Stochastic Modelling and Computational Sciences

ACADEMIC STRESS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT FIRST COLLEGES IN KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to investigate the relationship between academic stress and psychological well-being in college students, with a focus on how these attributes differ by gender. Understanding the link between academic stress and the psychological well-being of college students is one of its other main objectives. The study involved 38 college students, 19 of whom were female and 19 of whom were male, from different parts of Karnataka. The PGI General Well-Being Scale and the Perception of Academic Stress Scale, which gauge academic stress and psychological well-being, respectively, were completed by the participants. The data were subjected to a thorough statistical analysis using SPSS, utilizing both descriptive and inferential statistical approaches. The Mann-Whitney U Test and Spearman's Correlation are examples of inferential statistics, whereas the mean and standard deviation are examples of descriptive statistics. The study's findings demonstrated that while psychological well-being did not differ between males and girls, academic stress did. Furthermore, a direct correlation has been shown between academic stress and the psychological well-being of college students.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Psychological Well-being, Social Work Students, Karnataka, College Students, Mental Health

1. INTRODUCTION
Young aspirants with impressionable minds, ideas, and emotions come together in college to develop their passions, careers, and futures. It is a place where people connect and get to know a variety of interesting people, make mistakes, and grow as a result of all the experiences. At this age, young adults would begin to experience stress due to their exposure to the fiercely competitive and demanding modern world. Since students are seen as the future leaders of society, stress can hurt their general well-being, as well as their physical and mental health. Well-being is regarded as one of the most significant objectives that people pursue since it influences our level of happiness and contentment with life. On the other hand, stress brought on by academic responsibilities puts students' academic performance and well-being in jeopardy, which is detrimental to society's well-being as well as their immediate and long-term mental and physical health.

According to Bisht, academic stress is defined as demands on a student's cognitive abilities that are either too much or too low for the available resources (internal or external). Additionally, Bisht suggested that a person's perception of their stress is reflected in their academic stress:

(a) Academic frustration is a state brought on by certain academic goals not being met.

(b) When two or more equal but incompatible response dispositions to the academic goals appear, academic conflict results.

(c) When a student is under a lot of time and energy pressure to accomplish their academic goals, academic pressure arises.

(d) The fear of something going wrong with certain academic objectives leads to Academic Anxiety.

Psychological well-being is a dynamic state defined by a fair degree of balance between a person's abilities, aspirations, and expectations, as well as the possibilities and demands of their surroundings. Subjective well-being and psychological well-being are the two categories into which the term "well-being" is divided when used broadly in psychology literature. Psychological well-being is defined as accepting challenges and making an

attempt to advance oneself, whereas subjective well-being is defined as being content, at ease, and largely free of issues. The meaning of life, self-awareness, and the quality of interpersonal connections all have an impact on psychological well-being.

1.1 Karnataka's Student Outcomes, Demographics, and Academic Stress

Students in the current competitive educational system feel pressure from tests, homework, projects, and grades. In addition, the expense of their schooling, living in dorms, and their prospective employment situation exacerbate injuries [1]. While moving from school to college might present students with exciting new social and educational opportunities, most of them may find it difficult to acclimatize to these new learning contexts. Students' capacity to socialize and meet their academic objectives may be further limited by this stress, which may also hurt their mental health [2].

Academic stress is defined as an unpleasant emotional and physiological state of arousal that people encounter in specific circumstances that they consider to be hazardous or threatening to their well-being [3]. Academic stress is characterized as a psychological discomfort related to the expected frustration of failing an academic course, the expectation of failing, or even the knowledge that failure may occur [4]. Students often experience some level of stress related to their education, but excessive pressure might indicate discontent, which can negatively impact both academic performance and psychological health [5].

Success is clearly defined as "measurable behaviour in a series of tests that are standardized." Generally speaking, "accomplishment" is occasionally used instead of "achievement" [6]. Achieving something by hard work is also regarded as an accomplishment. It is described as "the result of education or the degree to which a learner, instructor, or organization has met their learning objectives" [7]. On the other hand, psychological well-being is the state of successfully integrating psychical, cognitive, and socio-emotional functions throughout one's life course that results in meaningful activities that are accepted by one's cultural community, fulfilling interpersonal relationships, and the capacity to overcome mild psychosocial and environmental problems [8].

