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Stress Management among Post Graduate Students

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Abstract:- Stress is considered to be an integral part of one's life; stress can be any kind of worry, anxiety, hassle, trauma, tension, pain, or pressure. Stress is sometimes avoidable but sometimes it is unavoidable and one has to become aware of certain measures and ways how to manage it in an appropriate manner. Young age is a crucial stage since it is a time when youth experience many changes in their lives. They are anticipated to be the social elite. Therefore, students should improve their stress-management skills in order to lead a healthy life after they join the society. When a child reaches adolescence, they must not only get used to a new lifestyle and setting, but also become acquainted with a wide range of unfamiliar people, occasions, and objects. They are under a great deal of life stress. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the sources of stress among them as well as coping mechanisms. According to the study, the primary sources of stress include professional transitions, interpersonal interactions, relationship issues, and academic assessments.

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is a mental or physical tension brought about by internal or external pressures. Researchers have found significant biochemical changes that take place in the body during stress includes depression, cardiovascular disease, stroke and cancer. The word stress is derived from the Latin words*trictus* meaning 'to be drawn tight'. Stress is simply a fact of nature-forces from the outside world affecting the individual. In general stress is related to both internal and external factors. External factors include the physical environment, including job, relationship and others, whom, and all the situation, challenges, difficulties, and expectations confronted with on a daily basis. Internal factors determine the body's ability to respond to, and deal with, the external stress including factors (Stress management by Ruth Baer).

Academic, environmental, social and health problems all play an important role in the development of stress among students. Academic variables are the most significant stressors, necessitating the implementation of particular and focused interventions to significantly reduce the load of stress on students.Students are additionally stressed by teaching methods and academic surroundings(Waghachavare*et al.*, 2013)

Most of the factors that cause stress fall into the category of everyday events. These may come from the job, family, and task done on daily basis. Significant stress can also be caused by common daily annoyances such having too much to do, juggling several obligations, time constraints, traffic noise, work discontent, bad health, unfavourable attitudes, relationship pressures, or financial difficulties. Teenage stress is caused by number of factors which include puberty, parental expectations, peer pressure, academic pressure, relationship with opposite sex, and physical appearance.

While stress can appear in many different ways, the physiological changes brought on by the fight or flight response are the underlying cause of all symptoms. Any sense of danger, including external stressors like loud noises or bright lights, sends a new stimulus from the brain's sensory cortex through the hypothalamus to the brain stem. All of the senses are on high alert, and there is a quick spike in heart rate and muscle tension. Your general health could be gravely harmed if the body does not quickly revert to its regular relaxed state.

Despite the fact that psychological threat is more rampant in modern life than physiological ones, the human body continues to respond to stressful situation in a physiological manner. Any threat, real or perceived still brings about similar changes in ourbodies. The complex human body that comprises of a system of reciprocal actions and reactions cannot balance the level of chemicals in the body. This disruption of chemical levels leads to physical symptoms that can appear in any part of the body. Stress, both chronic and severe, can result in emotional symptoms that may sometimes be misunderstood as behavioural changes. Emotional stress symptoms occur generally when you have long periods on unresolved stress.When all attempts to eliminate the source of stress fail, unresolved stress develops.

Behavioural symptoms basically result from emotional symptoms. Visible symptoms include nail biting, pacing, teeth grinding or jaw clenching. One tends to overreact to minor problems and pick fights with others.

Mindfulness meditation techniques, with an emphasis on developing detached observation and awareness of the contents of consciousness, should be introduced to students as a powerful cognitive behavioural coping strategy for transforming the ways in which stress can be reduced. They may also have relapse prevention potential in affective disorders. Meditation Awareness Training (MAT) program focuses on the establishment of solid meditative foundations and integrates various support practices that are traditionally assumed to effectuate a more sustainable quality of well-being. In view of the above facts the present study has been planned with the following specific objectives:

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II. OBJECTIVES OF INVESTIGATION

- To find out stress level among PG students
- To determine the ways of coping with stress among students

III. SCOPE OF STUDY

The goal of this study is to determine the levels of stress that college students experience and how well-prepared they are psychologically to handle those stresses. to understand how the school manages the type of stress that students experience. to understand how the institution is impacted by the stress that students experience.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hess and Copeland (2001)suggested that MAT may increase emotion regulation ability in higher education students with issues of stress, low mood, and anxiety. It is expected that better academic performance would arise from students with greater levels of psychological well-being.

Misra and Castillo (2004) Academic stress emerges out from experiencing stress due to factors such as scholarship requirements, family-related pressures, competition in the class and course-related stress and financial burdens, experienced by students.

Gaur and Totuka (2011)investigated thathigh job satisfaction resulted in decrease occupational stress and created a positive working environment, promote psychological well-being, reduce turnover intention and ultimately affect the intention to leave the workplace. The result of the study indicated that overall highest level of occupational stress was observed in the people working in India and the males who had recently joined the workforce in the age group 20-40 years as compared to the females. The occupational stress was significantly higher in the younger generation and should be taken care for maintaining the mental health and ensure efficient work output.

Das *et al.*(2012)determined that both life events and medical problems can contribute to stress and sadness. The only distinction is that although depression is linked to unpleasant circumstances like financial hardship or death, stress can be brought on by joyful events like a promotion or marriage. Many young people find that life is a terrible tug of war full of competing signals and expectations from their parents, instructors, coaches, jobs, friends, and even themselves.

Waghachavare*etal.*(2013) came to the conclusion that the majority of students supported adding stress management instruction to the curriculum, hence steps should be done to do so. Pupils' health is a top priority, thus encouraging students to adopt healthy eating and lifestyle choices is important. Teachers, parents, and even students themselves should be aware that stress can be brought on by having excessive expectations for academic success. Finally, students can reduce stress by developing regular study habits and being adequately prepared.

Iqbal *et al.*, (2015) concluded that stress, anxiety, and depression all affected more than half of the undergraduate students (51.3%, 66.9%, and 53%). Those in the fifth semester were shown to have higher rates of morbidity than students in the second semester. Compared to their male counterparts, women reported greater scores. The perception of one's own academic self-evaluation was closely related to a higher grade.

Par *et al.* (2015) reported that the main construct measures only perceived stress over other forms of stress and fails to appraise the intensity of the concept or whether other behaviors affect the perception. The observed result may also have been occasioned by the self-report nature of the instrument, the small geographical area of the study, the use of a cross-sectional design, and the inclusion of a restricted number of variables in the study. Finally, data used for this study was obtained from only international postgraduate students in Universiti Putra Malaysia. The observed insignificant relationship between stress, age and gender may therefore be limited to only the students of the institution.

