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**The Impact of Academic Stress on Mental Well-being and Health among**

**Nazarbayev Intellectual schools Students and Teachers**.

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*Introduction:*

Studies have shown that excessive stress results in burnout, anxiety, and even disease. Mental health is a part of overall well-being, especially in school where students and teachers are regularly exposed to academic pressure.

In Nazarbayev Intellectual schools, the extreme academic intensity along with the pressure to perform well in exams and summative assessments affects the mental health of students. The educators, though heavily burdened in their workload as they instruct the students, also experience severe stress levels. Most schools lack proper mental health assistance and awareness. The aim of this research is to examine the interrelationship between well-being and academic stress, identify principal stressors, and provide realistic recommendations on improving mental well-being in NIS schools.

*Research Objectives:*

The main goal of this research is to examine the influence of academic stress on teachers and pupils and explore potential interventions in improving mental well-being. This research will seek to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the key academic sources of stress for NIS teachers and students?
2. How does school pressure influence the mental wellbeing of students and teachers in the long term?
3. What are students' and teachers' coping strategies currently, and how effective are they?
4. What structural reforms or mental health systems could be implemented to improve well-being?

*Personal Motivation:*

This research is important to me personally as a NIS student with first-hand experience of the psychological pressure that comes with academic pressure and expectations. As volunteer and leader, I have seen directly how stress affects students and teachers, not only their school performance but also their physical and mental well-being. Through this research, I want to assist in creating a healthier school environment where mental health is as important as academic success.

*Significance of the Study:*

The study will benefit NIS teachers and students most directly by providing them with an improved understanding of and coping with academic pressure. The study will also provide valuable information to policymakers and school administrators so that they can institute stress management and mental health programs. Parents and mental health professionals can also be helped by this study in treating students when not in school.

*Solution and Product:*

The final product of this research will be a general report on academic stress and mental health in NIS schools, which will include:

1. Findings on main academic stressors and their effects on mental health,
2. A discussion of coping strategies and effectiveness,
3. Recommendations for NIS school mental health initiatives, including stress management workshops and institutional policy reform,
4. A proposal for an official school-wide mental health support system, including counseling services and peer support systems.

This research will serve as a foundation to build improved mental health awareness within NIS schools, offering practical solutions in order to create a healthier, more supportive learning environment.

**CONTEXT**

            In recent years, mental health problems have become global, especially stress and anxiety are among the most common conditions affecting the quality of life. One of the approaches that has received widespread attention is Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), a structured program that combines meditation and yoga aimed at improving mental well-being. Originally developed by Kabat-Zinn in 1979, MBSR has been widely studied in connection with its impact on health, quality of life and social functioning. In an increasing level of stress among students as well as teachers at schools, inclusion of MBSR in schools can be an attempt towards pharmacologically dissimilar approach to well-being.

            On the global level, stress-related disorders have a serious effect on well-being and performance. Depressive and anxiety disorders, as calculated by the World Health Organization (WHO), amount to almost $1 trillion yearly in lost performance for the world economy (WHO, 2017). Persistent stress not just leads to burnout and emotional exhaustion but could also become an etiological risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, immunity compromise, and cognitive impairment. MBSR turns out to be a promising non-chemical solution to these problems. Churi et al. meta-analysis of 2015 illustrates the efficacy of MBSR in symptomatic relief for depression, anxiety and stress as well as an improvement in general well-being. Further, its use in management of chronic pain and emotional management is also documented by the systematic review of Kramer et al. (2016).

Apart from its individual benefits, MBSR can be used to form a more compassionate society by ensuring empathetic communication, stress tolerance, and better work-life balance. For instance, the use of mindfulness courses in the workplace has been found to increase productivity and reduce worker burnout (Good et al., 2016). At schools, incorporating mindfulness strategies in school curricula has been linked with increased concentration, academic performance, and control of emotions in students (Zenner et al., 2014).

