A Study on Stress Management among the Students of Government and Private Colleges of Darjeeling

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ABSTRACT

Stress management among college students is a critical issue, particularly in Darjeeling, where students from government and private institutions face various stressors that affect their mental health and academic performance. This study aimed to evaluate stress levels, compare academic stress and stress management strategies between government and private college students, examine the relationship between academic stress and stress management, and investigate the association between stress levels and demographic variables, such as gender. The research employed an analytical approach using primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to a sample of 100 students from government and private colleges in Darjeeling. Data were analyzed using frequency tables, simple percentages, independent sample t-tests, correlation tests, and chi-square tests. The findings revealed significant differences in academic stress levels and stress management abilities between government and private college students, with a positive correlation between these two variables. Additionally, the study identified associations between stress levels, stress management, and sex. The results underscore the need for targeted interventions to address stress among college students in Darjeeling, considering the differences between government and private institutions, and the role of gender in stress experiences and management. The study concluded by emphasizing the importance of implementing stress management programs tailored to specific student populations and providing gender-sensitive support services to enhance students' academic performance and overall well-being.

Keywords: Stress Management, College Students, Government Colleges, Private Colleges, Darjeeling, Academic Stress, Academic Performance, Coping Strategies, Gender Differences, etc.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing incidence of stress among college students is a matter of global concern. This issue is particularly pertinent in the context of Darjeeling, where students from both government and private institutions encounter various stressors. Effective stress management is essential for students' comprehensive development and academic success, rendering the exploration of coping mechanisms a critical area of study. Students in this region face numerous challenges, including academic pressure, financial limitations, personal relationships, and occasional work responsibilities, all of which can contribute to heightened stress levels (Brougham et al., 2009). The significance of stress management is highlighted by its effect on students' mental health and academic performance. Research underscores the importance of perceived control over time and effective time management as strategies that can mitigate stress among college students, leading to enhanced academic outcomes and healthier lifestyles (Nonis et al., 1998). Furthermore, self-leadership practices have been demonstrated to reduce stress, with students' coping skills serving as a moderating factor in this relationship (Maykrantz & Houghton, 2018). Gender differences also play a significant role in stress perception and coping strategies, with females often reporting higher stress levels and employing different coping mechanisms than males (Graves et al., 2021). The context of stress management in Darjeeling's colleges involves understanding these dynamics and tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of the student population. By examining the stress and coping strategies of students in both government and private colleges, this study aims to identify patterns and develop strategic interventions that cater to this diverse group. By bridging the gap between stress levels and coping strategies, this study seeks to contribute to the development of targeted support systems that

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enhance students' capacity to manage stress effectively, ultimately fostering their academic success and well-being.

Statement of Problem

Stress management among students in Darjeeling's government and private colleges is a significant concern because of the diverse challenges that they face. Sources of stress include academic workloads, financial issues, social adjustments, and competitive pressure. A lack of effective stress management strategies can lead to poor academic performance and mental health issues. Students who perceive a lack of control over their time experience higher stress levels, which affect their academic and personal lives (Nonis et al., 1998). Coping skills and self-leadership are crucial for moderating stress levels (Maykrantz and Houghton, 2018). In Darjeeling, government and private college students may experience distinct stressors based on academic demand and resource availability. Technology-based interventions, such as time management apps, have been shown to enhance students' perceptions of control and mitigate stress outcomes (Alhasani & Orji, 2024). However, research gaps exist regarding Darjeeling's unique student demographic. The problem involves recognizing high stress levels, understanding the causes, and identifying management strategies. Addressing these issues through research can help to develop supportive environments that promote student resilience and contribute to the discourse on stress management in higher education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social science researchers in India have conducted numerous studies over time focusing on various aspects of stress management in the context of education. This study considers some of the most recent and pertinent studies reviewed and presented below.

Bhatia and Rehman (2025) investigated stress among medical students in India. Their findings showed higher stress levels among female students due to their academic workload, examinations, poor infrastructure, low self-esteem, and financial issues. This study emphasizes the need for counselling centers, regular sessions, and healthy student-teacher relationships to manage stress. It also notes increased academic pressure from the growing number of medical colleges and students advocating institutional interventions for their mental health.

