

Study Habit Plan to Reduce Academic Stress during Pandemic Period

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Abstract

The present paper discusses about the effect of study habit and academic stress. During pandemic period we all are facing many problems in all areas even in education the students' parent and all the stake holder in education field. This paper also discusses about the interdependence of various factors that affect stress and how a study habit plan can help overcome the challenges. At the end this paper proposes a structured model for study habit plan and some suggestions are given to students, parents, teachers, educators and counsellors based on the present study.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The World Health Organization has declared the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) as an epidemic. During this unprecedented situation everybody in this world is facing stressors in one or the other area of life. This also includes school and college going students, who are under constant stress due to cut throat competitions and parental demands. There are various kinds of adjustments which the students are facing in their social, psychological, economical, religious and educational spheres. Due to the sudden closures of schools and colleges all over India, it became very difficult for student, parents and teachers to manage the virtual mode of teaching. In the beginning, adjusting to the technological needs for virtual classrooms was the toughest challenge. Parents were majorly responsible for setting up the virtual classroom for their children, initially they had to home school their ward to effectively maintain the continuity of their children's education. It was not only the parents who were majorly responsible, but also the teachers. They had to learn and understand new tools and technologies including the traditional way of using blackboard to using the virtual white board and PowerPoints. With all this, students had to cop up with their learnings and backlogs from the physical classrooms. Due to the virtual setup and also lack of parental monitoring because of work-from-home and many other reasons, the students lacked interest in learning and eventually developed the fear for exams. Another main reason was that not all parents had sufficient time or adequate educational qualifications to help their children with the school assignments that were given in the initial phase of the school closure for the term completion. All this exposed the students to a very stressful environment and affected their mental wellbeing.

Based on the report published by Hindustan Times on 20th August 2020, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducted a survey which stated that approximately 27% of the students were facing the issue with availability of laptops and smartphones for their online classrooms as the maximum number of educational institutes switched to smartphones as their

medium for the teaching-learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was reported in Indian Express on 1st October 2020 that a 15 years old girl committed suicide because she had no smartphone to attend the online lectures/classes from her village. The girl's father had suffered from unemployment, he was not able to provide her with a smartphone which was essential for her online classes.

There are various factors which can be taken into consideration in terms of the impact on student performance during the pandemic. Let us discuss about the four major factors that had an impact on the educational development of students:

1. Stress:

Academic stress is the prime factor which is majorly caused by the factors listed below. Due to the mental stress that students went through during this period be it because of the loss of loved ones or by the competitive study environment, students were not able to cop up with the studies and gain as much as they gained in physical classrooms.

2. Technological Needs:

Teachers being the major stakeholders in this scenario, the lack of awareness of different tools and technologies led to a major time loss in the field of education. Teachers had to first spend time on their learnings of technological tools, which led to a time gap before reopening the institutes in virtual mode. Thus, leading to stress and anxiety among students during the exams and assignments. Small kids had to cop up with the technological needs and understand the importance of time management during this period.

3. Financial Background:

Due to the pandemic situation, there have been a lot of news on unemployment of individuals which has led to an adverse effect on their families. The economic instability of the family has led the students to overthink about the financial crisis of their family. Parents were not able to afford the required equipment for online classrooms. This led to a stress environment at homes and affected the academic performance of the students as technology was the prime need of today's world.

4. Geographical boundaries:

There are various issues faced due to the geographical boundaries of the student, because of the unavailability of computer and weak network connection many students from both rural as well as urban areas (but majorly rural areas with respect to internet connectivity) are not able to attend the online classes and also are not able to submit their assignments on time. All this has led to psychological distress and severely has also impacted with suicidal attempts in adolescents and children.

Further, the students who planned their studies properly were able to overcome these challenges and achieves higher academic performance. In this paper, I propose the study of academic stress and study habits. With a proper study habit, any student can deal with the above four factors. This will help them to overcome the psychological distress that occurs to them and will develop the competitive atmosphere again even in the virtual mode of learning. The below diagram represents the interdependence of various factors that affect stress and how a study plan can help overcome the challenges.

