



The Relationship between Stress Symptoms and Personality Trait among Secondary School Students at Al-Najaf City

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Abstract: A Student's life is subjected to different kinds of stressors, such as the pressure of secondary(w) an obligation of success, uncertain future and difficulties envisaged for integration into the system, these Students face social, emotional, physical and family problems which may affect their learning ability Some of them Find it hard to cope with the stress.

Coping with stress is essential to survival and wellbeing and it has been identified as a stabilization component which may did an Individuals in psychological adaption throughout high stress Situations in addition to dealing to stressful situations, students must manage with educational pressures.

A descriptive Cross-sectional design used to Study the Relationship between symptom of Stress and personality trait among Secondary School students at Al-Najaf City (October, 2023) to (april, 2024).

A non-probability (Purposive) sample was selected to obtain representative and accurate data. The total number of students participating in the Study was (200) Students.

The study results show that there is a high significant relationship between stress levels and the study sample. demographic data (sex, economic status and mental illness) at p-value less than (0.001), and relationships between Stress levels & living patterns at p-value less them (0.05).

The study concludes that stress levels affect of personality trait among Secondary School Students. And this conclusion is proved through the statistical approaches that show there is a correlation between the stress levels and personality traits, So there is no enough evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Otherwise, the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

The study recommends to Study Supporting educational methods by the Educational Committee that limits violent and aggressive behavior of adolescents in schools, such as (moving away from scenes of an aggressive nature, beating, violence, fighting, quarrels, and blood scenes), school professionals should consider taking adolescents' personality traits and school-based stress into account, Parents may take an active interest in their child's program, providing emotional support. However, parents may be cautious not to exert excessive pressure, Subject teachers should refer any student to the guidance and counselling officers when they detect a problem.

Key words: Stress, personality traits.



Introduction

A student's life is subjected to different kinds of stressors, such as the pressure of secondary with an obligation of success, uncertain future and difficulties envisaged for integration into the system, these students face social, emotional, physical and family problems which may affect their learning ability. Some of them find it hard to cope with the stress and lag behind, while others see the pressure as challenge to work harder, stress can lead to disruptions in both physical and mental health, stress reduction and adopting a healthier life style have been major concerns of the students, the importance of awareness about the stress level has a major effect on one's mental and physical capacity.⁽¹⁾

In general, there are two types of stress: eustress and distress. Eustress is a form of positive stress that motivates people to continue working. Positive stress promotes and facilitates learning, and a healthy level of stress can enhance learning ability, distress, on the other hand, is a type of negative stress that occurs when the pleasant stress becomes too severe to tolerate. This type of negative stress suppresses and inhibits learning and should be minimized.⁽²⁾

One of the factors that can influence stress appraisal and response is personality, there are five broad personality traits based on the Five-Factor Model, which consists of neuroticism (e.g., tendency to be emotionally unstable, and experience such feelings as anxiety, worry, and fear), conscientiousness (e.g., tendency to be responsible, organized, hard-working, goal-directed), extroversion (e.g., tendency to be sociable, assertive, positive, and with a high activity level), openness (e.g., tendency to be perceptive, creative, reflective and appreciate fantasy, and aesthetics), and agreeableness (e.g., tendency to be kind, cooperative, altruistic, trustworthy and generous).⁽³⁾

Coping with stress is essential to survival and wellbeing and it has been identified as a stabilization component which may aid an individuals in psychological adaption throughout high stress situations; in addition to dealing to stressful situations, students must manage with educational pressures. Various stress-reduction strategies for students have been investigated, which include time management skills, support systems, positive emotion, free time participation, and insight meditation anxiety - reducing courses, wellness electives, informal support groups, and mentoring programs.⁽⁴⁾

Importance of the study

Today, stress has become a huge problem; the majority of individuals, even young children are not an exception, can be viewed in a condition of stress, if we want to cope with stress, we must first grasp the physiology of stress, despite the fact that stress research had contributed important insights and improved our knowledge of stress's metabolic and physiological difficulties, stress affects most of the bodily systems, despite this, stress management continues to be a significant concern.⁽⁵⁾