            At the local level, the increasing population of students and professionals struggling with disorders due to stress requires mindfulness-based interventions. Studies in Kazakhstan indicate an increase in mental illnesses resulting from rapid urbanization, socio-economic considerations, and academic competition (Akilbekova, 2020). NIS students who study in competitive schools face immense academic pressures that lead to stress and emotional exhaustion. Similarly, teachers with heavy workloads and duties experience burnout. Lack of mental health awareness and structured psychological therapy in most Kazakhstani schools is also a contributing factor to the issue. Initial efforts to apply mindfulness courses for Kazakhstani schools and work environments have been successful, with pupils registering greater concentration, emotional stability, and lower stress levels.

            From a psychological point of view, MBSR is based on mindfulness practices that promote awareness and acceptance, helping people get rid of the usual stress-supporting thinking patterns. (Baer, 2003). From a socio-cultural point of view, the practice of mindfulness encourages intervention at the level of society, offering a holistic approach to collective well-being. These concepts show that MBSR is effective not only at the individual level but also contributes to the improvement of the general state of society. Brain research has ascertained that mindfulness practice enhances the prefrontal cortex, the area in the brain connected with emotion regulation and decision making (Hölzel et al., 2011).

           From a socio-cultural context, mindfulness developed from Eastern meditation practices, yet its contemporary application is widespread in secular and clinical contexts. Mindfulness practice promotes collective well-being through the creation of a culture of empathy, patience, and emotional sensitivity. Critics contend that commercialization of mindfulness has eroded its true nature, reducing it to a self-improvement industry and not a whole-person well-being practice (Purser, 2019).

           Despite these concerns, several pilot studies in schools around the world have demonstrated that mindfulness programs require little or no funding and can be integrated into standard school procedure with short-guided sessions. MBSR is used by schools that have recorded increased student motivation, teacher satisfaction, and lower misbehavior rates (Meiklejohn et al., 2012).

            This research project aims to study how MBSR can be adapted to local conditions while maintaining its basic principles. Integrating international data from Khuri, etc. (2015), Kramer et al. (2016), Bayer (2003), as well as local data on the prevalence of stress, the study will assess the possibilities of implementing awareness programs in Kazakhstan. The results will help bridge the gap between global strategies and local applications by offering recommendations for policymakers.

**AIMS**

This research will discuss the prime factors that can determine the existence of well-being among school students and ways through which enhancement can be affected and sustained. By finding out how physical, emotional, and social components contribute toward wellness, I will highlight practical ways through which the same may be absorbed into the lifestyle of all students to result in their living a healthy, balanced life.

1. How does physical activity, mindfulness practices, and social connections affect the student's overall well-being?
2. What is the role of stress management techniques in improving emotional health and academic performance?
3. What are some sustainable habits that students can adopt for long-term well-being and balance?

I predict that physical activity, mindfulness, and strong social support in concert will interact to have the most positive profound impact on well-being. In its essence, this study aims at empowering students to bring about improvements in the quality of life and building a community where everyone gets an equal opportunity to thrive.

**METHOD**

In order to understand the well-being and mental health of students and teachers, the researchers employed a combination of research methods which included surveys, data collection in the school environment and comparative analysis of the gathered data. Such methods were selected in a way that would be consistent with the study objectives, and at the same time would provide a comprehensive view of the topic.

  The first stage of the research involved administering surveys to 20 students and 30 teachers at the school. This group of students and teachers was chosen in order to include students and teachers of different ages and the level of academic and working challenges that they face in school and at work in order to make the sample more representative and relevant. The survey was comprised of questions that aimed at measuring stress levels, time spent on academic and work activities, emotional symptoms like fatigue, anxiety, or irritability, and ways that students and teachers use to deal with these problems (See Appendix no. 1). This method was selected because it is a fast way of collecting data from many people, and the data collected are quantifiable and can be compared. The questions were presented in a very structured manner so that only the most important information relevant to the study was emphasized. However, a major drawback of survey is that the participants may tend to give responses that they think are correct or may not respond to all the questions. To minimize this risk, the surveys were made anonymous so that the students and teachers could express themselves freely.