Mandava*et al.* (2018)discovered that preventive measures can be taken on both an individual and an organizational level. Maintaining cognitive clarity, convening meetings with co-workers to discuss issues and emotional states, promoting personal balance, and mimicking work environments are crucial on an individual level (role play). Preventive techniques are intended to alter the working conditions and work habits of operators on an organizational level. It seeks to enhance organizational culture through inspiring and modernizing.

Zegeye*et al.* (2018) concluded that over all, postgraduate students experienced high level of stress that may affect their psychological well-being. Academic burden was the main source of stress. Unmarried and female students were at risk of stress. Therefore, counseling, coping and preventive measures were recommended to control the risk factors of stress among the students.

Guo *et al.*(2021)discovered that the assessment and primary study quality had a moderating effect on the prevalence of depression symptoms. More over one-third of postgraduates reported experiencing symptoms of depression, demonstrating the group's susceptibility to mental health risks. To stop the severity of postgraduates' mental problems from worsening, college authorities, teachers, and students should work together.

Alhawatmeh*et al.* (2022)found that the use of mindfulness meditation as a stress-reduction technique among undergraduate nursing students, as mindfulness meditation was found to significantly improve perceived stress and cortisol. Mindfulness meditation was found to be a promising tool for nursing students to manage stress and number of health consequences.

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V. METHODOLOGY

A. Locale of the study:

The present study was carried out in Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, Haryana.

B. Selection of Area:

Out of total six colleges of Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, Haryana. I.C. College of Home Sciences was selected purposively as the study confined to girl PG students only.

C. Selection of Sample:

A total sample of 30 post graduate students were selected at random from I.C. College of Home Science, Hisar.

D. Variables and their measurements

a) Variables:

Two types of variables was selected as per the objectives of the study i.e., independent and dependent variables.

1.Independent variables a) Personal and socio-economic variables a. Chronological Age b. Place of residence c. Family size d. Family type e. Marital status f. Educational status g. Family education h. Family Occupation i. Family income j. Physical Activity k. Year of study	Questionnaire will be developed
b)Coping mechanism	Questionnaire will be developed
2. Dependent variables: a) Stress	Depression anxiety stress scale (DASS) by Lovibond, S.H. & Lovibond, P.E. (1995) and P.G.I. health questionnaire by Wig and Verma

- Independent variables
  - **Age:**The amount of time during which someone or something has lived or existed. In this study, age was operationalized as the number of full years completed by the respondents at time of questionnaire.
  - **Place of residence:**A dwelling or home used as a main residence, either originally or currently. It may refer to a home, place of residence, or refuge that is a: - house (for a single person or a family) - apartment.
  - **Family size:**Family size refers to the number of persons in the family. Economic family refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law union, adoption or a foster relationship.
  - **Family type:**Nuclear families and joint families are the two basic forms of families. A spouse and their dependent children live together in a nuclear family. Additionally, a joint family is an extended family that consists of three or more generations as well as their wives and lives as a single unit.
  - **Occupational status:** A crucial indicator of socioeconomic status, occupational status represents the distribution of power, privilege, and prestige associated with different places in the professional hierarchy (SES).
  - **Annual income:** This is the total value of income fiscal year.

- Dependent variables
  - **DASS 21**

    In the present study DASS 21 item self-report scale is used to measure the three relatednegative emotional states of depression, anxiety, and stress. Each of the three DASS scales contains 7 items, divided into subscales of 2-5 items with similar content. The complete details of the scale are given in Appendix (I).
  - **Ways of Coping Scale**

    For the present study, 'Ways of Coping' scale devised by Hussain and Sharma(1996) was used. The scale is designed on the pattern of "Ways of Coping" scaledeveloped by Folkman and Lazarus (1985). Each itemis followed by 4 options ranging from "Not Used" to "Used a great deal". Inbetween these two extremes, there are two categories namely, "Used somewhat"and "Used quite a bit". The scoring pattern is 1 for "Not used", 2 for "Usedsomewhat", 3 for "Used quite a bit" and 4 for "Used a great deal". For eachstatement, subject is required to encircle any one of the

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above-mentionedcategories depending on its applicability for him/her.

VI. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

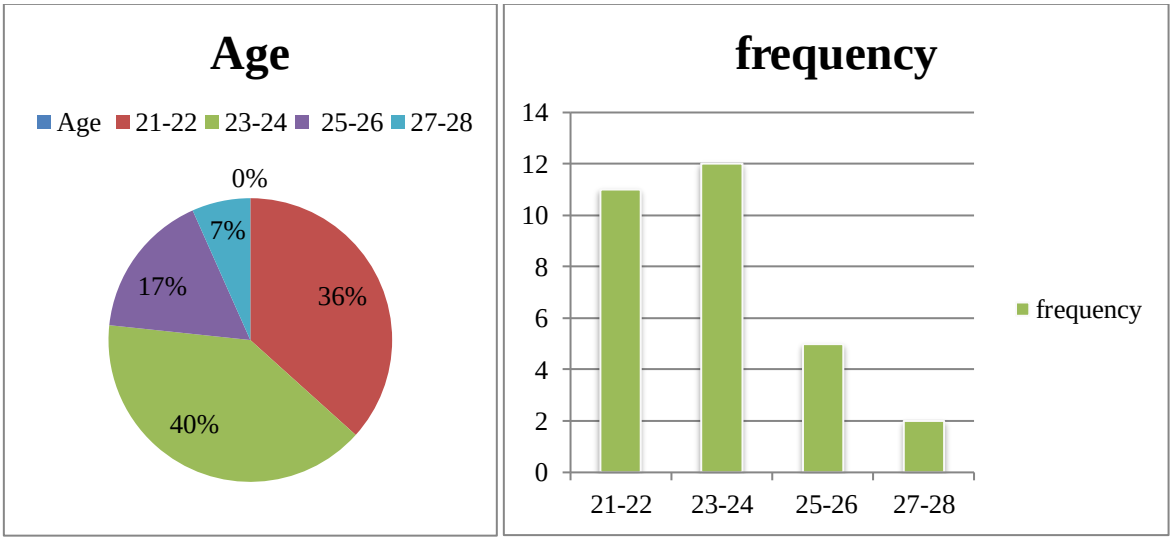
- **Methods of Data Collection:** A well-structured questionnaire wasdesigned as per the objectives of study. Based on the responses the questionnairewas modified accordingly and was used for final data collection. The goal of the study was explained to the participants, and the respondents was provided clear instructions before administering the scale and their consent was taken prior to the data collection.
- **Statistical Analysis:** The collected data was tabulated, classified, and statistically analyzed by application of suitable statistical tools to draw meaningful inferences from the study.

