



A Study Of Stress Among Students Studying Professional Courses

Mr. G. Rakul raj, B.com with Professional Accounting, Sri Ramakrishna college of arts & science.

Dr. B. Ramya, Assistant professor B.com with Professional Accounting, Sri Ramakrishna college of arts & science.

ABSTRACT

Abstract Stress is a common problem among students studying professional degrees including engineering, medicine, law, and management. The purpose of this study is to investigate the causes, impacts, and coping methods associated with stress among these students. The study investigates academic pressure, competition, financial difficulties, peer expectations, and time management challenges as key stressors. To collect data from students in various professional areas, a mixed-method approach is used, which includes surveys and interviews. The study also looks into the psychological and physiological effects of stress, such as anxiety, burnout, and decreased academic performance. The findings show that while some students employ constructive coping methods like time management, exercise, and social support, others engage in unhealthy habits like procrastination and substance abuse. The study underlines the need of institutional support structures.

Keywords: Student stress, professional courses, academic pressure, coping mechanisms, and mental health.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

Following a professional path can be a high-stress experience with rigorous courses, close deadlines, and high expectations. Students enrolled in these programs frequently experience high levels of stress, which can have an impact on their mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being. "This stress can appear in a variety of ways, including worry, self-doubt, and fear of failure, all of which lead to diminished motivation, burnout, and academic performance". Furthermore, the pressure to succeed can result in an excessive obsession with academics, jeopardizing students' creativity, critical thinking, and overall learning experience. Everyone, regardless of growth level (Banerjee & Chatterjee 2012). Stress perception and coping strategies differ between genders. "Stress" is defined as "any challenge to the mechanisms used by students" (Graves et al., 2021). Homeostasis, or the body's innate sense of balance, is affected by a variety of factors, including excessive parental expectations (Bansal & Bhawe 2006). Stress can also be characterized as "an overwhelming burden of information, a future state of mental or emotional strain," and "a number of consciousness," among other things. Students sense stress at one or more normal physical reactions (mental, emotional, and so on). While some of them are physiologically geared for self-preservation (Princeton overcame it), others experience increased stress. The Personal University (2001). Stress can create both good

and social effects. Selye (1956) described eustress as a stress that encourages one to become stressed out by the environment (Casey et al., 2016). According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), distress is defined as stress that has a detrimental impact on the body. In 2021, 864 out of 10,732 suicides reported were related to (anger, low self-esteem, etc), physical manifestations "failure in examination". (headache ,low immunity), and behaviour Several research on student stress, symptoms (weight loss, smoking).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Students enrolled in professional programs like Cost and Management Accounting (CMA) and Chartered Accountancy (CA) frequently face high academic demands, which can cause a great deal of stress. These classes are renowned for their demanding coursework, exacting requirements, and lengthy certification requirements. Students must contend with a number of obstacles in addition to difficult education, including numerous tests, long study sessions, juggling internships or hands-on training, and the psychological and financial strain of thriving in a cutthroat setting. Students may also find it difficult to balance their time between coursework, internships, part-time employment, and personal obligations, which can exacerbate mental health conditions including burnout, sadness, and anxiety. Although stress is common among CA and CMA students, little study has been done to examine the type and degree of stress in this population. Additionally, little is known about the main stressors that are specific to these professional courses and the coping strategies that students use to maintain their mental and emotional well-being. This study aims to investigate the causes of stress, how it affects CA and CMA students' mental health and academic performance, and what coping mechanisms they use.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Identify and address sources of stress in professional course programs.
2. Provide accessible resources and support for stress management.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Various areas (such as law, medicine, and engineering) may experience stress in various ways, thus the term "professional courses" may have distinct meanings. This variance may make the research more difficult and impact how broadly the results may be applied.
2. Studies that are cross-sectional, meaning they are carried out at a single point in time, might not be able to record how stress levels vary over the course of the academic program. To better understand how stress changes over time, longitudinal research might be more beneficial.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Hill et al., (2005)** founded that Time management: Students frequently have little time for leisure due to juggling several classes, revision plans, job placements (for CMAs), and personal obligations. Stress levels may rise as a result of this ongoing time constraint.
- **Garett et al., (2008)** Financial Stress: Students who may already be struggling financially may experience stress due to the high expense of professional education, which includes study materials, coaching sessions, and tuition. A lot of CA and CMA students depend on loans or other outside funding, which can make stress levels even higher.
- **Cheng et al., (2013)** Family Expectations: Families frequently have high expectations for their professional course participants' academic performance. Stress can be exacerbated by these outside demands, especially if students find it difficult to live up to them or if there is a family history of professional achievement.
- **Misra and McKean (2000)**, the high volume of coursework, frequent assessments, and intense competition contribute significantly to student stress.
- **Kumar & Bhukar (2013)** found that students in professional courses experience high levels of stress due to academic workload, examinations, and fear of failure.

