

Impact of Stress on Youth and its Remedy

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ABSTRACT

India comprises with the second largest population of the youth in the world. Various kind of studies throughout the world states that the students pursuing professional courses like medical, dental, engineering are likely to be much stressed than that of the other students. A student taking excessive stress can in future have problems like depression that would affect his intellectual. There was a study conducted from September 2011 to February 2012 and this was conducted among medical, dental and engineering students in the urban area of Sangli district, Maharashtra, India. Out of 1,224 students, 299 (24.4%) experienced stress. Students from all the three field had been undergoing through stress and the main factor was the academic stress. The factors giving rise to the stress may be disintegrating family bond and relationship, work pressure, poor nutrition, lack of rest, social environment. The youth in the country constitutes the age group of 10-24 years and are the future of our country. Nearly 10-30 percent of youths in India suffer from stress and this affects them specifically and the stress has a long lasting impact on youth. They are not able to come out easily from this mental Trauma. Also due to the stress they suffer, they are not able to have a proper diet and this result in many neurological and mental disorders. Stress among youths is nowadays a matter of concern for their parents, teachers and family members. Many a times in life, a situation comes where youth go through stress may be due to the examinations, peer pressure and friendship and they make a bundle of it in their minds and goes through stress. Several youngsters in stress consume alcohol, drugs that affect their life. Through this research paper I will try to examine the impact of stress among the youths and its remedy.

Keywords: Stress, Aasra, Dizziness, ERIC, SRA

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is defined as “a state of psychological and physiological imbalance resulting from the disparity between situational demand and the individual’s ability and motivation to meet those needs”.¹ As stated above, India is a country where youth’s population is second in the world and thus the stress among youth is also at a higher rate. Stress can either be positive or negative. Positive stress can be the one in which a person is motivated to gain something. Stress can act as a booster while you are making a last attempt in winning a game also during exams due to stress the students study rather than watching Television. Stress is a kind of response when we feel threatened and it raises our body for an emergency action due to which heart beats faster and our

senses become sharper which increases stamina and also we are more focused. Negative stress can be the one in which person suffers from psychological, emotional, physical, social problems. “Modern life is full of frustrations, deadlines, and demands. For many people, stress is so commonplace that it has become a way of life. Stress isn’t always bad, though. Stress within your comfort zone can help you perform under pressure, motivate you to do your best, even keep you safe when danger looms. But when stress becomes overwhelming, it can damage your health, mood, relationships, and quality of life. You can protect yourself by understanding how the body’s stress response works, recognizing the signs and symptoms of stress overload, and taking steps to reduce its harmful effects.”² When the stress crosses our comfort zone it can affect our mind

¹ *What is stress? Meaning, Definition and causes of stress,*
<http://kalyan-city.blogspot.in/2011/03/what-is-stress-meaning-definition-and.html> (April 4, 2016, 9:40 p.m.)

² *Stress symptoms, signs and causes,*
<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-symptoms-causes-and-effects.htm> (April 7, 2016, 8:41 p.m.)

and body too. Many health problems are caused due to stress i.e. body pain, heart disease, skin problems, improper digestion, lack of sleep resulting in severe headache, migraine, depression, weight problems. The main factor responsible for the stress nowadays is academic factor as the parents want their kids to excel in academics and also get a professional degree. If their kids are not willing to do what their parents want and still they opt for it due to the pressure of their parents. They are not able to excel as they have lack of interest in it resulting in suicides attempted by them. "In India according to National Crime Records Bureau 110,417 people committed suicide in the year 2002, which is 1.8% more than compared to 2001., i.e; a suicide is committed every five minutes. Seven times that number attempt to take their lives and as for those who feel desperate and unable to cope, the number is mind boggling. More suicides occur between 18 and 45 - in other words in the most productive age group of our society."³

II. METHODS AND MATERIAL

Causes of Stress

"The situations and pressures that cause stress are known as stressors. We usually think of stressors as being negative, such as an exhausting work schedule or a rocky relationship. However, anything that puts high demands on you or forces you to adjust can be stressful. This includes positive events such as getting married, buying a house, going to college, or receiving a promotion. Of course, not all stress is caused by external factors. Stress can also be self-generated, for example, when you worry excessively about something that may or may not happen, or have irrational, pessimistic thoughts about life."⁴ Also many of the youths today live in isolation and that is also one of the causes of stress as they don't interact with the people outside and live in isolation resulting in loneliness. "What causes excessive

³ *Aasra (Articles and statistics)*,
<http://www.aasra.info/articlesandstatistics.html> (April 11, 2016, 8:11 p.m.)

