

Evaluation of Stress Among Pharmacy Students During a Pandemic

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Introduction

Stress is something that can cause many effects on health, academic performance and job performance.¹ In addition, the professional pharmacy curriculum has been associated with high levels of student stress.² Here at the University of Findlay College of Pharmacy, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in changes that have impacted how students continue their education. Prior to the fall 2020 semester, students were given an option to attend class in person, with masks on and physically distanced, or attend the entirety of their semester virtually via Zoom. These changes, along with unexpected periods of isolation, quarantine or the illness of self or a friend, family member, colleague or instructor has led to disruption in the educational process. While stress is a topic that is not studied very often among pharmacy students, it is worthwhile to evaluate stress during the time of disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ This study was done to evaluate pharmacy students' stress and methods to relieve stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study utilized an anonymous online survey to collect University of Findlay College of Pharmacy P1-P5 answers through a Google Form. The survey included all the questions on the PSS10 which is a validated perceived stress scale in addition to questions seeking to quantify stressors and coping mechanisms.

Methods

- Data was collected using an anonymous Google Form from Pharmacy students in their P1 to P5 year.
- The Google form was open for a total of 2 weeks for pharmacy students to respond at the end of Fall 2020.

Results

Number of Responses: 114

Response Rate : 50.22%

Gender:

Female- 78.1%

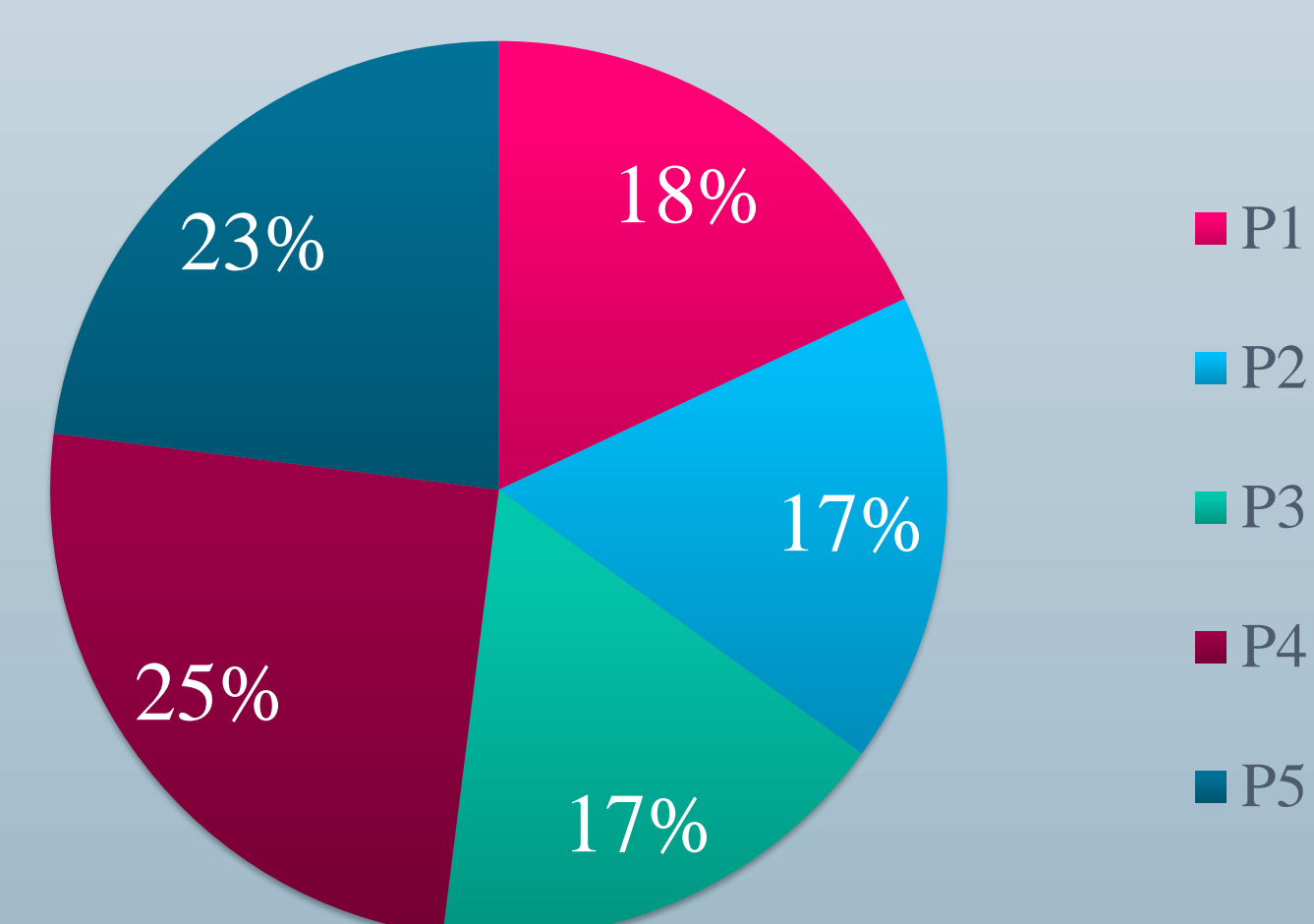
Male- 21.9%

Primary Engagement in Coursework

Remote through zoom- 5.3%

In- Person- 94.7%

Year in Pharmacy School



Extracurricular Involvement :

