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IMPACT OF STRESS AND ANXIETY OF TWO-SEMESTER AND TRI-SEMESTER ON SAUDI STUDENTS OF ENGLISH AT JAZAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the relationship and impact of stress and anxiety on the performance of the students of English at Jazan University in Saudi Arabia, who have attended two-semester and trimester courses. Data were collected from 100 students taught by the same teachers and supported with the same materials. Data were analyzed by One-way ANOVA repeated measure and Paired Sample t-test on SPSS. The result of the SPSS analysis shows a significant difference in the impact of stress and anxiety between the performance of twosemester and tri-semester students. Students who had less stress and anxiety performed better in the two-semester course than those who had more stress and anxiety in the tri-semester course. The result of the research helps the authority to decide whether there should be two semesters or tri-semesters in that particular university. Later on, it becomes and model in the decision-making of the educational system of Saudi Arabia. Every research is not beyond the limitation, so is not this study. The sample is not so large and sufficient to generalize, and when data were collected, it was during the pandemic time that added more stress on the students that might have an extra impact on the students' performance. The originality of the research is testified and trustworthy as the research had been involved in teaching the designing of the tri-semester courses of the university. So, this research can work as a model for the educationists of Saudi Arabia to decide essential plans and programs in educational institutions. It can also help other researchers to work out this type of research.

KEYWORDS: two-semesters, tri-semesters, stress, anxiety, Saudi students

INTRODUCTION

The term "stress" refers to a dynamic interaction between a person and their surroundings. Demands, constraints, and possibilities associated with employment may be regarded as threatening to exceed the individual's resources and skills in this engagement. Any physical or psychological stimulation that disrupts the adaptive state and causes a coping reaction is referred to as stress. According to Bouayed Jaouad et al., 2009,) nervous system dysfunction is caused by oxidative damage in the brain. Oxidative stress has recently been linked to depression, anxiety disorders, and excessive levels of anxiety. The findings that show a link between oxidative stress and pathological anxiety have sparked a slew of new studies looking into the link between oxidative status and normal anxiety and a possible causal linkage between

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cellular oxidative stress and emotional stress. Again acute stress and anxiety can damage the cognition and decision making part of the brain. As McEwen, Bruce S, Eiland, Lisa, Hunter, Richard G, Miller (2012) finds that acute and chronic stress disrupts the brain circuitry that controls cognition, decision-making, anxiety, and mood, which can lead to an increase or decrease in the expression of those behaviours and emotions. Not only that, but stress anxiety also affect second language acquisition and performance. In the subject of second/foreign language, the significance of effect in general, and anxiety in particular, has been overlooked for far too long. More study is necessary to change this scenario and get academics, administrators, and instructors to acknowledge the prevalence and deleterious impacts of foreign-language anxiety(Kim, 2002). The growing interest in stress studies is most likely because we live in a world where there are many stressful situations, and stress has become a global phenomenon. It has become an inextricable aspect of life, and it is believed to be the price we all pay for surviving. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, twothirds of visits to family doctors are for stress-related issues. Stress is unavoidable in human life, and reactions differ from person to person. It is contingent on their ability to cope with a variety of life challenges. Because of the transitional nature of college life, nursing students are prone to stress. Stress is thought to harm health and academic performance. Students are exposed to a variety of situations. Significant stress, resulting in mental health issues such as anxiety and depression Nursing students have higher stress levels than medical, social work, and pharmacy students, according to a study comparing the stress levels of several professional students. However, stress levels are higher, and there are more sources of stress among health professionals, particularly nurses, with poor health repercussions. The World Health Organization (WHO) 2020 predicts that stress-related diseases will be one of the top causes of disability. Nursing schools are now widely acknowledged as a demanding environment that harms students(S. Gomathi & Jasmindebora, 2017). stress and anxiety have encompassed the whole human life, and during the corona pandemic, it has multiplied in many ways. Saudi Students are not an exception to this neck-breaking pressure. They are usually easy-going and comfort-loving people because of their culture and economic well beings. Their education system is usually two-semester courses, extending up to four months and considerable intervals between them. They also have a summer vacation when they visit different places and countries for relaxation and comfort to come out from their monotonous routine life. However, during the pandemic, they decided to start a tri-semester system in their education as they could not visit any country due to pandemics and enough time between and after the semesters. Some institutes were yet confused about the semester's impact on the students. So they needed to assess the impact of stress and anxiety of the tri-semester on the students. So this research was carried out to solve the problem and guide the authorities, teachers, and educationists on whether to design a two-semester or tri-semester course in the Saudi context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress is defined as any intrinsic or exogenous stimulus that causes a biological response. Stress reactions are the compensating responses to various pressures. Stress can have various impacts on the body, ranging from changes in homeostasis to life-threatening effects and death, depending on the nature, timing, and severity of the applied stimulus. Pathophysiological complication is common in many cases(Yaribeygi et al., 2017). In various studies, stress has