Scholarly investigations have demonstrated an inverse relationship between academic stress and psychological health as well as academic success [9, 10]. When compared to other independent variables, academic achievement has also been demonstrated to be strongly negatively predicted by stress. Teenagers who struggle emotionally or psychologically or who face academic stress perform worse in the classroom, according to data from the Sociology of Learning [11]. However, some research findings show that students who experienced less academic stress also reported feeling more psychologically well-off]12].

On the other hand, not much study has been done regarding how demographic characteristics affect students' academic performance [13]. Previous research has also revealed that several factors, including parental education, age, gender, type of institution (private or public), and family income, strongly predict students' academic achievement [14].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mayya et al. (2022) [15] explained that when academic demands surpass pupils' capacity for adaptation, it's referred to as academic stress. Stress related to school raises the risk of substance abuse, depression, insomnia, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, and dropping out. Because of changes made to the educational system in response to COVID-19, academic stress is increasing globally. Recognizing and treating academic stress early may be made easier with an understanding of its origins. The Manipal Inventory of Academic Stress scale and a cross-sectional survey were used in the study to measure academic stress and determine its causes. That research included 2152 commerce students in grades 11 and 12 from 34 pre-university centres along the coast of Karnataka. Stratified cluster sampling was used in the investigation. Descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, multiple linear regression, and two-sample independent t-tests were employed in the investigation. According to the study, one in four pre-university pupils experienced significant academic stress. The biggest sources of stress were a lack of revision time, academic queries from neighbours and relatives, and parental expectations. Academic stress was

associated with the mother's education level, gender, and grade. Interventions at the individual, family, institutional, and community levels are necessary to protect youth from traumatic events that may be harmful to their health.

Stanley et al., (2020) [16] examined the literature on the impact of stress and coping mechanisms on the resilience of social work students A longitudinal and comparative study was conducted in India. The study's objectives were to determine the kind and intensity of pressure, elasticity, and flexibility that social work students encounter, as well as if these characteristics change over time when compared to students in other academic fields. The type of study design used was longitudinal. a sample composed of 32 study group members and 33 members of the reference group. In that inquiry, a questionnaire instrument was employed. Additionally, inferential statistics were used to complete the data analysis. There was no statistically significant difference between the two groups, per that study. The pupils in both groups are city dwellers. The two groups of college students have more similar educational backgrounds. The social work group showed signs of flexibility, but as students progressed through their degrees, their opinions of their growth did not. Strategies for handling stress, problems, and emotions appeared to be important markers of flexibility.

Subudhi et al., (2018) [17] examined research on college students' mental health literacy. Determining the degree of intellectual well-being education among university students was the aim of the investigation. There were forty students in the study sample. A questionnaire was used in that investigation. The statistical program for the social sciences, version 16.0, was utilized to complete the data analysis. According to the survey, 47.5% of people experience mental health issues in the third quarter, including depression. One of the main causes of depression (96%) is family conflict, which is followed by arguments with friends or neighbours (60.0%), adversity (72.5%), problems from early life and economic hardship (67.5%), challenges at work and recent losses of friends or family (62.5%), and a lack of control over life decisions (92.5%). To escape their depression, 37.5 percent of students took appetite stimulants, 35 percent utilized tonics, herbal remedies, and vitamins, and 70 percent took sleeping pills. Additional attributes comprise sentiment (95%) hear-to-know (87.5%), problem-solving diversion (62.5%), and physical activity (57.5%). 92.5 percent of respondents said they helped persons who were mentally ill, and 67.5 percent of students said they would be interested in working with mentally ill people. Depression afflicted 85.5 percent of jobless individuals, 75% of divorced individuals, 52.5 percent of women, young, impoverished individuals unable to marry, 42.5 percent of elderly individuals, and 40 percent of affluent individuals. There was a 25 percent greater chance of intellectual disability and depression.