VII. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

N=30

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21-22	11	36.66
23-24	12	40
25-26	5	16.66
27-28	2	6.66

Table 1: Age



Most of the respondents fall under the age group of 23-24 and the least respondents belonged to 27-28 years of age.

N=30

No. of members	Frequency	Percentage
4	10	33.33
5-7	15	50
Above 7	5	16.66

Table 2: Family size N=30

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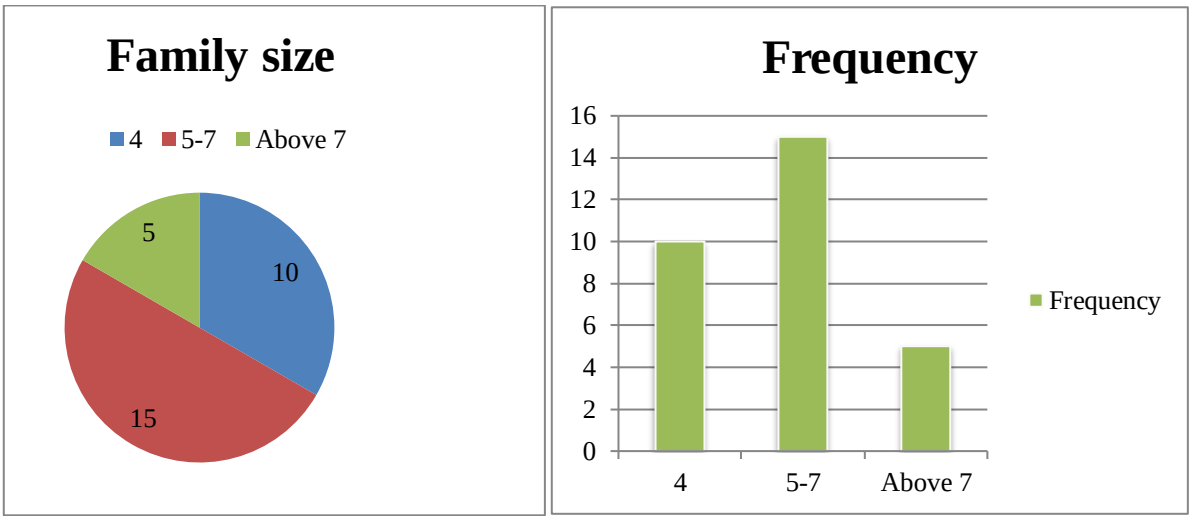
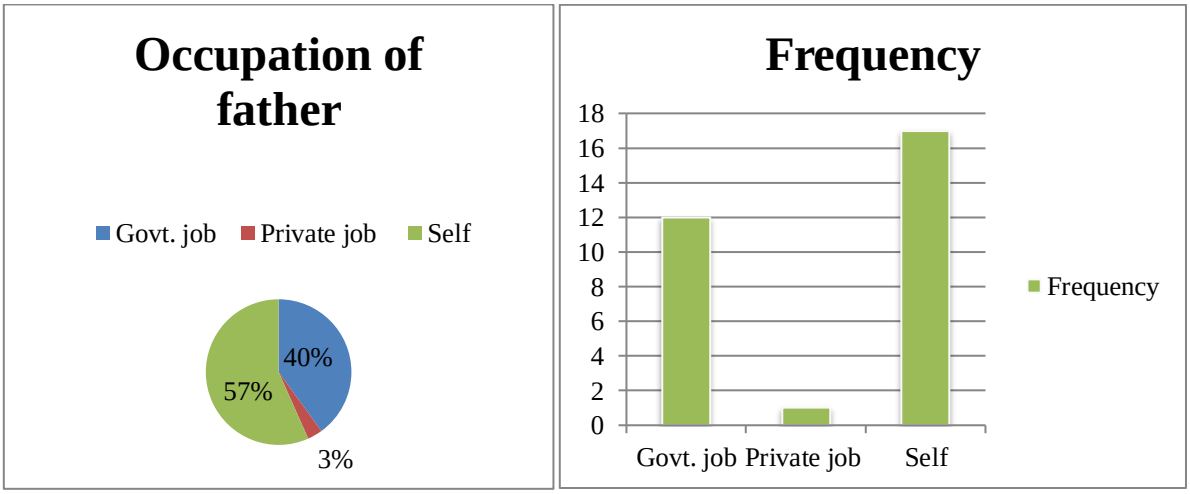


Most of the students belonged to the family with 5-7 members and only five students had more than 7 members in their family.

N=30

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Govt. job	12	40
Private job	1	3.33
Self	17	56.66

Table 3: Occupation of father



The majority of students belonged to the family who were self employed(farmers, businessman). While some of their families had government jobs and only one student belonged to the family having private job.

N=30

Income	Frequency	Percentage
Upto 50 k	18	60
50- 70 k	4	13.33
Above 70 k	8	26.66

Table 4: Monthly family income

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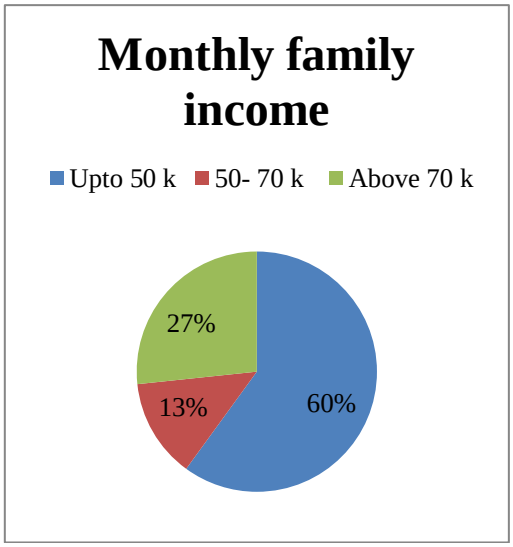
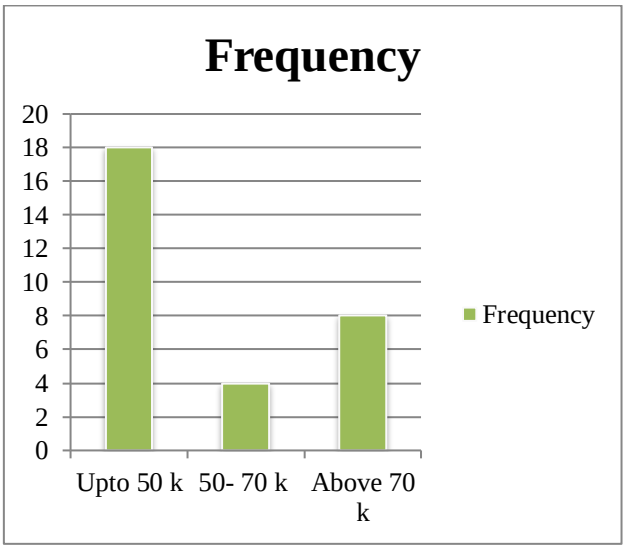