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been proven to create functional and structural alterations in the brain's hippocampal region (McEwen, 1999as cited in Yaribeygi et al., 2017)). Some studies have found that low cognitive performance in school-aged children precedes the flat diurnal cortisol pattern and low morning cortisol levels seen in mid-adulthood (Power, Li, & Hertzman, 2008as cited in Suhonen et al., 2018). This is how the definition and impact of stress and anxiety were depicted on the physical nature of human beings.

Similarly, stress and anxiety can have a tremendous impact on human memory. Stress harms learning as well. The results of the hippocampus-dependent loading data show that after being exposed to a new environment, participants are less familiar with it(Narayan et al., 1999). The impacts of anxiety can have a very detrimental effect on memory, but also it can cause change the functional pathways of the human brain. Research in cognitive psychology explores that learning can be tremendously affected by long-time traumatic experiences, altering neural pathways in the brain throughout the lifespan. The human brain is programmed to store, process, and sense dangerous events. All parts and areas of the body and brain take part in this "fight or flight response," making individuals respond swiftly to frightening plights. Since so many brain parts engage in this response, depressing, anxious events impact the brain devastatingly and profoundly. However, the brain must be calm and attentive to process, store, retrieve, and respond to new learning(Perry, 1999as cited in (Gordon, 2015).

Stress and anxiety can also have impedimental aftermath on language learners in learning and cognitive function. "A study of Vietnam veterans with combat-related PTSD indicated that they scored significantly lower on tests for short-term recall and long-term memory storage than did subjects without PTSD (Bremner et al., 1993 as cited in Gordon, 2015)." Similarly, Stevens' (as cited in (Gordon, 2015) study of Cambodians in Australia revealed that 91% of the participants experienced symptoms related to PTSD and depression. Many of the study participants experienced symptoms that directly affected learning and cognitive function, including headaches (69%), poor concentration (58%), and loss of memory (57%). The most comprehensive study of trauma's impact on language acquisition is that Söndergaard & Theorell (as cited in Gordon, 2015) found in their nine-month longitudinal study of Iraqi refugees that refugees who suffered from prolonged stress and anxiety were significantly slow at learning a second language.

Stress and anxiety can have significant poor performance of already learned and adult learners of the second language and even the native speakers having low confidence. (Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues... - Google Scholar*, n.d.). The Input Hypothesis: Issues... - Google Scholar, n.d.) 's affective filter hypothesis offers promising connections for research with stress and anxiety. He theorized that affective factors including anxiety and self-confidence exert a significant contribution to second language acquisition. Debilitating anxiety and Low self-esteem activate the learners' affective filter, creating a mental impediment that obstacles comprehensible input from entering the language acquisition device. While Krashen's idea has been questioned for lack of empirical evidence, subsequent neurological research shows that pupils' anxiety levels alter knowledge transmission and preservation. According to neuroimaging and neurotransmitter research, information is stopped from entering the brain's higher cognitive memory consolidation and storage areas when people are stressed.

