

# [We believe it is important to look at the stress experienced](https://assignbuster.com/we-believe-it-is-important-to-look-at-the-stress-experienced/)

Background: We believe it is important to look at the stress experienced by students and the environmental factors that possibly contribute to it, as it has been proven that stress has an effect on an individual's psychological well being. Aims: The purpose of our assignment was to conduct research on whether students who work while at University perceive their experience of work as being more stressful as than those who do not work while at University. Methods: The data for this study was provided by the Organisational Behaviour lecturer, and is a culmination of results from questionnaires filled in by Organisational Behaviour students from our current class (Summer school 2011) as well as from previous years. The sample group was selected for convenience owing to the fact that time is very much a factor for the Summer school courses. There were a total of four questionnaires used, and it was up to each group to interpret the data set in relation to their chosen research question. Results: We found no significant difference between those who work and those who do not (p= 0. 7). We have also found that the experienced stress levels of the students in this study are average, however we did find a significant difference between working males and working females (p= 0. 02). No difference was found between non-working males and females (p= 0. 17). Conclusions: There are always going to be advantages and disadvantages of working whilst studying. I could not find a clear definitive answer as to whether students who work and study experience more stress than those who do not work. From the findings there is a link that having a higher demand workload can increase the levels of stress but it is entirely dependent on how each individual copes with it. Keywords: Stress; university students; well-being; sources of stress; coping; working student; not working student. IntroductionThe purpose of our assignment was to conduct research on whether students who work while at University perceive their experience of work as being more stressful as than those who do not work while at University. Within the report we were able to compare the amount of stress in students who work while at University VS students who do not work while at University. To do this we used data that was collected from other Organisational Behaviour students with the JDSC Scale. We were able to analyse the data to see if there were any differences in gender in regards to the experience of stress while working. We believe it is important to look at the stress experienced by students and the environmental factors that possibly contribute to it, as it has been proven that stress has an effect on an individual's psychological well being. The data for this study was a culmination of results from questionnaires filled in by Organisational Behaviour students from our current class (Summer school 2011) as well as from previous classes. There were a total of four questionnaires used, and it was up to each group to interpret the data set in relation to their chosen research question. Everybody experiences stress in their lives. Stress is a common term experienced by many students and it is usually expressed by the term Pressure. Stress is frequently used to describe a negative condition or emotional state. University students experience various forms of stress due to the academic work and job demand. University students might experience more stress if they are working at the same time than students who do not work. University is a big source of stress for a variety of reasons, like poor planning which often leads to crisis situations. The stress of everyday life in university shows itself in different ways: the expectations of making an A in every course, missing the assignment deadlines, the fear of doing poorly on tests, and worrying about failing. However, stress can become serious, if the students have to combine the two roles. The problem of stress is often related with psychological well being. Various research studies indicate a high correlation of stress between students who work whilst studying. Work requires a significant demand of time and energy and this can have an effect on an individual's stress levels. There is a link that having a higher demand workload can increase the levels of stress but it is entirely dependent on how each individual copes with it. Our findings have found that the experienced stress levels of the students in this study are average. There was no significant difference between those who work and those who do not, however we did find that females were more likely to talk about stress and the impact it had on their wellbeing, than males who did not like to discuss stress. No difference was found between non-working males and females. Literature ReviewDuring the course of our research we have found very little research on stress experienced by students in paid employment and students who are not. While there is an abundance of data on the stress-related experiences of students in paid term-time employment (Callander, 2008; Curtis ; Shani, 2002; Greenback, Hepworth ; Mercer, 2009; Manthei ; Gilmore, 2005), there is very little that can be found that looks into the reasons there might be differences of stress experienced by working and non-working students. With this in mind, we have extrapolated what we could with the data and research available to us in regards to stress experienced by working and non-working