

The Mental Stress Levels of Students Studying In Different Professional Courses

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No.162 , PH road, Chennai – 600077***Abstract:****Aim:**

Survey on the stress levels faced by students studying in different professional courses.

Objective:

To find out the mental stress levels of students in different professional courses.

Background:

Mental stress is commonly faced by students studying in different courses which leads to many adverse effects such as overeating, high BP, insomnia, depression and suicidal thoughts. Stress affected students may also turn to drugs and alcohol abuse which leads to social isolation and open to self harm. There are many reasons for stress faced by students which includes pressure from parents, fear of their future, monetary problems, academic competition, etc.

Reason:

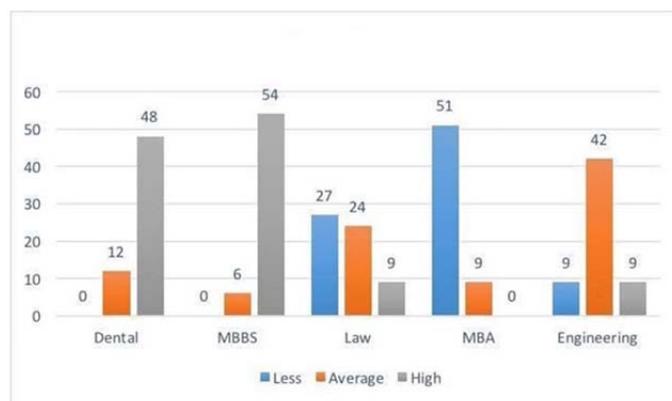
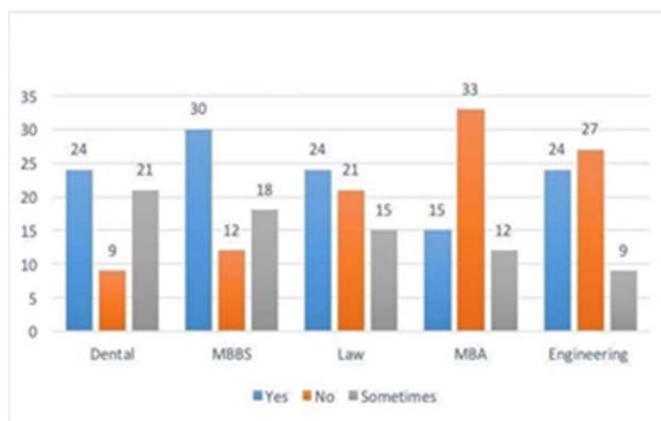
This survey is conducted in order to find out the courses having high levels of mental stress on students which can aid in management of counselling and to find out reasons for the high level of stress put on them so that it can be reduced or eliminated.

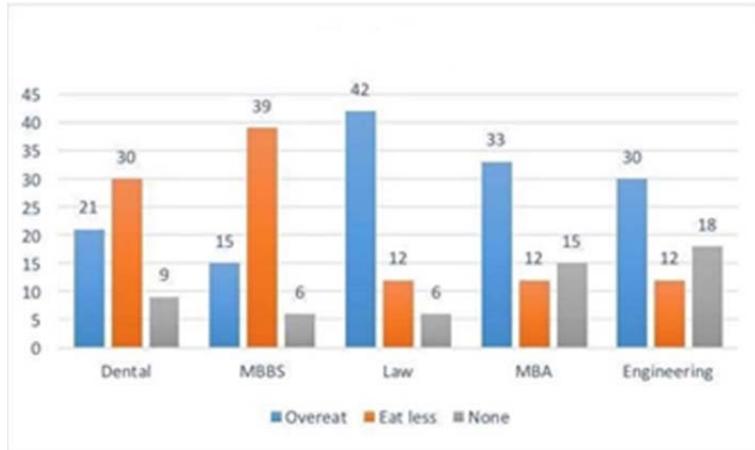
Keywords: stress, students, courses**INTRODUCTION**

