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## A Study on Perceived Stress of Students Preparing for Entrance Examinations

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### Abstract

In today's competitive environment, students are required to score both in their regular curriculum and also in various entrance examination like, NEET, JEEE, CLAT and CAT for perusing their higher education. Parallel preparation of these exams and balancing the routine along with this preparation causes them stress. This study investigates, the perceived stress of twelfth standard students who are prepare for any one of above-mentioned entrance examinations. Students of Erode district, who are planning to enrolled for entrance exams were the population of the study. Based on purposive sampling technique, 150 structured questionnaires were distributed among the students and the researcher received 125 valid responses. The collected data was analyzed through chi-square and the results revealed that, students appearing for NEET, JEEE, CLAT and CAT has expressed their, self-inflicted, peer-inflicted and parent-inflicted stress. Notable, students having more mark has more stress. The researcher also recommended to the Government, that they have to take steps to address these issue as it affects the mental and physical health of next generation.

**Keywords:** Entrance examinations, stress, students

### 1. Introduction

Generally, in teen ages human undergo notable biological and psychological changes, and in this age period they are so vulnerable. At the same time, in this age they need to prepare for their school final exams and most of them are need to or forced to work for any one; sometimes more than one entrance examinations such as NEET, JEE, CLAT, CAT and even for some entrance examinations conducted by specific universities. This pressure combined with general age-related issues causes them certain chronic mood anxiety disorders. Life is even worse for the students who are academically poor, they need to put more effort to prove themselves and they pertained to more stress compared to the creamy layer students.

stress is simply the body's non-specific response to any demand made on it. Stress is not by definition synonymous with nervous tension or anxiety. Most of the students got affected by eating disorders during their exam preparation like anorexia and bulimia. Many do not prefer taking treatment for their eating disorder, nor many of them do agree that they have an issue. Eating disorders are potentially life threatening and can cause serious health issues such as kidney failure, stunted growth, loss of female menstruation, failure in the reproductive system and heart issues if not treated properly (Bhasin *et al.*, 2009)<sup>[3]</sup>.

The following are the common Symptoms of stress

- Trouble concentrating, remembering details, and making

decisions.

- Fatigue.
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, and helplessness.
- Pessimism and hopelessness.
- Insomnia, early-morning wakefulness, or sleeping too much.
- Irritability.
- Restlessness.

When the depression of the student is unobserved it may even lead to suicide. Depression is a common but serious illness that made one to feel despondent and helpless, completely detached from the world (Chitra, 2020)<sup>[4]</sup>. The one who has the symptoms like-feelings of sadness or unhappiness change in appetite or weight, slowed thinking or speech, loss of interest in activities or social gatherings, fatigue, feelings of guilt or anger over past failures has to be given attention and enough medical and psychological has to be given them to get rid of those issues (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981)<sup>[5]</sup>. Keeping the worse consequences of stress in mind the researcher has attempted to study the perceived stress of students who are preparing for various entrance examinations.

### 2. Review of Literature

Sharma & Sidhu (2011)<sup>[6]</sup>, mentioned in their study that, educational experts unanimously agree that the present syllabus and curriculum of board and competitive

examination needs to be replaced with a system friendly to students. Something needs to be done to lessen the huge load of entrance examination stress on students but without lowering the quality of education. They have also suggested that, the syllabus for the board and entrance exams can be made unanimous, so that the dual preparation can be avoided. Research of Zeidner (1992) [8] has reported that, 64 per cent of students preparing for medical entrance was suffered by depressive symptoms, and 82, 51 per cent of them affected by anxiety, stress respectively. It was also noted that, a considerable percentage of them have severe symptoms of stress which need to be addressed immediately.

Mohameed & Khan (2014) [1] stated that Faculty members and administrators are a significant source of stress. Their findings revealed that the dissatisfaction level of faculty and their pressure to produced result passed to students and that creates higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression. In the same way, Faculty support has been associated with significantly lower stress levels.

Bharti (2013) [2] explained that, Stress and tension form a part of human life. Life is lived through different phases. It is generally considered that getting education is one of the paramount phases of human life because it is education which opens the door of success and develops qualities of a good citizen. By and large, it is accepted that success and quality in life are predicted upon the individual's performance. The performance is evaluated through examinations. Therefore, examination becomes a powerful instrument of certifying the quality or potential of an individual (Sivakumar & Chitra, 2017) [7]. The worth of an individual is measured on the basis of getting admission in desirable courses having employment potential. Due to limited employment opportunities and a

smaller number of lucrative jobs, competition has shot up to an undesirable level resulting in a stressful situation globally.