Jain and Singhai (2017) reviewed literature on academic stress among students. This review shows how academic pressure from examinations, assignments, and expectations contributes significantly to student stress. Factors such as peer pressure, parental expectations, and academic environment increase stress levels, thereby affecting mental health and academic performance. The literature reveals that stress manifestation varies according to individual and stream-specific factors, highlighting the need for stress management through mindfulness, counselling, and holistic development.

Jan and Mattoo (2022) studied academic stress and stress management among senior secondary schoolgirls in Kashmir. This study compared academic stress levels and stress management abilities between government and private school girls and examined their relationships. The sample included 400 students who completed the Academic Stress Questionnaire and the Adolescents' Stress Management Scale. The analysis revealed that government schoolgirls had higher academic stress levels, whereas private schoolgirls showed better stress management abilities. A significant negative correlation was observed between academic stress and stress management. This study highlights disparities between government and private schoolgirls in Kashmir, emphasizing the need to address these issues for students' well-being.

Mansuroglu (2024) evaluated the efficacy of stress management training among first-year health discipline students by focusing on their Perceived Stress, Coping Methods, and Psychological Resilience. The study found significantly reduced stress levels in the intervention group compared to the control group, along with enhanced coping strategies and psychological resilience. The study included 102 first-year health program students who were split equally between the intervention and control groups. The 7-week training program resulted in reduced perceived stress (22.1%), improved coping methods (5.1%), and enhanced psychological resilience (22.6%). The researchers concluded that stress management training effectively improved these outcomes and recommended integrating such training into health education curricula to prepare students for future professional stressors.

Anandhi (2023) studied stress management strategies among students with a focus on adolescents. Research has shown a strong link between stress, academic assessment, and career exploration, leading to behavioural, physical, and psychological issues. This study defined stress types and explored related health complications, such as heart disease, diabetes, and depression. This study presents stress management strategies, including exercise, leisure activities, sleep, peer communication, and time management. Using a descriptive methodology with questionnaires, the research concludes that identifying common stressors is crucial to reducing their impact on students. It should be noted that stress affects all age groups and requires effective management for academic success.

Emran et al. (2024) examined factors influencing student stress levels in Dhaka, Bangladesh, through an online survey of 636 students. Key findings showed that gender and residence influenced stress, with females and rural/semi-urban residents reporting higher levels of stress. Psychological factors such as appetite levels, family bonding, and sensitivity to judgments were significant, with moderate family bonding linked to lower stress. Regular communication with family and friends decreased the odds of very high stress levels, whereas social media showed mixed effects. Age was correlated with higher stress levels, and academic factors affected stress levels. The authors suggest using these insights for targeted stress management interventions and recommend longitudinal studies to validate the findings.

Ahmad et al. (2021) evaluated stress levels among students at the Government College of Nursing, Srinagar, India. This study assessed stress levels and their relationship with gender among 30 second-year nursing students, selected through random sampling using the Perceived Stress Scale. The results showed that 63.4% reported moderate stress, 33.3% reported low stress, and 3.3% reported high stress, with no significant gender differences in stress scores. This study provides insights for administrators to address student stress and recommend improved learning environments and counselling services. Limitations include the small sample size and the focus on the quantitative description. The study concludes that students experience moderate stress levels and suggests measures to improve their well-being and academic performance.

Kumar et al. (2023) studied stress management among research scholars in Indian universities. Data were collected from 106 research scholars using a questionnaire. The primary stressors identified were career settlement, academic load, and an uncertain future. Common symptoms include restlessness, anxiety, depression, and a lack of motivation. Scholars manage stress through conversations with friends, music, and family members. Most participants reported positive relationships with their colleagues and supervisors. COVID-19 negatively affected research activities by 73.60% of the scholars. Although stress is unavoidable, effective management strategies can enhance coping mechanisms. This study recommends maintaining routines, exercise, a balanced diet, and mindfulness techniques.

