

## Sources of Stress among Jordanian University Students

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to surveyed the Jordanian students in Al-Isra university, and asked them to Investigating of sources of stress are exposed to. A total of sample compromise 100 male and 100 females randomly selected, moreover to find out the effects of gender and faculties of students in sources of stress are exposed to. It was hypothesized that there are statistically differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in sources of stress among Jordanian students based on their gender and faculties. The sources of stress of the respondents was measured with the help of sources of stress scale which is developed by Malek Alkhubata 2012. Results of the study showed that there is statically difference in sources of stress among the students based on their gender and faculties variables.

**Keywords:** Sources of stress and Jordanian students.

### Introduction

The new era has brought, Plethora of demands that tax human body and mind, now a day's everyone talks about stress, everyone is victim of high level of stress such as laborers, slum dwellers, working women, businessmen, students, professionals and even children (Guilfor and Dunham, 1992) stress has become the core concern in the life of individual, but everyone wants stress free life, stress is a problem which is hard to avoid, it is a part of life. Every individual is subjected to stress either knowingly or unknowingly. Long stress is considered alien among student's lifestyle which is now a major health problem (Awad, 2000). Stress is difficult to define precisely, the concept of stress was first introduced in the life sciences by Hans Selye in 1936 derived from the Latin word 'stringer' which means the experience of physical hardship, starvation, torture, and pain. Selye, (1936) posit that stress is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand placed upon it. Furthermore, stress was defined as any external event or internal drive which threatens to upset the organism equilibrium (Selye, 1956).

Stephen Robbins,1999 says stress has been stated as "a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what the individual desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress affects in physical health and mental well-being too, to successfully manage stress in everyday lives, individual can learn to relax and enjoy life. The best method to face the stress is to prevent it, this may not be always possible (Cohen, 1994). And the next best thing is to reduce stress and make the life easier, stress is referring to any environmental, and individual or internal demands, which requires the individual to readjust the usual behavior patterns,

Enumeration the causes of stress is hard, there can be innumerable stress factors since different individuals react differently to the same stress conditions. Albrecht, 1979 says a strong stress situations for an individual may prove to be mild for another, for yet another person the situations might not qualify as stress symptoms at all. Stress is often termed as a twentieth century syndrome, born out of men's race towards modern progress and its ensuing complexities. For that matter, causes such as a simple flight delay to managing a teenage child at home can put you under stress (Bader, 1985).

A stress condition can be real or perceived; our brain reacts the same way to both causes of stress by releasing stress hormones equal to the degree of stress felt. The brain doesn't differentiate between real and imagined stress. It could happen while watching a horror movie or when one is apprehensive of some imminent danger (Nayak, 2008) different types of stress acute stress, episodic acute stress, and chronic stress each with its own characteristics, symptoms, duration, and treatment approaches.

Brings researchers in field of mental health that stress effects are disorder realization of individual, lack of clarity of self-concept for a friendly, memory weaken become fragmented. It becomes more susceptible to disease, psychological, mental, physical, and repeated heavy stress causes individual to anger, fear, sadness, and feelings of depression, feelings of shame jealousy, stress that can lead to disruption of growth self-esteem increase dispersion of attention, linked to the stress disorder, performance, and weakness, confusion of hearing, movement of excess, self-hatred, weakness of the ego, and loss of identity, tendency of alienation, frequent complaint of disease and desire in drowsiness (Almusawi, 1998).

The theories that focus on the specific relationship between external needs stressors and bodily processes stress can be grouped in two different categories, approaches to systemic stress based in physiology and psychobiology (Selye, 1976) and approaches to psychological stress developed within the field of cognitive psychology as Lazarus 1966, 1991, Lazarus and Folkman 1984, and McGrath 1982.

Akbar, H. Ashutosh, K and Abid, H (2008) Present study was undertaken to examine the level of academic stress and overall adjustment among Public and Government high school students and to see relationship between the two variables academic stress and adjustment. For that purpose, 100 students of class IX were selected randomly

from two different schools out of which 50 were taken from Public and the remaining 50 were taken from Government school Sinha. And Sinha scale for measuring academic stress was used to see the magnitude of stress and Sinha and Singh Adjustment Inventory for school students was used to examine level of adjustment among the students.

Results indicated that magnitude of academic stress was significantly higher among the Public-school students whereas government school students were significantly better in terms of their level of adjustment. However, inverse but significant relationships between academic stress and adjustment were found for both the group of students and for each type of school.

S Kumar, S. Dagli, R J and Kulkarni, S (2009) the aim of the present study was to assess perceived sources of stress amongst dental undergraduate students at a private dental institution in India. A modified dental environment stress (DES) questionnaire which consisted of 38 questions was used to assess the levels of stress. The study results were major stressor for all the students was examination and grades with a mean score of 2.86 (SD 1.06) followed by full working day, receiving criticism from supervisors about academic or clinical work, amount of cheating in dental faculty, rules and regulations of the faculty and fear of unemployment after graduation. Amongst the six highest stressors in each year, at least three were dental faculty related.

