

IJACT 19-3-6

The Experience of Stress in Female College Students

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Abstract

This purpose of this study was to identify the meaning and structure of the experiences of women who were most stressed when they live and how they respond to stress when they were stressed. Six Female college students aged 29 years were interviewed for a total of three times until data was saturated and collected until no more data were collected. Interview data was processed through the analysis and interpretation process using the Giorgi phenomenological research method. As a result, 45 semantic units was derived, these were divided again into 12 subcomponents, and then divided into 3 categories. The stress situation of female college students was a way to escape from the stress that arises in situations that were difficult to overcome due to their inability to cope with, and that they were trying to take a walk or listen to music. A young women aged group, female college students becomes the center of the future family. Therefore, their emotional health will be more important than any other class. In conclusion, this study suggests the provision of a young women's tailed program that could help the female college students to experience the stress in the life task positively and to help the stress crisis as a positive experience of life.

Keywords: *Cross-sectional descriptive research, Emotional Happiness, Health Promotion Behaviors,*

1. Introduction

The lives of today's The lives of today's rapidly changing modern people are exposed to continuous stress situations. Lazarus defined stress as the relationship between an individual and the environment that threatens the person's well-being in the relationship between the person and the environment [1]. Generally, stress is used as a negative meaning to induce tension, making it difficult to adapt to a certain condition, thereby causing psychological burden [2-4]. Furthermore, because stress also leads to interpersonal conflict, the vicious cycle of suffering is repeated [5]. Therefore, prolonged exposure to excessive stress may affect quality of life by exposure to anxiety and other stressful diseases [6]. Recently, the industrial structure of Korea has changed dramatically, and the way of life of female college students has changed a lot. In other words, while women's opportunities for social participation are expanded, the existing consciousness of women has been followed, which can serve as a new experience stress for female college students.

Looking at the employment rate of university graduates in Korea, it was 71.3% for boys and 65.4% for female college students. In addition, employment rate among non-regular workers was 35.3% in 2007 [7]. Gender discrimination in this employment structure will be stressful enough to feel uncomfortable pressure on female college students due to discrimination even after graduating from the same university [8]. In addition, various conflicts as the beginning of female adults and difficulties in unpredictable situations have different

Manuscript received: February 16, 2019/revised: January 22, 2019/ Accepted: February 16, 2019

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aspects to men. Especially, it was a great stress factor for women college students to work after graduation, especially physiological problems such as marriage and childbirth as a woman. If these current stresses are not adequately coped with, the present Korean government will have a huge influence on the problem of low fertility [9-10].

Existing research on women's characteristics suggests that women are more sensitive to the expectations and situational needs of the people around them than to men [8][10]. Among women of various characteristics, the independent and highly vigorous women will have different stresses due to the recognition of passive characteristics that women are more socially and more adaptive than men. These existing perceptions will require passive livelihoods that are independent of the will of the woman with active and independent values. Despite the fact that conflicts arise due to the social recognition of the past, women's college students will suffer conflict and suffering because of their socially pointed out that they are unique female college students rather than change their existing perception [11-12].

Harter, S et al emphasize that women reflect cultural expectations of intimate relationships rather than men [13]. (Harter, S, *Self and Identity Development*, In *at the threshold – the developing adolescence*, Feldman S. S., & Elliott G. J. Harvard University Press, 1990; Gilligan, G, *In a different voice*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982). As for the characteristics of female college students in terms of their roles, female college students try to find their positions and roles constantly while experiencing confusion and psychological conflicts of self - identity as they enter college [11]. They themselves wonder how to set a role and status as a woman [14]. At this time, the parent functions as a role model, while providing mental and economic help in close proximity. Female college students are more influenced by their relationships with their mothers, who are more intimate than their fathers [15]. However, most mothers are dissatisfied with the low value of family and society for their role as full-time housewives. Because of their inferior social position and role, they tend to have a longing for the role of professional women and to realize their own dreams through their daughters [16]. Thus, without consideration of the aptitude and abilities of the daughter, most mothers can challenge their expectations in various ways without considering the desires and abilities of their daughters and cause conflicts [15]. This expectation eventually sends to the daughter a mutually contradictory dual message that being able to make a happy family while doing a successful social activity is the ideal woman. Because of this desire, they want their daughters to go to college and work hard to become professors after graduation. At the same time, they are adults, and as a woman, they deserve to help their mother to do housework. In this environment, most female college students want to engage in professions even if they are married.