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Language learning is a cognitive task that requires encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can obstruct each process by causing worried students to have divided attention. Anxious pupils concentrate on the work at hand as much as their reactions to it. When responding to a question in class, for example, the worried student is focused on answering the teacher's question (MacIntyre, 1995 as cited in Tanveer, 2007). Anxiety, fear, and anxiousness are common feelings exhibited by second/foreign language learners when learning a second/foreign language and are thought to hurt communication in the target language(Tanveer, 2007). People consider it unpleasant to interrupt and correct someone who is trying to have a conversation with them, according to (Tanveer, 2007). Errors in social settings are overlooked mainly if they do not interfere with meaning.

Anxiety and stress sometimes cause many errors in the productive skills of the language. According to (Tanveer, 2007), errors in social settings are mostly overlooked if they do not interfere with meaning because people consider it impolite to interrupt and correct somebody trying to have a conversation with them. Anxiety, fear, and anxiousness are common feelings exhibited by second/foreign language learners when learning a second/foreign language and are thought to harm communication in the target language(Tanveer, 2007). Language learning is a cognitive task that requires encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can obstruct each process by causing worried students to have divided attention. Anxious pupils concentrate on the work at hand as much as their reactions to it. When responding to a question in class, for example, the worried student is focused on answering the teacher's question (MacIntyre, 1995 as cited in Tanveer, 2007). According to (Tanveer, 2007), errors in social settings are mostly overlooked if they do not interfere with meaning because people consider it impolite to interrupt and correct somebody trying to have a conversation with them.

Continuous and concurrent stress and anxiety may have a mountainous impact on negative tests, poor test performance and cause fear of negative evaluation. According to (Horwitz et al., 1986, as cited in Tanveer, 2007), the researchers attempted to present the literature on the theoretical contentions of language anxiety proposed by concerning three performance-related anxieties: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. With the support of appropriate literature, these three components have been further developed.

To better understand the challenges EFL/ESL learners may encounter in learning to speak a second/foreign language, (Tanveer, 2007) looked at the three stages of language learning: input, processing, and output. Lack of sufficient input for learning FL/L2 in an environment where the target language is not the first language, as well as a lack of opportunities to frequently process the limited (and sometimes filled with errors) input, has been found to cause language anxiety in ESL/EFL learners at the output (speaking) stage. He also looked at the research on socio-cultural components of language learning, including social status, power relations, sense of self, and L1 and L2/FL.

Again stress and anxiety may have both negative and positive impacts on the human being. If the stress and anxiety level are under the bearing ability of the person, it works as a facilitative force, and if the level of those is beyond the bearing level of the person, it works as a debilitative

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force. According to (S. Gomathi & Jasmindebora, 2017), the majority of stress literature consistently addresses the fact that life changes or transitions can predispose a person to stress, and that both negative and positive events in our lives, such as failing an examination, having problems with roommates, illness among family members, getting married or divorced, being promoted or terminated, moving to a new neighbourhood, or attending university, can all predispose a person to stress. As a result, sources of stress have been identified as life changes, daily problems, home life, and acculturation - the process of adapting to and integrating into a new cultural context.

Many factors related to stress and anxiety among the students, but exam-related stress was a topic of discussion during this pandemic. According to (2020), most students (91%) self-reported exam stress. One-third of respondents said distant E-tests were more stressful than on-campus exams, while another third thought both forms of exams were unpleasant. In comparison, 23.55 per cent of students said in-person tests were more stressful, while only 8.73 per cent said neither distant E-exams nor in-person exams were difficult. Students' self-reported stress during tests was highly related to their primary academic Pharmacy, Nursing, and Applied Medical Sciences had the highest percentage of students majoring in these fields.

A & A (1999) describes that most medical college students have mental care, which is the tip of the iceberg. Far more people are not using behavioural issues, strained interpersonal relationships, or declining performance; any psychiatric treatment Psychiatrists link this alarming tendency to the stress that competitive educational systems generate. The present-day Youth is at a fork in the road. The student enters a new demanding and stressful environment when they enter professional colleges.