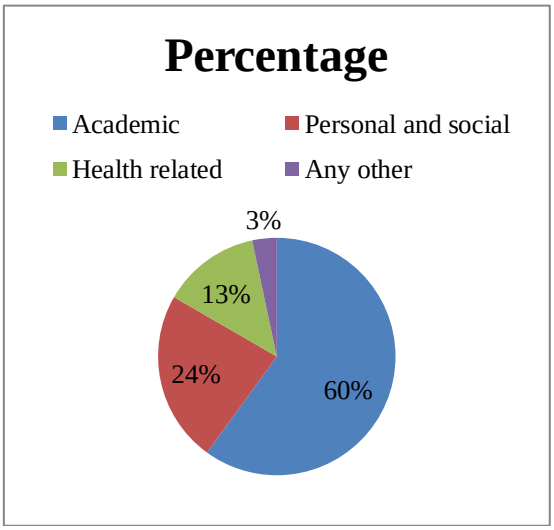


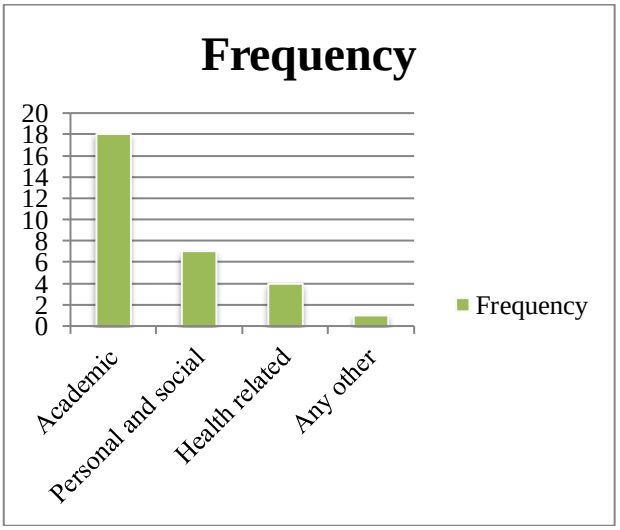
Monthly income of most of the families was upto 50,000 rupees while 4 students had 50-70,000 rupees and eight students had more than 70,000 rupees as their monthly income.

N=30

Type	Frequency	Percentage	Rank order
Academic	18	60	1
Personal and social	7	23.33	2
Health related	4	13.33	3
Any other	1	3.33	4

Table 5: Types of stress faced





Utmost students faced academic stress followed by personal and social, health related and any other (family related, relationship issues, financial burden) respectively.

N=30

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Mild	10	33.33
Moderate	15	50
Severe	3	10
Very severe	2	6.66

Table 6: Level of stress

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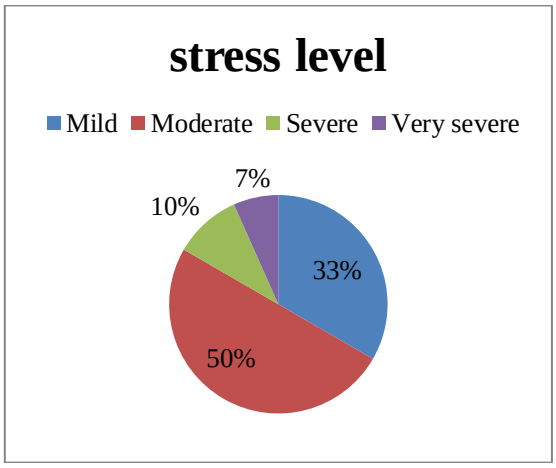
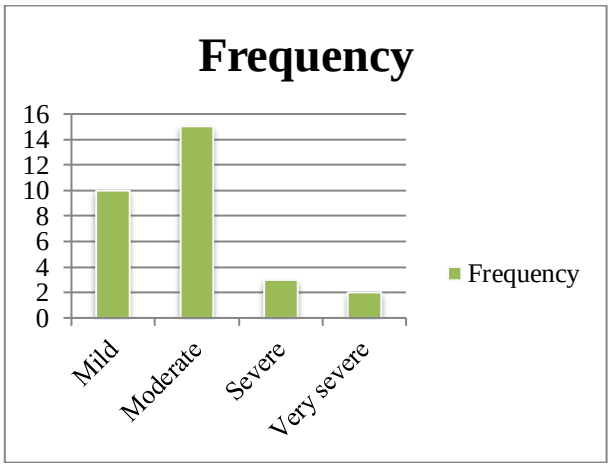


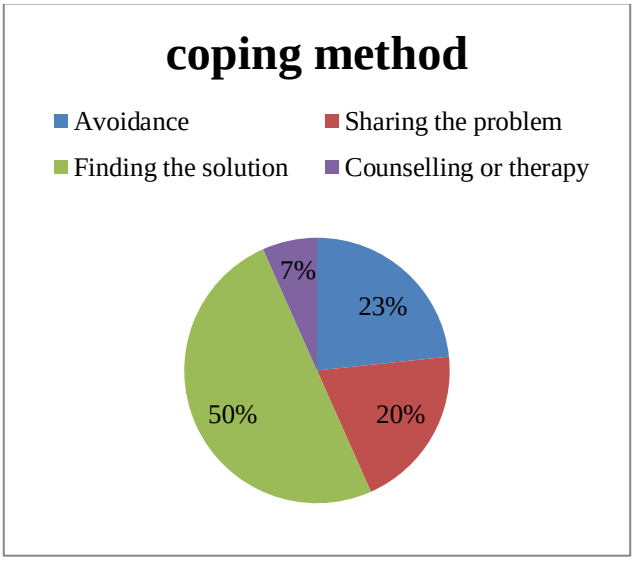


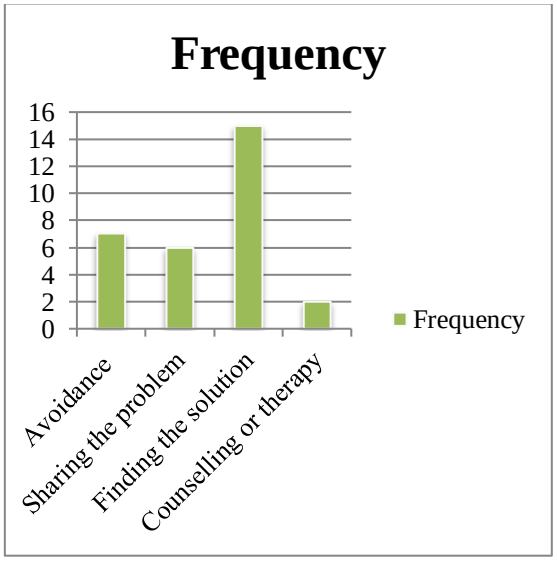
Most of the respondents faced moderate amount of stress while the minimum of two students out of 30 experienced very severe stress.