⁴ *Stress symptoms, signs and causes*,
<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-symptoms-causes-and-effects.htm> (April 7, 2016, 8:41 p.m.)

stress depends, at least in part, on your perception of it. Something that's stressful to you may not faze someone else; they may even enjoy it. For example, your morning commute may make you anxious and tense because you worry that traffic will make you late. Others, however, may find the trip relaxing because they allow more than enough time and enjoy listening to music while they drive."⁵

The causes for stress among youth are as follows:-

1. Gradual life changes.
2. Workload in colleges/ institutions/ office/ firms.
3. Detachment from family.
4. Academic pressure.
5. Isolation.
6. Pessimism.
7. Being too busy.
8. Attitude problem.

Signs and Symptoms of Stress

There are number of signs and symptoms. Not everyone behaves, thinks or act in the same way. Although there are some commonly accepted symptoms of stress, it differs from individual to individual. Some may have solely physical symptoms such as gaining or losing weight and some may have solely psychological symptoms such as jealousy. There are following symptoms of stress:-

Physical stress symptoms:

1. "Breathlessness"
2. Churning stomach
3. Diarrhea/Constipation
4. Dizziness
5. Dry mouth
6. Excess perspiration
7. Fatigue
8. Headaches
9. Hyperventilating
10. Increased colds/flu
11. Increased heart rate

⁵ Id.

12. Indigestion”⁶

Psychological Stress Symptoms

1. “Increased worrying.
2. Indecision.
3. Irritability.
4. Jealousy.
5. Lack of concentration.
6. Loss of confidence.
7. Lower self-esteem.
8. Mind in a whirl.
9. Mood swings.
10. Negative thinking.
11. Pessimistic thinking.
12. Rumination.
13. Sensitivity to criticism.
14. Snappy.
15. Stressful thinking.
16. Tense.
17. Worrying a lot.”⁷

Impact of Stress

Stress among youth is one of the main concerns for their parents and teachers. The main stressors are feeling ill all the time, the relation between parents and their children, pressure of their peer group, examinations, frequent change of colleges, frequent change of cities, death of a close family member or friend and up and down of grades. Due to stress, youths behavior changes with everyone may it is their friends, parents, etc. they feel irritated all the time. Also parents nowadays think twice or thrice before saying anything to their children as they think so much and gets depressed in result of which they try to commit suicide.

Managing Stress

⁶ *Signs and symptoms of stress*,
<http://stresscourse.tripod.com/id5.html>, (April 11, 2016, 6:57 p.m.)

⁷ Id.

“We're all different. Some people seem to be able to roll with life's punches, while others tend to crumble in the face of far smaller obstacles or frustrations. Some people even seem to thrive on the excitement and challenge of a high-stress lifestyle. Your ability to tolerate stress depends on many factors, including the quality of your relationships and support network, your life experiences, your emotional intelligence, and genetics.”⁸

The factors that influence the ability to manage stress:

1. Social relationships are one of the strong network one has and thus they are more likely to be free from stress soon as compared to the one in isolation.
2. Physical and mental health are connected with each other thus it is important to maintain a balance between the body and the brain so a regular exercise of 30 minutes acts as a booster and relaxes our mind too.
3. Your diet plays a vital role in coping up with stress. So a diet including fresh fruits and vegetables can help you to cope up with the ups and downs in life.
4. If you have confidence in yourself and control on your senses then nothing can act as a stressor in your life.