Stress can be defined as 'any challenge to homeostasis', or to the body's internal sense of balance.[1] Many studies undertaken in many countries have shown that students studying in medical and dental courses experience higher stress levels. Increased stress levels result in an increased prevalence of psychological problems like depression, anxiety, drug abuse and suicide ideation.[2][3][4] Excessive stress results in an increased prevalence of psychological problems like depression, anxiety, substance abuse and suicide ideation.[5] This study was undertaken to rule out the main reasons for stress among the college students studying in the colleges of Chennai in the following courses-Engineering, Medicine, Dentistry, Law and MBA. The general characteristics of a person in distress are: being over-aroused; tense or unable to relax; touchy, easily upset or irritable; easily startled or fidgety, and demonstrating intolerance of any interruption or delay.[3] The studies performed in the colleges of India have shown the prevalence of stress among students in Engineering courses and highly among medical and dental students. Stress can also be associated with the number of examinations and the monetary status and surroundings of the students.

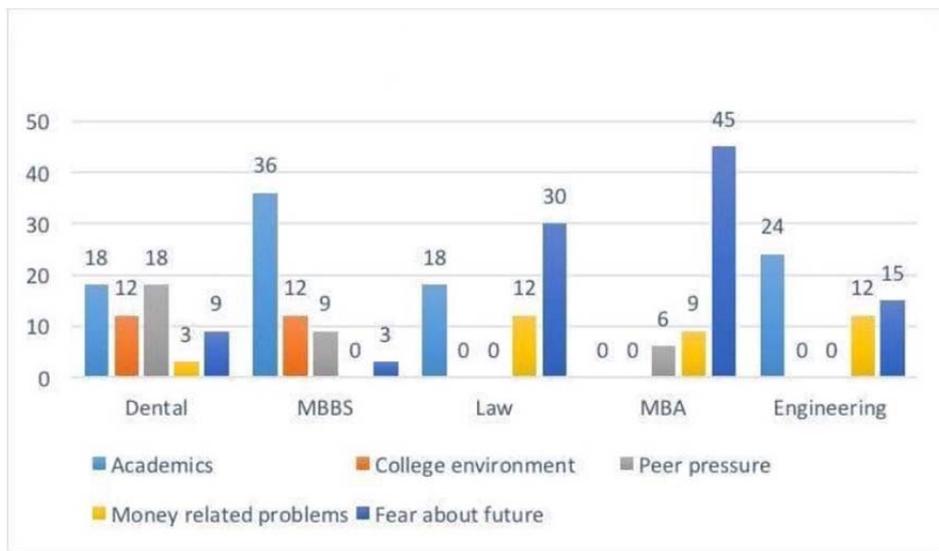
MATERIALS AND METHODS:

This study which is undertaken in the colleges of Chennai for the courses-Engineering, Medicine, Dentistry, Law and MBA. A questionnaire was framed and was given to the students belonging to various colleges and were asked to fill the form. Three hundred participants for the survey were randomly selected from various colleges in Chennai. There were 60 students from each course participating in the survey.