N=30

Ways	Frequency	Percentage	Rank order
Avoidance	7	23.33	2
Sharing the problem	6	20	3
Finding the solution	15	50	1
Counselling or therapy	2	6.66	4

Table 7: Coping with stress





The majority of students with 50% believed in finding the solution of their problems, 23% preferred avoidance of the situation, 20% considered sharing their issues with others, while 7% went with counselling or therapy.

N=30

Q. No.	A Frequency (%)	B Frequency (%)	C Frequency (%)	D Frequency (%)
2	10(33.33)	6(20)	12(40)	2(6.66)
4	14(46.6)	10(33.33)	6(20)	0(0)
7	8(26.66)	13(43.33)	7(23.33)	3(10)
18	12(40)	8(26.66)	8(26.66)	2(6.66)
19	8(26.66)	12(40)	4(13.33)	6(20)

Table 8: Physical factors affecting stress

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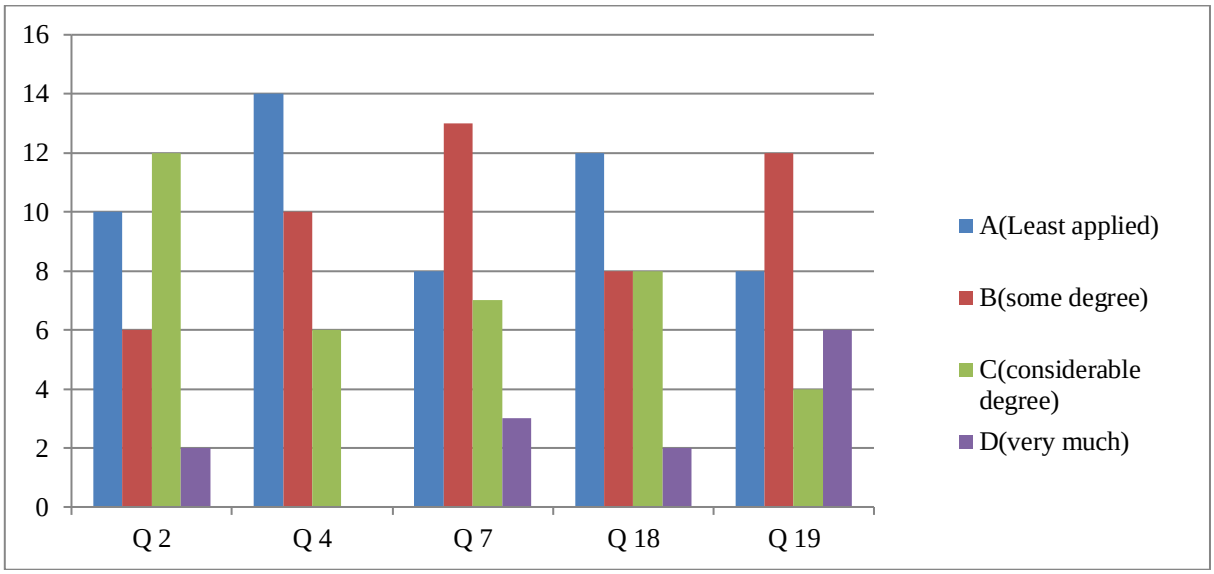

In this study, 20% of the students experienced very severe increase in heart beat rate during stress, 40% of the students faced considerable degree of dryness of mouth, 43.33% of them faced some degree of stress in the form of trembling (shaking of hands) and 46.6% respondents pointed least difficulty in breathing as physical factors of stress.

N=30

Q.No.	**A Frequency (%)**	**B Frequency (%)**	**C Frequency (%)**	**D Frequency (%)**
1	10(33.33)	17(56.66)	3(10)	0(0)
3	4(13.33)	16(53.33)	6(20)	4(13.33)
5	7(23.33)	11(36.66)	9(30)	3(10)
6	9(30)	7(23.33)	10(33.33)	5(16.66)
8	3(10)	19(63.33)	7(23.33)	1(3.33)
9	4(13.33)	13(43.33)	11(36.66)	2(6.66)
10	9(30)	13(43.33)	6(20)	2(6.66)
11	6(20)	15(50)	8(26.66)	1(3.33)
12	5(16.66)	16(53.33)	4(13.33)	5(16.66)
13	11(36.66)	7(23.33)	8(26.66)	4(13.33)
14	5(16.66)	15(50)	7(23.33)	2(6.66)
15	7(23.33)	13(43.33)	6(20)	4(13.33)
16	7(23.33)	16(53.33)	6(20)	2(6.66)
17	8(26.66)	13(43.33)	7(23.33)	2(6.66)
20	5(16.66)	11(36.66)	12(40)	2(6.66)
21	12(40)	7(23.33)	8(26.66)	3(10)

