# Exploring the Sources and Coping Strategies for Academic Stress among Undergraduate Students: A comprehensive Analysis

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**Abstract**

Every individual has experienced some level of stress in their day-to-day life. Academic stress refers to the feeling of discomfort or pressure that students experience related to academic work. The title of the paper is "Exploring the Sources and Coping Strategies for Academic Stress among Undergraduate Students: A Comprehensive Analysis". The prime investigation of the study is to find out various sources and measures of academic stress among the undergraduate students. The study has found that peer pressure, institutional pressure, workload, too much parental expectation, financial difficulties, defective curriculum, and methods of teaching etc. are the main sources of academic stress among undergraduate students. Further, the study finds some coping strategies, such as an effective curriculum, good study habits, practicing yoga and meditation, child-centred curriculum, and so on. The research has also mentioned some recommendations for ways to solve the academic stress among undergraduate students.

**Keywords**: Academic, Stress, Undergraduate students, coping strategies.

## 1.0. Introduction:

Academic stress refers to the emotional and mental issues or pressure that are experienced by students due to academic workload. When students feel pressure, distress, anxiety, fear, and maladjustment with the academic scenario, then it turns into a form of stress. Now-a-days it is seen as a part and parcel of students' life. At every stage, viz. primary to higher education, each students feel academic stress due to too much expectation of parents, excessive assignments, projects, homework, defective curriculum and methods of teaching, societal expectation, institutional pressure and institutional pressure etc.

During the undergraduate level, sometimes students are unable to handle their physical changes and academic-related stress at the same time. So, it has become a burden, difficult, fatigue, and helpless, which impacts on performance of academic achievement.

Reddy,. & Menon,. & Thattil (2018) highlighted on various sources of academic stress among the university students, which was based on quantitative research design. They found out some major sources were fear of failure, teacher and students' relationships, personal inadequacy, inter-personal conflict, lack of study facilities, etc. the effects of students' academic stress. They also suggested some measures to solved and overcome from the academic stress (Reddy,. & Menon,. & Thattil, 2018). Narayanamma, B., Jayakumar, C., Nagasai, H., and Teja, D. (2023) found significant differences in academic stress levels among undergraduate students from different streams such as humanities, science, and management, but found no significant differences in academic stress between male and

female students (Narayanamma, B., Jayakumar, C., Nagasai, H., & Teja, D., 2023). Sailo, Huntharhmachhuani, and Varghese, Divya (2024) discussed several causes of academic stress affecting students' achievement, including peer-related, teacher-related, learning-related, institutional, financial, and parental stress. The study also focused on coping strategies such as problem solving, emotional support, seeking social support, and positive thinking, which play vital roles in reducing academic stress among undergraduate students (Sailo, Huntharhmachhuani & Varghese, Divya, 2024). Islam, Sefatul., & Rabbi, Fajlay. (2024) discussed the various uncover sources of academic stress among university students and provided preventive measures to solve the stress of students related to academics (Islam, Sefatul, & Rabbi, Fajlay, 2024, p. 255-271).

Due to academic stress, students have faced anxiety, stress, depression, distress, conflict, fear, an inferiority complex, and feelings of loneliness, and these have created trouble in learning as well as academic performance. During the undergraduate level students going through certain difficulties of mental health issues such as emotional disturbance, social maladjustment, peer pressure, body image issues, identity crisis, eating disorder and relationship issues etc. which are directly or indirectly influence on academic achievement and academic grades (Saikia, Tarun., & Saikia, Runu., & Duwarah, Rashmi., & Padi, Purnima. 2025, p.141-260).

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study are-

1. To study the sources of academic stress that affect undergraduate students
2. To suggest the coping strategies that help to reduce academic stress among undergraduate students

### 1.2 Methodology:

The researcher adopts a descriptive research design within the qualitative research methodology to study "Exploring the Sources and Coping Strategies for Academic Stress among Undergraduate Students: A Comprehensive Analysis". The researcher used secondary sources for the collection and analysis of the study, including various sources such as books, articles, journals, websites, the internet, and other relevant e-resources.

### 1.3 Result and Discussion:

#### 1. To study the sources of academic stress that affect undergraduate students

There are several sources that affect academic stress among undergraduate students. Academic stress is part and parcel of the students' lives, especially during the undergraduate level. Below are mentioned some of the sources that affect undergraduate students –

#### a. Workload:

One of the important sources of academic achievement of undergraduate students is too much workload. Too much workload, such as assignments, projects, home works, exams, and departmental responsivities etc., makes the students stress, anxiety, discomfort, frustrated, and bored, which leads the reason of poor academic performance and create stress related to academics.

#### b. Peer Pressure:

Sometimes, too much pressure of peers can create stress of undergraduate students in the field of academic fields. Healthy relationships with peers can encourage and motivate them to achieve to determined goals, and unhealthy relationships with peers can destroy and misleading their life in a destructive way, and these kinds of sources can develop the feeling of academic stress during the academic year.

#### c. Institutional Pressure:

Another important source of academic stress among undergraduate students is institutional pressure. Unnecessary and too much workload and instruction of the educational institutions

regarding learning can create unrest, conflict, fear, and stress among the undergraduate students, which became the form to academic stress.

**d. Fear of examination:**

Some students have suffered anxiety, fear, and stress name of the examination. Frequent practiced of examination also increase the level of examination among undergraduate students and developed a negative attitude towards the study and its effects on academic performance.

**e. Financial Problems:**

Due to financial scarcity, students have faced many problems in the field of learning as well as completing their educational journey. Lack of financial availability can bring demotivation, losing opportunities, and a feeling of low self-esteem among undergraduate students, which directly or indirectly creates academic-related stress.

