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Impact of Emotional Intelligence on the Productivity of Students and Working Professionals

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***Abstract*-- Stress has been a major factor affecting the productivity of students and professionals and it occurs in many ways especially from teenage. The major factor for building up the stress would be the money factor. Parents and Teachers insist the children to get high marks to get higher jobs there by getting higher salaries. Along with it, the mounting living expenses and the craze for the luxury life styles also adds to the core. Covid-19 Pandemic season also added its share to the kitty. All efforts are moved to be happening from home i.e.; work from home and work at home etc. Humans are social animals and they need to be socially fit in all perspectives. And the same high-pressure expectation is there at higher studies and the professional jobs that follow. Competition, higher growth and maximum profit-making push us all to over perform and thereby we breakdown leading to pressure, tension and depressions. Attempt made here is to study the stress on school, college students and professionals and to arrive at the impact on their productivity. Each individual is unique and they see the world based on their own experiences.**

***Keyword*-- Emotional Intelligence, Stress, Productivity, Students, Professionals**

I. Introduction

Competition from all angles has increased the pressure on all of us. Globalization, short product life cycle, do it right first time, quality and cost are some of the reasons for increased pressure to perform. Covid-19 pandemic has added more like work from home and work at home concepts. Students are under severe pressure from different angles. They know that if they don't perform, they will be left behind. The expectations from family and relative circles are putting heavy toll on students in addition to the bodily and emotional changes undergoing in them. Comparison with peers and other groups are regular in nature which brings the depression in them. Suicide rates on failure are also on the rise. In a recent newspaper story from Kerala, two professional study aspirants committed suicide as a result of failure in various examinations. They were from well-to-do families. Many hospitals also state that parents are been treated for depressions for their kids not living up to their expectations.

In Kerala, the professional college pass percentage is approximately about 40% and out of which only 20% are employable. This low pass percentile could be due to various reasons of pressure, stress and tension. Online classes, work from home and work at home concepts are adding fuel to the fire. We have to bring in amicable changes and support systems to help our kids perform well under healthy conditions. Future of India should not succumb to pressure and finally all going depressed and non-performing. We need performing people with an innovative mindset to build a new India. Attempt made here is a study conducted on professionals, students and future aspirants to measure their stress level and analyze to see where they are today and what could we do differently for a better tomorrow. Practicing EI-Emotional Intelligence can help all of us to live a healthy life and influence others around.

II. Stress – An Overview

Stress in students is often induced from many angles. It slowly builds up as they grow up to higher levels. Different angles where stress can occur are online classes, Bodily/Hormonal Changes; Parents; Peers; School; Entrance examination coaching institutions; Teachers; Industry. On reviewing the various journals, especially the one published in Science Direct and study conducted by Harvard University reveals that during puberty both Boys and Girls undergo emotional conflicts like what to do, when to do and most of the times there will be flare up of emotions. Adolescence can be considered as a transitional period between childhood and adulthood, when children are prepared for adult roles. During this stage there occurs multiple transitions in various fields like education, training, employment and unemployment, also transitions from one living circumstance to another. Even though the transition varies or depends by country and by function, there can be different ages at which an individual is considered (chronologically and legally) mature enough for society to entrust them with certain privileges and responsibilities. The Cognitive or thinking encompasses increase the knowledge and the ability in abstract thinking and in effective reasoning.

