



## **BSc (Hons) Psychology**

### **International College of Business & Technology**

Cardiff School of Management – Cardiff Metropolitan University – UK

A Study of

### **Gender differences in Academic Stress and Academic Pressure among students aged 18-23 in Sri Lanka**

By

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**This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfillment  
Of the requirements for the degree of  
BSc (Hons) Psychology).**

**DECLARATION**

This work is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of BSc (Hons) Psychology and has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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I acknowledge that the above named student has regularly attended the meeting, and actively engaged in the dissertation supervision process.

Signed                      - Stephanie Gunaratne (Supervisor)

Date                        - 22.09.2021

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### Abstract

Nearly 75% of students experience academic stress and pressure across the globe. There can be gender differences in perceiving and managing academic stress. The present study explored to identify the gender differences among the school and college students who experience academic stress and academic pressure. The sample consists of 58 students in total aged 18-23, 39 female students and 19 male students. They were chosen by purposive and snowball sampling method and the data was collected by an online based survey using the Google forms. Students were assessed with; Demographic questionnaires, Academic Stress Scale (ASS) and Academic Pressure Scale (APS). The collected data was analysed using IBM SPSS 25 version. To assess the hypotheses; Pearson correlation, Independent t-tests and ANOVA test were conducted. The findings of the study revealed that almost 45% of the participants in Sri Lanka experience academic stress and there is a strong positive correlation between academic stress and academic pressure. But, there were no gender differences among the sample in academic stress and academic pressure. Also, there were negative significant relationships between other demographic variables and academic stress. The students stated the major academic stressors were high workload, peer pressure and worrying about grades or results. Thus, every student who experience academic stress are prone to psychological disorders, there should be implications developed in order to maintain a stress-free, positive school and college environments.

*Keywords:* academic stress, academic pressure, gender, students

## **Introduction and Literature Review**

On average across the world, 66% of students report feeling stressed (Pascoe, Hetrick & Parker, 2020). Thus, stress has become a fundamental topic among students. Stress is an emotional and mental tension which can lead to confronting consequences (Kristen, 2012). Stress is divided into two categories; distress which can end up in unfavourable physical and mental outcomes whereas eustress is the positive consequences by the stressors (Nelson & Simmons, 2004).

Nearly 10-20% of school students face stress in relation to academics (Luo et al., 2020). Academic stress is defined as ‘the stress faced by the students in terms of assignments deadlines, tests, expectations from parents and teachers to excel in their academic work and the competitions among the classmates’ (Denise & Judith, 2018 p.119). Academic pressure is also a notable issue faced by almost all the school students (Hasim, 2003). There was a positive correlation between students’ academic stress and psychiatric problems found from a study conducted in Indian context (Deb, 2015). Prabhu (2015) reported that the students in private sector schools face more academic pressure than government sector schools. The added stressor for private school students is finance, because they pay higher amounts than government school students.

Students in the Asian culture reported ‘setting of the classroom’ as a paramount stressor (Huan et al., 2008) and there also can be gender differences reported when studying the perception of academic stress and academic pressure of school students (Jones, 1993). Allen and Hiebt (1991) argued that women not only face higher academic stress but are also prone to depression because most of them described higher number of depressive experiences that they faced in their lives. Some of the academic stressor are social pressure, transition to higher education, transition of psychosexual stage, socioeconomic status, parents’ education level and in the present world COVID-19 crisis.

### **Social pressure**

In Asia, only 4% of 200 million students will get an opportunity to enter universities after successfully finishing their primary education (Lin & Chen, 1995). This renders a high competition among students that can result in academic pressure to both students and parents. In order to enter such universities and maintain a higher standard of life, parents pressurize their children in their early lives. The pressure continues throughout the children's lives as a long race. All of this happens because most Asian parents think that 'this is the only way to fit in the society with good quality of life and fulfil their wishes' (Killen, Kim, McGlothlin & Stangor, 2002). Schools and education systems are pushed by the parents' demands to prepare even more tougher examination papers and conduct tests often to keep the students warmed up (Lin, 1993).

### **Stress in adolescence life**

The most critical stage in one's life span is adolescence. Almost all individuals face tremendous changes physically, psychologically, emotionally and cognitively (Byrne & Mazanov, 2002). The origin of the stressful experiences in an adolescent's life can flow from normal events like change of school, interpersonal problems or fight with a classmate/parent to non-normative cases like exposure to sexual violence (Grant et al., 2003). Comparatively, the adolescents in current generations build up more coping strategies to different stressors than in older generations. In spite of, the adolescents who were unable to cope up resulted in suicide, substance use and depression (De Anda et al., 1997).

### **Gender differences in Academic stress**

Academic stress led the way to lower self-esteem among many students which in turn impact on the confident level, self-efficacy, depressions and suicidal thoughts (Nikitha et al., 2014). Liu and Lu (2011) found that though students at high school face stressful situations some of them were able to build up coping strategies and overcame the situations. This is explained by the theories of resilience. Chinese high school students face higher academic stress than the Western school students (Wu & Sun, 2008).

The relationship between gender and academic stress has been explained for decades (Eitle, 2005). There is still a gap found between girls performing better than boys in academic performances and they were ethnic backgrounds, perceptions towards the subjects to assume them as gender-related subjects, attitudinal and environmental factors. (Chambers & Schreiber, 2004). While Agarwal (2011), highlighted that there are no differences in gender of the students who experience academic stress. In Contrast, few studies show similar gender



moderations in girls and boys of high school perceiving academic stress (Krenki, Aunola & Nurmi, 2009). According to the moderational-stress reactivity model, it was revealed that girls responded more academic stress than boys (Hankin et al., 2007).

### **Academic pressure**

The extant literature revealed that academic pressure is multi-dimensional and from parents, schools, teachers, peers and society (Young, 1993). Students face tremendous pressure at school to succeed in academic (Bossy, 2000). Even the pressure was driven by the society in Japan which imposes more expectations on students. The theory of conformity (Bernheim, 1994) explains when parents try to fit in the group influenced by social norms of educating their children. Parents also learn and believe that the success of education for their children is to enter high class universities in the state (Japan Times, 1999). Children belong to many groups, mainly to the family group. The concept of groupism works with the Asian mothers who strive harder to educate their children and try to fit them in the culture (Stevenson & Lee, 1990). White (1993) found that Asian mothers work more for their son's academic achievement than their daughters. All these aspects of academic pressure draw them to various negative psychological impacts such as dislike to school, violent burnouts, lack of confidence, anxiety, depression, suicide and bullying (Japan Magazines of Education, 1995). Meanwhile, the students not only face psychological problems due to academic pressure but also physical, social and emotional problems (Mitchell, 2016).

### **The role of socioeconomic status**

Among some of the demographic factors which could affect the students' academic stress is the socioeconomic status (SES; Amrai et al., 2011) and still prevalent in certain areas when considering at individual level (Cappraro & Wiggins, 2000). The students with greater SES level perform even more better than the less SES level (Garzon, 2006). This problem is more reflected among secondary level students (Trusty, 2000). There was a positive correlation found between students' university grade points and the demographic factors like gender, ethnicity and family income (Betts & Morrel, 1999). It is also revealed that disturbed family background and peer pressure can be the major academic stressors (Huli, 2014). The study conducted by Ghatol (2017) found that students from joint family score high in anxiety scale than from nuclear family. These findings suggest that a pleasant, positive and supportive environment from teachers and parents is much needed for the students to excel in

their academics. The more the involvement of parents on their child's academic, the more the child achieves higher academic goals in life (Goddard, 2003).

### **The role of parents' educational level**

The students of educated parents score higher in tests compared to students of medium or uneducated parents, because educated parents can communicate well, teach and revise the lessons taught at school (Krashen, 2005). According to the theory of educational productivity proposed by Walberg in 1981 it was found that the three main factors determining the academic performance without or less academic stress and pressure are aptitude, instruction and environment (Roberts, 2007). Most of the students experience higher academic stress while taking exams, worrying about class ranking and competitions (Rawson, Bloomer & Kendall 1999). Fairbrother (2003) highlighted those academic stressors were poor interpersonal relationships, competitions, fear of failures and self-expectations.

### **Transition into higher education**

College is a stressful stage in students' life because it is totally a new experience moving from school life to college life. Moreover, students who join international colleges/universities face much more complications in learning the new language rather than preparing for their semester examinations (Mori, 2000). Thus, these stressors can take up the role of increasing the probability of physical and mental illness (Pearlin, 1999). In a study both American and international students described the academic stressors in terms of coping strategies, financial burdens, parental pressures and competitions among batch mates (Ranjitha, McKean, West & Russo, 2000).

