

Impact of Eustress on Academic Achievement of University Students

Madiha Zahra

MPhil Scholar, Department of Education,
PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi
Email: Madihazahra123@icloud.com

Dr. M. Imran Yousuf

Professor, Department of Education,
PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi
Email: dr.imran@uaar.edu.pk

Dr. Tehsin Ehsan

Lecturer, Department of Education,
PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi
Email: tehseen.ehsan@gmail.com

Abstract

This research study investigates the impact of eustress on the academic achievement of students at the university level. Eustress, a positive form of stress, has gained attention for its potential influence on various aspects of human functioning, including cognitive performance. The study aims to explore whether eustress, as experienced by university level students, contributes to enhanced academic achievement. The first objective was to find the perceptions of students about eustress at university level. A Descriptive approach is employed, utilizing quantitative data collection methods to provide an understanding of the phenomenon. The research contributes to the existing literature by shedding light on the potential benefits of eustress in an educational context and its implications for student achievement. This study is both quantitative and descriptive. The targeted population includes two public universities of Islamabad with undergraduate students enrolled in computer science and Education program. The sample is selected through convenient sampling.

Keywords: Eustress, learning performance, academic achievement, university, education

Introduction

Eustress, a term coined by endocrinologist Hans Selye in the mid-20th century, derives its prefix "eu" from the Greek word meaning "good" or "well." It signifies stressors that evoke excitement, anticipation, and motivation, rather than dread or exhaustion. Eustress arises from various sources, such as embarking on a new educational journey, participating in competitive events, or tackling intellectually stimulating projects. It stands as

a catalyst for growth, pushing individuals beyond their comfort zones and fostering resilience in the process (Selye, 1956). In the dynamic landscape of human experiences, stress is a concept that often conjures notions of strain, anxiety, and adversity (Selye, 1956). However, nestled within the folds of stress is a distinct and less explored phenomenon known as "eustress." Unlike its better-known counterpart, distress, which signifies the negative impact of stress on well-being and functioning (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), eustress illuminates the positive aspects of stress. Eustress emerges as the invigorating force that propels individuals to overcome challenges, attain goals, and find fulfillment in the face of demanding situations (Selye, 1974).

The delineation between eustress and distress hinges on the perception of the stressor and its effects. While distress can lead to a sense of helplessness and anxiety, eustress is characterized by an enhanced sense of purpose and engagement. The general autonomic reactions to eustress are to some extent equivalent as to the reactions elicited by distress.

It specifies processes, which entail the activation of the stress response systems of the body. However, crucially, eustress is therefore associated with positive cognitive appraisal, which is a view that the stressor can be effectively dealt with hence promoting the aspect of personal development and accomplishment (Lazarus and Folkman 1984).

Stress and academic outputs are quite interrelated but has a very intricate affiliation that requires the careful study and very extensively researched socio-cultural activity that is well known and has attracted much attention in educational research. Cognitive stress, physical stress, emotional stress – in whatever way stress is manifested, it poses a major threat. The impact of learning strategy use for student: academic achievement, cognitive features, and psychological health. This relationship also reveals that the psychological and the somatic have a precarious balance between them. The research analysis of the given case reveals the importance of not only the academic factors, but also the necessity to develop a deeper view on the case, consequences of stress on education process of students. Pressure, this could be academic, self imposed and or other pressures from community members, and Cognitive aspects such as, outside forces can have an effect on students 'concentration, their memory and understanding describe and reason effectively in their academics efforts which is well captured in Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The negative effects of stress on academic achievement can be expressed in a number of possible ways, from poor motivation and reduced ability to focus, to increased stress and decreased self-confidence. Academic burn out on the other hand is indicative of persistent and excessive stress having a negative impact not only on the grades but on the mental and physical well-being of the students health.

The search for the role of eustress in academic performance at the university level is thus a search that is informed by the desire to unwrap the complex relations that influence students' learning process. While the

conventional discourse stress as experienced in contexts around it tends to focus on the negative impact on academic favorable performance and health, the study of eustress offers a theoretical perspective –a trend toward stressing a complexity of stress image that may be utilized for enabling desirable effects.