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The researchers in various fields studied the pubertal changes in brain structure and its effects on cognition or social relations whereas sociologists studied about the changes occurred in adolescence on acquisition of social roles (for example, worker or romantic partner) and how this varies across cultures or social conditions. And the Developmental psychologists studied on changes in relations with parents and peers as a function. The puberty can have important psychological and social changes. Early maturing boys have the advantage in capturing the attention of potential partners whereas pubescent boys often tend to have a good body image, are more confident, secure, and more independent. Boys maturing late can be less confident because of poor body image due to comparison of their body to already developed friends and peers. There are also studies indicating, early puberty is not always positive for boys; early sexual maturation in boys can be accompanied by increased aggressiveness due to the increase of hormones that affect them. Since they appear to be older than their peers, pubescent boys may face increased social pressure to conform to adult norms and society may view them as more emotionally matured, irrespective of the fact that their cognitive and social development may lag behind their appearance. For girls, early maturation can sometimes lead to increased self-consciousness. In consequence of that, girls who reach sexual maturation early are more likely than their peers to develop eating disorders. In addition to all these personal conflicts inside them, girls may have to deal with sexual advances from older boys before they are emotionally and mentally mature. The parents as usual will put the pressure to get high marks especially to continue the studies in reputed colleges, pay less tuition fees and to get selected in the campus recruitments. Online classes add more pressure on students. Peers put the unknown pressure as they are compared against each other. Rather than creating a helping mindset, friends would hide facts and information from sharing. The schools would want their status to be kept high and which adds the pressure on their students. Entrance coaching institutes have their take to project them as the premier institute. Teachers as usual wanted their wards to come to top. Finally, the industry will put the pressure by saying that they are not employable.

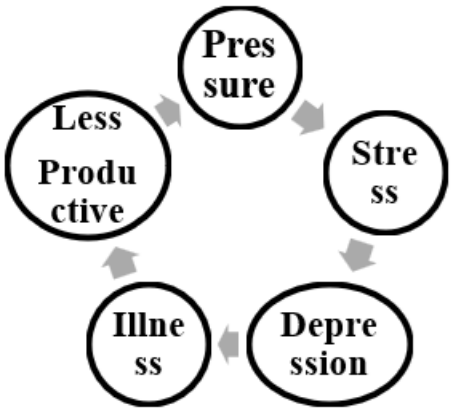


Fig .1 – Life cycle of productivity loss

Fig. 1 here shows the life cycle of productivity loss. Expectations on Performance always puts the pressure in individuals. Continued pressure becomes stress. Stress relieving did not happen on daily basis and it piles up making the body and mind suffer. It turns out as depression. The expectation on future incidents always will create the pressure which leads to illness that may reduce the productivity of individuals. We should learn and encourage students to live in the present. Let the future happen. Let us learn from the past. We wanted them to concentrate on the present. Especially in this Covid-19 pandemic season, it became more relevant to live in the present.

III. Emotional Intelligence – An Overview

In the dynamic world, one transaction leads to another. By understanding the situation, preparing ourselves for the response and finally responding in a way to win is the ability that we should nurture in students. If you are a better EI person you will have the ability to win them quickly with a smile. EI requires that, a person should understand self-emotions, know others emotions, manage self and others' and should be able to control the outcome with a timely response such that the transactions stay alive. Others' interest on us depends on the kind of response that we provide. If that response is in line with their thoughts, then, the conversation or transaction would progress and finally reach the desired destination.

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IV. Objectives Of The Study

This study aims to measure the stress level of school, college students and professionals and to recommend suggestions to mitigate this problem.

1. To study the stress factors in school, college students and working professionals
2. To measure the variances in the stress levels of the sample under study.
3. Suggest solutions to mitigate this issue of the sample to equip them with the current scenario.

V. Scope Of The Study

Scope of the study is to measure and evaluate the stress levels of school, college students and working professionals by means of standard questionnaire. The data collected was be analyzed and recommended the suggestions thereon.