Rehman and Baluja (2021) examined how well undergraduate medical students at the Hamdard Institute of Medical Sciences & Research, New Delhi, understood and managed stress. The study included 254 first-and third-year MBBS programs. Only 28.4% of students correctly defined stress, linking it to anxiety (79.6%). The most common stressors were a large syllabus (48.8%) and insufficient study time (28.7%). For students living in hostels, 72.7% felt homesick, and 58.6% said that not having friends was a major non-academic stressor. To relieve stress, most students listened to music (63.7%) or watched internet videos (24.1%). Only 0.8% practiced meditation, and 5.1% used substances. This study suggests adding stress management strategies, such as meditation, yoga, sports, and counselling, to the medical curriculum to help students cope better.

Talawar (2025) studied students' attitudes towards stress management in Belagavi City, India, focusing on undergraduate and post-graduate students. This study examined the sources of stress, including examination pressure, academic workload, financial instability, and familial expectations. In total, 100 respondents were surveyed using stratified random sampling. Students primarily manage their stress through time management, communication with friends and family, and meditation. A Chi-square test showed no significant relationship between academic disciplines and stress management choices. This study recommends collaboration between educational institutions and counsellors to enhance students' well-being through seminars and workshops.

Research Gap

While research on stress management among students has been conducted in various regions of India, there

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remains a notable absence of significant studies focusing on this issue in Darjeeling. This study endeavours to fill this research gap by examining stress management practices among students of Darjeeling.

Significance of the Study

The investigation of stress management among students in government and private colleges in Darjeeling is important. Globally, college students experience high stress levels due to academic pressures and personal challenges, impacting their mental health and academic performance. Understanding the stressors that affect Darjeeling students can enable effective intervention. Stress factors include academic workload, examinations, and financial difficulties, which influence students across educational settings (Kwaah and Essilfie 2017). Students who maintain control over time and use effective coping strategies report lower stress levels and better academic outcomes (Nonis et al. 1998). Self-leadership practices reduce stress when moderated by coping skills (Maykrantz and Houghton, 2018). Examining stress management differences between government and private colleges could reveal institutional factors affecting stress and help policymakers implement changes to support students' mental health. The significance of this study extends to educational policies and practices that promote academic success and mental well-being (Ibarra-Mejia et al. 2022).

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to: (i) evaluate stress levels among college students; (ii) compare the academic stress experienced by students in government and private colleges; (iii) compare the stress management strategies employed by students in government and private colleges; (iv) examine the relationship between academic stress and stress management among students in government and private colleges; and (v) investigate the association between stress levels and selected demographic variables, such as gender.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study constitutes an analytical investigation that utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Secondary data were obtained from pertinent research articles, journals, research papers, and research-based publications. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered during interviews with students from both government and private colleges in Darjeeling, conducted via a field survey. The questionnaire was developed based on the existing literature. Convenience sampling was employed to select college students for the interviews. The sample comprised 30 students from a government college and 50 from a private college, resulting in a total sample size of 100. A field survey was conducted in July and August 2025 in Darjeeling. To analyse the primary data and achieve the research objectives, frequency tables, simple percentages, and statistical tools, such as the independent sample t-test, correlation test, and chi-square test, were used. Primary data were analyzed using the SPSS software package (version 26) to derive logical conclusions. The data collection process ensured a diverse representation of student perspectives from both government and private institutions in Darjeeling. The field survey, conducted over two months, allowed for an in-depth exploration of the students' experiences and opinions. The use of various statistical tools and SPSS software facilitated a comprehensive analysis of the collected data, enabling researchers to draw meaningful insights and conclusions.

Hypothesis

Five sets of hypotheses were formulated to achieve the research objectives of this study. These are presented below.

H1: There is no significant difference in the level of academic stress between the students of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

H2: There is no significant difference in stress management between government and private college students of Darjeeling.

H3: There is no relation between the level of academic stress and stress management of government and private

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colleges of Darjeeling.

H4: There is no association between the level of academic stress and the gender of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

H5: There is no association between the level of stress management and the gender of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the study is organized into three subsections: demographic aspects (such as gender), technical aspects (including the level of academic stress and stress management), and hypothesis testing. These components are discussed below.