In addition, universities are different from the middle and high schools in which they have experienced, and they are given the task of deciding themselves as adults and the tasks to be carried out as a student, as well as a wide range of interpersonal relationships. A rapidly changing society is making more demands on college students for their university life. People have a desire to be recognized by others. Therefore, students will be confident in the tasks they are able to do adequately as students, but if not, they can come to them with the stress of frustration and fear [17-18].

Also, during the life cycle, female college students, usually in their twenties, are a time to seriously consider marriage and family formation. However, as social participation has expanded, it has become a society that gives priority to social participation in employment rather than marriage. Therefore, despite the fact that women in their twenties should be given the same care and consideration as men in the same way as men, the reality is not so. There is a psychological conflict that follows the change of inequalities and values of traditional social systems and conflicts of roles and gender roles rather than expectation and consideration for the changing role of women in their twenties. This contradiction of social structure makes invisible conflict exist. Piper emphasized the need for research on women's psychology that deals with the unique characteristics of women who develop differently from men[19].

Recently, research on stress has been carried out in various fields. However, research has not been carried out specifically on the subject of women, especially female college students. The stress management of female college students who are the center of the family in the future is more important than the management of any other generation. The purpose of this study is to analyze

phenomenological experience of female students' stress experience. The specific research problems of this study are as follows. First, what is the most stressful situation for college students? Second, what are the physical and mental emotional reactions to stress? Third, what is the way to cope with stress?

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

This study used a non-random sample to find participants who could provide a lot of insight into the stress phenomenon of female college students [20]. In other words, in order to search for specific aspects of the phenomenon in detail, this study selected cases of female college students between 20 and 29 years old and selected as a person who can actively interview for information on the subject. The specific criteria of the participants were as follows. First, participants in the study were selected from the ages of 20-29 at the time of the survey. Second, the physical, mental, and emotional symptoms of stress are based on previous studies such as [14] [16] [21-24], and the age of the participants was varied so that the phenomenon of college students' stress was fully revealed. Third, after listening to the purpose of this study, they were able to understand the purpose of the study and actively speak their stress experience honestly. Fourth, as participants who are confident that they will have the opportunity to look back on themselves through participation in this study, they will have confidence that this study will help their personal growth. Fifth, the present study was conducted on 20-29 year old female college students who promised to abbreviate things that would be difficult due to personal exposure and express their intention to express their experiences with honesty. The demographic characteristics of the study participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. General characteristics

Participants No (Age)	School Grade	Housing	Religion
1(29)	4	Commuting	Catholic
2(22)	3	Dormitory	None
3(21)	2	Commuting	Protestant
4(21)	3	Dormitory	Buddhism
5(20)	1	Dormitory	None
6(25)	4	Own living	None

2.2. Data collection

In order to prepare and process the interviews in this study, the researchers recruited college students who expressed intention to participate after explaining the purpose of the research by telephone to the college students with whom they were acquainted. The interview questionnaires used in this study are as follows. In order to construct a questionnaire about the stress phenomenon of female college students, it is recommended that prior to the study, a thesis on the physical symptoms of stress, a thesis on the emotional part of stress, and a precedent study on the social ecological thesis of stress, The questionnaire was composed of three successive structures. The open order in-depth interviews are as follows: first, 'stress situation'; second, 'body, mind, emotion and social ecological response to stress'; and 'coping with stress' The interviews were conducted three times per participant from December 1, 2018 to January 10, 2019, and took an average of more than 2 hours per session. All interviews were recorded with the participant's consent. After completion of the interview, it was confirmed that there was no difference from the contents stated to the research participants. In addition, the characteristics of the study participants, the field notes that recorded the linguistic and nonverbal expressions and behaviors observed at the interview, the progress of the research, and the data that researchers

should pay attention to in the analysis were written in the research diary.