A student's life is impacted by various stressors, including academic pressure and the expectation of achievement, an unclear future, and anticipated challenges in integrating into the system. These children are dealing with social, emotional, physical, and family issues affecting their study and academic achievement (Fish & Nies, 1996; Chew-Graham, Rogers & Yassin, 2003 as cited in Shaikh et al., 2004).

Some stress and anxiety have both physical and mental detrimental impacts and both negative and positive effects on a human being. Many factors contribute to the mountainous pressure on modern people, especially students, but stress and anxiety related to academic exams and repetitive evaluation significantly impact the students of modern Times.

English was introduced in the 1930s with the discovery of oil and was exclusively used in commerce, while the government did not include it in the curriculum until the 1950s. English was first taught in Saudi Arabia at the Scholarship Preparation School (SPS), which was founded in Makkah in 1936 to prepare Saudis to travel overseas and get a Western education (Alshahrani, 2016). However, because Saudi Arabia was still a young and impoverished nation at the time of integration, the spread of ELT was sluggish. The first college in Mecca, founded in 1949, required English as a subject for two hours per week for four years, and the first university (King Saud University), founded in 1957, included an English department (Al-Abed Al-Haq Smadi, 1996 as cited in Faruk, 2014). So the history of the English language in Saudi Arabia is not very long.

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Nevertheless, the government tries to promote English through various means. The government's Scholarship program, which began in the early 2000s, has played an essential role in this nation-building endeavour. The scholarship program, which involves funding the tertiary studies of a large number of Saudi nationals at offshore institutions, is essentially a massive investment in human resources – a campaign to upskill a new generation of Saudis to create a highly educated, skilled, and knowledgeable nation(Moskovsky & Picard, 2018). With economic power and a massive influx of people, especially workers and household labourers, Saudi people started their English communication as a lingua franca. So they understand the need for the English language. In addition, in the 1970s and 1980s, a massive influx of non-Arab speaking migrant skilled and unskilled labourers and millions of non-Arab pilgrims resulted in substantial growth of ELT. As the only language of contact between Arabs and non-Arabs on the one hand, and as a gateway into the non-Arab world on the other, English was seen as critical to maintaining the country's economic swagger (Faruk, 2014). Thus, the Saudi government has recognized the crucial role played by the English language in all of this. Indeed, English has a unique position in the Saudi community for various social, cultural, historical, and economic reasons (Moskovsky & Picard, 2018). Now English is taught in every layer of education in Saudi Arabia from primary to university level. They hire English teachers from different parts of the world. They employ both non-native English teachers and native English-speaking teachers. However, they have different perceptions about native and nonnative teachers. As an English teacher working at the university level, I observed Saudi University students' different attitudes and perceptions about the non-native and native English teachers. That inspired me to investigate the study.

METHODOLOGY AND HYPOTHESIS

The researcher and his experienced colleagues have taught 100 students divided into three classes with 33, 33, and 34 students in each group. They were supplied and supported with the same materials and classroom facilities. The semesters' duration was four months each, and therefore they had two semesters in a year. After each semester, an achievement test was conducted, and the result was collected and preserved for the research. Before every final exam, they had been given ample time to prepare, and a sense of relaxation prevailed among the students. A paired sample t-test was selected to analyze the collected data.

Ho Hypothesis: there is no significant impact of stress and anxiety on the achievement tests score of the students in two-semester courses.

H1 Hypothesis: there is a significant impact of stress and anxiety on the achievement tests score of the students in two-semester courses.

Again the same groups of students were taught by the researcher and his qualified colleague next year. The number of students in each group was the same as the previous year. similarly, they were supplied and supported with the same types of materials which is a bit higher than the previous input, just like Krashen's input hypothesis. i+1. However, this time the semesters was three months, and it was tri-semester courses in a year. The students were taught as usual,

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and they had to attend three achievement tests after completion of each semester. However, they were not provided ample time to revise and take perspiration of the exams. So they were stressed and suffering from anxiety of poor performance. Their achievement test scores were collected and preserved for the study, and this time One-way repeated measure ANOVA test was adopted to analyze the collected data.