Demographic Aspect:

Gender of Respondents:

Table-1

Gender		
Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	60	60
Female	40	40
Total	100	100

(Source: Field Survey)

Observation: From the above table1, it was found that 60% of the respondents were male, whereas 40% of the respondents were female from both government and private college students.

Technical Aspect:

Level of Academic Stress of College Students:

Table-2

Level of Academic Stress of College Students		
Attributes	Frequency	Percent
High	35	35
Moderate	40	40
Low	25	25
Total	100	100

(Source: Field Survey)

Observation: From Table 2, it can be seen that 35% of the respondents felt a high level of academic stress, 40% of the respondents felt a moderate level of academic stress, whereas 25% of the respondents felt a low level of academic stress for both government and private college students.

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Level of Stress Management of College Students:

Table-3

Level of Stress Management of College Students		
Attributes	Frequency	Percent
Good	35	35
Average	30	30
Poor	35	35
Total	100	100

(Source: Field Survey)

Observation: From Table 3, it was observed that 35% of the respondents had a good level of stress management, 30% of the respondents had an average level of stress management, whereas 35% of the respondents had a poor level of stress management for both the government and private college students.

Hypothesis Testing:

Independent Sample t-test: An independent samples t-test, also referred to as an unpaired t-test, is a statistical method employed to ascertain whether there is a significant difference between the means of two independent, unrelated groups. This test compares the average of a continuous variable across two distinct groups, such as the average test scores of two classes. The essential prerequisites for this test include the presence of two independent groups and a continuous, normally distributed variable. The test yielded a p-value that indicated the statistical significance of the observed difference. In this study, an independent samples t-test was used to examine whether (i) there exists a significant difference in the level of academic stress between students of government and private colleges in Darjeeling and (ii) there is no significant difference in stress management between students of government and private colleges in Darjeeling.

Hypotheis-1

H_0: There is no significant difference in the level of academic stress between the students of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

H_1: There is a significant difference in the level of academic stress between the students of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

Table-4

Group Statistics							
College Type			Statistic	Bootstrap			
				Bias	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
Level of Academic Stress of College Students	Government College	N	50				
		Mean	2.1	-0.0016	0.1235	1.8491	2.3478
		Std. Deviation	0.8391	-0.0124	0.04484	0.72435	0.90741
		Std. Error Mean	0.11867				
	Private College	N	50				
		Mean	1.7	-0.0027	0.0922	1.5179	1.8679

		Std. Deviation	0.64681	-0.00929	0.05506	0.53557	0.74817
		Std. Error Mean	0.09147				

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Table-5

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Level of Academic Stress of College Students	Equal variances assumed	4.681	0.033	2.67	98	0.009	0.4	0.14983	0.10267	0.69733
	Equal variances not assumed			2.67	92.037	0.009	0.4	0.14983	0.10243	0.69757

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Interpretation: The table above presents the results of two statistical tests: Levene's test for equality of variances and the t-test for equality of means. The analysis was divided into two scenarios: one assuming equal variances between the groups and the other assuming unequal variances. Levene's test was employed to determine which statistical approach should be used to assess the equality of means by testing the null hypothesis that the variances of the two groups are equal. The low significance value associated with Levene's test suggests that the variances are unequal, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. In the table, a very low value of this test statistic indicates that the variances between government and private college students are not equal. Consequently, the statistics for the t-test assuming unequal variances should be used. The t-test yields a t-statistic of 2.67 with 92.037 degrees of freedom. The corresponding two-tailed p-value was 0.009, which was below the threshold of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at the 5% level of significance, indicating a significant difference in the average level of academic stress between students from government and private colleges in Darjeeling.

Hypotheis-2

H_0: There is no significant difference in stress management between government and private college students of Darjeeling.

H_1: There is a significant difference in stress management between government and private college students of Darjeeling.