Problem statement

For a long time, the consequences of computer science and IT have only presented a negative picture in the literature. This study overemphasis on academics, thus there is void when it comes to explaining how eustress, a positive stressor, might also add up to positive trends in academic performance. This study aims at filling this gap by ascertaining whether eustress has a statistically meaningful effects on the academic performance of university students.

Objectives

1. To find out the perceptions of students about eustress at university level.
2. To explore the impact of eustress on academic achievement at university students.

Rationale of the study

Stress has been a subject of study for a long time, and the adverse effects of stress are well documented, but more research has been focused on positive stress or eustress. One must appreciate the concept of eustress since it provides a healthy angle in looking into stress as a means to boost motivation and performance of an individual. Consequently, this piece of research seeks to examine and define eustress on its own right as well as outlining its differences from distress. Identification of contexts where eustress is observed and its impact on people, will help the area of positive psychology and provide guidelines for stress management. These research outcomes will be useful in designing programs that focus on eustress to enhance mental health, back and workplace efficiency, and education achievement to serve the well-known lack for effective stress balanced management.

Review of literature

Eustress is one of the stress concepts introduced by endocrinologist Hans Selye in the mid-20th century; this type of stress has recently been receiving considerable attention in psychological and educational literature. whereas stress has always been connected with the negative effects, the development of eustress has provided a completely new take on the relation between stress and human functioning. Literature review of this paper therefore seeks to look at the core of understanding of eustress, how it works, and the mechanics of distinguishing it from distress in current literature (Rücker, 2012).

According to Quick et al. (1997), this sort of pressure can likewise bring about a more prominent feeling of achievement and happiness after the difficult errand is finished. Stress can meaningfully affect mental and actual wellbeing, as per research. Individuals experiencing eustress will for the most

part have lower levels of cortisol, the tension substance, diverged from those experiencing inconvenience (McGonigal, 2015). Besides, as per O'Sullivan (2011), stress is related with improved invulnerable capability, expanded flexibility, and a more peppy point of view. These benefits feature the meaning of framing stressors in a positive light and looking through out testing anyway compensating experiences. Stress can emphatically affect efficiency, inspiration, and occupation fulfillment in the working environment.

According to Nelson & Simmons (2003), representatives who see their business related pressure as pressure are bound to make proactive moves like searching for new liabilities and mastering new abilities. This proactive technique updates individual execution as well as adds to definitive turn of events and progression. Notwithstanding, it is fundamental to recognize that singular impression of stress as eustress or trouble are emotional and can be exceptionally factor. Factors like individual strength, strategy for practical adaptations, and the genuinely strong organization open can affect how stress is seen and made due (Folkman, 1997). Along these lines, interventions highlighted progressing eustress should focus in on working on these factors, assisting individuals with reexamining stressors unequivocally and cultivate effective procedures for managing particularly troublesome times.

Characteristics of eustress

Positive Appraisal

Eustress is distinguished by its inherent . Unlike distress, which elicits feelings of anxiety and apprehension, eustress is typically accompanied by a positive cognitive appraisal. Individuals perceive eustressful situations as challenging yet manageable, and they often view these experiences as opportunities for growth and accomplishment. This positive outlook shapes the way individuals engage with stressors, fostering a sense of excitement rather than dread (Wani & Nadaf, 2018).

Motivational Component

One general feature of eustress is thus its motivational outcome. Eustress helps people to focus on the desire to achieve certain objectives, to fight for success, to do even more than was planned. This energy appears to be produced by the expectation of success in the confrontation with Complex condition. In addition to increasing work performance, this motivational aspect of eustress fosters a problem-solving orientation (Schellenberg & Bailis, 2016).

Enhanced Cognitive Functioning

For instance, eustress is very closely linked to the notion of increased mental effort. It is when individuals are exposed to what can be termed as eustressful situations; the cognitive mechanisms get sharpened. This is a good state for memory consolidation, creativity and decision making to occur. Therefore, eustress leads to better performances in academic work and problem solving skills among students (Strack et al. 2017 p 1031).