**2.1. Objectives**

- To study the self-inflicted stress among students preparing for various entrance exams
- To study the peer-inflicted stress among students preparing for various entrance exams
- To study the parent-inflicted stress among students preparing for various entrance exams
- To analyse the association of last academic score and level of stress of students preparing for various entrance exams

**3. Methodology**

**3.1. Sampling**

The researchers have collected data from the students preparing for various entrance exams. The population considered for this study is students of Erode district, and the required samples were collected through cluster sampling technique.

**3.2. Data Collection**

The study is based on both primary and secondary data, the required primary data was collected through questionnaire.150 students were asked about the name of entrance exam or exams they planning to enroll and their questionnaire to measure their level of stress. The researchers have received 125 valid questionnaires and the same was analyzed in the light of statistical tools.

**4. Analysis**

**Table 1:** Association of entrance exam with self-inflicted stress among students.

Name of entrance exam	Level of Perceived Stress					Total	Chi-Square value	P Value
	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Extremely Severe			
NEET	1	5	15	41	38	100	19.342	0.001**
JEEE	2	4	13	35	32	86		
CLAT	4	4	12	21	20	61		
CAT	5	6	17	25	30	83		

Table 1 depicts the association between of type of entrance exam with self-inflicted stress. The p value less than 0.01, so the null hypothesis stating no relationship between type of

entrance and self-inflicted stress is rejected at 1 per cent level of significance. Hence the afore mentioned factors have significant and positive association.

**Table 2:** Association of entrance exam with peer-inflicted stress among students

Name of Entrance Exam	Level of Perceived Stress					Total	Chi-Square value	P Value
	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Extremely Severe			
NEET	5	10	15	35	21	86	16.342	0.001**
JEEE	6	12	20	30	36	104		
CLAT	5	6	20	25	28	82		
CAT	6	11	21	30	35	103		

Table 2 states the association between of type of entrance exam with peer-inflicted stress. The p value less than 0.01, so the null hypothesis stating no relationship between type of

entrance and peer-inflicted stress is rejected at 1 per cent level of significance. Therefore, type of entrance exam is associated with peer-inflicted stress.

**Table 3:** Association of entrance exam with parent-inflicted stress among students

Name of Entrance Exam	Level of Perceived Stress					Total	Chi-Square value	P Value
	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Extremely Severe			
NEET	10	20	25	40	40	135	15.342	0.001**
JEE	8	18	28	35	41	130		
CLAT	8	10	30	30	35	113		
CAT	9	19	30	40	35	133		

Table 3 states the association between of type of entrance exam with parent-inflicted stress. Since the p value less than 0.01, the null hypothesis assuming no relationship between

type of entrance and parent-inflicted stress is rejected at 1 per cent level of significance. Hence forth, type of entrance exam is associated with parent-inflicted stress.

**Table 4:** last academic score and level of stress

Name of Entrance Exam	Level of Perceived Stress					Total	Chi-Square value	P Value
	None	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Extremely Severe			
Less than 60%	0	3	4	3	0	10	16.342	0.001 **
60-70%	2	3	4	4	4	21		
71-80%	2	3	3	4	13	25		
81-90%	3	3	4	10	25	45		
More than 91%	2	2	5	9	5	24		

Table 4 briefs the association between last academic score and level of stress. The p value of explaining above association is less than 0.01, hence the null hypothesis explaining no association between academic score and stress holds no good and rejected at 1 per cent level of significance. There is a positive and significant association between aforementioned factors.

## 5. Findings and Conclusion

The self-inflicted, Peer-inflicted and parent-inflicted stress is positively associated with type of entrance examination. Students preparing for all above type of entrance examination has mentioned that they pertained to self-inflicted, Peer-inflicted and parent-inflicted stress. Similarly, the study on association of last secured mark with level of stress reveals, students securing less mark is having less stress compare to student securing more than 80 per cent. When the mark increases, the level of stress also increases and vice versa. The results revealed almost all appearing for entrance exams are exposed to stress, which is not advisable for their mental and physical health. Government has to take steps to solve these issues without compromising the quality of education.

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