Table-6

Group Statistics							
College Type			Statistic	Bootstrap			
				Bias	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
Level of Stress Management	Government College	N	50				
		Mean	2.2	0.0008	0.1087	1.9796	2.4081

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of College Students		Std. Deviation	0.75593	-0.00968	0.05329	0.63557	0.84107
		Std. Error Mean	0.1069				
	Private College	N	50				
		Mean	1.8	-0.0038	0.1227	1.56	2.04
		Std. Deviation	0.88063	-0.00921	0.04367	0.77693	0.94669
		Std. Error Mean	0.12454				

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Table-7

Independent Samples Test									
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	4.639	0.034	2.437	98	0.017	0.4	0.16413	0.07429	0.72571
Equal variances not assumed	—	—	2.437	95.801	0.017	0.4	0.16413	0.0742	0.7258

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Interpretation: The table above illustrates the outcomes of two statistical tests: Levene's test for equality of variances and the t-test for equality of means. The table comprises two analytical scenarios: one presumes equal variances between the two groups, and the other assumes unequal variances. Levene's test is instrumental in determining which statistical approach should be employed to assess the equality of means, as it evaluates the null hypothesis that the variances of the two groups are equal. The low significance value associated with Levene's test suggests that the variances are unequal, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis. In the table, a notably low value of this test statistic indicates that the variances between government and private college students are not equal. Consequently, the statistics corresponding to the assumption of unequal variances should be utilized for the t-test for the equality of means. The t-test yielded a t-statistic of 2.437, with 95.801 degrees of freedom. The associated two-tailed p-value was 0.017, which is below the threshold of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis is rejected at the 5% significance level, indicating a significant difference in stress management between government and private college students in Darjeeling.

Correlation Test: A correlation test evaluates the relationship between two or more variables to ascertain whether they are associated and to what extent. It aids in determining whether variations in one variable correspond to changes in another variable. Various types of correlation tests exist, including Pearson, Spearman, and Kendall's tau, which are appropriate for different data types and relationships. In this study, a correlation test was employed to examine the relationship between the level of academic stress and stress management in government and private colleges in Darjeeling.

Hypotheis-3

H_0: There is no relation between the level of academic stress and stress management of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

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H_1: There is a relation between the level of academic stress and stress management of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

Table-8

Correlations			
		Level of Academic Stress of College Students	Level of Stress Management of College Students
Level of Academic Stress of College Students	Pearson Correlation	1	0.778
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	100	100
Level of Stress Management of College Students	Pearson Correlation	0.778	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	100	100

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Interpretation: In the above table, the bivariate correlation test was applied to test the correlation between the level of academic stress and stress management of government and private colleges in Darjeeling. In the above correlation matrix, Pearson's correlation coefficient is 0.778, and the P-value for a two-tailed test is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, at the 5% level of significance. Hence, it can be concluded that there is a positive correlation between the level of academic stress and stress management of government and private colleges in Darjeeling.

Chi-Square Test:

The chi-square test is a statistical hypothesis test used to compare observed frequencies from categorical data with expected frequencies to ascertain whether a statistically significant relationship exists between variables or if the observed differences are attributable to chance. This test applies to categorical variables, such as gender or preferred newspapers, and is used to analyse data within a contingency table. This aids in determining whether the observed frequencies significantly deviate from those expected under the null hypothesis. In the present study, this test was applied to examine whether there is any association between (i) the level of academic stress and the gender of students in government and private colleges in Darjeeling and (ii) the level of stress management and the gender of students in these institutions.

Hypotheis-4

H_0: There is no association between the level of academic stress and the gender of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

H_1: There is an association between the level of academic stress and the gender of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

Table-9

Cross Tabulation Level of Academic Stress and Gender of College Students					
			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Level of Academic Stress of	High	Number	35	0	35
		% of Total	35.00%	0.00%	35.00%
	Moderate	Number	25	15	40

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College Students		% of Total	25.00%	15.00%	40.00%
	Low	Number	0	25	25
		% of Total	0.00%	25.00%	25.00%
Total		Number	60	40	100
		% of Total	60.00%	40.00%	100.00%

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Table-10

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	60.938	2	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	81.677	2	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	58.799	1	0.000
No of Valid Cases	100		

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Interpretation: The Pearson Chi-Square or P value of the test at the 5% level of significance was 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is an association between the level of academic stress and the gender of the government and private colleges in Darjeeling.