Transactional model of stress and coping

The transactional model of stress and coping formulated by Richard S Lazarus and Susan Francis Z Folkman in 1984 serves the purpose of describing the processes related to stress and coping in a most elaborate manner. This model holds that stress is a function of the person environment fit in which perception appraisal of stressors has a major centrality in the overall stress process. Core components of the model are: Core components of the model are:

Primary appraisal

The first step about the model is the primary appraisal; whereby an individual assesses the impact of a certain event or occurrence. This appraisal decided the type in which the stressor is seen either as a threat, challenge, or something non-threatening. A threat means a possibility of something bad or the loss of something valuable, on the other hand a challenge means that something good could be gained or achieved. It is indeed very closely related to the idea of eustress which involves positive appraisal of the stressor.

Secondary appraisal

The second stage is a determination of the resources and strategies that are available to enable one to deal with the stressor. People evaluate its potential regarding their capacity to handle or regulate it, in terms of skills and knowledge of the available social support. Thus, the secondary appraisal can result in effective coping strategies through which the dangerous effects of stress can be managed and the tendency towards resilience can be built.

Coping strategies

Managing stress is the process of utilizing the coping strategies. The coping strategies are the ways in which the stress is handled. Lazarus and Folkman identified two primary types of coping strategies: The strategies of APTS also differ from the problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies. Cognitive method coping is a process of actively working on managing the source of stress, including acquiring a plan, seeking information, and more. However, being a problem-focused coping mechanism, it seeks to change the response to stress by either avoiding or minimizing the situation while the emotion-focused coping tries to alter the emotional outcome of the stress through seeking of support, relaxation, or viewing the situation in a different light.

Psychological and physiological mechanisms of eustress

Positive stress which is referred to as eustress triggers several psychological and physiological processes that helps in organization performance, personal welfare, and development. Knowledge of these mechanisms cannot be overemphasized in the application of eustress in the personal and working lives of individuals.

Psychological Mechanisms

Indeed, as an essential part of eustress, the explanation effect is defined by the improvement of motivation and commitment. When a stressor is

appraised as a challenge, its perception stimulates a positive state of mindset as folks are encouraged and willing to complete the procedure. It may add to more diligent, dedicated, and tenacious behaviors that are necessary for the accomplishment of tasks and the handling of challenges. Eustress state also generates arousal and enthusiasm, which creates an urge of people towards their tasks and they get involve in it profoundly.

Physiological Mechanisms

Similarly as is the case with eustress, there are physiol-ogy ‘keyword’ responses that take place for the purpose of enabling the best functioning and performance. One of the key responses is hormonal; it includes adrenaline release and cortisol, for example. The epinephrine otherwise known as adrenaline raises the rate of heartbeat, the oxygen supply to the muscles and the energy plus plan an effective fight or flight response. Still, a hormone that is associated with negative aspects of stress, cortisol, is indispensable for regulation of metabolism, managing inflammation, and full body reaction to stress. In the case of eustress, all the mentioned hormonal changes are modulated so that it enables an individual to perform optimally and avoids detrimental influence of chronic stress.

Stress management is the psychological and physiological manner that stress is utilised as a constructive force; eustress is the skill by which resources that cause stress are used effectively. Understanding of these processes explain how it is possible to construct on the positive side of stress and to build conditions of motivation, interest and well-being for individuals and organizations.

Academic achievement

The constructive form of stress is called eustress which has highly significant effect towards the performance capability by enhancing the motivational levels, interest and psychological and intellectual skills. Learners ought to cultivate a thinking style that allows him or her seize academic barriers as chances rather than threats, and then, more likelihood is that such a learner shall experience Eustress. It brings positives in the way learners approach their academic work since they have positive attitude and passion towards it, which may result to high performance. Self-motivated students are people who possess; high levels of academic motivation of goal setting and self and academic persistence and approach for learning activities and/or performance.