### **COVID-19 context**

Nowadays all the educational sectors around the world talk more about the academic stress and mental well-being of the university and school students during this pandemic situation faced because of the arising Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19), as this situation has contributed highly as one of the major academic stressor to all the school and college students around the present world (Nicola et al., 2020). The Sri-Lankan authority and government had to impose lockdown and self-isolation in order to prevent the spread of the disease and this had made people to experience the feeling of fear and anxious (Ornell et al., 2020). The students had to study online using the electronic devices. Thus, it was a new learning approach for the students and most of them had great difficulty in accessing the online classes

due to network connection and various other problems. School and college students were at the stage of moving into the next segment in their lives but after the pandemic they had to meet a lot of issues such as financial crisis, lack of academic requirements, low standard of life, low socioeconomic status and lack of job opportunities (Rodriguez, Pantaleon, Dios & Falla, 2020). Thus, this made them to stop and think about the next step in life. Therefore, students decide to take up their own lives. In addition to the new cases of COVID-19 victims, the cases of suicide also increased (Mamun and Griffiths, 2020).

### **The present study**

The rationale of the present study is to identify the gender differences especially among the students who are aged between 18-23. The study by Gunawardena (2015) stated that schools in Sri-Lanka lack of proper learning facilities, poor management, lack of proper instruments and lab facilities, lack of career awareness programs and coordination. Almost 35% of mothers in Sri-Lanka undergo domestic violence and abuse which directly affects the children psychologically. This also can be considered as a vital academic stressor for the children (Jayatilleke et al., 2010).

The students of age 18-23 include the college freshmen and students facing their Advanced Level Examination which is considered to be one of the turning point examination in students' life according the education system in Sri-Lanka. This age period is known as post-adolescence or young adulthood stage (Maguire, Ball & Macrae, 2001). The students entering or have already entered college would face several stressful situations like unable to balance love life and education, use of substances, assignment deadlines and crime (Mohler, Lee & Wechsler, 2003). According to Erik Erikson's theory of psychosexual developmental stages, individuals of age 18-19 face problems in role confusions and identity whereas 20-23 aged individuals experience issues related intimacy and loneliness (Maree, 2021). Thus, the present study aimed to examine the relationship between academic stress and academic pressure in academic performance, paying special attention to the gender differences from this age group.

### **Aims of the study**

The aims of the study are to explore the gender differences in Academic Stress and Academic Pressure among the students of age 18-23 who reside in Sri Lanka. The academic stress and pressure variables analysed in this study were self-expectation, despondency from teachers and parents, workload, worrying about subject grades, difficulties in subject concentration, parental pressure, role played by self-confidence, peer pressure, attitudes of teachers, language fluency, feelings of inferiority, frustration and subject results. Further, the demographic background of the students are also analysed in terms of socio-economic status, educational level and professions of parents, income level, learning environment at school and home, learning resources and facilities of accessing the education.

### **Research questions**

1. Is there any significant relationship between academic stress and academic pressure among the students of age 18-23 in Sri Lanka?
2. Are there any gender differences among the students who experience Academic Stress and Academic Pressure?
3. Are the students' academic pressure and stress influenced by family income?
4. Are the students' academic pressure and stress influenced by parents' education levels?
5. Are the students' academic pressure and stress influenced by learning environment?

### **Hypotheses**

These are the five hypotheses derived from the research background;

Hypothesis 1- There is a significant positive relationship between the academic stress and pressure among the students of age 18-23 of Sri Lanka

Hypothesis 2- There is a significant positive relationship in gender differences, girls face greater stress than boys in academic stress and pressure among the students of Sri Lanka

Hypothesis 3- There is a significant negative relationship between family income in the academic stress and pressure among the students of Sri Lanka

Hypothesis 4- There is a significant negative relationship difference between the parents' education levels in the academic stress among the students of Sri Lanka

Hypothesis 5- There is no directional relationship between the learning environment in the academic stress and pressure among the students of Sri Lanka

## **Methods**

### **Participants**

Participants were 58 students aged between 18-23 who were to face the GCE Advanced Level Examination in the upcoming year and college freshman in Sri Lanka. The sample consists of 19 males and 39 females and they were chosen using purposive sampling method. The survey link was shared to the known potential participants and the snowball sampling method was used to expand the sample. The survey link was shared via social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and email. As the survey questionnaires was administered in English therefore the students who were capable of reading and writing English fluently was sampled and considered as an inclusion criteria. Also, the students who did not range between 18-23 were excluded from the study (see Appendix A).

### **Procedure**

The data collection completely was conducted by online using Google forms via social media due to the prevailing pandemic COVID-19 situation all over the world. The researcher sent the survey link to known potential participants and they shared with other potential participants in their schools and colleges. The participants had to open the survey using the link sent with the research details as a message which will take around 15-20 minutes to complete. Once the link is opened, the researcher attached the invitation paragraph, participant information sheet, demographic questionnaire, academic stress scale, academic pressure scale and followed by a debriefing sheet. The invitation paragraph addressed the background of the research (see Appendix A).

Then the information sheet which clearly explained the purpose, aims, objectives, procedures, why do they fit in the sample, results, benefits and risks without any deception of the study (see Appendix B ). Withdrawal consent and foreseeable risks were explained in the information sheet so that the participants know the way to withdraw from the study at any time exclusion after pressing the submit button at last. The participants were asked would they agree even after reading the information. If yes, the next would be opened and they had to fill in the questionnaires. Through the participation continuation, it was assumed as

voluntary participation. No personal details and identifiable details were required to be filled by the participants in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity.

The participants who proceeded had to answer the demographic questionnaire. The next page of the survey was Academic Stress scale and then at last Academic Pressure scale. Upon the completion of the questionnaire, the participant was led to a debriefing sheet (see Appendix F ) which summarized about the study. After reading the debriefing sheet if they had to submit the answers, they were able to submit by clicking on the ‘submit’ button’.

## **Measures**

### **Demographic questionnaire**

The participants who proceeded had to face the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C ). It consisted of 15 questions about age group, gender, birth country, number of members in family, parents’ employment type, parents’ highest level of education, transport used to travel to school/ college, opinion about family income, distance between school/college and home and supportive learning environment.

### **Academic Stress Scale (ASS)**

Kim (1970) developed the Academic Stress scale (ASS) to assess the level of academic stress. The current study will adopt the ASS version which was modified by Kaliappan and Rajendran (see Appendix D). It includes 35 questions under 4 sub sections as worrying about grades, despondency from teachers/ parents, self-expectation and workload. The Academic Stress scale (ASS) will suit Sri Lankan context as it is successfully used by researchers in other South Asian Countries (Philips & Halder, 2020). After the elimination, the reliability score of the scale is 0.8 (Rafael, Francisco & Jose, 2018). Higher the academic stress score is the indication of high stress. ASS has an acceptable internal consistency was proven by the construct validity test (Izzati, Tentama & Suyono, 2020), validity and reliability (Dalia & Gabriel, 2015).

### **Academic Pressure scale (APS)**

Academic Pressure Scale is an assessor with 35 items which was developed by West and Wood (1970). In the current study, shortened version of APS which was used by Jones (1993) to assess the gender differences among students with only 8 items will be used to

estimate the academic pressure. Higher the academic pressure score is the indication of high pressure. The retest reliability of APS is 0.78 (Coney & West, 1979). (See Appendix E)

### **Ethics**

The research was only conducted after the approval of Ethics Review committee of Cardiff Metropolitan University (CMU). The approval reference number of ethics is UG-4206. The confidentiality and anonymity of the research was maintained throughout the process of data collection and after the research has been conducted too. The data was stored anonymously in a password protected laptop. The data was accessible only by the research supervisor and the researcher. The participants were explained about the background, aims and objectives of the study in the information sheet. There was no any direct harm caused to the participants and if any participant faced any significant stress risks, they were guided to support services (details were mentioned in the information sheet). Each participant was only identified by the reference numbers and none of their personal details was collected for the research purpose. The participants were given all the rights to withdraw from the study at any time and they were given all the guidance about withdrawal in the information sheet.

### **Analysis and statistics**

The researcher conducted descriptive and inferential statistical analyses using the IBM SPSS version 25 software. Initially, descriptive statistical analyses were conducted to get a clear picture of the data collected and to identify the means of the data sets. Descriptive statistics were conducted to show the frequencies of each variable; age group, gender, academic stress, academic pressure, family income level, supportive learning environment, father's and mother's educational level. Then, the inferential statistical analyses were conducted in order to test the five hypotheses derived from the research background.

### **Results**

#### **Preliminary analyses**

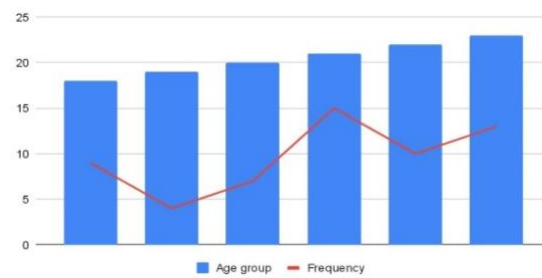
The data was cleaned after exporting to SPSS. The scores for academic stress and academic pressure were reverse scored and the dependent variables (gender, Parents' education level) were converted to numerical values using the keys (Appendix G). The assumptions for to run Pearson's correlation tests were met.