VI. Research Methodology Used

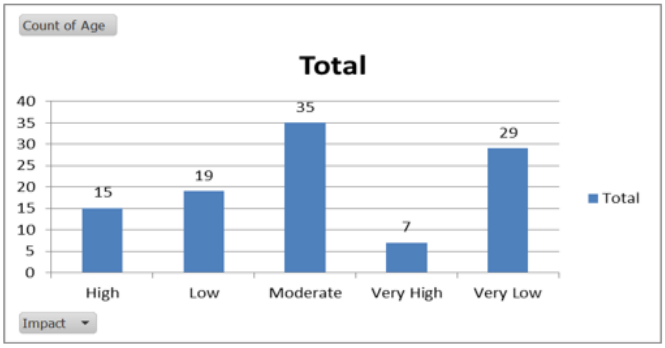
Out of the twenty professional colleges in Trivandrum, we have selected three colleges to collect the data. Data of both males and females are collected. We have collected data from two schools in Trivandrum city. We have collected samples from four different companies at Trivandrum. The sample was arrived by using the convenience sampling method. Questionnaire was obtained from National Psychological Corporation (NPC). Data collected by direct questionnaire sharing, filling and collecting it back then and there. Data was coded and errors and omissions were identified and removed. Few cases were subsequently contacted to get the accurate data. The entire data collection process took 4 weeks of time. The scoring of data was done using the guidelines of the standard questionnaire. The guidelines are as specified below.

Table 1 – Scale to measure stress

Raw Scores			Stress Levels
Boys	**Girls**	**Adults**	
204 – 180	210 – 196	>40	Very high
177 – 166	194 – 189	’31-40	High
164 – 153	188 – 175	’21-30	Moderate
151 – 141	169 – 161	<20	Low
138 – 115	160 – 141	NA	Very Low

Analysis

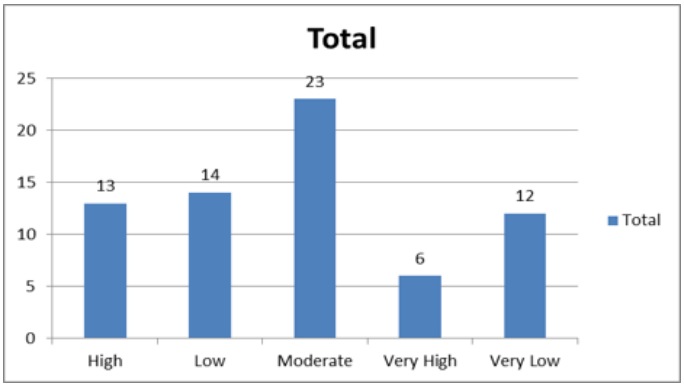
Productivity is the ratio of output to inputs in production; it is a measure of the efficiency of production.



Graph 1 – Analysis college students

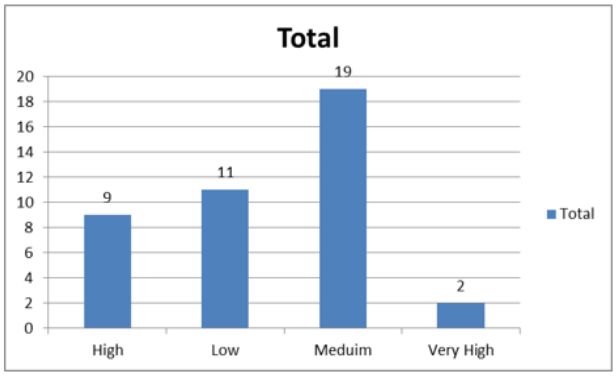
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Data collected for 105 college students from three different medical and engineering colleges. The average age group is around 22 years. There were 70 females and 35 males. Graph 1 shows here the analysis of data reveals that, there are 7 (7%) students out of 105 in the very high stress category, 15 (14%) out of 105 in the high category, 35 (33%) out of 105 in the moderate category, 19 (18%) out of 105 in the low category and 29 (28%) out of 105 in the very low category. Overall, 54% college students are in the moderate to very high stress category. These students require immediate counseling and support. Data collected for 68 school students from two different schools. The average age group is around 15 years. There were 19 females and 49 males.



Graph 2 – Analysis on school students

Graph 2 shows here the analysis of data reveals that, there are 6 (9%) students out of 68 in the very high stress category, 13 (19%) out of 68 in the high category, 23 (34%) out of 68 in the moderate category, 14 (21%) out of 68 in the low category and 12 (18%) out of 68 in the very low category. Overall, 62% school students are in the moderate to very high stress category. These students require immediate counseling and support.