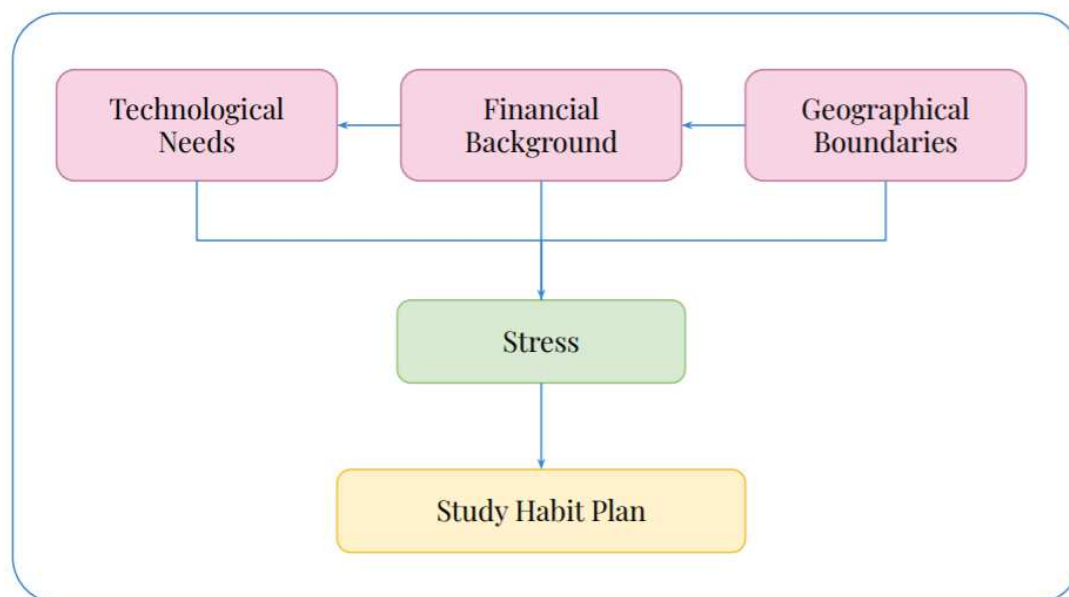


Fig 1.1

2. Background

There have been several studies which concluded that there is relationship between academic stress and study habit. Considering the major four factors which we discussed above, researchers have indulged in a conclusion that most of these factors are interdependent on each other. Also, there have been previous study about the impact of COVID-19 on the teaching-learning process.

The paper “A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning” by Sumitra Pokhrel and Roshan Chhetri focused on the certain dearth like the drawbacks of online teaching infrastructure, limited exposure to various online tools, information gap and learning at home being a challenge. Overall, it discusses about the impact that this epidemic on the educational sector across the world.

Kaur. J. and Kaur. N., in their paper “Study of Academic Stress and Study Habits among Adolescents” worked on a sample having 200 adolescents. Out of these 200 sample adolescents, the set of 100 adolescents were from rural background and another 100 were from urban background of Ludhiana district. Among this set of 100, there were 50 male adolescents and 50 women adolescents in each group. Due to the diverse set of adolescents in the sample, it was investigated that there was a significant difference between the study habits and academic stress with respect to locale and gender of the adolescents.

Bisht Battery of Stress Scales (revised in 2005) by Bisht and Study Habit Inventory (2011) by M.Mukhopadhyay and D.N Sansanwal were used as tools for data collection. The results of the Study showed that there exists significant mean difference of academic stress of male and Female adolescents in regard to their locale at both the levels of significance. There exists no Significant mean difference in academic

stress of male and female adolescents at both levels of Significance. It is further observed that mean scores of study habits among female adolescents are more than the mean scores of male adolescents. Mean scores of study habits of adolescents of rural areas are more than the mean scores of adolescents of urban areas. Many researchers agreed that stress varies as per the study habit of the students.

2.1 Research Gap

Thus, from the above studies we can conclude that there are very few studies in preparing study skill modules. In Indian context, inculcation of study skills among school and college going students is still lacking. During this pandemic period in India school and college going students are facing lots of problem to cope with their virtual classes and submitting assignment work. Hence there is an urgent need to include study skills training programmes in School and Colleges of Education. Thus, the trained student will be able to adjust them in any situation. Since it has been observed that there are very few studies taken up to train school and college going students to would help in fostering disaster management awareness and practical skills to combat disasters to great extent.

3. Objectives

This paper seeks to achieve its general objective to study a relationship between academic stress and study habit of the students.

