**THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE ON STRESS AND COPING BEHAVIOUR AMONG ENGINEERING STUDENTS**

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**ABSTRACT**

In this study an attempt is made to find out the influence of social intelligence on stress and coping behviour among the engineering students of NIT Warangal. The sample consists of 120 1st year engineering students boys and girls who were randomly drawn from various branches of NIT Warangal. The Social Intelligence was measured by using Social Intelligence Scale questionnaire by Mathur.S.,(2007), the stress was measured by Stress inventory developed by Reddy .C.J. and Reddy. V. S. (2010) and the coping is measured by ways of coping questionnaire developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1988). Suitable statistical analysis was used and results were discussed.

**INTURDUCTION**

The present generation is in the competitive world. As Stress is a necessary and unavoidable concomitant of daily living. It is necessary because without some stress we would be listless and apathetic creatures, and unavoidable because it relates to any external event, be it pleasurable or anxiety producing. A person's response towards stress depends on whether an event is appraised as a challenge or a threat (Lazarus & Folkman,1984).

In education system, engineering students are adolescents, in this stage due to fast physical changes and mental development at this stage, engineering students may sometimes experience incompatibility of their mental development with their physical changes or with the social environment and thus suffer from problems arising from inadequate adaptations.

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These problems may further cause psychological troubles and even induce deviant behavior. In modern society, stress has become a part and parcel of the life. Pinel (2003) defines stress as a psychological response to life’s pressures and events (Benson and Stuart, 1992) and can generally be viewed as a set of neurological and physiological reactions that serve an adaptive function (Franken, 1994). Holmes and Rahe (1967) indicated that any life change that requires numerous readjustments can be perceived as stressful.

Teens of today face many challenges that parents and traditional educators may not have had to experience when they were growing up. Due to numerous pressures of the 21st century, engineering students are having difficulty in coping, and are requesting for educational programs in colleges to help teach them how to cope with such stressors (Frydenberg et al., 2004). Many students face stress as they try to mix up busy lives, college, and work; while they are trying also to have time with family and friend. For some student, stress becomes almost a way of living. However, it is really dangerous to let stress become student’s way of living in engineering students, because some stress levels can lead to a terrible effect that changes completely student’s life and it may result to failure. When the brain is familiar with stress, a physical reaction is triggered and it easily damages the memory, which may lead to further mental reactions or misconduct. A student’s life is subjected to different kinds of stressors, such as the pressure of academics with an obligation of success, uncertain future and difficulties envisaged for integration into the college system. These students face social, emotional and physical and family problems which may affect their learning ability and academic performance (Fish and Nies, 1996; Chew-Graham et al., 2003). Stress levels among college students are higher than those of people at any other stage of life, a poll has found. In addition, the poll found that college students have a higher predisposition toward experiencing depression sometime during their four years at college (David, 2009).

Coping strategies are known to influence an individuals’ experience of stress. For most engineering students, managing stress during college can be extremely challenging. However, learning how to manage stress may help students cope with every day social and academic pressures, and thus have a better college experience. Effective time management strategies increase academic performance (Campbell and Svenson, 1992) and are frequently suggested by academic assistance personnel as aids to enhance achievement for college students. Although programs emphasize starting large tasks well before due dates, breaking down large tasks into small ones, and doing small tasks on a regular schedule, students regularly ignore these techniques and find themselves in great distress before exams (Brown, 1991).

According to Rotter, people acquire generalized experiences to perceive reinforcing events either as dependent on their own behavior or as beyond their control (Rotter,1966, P. 1. Internally oriented people tend to believe that reinforces are subject to their own control and occur when they display their skills. Externals in contrast, see little or on connection between their behavior and various reinforces; they perceive the occurrence of the reinforces as determined primarily by fate, luck, or powerful others.

Internal/external engineering students Academic Performance, various studies have shown that internals have the motivation and persistence necessary to achieve success in a variety of areas, including academic situations. In an early review of literature, Findley and Cooper (1983) found very strong evidence that internality is associated positively with super performance on a verity of standard achievement testes. As compared to externals, internals are more focused on the task, persistent, cognitively active and flexible, and efficient in learning the rules necessary for problem solving. They gather more information about their situations, which helps them devise strategies to cope with stress and control outcomes.

Internal/external students career development and status, internals show a stronger tendency to take responsibility for their own action and to work hard to achieve longer-range goals. In the area of career development, Luzzo and Ward (1995) found that internal students are more likely than external students to take the time and effort necessary to obtain part-time employment experiences congruent with their career aspirations.