There was a significant difference in stress perception between genders with a predilection for males. Twelve of the 38 questionnaire items had significant differences across the year groups including clinical DES items. The primary sources of stress as perceived by nearly 275 students at one private dental school in India were examinations and grades followed by full working day and receiving criticism from supervisors about academic or clinical work. It appears there is a need for the establishment of student advisors and counselors combined with a faculty advising system in addition to student-oriented programmers.

Elzubeir, MA. KE Elzubeir, KE and Magzoub, ME (2010) aimed to provide a systematic review of studies reporting on stress, anxiety and coping among Arab medical students and to identify implications for future research. Pub Med was searched to identify peer-reviewed English language studies published between January 1998 and October 2009 reporting on stress and coping among undergraduate Arab medical students. Search strategy used combinations of the terms Arab medical student, stress, PBL, psychological distress, depression, anxiety, and coping strategies. Demographic information on respondents, instruments used, prevalence data and statistically significant associations were abstracted.

The search identified 8 articles that met the specified inclusion criteria. Within the limited range of Arab medical students studied, studies suggest these students have a high prevalence of perceived stress, depression, and anxiety, with levels of perceived psychological stress as high as those reported in the international literature for medical students of other regions of the world. Limited data were available regarding coping strategies, the impact of stress on academic performance and attrition among Arab students. No data were available regarding the impact of problem based learning on stress and coping. The existing literature confirms that stress, depression, and anxiety are common among Arab medical students, as for students elsewhere. Little is known about the contribution of different curricula approaches to perceived stress and what coping.

Cheng, K W (2011) studied the sources of stress among college students in Taiwan, a questionnaire survey was conducted to collect research data. A total of 230 questionnaires were distributed, and 201 valid responses were obtained. Research findings suggested that male students feel stronger stress from family factor than female ones, students in higher grades feel more stress from physical mental, school, and emotional factors, students who take a student loan also feel more stress from physical mental, school, and emotional factors than those who do not.

Objective of the study

The study aims to: -

1. Study of sources of stress experienced by Jordanian and Indian universities students.
2. Examine the sources of stress Jordanian students are exposed to.

Hypothesis of the study

1. The academic area will be the most effective area in sources of stress experienced by Jordanian universities students.
2. There are statistically differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in sources of stress among Jordanian students based on their gender and faculties variables.

### Significance of Study

Stress can be inadvertently linked to success or failure at one's thing, the general impression about stress is the feeling of failure due to problems overload. But if this is the case and so simple a problem than merely by reducing the amount of problems, stress could have been done away with. However, the problem is not that easy to pinpoint, it is here that a comparative investigation of the reasons of stress in different occupations becomes important. Herein lays the most crucial significance of the study, to combat a problem the awareness of the conditions, which lead to it are very important. stress means that the person cannot cope with the demands put forward by his or her life, which is opposite to their expectations of rewards and success, affects both the person concerned and the relationships he or she forms in the society be it with family or friends. Although the importance of individual

differences cannot be ignored, scientific evidence suggests that certain studying conditions are stressful to most people.

The excessive life load demands and conflicting expectations and puts a greater emphasis on studying conditions as the key source of study stress, and for study redesign as a primary prevention strategy. In life where study overload is the cause of the stress, the students find that they have to take time off to deal with the stress, only to return to study conditions to find that the already unmanageable study load has substantially increased in their absence, thereby increasing the source of the stress and fueling a vicious cycle which may ultimately lead to a complete breakdown in health, At times the study stress becomes so extreme that the students grow an aversive of it and they try to avoid it by withdrawing either psychologically (through disinterest or lack of involvement in the study etc.). Or physically through absenteeism, frequently reporting late for study and even while studying an attitude of lethargy persists. In this present era of cutthroat competition, the idea of being perfect becomes very necessary to strive and become successful.

#### Problem of the Study

Stress is any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands upon a person, anything that can unbalance his individual equilibrium. And while the physiological response to such demand is surprisingly uniform, the forms of stress are innumerable. Stress may be even but unconscious like the noise of a city, daily chore or driving the car. Perhaps the one incontestable statement that can be made about stress is that it belongs to everyone to businessmen and professors, to mother and their children, to factory workers, students etc.

Stress is a part of fabric of life; nothing can isolate stress from human beings as it is evident from various researches and studies. Stress can be managed but not simply done away with. Today, widely accepted ideas about stress are challenged by new research, and conclusions once firmly established may be turned completely around. The latest evidence suggested some stress is necessary to the wellbeing and a lack can be harmful. Stress causes some serious ailments severe stress makes people accident prone.

#### Sample of the Study

The sample of the study included 200 students in total of 100 males and 100 females. All the respondents were first randomly selected and then the researcher selected those belonging to the middle class from different academic area in al-Isra university.