Specific objectives:

1. To get the conceptual idea of Academic Stress during virtual learning.
2. To explain the role of study habit among the school and college going student in virtual mode of learning.
3. To examine the relationship between academic stress and study habit of the students during the virtual mode of learning.
4. To examine effect of the study skills module to developed study habit among school and college going student in any situation like pandemic period.

4. Methodology

In this paper, I propose a structured model for study plan. The model consists of five major components which should be followed by the students and their parents. Following are the five components:

- Time Management
- Revision
- Recreation
- Proper Diet Plan
- Physical and Mental Exercise

The below figure represents the overview of the Study Plan Model.

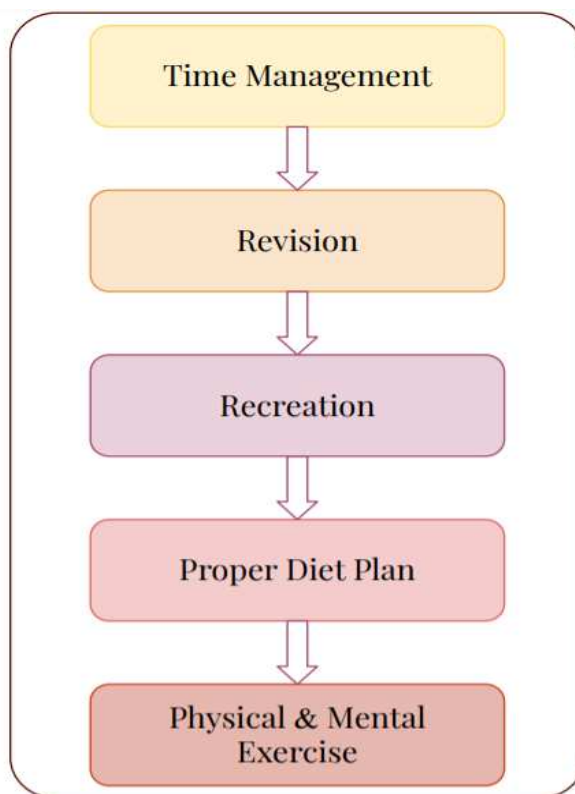


Fig 1.2

- a) **Time management:** Time management plays a vital role in the study habit of students. It is observed that many schools and college going students prefer last minutes studies. Parents and teachers should help the students to make proper time table for their study. During this pandemic period as everyone is working from home and this created chaos in the time schedule of all family members including students, if students prepare a proper time table it will help them and their family member to make availability of all learning as well as infrastructural resources. The below diagram represents an outline for students to plan their studies.

TIME SCHEDULE					
Schedule for 20th June, 2021 - 26th June, 2021					
TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		Yoga/Meditation + Nutritious Breakfast			
		Online School sessions + Healthy lunch			
		Recreation			
		Self-Study/Revision			
		Meditation			
		Self-Study/Revision			
		Dinner + Proper sleep of 8 hours			

Fig 1.3

- b) **Revision:** The next important component of study habit is Revision. The students should go through the previous day's/week's teaching which will help them to recall their learning and retain it for long-term. Since the schools has been shut, internal assessments are on hold and term end exams are cancelled. Yet students are continue studying online whatever they are revising will help them for their future study and to make their foundation strong.

- c) **Recreation:** In this virtual mode of learning students feel tiered by sitting in front of laptop/mobile/computer screen. The siting postures and lack of physical exercise make lots of physical issues among school and college going student. Due to social distancing and lockdown students are not able to meet their friends and plan field activities which they were used to do at their school or college days. Online games are very good source for the student to spend their leisure time.

- d) **Proper diet:** The nutrition food can impact on the daily performance of the students. Mental and behavioural problems can be traced back to unhealthy nutrition and poor eating habits. The cognitive development of the students depends on the eating nutritious food.

- e) **Physical and Mental exercise:** Since the lockdown period everyone is passing through the higher or low stress. Good mental health and healthy body reduces the influence of stress while studying. A great option for maintaining the physical and mental health of the students would be exercising yoga and meditation in the morning, this will help the students maintain peace of time throughout the day and will help boost energy for their studies.

5. Conclusion

This paper revealed the discussion about the interdependence of various factors that affect stress and how a study habit plan can help overcome the challenges. The study is helpful for school and college going students. In this competitive world academic achievement and students' performance has become major indicator of success. The implication of study habit plan can help students to improve them in their academic performance and get the result as per their expectation.

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