#### **Demographic statistics**

The mean age of the participants was 9.6 years with a standard deviation of 1.70 whereas most of the participants were in the age group of 21 (n=15) and there were only 4 students in the age group of 19 (see Figure 1 and Table 1). Most of the participants were females (n=39) than males (n=19). Most of the participants' father's education level was college while most of the mothers had a level of school education. Same number of students reported that their fathers and mothers have university level of education (see Table 1).

**Figure 1**

*Descriptive analysis of participants' age*



### Academic stress and pressure statistics

The means of academic stress and pressure scores are 108.07 and 25.12 respectively. According to the scores of academic stress scale, almost 45% of the participants experience academic stress and 51.7% of the participants experience academic pressure at schools and colleges. Out of 58, 31 reported that their family income is good and 27 reported that their family income is satisfactory (see Table 3). Most of them reported that they have a good (n=55) supportive learning environment. 3 out of 58 reported that they have no supportive learning environment (see Table 2 and 4).

| Baseline characteristics | N  | %    |
|--------------------------|----|------|
| <b>Gender</b>            |    |      |
| Male                     | 19 | 32.8 |
| Female                   | 39 | 67.2 |
| <b>Age</b>               |    |      |
| 18 years                 | 9  | 15.5 |
| 19                       | 4  | 6.9  |
| 20                       | 7  | 12.1 |
| 21                       | 15 | 25.9 |



|                          |    |      |
|--------------------------|----|------|
| 22                       | 10 | 17.2 |
| 23                       | 13 | 22.4 |
| Father's education level |    |      |
| University               | 11 | 19.0 |
| College                  | 30 | 51.7 |
| School                   | 17 | 29.3 |
| Mother's education level |    |      |
| University               | 11 | 19.0 |
| College                  | 22 | 37.9 |
| School                   | 25 | 43.1 |

**Table 1***Descriptive statistics of the variables***Table 2***Descriptive statistics of the variables*

| Baseline characteristics        | mean   | sd    |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------|
| Academic stress                 | 108.07 | 25.16 |
| Academic pressure               | 25.12  | 7.76  |
| Family income                   | 1.47   | 0.503 |
| Supportive learning environment | 1.05   | 0.223 |

**Table 4***Descriptive analysis of supportive learning environment*

| Family income |           |         |
|---------------|-----------|---------|
|               | Frequency | Percent |
| Valid         |           |         |
| Good          | 31        | 53.4    |
| Satisfactory  | 27        | 46.6    |
| Total         | 58        | 100.0   |

| Supportive learning environment |           |         |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|
|                                 | Frequency | Percent |
| Valid                           |           |         |
| Yes                             | 55        | 94.8    |
| No                              | 3         | 5.2     |
| Total                           | 58        | 100.0   |

**Gender differences in Academic stress and pressure**

In order to study the hypothesis 2, an independent t-test was conducted. The test was found to be statistically not significant,  $df(56)$   $t = -.191$ , .958

**Table 5**

for academic stress and  $t=0.779$ , .409 for academic pressure, the p values are .958 and .409 which means greater than .05, suggesting that this is a negative relationship and there are no gender differences between academic stress and academic pressure among the sample, thus hypothesis 2 is rejected (see Table 5).

|                   | F    | Sig. | t     | Df |
|-------------------|------|------|-------|----|
| Academic stress   | .003 | .958 | -.191 | 56 |
| Academic pressure | .691 | .409 | .779  | 56 |

### Dependent Variables Analyses

To assess the relationship between academic stress and academic pressure, Pearson's correlation test was conducted. To assess the relationships between the demographic variables, independent t-tests were conducted.

### Academic stress and academic pressure

To assess the significant relationship between academic stress and academic pressure among the students of age 18-23 in Sri Lanka, a Pearson product-moment correlation explored the relationship between Academic stress ( $M=108.07$ ) and Academic pressure ( $M=25.12$ ) among the participants and found the results to be statistically significant,  $r(0.63) = .00$ , the p value is .00 which means lesser than .05, indicating a strong positive relationship between academic stress and academic pressure among students and hypothesis 1 is accepted (see Table 6).

**Table 6**

*Correlations for academic stress and academic pressure.*

|                   |                     | Academic stress | Academic pressure |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Academic stress   | Pearson correlation | 1               | .630**            |
|                   | Sig. (2 tailed)     |                 | .000              |
|                   | N                   | 58              | 58                |
| Academic pressure | Pearson correlation | .630**          | 1                 |
|                   | Sig. (2 tailed)     | .000            |                   |
|                   | N                   | 58              | 58                |

### Family income among students facing academic stress and academic pressure.

In order to study the hypothesis 3, ‘Are the students’ academic pressure and stress influenced by family income?’ ,an independent t-test was conducted. The test was found to be statistically not significant,  $df(56)$   $t = -.573$ , .051 for academic stress and  $t = -2.8$ , .06 for academic pressure, the p values are .051 and .066 which means greater than .05, suggesting that there is a negative relationship between family income among students facing academic stress and academic pressure and hypothesis 3 is accepted (see Table 7).

**Table 7**

*Independent test for family income in students facing academic stress and academic pressure.*

|                   | F     | Sig. | T     | df |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|----|
| Academic stress   | 3.980 | .051 | -.573 | 56 |
| Academic pressure | 3.514 | .066 | -2.8  | 56 |

### Parents’ education levels among students facing academic pressure and academic stress

To analyse hypothesis 4, the students’ academic pressure and stress influenced by parents’ education levels, a One-way analysis of variances compared the measures of mother’s educational level and father’s educational level to academic stress. This analysis was found to be statistically not significant,  $F = (2, 55) = 2.06$ , .544, the p values are .137 and .584 which means greater than .05. Further, Tukey HSD indicated that there is a negative significant relationship between parents’ education levels and academic stress among students and hypothesis 4 is accepted (see Table 8).

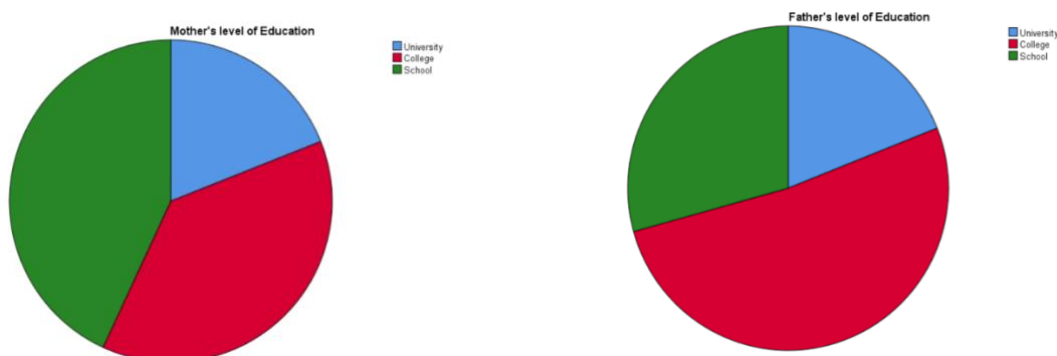
**Table 8**

*ANOVA test for academic stress among parents’ education levels among the sample.*

|                   | df    | F     | Sig. |
|-------------------|-------|-------|------|
| Academic stress   | 2, 55 | 2.063 | .137 |
| Academic pressure | 2, 55 | 0.544 | .584 |

**Figure 2**

*Father’s and mother’s education levels*



### Learning environment among students facing academic pressure and academic stress

In order to study the students' academic pressure and stress influenced by learning environment, an independent t-test was conducted. The test was found to be statistically not significant,  $df(56)$   $t = -.112$ , .728 for academic stress and  $t = -.810$ , .055 for academic pressure, the p values are .728 and .055 which means greater than .05, suggesting that there is no directional relationship between learning environment among students facing academic stress and academic pressure and hypothesis 5 is accepted (see Table 9).

**Table 9**

*Independent test for learning environment in students facing academic stress and academic*

|                   | F     | Sig. | T     | df |
|-------------------|-------|------|-------|----|
| Academic stress   | .123  | .728 | -.112 | 56 |
| Academic pressure | 3.831 | .055 | -.810 | 56 |

### Discussion

#### Findings of the study

The present study identified the relationship between gender differences in academic stress and academic pressure among students of age 18-23 in Sri-Lanka. Out of 58 potential participants, 39 were females and 19 were males. As the results from the independent t-test conducted to support the hypothesis 2 were not statistically significant and the study proved there is no relationship in gender differences among the students facing academic stress and pressure. The results stated 17.24% of 19 males and 27.5% of 39 females in the study reported high academic stress. The data revealed that 57% of the total sample reported high workload in learning the examination syllabus, 29.3% of them revealed peer pressure and 65% mentioned worrying about grades or results were the major academic stressors. The present study revealed that 58.6% of the participants stated that teachers treat them biased to their socioeconomic status is a major stressor.