Stress In Academic Fields

For Law Students

“Law students feel that grades are emphasized excessively and see the law school as a screening program for law firms, the best of which interview only students who have made law review. Often, when students do not rank near the top of their class at the end of the first semester, they give up trying because their best efforts were not rewarded.”⁹

For Medical Students

⁸ *Stress symptoms, signs and causes*,
<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-symptoms-causes-and-effects.htm> (April 7, 2016, 8:41 p.m.)

⁹ *Student stress: Effects and solutions. ERIC digest 85-1*,
<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-926/stress.htm>, (April 10, 2016, 4:32 p.m.)

“Medical education includes four years of medical school and three to five years of residency training in a teaching hospital. Premedical education in college is in itself stressful because of the keen competition to get into medical school. Competition continues in medical school among students eager to get into the residency program of their choice. For some residents, competition continues for those who wish to earn the status of "chief resident" in the program and to win a post residency fellowship.

A major stressor for first-year medical students is the amount and complexity of material to be learned. Students feel academic pressure because nearly all their classmates were superior college students. Fatigue is often cited as a stressor in the second year, and many researchers describe a hypochondriacally phenomenon by which medical students imagine they have the disease they are studying.

In the third year, medical students begin patient care, but they are low on the totem pole. Acceptance of death and dying emerges as a key issue in coping with stress. For some medical students, the clinical years become routine and the fourth year is less stressful. However, in the first year of residency training (the internship), overwork and sleep deprivation becomes major stressors. Lack of personal time continues to stress residents in their second and third years.”¹⁰

For Graduate Students

“The accelerated growth in undergraduate programs has also been felt in graduate schools, resulting in an oversupply of Ph.D.s. Consequently, graduate students, facing poor employment opportunities when they finish their doctoral programs, feel stress associated with the uncertainty of their career choice and future prospects.

Often, graduate students perceive that faculty exert great power over their lives and feel that they live in a state of substantial powerlessness. Another source of stress is the difficulty of achieving social intimacy. It is difficult to find a mate or maintain a relationship with an existing one. Graduate students tend to lack the time and/or the opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships.

¹⁰ Id.

Specific tasks that produce stress in graduate students are preliminary exams and the doctoral dissertation.”¹¹

Stress and Suicide

The youths who are not able to cope up with stress commits suicide. The rate of suicide in India is far high due to stress. “India accounted for the highest estimated number of suicides in the world in 2012.”¹² Also according to WHO report, a person commits suicide in every 40 seconds in India. “In the WHO South-East Asia Region, the estimated suicide rate is the highest as compared to other WHO regions. Suicide rates show a peak among the young and the elderly, the report said. Most suicides in the world occur in the South-East Asia Region (39 per cent of those in low- and middle-income countries in South-East Asia alone) with India accounting for the highest estimated number of suicides overall in 2012.”¹³ “According to the report, 258,075 people committed suicide in India in 2012, with 99,977 women and 158,098 men taking their own lives. India's suicide rate was 21.1 per 100,000 people, according to the report.”¹⁴

A recent case of suicide is Pratyusha Baneerjee's death by hanging herself on the ceiling fan. Though it's not clear yet that what forced her to commit suicide but external stress is considered one of the reasons to commit suicide.

“Growing up is fraught with suicidal tendencies. A Nimhans study under way has found that 11% of college students and 7%-8% of high school students have attempted suicide. In the survey, 1,500 school and college students were studied on suicide prevention."What's bothering the current adolescent generation is stress due to academics, relationship with parents, peer groups and romantic relationships," says

¹¹ Id.

¹² *India has the highest number of suicides in the world: WHO*, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-has-highest-number-of-suicides-in-the-world-WHO/articleshow/41708567.cms> (April 11, 2016, 9:59 a.m.)

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ Id.

Dr M Manjula, associate professor, department of psychiatry, Nimhans, who is spearheading the study. An earlier Nimhans study involving 800 teenagers revealed that 20% of children suffered from subclinical depression, while 30% suffered from mild to moderate depression, she said. Dr G Gururaj, professor of epidemiology, Nimhans, said there has been a huge increase in suicides in India from nearly 40,000 in 1920 to 1,35,000 by 2013.