2.3. Data Analysis

This study used Giorgi's phenomenological analysis method [25], which focuses on explaining the meaning of living experience based on talking about his experiences through in - depth interviews of participants. The analysis process of Giorgi 's research method consists of 'overall recognition ', 'semantic unit ', 'transformation of semantic units into academic terms', and 'integration into structure'. This study was analyzed according to the context of Giorgi's phenomenological analysis method as follows. ① In order to get a feeling from the data, the dictation of the subject was repeatedly read and pondered. ②The ambiguous part of what the participant said was asked again to confirm the exact meaning to the participant. ③The participant expresses her own experiences by expressing the participant's words in a unit of the same meaning (expressive form or vocabulary). ④ Identify the themes that can represent the participants 'vivid experiences in the participants' natural meaning unit. ⑤ In order to materialize the derived theme, the focus meaning that the participant's experience means is described in the language of the researcher. ⑥The central structural meaning is integrated from the viewpoint of the participant. ⑦ Integrating the situation and structural description, the meaning from the viewpoint of all participants was written as a general structural description (Table 2).The analysis process proceeded at the same time as the data collection, where the meaning of the data was underlined, and where there was a different meaning between the meanings was again asked. As a result, it was repeated until no more meaning appeared, and semantic units were derived. As a result, 45 semantic units were derived from 6 research participants. Among the derived semantic units, duplicate or out - of - structure units were excluded and used for analysis. The components were constructed based on the derived meaning units, and the correlation between the components was analyzed to integrate the stress response and coping structure. As a result, the structure of reaction and coping with college students' stress situation was integrated into three components and twelve subcomponent structures. In the process of analyzing the data, the researcher took the attitude of phenomenological reduction and went back to the raw data every time analyzing the posture of reduction, and repeated the process of verifying and supplementing the semantic unit derivation process. For this study, the researchers regularly attended workshops on qualitative research, cultivating their ability as phenomenological researchers and conducting ongoing phenomenological studies. In order to increase the validity of the data analysis on the statement contents, the research participants were asked again if necessary, and the relationship between the components was confirmed. Furthermore, two re- searchers of nursing professors who are conducting qualitative research were sought to secure the validity of the analysis.

Table 2. Process of Analysis

Process	Contents
1 st	Repeat reading and pondering what the subject said
2 nd	Identify the exact meaning
3 rd	Identify participants with natural meaning unit
4 th	Identify the themes
5 th	Explain focus meaning in the language of the researcher
6 th	Situated structural description
7 th	General structural description

3. Result

The meaning of stressful situations and physical, mental, emotional, socio-ecological responses and coping by college students derived from Giorgi phenomenological analysis procedure consists of three categories and 12 subcomponents. A representative example of each subcomponent was described as follows.

3.1. Stress Situation

The stress level of the participants was 'unfairness', 'excessive task', 'loneliness', 'physiological phenomenon' (Table 3).The details are as follows. Participants felt stressed when they quarreled with their friends at school, with their parents, when they heard bad sounds from the part-time boss, and when they were lonely or when menstrual symptoms.

Table 3. Stress Situation

Category	Subcomponents	Semantic Units
Stress Situation	Unfairness	Fight, The future was deadly, There was a disagreement
	A heavy work	Not what it means, Living away from home, mistake, Quit Inconvenience, Exam, Disability
	Loneliness	Separation, Poverty, Conflict with parents, Unfamiliar area Alienation
	Menstrual symptoms	Menstrual cycle, Cold sweat, Tiredness, Obesity

3.2. Stress Response

The stress response of the study participants was expressed as ‘nervous system change’, ‘gastrointestinal symptoms’, ‘sensory symptoms’ (Table 4). The details are as follows. Participants could not sleep if they get stressed out or feel pain in the headache. If they are sleeping continuously or doing nothing, they may be binge eating and drinking alcohol heavily, showing signs of abnormality on their skin or tear off lips.