Initially, the relationship between academic stress and academic pressure was explored and found to be statistically significant, indicating a stronger positive correlation. This supports previous literature that proved nearly 65% of the students reported stress due to academic pressure with no significant differences in age, gender and grades (Deb, Strodl & Sun, 2015). It is important to know when academic stress and academic pressure are found to

be positively correlated, there are a lot of increasing chances for psychiatric problems such as anxiety, depression and phobias (Sidbanth, 2016).

Learning environment, parents' education levels and family income were the demographic variables studied in the present study. The data stated that 53.4% of the students reported the option 'Good' and 46.6% reported the option 'satisfactory' for family income (see table 3). Almost 94% of the sample reported that they possess a supportive learning environment (see table 4). It was also found that 50% of the students' parents had lower educational level who experience higher parental pressure (see figure 2). Thus, the data revealed that there were no significant relationships between the demographic variables studied among the sample and academic stress and pressure.

In the understanding of the student's mental well-being, there should be initiatives taken up to reduce mental stress related to academics. Students as well as the parents should be educated with proper stress-coping strategies to help them reduce academic stress. Also, there should be immediate actions taken at school level to teach the students how to manage stress. Attention to be provoked on the students who are prone to prolonged stress because this could lead to chronic stress. It would be a greater relief for the students to at least conduct virtual stress-management programs, yoga practices, teaching healthy coping mechanisms, assisting support groups and suicide prevention programs during the lockdown and isolation period. Methods to increase resilience during isolation periods and providing free psychological counselling at the most accessible places such as in the own university would help students to react normally to stress and pressure due to academics.

### **Summary of the results**

As outlined in the study, academic stress and academic pressure among school and university level students play a vital role in academic performances. The present study revealed that 45% of the school and college students in Sri-Lanka experience academic stress. Some of the major academic stressors that were addressed in this study are despondency by teachers or parents, worrying about grades, self-expectation and workload. Lin (1993), reported that parents' demands pushed the school and education system to conduct consecutive mock exams in order to prepare students for their final /board examinations. The other major stressor is social pressure, students work hard to pass the examinations and enter high-level universities to fit in the culture and the norms created by the society. Parents compare academic excellence of their children with the other children at school, among

relatives and the society and this set up unnecessary standard levels for the people in the culture (Stevenson & Lee, 1990). Due to these stressors students can be viewed to prolonged stress and can develop mental disorders like depression, burnouts and PTSD (Mitchell, 2016). Academic pressure also influenced the academic performances of students at college and school. It had been stated that peer pressure in the use of drugs is the major reason reported among the adolescent students and college freshmen (Jelsma & Varner, 2020). Thus, this study focused on peer pressure as the main factor under academic pressure and academic performances.

The other demographic variables that could affect a child's academic performances are gender, family income and parents' education level. In the present study, there were no gender differences found among the students perceiving academic pressure and contradicts with the study by Jones (1993) stated that adolescents girls scored higher than boys in academic pressure scale. Whereas, few other studies mentioned that there no gender differences among academic performances of the students (Agarwal, 2011; Krenki, Aunola & Nurmi, 2009). Students who come from lower family background in terms of family income face greater stress and difficulties in achieving higher grades at schools and colleges (Betts & Morrel, 1999). Thus, there is a stronger positive relationship between family income and students' academic excellence. (Krashen, 2005) explained the need of educated parents to teach and support their children at home to perform well at schools and examinations and this contradicts to the present study.

An important point to note is that the study was conducted during the lockdown period due to COVID-19 pandemic situation prevailing in Sri Lanka. So, the students may have faced more stress in accessing educational facilities. Students had to face difficulties in adapting to the new approach of learning, that is online or virtual learning by the use of electronic device (Nicola et al., 2020). Students lost physical connection with teachers and lecturers and for most of them to acclimatise to this hard situation. The age group of the selected population was 18-23 in which the students leaving from school after the Advanced Level Examination in Sri Lankan educational system and new students who enter universities and colleges as freshman (Ornell et al., 2020). This means they move forward to a new step in life. But due to the academic stress and pressure along with issues related to the pandemic, most of them were unable to move on with their life. They faced financial issues, loss of loved ones, virtual learning classrooms, self-isolation and assignment deadlines as the major stressors (Rodriguez, Pantaleon, Dios & Falla, 2020).

### **Limitations of the study and future directions**

Among the larger population of school students and college freshman under age 18-23 years in Sri-Lanka, the sample size was relatively small. Therefore, there can be errors in generalizing the data to extract the results so a study with larger population size can give more validations to the results. Though the study validates the findings, for further validations a study with larger population is required because the results are extracted from self-reports. The study was unable to present equal number of males and females. Thus, the statistical analyses including gender differences require further validations in future research. The study was conducted during the prevailing pandemic situation in the country due to COVID-19 disease so the students can have had an added-up stress due to cancellation of examinations, online lectures, loneliness, social isolation and difficulties in accessing the educational facilities. The responds from the participants depend on some of the factors like motivation, perception and ability, they are open to biases.

As the strengths of the present study, there were no or very fewer missing data of the variables indicating no greater influence on the inferential analyses. The responses from the participants were collected from different regions of Sri- Lanka, the results were unbiased. It was accessible to almost most of the participants because it was an online-based survey. As the participants had to choose the options in order to answer the questions in the Likert scales, it was time consuming. The researcher had to prepare the survey and send in as a link, it was time consuming for the researcher as well. In general, online surveys help to save money. There was no need of printing any questionnaires.

In conclusion, the present study evaluated the relationships between gender among students facing academic stress and pressure. Nearly half of the students experience high academic stress due to various stressors. Furthermore, two-third of the students revealed that family income supports the academic excellence. As the students with lower family income are prone to academic stress. About 50% of the students reported with lower parents' education level. Almost 94% of students stated that they had good learning environment. After the evaluation, the present study proved that there are no significant relationships between these demographic variables as dependent to academic stress and pressure. However, was found that academic stress and academic pressure were positively correlated. Therefore, considering the mental well-being of the students there should be proper implications such as stress-management programs, yoga practices, healthy coping

mechanisms, support groups and suicide prevention programs developed in order to maintain a stress- free learning environment at schools, colleges and universities. The present study only talks about academic stress and pressure thus can be extended in a way where the study can link about other stressors which can impact on students' academic performances. Thus the present study fails to present equal male and female students, a future study with equal representation of students of sample will be more validate in studying the gender differences among the students facing academic stress and pressure.



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## Appendix A



### Invitation paragraph

Dear Invitee,

I, Shameeshika Kulendiren, am an undergraduate student of ICBT campus enrolled in the BSc (Hons) Psychology program offered by Cardiff Metropolitan University UK. I am kindly inviting you to participate in the study that I am conducting as my final year research project.

Title: Gender differences in Academic Stress and Academic Pressure among students aged 18-23 in Sri Lanka. **UG-4206**

If you are a student aged 18-23 in Sri Lanka and will be facing the government examinations (GCE AL/ Examinations in Colleges or Universities), please consider participating. The study involves completing a survey which will take a maximum of 15-20 minutes. You will be completing a demographic questionnaire, an academic stress questionnaire and an academic pressure questionnaire during the survey. Participation is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any moment from the study while answering the questionnaire by closing the tab.

If you would like to participate, please read the information sheet attached below, which has more details regarding the study. You may close the tab and withdraw even after reading the information sheet.

Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration!

Shameeshika Kulendiren

Primary Investigator

Research Supervisor: Stephanie Gunaratne

[stephanieg@icbtcampus.edu.lk](mailto:stephanieg@icbtcampus.edu.lk)

## **Appendix B**

### **Participant Information Sheet**

#### **What is the purpose of the study?**

The aim of this study is to examine the gender differences in Academic Stress and Pressure among students. The research will be conducted among students aged between 18-23; residing in Sri Lanka **UG-4206**. Moreover, the study will be examining how age, parents' education and profession, socioeconomic status and learning environment may also affect academic stress and pressure.

This study is done in order to complete the final year BSc (Hons) Psychology program offered by ICBT campus - an associate of the Cardiff Metropolitan University, United Kingdom. The project will be handed in as the final year dissertation.

#### **Why have I been invited to participate?**

The research requires students (both males and females) aged 18-23 in Sri Lanka, and it is thought that you are suitable for this study. If you are able to read and understand the questionnaires in English, please consider taking part.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

Participation is entirely voluntary. The consent will be assumed through continuous participation in the online survey. Participants have the right to withdraw at any given time during the study. You can withdraw from the study by closing this link prior to submitting your answers.

However, once you submit your answers you will not be able to withdraw as there is no identification mark for your answered questionnaire. This is done in order to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity.

#### **What will participation involve?**

Participants may fill out the survey attached below, which will take a maximum of 15-20 minutes. It contains a demographic questionnaire and 2 scales to assess academic stress and academic pressure. Once you fill the survey and submit, the data will be recorded for analysis. Data recording will happen anonymously using a code in a password protected laptop. And accessible only by the research supervisor and the researcher. No one else will have the access

**Are there any risks associated with taking part?**

There are no obvious risks in taking part in the study. In fact, the project is ethically cleared by Cardiff Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

However, as the survey consists of questions regarding academic stress and pressure, you may feel uncomfortable or distressed. If you do feel uncomfortable taking part in the study, you have the right to withdraw at any given time by closing the link. (The process is given above).