#### Tool of the Study

The sources of stress of the respondents was measured by Malek Alkhubata, 2012 scale. This scale consisted 37 items were divided into five dimensions: academic, family, social, health, and emotional area, scoring template for each item record the value of the response in: 1 = always, 2 = often, 3 = sometimes, 4 = never. Finally, the scale has a Cronbach alpha for Internal Consistency of 0.947.

#### Data Analysis

Statistical techniques in accordance with the various objectives of the study, and to test the hypotheses based on the objectives following statistical techniques were used. Descriptive techniques such as Mean, percentage, Standard deviation, ONE WAY ANOVA and t-test, will be worked out to ascertain the nature of distribution of scores.

### Results of the Study

Table (1) presents means, standard deviations, and percentages of sources of stress Jordanian students are exposed to:

Sources of stress	Mean	S. D	100%
Academic area	3.76	0.66	75.20 %
Social area	3.68	0.77	73.60 %
Health area	3.60	0.73	72.00 %
Emotional area	3.50	0.75	70.00 %
Family area	3.30	0.84	66.00 %
Total	3.57	0.66	71.40 %

Table (1) presented a summary of mean, standard deviation, and percentage for the sources of stress among Jordanian university students, the results indicate that the sources of stress caused by academic area has mean 3.76 and 75.20% percentage, and ranked first, the family area has ranked last and got means 3.30 and 66.00% percentage. whereas the total means for all the areas are 3.57 and 71.40% percentage.

Table (2) provides t-test results to sources of stress Jordanian are exposed to base on their gender:

Sources of stress	Gender	N	Mean	S. D	t	Sig
Academic	Male	100	3.95	0.59	6.20	*0.00
	Female	100	3.56	0.66		
Family	Male	100	3.50	0.83	4.75	*0.00
	Female	100	3.11	0.81		
Social	Male	100	3.88	0.74	5.48	*0.00
	Female	100	3.47	0.76		
Health	Male	100	3.75	0.75	4.23	*0.00
	Female	100	3.45	0.69		
Emotional	Male	100	3.50	0.64	6.09	*0.00
	Female	100	3.11	0.64		
Total	Male	100	3.72	0.63	6.07	*0.00
	Female	100	3.34	0.61		

Table (2) shows there are statistically different at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in sources of stress among Jordanian students based on their gender in favor male students.

Table (3) presents ONE WAY ANOVA results to sources of stress Jordanian are exposed to base on their faculties:

Sources of stress	Source of Variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F	$\alpha$
Academic	between group	0.55	4	0.14	0.32	0.867
	within group	172.05	395	0.44		
	Total	172.60	399			
Family	between group	5.39	4	1.35	1.92	0.107
	within group	277.99	395	0.70		
	Total	283.39	399			
Social	between group	2.51	4	0.63	1.05	0.381
	within group	236.55	395	0.60		
	Total	239.06	399			
Health	between group	3.63	4	0.91	1.69	0.151
	within group	211.72	395	0.54		
	Total	215.35	399			
Emotional	between group	1.19	4	0.30	0.67	0.617
	within group	175.98	395	0.45		
	Total	177.16	399			
Total	between group	0.93	4	0.23	0.56	0.695
	within group	166.15	395	0.42		
	Total	167.09	399			

Table (3) shows there are no statistically different at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between means of source of stress among Jordanian students based on faculties variable, the total value  $F = 0.56$  and  $\alpha = 0.695$ .

#### Discussion

Most students reported the academic domain causing great amounts of stress in everyday life. Stress from living conditions was much less prevalent than expected, but instead, time management was inextricably linked with academic domain as being the two greatest sources of stress. In addition, as anticipated, high percentages of the students exhibited unhealthy behaviors; however, not all behaviors correlated directly with increased stress magnitude or frequency.

The two most significant unhealthy behaviors associated with the stressed participants in this study are sleeping and eating patterns. The self-perceived effects of student stress are varied and include increased anxiety, conflict in relationships, apparent negative influences on grades, decreased sleep, impaired health, increased social habits, weight fluctuation, and mood changes. Many students specified that their health was a source of stress for them, and about 6 percent of all students ranked overall health to be one of the greatest causes of personal stress. Although health is clearly a concern for many of the participants in this study, it is not known whether these participants directly see a correlation between the stress they experience and the unhealthy habits they exhibit.

The social conditions that surround the students today can offer the best explanation for the emotional or psychological tension thus they are living under social pressure, and facing new life situations, students feel stress and frustration when the life does not go as them expect. Also, feel very worried about the future when approaching the end of study Depending on, age, psychological characteristics, socialization, biological changing, and experiments. In this age the demands of youths are increasing rapidly. As seen in this study the males have more

needs than females such as the study pressure, the need of the job, recession in markets, secure future, and family pressure.... etc. In Jordan, the dearness is increasing day by day drastically which is also the reason of stress. Some cultural and traditional habits also become hindrance and create stress for male such as hesitation and shamelessness in asking help from girls, family, or friends. the study results compatible with study results of Akbar, H. Ashutosh, K and Abid, H, (2008), Kumar, S. Dagli, R J and Kulkarni, S (2009), and study of Cheng, K W (2011).

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