This is in line with the development of a growth mindset as defined by Dweck (2006) , as being one of the psychological mechanisms through which eustress influences academic achievement. Mastery-oriented students are the ones, who believe that their intelligence can be improved over time, by utilizing various techniques, hard work, as well as with the help of other people. Eustress helps to develop this approach since it contributes to regarding academic tasks as doable and resolving. This perspective assists to grant difficulties to be withstood, errors to be made and improved and finally, high academic achievements are attained. The fact that goals can be

met also serve to enhance their self-efficacy expectations which in turn leads to more motivation and accomplishment.

The first is that it has an effect on the physiological processes underlying cognitive operations. It has been postulated that moderate degrees of arousal can improve various aspects of cognitive functioning, particularly working memory, attention, and problem solving, by invoking the Yerkes–Dodson law (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908). Under conditions of eustress, the optimal level of arousal enhances students' attention and concentration, and thus make them better absorbers of information. This improved 'mental fitness' is useful during examination periods and other tasks that require the application of knowledge on a moment's notice.

Eustress and academic achievement

Enhanced Performance

Eustress is used in increasing the level of arousal to an optimal level to avoid stress while at the same promoting cognitive and academic performance. Yerkes-Dodson Law (1908) has established that moderate pressure can help boost a person's efficiency because of the enhanced wakefulness. Eustress produces this level of arousal which enhances energy, focus, clear thinking and effectiveness in performing academic assignments. For instance, a student who gets eustress while handling a difficult assignment may feel more alert and efficient than he or she normally would and hence submit work of higher standards and earn better results.

PERCEPTION OF EUSTRESS

The Nature of eustress perception has been identified as crucial in discriminating it from distress and the evaluation of its effects. Perception therefore describes how people evaluate stimuli that are stressful in their environment. The transactional model of stress and coping that was introduced by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984 does not therefore consider stress to be just a result of events happening in the environment but is quite sensitive to the cognitive evaluation done by the person concerned. Appraisal of stressors as emissions rather than threats make them in this case known as eustress.

The right perception is an essential factor of eustress to have an enabling impact on an individual's life. Difficulties are viewed as a way of learning, advancing, and accomplishing things and hence the experiences generate such feelings as pleasure, interest, and self-fulfillment. For example, Selye (1974) was the first to describe the positive kind of stress that is useful for proper functioning of an organism and even for the increased performance – eustress. When stressors are viewed as being directly under the control of the person, then they are considered to be having eustress.

Personality, prior experiences and coping styles also affects perception of eustress. For instance, as Dweck (2006) has pointed out, people with fixed mindset will not approach tasks in the same manner as people with growth mindset will do; people in growth manner will regard challenges as opportunities toward enhanced mastery. This mindset helps build coping

ability and the capacity to recast threatening events in a positive light so as to help strengthen the perception of eustress. Moreover, it has been identified that individuals with high self efficacy, meaning belief in their ability to succeed, tend to therefore perceive stressors as a challenge and therefore imbued with eustress (Bandura, 1997).

The perception of eustress is context-dependent and can vary across different situations and environments. In academic settings, for example, students who perceive exams and assignments as opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills are likely to experience eustress. This positive perception can enhance their motivation, engagement, and academic performance. Conversely, if the same stressors are perceived as overwhelming and threatening, they may lead to distress and negatively impact performance and well-being.

Materials and Methods

Current research study was descriptive and quantitative in nature. Descriptive research, sometimes referred to as survey-based research, focuses exclusively on what happened or is happening rather than why and when it happened in order to identify the characteristics of a community. Quantitative research uses measurements, data, statistical tools, and computational techniques.

Population

The people who appeal to the researchers' interest in generalizing the research's findings are referred to as the population of a study. The total number of individuals from which samples are chosen for measurement is referred to as the population. Population of the study was undergraduate students who are studying in public universities of Islamabad. There are 17 HEC recognized public universities in Islamabad. The targeted population was the students of BS Computer Science and BS Education. The estimated targeted population of the study was 3588.

Sampling

The research used simple random sampling technique which helps to isolate a segment of population that is in the centre of research study. Compared to other procedures of sampling, this technique gives all members in the target population an equal probability of being selected in the study thereby reducing biases of sample selection and increasing its external validity.