Hypotheis-5

H_0: There is no association between the level of stress management and the gender of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

H_1: There is an association between the level of stress management and the gender of government and private colleges of Darjeeling.

Table-11

Crosstabulation between Level of Stress Management and Gender of College Students					
			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Level of Stress Management of College Students	Good	Number	35	0	35
		% of Total	35.00%	0.00%	35.00%
	Average	Number	20	10	30
		% of Total	20.00%	10.00%	30.00%
	Poor	Number	5	30	35
		% of Total	5.00%	30.00%	35.00%
Total		Number	60	40	100
		% of Total	60.00%	40.00%	100.00%

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

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Table-12

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	54.365	2	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	67.703	2	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	53.036	1	0.000
No of Valid Cases	100		

(Source: Compiled by researcher)

Interpretation: The Pearson Chi-Square or P value of the test at the 5% level of significance was 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is an association between the level of stress management and the gender of the government and private colleges in Darjeeling.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The analysis conducted in this study yielded the following principal findings.

10.1 The level of academic stress differed significantly between students attending government and private colleges in Darjeeling. The results of the t-test yielded a p-value of 0.009, which was below the threshold of 0.05, thereby leading to rejection of the null hypothesis.

10.2 The ability to manage stress differs significantly between students attending government and private colleges in Darjeeling. The results of the t-test yielded a p-value of 0.017, which was below the threshold of 0.05, thereby leading to rejection of the null hypothesis.

10.3 The study identified a positive correlation between the level of academic stress and stress management abilities of students in both government and private colleges in Darjeeling. The Pearson correlation coefficient was 0.778, with a p-value of 0.000.

10.4 The study identified a correlation between academic stress levels and gender among students attending government and private colleges in Darjeeling. The application of the chi-square test yielded a p-value of 0.000, resulting in rejection of the null hypothesis.

10.5 In terms of stress levels, 35% of the respondents indicated experiencing high levels of academic stress, 40% reported moderate levels, and 25% reported low levels.

10.6 In terms of stress management capabilities, 35% of the respondents demonstrated good proficiency, 30% exhibited average proficiency, and 35% displayed poor proficiency.

10.7 The sample comprised 60% male and 40% female students from both public and private colleges.

The findings revealed substantial differences in stress levels and management strategies between students attending government and private colleges. Additionally, there were notable associations between stress, stress management, and gender. These results underscore the need for targeted interventions to address stress among college students in Darjeeling.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions of this study on stress management among students in government and private colleges in Darjeeling can be articulated as follows. This research provides valuable insights into stress levels and

management strategies among college students in Darjeeling, highlighting the significant differences between government and private institutions. The findings demonstrate that academic stress levels and stress management capabilities differ considerably between the two types of colleges. Furthermore, a positive correlation was identified between academic stress levels and stress management abilities, indicating that students experiencing higher stress levels may develop more advanced coping mechanisms. Gender was also found to be associated with both academic stress levels and stress management capabilities, underscoring the necessity for gender-sensitive approaches in addressing student stress. The study revealed that a substantial proportion of students experience moderate to high levels of academic stress, with varying degrees of proficiency in stress management. These results emphasize the importance of targeted interventions to address stress in college students in Darjeeling. Educational institutions should consider implementing stress management programs tailored to their specific student populations, considering the differences between government and private colleges. Such programs can include workshops on time management, coping strategies, and mental health awareness. Additionally, gender-based differences in stress experiences and management suggest a need for sex-specific support services. Counselling centers and mental health resources should be made readily available and promoted to all students, with particular attention paid to addressing gender-specific stressors and coping mechanisms. Future research could explore the specific factors contributing to stress in government versus private colleges and examine the effectiveness of various stress management interventions in this context. Longitudinal studies can also provide insights into how stress levels and management strategies evolve over the course of a student's academic career. In conclusion, this study contributes to the understanding of stress dynamics among college students in Darjeeling and provides a foundation for developing effective stress management strategies in higher education institutions. By addressing these issues, colleges can work towards creating a more supportive and conducive learning environment, ultimately enhancing students' academic performance and overall well-being.

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