

Gain Resilience to Overcome Stress: Striding towards a Healthy Lifestyle

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Abstract—Today, humans have secured increased longevity but tend to have poor standards of health. The state of health one has in the later years of life is related to the lifestyle one has adopted throughout the lifetime. Thus, earning a good health is the need of the hour. With increasing stressors in life, achieving good physical and mental health has become a difficult task. But, how so ever difficult it may be, it is not impossible. The youth specially the undergraduate population, who are the future of our nation, need to identify the stressors, learn to cope with them and become resilient to achieve positive mental health. They should strive not only to live a longer life but a healthier one too.

One of the most common hazards to health is 'stress'. It comes from all realms of a person's life and demands resilience to face its challenges. The aim of the present research is to assess the experienced level of stress, identify the common and most important stressors such as family; type, structure, income; academics; social media (Facebook, Whatsapp); role overload; social pressures; relocating for studies; life in hostel, pg, with roommates among young women college students.

To develop an in depth understanding of the effect of these stressors, both quantitative and qualitative research methods have been employed. Quantitatively, two questionnaires were administered namely The Perceived Stress Scale; a self-report visual analog scale (VAS) global measure of perceived stress (Hill, Aldag, Chatterton, & Zinaman, 2005) and Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Connor and Davidson 2003) on 610 women undergraduate students chosen randomly from Daulat Ram College, University of Delhi. In addition to these questionnaires, information pertaining to various demographic variables was carefully collected to see their relation with the variables under study. The Demographic details included region/ native place, living arrangement, family structure, activities, social support, and religion etc.

Insight about the results has been gained by content analysing the qualitative responses of participants pertaining to the most stressful life event they have experienced within the past six months.

The rationale of the research is twofold - that college students need to recognise the causes behind stress as experienced by them, and, to learn to handle them efficiently. The coping mechanisms have also been identified by locating the factors/means through which the high scorers on resilience are able to handle stressors. The ways of coping stress, with the ever pervasive stressors, need be discussed with the college population. They need to learn how to become resilient i.e. resourceful, optimistic, purposeful and hardy for their own success vis-a-vis health. Further, they should spread awareness about good parenting, optimal usage of social media, inculcating passions, balancing between roles, achieving emotional independence, choosing the correct role models and so on to live a life which is challenging but not arduous.