

Association between Perceived Stress and the Academic Performance among Undergraduate Female Students in the University Of Peradeniya

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University students are particularly subjected to stressors. Student can be stressed due to different stressors such as academic, financial and health related issues and female students suffer considerably higher level of stress than male students. Stress is the bodies' reaction both neurologically and physiologically to adapt to the new condition. Stress can either negatively or positively influence the academic achievement. This study explores the association between perceived stress measured by Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) with current Grade Point Average (GPA), up to previous semester. Scores ranging from 0-13, 14-26 and 27-40 would be considered as low, moderate and high perceived stress. This cross-sectional study conducted among 450 third year undergraduate female students of the University of Peradeniya. Stress level and its correlation with current GPA of the students were analyzed using Pearsons' correlation analysis. The mean age of the respondents was 23.30(SD \pm 0.89). The mean perceived stress score and the GPA were 18.92(SD \pm 5.22) and 3.16 (SD \pm 0.33) respectively. The findings of the study showed that overall, the undergraduate students experienced moderate levels of stress (76.8%). The correlation between perceived stress and the GPA was statistically negative and not significant ($r = -0.006$, $P > 0.05$). Better stress levels in the Peradeniya compared to local and foreign universities, probably indicating the psychosocial relief provided by this garden university. Although the recent finding shows that undergraduate students were in moderate levels of stress, related research is encouraged to be conducted. This is important for the discovery of the current state of psychological well-being among undergraduate students.

Key words: Stress, Academic performance, PSS, GPA, Undergraduate students