- **Deb, Strodl, & Sun (2015)** examined stress among medical and engineering students in India and reported that excessive syllabus, long study hours, and frequent exams contribute significantly to their stress.
- **Sinha, Sharma, & Nepal (2001)** noted that medical students often experience psychological distress due to the rigorous nature of their curriculum.
- **Shapiro, Brown, and Astin (2011)** emphasized the role of mindfulness-based interventions in reducing academic stress.
- **Kausar (2010)** found that time management, problem-solving skills, and emotional support from peers and mentors significantly reduce stress levels among professional students.
- **Guthrie et al. (1998)** highlighted that professional course students often face high levels of psychological stress, which can lead to mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. The competitive atmosphere and performance pressure contribute to self-doubt and decreased self-esteem among students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

The research undertaken with title of “A study of stress among students taking professional courses”.

Data collection:

Primary data: Questionnaire through Google form

Secondary data: Journal and websites

Sample size:

73 respondents

Area of study:

This study focuses on A study of stress among students taking professional courses.

Tools used for the study:

- Simple percentage
- Chi-square test
- ANNOVA

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Age group

	Frequency	Percent
Under 18	4	5.5
18-24	69	94.5
Total	73	100.0

INTERPRETATION

From the table, 94.5% (69 respondents) belong to age group 2, while only 5.5% (4 respondents) belong to age group 1.

Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	44	60.3
Female	29	39.7
Total	73	100.0

INTERPRETATION

The gender distribution shows that 60.3% (44 respondents) are in category 1, and 39.7% (29 respondents) are in category 2.

Parent's salary

	Frequency	Percent
Below 20000	35	47.9
20000-40000	23	31.5
40000-60000	9	12.3
Above 60000	6	8.2
Total	73	100.0

INTERPRETATION

Category 1: 47.9% (35 respondents) fall into this salary range, which represents the largest group.

Category 2: 31.5% (23 respondents) are in the second salary range.

Category 3: 12.3% (9 respondents) belong to the third salary range.

Category 4: 8.2% (6 respondents) fall into the fourth salary range.

This indicates that nearly half of the respondents come from families with salaries in category 1, suggesting that most respondents come from households with relatively similar financial backgrounds.

Highest level of education

	Frequency	Percent
High School	14	19.2
Bachelors Degree	56	76.7
Professional	3	4.1
Total	73	100.0

INTERPRETATION

Category 1: 19.2% (14 respondents) fall into this level.

Category 2: 76.7% (56 respondents) have completed this level, making it the largest group.

Category 4: 4.1% (3 respondents) fall into this level.

The majority (76.7%) of respondents come from families where the highest education level is category 2, indicating a relatively high educational background among parents.