- 84.2% of students were involved in extracurricular activities
- 62.5% of those students who stated that they were in extracurricular activities also held a leadership position

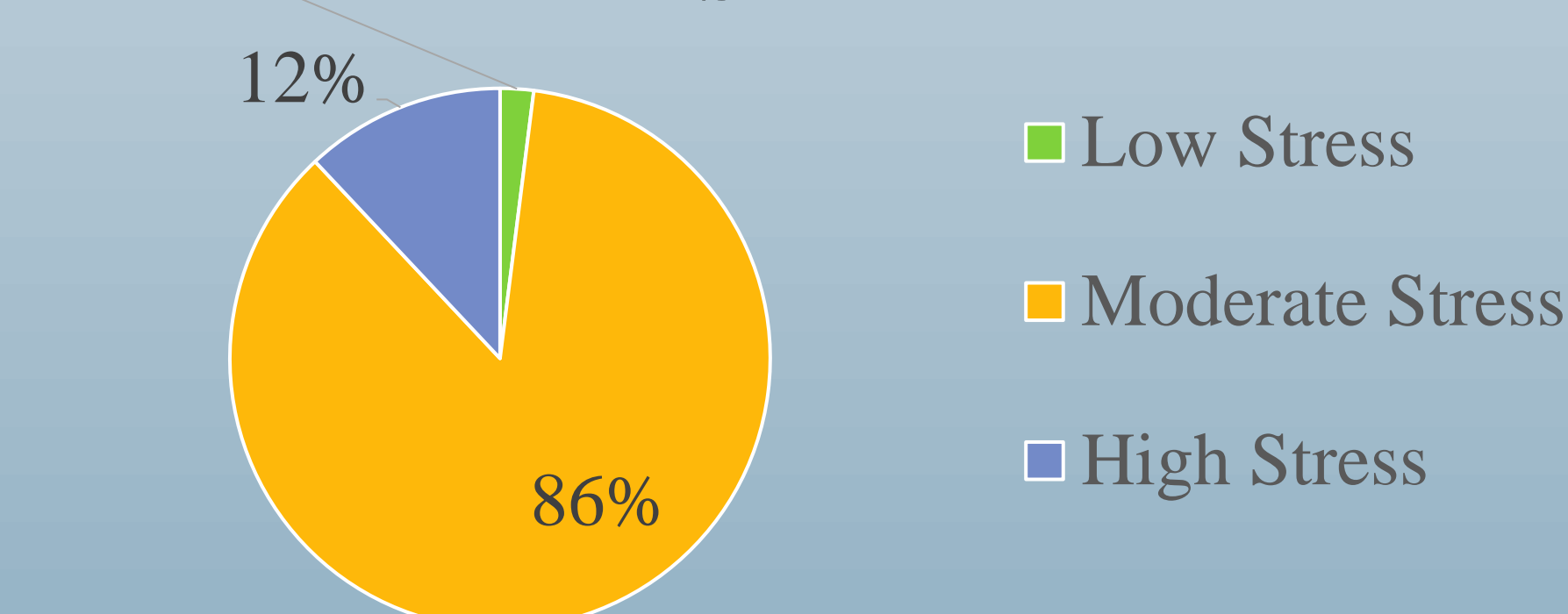
Internship/ Job status:

62.3% had a job/internship

Average Hours Worked Per Week in Fall 2020



Stress Level Based on Total PSS10 Score



Common Activities causing Stress of Anxiety during fall 2020 Daily :

- Exams and Assessments with 27% of students
- COVID with 12% of students daily

Average PSS10 Scores	UF Study Cohort P3-P5's (n=72)	Comparator 1 Cohort (n=91)-3 year PharmD program ¹	Comparator 2 Cohort (n=109)- 4 year PharmD Program ⁴
Overall Average	22.6	28.1	26.5
Female	22.9	29.1	28.1
Male	21.6	26.8	22.4

Conclusion

- There were a total of 114 participants in the survey which led to a 50.22 % response rate for all pharmacy students P1-P5 at the University of Findlay.
- There was a good proportion of responses overall between class cohorts between P1-P5's.
- Based on the results, even with the option, most pharmacy students chose to do classes in person instead of remote during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- When utilizing the PSS10 stress survey it was found that 86% of the respondents have moderate stress.
- When comparing the PSS10 from The University of Findlay P3-P5's who are in their professional years it was found that the students had on average less stress with an average score of 22.6 compared to two comparator groups surveyed prior to the COVID pandemic.

References

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