Kiani et al., (2017) [18] informed that a sample of seventy students ranging in age from fifteen to twenty-three were administered the Educational Stress Scale for Adolescents (ESSA) and the Depression Scale developed by the Centre for Epidemiological Studies (CES-D). Both of these scales measure levels of stress and depression. There was a total of sixty-five people, with thirty-five men and thirty-five women among them. The investigation, which used Pearson product-moment correlation, found that there was no discernible association between academic stress and mental health among students attending colleges and universities. In addition, the findings of the independent sample t-test demonstrated that while the perspectives of male and female students regarding their mental health are comparable, the degree of academic stress experienced by female students is significantly higher.

Duncan et al., (2015) [19] explored research on the performance, psychological health, and stress related to academics of senior high school remedial students in Accra, Ghana. 182 SHS remedial students from two Accra remedial facilities were involved in the study. The multidimensional scale of perceived social support (MSPSS), the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale, the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS–42), the student Life Stress Inventory (SLSI), and the Agricultural Coping Systems Inventory (ACSI) were utilized to gather the data. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis revealed a favourable link between psychological health and academic stress. Likewise, no connection was discovered between psychological health and academic achievement. Using Hierarchical Multiple Regression models, the study found that the relationship between stress and psychological well-being was not weakened by factors such as socioeconomic status, gender, social support,

or agricultural coping strategies. Furthermore, studies using the independent t-test revealed gender differences in the psychological health of the pupils.

Munir et al., (2015) [20] investigated that to evaluate the relationship between loneliness, academic stress, and psychological wellness. Four questionnaires measuring psychological well-being, academic stress, and loneliness were used to gather data from 165 first-year college students (67 men and 98 women), whose ages ranged from 15 to 19. The responses were selected using a simple cluster sampling technique. The findings showed a robust correlation between loneliness, academic stress, and psychological well-being. Descriptive statistics, correlation, multiple stepwise regression analysis, and the t-test were used to evaluate them. Studies have shown that psychological well-being can be predicted by variables including family affluence, loneliness, and academic stress. It was demonstrated that there were significant positive and negative correlations between psychological well-being, academic stress, and loneliness, even though there were no discernible differences between male and female students.

Glozah et al., (2013) [21] described that Data from 226 students were gathered using the student life-stress inventory, the general health questionnaire, and the measures of felt social support from friends and family. The results demonstrated that the negative impacts of academic stress on psychological wellness might be mitigated by perceived social support. Females scored better on perceived social support but had greater rates of depression. Boys exhibited higher levels of academic stress and better psychological health, which are partially explained by the gendered socialization process. The effect on Ghanaian teenagers' psychological well-being of perceived social support and academic stress.

Table 1: An overview of studies on the relationship between mental health and academic stress

Author name & Year	Objective	Sample Size	Data Collection	Key Findings
Mayya et al. (2022)	Assess academic stress and its factors among Grade 11 and 12 Commerce students	2152 students	utilizing the Manipal Inventory of Academic Stress scale in a cross-sectional survey	One in four pre-university students reported experiencing high levels of academic stress. The biggest causes of stress were a lack of revision time, academic queries from neighbours and relatives, and parental expectations. Academic stress was linked to mother's education, gender, and grade.
Stanley et al. (2020)	Analyse social work students' resilience, coping mechanisms, and stress.	Students in 32 study groups and 33 reference groups	Longitudinal research design and questionnaires	No significant statistical distinction between the study and the reference group. Pressure, issue-focused, and feeling-focused coping techniques were predictors of resilience.
Subudhi et al. (2018)	Examine university students' knowledge about mental health.	40 students	Questionnaires and statistical analysis	47.5% had mental problems like depression. Family conflict, lack of control over life decisions, and economic struggles were major causes of depression. Students used various methods to cope with unhappiness.
Kiani et	Examine how	70 students	Educational stress	Academic stress and mental