If you require further assistance or professional help regarding your discomfort, please feel free to contact any of the below lines, which are free psychological support services that are available in Sri Lanka

CCC Line -1333

National Mental Health Hotline - 1926

Sri Lanka Sumithrayo - 011 2692909, 011 2696666, 011 2683555

Shanthi Margam – 0717639898

**Are there any benefits associated with taking part?**

There are no direct benefits for the participants in taking part in the study. However, your participation will be beneficial for the completion of the researcher's BSc in Psychology programme.

**What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The data recorded will be analysed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). Your responses will be treated with high confidentiality at all times. Your names will not be required and that way anonymity is ensured.

The study will be presented to ICBT campus and Cardiff Metropolitan University as the final dissertation in order to complete the BSc (Hons) Psychology program. Further, the outcomes of the project may get published for academic purposes, while ensuring the anonymity.

**How will my data and my privacy be protected?**

Your privacy will be highly respected. We have taken careful steps to make sure that you cannot be identified from any of the information that we have requested. The study does not



require you to include any personal data. Information collected will be stored in a password protected laptop for only the researcher and supervisor's access.

**Who is involved in the project?**

The research will be conducted by Shameeshika Kulendiren, a student from the final year BSC (Hons) Psychology program of CBT campus, Colombo - an associate of the Cardiff Metropolitan University.

The study will be supervised by Ms. Stephanie Gunaratne [MSc (UK), BSc (Hons)]

The project has been approved by the Cardiff University Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions or doubts about the study or should you require any further clarifications please do not hesitate to email the research supervisor through [stephanieg@icbtcampus.edu.lk](mailto:stephanieg@icbtcampus.edu.lk)

## Appendix C

### Demographic questionnaire

1. Select the age group that you fall into;
  - i. 18 years ☐
  - ii. 19 years ☐
  - iii. 21 years ☐
  - iv. 22 years ☐
  - v. 23 years ☐
2. What is your gender?
  - i. Male ☐
  - ii. Female ☐
3. What country were you born in?
  - i. Sri Lanka ☐
  - ii. Abroad ☐
4. How many members in your family?
  - i. 2 ☐
  - ii. 3 ☐
  - iii. 4 ☐
  - iv. Above 4 ☐
5. What is your father?
  - i. working ☐
  - ii. Businessmen ☐
  - iii. Nil ☐
6. What is your mother?
  - i. working ☐
  - ii. Businessmen ☐
  - iii. Nil ☐
7. What is the highest-level education of your father?
  - i. School ☐
  - ii. College ☐
  - iii. University ☐
  - iv. Nil ☐
8. What is the highest-level education of your mother?
  - i. School ☐
  - ii. College ☐
  - iii. University ☐
  - iv. Nil ☐
9. How do you travel to school/college?
  - i. Private transport ☐
  - ii. Public transport ☐
  - iii. School service ☐
10. What is your opinion about your family income?
  - i. Good ☐
  - ii. Satisfactory ☐
  - iii. Bad ☐
11. How far is your home from school/college?
  - i. Far ☐
  - ii. Nearby ☐
12. Is anyone having a serious illness in your family?
  - i. Yes ☐
  - ii. No ☐
13. Who is the eldest in your family?
  - i. You ☐
  - ii. Brother ☐
  - iii. Sister ☐
14. Are you living with your parents?
  - i. Yes ☐
  - ii. No ☐
15. Do you think that your family and home support you for proper learning environment?

- i. Yes ☐      ii. No ☐

## Appendix D

### ACADEMIC STRESS SCALE

This scale consists of 35 items describing the stress in your institution/ college life from the various sources. The level of stress you feel for each item can be indicated by selecting the likert in the bracket given against each statement.

If you feel No Stress select the likert in the 1st bracket (NS), Slight Stress in the 2nd (SS), Moderate Stress in the 3rd (MS), High Stress in the 4th (HS) and you feel Extreme Stress 5th bracket (ES).

|                                                           | NS  | SS  | MS  | HS  | ES  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1. Teachers make too many extra demands on students.      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 2. Poor interest in some subjects.                        | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 3. Progress reports to parents                            | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 4. The teacher is not humors towards us.                  | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 5. Lack of concentration during study hours.              | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 6. Difficulty in remembering all that is studied.         | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 7. Worrying about the examinations.                       | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 8. Lack of self-confidence.                               | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 9. The teachers do not listen to our ideas.               | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 10. Conflict with friends/college authorities.            | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 11. Teachers give more punishment in the class.           | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 12. Worry about results after examinations.               | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 13. Hesitate to ask the teacher for detailed explanation. | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 14. Biased attitude of the teacher.                       | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 15. Inadequate space or room for study at home.           | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 16. Not knowing how to prepare for the examinations.      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 17. Lack of assertiveness (confidence) in the class.      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 18. Lack of opportunity to meet teachers.                 | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 19. Teacher shows socio-economic status on students.      | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 20. Slow in getting along with the curriculum.            | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 21. Exam papers are tough and not valued well.            | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

22. Unable to complete the assignment in time. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
23. Lack of communication between teachers and students. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
24. Monotonous (boring or tedious) teaching style by the teacher. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
25. Not enough discussion in the class. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
26. Lack of mutual help among classmates. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
27. Lack of fluency while speaking the language other than the mother tongue. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
28. Difficulty in public speaking. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
29. The teacher is fast and does not use blackboard legibly. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
30. Teachers lacking interest in students. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
31. Examination syllabus is too heavy in some subjects. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
32. Feeling of inferiority. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
33. Unable to discuss Academic failures with parents. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
34. Not able to grasp the subject matter. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
35. Incomplete and confusing study material. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )



## Appendix E

### Academic Pressure scale (APS)

**Please rate your perception about the following statements in contributing to academic stresses.**

**1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree (1 2 3 4 5)**

1. I often find myself worrying after I have taken a test even though I know it is too late to do anything about it. **1 2 3 4 5**
2. It is very frustrating for me when I can't seem to learn the things I'm supposed to for school. **1 2 3 4 5**
3. It upsets me when I can't understand the assignments my teacher gives at school. **1 2 3 4 5**
4. It embarrasses me when the kids at school make fun of me because I can't answer a question in class. **1 2 3 4 5**
5. It would frustrate me if my parents told me that I should be able to make better grades at school. **1 2 3 4 5**
6. It would upset me if my teacher had to talk to us about a low grade I had received in school. **1 2 3 4 5**
7. I become upset when I begin to study for an important test at school. **1 2 3 4 5**
8. It would disturb me if my teacher said I wasn't trying in class because I didn't do as well as the school thought I should do. **1 2 3 4 5**

## Appendix F

### Debriefing sheet

**Title of project:** Gender differences in Academic Stress and Academic Pressure among students aged 18-23 in Sri-Lanka **UG-4206**.

**Name of Researcher:** Shameeshika Kulendiren

Thank you for taking part in this study. The sheet will provide you will full details of the study in which you participated.

The purpose of the study is to study if there is a gender difference in academic stress and academic pressure as there can be gender concerns which add on to academic stress of the students. The present study also aims to study academic stress and pressure in relation to demographic factors.

The research required school/college students (both males and females) aged 18-23 in Sri Lanka, and it is thought that you are suitable for this study. The study involved filling out a demographic questionnaire, stress questionnaire and an academic pressure questionnaire. The consent for voluntary participation was assumed through continuous participation in the online survey. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any given time during the study, before submitting the responses, simply by closing the link. However, once you submit your answers you will not be able to withdraw as there is no identification mark for your answered questionnaire. This was done in order to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity. There are no obvious risks in taking part in the study. In fact, the project is ethically cleared by Cardiff Metropolitan University, United Kingdom. However, as the survey consists of questions regarding academic stress and pressure and if you feel distressed or uncomfortable please contact a psychological support service. You may access the details of those services from the information sheet.

Thank you again for taking part. If there is anything you would like to discuss in relation to this study, please feel free to do so by contacting the research supervisor.

Name of supervisor: Ms. Stephanie Gunaratne

E-mail: [stephanieg@icbtcampus.edu.lk](mailto:stephanieg@icbtcampus.edu.lk)

Appendix G

Keys for Scorings in SPSS

 Value Labels

Value:

Label:

Add

Change

Remove

1 = "University"

2 = "College"

3 = "School"

Spelling...

OK

Cancel

Help

 Value Labels

Value:

Label:

Add

Change

Remove

1 = "Male"

2 = "Female"

Spelling...