Table 4. Stress Response

Category	Subcomponents	Semantic Units
Stress Response	Nervous System Change	Insomnia, Headache, Sleeping continuously, Depression
		Confinement at home
	Gastrointestinal Symptoms	Binge eating, Dinking alcohol heavily
		Sensory symptoms

3.3. Stress Coping

The respondents' stress ping was said to be 'energy divergence', 'comforting oneself', 'avoiding', 'Conversion', 'rearranging around' (Table 5).The details are as follows. Participants were looking for a pathway to divert energy such as drinking or singing. They showed consolation, such as eating stimulant foods or listening to

music. They showed behavior to escape from stress or escape from stress, And cleaning up the stress situation by switching to another direction. Participants looked for someone to help them cope with stress and asked for advice.

Table 5. Stress Coping

Category	Subcomponents	Semantic Units
Stress Coping	Energy divergence	Drinking alcohol, Singing song, Fighting with someone, SNS,
		Taking a lot, Buying stuff
	Comforting oneself	Ingestion stimulated food, Stretching, Listen to music,
		Finding something new
	Avoiding	Sleeping, Nothing eat
Conversion	Cleaning room, Go to comfortable place	
	Rearranging around	Finding someone to get advice, Self-reflection

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the meaning and structure of stress experience of female college students by using Giorgi method [25]. Six female college students aged 20 to 29 years were collected. The collected data were analyzed through analysis and interpretation simultaneously, and 45 semantic units and 12 sub - components were derived. The final category consisted of three categories: category 1, stress 2, category 3, category 3 stress coping; The stress situation of female college students consisted of 'unfairness', 'excessive task', 'loneliness', 'physiological phenomenon'. These results were similar to those appeared in [22] studies. The stress symptoms of female college students consisted of 'nervous system change', 'gastrointestinal symptoms' and 'sensory symptoms'. The stress coping of female college students showed 'energy dissipation', 'comforting oneself', 'avoiding', 'switching' and 'rearrange around'. The female college students' age is the period of strengthening the foundation as an adult, and it is also the time to prepare for the same job as men due to changes in industrial structure and social awareness. Nevertheless, the traditional perception of women is more stressful for female college students because they do not fully accommodate these social changes.

According to the results of this study interview, female college students expressed their conflict with their mother and thought that it was their fault after the conflict.

If they look at their mother's opinions rather than their opinions, they are confused about their own decisions. In this research, [16] found that relationship with parents had a huge impact on the decision making of young women. Therefore, it was observed that the tasks to be done would be excessive and the stresses occurred when the tasks assigned to them were not successful enough. It is also a time when a young woman must experience menstrual pain that requires more severe pain than any other generation. And because of the burden of having to work as a professional recently, loneliness caused by studying in a strange area far from his hometown was also a great stress. These stresses manifested symptoms of nervous system disorder such as being unable to sleep, sleeping for a long time, having a severe headache or nervous change, and complain of gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhea. It also showed sensory symptoms such as dizziness or abnormal skin sensation. Therefore, to cope with these symptoms, female college students tried to solve the mental stress by physical energy divergence, by doing some comforting action for oneself, and sometimes by avoiding the stress situation.

Other female college students were trying to clean up their surroundings, such as cleaning up, finding people who could give advice, and correcting their thoughts.

Based on the above meaning, the experience structure of stress of female college students was as follows.

Female students were experiencing various stresses in life such as study and part - time job. There was stress in situations that were difficult to cope with because of their inability to cope with them, stress that arises from receiving unfair treatment, and there was stress caused by disagreement. As a way to get rid of the stress, the female college students showed that they tried to avoid the drinking and hermit, and tried to take stability by taking a walk or listening to music.

This study suggests the provision of a young women's personalized program that can help the female students to experience the positive stress of stress in the life task, so that stress crisis can be a positive experience of life.

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