Ho Hypothesis: there is no significant impact of stress and anxiety on the achievement test score of the students in tri-semester courses.

H1 Hypothesis: there is a significant impact of stress and anxiety on the achievement test score of the students in tri-semester courses.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

To show the difference in achievement test scores of the same group's two-semester year, a paired sample t-test was conducted with the collected data and results and analysis are presented below.

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	
Pair 1	duration of four months		100	6.48093	
	duration of four months		100	7.10768	

Table no. 1

the table shows that the test score of two semesters that were of four months duration. The means of the two tests are 77.76 and 78.19, and their difference is very insignificant. The standard deviation of the two tests is 6.481 and 7.108, and their difference is also very insignificant. This also leads us to accept the Ho hypothesis: there is a significant impact of stress and anxiety on the achievement tests score of the students in two-semester courses.

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		Paired Difference s			The 95%confidence interval of the difference		t		Sig. (2-tailed)
			Std. Deviation						
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	duration of four months	-0.43	10.6147	1.06147	-2.53619	1.67619	-0.405	99	0.686

Table:2

Based on the paired samples t-test, t(99) = -0.405, p = 0.686, 95% CI [-2.536, -1.676], since the significant value is greater than alpha, we failed to reject the null Hypothesis, and the H1 Hypothesis is rejected. So it can be concluded that stress and anxiety have no significant effect on the achievement scores of the two-semester year.

Result and Analysis of One-way ANOVA Repeated Measure test: To show the difference of achievement test scores of the tri-semester year of the same group, a One-way ANOVA Repeated Measure test was conducted with the collected data and results and analysis are presented below.

Descriptive Statistics					
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N		
duration of three months	82.9	3.05009	100		
duration of three months	73.62	3.39572	100		
duration of three months	60.63	5.19645	100		

Table no. 3

in the descriptive statistics table above, we can see that first semester, second semester, and semester achievement scores are 82.9, 73.62, and 60.63 successively, which indicates that students' performance in the first semester was better than others achievement scores. However, the with passage of time, stress and anxiety increase among the students due to the pressure of threes semesters in the year. That is why the successive tests scores decreased significantly.

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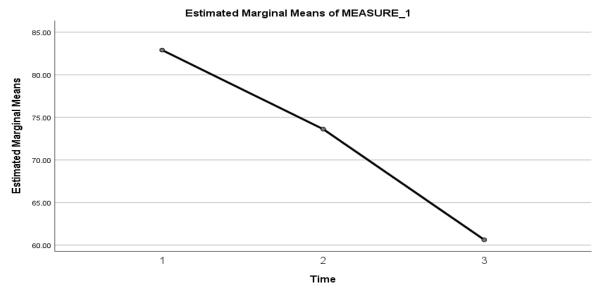
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Multivariate Tests						
	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pillai's trace	0.931	656.046a	2	98	.000	0.931
Wilks' lambda	0.069	656.046a	2	98	.000	0.931
Hotelling's trace	13.389	656.046a	2	98	.000	0.931
Roy's largest root	13.389	656.046a	2	98	.000	0.931

Each F tests the multivariate effect of time. These tests are based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

Table no. 4

In the table of Multivariate tests, we can see that the p-value is .000, which is smaller than 0.05, which leads us to reject the null Hypothesis. Moreover, our Ho Hypothesis was that there is no significant impact of stress and anxiety on the achievement test score of the students in trisemester courses is rejected. As a result, our H1 Hypothesis is that there is a significant impact of stress and anxiety on the achievement test score of the students in tri-semester courses is accepted. Again According to Cohen's (1988) guidelines for interpreting effect size values are Small: 0.01, Medium: 0.059, Large: 0.138, and our Partial Eta Squared is 0.931, which indicates that there significant effect of stress and anxiety of tri--semester o the performance of the students.