OK

Cancel

Help



## Appendix H

## Poster



Cardiff Metropolitan University  
Prifysgol Fetropolitan Caerdydd  
UNIC

## Gender differences between Academic Stress of Ordinary level students in Central province of Sri Lanka

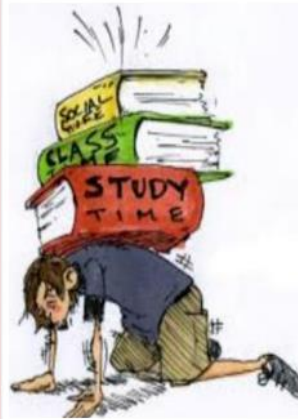
**Background:** Empirical evidence suggests that adolescent students experience academic stress due to exams and other stressors as well. Gender differences and demographic factors are demonstrated in determining the academic stress of the students in Sri Lanka.

**Rationale:** As it is accounted in many studies that students have an increase number of stressors, stressful experiences and psychological issues developed during the adolescent period. Few studies also accounted that low socioeconomic status results in low self-esteem (Farooq et al., 2011, p. 10) The researcher considers that adolescents entering adulthood with a bad image of mental well-being should be spoken broadly as a serious case among the societies in order to prevent the chronic stress (Huan et al., 2008).

**Objective:** The study aims to examine the existence of gender differences and the influence of demographic factors among the students who face the Ordinary Level examination in Central province of Sri Lanka experience academic stress.

**Literature Review:** Phillips studied that tertiary level students in Bangladesh faced stress due to improper management, teacher's incompetence level and parental pressure. Chandra & Batada identified that the major school stressor is the school work/ homework along with fear about exams and grades. Researcher Jones (1993) proved that adolescent girls faced greater stress more than boys after examining a sample of 112 girls and 160 boys.

**Hypotheses:** Hypothesis 1- Ordinary Level students in Central province of Sri Lanka face academic stress and there is a significant difference between the academic stress and academic excellence of the students. Hypothesis 2- Ordinary Level students in Central province of Sri Lanka face academic stress on the basis of gender and there is a significant difference between gender and academic stress of the students. Hypothesis 3- Ordinary Level students in Central province of Sri Lanka face academic stress based on the demographic factors and there is a significant difference between demographic and academic stress of the students.



**Expected findings:** The expected findings according to the relevant literature, the adolescent students face a greater level of stress during the period of the examination. There will be gender differences in perceiving academic stress by the students, and girls having personal concerns will report greater stress than boys (Jones, 1993, p. 741), as well as the students will account the influence of demographic factors in academic stress (Farooq et al., 2011, p. 10). The findings of this study will be useful for future implications and research which can help students out of stressful events by providing proper counseling techniques and other measures for better improvements.

**Discussion:** Based on the past studies, almost 10-20% of adolescents worldwide suffer from stress related problems (Luo et al., 2020). Specifically, adolescents in Asian countries reported about academic stress as a major stressor and other studies reviewed from all the countries suggested gender concerns on academic performances of adolescents (Huan et al., 2008). The future implications from the mentioned reviews, adolescents should be appreciated to encounter their own perspectives about stress and the different stressors so that the adults and parents will be aware to aid their children under proper clinical setting, yoga practice, conduct stress- relief programs at schools and other religious places, programs to cope stress, resilience and provision of psychological counseling.

**Method and sample:** A total sample of 160 school students 80 girls and 80 boys were selected by random sampling method.

**Measures:** Academic Stress Scale proposed by Kim 1970 and few demographic questions were used to measure the sample.

**Procedure:** A quantitative analysis was used to obtain the descriptive and variable tests to test the significant differences between gender and academic stress of school students.

**Ethics:** This study will follow all the ethical concerns, by maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, signed an informed consent form, any time withdrawal form and no direct harm pruned to the sample. The study was approved by the ethic committee. (Phillips et al., 2020, p. 9).

### References:

- Chandra, A., & Batada, A. (2004). Disrespected and dealing with it: a quantitative and qualitative exploration of stress and coping among urban, African American teens. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 34(2), 139. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s1054-139x\(03\)00439-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s1054-139x(03)00439-7)
- Farooq, M. S., Chaudhry, A. H., Shafiq, M., & Berhanu, G. (2011). FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' QUALITY OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL. *Journal of Quality and Technology Management*, VII(II), 01-14. <https://doi.org/10.2466/ptm.2011.72.3.14>
- Huan, V. S., See, Y. L., Ang, R. P., & Har, C. W. (2008). The impact of adolescent concerns on their academic stress. *Educational Review*, 60(2), 169-178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0013191080193404>
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- Luo, Y., Cui, Z., Zou, P., Wang, K., Lin, Z., He, J., & Wang, J. (2020). Mental Health Problems and Associated Factors in Chinese High School Students in Henan Province: A Cross-Sectional Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(16), 5944. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17165944>
- Oduwaiye et al. Stress level and academic performance of University Students in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Makerere Journal of Higher Education*. 2017;9(1):103-112. Available: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/majoh. v9i1.9>
- Phillips, S. C., Halder, D. P., & Hasib, W. (2020). Academic Stress among Tertiary Level Students: A Categorical Analysis of Academic Stress Scale in the Context of Bangladesh. *Asian Journal of Advanced Research and Reports*, 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajarr/2020/v8i430203>



## Appendix I

### Supervisory meetings

International College of Business & Technology



#### Project Log Sheet – Supervisory Sessions for BSc in Psychology: Project – PSY6001

| Meeting          | Date                          | Work on progression                                                                                                                                                                                                | Work to be discussed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Work to be done<br>(Written by supervisor)                                                |
|------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st              | 05.01.2021<br>(1 – 1.30 pm)   | Reading more articles related to the topic.<br>Framing up a work/a draft.<br>Read about the scale validity.<br>Read about demographic factors for the research.<br>Start up with the introduction to the research. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The preferable topic for the research.</li> <li>About the scales and scoring to be used.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                | Search for a good topic and start working on it.<br>Find valid scales and their scorings. |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | 10.02.2021<br>11 a.m-12p.m    | Worked on the topic and started the proposal                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical analysis of the tools used.</li> <li>Rationale of the study</li> <li>Emphasis on the gender specific concerns.</li> <li>Talking about research adhering to the COVID-19 issues.</li> <li>Use of questionnaires</li> </ul> | Find more articles on gender differences. Try to do critical analysis on the study.       |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | 24.03.2021<br>10-11 a.m       | Have worked on the proposal and reviewed by miss.                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To correct the comments sent by miss and to add up few points to the proposal</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                           | Do the corrections.                                                                       |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | 27.03.2021<br>10.30-11        | Have worked on proposal                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion about starting up ethics</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                     | Talking about ethics                                                                      |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | 08.04.2021<br>3.30 to 4.00 pm | Few points on outlining the dissertation                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion on starting up introduction</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                  | Trying up start to write introduction for dissertation.                                   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup>  | 15.05.2021<br>11-12pm         | Introduction done                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizing literature introduction part and points to include in review</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                 | Read and write on more articles for literature review.                                    |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | 04.06.2021<br>3.30-4          | Have worked on ethics<br>On process of preparing Google forms                                                                                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to start up with Dissertation</li> <li>Discussed what should be done after Ethics approval</li> <li>Reviewing about the Dissertation.</li> <li>How to prepare Google forms</li> </ul>                                          | Talking about preparing google forums.                                                    |
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | 27.08.2021<br>11.30-12.30pm   | Results & Methods of the dissertation                                                                                                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction</li> <li>Lit review</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                        | Completing introduction and literature review.                                            |
| 9 <sup>th</sup>  | 11.09.2021<br>10.30-11        | Results and discussion sections in dissertation                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizing the results structure</li> <li>Spss interpretations</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                          | Trying to organize the tables under results sections                                      |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> | 21.09.2021<br>10.30-11 am     | Completed dissertation, given for review                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submissions to the moodle and icbtsis</li> <li>Recheck the document before submission</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                   | Make a copy of all the necessary documents and mail it to the supervisor.                 |

## Appendix J

### Ethics form and Ethics approval

When undertaking a research or innovation project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

The document ***Ethics application guidance notes*** will help you complete this form and is available from the Ethics Governance Section of the Cardiff Met website. The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents which you can access via your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

**Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.**

#### PART ONE

| 1A: GENERAL INFORMATION                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of applicant:                                                                                                                                   | Ms. Shameeshika Kulendiren                                                                          |
| Supervisor (if student project):                                                                                                                     | Ms. Stephanie Gunaratne                                                                             |
| School / Unit:                                                                                                                                       | ICBT Campus, Department of Psychology                                                               |
| Student number (if applicable):                                                                                                                      | st20195765                                                                                          |
| Programme enrolled on (if applicable):                                                                                                               | BSc (Hons) in Psychology                                                                            |
| Project Title:<br>If using a working title, it should convey what the project is about                                                               | Gender differences in Academic Stress and Academic Pressure among students aged 18-23 in Sri Lanka. |
| Expected start date of data collection:                                                                                                              | 18 <sup>th</sup> April, 2021                                                                        |
| Approximate duration of data collection:                                                                                                             | One month                                                                                           |
| Funding Body (if applicable):                                                                                                                        | N/A                                                                                                 |
| Other researcher(s) working on the project:<br>If your collaborators are external to Cardiff Met, include details of the organisation they represent | N/A                                                                                                 |
| Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?<br>If yes, attach a copy of your NHS application to                                                    | N/A                                                                                                 |
| Will the study involve human samples and/or human cell lines?                                                                                        | N/A                                                                                                 |