Following the survey segment, observations have been performed to seize actual-existence signs of pressure and mental fitness demanding situations at the school. Observations happened at some stage in ordinary college activities, together with lessons, smash durations, and extracurricular classes. The focus was on identifying visible signs of emotional stress, including issue concentrating, irritability, fatigue, or withdrawal from social interactions. This method allowed researchers to gather objective, conduct-primarily based facts, imparting insight into strain symptoms that won't were self-mentioned within the surveys. To ensure consistency and reduce bias, remark criteria were standardized, and observers underwent schooling to record findings correctly. While the technique supplied precious actual-world insights, it required considerable time and remained vulnerable to the subjective interpretation of behaviors via the observer.

By combining surveys, observations, and comparative evaluation, this examine supplied a comprehensive expertise of student’s and teacher’s well-being and mental health, balancing each subjective studies and goal indicators to offer a greater entire and dependable picture of the issue.

**RESEARCH**

**NIS Students’ and Teachers’ Well-being and Mental Health**

Introduction

In recent times, mental health and well-being have become a serious concern in colleges and schools among students and teaching staff alike. With increased pressures of academics and deadlines, growing social expectations pose a need for an exploration into the factors influential on mental health within school environs. This research is, therefore, trying to focus on experiences involving NIS students and teachers regarding mental health, based on stress level, coping strategies, and generally impacts brought in by school-oriented factors.

This paper therefore relies on certain survey data along with the interview of students and teachers from NIS, in order to gain an idea of the real scenario that students face in one of the most hectic academic environments. Further, I will analyze the results of the survey and the personal interview to understand the main factors that influence mental well-being and coping strategies among students.

Survey Results

The respondents, students at NIS in the main, were allowed some time to ponder over certain aspects of mental health. Respondents were mainly concentrated on aspects such as age of choice, occupation/activities, work/academic involvement, whether stressful, and successful coping mechanisms realized.

1. Age and Occupation

The overwhelming number of the subjects were teenagers and adults, and the age groups stood at 56% under 18 years old and 44% 18+. This is an indication that most of the subjects are in high school or early college years when academic pressures and transitions are most significant.

The distribution in the sample was as follows: high school students at 60%, working professionals at 40%. The selected distribution enables a proper balance between academic, early-career, and student populations that would enable a wide perspective on mental health across different stages of life.

2. Stress and Workload

In response to the question about academic workload, it was determined that 39% of the respondents reported studying or working for more than 8 hours per day. Little wonder that such hours made a good percentage, 45%, feel always overwhelmed. It further reveals the relation between high academic demands and stress, which is an important talking point when improvements in the support systems for students and staff are considered.

3. Prevalent Symptoms of Stress

Typical symptoms of stress were detected in the form of fatigue, loss of concentration, irritability, and sleep disturbances. 37% reported feelings of tiredness or lack of energy, and 29% complained of problems related to concentration. These results depict the challenges observed during examination times when the mental load is heavy.

4. Coping Mechanisms

As a result, from the emergence of stress, most of the respondents use different coping strategies, including dancing, walking, and other forms of exercises, watching TV, listening to music, as well as spending time with friends and family for relaxation Apparently, these activities provide emotional relief, though the effectiveness of these strategies varies across all subjects. The average rating of the effectiveness of current coping methods was 3.32 out of 5, suggesting that while students do use some methods of coping, there might be room for better ways to go about this.

*Interview Transcript: Dilnaz Muratkanova's research*

The interviewees shared their life experience and coping techniques in an interview to provide insight into the NIS students’ and teachers’ psychological status.

*Mr. Frederick, biology teacher of NIS:*

Q1: On a scale, how is your mental health throughout the school year?