Table 9: Psychological factors affecting stress

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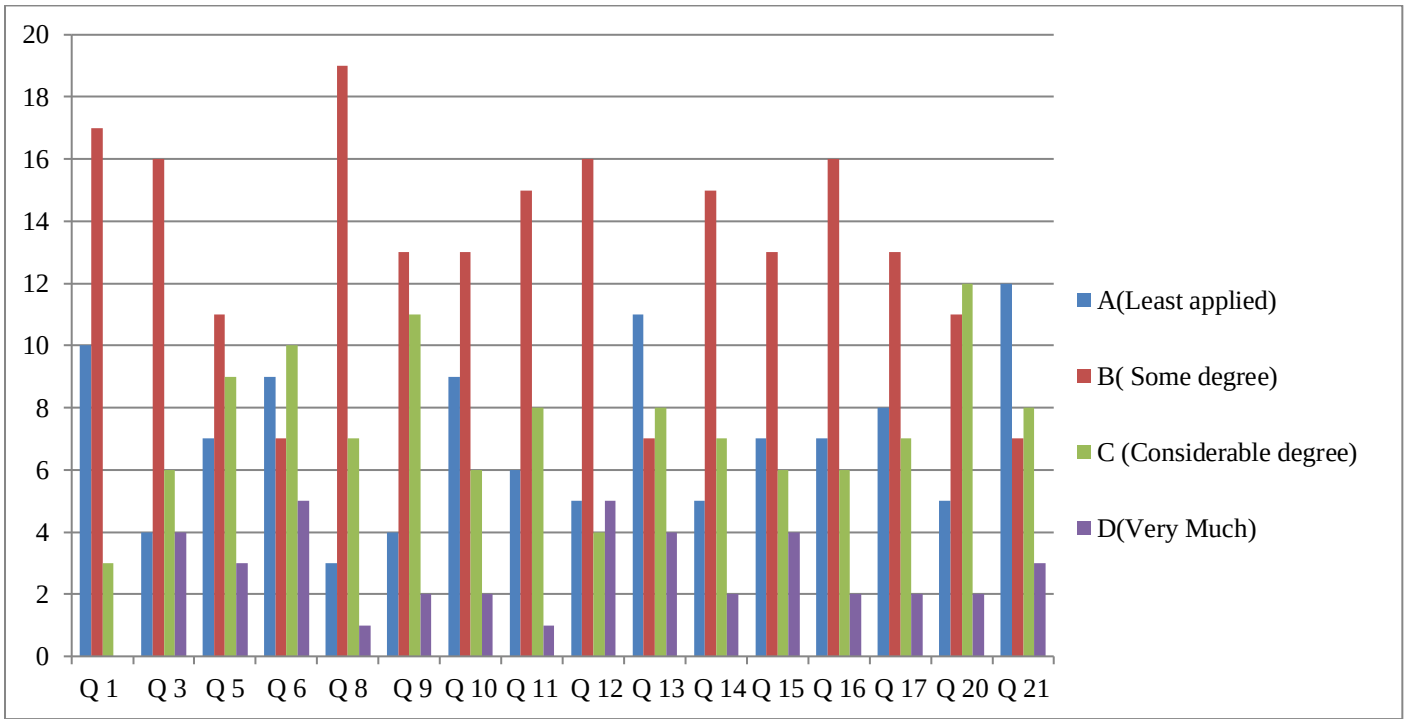
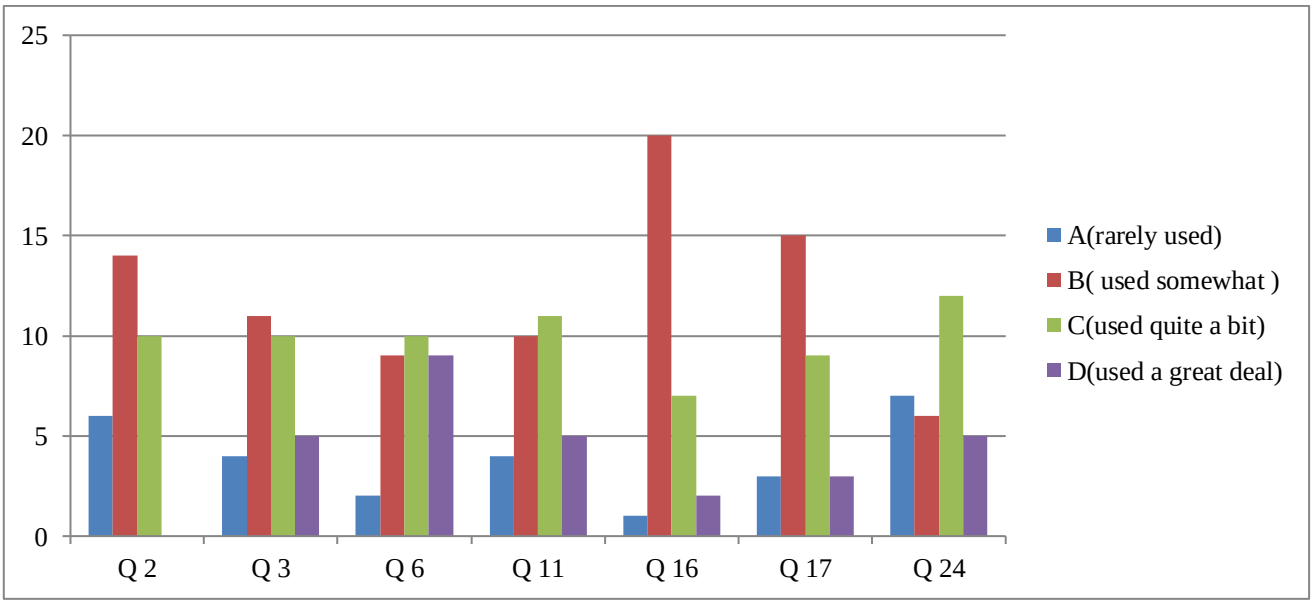


In this study, 16.66% of the respondents faced very much stress in taking up initiatives to do things and relaxing themselves and calming their minds. 40% of the students faced considerable degree of stress and were scared without any good reason. 63.33% of the respondents faced some degree of stress in using nervous energy. While 40% of the students least thought that life was meaningless.

N=30

Q.No.	**A Frequency (%)**	**B Frequency (%)**	**C Frequency (%)**	**D Frequency (%)**
2	6(20)	14(46.6)	10(33.33)	0(0)
3	4(13.33)	11(36.66)	10(33.33)	5(16.66)
6	2(6.66)	9(30)	10(33.33)	9(30)
11	4(13.33)	10(33.33)	11(36.66)	5(16.66)
16	1(3.33)	20(66.66)	7(23.33)	2(6.66)
17	3(10)	15(50)	9(30)	3(10)
24	7(23.33)	6(20)	12(40)	5(16.66)

Table 10: Ways of coping through avoidance



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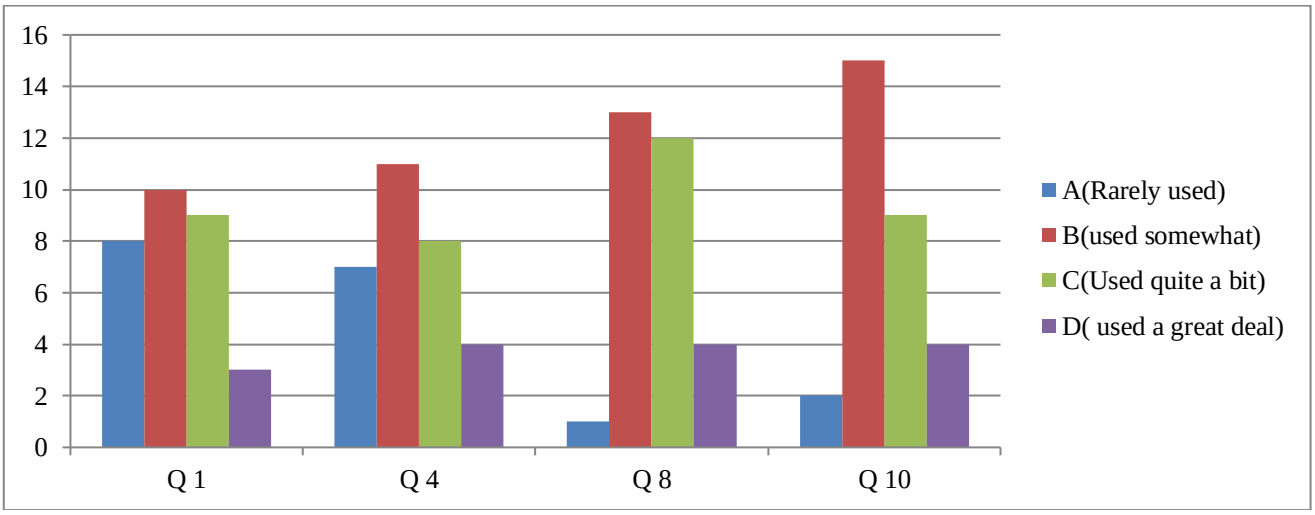
In this study, 30% of the respondents tried a great deal to forget the whole situation, 40% of the students thought quite a bit that time would make a difference- the only thing was to wait, 66.66% of respondents somewhat tried to keep their feelings from interfering with other things too much, while 23.33% also rarely thought that time would make a difference.