#### 1B: Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Desk based, involving only documents and not involving the collection of data from participants                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | No |
| Laboratory based, not involving human participants, human samples, animals or animal derived material                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | No |
| Practice based not involving human participants (eg curatorial, practice audit)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | No |
| <p>Answering <b>YES</b> to any of these questions indicates that the project does not include any participants and you will not therefore be collecting participant data.</p> <p>If this is the case, please provide a short (150 words) non-technical summary of the project, complete the Declaration at the bottom of the form and forward this form to your School Ethics Committee (or equivalent). No further information regarding your project is required and you do not need to complete any more sections of this form.</p> <p>If you have answered <b>NO</b> to all of these questions, please proceed to 1C.</p> |    |
| Provide a non-technical summary of the project below:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |    |
| N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| <b>1C: Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |    |
| Compulsory projects in professional practice (eg Initial Teacher Education)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | No |
| <p>A project for which NHS approval has been obtained</p> <p>NB If this is the case, please ensure that you submit copies of the following with this form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any questionnaires to be used</li> <li>participant consent / assent form and withdrawal form</li> <li>participant information sheet</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                     | No |
| <p>A project which is not compulsory in professional practice and has gained external ethics approval from a body other than the NHS.</p> <p>NB If this is the case, please ensure that you submit a copy of the approved ethics application with this form.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | No |
| <p>If you have answered <b>YES</b> to any of these questions, please provide a short (150 words) non-technical summary of the project and <b>complete the rest of Part One of this form.</b> You do not need to complete Part Two.</p> <p>Forward your completed form, along with any additional documents required (as indicated above) to your School Ethics Committee (or equivalent).</p> <p>If you have answered <b>NO</b> to all of these questions, please complete the rest of this form including Part Two.</p> |    |
| Provide a non-technical summary of the project below:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |

N/A

**1D: DATA COLLECTION AND STORAGE**

What types of data will you collect or create?

Quantitative data (using a questionnaire based survey)

How will you manage access to and security of the data?

The resulting data will be stored in OneDrive.

And accessible only by the research supervisor and the researcher with their university standard accounts. No one else will have the access to data.

Will the data collected be subject to the data retention protocols of any of the following bodies?

- Human Tissue Authority (HTA)
- Health and Care Research Wales (HCRW)
- Applications involving the NHS which will be submitted via IRAS

Yes ☐

For any project which is subject to the data retention protocols of an external body listed, you must develop a data storage plan to be submitted alongside this document for consideration by your School or Unit Ethics Panel.

No ☒

Please confirm that the data collected will be stored in a manner which complies with Cardiff Met requirements via one of the following statements.

**STATEMENT 1: FOR STUDENTS ON TAUGHT COURSES**

I confirm that any non-anonymised data related to research participants will only be stored on OneDrive, or by agreement with supervising staff, on Figshare, and that all data held elsewhere will be deleted, unless it is anonymised.

☒**STATEMENT 2: FOR STAFF APPLYING ON BEHALF OF STUDENTS ON TAUGHT COURSES**

I confirm that all students covered by this application are aware of their obligation to ensure that non-anonymised data related to research participants must only be stored on their Cardiff Met student OneDrive account and that all data held elsewhere must be deleted, unless it is anonymised.

☐**STATEMENT 3: FOR RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF**

I confirm that any non-anonymised data related to research participants will be stored in a secure manner (using a platform such as OneDrive or FigShare) and that all data held elsewhere will be

deleted unless it is anonymised.



#### DECLARATION:

I confirm that this project conforms with the [Cardiff Met Research Integrity & Governance Framework](#)

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

**STUDENTS:** I confirm that I will not disclose any information about this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

Signature of the applicant:

Shameeshika Kulendiren

Email: [shameeshikakulendiren@gmail.com](mailto:shameeshikakulendiren@gmail.com)

Date:

01.04.2021

#### FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY

Name of supervisor:

Ms. Stephanie Gunaratne

Date:

01.04.2021

Signature of supervisor:

[StephanieG@icbtcampus.edu.lk](mailto:StephanieG@icbtcampus.edu.lk)

#### Research Ethics Committee use only

Decision reached:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Project reference number: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date: [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

#### PART TWO

**If you haven't already done so elsewhere on this form, in the box below, provide a short (150 words), non-technical summary of the project.**

Academic excellence brings rewards. Yet, results in a competitive school/ college environment and high risks of stress due to tests, assignments, expectations from teachers and parents towards students



(Luo, Deng & Zhang, 2020). Almost 10-20% of students worldwide suffer from academic stress (Luo et al., 2020). The students perceive academic demands surpassing the adaptive potential (Denise & Judith, 2018). Specifically, students in Asian countries reported academic stress as a major stressor in classroom setting (Huan et al., 2008). Academic challenges and stress can have gender differences due to gender specific concerns (Jones, 1993).

The current study aims to examine whether there are gender differences in academic stress in students (Aged 18-23) in Sri Lanka. It is expected to find a gender difference in perceiving academic stress and pressure. The researcher hypothesize that girls are stressed than boys. Further, academic stress and pressure will be analysed in relation to demographic factors.

### References

- Denise, E., & Judith, W. (2018). Adolescent stress through the eyes of high-risk teens. *Continuing Nursing Education Series*, 34(5), 375–379.
- Huan, V. S., See, Y. L., Ang, R. P., & Har, C. W. (2008). The impact of adolescent concerns on their academic stress. *Educational Review*, 60(2), 169–178.
- Luo, Y., Deng, Y., & Zhang, H. (2020). The influences of parental emotional warmth on the association between perceived teacher–student relationships and academic stress among middle school students in China. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 114, 105014.
- Jones, R. W. (1993). Gender-specific differences in the perceived antecedents of academic stress. *Psychological Reports*, 72(3), 739–743.

### A RESEARCH DESIGN

A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project?

No

A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used<sup>1</sup>

A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project

In this section, include details (as appropriate) of:

- Research method(s);
- Sample and sampling;
- Participants including recruitment methods, activities to be undertaken, time commitment, details of any proposed payments;

<sup>1</sup> An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff. For details of protocols in use in your School or Unit, contact your Ethics Coordinator

- Analytical techniques

If your project does involve the use of an approved protocol, much less details will be required but you should indicate which areas of the project are covered by the protocol.

**Research method:** The researcher will use a quantitative method to carry out the research. Data will be collected using an online questionnaire based survey (Using Google forms).

**Sample:** The present study will sample 60 Sri Lankan students aged 18-23. The researcher will attempt to get an equal representation of males and females (That means 30 girls and 30 boys). According to Erik Erikson's Eight stages of development theory, ages 18-19 (Adolescence) is the period where students try to fit the best roles for them. They might go through different role confusions and identity issues. And the young adulthood period (20-24 years) in students' life may lead to experience intimacy and loneliness. During this transitional period of adolescence to young adulthood, there's an increasing levels of stress and this impacts suicide, unable to differentiate love life and education, psychosomatic illness, substance use and crime amongst youth population. Students aged 18-23 in Sri Lanka can experience added academic stress because it is the period where they face the Government examination (GCE Advanced Level Examinations) which is considered as a turning point in Sri Lankan educational system. As the results of the examination, it will make them decide about their higher education. And also for the students who have already entered the university/ college, it might be a new experience in such type of environment which can lead most of them to a stressful situation. The researcher understands that the school and college environment is totally different and will impact the students' life and academic excellence. Thus, the students aged 18-23 (post- adolescent stage / young adulthood stage) is particularly chosen for the current study.

Exclusion Criteria: As the survey is conducted in English, participants who cannot read and understand English to answer the survey will be excluded from the study. Also, the students who are not in the age range 18-23 will be excluded from the study.

**Sampling method:**

The current study will use purposive sampling method where the researcher will share the survey link with the researcher known potential participants. Then the snowball sampling method will be used to expand the sample. That means the researcher will ask the participants to share the link with other potential participants whom they know.

The survey link will be shared through the social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and email.

The Questionnaires will be administered in English and therefore, the students who are fluent in



English will be sampled.

**Aims of the study:** The researcher aims to study if there is a gender difference in academic stress and academic pressure as there can be gender concerns which add on to academic stress of the students.

The present study will also aim to study academic stress and pressure in relation to demographic factors.

**Data collection methods and measures:**

The current study will be conducted as an online survey using Google forms shared through social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and email) due to the prevailing COVID-19 situation and related health and safety restrictions for physical contact. The research link will have an invitation paragraph (see Appendix A) followed by the information sheet (see Appendix B) which will explain the background of the research, aims, objectives, procedure, why they fit in the sample, results of the study, benefits and risks without any deception.

