

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

ACADEMIC DISTRESS, PERCEIVED PARENTAL SUPPORT, SELF-DETERMINATION, AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Background: Education is highly involved in enabling individual development offering wider career and upcoming possibilities. This study aimed to examine the association between academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success of students in government and private universities. **Methods:** The sample of the study comprised of 75 private university students and 75 government university students with an age range of 19–30 years from Lahore and Rawalpindi. The Student Stress Inventory to measure Academic Distress, Perception of Parents Scale to measure perceived parental support, The Self-Determination Scale to measure Self-Determination, and Academic Locus of Control Scale to measure Academic Success were used to recruit the data. Descriptive Statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Independent Sample *t*-test and Linear Multiple Regression analysis were used to analyse the data. **Results:** A significant correlation existed between Academic Distress, Perceived Parental Support, Self-Determination and Academic Success among government and private university students. Academic Distress, Perceived Parental Support, and Self-Determination are significant predictors of Academic Success among the students of both the government and private universities. Non-significant mean differences were found among the government and private university students in terms of academic distress and self-determination and significant differences were found in perceived parental support, and academic success. **Conclusion:** Academic distress has a negative impact on the academic success of the students and perceived parental support and self-determination act as boosters for their academic success.

Keywords: Academic distress, Perceived parental support, Self-determination, University students

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INTRODUCTION

Education is highly involved in enabling individual development offering wider career and upcoming possibilities. The excessive accentuation put on education had driven to prolonged stress involvement. It is commonly observed that university students are more prone to this stress because they are presented to a large number of stressors.¹ A construct that is closely associated with students' academic success in educational set up particularly is parental involvement and support.² Self-determination is a pivotal ability set which is known to have an influential role in the academic success of the students of colleges and universities.³

Academic success has long been acknowledged as one of the main objectives of education. It has been known as one of the vital goals of education over the world.⁴ Rapid development in the field of science and technology in the current era has led to an increase in competition among students. Parents are keenly concerned with their children's academic career and success. The greater expectation of parents to excel in academics towards their children may lead to pressure, and the fear of inability to meet parental expectations has led to a greater experience of stress.⁵

Stress, if not well-managed can result in negative outcomes including low self-esteem, severe

symptoms of stress, anxiety, and even lead to suicidal thoughts.⁶ Parental support was establishing the effect on academic success.⁷ The focus of the present study was to explore the relationship between academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success, and to see the significant predictor of academic success of government and private university students, and how Academic Distress, Perceived Parental Support, and Self-Determination predict Academic Success among government and private university students.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted from March to August 2019 after taking permission from Student Affairs and Head of the Department of Arid Agriculture University, Foundation University, Rawalpindi Campus, and Riphah International University, Islamabad and Lahore Campuses. It was a correlational research design and the non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to recruit subjects. The sample size was calculated through the G-power analysis with 95% confidence interval, error of margin 5% and 50% response distribution. The calculated sample size was 150. Students of Bachelors and Masters were selected as the study subjects, 75 of them were taken from government universities and 75 were taken from private universities.

Male and female sample were equal in number. Students between the age ranges of 19–30 were included and students having any mental illness, history of drug abuse and disability were excluded. Students who were married, or whose parents were divorced, separated, expired, and under the guardian of single-parent were also excluded.

The Student Stress Inventory⁸ was used to measure the stress level among university students. It has 40 items and 4 subscales each comprising of 10 items namely Physical, Interpersonal relationships, Academic, and Environmental factors. It is a 4-point Likert scale and the value assigned for choices was 1 for never, 2 for somewhat frequent, 3 for frequent, 4 for always. The internal consistency of the scale was found $\alpha=0.80^8$ and in this study was $\alpha=0.94$. The second tool was the Perception of Parents Scale developed by Deci⁹. It was used to assess the children's perceptions of their parents' support and warmth. Scale comprised of 42 items, 21 for mother and 21 for father, and 6 subscales measuring mother autonomy support, mother involvement, mother warmth, father autonomy support, father involvement, and father warmth. It is a 7-point Likert scale and scores range from 1=Not at all true, 2, 3, 4=somewhat true, 5, 6, 7=Very true. The internal consistency of the scale was found $\alpha=0.85-0.89^{10}$ and in this study was $\alpha=0.88$. The third tool was The Self-Determination Scale developed by Deci¹¹. It measures the extent to which an individual behaves or functions differently in a self-determined way. It is a 10-item scale with 2 subscales: Awareness of oneself and the perceived choice in one's actions. It is a 5-point Likert scale and the respondents choose a score from 1=Only A feels true; 2, 3, 4, and 5=Only B feels true. The internal consistency of the scale was found $\alpha=0.88^{11}$ and in this study was $\alpha=0.60$. The last tool was Academic Locus of Control Scale by Trice¹² to measure academic performance and success. It contains 28 items and 2-points Likert scale true or false. The score ranges from 0 to 28, cut-off point was 14, scores above 14 depict high-grade point average and below 14 shows low-grade point average. The internal consistency of the scale was found $\alpha=0.82^{12}$, and in this study it was $\alpha=0.61$.

Data were analyzed using SPSS-21. Descriptive statistics were used to study the demographic characteristics of the sample. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to examine the relationship academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success. Linear Multiple Regression analysis was used to see the prediction between academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success among government and private university students.