Internal/external engineering students social skills, internals not only have more information about their situation and greater problem-solving ability than externals; they are also more socially adept. And also the research evidence indicates that internally oriented individuals are physically healthier that externally oriented individuals (Ryckman, Robbins, Thornton, and Cantrell, 1982: Strickland,1979: Wallston & wqallston, 1981).

**The present study has been taken up with the following objectives.**

* To identify the various sources of stress in engineering students.
* To identify the coping strategies used by engineering students.
* To find out whether locus of control influence their perception of stress and coping strategies used to overcome.

**To realize the above objectives the following hypotheses are formulated:**

* Engineering Students with external locus of control face more stress.
* Engineering Students with Internal locus of control use more positive reappraisal coping strategies.

**Sample and Method**

Engineering Students were randomly selected from various engineering colleges in and around Warangal town. The sample comprised 60. These engineering students were met individually and were explained about the relevance of the study and were asked to give their frank opinions about the problems they faced and how they over come. The subjects were given questionnaires i.e., I-E locus of Control questionnaire by J.B. Rotter, Stress inventory developed by Reddy .C.J. and Reddy. V. S. (2010) and coping questionnaire developed by Folkman and Lazarus (1988).

**Results and Discussion:**

**Sources and intensity of stress among engineering students with internal locus of control:**

The mean stress intensity of engineering students with internal locus of control is as follows. the internally controlled engineering students mean stress intensity score in physiological problems is 6.98, psychological problems is 6.48, peer problems is 4.64, family problems is 5.16, problems with self is 9.74, educational problems is 12.16 and social problems is 8.02. Among the various sources of stress the engineering students with internal locus of control have experienced more stress due to educational problems followed by problems with self and social problems. These engineering students had least stress due to peer problems followed by family problems.

**Sources and intensity of stress among engineering students with external locus of control**

The mean stress intensity of engineering students with external locus of cont is as follows. the externally controlled engineering students mean stress intensity score in physiological Problems is 7.54, psychological problems is 7.65, peer problems is 5.72, family problems is5.30,problems with self 10.96, educational problems is 13.12 and social problems is 9.41. Among the various sources of stress the engineering students with external locus of control have experience more stress due to educational problems followed by problems with self and social problems. These engineering students have experienced less stress due to family problems followed by peer problems.

**Sources of stress of engineering students locus of control:**

When we look at the mean difference between engineering students with internal locus of control and external locus of control these groups differ on psychological problems (mean of engineering students with Internal locus of control is 6.48 and the mean of engineering students with external locus of control is 7.65) the t value between the two group is 2.05 which is significant at 0.05 level. Among the two groups the engineering students with external locus of control have experienced more then engineering students with internal locus of control.

The results mentioned above indicate that the engineering students irrespective of their personality have experienced more stress in educational problems followed by problems with self, social problems physiological problems, psychological problems, family problems and peer problems. The highest intensity is due to educational problems and least was related to peer problems.

The engineering students with external locus of control have experienced more intensity of stress in educational problems, followed by problems with self, social problems, psychological problems, physiological problems, peer problems and family problems. When we look in to the influence of personality on sources of stress, it is found that engineering students with external locus of control have experience more stress intensity of the areas but there was no difference between the two groups with regarding physiological problems and family problems. Thus engineering Students with external locus of control have experienced more stress. Conforming the hypotheses 1 that engineering students with external local of controlface more stress. These findings are also in accordance with the earlier studies (Findley and cooper (1983); Luzzo and Ward (1995); Rtter, 1966, P.1; Ryckman, Robbins, Thornton, and Cantrell, 1982; Strickland, 1979; Wallston & Wallston, 1981) which says that people with external locus of control are more predisposed to stress.

**Coping strategies among engineering students with internal locus of control.**

The mean frequency score of coping strategies of engineering students with internal locus of control as follows. The mean frequency of score of confrantive coping is 8.50, distancing 7.32, self controlling 10.60, seeking social support 9.55, accepting responsibility is 6.87, Escape Avoidance is 10.15, planful problem solving is 9.95 and positive reappraisal is 12.07.when we look in to the frequency of various coping strategies the engineering students with internal locus of control have used more of positive reappraisal, followed by self controlling and escape avoidance coping.

**Coping strategies among engineering students with external locus of control.**

The mean frequency score of coping strategies of engineering students with external locus of control as follows. The mean frequency score of confrantive coping is 8.60, distancing 7.50, self controlling 10.52, seeking social support 8.81, accepting responsibility is 6.82, Escape Avoidance is 10.41, planful problem solving is 9.41 and positive reappraisal is 11.79.when we look in to the frequency of various coping strategies the engineering students with internal locus of control have also more of positive reappraisal followed by self controlling and escape avoidance coping

**Coping Strategies and locus of control:**

When we look at the mean difference between engineering students with internal locus of control have used more of seeking social support (9.55) and the engineering students with external locus of control is (8.81) the t- value is 2.21 which significant at 0.05 level, this indicates that the students with internal locus of control have used more seeking social support coping than engineering students with external locus of control.