**f. Parental Expectation:**

Keeping expectations from the child in terms of good academic outcome is good, but setting higher benchmarks in results without knowing the level of the child's ability, interest, and potential is not acceptable. To prove and reach the parental expectation sometimes creates feeling of guilty, stress, and frustration, which later impacts academic achievement.

**g. Defective methods of teaching:**

Effective methods of teaching are helps undergraduate students to explore and reconstruct of knowledge and make the learning process smooth and fruitful. And help them to understand the content easily in less time periods. If the methods of teaching are defective, then students can difficult to adjust with the classroom situation as well as content knowledge, which can develop the feeling of stress in academics.

**h. Defective curriculum:**

Curriculum plays a vital role in moulding students' academic life in a better way. If the curriculum is not useful and effective for the learner, then it can destroy one generation and misguide. When the curriculum is found defective, students feel stress, unfit, and meaningless of their education journey and can lead to academic stress.

i. **Inadequate learning resources:**

Inadequate learning resources can make the learning unattractive, unfruitful, and boredom for undergraduate students during the classes. And these kinds of feelings create an unhealthy learning environment for them.

**j. Poor study habits:**

Attitude toward poor study habit is also another prominent source of academic stress. Due to have poor study habits of undergraduate students can suffer anxiety, fatigue, and fear, which affect on academic performance and can lead the feelings of failure.

Besides the mentioned sources, we can also find some other sources that can lead to academic stress among undergraduate students, which are mentioned below-

**k. Conflict between teachers and students**

**l. Too much addiction to social media**

**m. Uncertainty about career**

**n. Chronic illness**

**o. Societal expectation, etc.**

2. **To suggest the coping strategies that help to reduce academic stress among undergraduate students**

There are certain coping strategies we should adopts to solve the problems related to academic stress of undergraduate students. Here are mentioned below-

**i. Proper time management:**

Maintaining proper time management can reduce academic stress among undergraduate students. These kinds of regular practice motivate and encourage them to study properly and consistently.

**ii. Effective method of teaching:**

To coping and reduce academic stress among undergraduate students, educational institutions should arrange and adopt new and modern effective methods of teaching. And these kinds of strategies increase attention and make learning understandable.

**iii. Child-centred curriculum:**

Another important coping strategy of academic stress is to prepare and implement of adequate child-centred curriculum, which is based on needs, ability, interest, and utility of the individual differences.

**iv. Vocational Guidance:**

From the earlier stage of learning, educational institutions should keep some provisions to organise a vocational guidance programme to direct the right vocational path and showing the advantages and opportunities of selecting of particular course of study. These kinds of strategies can help to reduce academic stress and motivate students to follow the correct occupation in the future.

**v. Healthy institutional environment:**

Educational institutions should create a healthy environment to organize some initiatives, such as create awareness on mental health, organized co-curricular activities, and celebrate important days or events etc. These kinds of initiatives help the undergraduate students to follow disciple and makes them free from academic related stress.

**vi. Practicing Yoga and Meditation:**

Another effective coping strategy of academic stress among undergraduate students is practicing Yoga and meditation regularly and realizes the relevance of yoga and meditation in daily life. Practicing yoga postures and systematic ways of meditation eradicate the feeling of stress and help in fostering academic as well as personal life.

**vii. Adequate learning resources:**

Provisions of availability of adequate and effective learning resources also can reduce academic stress among undergraduate students. Adequate learning resources make students motivated and clear their doubt and difficulties. and be able to solve problems related to academic stress.

**viii. Minimising workload:**

As per as possible, teachers should minimise workload related to the academics of the students and avoid unnecessary responsivities. This kind of strategy helps the students to reduce academic stress.

**ix. Reform the examination system:**

Frequently, examination practices should be abolish and adopt a current, effective, and student-friendly examination system relevant to the 21st century. We should give more focus on what they learn than the how many marks they secure.

**x. Good study Habits:**

Another important coping strategy for reducing academic stress is developing good study habits. Regular learning can help to clear doubts, difficulties, and completing their everyday academic tasks as given by the teachers. These practices help to deal with stress related to academics.

Besides these mentions of coping strategies, we can also add some others, such as.

**xi. Educational Guidance**

**xii. Proper utilization of social media**

**xiii. Proper rest and diet**

xiv. **Proper utilization of leisure time**

xv. **Organization of co-curricular activities, etc.**

**1.4 Conclusion and recommendation:**

Lastly, we can conclude that to measure academic stress among the undergraduate students, the government should be take strong initiatives to minimising their workload and provide provisions for the availability of employment on a large scale. Most of the time, we notice that a lack of proper guidance and counselling from the grassroots levels, students became confused or feel stress at an early stage of life, which later affects on their selection of the right vocation or occupation in the right time. So, we as democratic citizens of the nation should realize and reform the examination system and make it flexible or productive ways. At the undergraduate level, a lack of proper direction leads most adolescents to develop or be attracted towards anti-social activities such as drug addiction, alcohol, bullying, committed suicide, a tendency to self-harming, and negligence on physical as well as emotional care, etc., which becomes dangerous or unhealthy for society as well as nation building. Most importantly, parents and other stakeholders of the society should try to understand the ability, potential, and efficiency of each student and emphasize on individual differences. Try to focus on quality, not quantity, and provide awareness, motivation, introduce a large amount of skilful courses, employability, enhancement of leadership quality, respect their opinions, and proper implementations of policies, committees, acts, and others reports related to the academics.

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