RESULTS

The study comprised 75 male and 75 female students, 104 were enrolled in BS and 46 in MS program. Mean age of the participants was 23 ± 2.66 years.

Table-1 shows the correlation between the study variables. Academic distress was significantly negatively correlated with academic success ($r= -0.18$, $p<0.05$). A highly significant positive relationship was found between perceived parental support and academic success ($r=0.27$, $p<0.01$). Self-determination was also significantly positively correlated with academic success ($r=0.29$, $p<0.01$), and perceived parental support ($r=0.44$, $p<0.01$) whereas academic distress was negatively correlated with perceived parental support, and self-determination.

Table-2 shows the prediction among study variables. Academic distress accounts for 27% negative variance in the outcome variable (Academic Success), the second predictor Perceived Parental Support accounts for 68% variance in the outcome variable (Academic Success), and the third variable Self-determination was responsible for 81% variance in the outcome variable (Academic Success). The overall model is statistically significant as $F(7.43, 150)=7.43$, $p<0.000$, $R^2=0.132$.

Table-3 shows the results of *t*-test for differences among government and private university students in terms of Academic Distress, Perceived Parental Support, Self-Determination, and Academic Success. No statistically significant differences ($p>0.05$) in the mean difference were found between the students of government and private universities in terms of their Academic Distress, Perceived Parental Support, Self-Determination, and Academic Success.

Table-4 shows results of *t*-test for gender difference among students in terms of Academic Distress, Perceived Parental Support, Self-Determination, and Academic Success. There was a significant difference in males and females in terms of perceived parental support ($p<0.03$), and academic success ($p<0.00$). No statistically significant differences ($p>0.05$) in the mean difference were found between male and female students of government and private universities in terms of academic distress, and self-determination.

Table-1: Correlation between academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success

Variables	ALCS	SSI	POPS	SDS
ALCS	-	-0.18*	0.27**	0.29**
SSI		-	-0.01	-0.18*
POPS			-	0.44**
SDS				-

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, ALCS=Academic Locus of Control Scale, SSI=Student Stress Inventory, POPS=Perception of Parents Scale, SDS=Self-Determination Scale

Table-2: Linear multiple regression analysis for independent and dependent variables

Variables	B	ΔR^2
SSI	-0.18	0.02*
POPS	0.27	0.06*
SDS	0.29	0.08*

* $p < 0.001$, SSI=Student Stress Inventory, POPS=Perception of Parents Scale, SDS=Self-Determination Scale

Table-3: Independent sample *t*-test for government and private university difference in terms of academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success (n=150)

Variables	University	Mean±SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
SSI	Private	80.53±17.09	0.33	0.25
	Government	80.78±17.12		
POPS	Private	228.23±36.45	0.21	0.47
	Government	229.04±36.85		
SDS	Private	34.91±8.47	0.24	0.32
	Government	33.28±7.45		
ALCS	Private	18.09±3.65	0.29	0.39
	Government	18.00±3.62		

ALCS=Academic locus of Control Scale, SSI=Student Stress Inventory, POPS=Perception of Parents Scale, SDS=Self-Determination Scale

Table-4: Independent sample *t*-test for gender difference in terms of academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success (n=150)

Variables	Gender	Mean±SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
SSI	Male	39.02±6.28	2.71	0.38
	Female	36.06±5.78		
POPS	Male	221.50±29.87	6.33	0.03
	Female	249.81±21.80		
SDS	Male	32±10.69	0.94	0.00
	Female	33.72±9.60		
ALCS	Male	39±1.43	2.13	0.37
	Female	37.54±4.20		

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.000$, SSI=Student Stress Inventory, POPS=Perception of Parents Scale, SDS=Self-Determination Scale
ALCS=Academic Locus of Control Scale

DISCUSSION

The study was carried out to find the relationship and prediction between academic distress, perceived parental support, self-determination, and academic success among government and private university students. The findings of the current study showed the significant negative relationship between academic distress and academic success, a significant positive relationship between perceived parental support and academic success, and a significant positive relationship between self-determination and academic success. Regression analysis showed that Academic Distress, Perceived Parental Support, and Self-Determination significantly predict Academic Success among which the self-determination was the strongest predictor of academic success.

No statistically significant mean differences were found among the government and private universities of Rawalpindi and Lahore on *t*-test of the data. The findings are in agreement with previous

researches. Sohail¹³ conducted the study to find out the effect of academic stress on academic success on the medical students and he concluded that there was a significant negative relationship between academic stress and academic success. Sharif A¹⁴ performed a study to explore the influence of academic success on academic stress and also the stress factors which are affecting the academic performance of students. Their results indicated that the students experience significant stress in their academic life which has a negative effect on their academic results. Essel and Owusu¹⁵ reported that academic stress leads to low academic performance. Shukla *et al*¹⁶ also concluded that parental support acts as a booster for academic success. Chao *et al*¹⁷ carried out a study in which the effect of self-determination skills on the academic success of the students was examined and their results revealed that academic success increases by use of self-determination skills.

CONCLUSION

The academic distress leads to low academic success rate whereas the parental support and self-determination increase the academic success of university students. There is a need to identify the stressors affecting the academic work of the students and enable them to deal with those stressors, in other urban, rural, and underdeveloped areas to gain more insight about the stressors of the students.

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