Research instrument

Creating and testing of a research instrument in form of self-administered questionnaire aimed at establishing data on academic integrity, performance and quality of learning among students. It also gives information about the format of the questionnaire, the type of items used as well as the validation done with the help of academic professionals and the use of Likert scale items.

The Likert scale uses five response options, which are labeled strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree using this scale, the Likert

scale affords the respondent the chance to express the level of agreement or disagreement towards the statement in question to different degrees.

As with any survey the questionnaire is then adapted to meet the objectives of the research. The questionnaire was consisted of two sections, first one of which focused mainly on demographic details including gender, age, nationality and other features, etc. Products were developed in the form of instruments that would measure academic honesty, academic achievement, and learning outcomes.

Validation and reliability

Validity of a research instrument is very important in establishing the authenticity of the results obtained from the study. As far as validity is concerned, it has several distinctive features such as content validity, construct validity, and criterion-related validity. For this purpose, a preliminary version of the questionnaire was first pre-tested on a sample of instructors and students. From the opinions and suggestions of the respondents the research instrument was adjusted to fit the objectives of the study. After that, the refined instrument was validated for face validity by the educators in the education department. This process was quite helpful in order to guarantee that the research instrument indeed reflects the necessary data and therefore increases the credibility and relevance of the findings of the research.

The reliability of an research instrument is one of the fundamental indication of the stability of the measures in the expected factors. For this situation, viability of testing was measured for the instrument stability using a generally received sign of interior constancy that is Cronbach's Alpha. Hence, the Cronbach's Alpha value which is about 0. 729 illustrate that the instrument is highly consistent, the instrument is highly reliable and effectively measures the same fundamental development at a higher level of reliability.

Data collection

Data for the enhancement of accuracy and credibility of research outcomes. The questionnaire was given to the students of different universities offering undergraduate programs with the purpose of painting the picture of this specific population group. Consequently, the study centred on such students in order to obtain information relevant to the general academic setting. Most important of all, while collecting the data, special emphasis was placed on anonymity so that no one individual could be identified. This measure helped protect the identity of the respondents while at the same time create a feeling of safety to make people respond freely and, thus, more objectively. In that respect, it is possible to claim that the outcomes of the research are both reliable and valid since the method of data collection adheres to the highest standards.

Data analysis

The data, after careful numerical coding schematically, was getting entered in an excel sheet and then moved to SPSS 16 for analysis. The first goal was to have an organized and efficient means of collecting, sorting, analyzing,

as well as totaling the data that was needed for the assessment. For the assessment of the data, descriptive comparative analysis techniques were used and for this, the mean score, frequency, and percentage rates of each statement were analyzed. A breakdown of these percentages was then used to enhance the data analysis so as to acquire a better understanding of the outcome. Due to this kind of structure, the data analysis not only created a systematic plan for covering all the findings but also provided reliability and validity to the study.

Result and discussion

The data that was collected from the sources needed to be evaluated and deciphered in order to genuinely understand the students' assessment of academic trustworthiness. A set of questions received five responses: As the response scale is slightly different from the typical Likert scale, the possible responses of the subjects were categorized into four; they include neutral, neutral, strongly agree and strongly disagree. The students' academic integrity was compared using frequency and percentage.

Table 1

Demographic information of respondents

Categories	Frequency	percent
Gender:	142	40
Male		
Female	216	60
Age		
18-20	116	32.4
21-23	162	45.3
24 and above	80	22.3

It demonstrates that there 40 percent of the sample were male, Whereas 45 percent of respondents were at age group of 21 to 23 years.

