

Gender differences in stress among young adults

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ABSTRACT

The current study examined the stress among young adults across gender. A total of 120 respondents were selected from Lucknow city. Out of which 60 were male and 60 were female respondents. The data was collected using a self administered interview schedule along with perceived stress scale. The data was coded, tabulated and analyzed using frequency, percentage, Chi-square. The results of the study revealed that female experienced more stress than male. It was also found that there was highly significant difference between gender and stress which meant that stress level may vary according to gender.

The term adult comes from the Latin verb *adultus* which means grown to full size and strength or matured. Adults are individuals who have completed their growth and are ready to assume their status in society along with their other adults. Young adult is a stage of life marked by change and exploration. This is a period of adjustments to new patterns of life and new social expectations. The young adult is expected to play new roles, such as that of spouse, parent and to develop new attitudes, interests and values in keeping with these new roles. These adjustments make early adulthood a distinctive period in the life span and also a difficult one.

Stress is a fact of everyday life. When people reach out for help, they are often dealing with circumstances, situations, and stressors in their lives that leave them feeling emotionally and physically overwhelmed. Many people feel that they have very little resources or skills to deal with the high levels of stress they are experiencing. Stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or anxious. Everyone sees situations differently and has different coping skills. For this reason, no two people will respond exactly the same way to a given situation.

The research design followed in the present study was cross sectional in nature. In total 120 respondents were selected from the urban area of the Lucknow city between

the age of 20-35 years. Out of which 60 were male and 60 were female respondents. The purposive random sampling techniques were used for the selection of samples. The data were collected using a self administered interview schedule which covered the general information's along with Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, 1983). The data was then coded, scored, tabulated and analyzed by using relevant statistical procedures. The data analysis was done using descriptive statistics in terms of frequency, percentages and Chi-Square test.

The general profile of the respondents was studied in terms of their age, occupation and marital status.

The Table 1 showed that 31.6 per cent male and 43.4 per cent female respondents belonged to age group of 20-25 years, whereas, 41.6 per cent male and 28.3 per cent female respondents belonged to age group of 26-30 years and also 26.6 per cent male and 28.3 per cent female respondents belonged to age group of 31-35 years.

It is evident from Table 2 that 70 per cent male respondents and 55 per cent female respondents were working. However, only 6 per cent male respondents were non-working.

From Table 3 it is clearly observed that 30 per cent male respondents and 27 per cent female respondents were unmarried, whereas, 70 per cent male respondents and 55 per

cent female respondents were married.

The major findings of the study were as follows:

Table 4 showed that 31.6 per cent male respondents and 28.4 per cent female respondents were having mild stress. On the whole 30 per cent of the total respondents were suffering from mild stress. More than half of the respondents *i.e.* 65 per cent male and 68.3 per cent female respondents were having moderate stress. Also 66.6 per cent of the total respondents were having moderate stress. Very few *i.e.* 3.4 per cent male as well as 3.4 per cent female respondents were having severe stress. More females were suffering from moderate stress as compared to males (Fig. 1).

Table 5 showed that there was highly significant difference between gender and stress. It means that stress level varied according to gender.

Conclusion:

The study found that in general female experienced more

stress than male. Only few respondents suffered from severe stress. The findings of this study were same with the study conducted by Shah *et al.* (2010) which concluded that stress

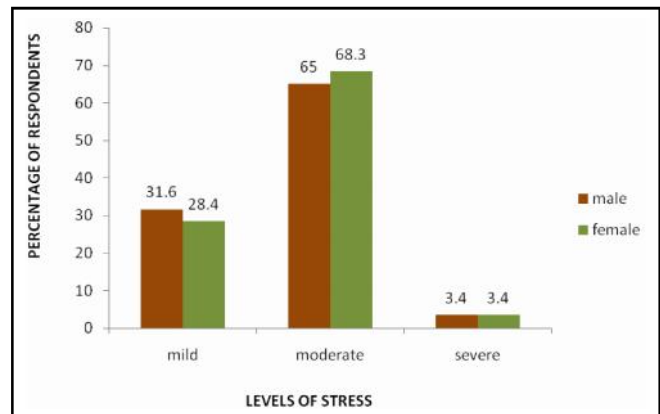


Fig. 1 : Levels of stress in male and female respondents

| Sr. No. | Age of the respondents in years | Male (n=60) | Female (n=60) | Total (n=120) |
|---------|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. | 20-25 | 19(31.6) | 26(43.4) | 45(37.5) |
| 2. | 26-30 | 25(41.6) | 17(28.3) | 42(35.0) |
| 3. | 31-35 | 16(26.6) | 17(28.3) | 33(27.5) |

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

| Sr. No. | Occupation | Male (n=60) | Female (n=60) | Total (n=120) |
|---------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. | Working | 42(70) | 33(55) | 75(62.5) |
| 2. | Non working | 6(10) | - | 6(5) |
| 3. | Student | 12(20) | 27(45) | 39(32.5) |

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

| Sr. No. | Marital status | Male (n=60) | Female (n=60) | Total (n=120) |
|---------|----------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. | Unmarried | 18(30) | 27(45) | 45(37.5) |
| 2. | Married | 42(70) | 33(55) | 75(62.5) |

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

| Sr. No. | Levels of stress | Males (n=60) | Females (n=60) | Total (n=120) |
|---------|------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. | Mild(0-18) | 19(31.6) | 17(28.4) | 36(30) |
| 2. | Moderate(19-37) | 39(65) | 41(68.3) | 80(66.6) |
| 3. | Severe(38-56) | 2(3.4) | 2(3.4) | 4(3.3) |

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

| Variable | d.f. | 2 value | Level of significance |
|----------|------|---------|-----------------------|
| Gender | 2 | 11.1** | 1 |

** indicates significance of value at P=0.01

was higher among female students. It was also concluded from the above study that there was highly significant difference between gender and stress which meant that stress level vary according to gender. The findings of this study are at contradictory with the study conducted by Ghaderi *et al.* (2009) which concluded that there was no significant gender difference on stress.

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