The results mentioned above shows that the engineering students irrespective of their locus of control have used more of positive reappraisal coping followed by self controlling, escape avoidance, planful problem solving, seeking social support, confrantive coping and distancing. When we observe the influence of personality on coping all the coping strategies except seeking social support have not shown any statistically significant differences. Seeking social support as, coping have been used more by engineering students with internal locus of control(9.55) than external locus of control (8.81) with a t- value of 2.21 , which significant at 0.05 level. Thus the hypotheses stating that coping is influenced by internal locus of control use more of seeking social support is accepted.

**Limitations of the Study:**

As the study has been exploratory in nature it may not be generalized to the general population and the results of the present study forms that apart from personality there might be number of other factures which may influence the coping strategies used by engineering students. They may be their knowledge, age , gender, social status and the situation it self. The further research can emphasis on the impact of situation on coping, would be through more light on coping behavior.

**Conclusion:**

From the discussion of the above results we can conclude that engineering students with external locus of control face more stress than engineering students with internal locus of control. The personality of engineering students does not have much influence on the coping strategies used by them to overcome stressful situation.

Table: 1 **Showing the means and Standers deviations of stress intensity among engineering students in relation with Internal Locus of Control and External Locus of Control.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Internal Locus of Control** | | **External Locus of Control** | | **t-value** |
| **Physiological Problems** | **Mean** | **6.98** | **Mean** | **7.54** | **1.48@** |
| **SD** | **4.10** | **SD** | **4.17** |
| **Psychological Problems** | **Mean** | **6.48** | **Mean** | **7.65** | **2.51\*** |
| **SD** | **4.98** | **SD** | **5.19** |
| **Peer**  **Problems** | **Mean** | **4.64** | **Mean** | **5.72** | **2.66\*\*** |
| **SD** | **4.50** | **SD** | **4.41** |
| **Family**  **Problems** | **Mean** | **5.16** | **Mean** | **5.30** | **0.40@** |
| **SD** | **4.01** | **SD** | **3.87** |
| **Problems**  **with self** | **Mean** | **9.74** | **Mean** | **10.96** | **2.80\*\*** |
| **SD** | **4.58** | **SD** | **4.95** |
| **Educational Problems** | **Mean** | **12.16** | **Mean** | **13.12** | **2.17\*** |
| **SD** | **4.72** | **SD** | **4.95** |
| **Social**  **Problems** | **Mean** | **8.02** | **Mean** | **9.41** | **3.06\*\*** |
| **SD** | **4.93** | **SD** | **4.99** |

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**@**- indicates not significant

**\***- indicates significant at 0.05 level

**\*\***- indicates Significant at 0.01 level**.**

Table: 2 **Showing the means and Standers deviations of coping strategies among engineering students in relation with Internal Locus of Control and External Locus of Control.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Internal Locus of Control** | | **External Locus of Control** | | **t-value** |
| **Confrontive**  **Coping** | **Mean** | **8.50** | **Mean** | **8.60** | **0.35@** |
| **SD** | **3.18** | **SD** | **3.24** |
| **Distancing** | **Mean** | **7.32** | **Mean** | **7.50** | **0.65@** |
| **SD** | **3.02** | **SD** | **2.99** |
| **Self Controlling** | **Mean** | **10.60** | **Mean** | **10.52** | **0.20@** |
| **SD** | **4.27** | **SD** | **3.69** |
| **Seeking Social Support** | **Mean** | **9.55** | **Mean** | **8.81** | **2.21\*** |
| **SD** | **3.60** | **SD** | **3.73** |
| **Accepting Responsibility** | **Mean** | **6.87** | **Mean** | **6.82** | **0.20@** |
| **SD** | **2.41** | **SD** | **2.57** |
| **Escape Avoidance** | **Mean** | **10.15** | **Mean** | **10.41** | **0.69@** |
| **SD** | **4.01** | **SD** | **4.10** |
| **Planful Problem Solving** | **Mean** | **9.95** | **Mean** | **9.41** | **1.71@** |
| **SD** | **3.55** | **SD** | **3.37** |
| **Positive Reappraisal** | **Mean** | **12.07** | **Mean** | **11.79** | **0.80@** |
| **SD** | **3.85** | **SD** | **3.65** |

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**@**- indicates not significant

**\***- indicates significant at 0.05 level

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