The participants who agree to take part may proceed to the questionnaires. Through continued participation and the submission of the responses, the consent will be assumed as voluntary participation. No personally identifiable information will be requested from the participants in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. So there is no way to track and identify the responses of a specific participant upon submission of the data. As a result, the withdrawal rights will be denied upon submission of the responses. However, if they wish to withdraw from the study, the participants may close the tab at any time or refrain from submitting the responses. Implied consent and withdrawal procedures and limitations will be explained to the participants in the information sheet. If they have any questions or doubts about the study, they can email the research supervisor for clarifications (email address of the supervisor is mentioned in the information sheet).

The participants who proceed to the questionnaires will first get a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C). This consists of questions covering gender, age, number of family members, educational level, current jobs of parents, mode of transportation used to reach the school and socioeconomic status, etc. The researcher will study these demographic factors in relation to academic stress and academic pressure.

Kim (1970) developed the Academic Stress scale (ASS) to assess the level of academic stress. The current study will adopt the ASS version which was modified by Kaliappan and Rajendran (see Appendix D). It includes 40 questions under 4 sub sections as worrying about grades, despondency from teachers/ parents, self-expectation and workload. The Academic Stress scale (ASS) will suit Sri Lankan context as it is successfully used by researchers in other South Asian Countries (Philips & Halder, 2020). ASS has an acceptable internal consistency, validity and reliability (Dalia & Gabriel, 2015). Academic Pressure scale (APS) with 35 items was developed by West and Wood (1970). In the current study, shortened version of APS with only 8 items will be used to estimate the academic pressure (see Appendix E).

Upon the completion of questionnaires, pressing the next button will direct the participant to the debriefing sheet (Appendix F) which will summarize and clarify what they went through during the study. After reading the debriefing sheet still the participants can withdraw from the study if they don't want to proceed, simply by non-submission and closing the tab. But after clicking the submit button withdrawal ability is denied.

**Analysis:** The researcher will conduct descriptive and inferential statistical analyses using the IBM SPSS version 25 software. Initially, descriptive statistical analyses will be conducted to get a clear picture of the data collected.

The inferential statistical analyses will be conducted in order to test the following hypotheses;

- Hypothesis 1- There is a significant gender difference in the academic stress of the students in Sri Lanka. This hypothesis will be tested by Independent t-test (Males and females will be the two independent groups)
- Hypothesis 2- There is a significant gender difference in the academic pressure of the students in Sri Lanka. This will be tests by Independent t-test (Males and females will be the two independent groups)

Further, demographic factors will be studied to test if,

- There is a significant difference in academic stress and academic pressure based on socioeconomic status of the students in Sri Lanka.
- There is a significant difference in academic stress and academic pressure based on the parents' education, profession, learning resources of the students in Sri Lanka.

**Ethics:** The researcher will maintain confidentiality and anonymity throughout the process of data collection and after the research has been conducted too. The data will be stored anonymously in OneDrive which ensures better security and also maintains accessibility for supervisors and staff in the longer term to comply with regulations.

And accessible only by the research supervisor and the researcher linked with the University (Cardiff Met standard accounts). No one else will have the access to data. There will be no any direct harm caused to the participants and if any participant faces any significant stress risks, they will be guided to support services (details will be mentioned in the information sheet). The research will be only conducted after the approval of ethics Review committee of CMU. Each participant will be only identified by the reference numbers and none of their personal details will be collected for research purpose. If the participants require any further clarifications, they can contact the research supervisor through email (e- address will be mentioned in the information sheet, invitation paragraph and debriefing sheet).

A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research?

No

|                                                                                            |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research                    |    |
|                                                                                            |    |
| A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications?                                  | No |
| A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them |    |
|                                                                                            |    |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| I have conducted an online survey using Google forms for an assignment purpose. But have no prior experience in conducting research                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>B2 Student project only</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| The supervisor possesses 6 years of research experience and has publications under her name. She has supervised BSc and MSc level students in many diverse topics for about 3 years.<br>She has conducted research studies with students in Sri Lanka as participants and has publications specifically under the theme of academic stress. Further, the supervisor has experience in conducting questionnaire based surveys. |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>C POTENTIAL RISKS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| C1 What potential risks do you foresee?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Include details of risks to the participants, the researcher and the project as a whole.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| There are no foreseeable risks in taking part in the current study. However, since the participants have to recall their past when sharing their experiences, there is a possibility of triggering distress to some participants. They are free to avoid answering any question that they feel is personal or intrusive, or make them feel unhappy, dissatisfied, or distressed. |
| C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Participants who feel distressed can withdraw from the research at any time without adding their responses, simply by closing the tab. Anyone who is requiring or interested in professional psychological support can be directed to the free psychological support services in Sri Lanka. Details of these service providers will be given in the information sheet            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shanthi Maargam, Sri Lanka</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| +94717639898                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Gothami Rd, Colombo 00800                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <a href="https://shanthimaargam.org/">https://shanthimaargam.org/</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

shanthimaargam@gmail.com

- Sumithrayo, Sri Lanka

+94112682535

60/7 Horton Pl, Colombo 00700

[info@srilankasumithrayo.lk](mailto:info@srilankasumithrayo.lk)

<https://srilankasumithrayo.lk/#>

- CCC Line, Sri Lanka – 1333
- National Mental Health line, Sri Lanka- 1926

**From:** Research and Innovation Admin <[sharepoint.admin@cardiffmet.ac.uk](mailto:sharepoint.admin@cardiffmet.ac.uk)>

**Sent:** 05 June 2021 16:39

**To:** Shameeshika, Kulendiren <[st20195765@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk](mailto:st20195765@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk)>

**Cc:** Bagshaw, Ruth <[RBagshaw@cardiffmet.ac.uk](mailto:RBagshaw@cardiffmet.ac.uk)>; Pabst Silva, Fernando <[FPabstSilva@cardiffmet.ac.uk](mailto:FPabstSilva@cardiffmet.ac.uk)>

**Subject:** Ethics Decision - gender differences in academic stress and academic pressure amongst students in Sri Lanka - Shameeshika, Kulendiren - (Approved Standard)

**Shameeshika, Kulendiren**  
**Cardiff School of Sport and Health Sciences**

Dear applicant

**Re: Application for Ethical Approval 'gender differences in academic stress and academic pressure amongst students in Sri Lanka'**

**Project Reference Number: UG-4206**

Your application for ethical approval of the above project was considered by Cardiff School of Sport and Health Sciences under the Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Framework, and I'm pleased to inform you that it was **APPROVED** on 05/06/2021

Minor issues may still need addressing before you commence any work, and if so these will be listed below:

N/A

Where changes to the information sheet, consent form and/or procedures are deemed necessary you must submit revised versions through the CSSHS Ethics Process. If you are a student, your supervisor must do this on your behalf.

Note: Failure to comply with any issues listed above will nullify this approval.

#### **Standard Conditions of Approval**

1. Your Ethics Application has been given a Project Reference number, noted above. This **MUST** be quoted on all documentation relating to the project (e.g. consent forms, information sheets), together with the full project title.
2. All documents must also have the approved University Logo and the Version number in addition to the information highlighted in point 1.

3. A full **Risk Assessment** must be undertaken for this proposal, as appropriate, and be made available to the School if requested.
4. Any changes in connection to the proposal as approved, must be referred to the School for consideration **without delay, quoting your Project Reference Number**. Changes to the proposed project may have ethical implications therefore must be approved.
5. Any untoward incident which occurs in connection with this proposal must be reported back to the School **without delay**.
6. If your project involves the use of **human samples**, your approval is given on the condition that you or your supervisor **notify the HTA Designated Individual** of your intention to work with such material by completing the form entitled “Notification of intention to Work with Human Material”. This form must be submitted to the Person Designated (PD) **BEFORE** any activity on this project is undertaken.
7. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure the project aligns with Cardiff Metropolitan University’s policies and procedures regarding GDPR compliance. For further information please [click here](#).

This approval expires on 05/06/2022. It is your responsibility to reapply/request extension if necessary.

**Ethics Committee**  
**Cardiff School of Sport & Health Sciences**

## Appendix K

## Turnitin report

Date- 19.09.2021

st20195765-PSY6001.docx

## ORIGINALITY REPORT

3%

SIMILARITY INDEX

2%

INTERNET SOURCES

2%

PUBLICATIONS

1%

STUDENT PAPERS

## PRIMARY SOURCES

1

HTUK Perera, B Nishantha. "DETERMINANTS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTIONS: TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) IN SRI LANKA", International Journal of Management, Innovation & Entrepreneurial Research, 2020

Publication

&lt;1%

2

Yangyang Liu, Zuhong Lu. "Chinese High School Students' Academic Stress and Depressive Symptoms: Gender and School Climate as Moderators", Stress and Health, 2012

Publication

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Student Paper

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**Word count**

|                                    |      |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Introduction and Literature Review | 1597 |
| The present study                  | 559  |
| Methods                            | 438  |
| Measures                           | 444  |
| Analysis and results               | 1244 |
| Discussion                         | 1582 |
| Total                              | 5864 |

Signed Shameeshika. K

Date 22.09.2021