"It's estimated that 15-20 lakh suicide attempts occur in India every year. For every suicide committed, there are a minimum of 15-20 persons attempting suicide. Not all suicides are reported to police due to the stigma attached to it. The victim's family also suffers for depression and don't get post-trauma counseling," he said.

He said World Health Organization estimates and police statistics differ as not all suicides are reported and the truth lies somewhere in between."¹⁵

"Due to 'stress', a 14-year-old from Mulund committed suicide by hanging himself from an iron bar of an under construct SRA building. The incident took place in Sambhaji nagar of Mulund around 10.30pm on February 8, 2014 (Friday). According to sources, the boy was under stress because his exams were approaching. On the day of the incident, the teenager left home without telling his parents. But when he did not return home after hours, they started frantically looking for him. They spotted a child hanging on an iron bar near to their area and later identified him. An official said the boy tied a dupatta to the iron bar and hung himself. No suicide note has been left behind. After the boy's parents saw his body, they were shocked. They have told the police that they suspect exam pressure to be the reason behind their son's suicide. The boy's body was taken to MT Agrawal hospital where he was declared dead on arrival. The victim's parents have registered a case of accidental death. An official from Mulund police station said, "We came to know about the incident and reached

the spot to examine the area. We will speak to the boy's parents for get more details."¹⁶

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Suggestions

According to me, the following are the suggestions:-

1. Physical activities like exercise, yoga, cycling, swimming etc can help the youths to cope up with stress as the mind and body are interconnected.
2. The intake of food should contain fruits, vegetables and the food that contains vitamins and minerals and not the junk food so that it refreshes the whole inner system of the body.
3. The main reason for being in stress is considered as being isolated. So there should be a social connectivity in the society so that the person shares problem with his/her friend and in reply can get a suggestion which do not take the person in the situation of stress.
4. Also insufficient sleep is one of the factors promoting stress. Hence, a sound sleep of generally 8-9 hours is recommended for the elimination of stress.
5. Counseling is one of the best ways to get rid of stress. There are many counselors who direct the person in the stress and help them to take out the person from this severe condition.
6. The key factor to reduce stress is having self-control on your senses so that any situation in the life does not lead to stress.
7. Colleges/ institutions play an important role in making the students of their colleges strong enough to face these problems in life so that they don't take stress.
8. Having a positive attitude towards life can be one of the factors to relieve stress.
9. One of the best ways to combat stress is challenging negative stressful thoughts so that it does not become burden on mind.

¹⁵ *Stressed-out students committing suicide, Sunitha Rao*, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/Stressed-out-students-attempting-suicide/articleshow/42119357.cms>, (11th April, 2016, 11:48 p.m.)

¹⁶ *Teen commits suicide due to exam stress*, <http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-teen-commits-suicide-due-to-exam-stress-1960288>, (April 11, 2016, 7:59 p.m.)

10. Stressors that are unavoidable like exams and college works may put you in the condition of stress but try to manage these stressors by turning off your stress alarm system.

IV. CONCLUSION

Through this research paper I got to know about stress and what are the signs and symptoms of stress among youth. India being the second highest in population among youth is in the first position for committing suicides due to stress. Also the management of stress is discussed in my research paper above. Stress among youth is recently a hot topic for research in India and had provided researchers a wide area for research. As mentioned in my research paper about the youth's stress is largely due to academic pressure of passing and failing in the exams. Stress is not a disease rather it is a response by body over a certain situation. One must not let stress to control one's body.

“It is not a daily increase, but a daily decrease. Hack away at the inessentials.”¹⁷

The above quote is said by Bruce Lee, as it is inferred from the quote itself that stress is not an increase but a decrease of one's physical or mental health. Thus, today's generation that is youth should try to keep away themselves from the stressors so that they lead a better life as compared to the ones who are fully into the stressors.

V. WEB REFERENCES

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¹⁷ *The positivity blog,*

<http://www.positivityblog.com/index.php/2015/11/25/stress-quotes/> (April 12, 2016, 1:01 p.m.)

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VI. AUTHOR PROFILE

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