Stress is a normal even essential part of life that goes hand in hand with working towards any goal or challenge, a stressful situation can spur us on greater effectiveness and achievement, in fact whether we like it or not we can't escape stress for complete freedom from stress is death, a World Bank report on secondary school leadership revealed that the education system world over have been ineffective and has failed to address the issue of secondary school principals stress and burnout, this has negated efforts to create a stronger human resource base which is invaluable for development in all its spheres in the school, several studies have been carried out on possible variables that could affects stress management for example Howart cited age; Berkel cited gender while Birdie cited teaching experience⁽⁶⁾

Methodology

Study Design: The study design is quantitative study (descriptive correlational). (October, 2023) to (April, 2024).

Administrative Agreements: The study was approved by the Council of the College of Nursing / University of Kufa and the Ethical Research Committee.



Ethical consideration is an important issue in nursing research, and its primary goal is to secure the rights of the researcher and study participants. Participants were assured that the data to be collected from the questionnaire would be kept confidential and that no one would be allowed to know it. Subsequently, written permission was obtained from the students to participate in the study.

Setting of the Study: The study had been conducted in secondary school of Al_Rahman , Al-yaqut and Muhammad Baqir Al-Sadr.

Study Sample: A non- probability (purposive) sample was selected to obtain representative and accurate data. The total number of students participating in the study was (200) students

The Study Instrument:

Part I: Students Demographic Data Form:

This part consists of (9) items: age, gender, marital status, live pattern, monthly income, , School names, chronic diseases and psychological diseases and medications of mental diseases.

Part II : Perceived Stress Scale(P.S.S):

This scale was developed by Cohen (1994). The purpose of this tool of psychology is to assess one's stress perception by inquiring as to how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded the participant finds their life to be (Cohen & Williamson, 1988). Based on the respondent's feelings and emotions throughout the previous month, these questions are answered using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (never) to 4 (very often). For example, question six asks, "In the past month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?" The answers to the four positively worded questions were reversed for scoring. Resulting scores range from 0 to 4, with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress and vice versa.

Part III: Personality Trait (Carver, 1997):

is a 36-item of The Big Five Inventory (BFI). Respondents indicate whether they have performed the response for each item on five-point multiple choice scale ranging from

1 (Strongly Disagree) 2(Disagree a little) 3(Neither agree nor disagree) 4(Agree a little)5 (strongly Agree)

BFI scale scoring ("R" denotes reverse-scored items). For every item give yourself the same number of points as the number you have written before it. For items with an R in front of them, scoring shall be reversed i.e. 1 becomes 5, 2 becomes 4, 4 becomes 2 & 5 becomes 1.

Extraversion: 1, 6R, 11, 16, 21R, 26, 31R, 36

Agreeableness: 2R, 7, 12R, 17, 22, 27R, 32, 37R, 42

Conscientiousness: 3, 8R, 13, 18R, 23R, 28, 33, 38, 43R

Neuroticism: 4, 9R, 14, 19, 24R, 29, 34R, 39

Openness: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35R, 40, 41R, 44

Data Collection:

The data was collected with the subjects' who were included in the current study using a developed questionnaire and a self-administered questionnaire. Prior to data collection, the investigator met with the students in the schools to clarify the study subjects' and obtain their verbal agreement to participate in the study with the right to refuse or withdraw participation and confidentiality of the information, and then a copy of the questionnaire was distributed before it's receiving by the investigator, A total of 200 questionnaires for statistical analysis were collected from secondary schools at al Najaf. This method was done at the schools that participated in this research. From October, 2023, to April 24th, 2024, the data collection procedure was conducted out.



Statistical analysis:

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 of the Statistical Analysis System. The following statistical data analysis approaches were used to analyze and evaluate the results of the study.

