Factors contributing Stress in campus - a pilot study

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H Y D E R A B A D

This project was presented in the Usability Engineering Course.

Background

- In previous surveys (Happiness Index, General Health Questionnaire & Mental health Continuum-MHC), we found mental health levels are alarming (22-25% under stress)
- No proper records of causes contributing to stress levels for our campus
- Need of personal interviews and conversations to dig more causes

Literature Survey

- Explored websites of different universities giving information about stressors which students face
- We found life metrics:
    - Social - Friends/ peers
    - Emotional - Personal
    - Financial - Dependency
    - Physical - Health
    - Spiritual - Sense of direction

Objective

To make a extensive list of all the causes that contribute to stress in students' life in campus.

Experiment Design

- Qualitative Study
  - Interview
- Quick Survey based on common responses from interview
- Using Ishikawa approach (Fishbone diagram) to identify the causes
- Pareto Chart
- Design of category based detailed survey

Procedure

- Description about our study to participants
- Interviewed for 30 mins(avg.)
- Interview Guide
  - Open ended questions
  - Specific questions
  - Positive questions
- Questions from:
  - General Discussion
  - Happiness Index Survey
  - General Health Questionnaire

Interview Guide

Open ended

1. How you feel Campus life is? Tell 10 -ve points
2. In general, how do you consider yourself?
3. Your perspective towards your peers.
4. Work - research & academics
5. Health - personal
6. Family
7. Friends - social
8. Sense of Direction in life
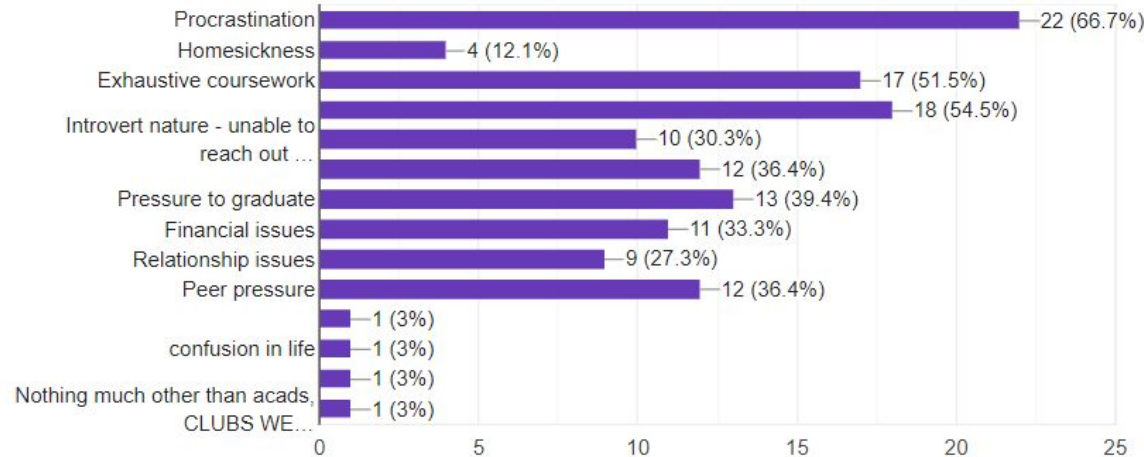
Specific Questions

1. Concentration
2. Sleep
3. Meaningful contribution in any task
4. Decision making capability
5. Grew through problems or stucked
6. 1 thing that disturbs you a lot
7. What you enjoy on daily basis?
8. Like challenges?
9. Tap Confidence levels

Positive

1. Events made you felt good
2. Suggestions that can improve life

Measure

- Interviewed 11 people
- Demographics
  - 9M, 2F
  - 7 MS, 3 MTech, 1 PhD
- Fishbone Approach
  - Reasons are normalised
- Quick survey: 33 responses
- Pareto Chart
- Build a section(categories) based survey

Category	Value
Procrastination	22 (66.7%)
Homesickness	4 (12.1%)
Exhaustive coursework	17 (51.5%)
Introvert nature - unable to reach out ...	18 (54.5%)
	10 (30.3%)
	12 (36.4%)
Pressure to graduate	13 (39.4%)
Financial issues	11 (33.3%)
Relationship issues	9 (27.3%)
Peer pressure	12 (36.4%)
	1 (3%)
confusion in life	1 (3%)
	1 (3%)
Nothing much other than acads, CLUBS WE...	1 (3%)

Personal

- Procrastination
- Disturbed schedules
- Missed deadlines
- Homesickness
- Problem with dogs
- Personal wellbeing
- Loneliness
- Low self-satisfaction
- Self-image consciousness

Academics & System

- Fee hike
- Exhaustive coursework
- Low attendance
- Placement issues
- Gap in understanding among faculty, TAs and students
- Comparative nature of faculty (comparing UG vs PG)
- Egoistic nature of professors and TAs
- Choice between research and placements
- Feeling of getting stuck into a wrong program

Research

- Lack of proper guidance
- Introvert nature - unable to reach out for help
- Slow work progress
- Lack of communication with guide
- Isolation - no social life
- Assigned work not contributing to research
- Research partners not on same page

Family

- Pressure to graduate
- Unable to give time to family
- Financial issues
- Financial dependence
- Pressure for marriage