students while at University. Stress refers to 'any event in which environmental demands, internal demands, or both, exceed the adaptive resources of an individual or social system' (Lazarus ; Cohen, 1977). Responses to stress can be emotional, behavioral, cognitive or physiological. Reactions to stress are defined as 'dealing with problems and situations or contending with them successfully'. Those responses can be positive or negative depending on the situation and the coping skills that the individual has at their disposal. Stress is a physical, mental, or emotional response to events that causes bodily or mental tension. It is also an important concept with the potential to help us understand the mind-body relationship (Giancola, 2009). According to the transactional model of stress (Lazarus, 1966), stressors are defined as demands made by the internal or external environment that upset balance, thus influencing physical and psychological well-being and requiring actions to restore balance. When the stressor is seen as a 'challenge' by the individual, they are less likely to experience a negative stress reaction than if the stressor is interpreted as a 'threat' - something the individual believes themselves incapable of managing (Lazarus, 1966). Studying and working at the same time could be stressful to some students and challenging to others. College students are a group particularly prone to stress (D'Zurilla & Sheedy, 1991) for some of the following reasons; due to heavy study load, examinations and meeting deadlines for assignments (Kohn & Frazer, 1986). The most prominent social stressors were lack of time for family and friends and financial difficulties (Linn & Zippa, 1984), (Vitaliano et al. (1989). Also jobs outside of the university setting involve their own sources of stress. A frequently stated source of stress that most undergraduate working students experience is changing sleeping habits, increasing class workload and new responsibilities. These sources can be classified in four categories, which are interpersonal sources, intrapersonal sources, academic sources and environmental stressors (Abouserie, 1994), (Kamarudin et al. (2009). Stress can be good or bad, but it all depends on the quantity; excessive stress can restrict student's preparation, attention, and performance however positive stress can be beneficial to students by encouraging them to greatest performance (Pfeiffer, 2001). Students who work while studying are more likely to have breakdowns in relation to their marks and academic performance. Moreover, time management is considered to be the most essential skill to reduce stress related problems both at work and study. In order for students to meet the expectations in university, work or any other activity one risks both external and internal costs; risk to academic or career prospects, dissatisfaction, dishonour, rejection, guilt and blows to their self-esteem (Schafer, 1996). There are several studies that have been conducted with nurses and medical students which demonstrated that in the academic area heavy work load, examinations and meeting deadlines for assignments were the most common causes of stress (Evans ; Fitzgibbon, 1992), (Kohn ; Frazer, 1986). This is further proved by Ratana Saipanish (2003) who carried out a study on 686 medical students in the Faculty of Medicine and their findings have also indicated that academic problems were found to be a major cause of stress among all students. The outcomes showed that the most prevalent causes of academic stress were exam and test related. Noticeably, academic stress related to testing producing fear and/or anxiety, and many students in university seem to be more emotionally vulnerable and sensitive because of examinations. Academic pressure pervades the life of undergraduates and tends to influence negatively on their psychological and physical well-being, and their capability to accomplish coursework effectively (Darling et al. (2007), (Clark ; Rieker, 1986), (Felsten ; Wilcox, 1992). Stress associated with job demand and academic assignments has been connected to numerous undesirable consequences such as poor health, depression, lower levels of self-esteem and relationship conflicts (Greenberger, 1981), (Lesko ; Summerfield, 1989), (Aldwin ; Greenberger, 1987). Stress is predicted to be higher in female students than male, which is associated with low self-esteem, changes and frustration. A number of studies have shown that female students are prone to have higher behavioral, cognitive, emotional and physiological reactions to stress than their male peers. Different reaction to stressors has been found in a number of studies such as avoidance, religious and social support and positive appraisals (Mattlin et al. (1990). These reactions could be classified as: emotional reactions (fear, anxiety, guilt, anger), behavioural (crying, abuse of self and others, smoking), cognitive (their strategies and appraisal for stressful situation) and physiological reactions (sweating, gain or loss weight and body aches) (Misra et al. (2000). In today's society it is not uncommon for students to juggle the demand of multiple roles; it is generally seen as a normal part of university life. Multiple roles are becoming more complex and dealing with them can lead to increased stress and strain on your psychological well-being. Even though studies show that combining two roles is demanding and has effects on individuals' psychological well-being, it is evident that not all people react to these demands in the same way (Swanson, Broadbridge ; Karatzias, 2006).