Descriptive data analysis through using:

1. (Frequency(F): The frequency of an events in statistics is the number of times the event occurred in an experiment or research. It was used for describing the distribution of sample demographic variables.
2. Percentages (%): is computed by dividing the frequency of participants in the category by the total number of participants and multiplying by 100 percent.
3. (Mean)of score (MS): The mean in statistics is the arithmetic average of a set of numbers. The average is computed by adding two or more scores and then dividing the total by the number of scores. It used to measure the centrality of the data.
4. Standard deviation: The standard deviation measures the amount of variance in a population. If the standard deviation is low, it means that everyone is relatively close to average. Whereas if the standard deviation is large meaning everyone is fairly unique and not too close to the average. It indicates the average amount of deviation of values the mean

Inferential Data Analysis by:

The next method is utilize to verify or rejects the hypotheses that are proposed earlier in the current work.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was designed to estimate the link between two variables, Perceived Stress levels and Coping Behavior to determine the type and strength of this relationship. Considered significant at P 0.05, extremely significant at P 0.01, and non-significant at P 0.01.The

Study Results and The findings

Table 1: Study Sample Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Rating and Intervals	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	99	49.5
	Female	101	50.5
	Total	200	100.0
Age Groups	17- 20	183	91.5
	21-24	17	8.5
	Total	200	100.0
Living Address	Urban	188	94.0
	Rural	12	6.0
	Total	200	100.0
Marital Status	Single	191	95.5
	Married	6	3.0
	Divorce	2	1.0
	Widow	1	.5
Economic Status	Total	200	100.0
	Not enough	45	22.5
	Barely Enough	78	39.0
	Enough	77	38.5
Living Patterns	Total	200	100.0
	With family	195	97.5
	Alon	4	2.0
	Others	1	.5
Physical Illness	Total	200	100.0
	Yes	47	23.5
	No	153	76.5
Mental Illness	Total	200	100.0
	Yes	86	43.0
	No	114	57.0



Table (1) shows the majority of age between (17-20) years old (91.5%), females (50.5%),urban (94.0%),Marital Status Single (95.5%), Monthly Income enough to some extent (39.0%), living with family (97.5%),No Physical Illness (76.5%),No Mental Illness(57.0%)

Table (2) Assessment of Stress Levels among the Study Sample

Stress Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Mild Stress	16	8.0
Moderate Stress	108	54.0
Severe Stress	76	38.0
Total	200	100.0

Table (2) The study results indicate that the 54% of the study sample exhibit a moderate stress. While 38% and 8% of the study sample exhibit sever and mild stress respectively.

Table (3) Assessment of Personality Traits among the Study Sample

Personality Traits	Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Extroversion Levels	Introvert	2	1.0
	Ambivert	94	47.0
	Extrovert	104	52.0
	Total	200	100.0
Agreeableness Levels	Low	1	.5
	Moderate	30	15.0
	High	131	65.5
	Very High	38	19.0
	Total	200	100.0
Consciousness Levels	Very low	199	99.5
	Moderate	1	.5
	Total	200	100.0
Neuroticism Levels	Low	10	5.0
	Moderate	51	25.5
	High	139	69.5
	Total	200	100.0
Openness to experience Levels	Low	9	4.5
	Moderate	65	32.5
	High	117	58.5
	Very high	9	4.5
	Total	200	100.0

Concerning table (3) The study results indicate that 52% of the study sample present with an extrovert trait. Regarding to the Agreeableness Levels, Neuroticism Levels, and Openness to experience Levels the study results indicate that the majority of the study sample present with high levels for all of these personality traits. While at the Consciousness Levels the study sample present with very low level.

Table (4) Correlation Between the Stress Levels and Personality Traits among the Study Sample

Main Studied Domain	Statistics	Extroversion Levels	Agreeableness Levels	Consciousness Levels	Neuroticism Levels	Openness to experience Levels
Stress	Pearson Correlation	-.108	-.209**	-.277**	.481**	.043
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.129	.003	.000	.000	.547
	N	200	200	200	200	200

Table (4): The study results indicate that there is a correlation between the stress levels and the Agreeableness Levels, Consciousness Levels, and Neuroticism Levels. While there is a no correlation with the other traits.