"I can assess my mental health just by observing how stressed I am, how tired I get. Yeah, throughout the school year, sometimes you're a little stressed, sometimes you're fine. During the school year, I feel okay. My mental state during the school year, I can rate as pretty normal.". Not so stressed and not so good, but during the period of exams or summative assessments, I feel more anxious and stressed compared to other years."

*Mr. Morris, chemistry teacher of NIS:*

Q2: What is the biggest influence that school has on your emotional wellbeing?

Work-a lot to be done at school and a lot at home. Yes, during this time of the year, lots of snow and winter in itself is already stressful. When there's much work to be done and very little time for preparation and meeting deadlines, I think it is mostly academic load and maybe post-school fatigue.

*Dauletkanova Alina, an 11 D grade student:*

Q3: How often do you feel stressed as a result of studying?

"Not quite because I have very supportive colleagues, so not very stressful. Not so often, but sometimes because of homework. A lot of homework. I feel really tired. I feel anxiousness and stress during the school year pretty often because we quite often take our exams and assessments. So I will rate it as often."

*Kairbekkyzy Alina, an 11 D grade student:*

Q4: What are some of the ways/methods you use when you feel stressed?

Dancing, walking, listening to music, and talking with my friends and family. I go dancing, I go playing sports, and this makes me relax. I like to rest by watching TV and doing some workouts. Mostly, I prefer just to sleep and relax, try to do my hobbies or something like that to release stress. Watching videos and drawing help me.

Analysis and Conclusion

The trend in the results derived from the survey and the interviews with teachers and students of our school is that academic workload and pressure during the examination period are the causes of stress. It therefore follows that an overburdened schedule is among the major sources of stress among NIS students. Their personal experience therefore illustrates the general tendency of students trying to balance heavy school work activities on one side and hobbies, exercise, and socializing on the other side to combat stress.

The students and teachers dance, do sports, and find family support as their coping mechanisms. However, the relative moderate effectiveness of such coping methods may suggest that students require supplementary resources or structured mental health support at school. For instance, workshops about mindfulness and relaxation techniques, or increased access to counseling, would provide students with more effective means of dealing with stress.

Finally, the willingness to seek professional help varies, with many respondents indicating uncertainty about whether they would reach out to a counselor or psychologist. This highlights a need to normalize mental health discussions and make professional support more accessible and acceptable.

While NIS students and teachers are able to survive with stress, the need is strongly felt that the system at all levels of school needs restructuring toward less pressure and more substantial support for the mental health mechanisms.

***Links:***

[***https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx?prevorigin=Marketing&origin=NeoPortalPage&subpage=design&id=yVLbOR7jwkKAg3U1W3KN4zxD5ielhmVAmMqAV\_YelFFUOThSRzlYVldHVFZRM0ZMV1BFRktZU01FOS4u&analysis=false***](https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx?prevorigin=Marketing&origin=NeoPortalPage&subpage=design&id=yVLbOR7jwkKAg3U1W3KN4zxD5ielhmVAmMqAV_YelFFUOThSRzlYVldHVFZRM0ZMV1BFRktZU01FOS4u&analysis=false)**– forms survey**

[***https://youtu.be/k7eLPf2qwlo?si=1XkzZAgdhE0gLNH1***](https://youtu.be/k7eLPf2qwlo?si=1XkzZAgdhE0gLNH1)**– interview on youtube**

**“NIS STUDENTS AND TEACHERS Well-Being and Mental Health”**

**Conclusion and Discussion**

*Summary of Key Findings*

The study aimed to investigate teachers' and students' NAS and well-being in terms of academic pressure, physical and psychological impact, coping styles, and readiness to use mental wellness interventions. Results indicate a number of findings:

1. Academic pressure lies at the core of stress, most prominently during examination and summation assessment periods.
2. Stress is manifested in both physical and emotional behaviors, wherein there is tiredness, agitation, and insomnia exhibited by students.
3. The students utilize several coping strategies such as sports, music, and friendship, but these interventions prove to be sufficient.
4. The majority of the students are in doubt about whether to take advantage of professional mental health care, reflecting a clear stigma and unawareness.