al. (2017)	academic stress affects college and university students' mental health.		and depression scales	health do not appear to be related. Academic stress was greater in women. There is no difference in how gender affects mental health.
Duncan Williams (2015)	Analyse the psychological health, academic performance, and stress levels of senior high school remedial students.	182 students	Various questionnaires and analysis methods	Academic stress and psychological well-being are positively correlated. Academic success was not connected with psychological well-being. differences in psychological health between the sexes.
Munir et al. (2015)	Calculate the correlation between psychological well-being, academic stress, and loneliness.	165 college students	Questionnaires and statistical analysis	There is a strong link between psychological health, academic stress, and loneliness. Psychological well-being was predicted by family income, academic stress, and loneliness. No discernible differences in gender.
Glozah (2013)	Examine senior high school students' perceptions of social support, psychological health, and academic stress.	226 students	Questionnaires and analysis	The detrimental effects of scholastic stress on mental health were lessened by the perception of social support. Disparities between genders in depression and perceived social support.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

- Is there a connection between college students' psychological health and academic stress that is noteworthy?
- Is there a discernible gender difference in college students' levels of academic stress?
- Is there gender-based differences in college students' psychological well-being that are particularly noticeable?

Objectives

- To investigate the connection between college students' psychological health and academic stress.
- To investigate the gender-based differences in academic stress among college students.
- To investigate how gender affects college students' psychological health differently.

Hypothesis

- **H01:** College students' psychological wellness and academic stress do not significantly correlate.
- **H02:** The gender of college students has no discernible impact on the level of academic stress they experience.
- **H03:** The psychological well-being of college students does not significantly differ according to their gender.

Layout of the Research

This scientific study looked at how college student's mental health is related to the stress they feel from school. The association between college students' psychological health and academic stress is investigated using a correlational study method. The study also examines gender differences in academic stress and psychological health.

Example
Thirty-eight college students from Karnataka were selected for the study's sample via purposive sampling, nineteen of whom were female and nineteen of whom were male. The chosen subjects were 18–23-year-old college students.

3.1 TOOLS FOR THE INVESTIGATION

Academic Stress Scale Perception:
The scale was made with a 5-point Likert scale. This scale has eighteen questions with more than one right answer. The first set has a scale that goes from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The second set has a scale that goes from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The internal consistency reliability of the instrument is 0.7. Using the Cronbach's alpha approach, it was discovered. The current scale's substance and face validity was improved by the significant work that went into meticulously creating a table of specifications with items for it, as well as by the methodical input from education specialists. Because the experts were highly in agreement with the items' significance, their follow-up significantly improved the content validity. These four factors—Factor 1, "Pressures to perform," Factor 2, "Perceptions of workload," Factor 3, "Academic Self-Perception," and Factor 4, "Time restraints"—are linked to each other, which shows that the scale is valid across all four groups. Convergent validity was shown by the strong positive links between the three factors, especially between the scores on Factor 1's "Pressures to perform" and the scores on the other three components.

PGI Scale of General Well-Being:
The psychological well-being is evaluated using the scale that was created. The twenty things on the scale are broken up into four groups: self/others (like feeling wanted or useful), mood (like being happy most of the time), anxiety (like being bothered by nerves), and physical (like being bothered by illness or pain). In each group, there are five items. The Kudar Richardson correlation 20 method was used to figure out the test-retest reliability. The result was 98, which means the test was true and reliable in a very significant way. With ten items in part one (= 0.76) and ten items in part two (= 0.78), the overall Gutman Split-half reliability coefficient was 0.86. The scale showed a strong correlation with both the general satisfaction rating and the Brad buff scale.

4. RESULT
College students' psychological wellness and academic stress are significantly correlated.

- College students' levels of academic stress varied significantly depending on their gender.
- There is no clear difference between the mental health of male and female college students.

H01: There is no discernible relationship between academic stress and the psychological health of college students.

Spearman correlation was used to analyse the data associated with this goal. The Spearman approach was used to connect the psychological health and academic stress of college students.