Table (5) Correlation Between the Stress Levels and Study Sample Demographic Data

Main Studied Domain	Statistics	Stress	Sex	Age Groups	Living Address	Marital Status	Economic status	Living patterns	Physical Illness	Mental Illness
Stress	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.378*	.009	.016	.041	-.209*	.150*	-.085	-.382*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.894	.819	.567	.003	.034	.233	.000
	N	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200



Table(6): The study results indicate that there is a correlation between the stress levels and the study sample sex, economic status, living patterns, and mental status. While there is no correlation with the other demographic data

Discussion of the Study Results

The current narrative review highlights that students commonly report high levels of academic-related stress, cross-culturally. The academic-related stress experienced by secondary and tertiary students' impacts their mental and physical health and leads to a range of academic problems⁽⁸⁾

Lazarus theory of stress proposes that stress is strongly linked to emotions through the coping process employed. However, studies that empirically investigate the association between academic stress and emotional problems in upper secondary school students are rare. Nonetheless, one recent study reported an association between school stress and emotional problems⁽⁹⁾

The present study conducts to find out the link between Stress and personality trait among Secondary School Students

This chapter presents the discussion of the study results with an appropriate rationale and articles based support. And it organized as follow:

Part One: Discussion of the Students' Demographic Data:Table(1)

In the present study results indicate that the female is the dominant gender for the study sample (50.5%), This result is accordance with the study Gao et.al (2020) who reported that Females were more vulnerable to stress and pain than males, so they might experience greater sadness and anxiety.

Regarding the age group, the present study results indicate that the age group of (17-20) (91.5%), the majority of the study samples are single in present (95%) and they live in urban areas (94.0%), they live with their families (97.5%) and their incomes is barely enough (39.0%) , the study results show that the do not suffer from physical illness (76.5%) or mental illness (57.0%).

In addition, the study results show that there a high significant relationship between stress levels and the study sample six, economic status and mental illness at p-value less than (0.001), and relationships between stress levels and living patterns at p-value less than (0.05).

Some factors acted as facilitators, where they reduced stress and were associated with improved academic success, while other factors acted as barriers increasing stress and were associated with wors- ened educational outcomes⁽¹⁰⁾

Part Two: Discussion of the finding of the levels of stress among secondary school students: table (2)

The study results show in table (2) the final general assessment of the stress levels of the secondary school students that the majority of nurses have (moderate) level of stress (54.0%) ; while (38.0%) of them have (high) level of stress.

The appearance of majority of the students (54.0%) as moderate stress, the results are generally logical indicating that not all people are equal in the level of stress, and there reason is due to difference in their characteristics and the factors affecting them.

The study results are consistent with the results of study of⁽¹¹⁾ that a majority of the students reported experiencing a moderate level of stress.

The stress is an essential aspect for senior high school students as they are nearing college life and because having better academic performance yields better opportunities in life⁽¹²⁾

Part three: discussion of personality traits among the study sample: table (3)

The study results indicate that 52% of the study sample present with an extrovert trait. Regarding to the Agreeableness Levels, Neuroticism Levels, and Openness to experience Levels the study results



indicate that the majority of the study sample present with high levels for all of these personality traits. While at the Consciousness Levels the study sample present with moderate level.

Part four: discussion of correlation between stress levels and personality traits among the study sample: table (4)

The study results indicate that there is a correlation between the stress levels and the study sample agreeableness levels at p-value less than (0.05), and relationships between the stress levels and study sample consciousness and neuroticism levels at p-value less than (0.001).

According to the evidence from previous studies on how the Big Five personality traits are related to a variety of feelings and behaviors, the five traits were expected to have different relationships with stress experiences.

Neuroticism contrasts emotional stability and even-temperedness with negative emotionality. Individuals high on neuroticism are more likely to experience feelings of anxiety, tension, sadness, and nervousness ⁽¹¹⁾

Conclusion

General conclusion:

The study concludes that stress levels affect of secondary school students. And this conclusion is proved through the quantitative study (descriptive) that shows that there is a moderate level of stress among personality traits of secondary school students, and high level of stress was recorded in students with (sex, Economic status and living patterns) so, there is no enough evidence to accept the null hypothesis. Otherwise, the alternative, Otherwise, the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

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