ACADEMIC STRESSORS AND REACTION TO STRESS AMONG SHKODRA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate stress levels of students at the University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi", Albania. The purpose of this investigation was to provide empirical data in the perceived stress of students that would help university lecturers and counsellors to target specific need areas more effectively. The first objective was to assess the nine categories of the Student-Life Stress Inventory. Five categories were stressors (Frustrations, Conflicts, Pressures, Changes, and Self-imposed) and four were reactions to stressors (Physiological, Emotional, Behavioral, and Cognitive Appraisals). The second objective was to assess the levels of disturbance from different academic activities (for example lecturers, seminars, mid-term exams, final exams, course projects, ect). The relation of stress to demographic variables was examined. The Student-Life Stress Inventory (SLSI) was used to measure stressors and reactions to stressors among university students. It indicates different types of stressors and reaction to the stressors as perceived by university students. The SLSI is a self-administered, 51-item Likert-type response format questionnaire ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = never, 2 = seldom, 3 = occasionally, 4 = often, 5 = most of the time). Participants read a statement and answer how often they experience a particular event or feeling. Data were collected from 513 students studying at a public University of Shkodra in Albania, during the second semester of the academic year 2014–15. The target population of the study was all students who had registered for that particular semester. Stratified random sampling according to students' university academic year and branch`s study was used to select classes in which to invite students to participate in the study (10 students from each of branch and year study). Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20). Descriptive statistics were used to generate means, standard deviations (SD) and frequencies for a list of demographic variables. In general the level of academic stress is moderate. There is no difference at the general level of stress among students according their gender. In examining the data, among the stressors categories, the self-imposed category (which includes stressors one imposes on self) is the most stressful content area. In the reactions to stressors, the cognitive category appears to be the most common type of reactions to stressors. Students experience frequent concern for final exams.

*Keywords***:** *academic stress, stressors, students*

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