Social

- Concern about peers
- Desire for relationships
- Relationship issues
- Peer and family pressure due to high reputation of IIIT
- Cultural mismatch
- Issues with peers

Analysis

- Listed down total 72 causes normalised to 38 causes
- Categories formed:
  - Personal
  - Social
  - Family
  - Research
  - Academics & System

Pareto Analysis

	Factors	# Occurences	% Occurences	% Cumulative Occureneces
1	Procrastination	22	17.1875	17.19
2	Gap in understanding among faculty, TAs and students	18	14.0625	31.25
3	Exhaustive coursework	17	13.28125	44.54
4	Pressure to graduate	13	10.15625	54.69
5	Isolation - no social life	12	9.375	64.07
6	Peer pressure	12	9.375	73.44
7	Financial issues	11	8.59375	82.04
8	Introvert nature - unable to reach out for help	10	7.8125	89.85
9	Relationship issues	9	7.03125	96.88
10	Homesickness	4	3.125	100
	Total	128		

80% problems are covered by:

- Procrastination
- Gap in understanding
- Exhaustive coursework
- Pressure to graduate
- Isolation
- Financial Issues

Pareto Chart
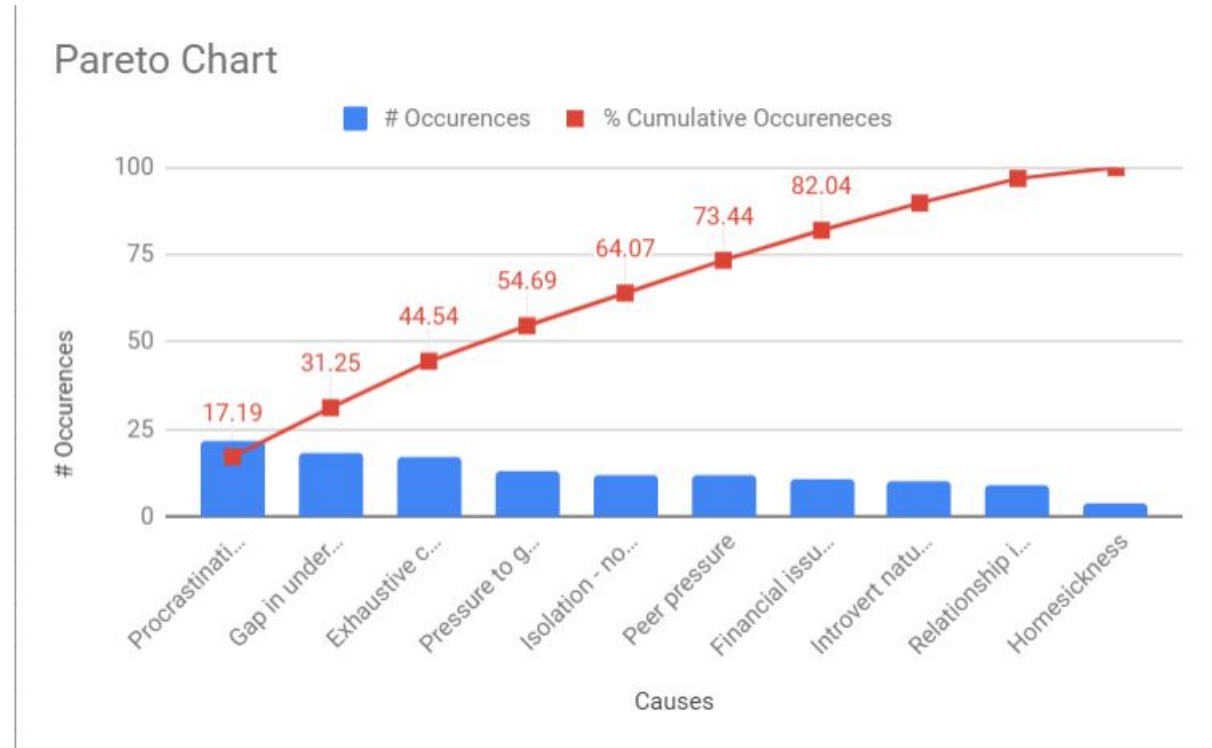
Measures for 6-Sigma

- ## Where we are?
  - Based on Happiness Index Survey and Mental health Survey, it was found that the campus' mental health is at alarming stage
  - On an average 22 - 25% of students fall in the above category
- ## Where we want to go?
  - We want to bring down the figure to 10%
- ## Plan of Action
  - Conduct detailed & 'Quantitative' survey over 200 students, covering all batches
  - Do Pareto and then find out the major 20% issues
  - Organise relevant workshops/ awareness programmes for the stakeholders to address the above issues
  - Repetitive plan of action(bi-monthly/ quarterly) will help us track the status updates

Limitations

- We never know what people are hiding from us
- Differentiating the factors which have more intense effect on stress vs less
- Avoid triggering the negative emotions of participant
- Differentiating the cause from subcause
  - Because of unknown interconnections
  - Wanted to discuss with you about the same

Future work

- Interview more participants including UG & DD students
- Discuss causes and sub-causes with faculty and students
- Conduct detailed Survey among maximum students
- Conduct a quantitative study based on the outcomes

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