*Interpretation of Findings*

The findings partially verify the initial hypothesis that NIS students suffer a great deal of stress as a result of pressures to study. The expectation that the students would have reported high stress levels was verified, specifically related to workload and deadlines. Unexpectedly, a function of season conditions—cold weather makes some participants feel poorer in terms of stress—was reported, indicating possible interdependence between environmental states and study stress.

Although previous research (Kahu, 2013, Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) has indicated that supportive settings diminish academic stress, the fact is still that despite peer support, academic workloads are still an endemic problem. This also indicates that stress can be diminished not only by social support but by systemic reform in scholarly expectations.

Another significant finding is the moderate effectiveness of coping strategies. While students participate actively in leisure and stress-reducing activities, they are insufficient to cancel out completely the incidence of stress but merely place added burden on the necessity of institutional intervention through formal well-being programs and stress management workshops.

The most unexpected finding was the significant proportion of students (43%) who were not sure whether they would receive professional mental health care. This indicates poor availability and awareness of psychological treatment, which needs to be improved by educational and destigmatization activities.

*Implications and Consequences*

*For Students and Teachers,* the research necessitates better education policy that can manage intense studying with the health of students. Educators must take into account flexible timetables, customized learning rhythms, and access to mental well-being services so that students can efficiently manage their workload.

*For Institutional Policy:*

* Schools must adopt formalized mental health programs using:
* Regular stress management workshops
* Greater school counselor numbers
* Stigma-decreasing mental health assistance awareness campaigns

For the Broader Educational Context:

The findings indicate that academic stress is not only an NIS phenomenon but also a worldwide phenomenon in competitive education systems. All future policy would do well to consider including the concept of well-being within school curricula, e.g., compulsory education in mental well-being and time management.

*Limitations and Future Research*

Although this study generates useful information, it is limited in sample size and demographic focus—the results might not be generalizable to all NIS students and teachers. In addition, seasonal influences and cultural tendencies toward mental illness were not investigated in depth, so more research in the future would be necessary.

*Future studies might investigate:*

* Longitudinal education stress studies to follow students' mental health over several years.
* Cross-national comparative studies of education systems to determine international trends in education stress.
* The extent to which environment (e.g., weather, school facilities) influences student happiness.

*Final Thoughts:*

This research emphasizes the need for a healthier school setting centered on psychological health as much as academic achievement. Although students are resilient with multiple coping methods, their chronic exposure to stress and ambivalence toward seeking help point to the need for some intervention at the school level. Through lessening academic stress, facilitating affordable mental health care, and cultivating culture of well-being, schools can make a healthy and productive environment of learning for future generations.

Implications of Further Research for the Global Problem

With the increase in global interest in mental health, ongoing research on MBSR and stress management interventions has the potential for contributing to both national and international discussions. Stress-related disorders impose a burden on millions of individuals worldwide, and identification of effective, inexpensive, and culturally relevant interventions has the potential for increasing well-being at a population level. Ongoing research may further influence education and work policies, with organizations being persuaded to adopt mindfulness programs within their institutions.

Reflection

Conducting this research has also deepened my understanding of the importance of mental health and well-being in academic and working life. I have also gained much knowledge about research design, namely the problems of data collection and methodological improvements needed. In addition, my personal perspective on stress management has shifted in that I now see mindfulness as not only a personal resource but as a widespread potential remedy to build emotional resilience in schools and workplaces.

In the future, I want to use more diverse data sources, a larger sample size, and combined methods in my research. I am also interested in conducting neurobiological research on mindfulness and its effects on brain function. By looking at these areas, future research may provide a more comprehensive and pragmatic understanding of mental health solutions.