specific period of time. After collecting the data, the scoring was recorded and the entire data were subjected to statistical analysis.

After statistical analysis of the data, the following observations were made –
1) Students from professional courses experienced significantly higher stress as compared to students from non-professional courses.

2) There was no significant difference in stress scores of males and females.

3) Students of non-professional courses with different SES did not differ significantly in their stress scores.

4) Students of professional courses with different SES did not differ significantly in their stress scores.

5) There is no significant difference in stress score of different age groups.

6) Though professional students experience more stress it is more pronounced in age group of above 20 years.

7) Students with different religious background did not differ significantly in their stress scores.

8) Professional and non-professional students differ significantly on some personality factors like A, C, M, N, Q1 but these two groups of students do not differ significantly in the rest of the personality factors.

9) The impact of the interaction of stress and the type of course is significant on the following personality factor – A, C, O,
and Q4. The rest of the personality factors are not influenced by the interactional effect

10) There is no independent impact of stress on self-esteem, however, stress and type of course has interactionally influenced the self-esteem.

11) There is no significant impact of stress on academic achievement of professional and non-professional students.

The results obtained indicate very clearly that it is the high stress group of professional students who need the intervention programmes most.

1) Professional college students experience more stress in comparison with non-professional college students. The probable reason may be more practical oriented studies with the medical and dental group of students which fall under the professional stream. The heavy course, syllabus to be completed in a scheduled period of time and the patient care system which has to be dealt with by the students in their 3rd and final year of study. Therefore these professional students are recommended stress breaking strategies through various methods of coping.

2) The professional and non-professional students differ in their personality factors like A, C, M, N, Q1. The professional students who score high on these factors having following features of easy
going, good natured, emotionally expressive, mature, stable, realistic about life and regulated by external realities.

3) Stress has no significant impact on self-esteem of both professional and non-professional students and also it has no significant impact on academic achievement of these two groups.