Table 2

Responses regarding eustress in academic life

Items	SA		A		N		DA		SDA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Felt challenged but motivated by the stress associated with studies	132	37	146	41	21	6	59	16	0	0
Feeling stress have positive effect on academic performance	86	24	149	41	45	13	58	16	20	6
Feel excited by the pressure of deadlines	71	20	116	33	80	22	54	15	37	10
Moderate stress is vital for university student growth and development.	85	24	147	41	49	14	53	14	24	7
Stressors of presentations can enhance performance	126	35	113	31	68	19	21	6	30	9

Seek challenging situations for ultimate benefits	30	8	138	39	126	35	42	12	22	6
Feel accomplished after successfully managing study-related stress	132	37	130	36	62	17	32	9	2	1
See stress as a chance for learning and growth	42	12	118	33	88	24	79	22	31	9

The data in the table reveals distinct trends in students' perceptions of stress in their academic lives. Three forth of the students have experienced moments when felt challenged but motivated by the stress associated with university studies. **Regarding recalling the instances of how positive stress has affected your academic performance, almost** half have of the respondents have experienced positive stress that enhanced their academic performance. However, there is still a notable portion (29%) who disagree or strongly disagree, implying that not all students have had positive experiences with stress.

Two third students have varied reactions to the pressure of impending deadlines or academic responsibilities. This split suggests a diverse range of responses to academic pressure, with twenty-two percent students thriving under pressure and others finding it less stimulating. **Experiencing moderate levels of stress is necessary for personal growth and development as a university student.** A significant majority (69.2%) indicated a strong belief that moderate stress is essential for personal growth. Almost have of the students perceived the stress as performance-enhancing. However, a considerable percentage (27%) perceived that stress have not produced such effect on them.

Students actively seek out challenging situations that might induce stress, driven by the belief that these challenges may be beneficial in the long term. However, there is a significant number of students who prefer to avoid such stress-inducing situations, indicating diverse attitudes towards embracing or avoiding stress-related challenges. Half of the respondents were successfully handling stress leading to a sense of accomplishment, whereas one-fourth did not felt the stress management as a rewarding. Almost fifty nine percent students were found showing a predominant view of stress as a growth opportunity and see value in stressful experiences.

Table 3

Perceived impact of eustress on academic achievement

Items	VG		G		F		P		VP	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Eustress enhance academic performance by motivation	98	28	148	41	80	22	28	8	4	1
Eustress has boosted grades and coursework performance	65	18	116	32	95	27	52	15	30	8

Eustress has improved focus and concentration on studies.	55	15	160	45	72	20	51	14	20	6
Eustress help to manage time & academic tasks	117	33	133	37	57	16	30	8	21	6
Eustress stimulate sense of accomplishment	40	11	124	35	112	31	58	16	24	7
Eustress has improved the problem-solving skills and academic outcomes	125	35	95	27	102	28	31	9	5	1
Eustress has boosted the motivation and drive to succeed academically	111	31	105	29	110	31	27	8	5	1
Eustress have increased the engagement and participation in academics	73	20	104	29	95	27	71	20	15	4
Eustress can influence the attitude towards academic challenges	91	25	114	32	77	21	35	10	41	12

The data in the table indicates that eustress has a generally positive impact on academic performance across various dimensions. A significant proportion of respondents reported that eustress enhances academic performance by motivating students, with notable numbers identifying improvements in grades and coursework performance. Many also observed that eustress boosts focus and concentration, contributing to better overall academic results. This relationship suggests that eustress can be a key factor in driving academic success.

As has been seen, with regard to time management and other academic tasks, eustress seems to work in a positive manner. According to the study, eustress assists a significant number of the respondents to manage their time and plan and complete academic tasks to inevitably improve academic performance. Also, eustress relates to the feeling of achievement that also helps academic motivation and performance.

How eustress affects the problem solving skills and motivation is also clear. Several participants underlined that eustress enhances problem-solving and academic performance; it also enhances respondents' motivation and aspirations for success. This points towards the fact that eustress does not only help to overcome academics obstacles but also improves the motivation for success in academics.

Appropriate stress enhances the views of the Students towards the academic tasks hence increasing their involvement in the academic tasks. This means eustress may be instrumental in coming up with positive ways in which students can approach and handle their academic responsibilities. This broad impact shows that eustress is effective in getting proactive and positive academic climate.