Graph 3 – Analysis on employees

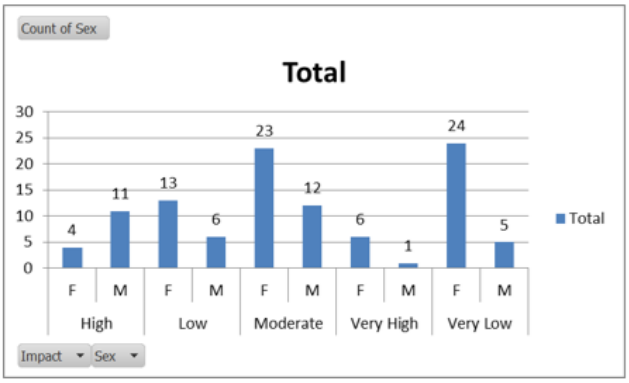
Data collected for 41 working professionals from four different Trivandrum based companies. The average age group is around 25 years. There were 28 females and 13 males. Graph 3 shows the analysis of data reveals that, there are 2 (5%) professionals out of 41 in the very high stress category, 9 (22%) out of 41 in the high category, 19 (46%) out of 41 in the moderate category, 11 (27%) out of 41 in the low category. Overall, 73% professionals are in the moderate to very high stress category. These professionals require immediate counseling and support.

VII. Effects Of Stress

Stress can have various effects on the individual as well as on the productivity on personal level or institutional level. Not only the individual suffers but the result may also be affected by absenteeism, exam performance, and overall result of the institution. While stress is typically discussed in a negative context, it also has positive value. Some individuals use stress positively to rise to the occasion and perform to their maximum. And hence the productivity rises. From the Institutions stand point, they may not be concerned whether the student experience low to moderate level of stress. Such levels may lead to low productivity. Stress usually prevents the person from doing things what he or she desires whereas demand refers to the loss of something desired. Stress is highest for the individuals who are uncertain as to whether they will win or lose and lowest for those who think that winning or losing is a certainty. But high levels of stress or even low levels sustained over a long period of time, can lead to reduced exam performance and their intervention is required. From the students' standpoint even, low levels of stress are likely to be perceived as undesirable. What we should consider as 'a positive stimulus that keeps the adrenaline running' is very likely to be seen as 'excessive pressure' by the teachers or parents. Stress has an emotional impact on productivity of students. Some people make the potential gain in stressful conditions while others are overwhelmed. The ability to handle stress depends upon perception, experience, family and social support, belief in locus of control etc.

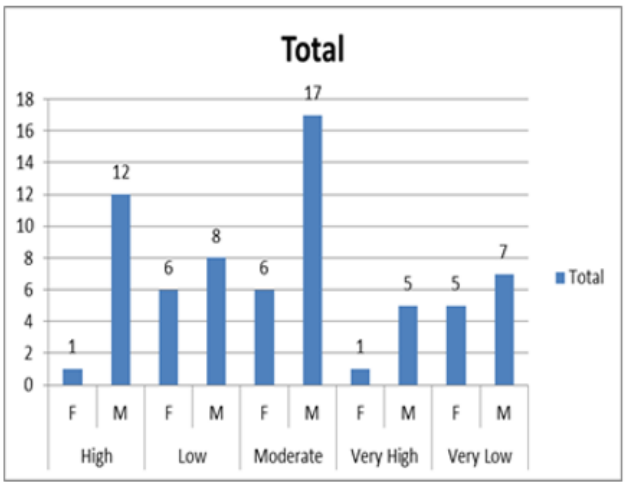
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VIII. Consequences Of Stress