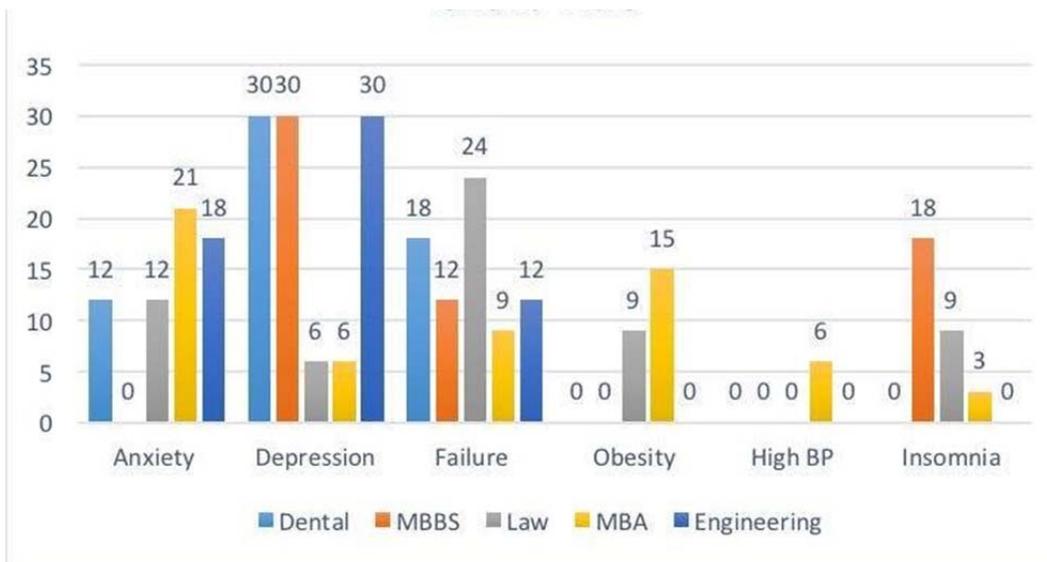
**Graph 1-Levels of Stress Among Students****Graph 2-Family Problems among Students**



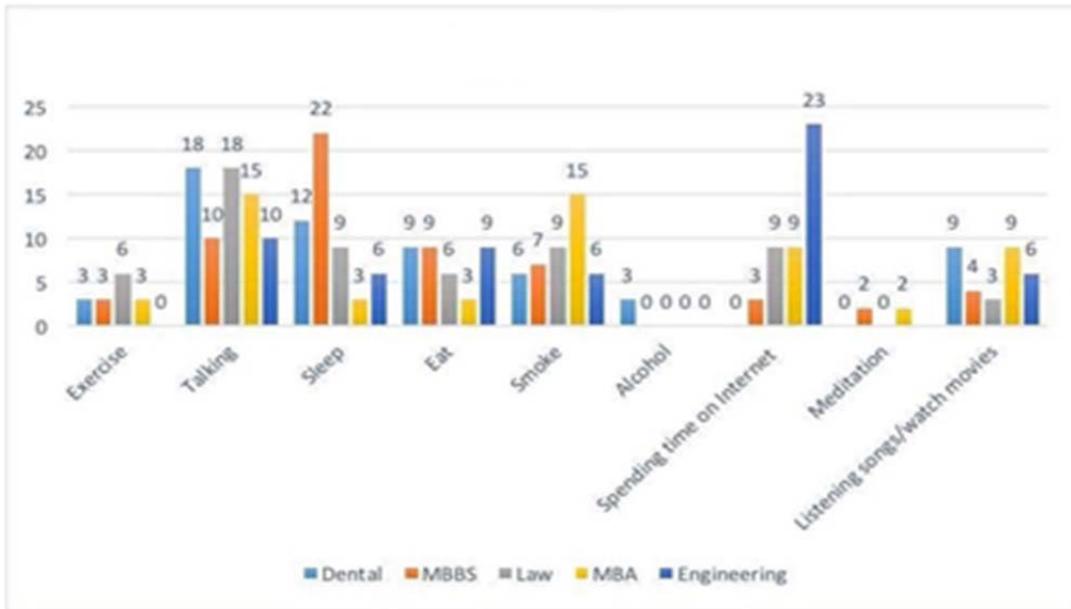
Graph 3-Eating Habits of Students.