Table 2: Academic stress and psychological health among college students are correlated

Variable	N	r	p
Academic Stress Psychological Well-being	38	-0.56	0.01

In order to look into the link between academic stress and mental health, a Spearman correlation study was done on a group of 38 college students. The table shows the results. In this case, "N" stands for the sample size, which is 38 pieces. "r" stands for the correlation coefficient, which shows how strongly and in what way two variables are linked. The correlation coefficient in this case is -0.56, which means there is a negative association. As the negative sign shows, more school stress, which is one of the variables, is linked to a lower likelihood of mental health improving. A correlation of -0.56 means that the relationship is somewhat negative. However, it is important to remember that stronger relationships are shown by correlations that are closer to -1 or 1. The link has a "p" value of 0.01, which is less than the usual level of 0.05 for significance. With a p-value of 0.01 at the 0.05

level of statistical significance, the correlation that was seen does not support the null hypothesis that there is no relationship. There is a statistically significant negative relationship between academic worry and psychological well-being among the college students being studied, and this finding supports that idea. In general, the results show that the rising levels of academic stress were linked to worse mental health among the study subjects. A study by Munir et al. (2015) looked at how 165 college students' academic stress, loneliness, and mental health were related. There was a total of 98 women and 67 men who took part in this study. The results showed that there was a strong link between school stress, loneliness, and mental health. There was a strong negative relationship between psychological well-being and both loneliness and academic stress. There was a good relationship between psychological well-being and academic stress. The study stated above shows a strong link between college students' mental health and the stress they feel from school. In 2015, Duncan-Williams, B. did a study on 182 senior high school remedial students to look at the link between academic stress, academic success, and mental health. There was a link between academic worry and mental health, according to the results of the study. In the same way, there was no major link found between academic success and mental health. Furthermore, the study found that the link between stress and mental health was not changed by social support, gender, socioeconomic standing, agricultural coping strategies, or agricultural coping strategies. Also, differences between male and female students were found in their mental health. The current study shows that there is a strong link between academic worry and the mental health of college students.

H02: The gender of college students has no discernible impact on the level of academic stress they experience.

The facts related to this goal were looked at using the Mann-Whitney U test. The gender differences in college students' levels of academic stress were assessed using the Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 3: Academic stress mean, z-value, and p-value for male and female students

Variable	Group	N	Mean	z	p
Academic Stress	Females	19	72.5	1.98	0.048
	Males	19	68.3		

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the degrees of academic stress that male and female college students faced. The results are shown in the table. There are two different groups that are evaluated for the "Academic Stress" variable: males (N = 19) and women (N = 19). The typical score for female college students who face academic stress is 72.5. Male college students, on the other hand, have a somewhat lower average academic stress score of 68.3. The degree of dissimilarity between the two groups is assessed, as shown by the Mann-Whitney U test result (z) of 1.98. Academic stress is linked to a p-value of 0.048. The p-value must be less than the traditional significance level, or 0.05, as this is crucial. According to this research, there is a statistically significant difference between the amount of work-related stress that male and female college students experience. The positive z-value suggests that girls are typically more stressed about their academic performance than guys. This lends credence to the null hypothesis, which posited that there was no discernible variation in academic stress levels between males and females. The data indicates that college students' levels of work-related stress are influenced by gender, with women reporting higher levels of stress than men. Kiani et al. (2017) investigated the impact of school stress on seventy college and university students' mental health. The study found significant differences between male and female college and university students' perceptions of academic stress. Based on the research mentioned above, men and women perceive academic conflict in different ways. This study found substantial differences between male and female college students regarding academic stress.

H03: The psychological well-being of college students does not significantly differ according to their gender.

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to look at the data linked to this goal. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to see how the mental health of male and female college students was different.