Finding

1. In the study it was established that three-fourth of the students felt that they were under pressure at some time while studying but stress influenced them positively.
2. Of all the participants interviewed, nearly half of them reported incidents whereby positive stress brought out the best in them academically.
3. Two-thirds of the students exhibit varied reactions to the pressure of approaching deadlines or academic responsibilities.
4. A significant majority of students (69.2%) believe that experiencing moderate levels of stress is crucial for personal growth and development during their university years.
5. Half of the respondents successfully managed stress, resulting in a sense of accomplishment, while one-quarter did not find stress management to be rewarding.
6. A significant proportion of respondents reported that eustress positively impacts academic performance by motivating students, with many noting improvements in both grades and coursework.
7. A substantial number of respondents noted that eustress aids in time management and organization of academic tasks, thereby supporting their overall academic achievement.
8. Majority of respondents emphasized that eustress enhances their problem-solving skills and academic outcomes, while also significantly increasing their motivation and drive to succeed.

Conclusions

This research investigation show that, eustress has been seen by student from university as positive and motivating factor in their academic endeavor. The results reveal that, students perceive eustress in ways that boost their academic performance in that they report increased grades, the ability to focus and concentrate more on their books. Another tangible benefit of eustress is that, due to better management and prioritizing of the tasks, more work and better results can be achieved, and the participant feels satisfied with the performance and positive about the achievements in academics. Also, students appreciate that with eustress, makes them think better, become motivated and obsessed with excelling academically. It also enhances their involvement and interaction with academics and the resultant impact on their general attitude towards learning and scholar activities. These conclusions herald the need to establish a positive academic climate that incorporates eustress as a positive factor to improve the students' performance.

Discussion

Analysis of eustress, or positive stress in the academic experiences of university students in the present study, has brought to the understanding of stress such trends that are useful to its overall understanding. The findings reveal that student's majority levels of appreciation mean that eustress is a

motivational factor in the overall performance and growth of these students. This perception is in concurrence with past literature that posits that pro-stress – middle stressful levels – enhances concentration, drive, and consequent academic performance.

The studies have revealed one of the important results that a student feels proud and satisfied when he has dp;. This sheds light on applying eustress within the classrooms, and create a stress an resilience oriented mindset among students. When stress is considered more of a challenge than a threat , the students are able to put forward effective ways of coping that will be of benefit to them in their overall development in the educational unit.

Also, the study points out the necessity for an eustress-receptive academic milieu in order to extract the most of the effect. This is so because when the students are being corrected by their instructors and even being appreciated, they are in one way or the other bound to develop positive perceptions towards the academic tasks that are being assigned to them. This support system can also be fortified by making students have access to academic support services like tutoring and counseling to enable them deal with stress.

The research also finds that heightened eustress leads to better time management and organisation of tasks. The students said that through eustress, they were able to manage their academic work effectively hence enhance their concentration on books. This research finding is useful since it suggests that eustress does not only enhance the students' academic performance but also fosters the mastery of practical life skills.

But here it is significant to realize that all the advantages related to eustress depend directly on the perception and regulation of stress. But it is important to remember that eustress, as great as it may be for the average student, has been linked to burnout and other health risks if a stressor is taken much past its optimal level. For this reason, the universities have to find a middle ground in ways that they develop conditions in the classrooms that foster productive stress.

Indeed the recommendations of the stress study include the use of stress management programme, development of positive academic climate, and availability of stress enhancing resources. It, therefore, refers to the approaches that one can easily apply in order to enable him or her to benefit from stress while avoiding its negative impact.

Therefore, this research forms part of the increasing focus on eustress to determine the benefits of stress as far as the first year university students' performance and development is concerned. In conclusion, education institutions can also focus on the generation of eustress in their environments, supplying the students with right equipment and control, in order to improve their academic as well as psychological well being.