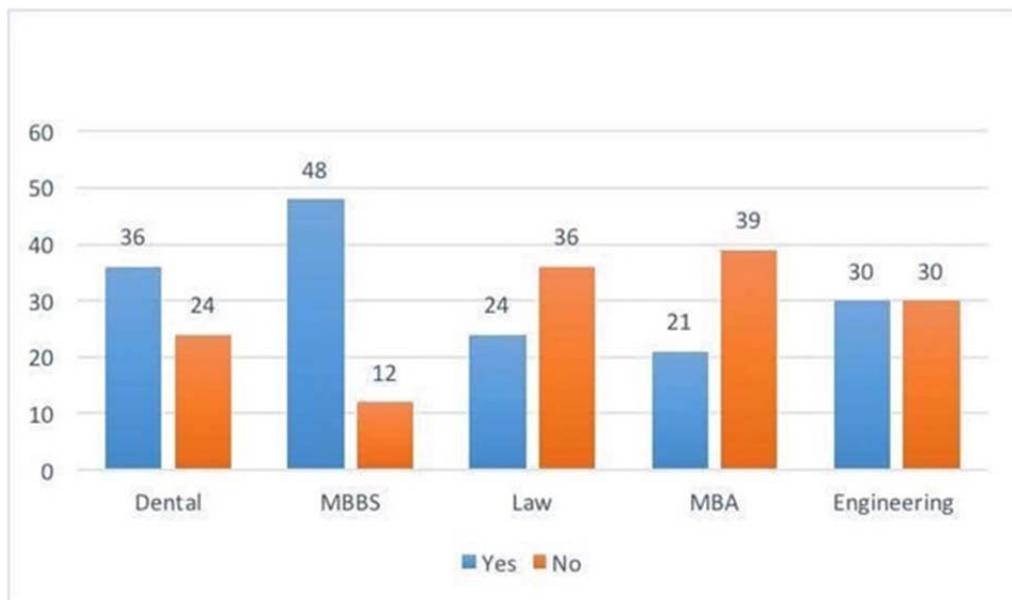
Graph 4-Factors Leading To Stress among Students



Graph 5-Effects of Stress on Students



Graph 6-Stress Relief Measures Taken By Students



Graph 7-Mental Depression among Students

RESULTS:

From Graph 1, It was found that MBBS and dental students are found to have very high levels of stress with MBA students having lowest stress levels followed by law. From Graph 2, it was found that MBBS students face more family problems while MBA students had least problems. From Graph 3, it was found that law students tend to overeat under stress while MBBS and dental students eat less. From Graph 4, it was found that academics and peer pressure are main reasons for stress in dental students, academics in the case of MBBS, fear about future in case of law and MBA and academics again in engineering students. From Graph 5 it was found that anxiety is the

highest form of stress in MBA students, depression in the case of dental and MBBS students, failure was the highest form of stress in law students and depression again in engineering. From Graph 6, talking was found to be the highest stress buster followed by sleeping in dental students, in MBBS and engineering, talking was again followed to be the highest stress buster followed by eating, law students have talking as the highest stress buster, talking and smoking was found to be high in MBA students. From Graph 7, the highest depression was found among MBBS students followed by dental students with MBA students having the lowest.

DISCUSSION

On the basis of the results, one can determine the severity of stress among medical and dental students. Academics was found to be the main reason for stress for them followed by peer pressure. The stress is high due to the pressure of work completion with their deadline such as assignments, projects, quota, etc. Other minor effects include obesity and insomnia. Engineering students were found to have average stress levels. Equal percentage of students were found to be depressed in medical, dental and engineering students. It is also noticed that dental and medical students are found to skip meals frequently while the other students are found to overeat. This may be due to over workload in students which make them eat less in order to keep in pace with their academics. Anxiety, depression and insomnia are the important effects of the stress faced by students. It is also found that talking with friends, sleeping and spending time on Internet were important stress busters with smoking and listening to songs/watching movies being low key stress busters. The stress faced by law and MBA students are very low when compared to others and stress may be concerned with money related problems and most importantly –fear about future. Talking with friends and smoking were found to be the important stress busters for law and MBA students.

CONCLUSION

From this study one can infer that the stress levels faced by students in dental and medical courses are very high and that proper counselling should be provided to the students

and prepare them to face the difficulties during the study of their course and make sure they deal with their problems. Students facing academic stress should be given counselling on how to manage and plan their work progress while peer pressure problems should be solved by giving them moral support and make sure they gain self confidence. The students with money related problems can be given advice and information on educational loans and scholarships and should be given guidance on how to approach and benefit from the loans. Students with fear about the future can be made to receive interactive sessions with great people who are successful and thereby I still a sense of confidence within the students.

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