N=30

Q.No.	A Frequency (%)	B Frequency (%)	C Frequency (%)	D Frequency (%)
1	8(26.66)	10(33.33)	9(30)	3(10)
4	7(23.33)	11(36.66)	8(26.66)	4(13.33)
8	1(3.33)	13(43.33)	12(40)	4(13.33)
10	2(6.66)	15(50)	9(30)	4(13.33)

Table 11: Ways of coping through sharing



During the course of this study, 13.33% of students found a way of hoping to great deal in expression anger to the person who caused the problem, apologised, let their feelings out somehow, 40% of the students quite a bit apologised or did something to makeup, 50% of the students somewhat used to let their feelings out, 26.66% of respondents rarely talked to someone to find out more about the situation as a way of coping with stress through sharing.

N=30

Q.No.	A Frequency (%)	B Frequency (%)	C Frequency (%)	D Frequency (%)
7	11(36.66)	8(26.66)	6(20)	5(16.66)
12	2(6.66)	11(36.66)	9(30)	8(26.66)
13	6(20)	5(16.66)	11(36.66)	8(26.66)
14	2(6.66)	15(50)	11(36.66)	2(6.66)
15	5(16.66)	8(26.66)	14(46.6)	3(10)
20	1(3.33)	10(33.33)	13(43.33)	6(20)
21	3(10)	9(30)	14(46.6)	4(13.33)

Table 12: Ways of coping through counselling and acceptance

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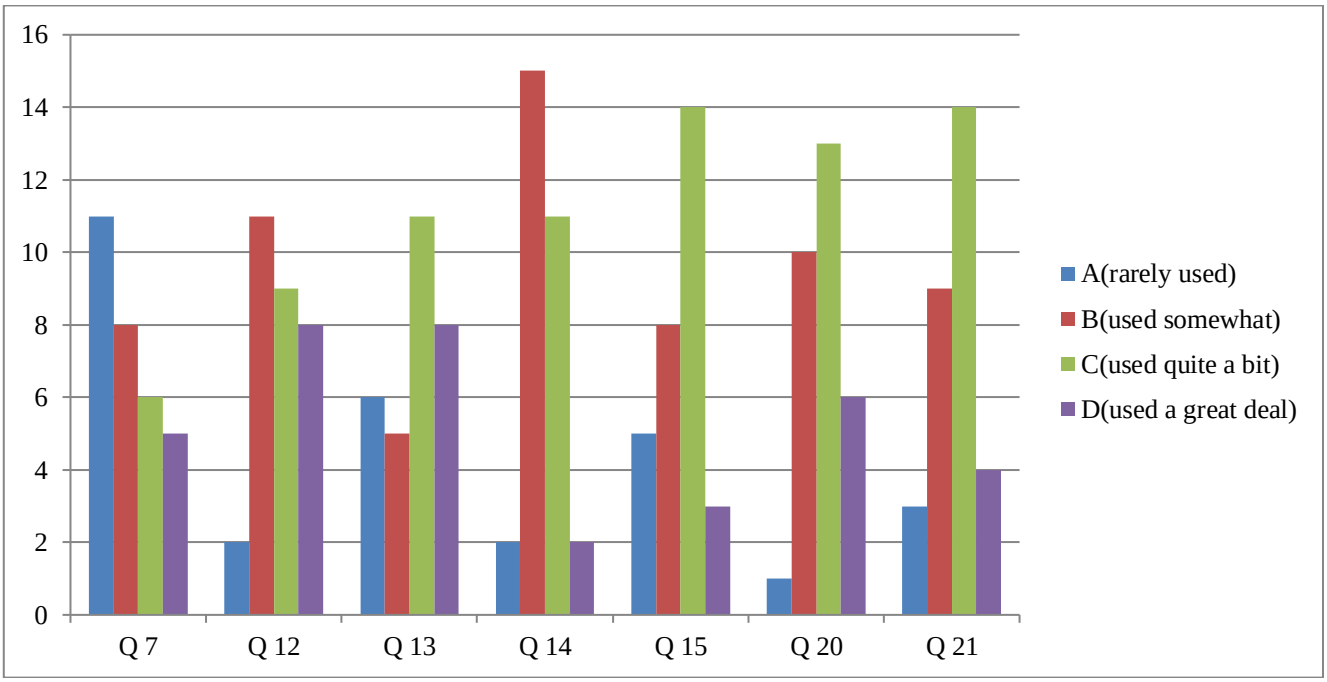
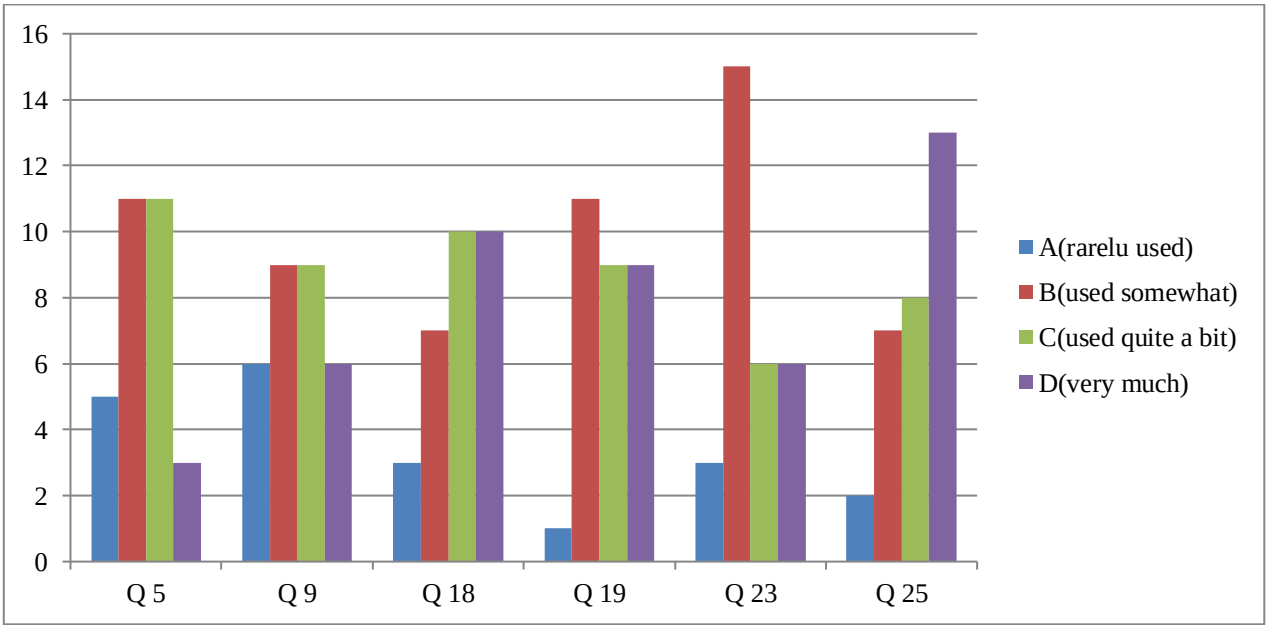