Graph No-1

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The graph above shows that the estimated Marginal means of the mean scores of three achievement scores are downwards. In the tri-semester year, it was 83 in the first achievement test, then it came down to 73 around in the second test, and finally, it landed to 61 in the third achievement test.

FINDINGS

- > Students who participated in the semesters' courses, four months of duration, had almost the same result. Because they had enough time to relax in between the semesters. The difference in their performance scores in the two exams was very insignificant.
- It was concluded that the stress and anxiety had no significant effect on the achievement scores of the two-semester year.
- It was also found from the One-way ANOVA Repeated Measure Test that in the trisemestral year, at the beginning semester, students' achievement score was significantly high, but in the next two semes, their test score significantly went down. That means stress and anxiety had a tremendous impact on their final and consecutive exams.
- It was also found that students had no impact of stress and anxiety in the beginning semester of the year, but the following two semesters had a very devastating impact on their final achievement scores.
- As the data were collected during a pandemic, it was also prominent that although they had online classes and did not attend any physical classes, they had no physical stress. However, due to tri-semestral engagement and pandemics, they had mental stress, which affected their performance.
- It was also proved that Saudi students are easy-going people, so they cannot take such colossal change all of a sudden.

DISCUSSION

stress and anxiety are detrimental to both body and mental health. They can affect badly in students' cognition and performance in the achievement test. Students who had four months duration course did not feel the stress and anxiety in their study, so their performance in the achievement test in both exams was noteworthy, and there was no difference in their average result. They got enough time to internalize the information and had enough time to revise them to perform better in both of the exams. They also had a considerable interval between the two semesters that helped them prepare for the next semester. Saudi nationals are very much easygoing and comfort-loving people. Every year they have summer vacation, so they travel to different places and countries for relaxation and pleasure. In two-semester courses, they get enough time to travel and enjoy, but in the tr-semester system, they can not avail of this opportunity to travel and relax, so they become tired and exhausted by stress and anxiety. These factors affect their achievement performance in the exams. In the tr-semester system, Saudi students had hardly enough time to feel relaxed, and the intervals between semesters are very short, which does not allow them to feel relaxed. As a result, their performance in the achievement tests was severely affected. Another factor is their culture; they had been taught in the two-semester system to which they have been used for a long time. So, all of a sudden, a significant change in their educational system affected them severely. The tri-semester system

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is not suitable for them, or it will take time for them to get used to this system. It was proved that as they are a newly emerging nation in education, especially in English language learning, they could not cope with this significant change of academic schedule. Similarly, it was also proved again that stress and anxiety had a tremendous impact on learning and acquiring a second language.

Limitation of the research

Ever research has some limitations so has this research. Data collected for this research is a hundred students, which is not enough sample to represent the whole system in the country. Data were collected during the pandemic, which already had a tremendous impact of stress and anxiety on the students. As the pandemic was ongoing and there was not enough physical communication between students and teachers, enough information and materials were not supplied to students. As a result, their performance in the exams might have been affected. Moreover, some students who stay in the remotest part of the kingdom might not have sufficient technological and internet facilities to attend the classes and appear at the exams. These might have added extra stress and anxiety to them.

CONCLUSION

Stress and anxiety have a mountainous impact on modern human beings, especially on the students. Stress and anxiety affect the students both mentally and physically, which ultimately results in the poor performance of students in the exams. This research proves that Saudi students are not the exception to this, and instead, they are heavily affected by them as they come from a very easy-going and comfort-loving society, so the tri-semester system in their education system may not work correctly or it may take more time until they are well prepared for this. Although sampling was not representative of the whole system and data were collected during the pandemic, the research may work a model to decide which system, two-semester year or tri-semester year, is applicable for Saudi students. Research methodology and approach are all original and appropriately chosen in this research can show ways to new researchers, teachers, high authorities, decision-makers, and educationists.

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