

Chapter 1

Factors Impacting Student Well–Being and Academic Performance: Understanding Stressors in the Educational Setting as the Foundation for Mental Health

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the stressors in the student’s environment, well-being, and academic performance as a basis for a mental health program. Stress at school can lower your quality of life and harm your relationships, general well-being, and level of enjoyment at home. The study aimed to determine the relationship between the stress level of 250 first-year Psychology college students from 4 different campuses to their well-being and academic performance. The findings indicate that the impact of academic pressure stressors on the respondents only felt less regarding social media usage. Peer pressure has little of an effect on the respondents. The respondents' knowledge of physical stressors was extensively assessed regarding the physical factor. The responders have few or no issues with the financial factor.

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INTRODUCTION

Stress is a biological and psychological response experienced upon encountering a threat that we feel we do not have the resources to deal with. It is also a state of disharmony or a threat to homeostasis. Physiological changes increase alertness, focus, and energy. Early definitions of stress concerned the effects of threats on the body. Stress was seen as a state of stimulation causing the fight or flight response, a higher level of physical arousal to escape or to fight the threat (Cannon, 1932), and to cope with stressors (Selye, 1956). A stressor is a stimulus (threat) that causes sudden stress, and severe stress generally increases heart rate, breathing, and digestive activity.

Physical reactions were important in allowing us to adapt and survive difficult circumstances. Stress emphasizes the context and situations in which stress occurs, focusing on issues such as life events (Holmes & Rahe, 1967). Even the earlier theories of stress recognized that it could harm the body. There has been a great deal of research showing the various ways that stress can take its toll on your physical health. Stress affects your health in many ways, direct and indirect. One of the ways that stress affects your health most directly is by reducing the effectiveness of the immune system, the body's means of fighting disease. More indirect ways that stress can affect your health relate to your behavior. As a result of stress, you are more likely to engage in unhealthy behavior such as smoking or drinking alcohol and caffeine, which cause you even more stress in the long run. Furthermore, you are less likely to engage in activities that protect your health, such as eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and sleeping on time.

Stress at school can impact not only your quality of life but also spill over into your home life, affecting your relationships, well-being, and happiness. Long-term stress impacting your happiness can lead to a quality of life that is seriously detrimental to you as an individual. Without the realization that change is possible, a sense of powerlessness and pessimism about the situation might result in years of unnecessary unhappiness. There is a condition called burnout that primarily affects those in roles supporting others, and students are prone to burnout because of too many projects, activities, and due dates of worksheets. Burnout consists of three central components. Emotional exhaustion involves the depletion of energy or the draining of our emotional resources. Depersonalization involves psychological withdrawal from relationships with other students and teachers and the development of negative, cynical attitudes toward others. Lack of personal accomplishment is the tendency to make negative judgments of our competence and achievement in school work, along with feelings of insufficiency and low self-esteem.

It is increasingly common for people to see self-medication as a solution to physical and emotional problems. Long-term stress can also affect your self-image,

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