



UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA (UTM)  
SAMARAHAN CAMPUS, SARAWAK  
FACULTY OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE AND POLICY STUDIES  
BACHELOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE (HONS.)

**TITLE OF STUDY**

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRESS MANAGEMENT AND  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS PERFORMANCE

ELEENDRA ANAK LINEK  
2006 15 4593  
COTTEE ANAK NAOS  
2006 10 7289

JULY – NOVEMBER 2009

## CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction	Pages
1.0 Introduction	1 - 5
1.1 Problem Statement	6
1.2 Research Objective	7
1.3 Hypothesis	8
1.4 Scope of the study	9
1.5 Significant of the study	10
1.6 Definition of terms	11
Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework	
2.0 Introduction	12
2.1 Literature Review	12 - 21
2.2 Conceptual Framework	22 - 34
Chapter 3: Research Method	
3.0 Research Methodology	35
3.1 Research Design	35
3.2 Unit of Analysis	36
3.3 Sampling Size	36
3.4 Sampling Techniques	37
3.5 Measurement / Instrumentation	38 - 40
3.6 Data Collection	41 - 42
3.7 Data Analysis	43 - 44
Chapter 4: Findings	
4.0 Introduction	45
4.1 Respondent profile	45 - 49
4.2 Finding by objectives	50 - 62
4.3 Summary	63
Chapter 5	
5.0 Discussion and findings	64 - 69
5.1 Conclusions	70 - 72
5.2 Recommendations	73 - 75
5.3 Limitations of the study	76
References	77 - 78
Appendixes	79 - 94

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Stress has become an important issue in academic circle as well as in our society. Many scholars in the field of behavioral science have carried out extensive research on stress and its outcomes and concluded that the topic needed more attention (Rees and Redfern, 2000; Ellison,2004; Ongori and Agolla, 2008; Agolla, 2009). Stress in educational institutions like in the universities can have both negative and positive consequences if not well managed (Smith, 2002; Tweed et al,2004; Stevenson and Harper, 2006).

Many people recognize that stress comes in the form of negative tension that is caused by someone or something. Those who recognize stress as negative tension fail to realize that stress can generate a positive reaction to a stimulus. The positive reaction of stress can drive individuals to achieve and to test their potential to its fullest. Stress can be a positive aspect of learning if students experience stress as a challenge can exhibit an increased capacity to learn (Roberts & White, 1989). Many experiences distress rather than challenge, which can lead students to feel threatened and helpless.

Experts in the stress management field have traditionally found it difficult to pinpoint how much stress is optimum. A very recent study, carried out by the University of Ohio, showed the relationship really depended on their definition of performance. In this study, subjects' ability to recall simple facts seemed to improve as their stress increased, while their ability to think flexibly and apply those facts to new situations deteriorated. This is interesting for those who learned back in basic stress management theory that the relationship between stress and performance always followed an inverted 'U'-shaped curve.

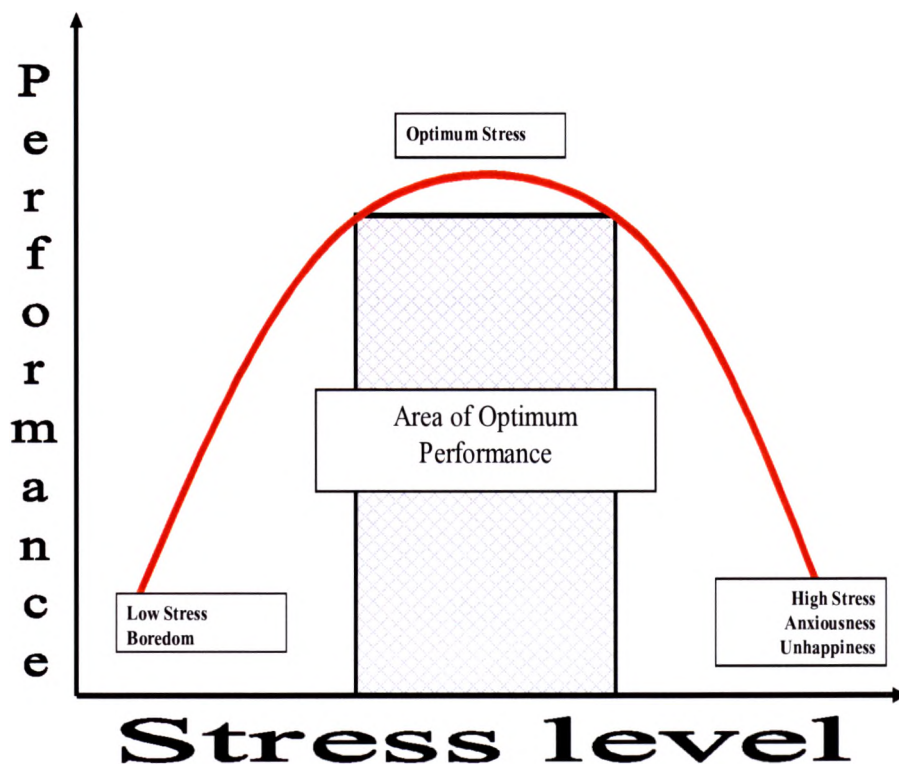


Figure 1.: The relationship between stress and performance

Sources: From Field Manual 22-51, *Leaders' Manual for Combat Stress Control*

The top of this curve is the optimal stress level. Insufficient stress will leave them feeling bored, tired and lethargic. The closer their stress levels to that 'optimal stress' point, the more excited and enthused they become about their work and their lives. Once they get beyond that optimum level, however, things start going downhill fairly quickly. All manner of negative stress responses kick in, and their performance starts to decline.

Chronic stress interferes with learning and memory and students who are stressed-out have lower Grade Point Average (GPAs) than their classmates. A July 2008 study of 24,000 students from 14 colleges and universities showed stress is a problem for 70% of students, and stress has impaired the academic performance for thirty-three percent (33%). In a 2007 study, Stress in America, the American Psychological Association (APA) reported that stress has had a significant negative impact on the lives of one-half of all Americans, causing physical symptoms (77%), psychological symptoms (73%), and fighting with friends or loved ones (54%).