



Impact of Religion and Faith on Academic Stress among International Students: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract

International student enrollment in higher education has seen a noticeable increase in the number who come to different countries outside of their origin. With this relocation, international students often face a lot of challenges, which may lead them to be mentally vulnerable. The primary aim of the study was to investigate the impact of religion and faith in relation to academic stress among international students in a British university. The cross-sectional study design collected data using a questionnaire, developed and circulated as an MS form among students who are currently enrolled in a full-time course at the University of Wolverhampton, aged more than 18 years. This study assessed academic stress, strength of faith, and locus of control using validated scales- Higher Education Stress Inventory, Santa Clara Strength of Faith, and Rotter's- External Locus of Control scale, respectively. A multifaceted statistical analysis was done using SPSS to determine whether either type of religious impact, and the strength of faith has on academic stress. Descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation, independent sample t-test, one-way ANOVA, and regression analysis were conducted to examine the associations between key variables. The findings revealed that for the present study's participants, strength of religious faith was not a significant buffer; rather, stress ran simultaneously among them with strong faith. However, differences were observed across religious subgroups, suggesting that the impact of faith depends on other confounding factors. based on their religion. Higher academic stress was more evident among those with an external locus of control. Overall, the multiple regression found that the impact of the strength of faith and locus of control could predict academic stress more than only demographic predictors. These results highlight that religious devotion alone may not safeguard international students from academic challenges, while other psychological constructs can play a more decisive role.

Keywords: International students, academic stress, religion, strength of faith, locus of control