Some of the possible avenues for future research regarding the eustress and positive aspects of stress in students are; family antecedents of eustress in relation to a student's subsequent academic achievement and occupational success and intersubject variability of perceiving stress and coping.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations can be made to enhance the positive impacts of eustress on students' academic experiences:

- The recommendations are that universities should provide guidance to students on stress management, with an emphasis on transforming hazardous stress to eustress. Training on stress busters like organizing stress, Workshops, and seminars involving mindful time management, setting goals among others.
- Instructors and other members of the academic team should encourage the students to see the academic tasks set as development opportunities. Encouraging criticism, praising efforts and achievements helps to keep stress perception in a positive key.
- In curriculum development, the tasks set should be challenging yet achievable because those cause eustress. Assignments, lessons, and due dates have to be designed in such a manner that challenges the students to the maximum but does not overburden them.
- It is also important that the Universities provide students with services that include, tutoring, academic advising, and counselling to enable students manage their academics. Such resources can be the help one requires to cope with stress thus transforming it into what is required, learning experiences.
- Larger group commitments and peer support initiatives can be used to let the students share their experiences, lessons and stress relieving options. Communal interaction method allows for development of classroom community and improvement of how students tackle problems.
- Instructors are therefore crucial in the assessment process , for the continuous assessment of a student and timely feedback to enable him/her have a clue on what he/she needs to do. This can minimize uncertainty and can help in increasing the students' self assurance in tackling academic tasks.
- Engaging the students in sporting activities like sports and games, and health and fitness exercises, counseling and mental health clinics, would allow students to have a balanced way of life. It is therefore important to maintain both physical and mental health in other to contain stress.
- Some of the benefits of flexible learning include schooled courses, which can include online study and flexible time limits so that the students can be able to cope with their learning program. Flexibility can minimize

pressure and give an opportunity for students to have a positive attitude towards their learning.

- By implementing above mentioned strategies, universities should be able to develop positive academic climate within the institutions that not only embrace the concept of eustress but also strive to make use of it to enable students perform better academically and socially transform to become better people.

Literature cited

- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Biggs, J. (1987). *Student Approaches to Learning and Studying*. Australian Council for Educational Research.
- Bordoloi, S. (2014). Factors Creating Eustress Among Subordinates--Role of Supervisors.
- Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. Random House.
- Folkman, S. (1997). *Positive psychological states and coping with severe stress*. Social Science & Medicine, 45(8), 1207-1221.
- Folkman, S., & Moskowitz, J. T. (2000). Positive affect and the other side of coping. *American Psychologist*, 55(6), 647-654.
- Gogoi, M., & Sahoo, J. (2019). A Study Of Academic Stress In Relation To Academic Achievement Motivation Of Secondary School Students.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). Stress, appraisal, and coping. Springer.
- McGonigal, K. (2015). *The Upside of Stress: Why Stress is Good for You, and How to Get Good at It*. Avery.
- Nelson, D. L., & Simmons, B. L. (2003). Eustress: An elusive construct, an engaging pursuit. In P. L. Perrewé & D. C. Ganster (Eds.), *Emotional and physiological processes and positive intervention strategies* (Vol. 3, pp. 265-322). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- O'Sullivan, G. (2011). *The Thriving Doctor: How to be More Successful, Resilient and Happy*. Routledge.
- Quick, J. C., Quick, J. D., Nelson, D. L., & Harrell, J. J. (1997). *Preventive Stress Management in Organizations*. American Psychological Association.
- Rücker, J. C. (2012). The relationship between motivation, perceived stress and academic achievement in students (*Bachelor's thesis, University of Twente*).
- Schellenberg, B. J., & Bailis, D. S. (2016). The two roads of passionate goal pursuit: Links with appraisal, coping, and academic achievement. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 29(3), 287-304.
- Selye, H. (1956). *The stress of life*. McGraw-Hill.
- Selye, H. (1974). Stress without distress. *JAMA*, 229(13), 1475-1479.
- Sharief, S. Relationship of academic stress with emotional intelligence

& academic achievement.

- Strack, J., Lopes, P., Esteves, F., & Fernandez-Berrocal, P. (2017). Must we suffer to succeed?. *Journal of individual differences*.
- Wani, G. A., & Nadaf, Z. A. (2018). Mental health, depression, stress, anxiety and academic achievement-a literature review. *Int. J. Mov. Educ. Soc. Sci*, 7(1).
- Yerkes, R. M., & Dodson, J. D. (1908). The relation of strength of stimulus to rapidity of habit-formation. *Journal of Comparative Neurology and Psychology*, 18(5), 459-482.