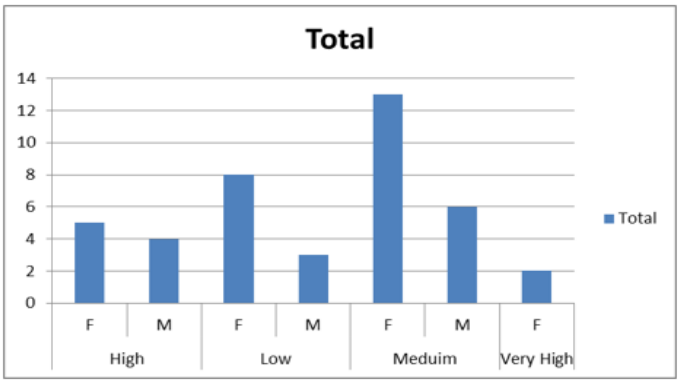
Graph 4 – Analysis on gender of college

The various physiological symptoms involved in stress are headache, high blood pressure, ulcer and loss of appetite. The psychological symptoms are self-pity, low self-esteem tension, anxiety, boredom and difficulty in making routine decisions and shame in facing others etc. The behavioral symptoms may include absenteeism, increased smoking or consumption of alcohol, fidgeting and sleeping disorders.



Graph 5 – Analysis on gender of school

The Graph 4, 5, 6 (College, School and working Professionals) show the split of male-female distribution in each category. Females are leading in all categories. But in the high category males are leading compared to females. So, stress factor is more in females than males.



Graph 6-Analysis on gender of employees

Practice Emotional Intelligence

Fig. 2 below shows how EI can help adjust our emotions to reduce the stress and help control the depression.

- *Understand and control self*

Every individual is going through a wave of emotions on each transaction. Each one of us would have the strength and weaknesses and that need to be identified. Seek help from counseling professionals if unable to identify.

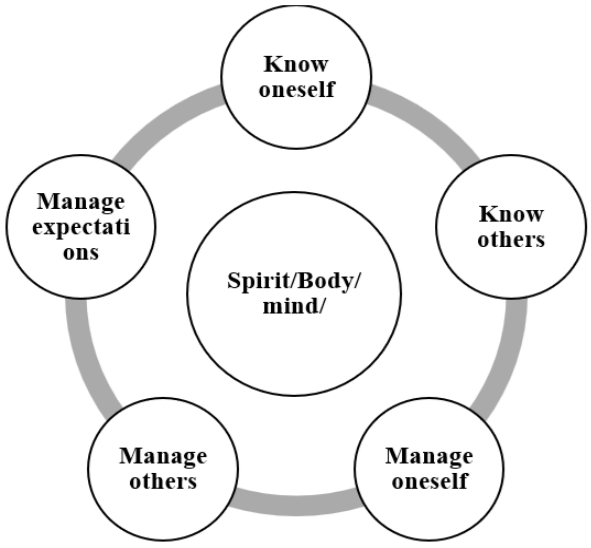


Fig. 2 – EI Cycle

- *Understand and manage others*

It might be because they are under stress. They have been going through a difficult time. Understanding emotions of others would help respond with better empathy.

- *Respond than react*

Reaction often is spontaneous action based on others actions or statements. Prepare ourselves to respond with facts, figures and compassion. Always prepare yourself to respond than react.

- *Manage Situations*

Understand the situations of both parties to ensure that you are in control of your emotions. This can save a lot of energy, time and make our life stress free.

IX. Findings And Conclusions

The study reveals that average 63% students/professionals combined are in the moderate to very high stress category. They require immediate counseling and support. We recommend this.

- Have more trained Emotional Intelligent Teachers/Councilors
- Eighth class onwards there should be one session weekly to teach Emotional Intelligence
- All Teachers/Councilors should be given basic Emotional Intelligent Training
- All Parents should be encouraged to attend Emotional Intelligent workshops

The fact is that stress is very bad. Stress is a major factor in almost all diseases today. We should not grow our children as furnaces of stress. Stress has to be controlled by practicing EI. Every school/college/working place should have an EI session once in a week. Especially EI trained teachers should conduct the sessions.

Understanding others and manage oneself and their surroundings is also significant to have a better job, better health and better family.

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