ABSTRACT

The study of reaction to conditions of intense psychological stress has been a major concern of psychological investigations for a long time. The concept of “stress” is one of the most significant concepts ever developed in the sciences. Stress is a word derived from a Latin word “Stringere” meaning “to draw tight”. One of the most common definitions of stress is that it is anything which causes an alteration of the psychological homeostatic process (Selye, 1976).

The present study is undertaken to study stress in relation to Personality, self-esteem and academic achievement of professional and non-professional college students.

Personality has been studied in different ways. Some psychologists have developed broad theories based on origins and development of Personality while others have focused on the influence of heredity on Personality. Most of these theories can be grouped into four categories:

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

According to Rosenberg (1979), self-esteem reflects the perceived discrepancy between an individual’s actual self state and an ideal or desired self state. Self-esteem appears to serve as an anxiety buffer in one’s daily life with research findings indicating that those with high self-esteem cope significantly better with stressful conditions than those
with low self-esteem (Elton, Burrows and Stanley, 1980; Greenberg Burling, Simon, Soleman, Lyon and Pinel 1972)

1) High anxiety is connected with relatively low performance at school and college level
2) Test anxiety is a better predictor of academic success than general anxiety.
3) There is an evidence of anxiety intelligence interaction.

It was believed that there will be significant differences in stress experiences of college students of professional and non-professional courses. Professional students are believed to be more stressed than the other students. And also it is believed that the higher stress will have negative impact on individuals psychological aspects like Personality self-esteem and academic achievements. Hence an attempt was made to investigate the impact of stress on these dependent variables.

For the purpose of the study three hundred students were randomly selected from two professional colleges (Dental and Medical) and two from non-professional colleges (Arts and Science). SES, Religion and gender were used as other independent variables.

A general Proforma and other psychological tests were used to collect data for the study.

a) 16-Personality Factor Questionnaire by R.B. Cattel
b) The self-concept questionnaire developed by Dr. Raj-Kumar Saraswat.
c) The socio-economic status scale developed by Dr. Srivastava.
d) The IPAT Anxiety scale developed by Samuel E. Krug, Ivan H. Scheier and Raymond B. Cattel.
e) The students previous years marks were considered as academic achievement scores.
The major objectives of the present study are –
1) To study the variation of stress in professional and non-professional college students groups.
2) To study the effect of stress on Personality of students of both professional and non-professional sample groups.
3) To study the variation in Personality traits between high stress group and low stress group.
4) To study the effect of stress on academic achievement of students of both sample group.
5) To study the effect of stress on self esteem of sample subgroups.
The data were statistically analysed and the following conclusions are drawn:
1) Professional and non-professional students differ significantly on their stress experiences.
2) Independent variable like age, gender, SES and religion have no significant impact on stress experiences of two sample groups.
3) There is a significant impact of stress on some of the factors of Personality of both sample groups.
4) There is no independent impact of stress on self-esteem of both the groups.
5) There is no significant impact of stress on academic achievements of professional and non-professional students.