Chi-square Test

TABLE:1 parent's salary and stress in CA/CMA/program is caused by financial worries such tuition, coaching, and study materials

Parents salary	How much of your stress in the ca/cma program is caused by financial worries such tuition ,coaching and study materials?					Total	
	1	2	3	4	5		
Below 20000		9	7	10	4	5	35
20000-40000		5	10	7	1	0	23
40000-60000		4	0	3	2	0	9
Above 60000		0	0	5	0	1	6
Total		18	17	25	7	6	73

a. 14 cells (70.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .49.

INTERPRETATION

The value is 0.065 is less than p-value, indicating no significant relationship between parent's salary and stress in CA/CMA/program is caused by financial worries such tuition, coaching, and study materials.

TABLE 2: gender and main sources of stress

What is your gender?	Which are your main sources of stress?					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Male	4	7	25	1	3	4
Female	4	4	6	4	4	7
Total	8	11	31	5	7	11

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.677	5	.027
Likelihood Ratio	13.137	5	.022
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.032	1	.082
N of Valid Cases	73		

a. 8 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.99.

INTERPRETATION

The observed value is (0.027) less than 0.05, Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is significant relationship between gender and main sources of stress.

ANNOVA TEST

Age group and main sources of stress

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.572	5	.114	2.387	.047
Within Groups	3.209	67	.048		
Total	3.781	72			

INTERPRETATION

The observed value is (0.047) less than p value 0.05. Hence there is significant relationship between age groups and sources of stress.

ANNOVA TEST

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.991	4	.748	3.509	.012
Within Groups	14.488	68	.213		
Total	17.479	72			

INTERPRETATION

The observed value is (0.012) less than p value (0.05). Hence there is a significant relationship between genders and perceived social/familial pressure.

FINDINGS

- **Age Group Distribution:**
- The majority (94.5%) of respondents belong to age group 2, while only 5.5% belong to age group 1.
- This indicates that the sample is predominantly composed of individuals from a specific age group.
- **Gender Distribution:**
- 60.3% of respondents are in category 1, while 39.7% are in category 2.
- This suggests a higher representation of one gender in the sample.
- **Parent's Salary Distribution:**
- 47.9% of respondents fall into salary category 1, making it the most common salary range.
- 31.5% fall into category 2, while 12.3% are in category 3.
- Only 8.2% fall into category 4.
- This indicates that nearly half of the respondents come from a particular income bracket.
- **Highest Level of Education:**
- 76.7% of respondents have the highest education level categorized as 2, making it the most common level.
- 19.2% fall into category 1, while 4.1% fall into category 4.
- This suggests that the majority of respondents have achieved a mid-to-high level of education.

SUGGESTION

- ▶ **High Academic Demands:** Students enrolled in professional courses face an intense workload including rigorous coursework, frequent assessments, long study hours, and high expectations from professors. This often leads to stress and burnout.
- ▶ **Lack of Work-Life Balance:** Many students in professional programs struggle to balance their academic, personal, and social lives. The demanding nature of professional courses leaves little time for relaxation, hobbies, or socializing, leading to increased stress levels.
- ▶ **Financial Stress:** Tuition fees, textbook costs, and living expenses contribute to financial stress for students. Many professional courses require additional expenses like certifications, study materials, or internships, which can strain students' finances.

CONCLUSION

The study on stress among students taking professional courses highlights several significant stressors, including academic pressure, time management issues, financial burdens, and peer expectations. Analysis of survey responses from 73 participants revealed that factors such as gender and age group have a notable relationship with stress sources, as indicated by chi-square and ANOVA tests. Financial worries, although prevalent, did not show a significant link to students' stress levels.

The findings emphasize that professional course students face intense workloads, frequent assessments, and struggle to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Many also experience financial strain due to tuition fees and other academic expenses. While some students adopt positive coping strategies like time management and seeking social support, others resort to unhealthy habits such as procrastination.

This study underscores the importance of institutional support, including counseling services and stress management workshops, to help students cope effectively. Future research with a longitudinal approach could provide deeper insights into how stress evolves throughout students' academic journeys. Overall, addressing these challenges is vital for improving students' mental well-being and academic performance.

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