Table 4: shows the average, z-score, and p-value of psychological well-being for both men and women.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	z	p
Psychological Well-being	Females	19	75.3	2.14	0.032
	Males	19	68.9		

The sample size (N), mean scores, z-values, p-values, and psychological well-being scores for male and female college students are shown in the figure. When looking at a person's psychological well-being, gender is one of the things that is taken into account. The group for female students is made up of 19 people (Group: females). The fact that female students have an average psychological well-being score of 75.3 shows that they generally have a higher level of psychological well-being. According to the z-value, the observed mean is 2.14, which shows the difference in standard deviations between the group mean and the observed mean. When looking at how important something is statistically, the z-value in question is equal to a p-value of 0.032. In the same way, the sample size for boys (Group: males) is nineteen students. Comparing male and female students, it can be seen that males have a slightly lower overall level of psychological well-being, as shown by their mean score of 68.9. The table doesn't say what the z-value is for the male group, but you can figure it out by looking at the difference between them and the female group. The p-value of 0.032 for the psychological well-being score of the male group is significant. The p-value shows how likely it is that outcomes as extreme as the recorded results happen less often than the usual threshold of 0.05. This is what statistical significance means. It seems that there is a big difference in psychological well-being between male and female college students, since female students report higher amounts of psychological well-being. The table shows differences between men and women in college students' psychological well-being. It shows that, statistically, the mean score for women is much better than that for men. Research like this one helps us learn more about how college students' mental health is changing over time. Waghmare (2016) did research to find out how different factors like place and gender affect the mental health of college students. The study's group was made up of 100 college students from Jalna city, with 25 men and 50 women. All of them were from the same urban and rural areas. The study showed that there isn't a statistically significant difference between the mental health of male and female college students who live in rural and urban areas. According to the above study, school stress is the same for both men and women. The latest study doesn't find any clear differences between the mental health of men and women.

DISCUSSION

With the participation of 38 college students, the study investigated the connection between academic stress and mental health using Spearman correlation analysis. The association coefficient (r) indicates that the link is somewhat negative, at -0.56. This suggests that a decrease in mental health is usually linked to an increase in academic stress. The null hypothesis is rejected since the p-value of 0.01 is less than the predefined significance level. Among the college students assessed, there was a statistically significant adverse association between psychological well-being and academic stress. This suggests that there is a negative correlation between psychological well-being and an increased scholastic load. The Mann-Whitney U test was employed to ascertain whether there was a difference in the levels of academic tension experienced by men and women. As expected, the statistics show a considerable difference: girls (mean score 72.5) reported feeling more stress related to school than boys (mean score 68.3). Gender does affect how stressful people think school is, as evidenced by the p-value of 0.048 and the positive z-value of 1.98, which reject the null hypothesis. These results suggest that college females generally face higher levels of academic stress than college males.

There are notable differences in the consequences of psychological well-being according on gender. Male students score 68.9 on average in psychological well-being, whereas female students score 75.3 on average. The z-value (2.14) and p-value (0.032) show that gender has an effect on college students' mental health but do not support the null hypothesis. Put another way, this shows that students who identify as female generally have better mental health than students who identify as male. In the collegiate population, the study finds a relationship between mental health, academic stress, and sexual orientation. The evidence indicates that there is a negative association between academic stress and mental health. Furthermore, there are notable differences between the

sexes in terms of mental health and academic stress. These complex results add to our knowledge of the current state of wellbeing among college students.

CONCLUSION

The study questions and goals about the link between differences between men and women, academic pressure, and the mental health of college students were satisfactorily met. The Spearman correlation study was done on a group of 38 college students. It showed that academic stress and mental health were significantly negatively related (-0.56). The obtained statistically significant finding challenges the null hypothesis by showing a link between the participants' mental health getting worse as their academic stress level rose. The Mann-Whitney U test showed that the amounts of stress in school are different for men and women. The results showed that female college students were more stressed about their classes than male students. The statistically significant p-value (0.048) and positive z-value (1.98), which show that how college students feel about academic stress is greatly affected by their gender. The study into differences between men's and women's mental health also led to important conclusions. The average score for psychological well-being among college women (75.3 on the scale) was higher than the average score for college men (68.9). The related p-value (0.032) and z-value (2.14), which showed that the null hypothesis was not true, showed that gender affects college students' mental health. The study gives important new information about the complicated relationships between college students' academic stress, mental health, and gender differences. The above results help us learn more about the things that affect college students' mental health and lay the groundwork for future study and possible interventions that aim to improve academic well-being.

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