In this study, 26.66% of the respondents used a great deal of coping in rediscovering what is important in life and stood on their own ground and fought for what they wanted, 46.6% quite a bit came up with a couple of different solutions and thought about how a person their admire would handle this situation and used them as their model, 50% used their past experiences of coping through acceptance, 36.66% rarely preferred professional help.

N=30

Q.No.	**A Frequency (%)**	**B Frequency (%)**	**C Frequency (%)**	**D Frequency (%)**
5	5(16.66)	11(36.66)	11(36.66)	3(10)
9	6(20)	9(30)	9(30)	6(20)
18	3(10)	7(23.33)	10(33.33)	10(33.33)
19	1(3.33)	11(36.66)	9(30)	9(30)
23	3(10)	15(50)	6(20)	6(20)
25	2(6.66)	7(23.33)	8(26.66)	13(43.33)

Table 13: Ways of coping through indulgence in other activities



In this study, 43.33% used a great deal in doubling their efforts to make things work as they knew what had to be done, 36,66% quite a bit were inspired to do something creative, 50% of the respondents somewhat jogged or excercised, 20% of them rarely made a plan of action and follower it.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Both good and negative forms of stress can affect how well college students perform. If taken favourably, the consequences are favourable; nevertheless, if taken negatively, they could have devastating effects on their general health. Low to moderate levels of stress help the majority of people function better. However, prolonged exposure to high levels of stress, or even mild levels of stress spread out over time, eventually has a negative impact on performance.The ways of coping through stress and their degree varies from individual to individual. Most of the students pointed physical factors caused more stress than psychological factors. A majority of the students were inspired to do something creative, made plan of action and followed it, prayed, prepared themselves for the worst, exercised and doubled their efforts as a way of coping with stress.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

After this study, we observed that almost every student faces some kind of stress due to one or other reason. Stress reduction techniques or methods should be implemented at college level and even counsellor should be appointed to give special emphasis to the needy. Yoga and meditation should be done weekly to calm the mind. Cultural events should also be organised as these are great stress busters especially for students and one becomes more confident and developed in organizational skills.

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APPENDIX (I)

STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG POST GRADUATE STUDENTS

- Chronological Age
- Place of residence
- Educational status

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21-22		
23-24		
25-26		
27-28		

Table 1: Age

No. of members	Frequency	Percentage
4		
5-7		
Above 7		

Table 2: Family size

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Govt. job		
Private job		
Self		

Table 3: Occupation of father

Income	Frequency	Percentage
Upto 50 k		
50- 70 k		
Above 70 k		

Table 4: Monthly income of family

Type	Frequency	Percentage	Rank order
Academic			
Personal and social			
Health related			
Any other			

Table 5: Types of stress faced

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Mild		
Moderate		
Severe		
Very severe		

Table 6: Level of stress

Ways	Frequency	Percentage	Rank order
Avoidance			
Sharing the problem			
Finding the solution			
Counselling or therapy			

Table 7: Coping with stress

Frequency (%) ⇨ **Q.No.** ⇩	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
2. I was aware of dryness of my mouth				
4. I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g. excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)				
7. I experienced trembling (e.g. in the hands)				
18. I felt that I was rather touchy				
19. I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (e.g. sense of heart rate increase, heart missing a beat)				

Table 8: Physical factors affecting stress

Frequency (%) ⇨ **Q.No.** ⇩	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
1. I found it hard to wind down				
3. I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all				
5. I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things				
6.I tended to over-react to situations				
8. I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy				
9. I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself				
10. I felt that I had nothing to look forward to				
11. I found myself getting agitated				
12. I found it difficult to relax				
13.I felt down-hearted and blue				
14. I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing				
15. I felt I was close to panic				
16. I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything				
17. I felt I wasn't worth much as a person				
20.I felt scared without any good reason				
21. I felt that life was meaningless				

Table 9: Psychological factors affecting stress

Frequency (%) ⇨ **Q.No.** ⇩	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
2. Went along with fate; sometimes I just have bad luck.				
3. Slept more than usual.				
6.Tried to forget the whole thing.				
11. Got away from it for a while; tried to rest or take a vacation.				
16. I tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much				
17. Wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with.				
24. I felt that time would make a difference – the only thing to do was to wait.				

Table 10: Ways of coping through avoidance

Frequency (%) ⇨ **Q.No.** ⇩	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
1. Talked to someone to find out more about the situation.				
4. I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem.				
8. I apologized or did something to make up.				
10. I let my feelings out somehow.				

Table 11: Ways of coping through sharing

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Frequency (%) ⇨ **Q.No.** ⇩	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
7.I got professional help.				
12. Rediscovered what is important in life				
13. Stood my ground and fought for what I wanted.				
14. Drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation before.				
15. Came up with a couple of different solutions to the problem.				
20. I thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model.				
21. I tried to see things from the other person's point of view.				

Table 12: Ways of coping through counselling and acceptance

Frequency (%) ⇨ **Q.No.** ⇩	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**
5. I was inspired to do something creative.				
9. I made a plan of action and followed it.				
18. I prayed.				
19. I prepared myself for the worst.				
23. I jogged or exercised.				
25. I knew what had to be done, so I doubled my efforts to make things work.				

Table 13: Ways of coping through indulgence in other activities