

Financial Stress and Mental Health among University Students

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Abstract: Financial stress has emerged as a critical issue among university students, significantly influencing not only their academic performance but also their mental and emotional well-being. With the continuous rise in tuition fees, increasing cost of living, and growing dependence on student loans, many students experience persistent financial pressure throughout their academic journey. This study examines the relationship between financial stress and mental health among university students by analysing major financial stressors such as educational expenses, accommodation costs, daily living requirements, and debt obligations.

The research is based on a secondary data approach, drawing insights from existing literature, research articles, government reports, and institutional surveys to identify patterns, trends, and key outcomes. The study further explores how financial stress contributes to various psychological issues, including anxiety, depression, reduced self-esteem, and overall psychological distress, while also impacting academic engagement, concentration, and performance.

The findings reveal a strong and consistent correlation between financial difficulties and deteriorating mental health conditions among students. Additionally, the study identifies that inadequate financial literacy, lack of institutional support, and limited access to coping resources further intensify stress levels. It emphasizes the importance of integrated strategies involving financial assistance programs, student counselling services, and financial education initiatives.

The study concludes that addressing financial stress requires a holistic and multi-dimensional approach, combining policy-level interventions, institutional support systems, and individual coping strategies to enhance students' overall well-being and academic success.

Keywords: Financial Stress, Mental Health, University Students, Anxiety, Depression, Financial Literacy

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, higher education has undergone significant transformation, particularly in terms of accessibility, cost structure, and student expectations. While universities have expanded opportunities for academic and professional growth, the **rising cost of education and increasing living expenses** have simultaneously created substantial financial challenges for students. Tuition fees, accommodation charges, study materials, transportation, and daily subsistence costs have escalated steadily, making it difficult for many students to sustain their

education without external financial support. As a result, a large proportion of students rely on **family support, scholarships, part-time employment, or educational loans**, which often leads to financial instability and stress.

Financial stress can be understood as the **emotional and psychological strain arising from an individual's inability to meet financial obligations or maintain financial security**. Among university students, this stress manifests in multiple forms, including about paying fees, fear of accumulating debt, and uncertainty regarding future financial independence. Unlike temporary financial concerns, student-related financial stress is often **chronic in nature**, persisting throughout the duration of academic programs and sometimes extending into post-graduation life due to loan repayment obligations. Additionally, students from economically weaker sections are disproportionately affected, as they face greater difficulty in accessing resources and opportunities.

The experience of financial stress among students is further intensified by **academic pressure and career-related uncertainty**. Students are expected to perform well academically, participate in extracurricular activities, and prepare for competitive job markets, all while managing limited financial resources. This creates a complex situation where financial concerns interfere with academic engagement, reducing concentration, productivity, and overall performance. For many students, the need to engage in part-time work to support their expenses adds another layer of pressure, often leading to **time constraints, fatigue, and burnout**.

Mental health, defined as a state of **emotional, psychological, and social well-being**, plays a crucial role in determining an individual's ability to cope with stress, maintain relationships, and make effective decisions. Financial stability is a key determinant of mental health, as it provides a sense of security and control over one's life. Conversely, financial instability can lead to **heightened levels of anxiety, depression, stress, and emotional exhaustion**. Students experiencing financial difficulties often report feelings of helplessness, low self-esteem, and fear about their future, which negatively impacts their overall quality of life.

Moreover, persistent financial stress can disrupt not only academic performance but also **social interactions and campus engagement**. Students with limited financial resources may avoid participating in social activities, group projects, or networking opportunities due to cost constraints, leading to **social isolation and reduced peer support**. Over time, this isolation can further aggravate mental health issues, creating a cycle of stress and disengagement.

The growing prevalence of mental health problems such as **anxiety disorders, depression, and burnout among university students** has become a global concern. Numerous studies indicate that financial stress is one of the **primary contributing factors** to these conditions. The competitive academic environment, coupled with financial insecurity, creates a high-pressure situation that affects students' emotional resilience and coping capacity. In extreme cases, prolonged financial and psychological stress may lead to serious consequences such as substance abuse or suicidal tendencies.

Given these challenges, it is essential to systematically examine the **relationship between financial stress and mental health within the academic context**. Understanding this relationship can help in identifying key stressors, assessing their impact, and developing effective strategies to support students. Universities, policymakers, and stakeholders must recognize financial stress as not merely an economic issue but a **multidimensional problem affecting students' psychological well-being, academic success, and future prospects**.

Therefore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of financial stress among university students and its implications for mental health, emphasizing the need for integrated interventions, financial literacy, and institutional support systems to ensure a healthier and more supportive learning environment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the sources of financial stress among university students

This objective focuses on identifying the major factors contributing to financial stress, such as tuition fees, living expenses, and student loans. It also considers socio-economic background and limited income opportunities. Understanding these sources helps in recognizing the root causes of financial strain among students.

2. To analyse the impact of financial stress on mental health

This objective aims to study how financial difficulties influence students' psychological well-being, including anxiety, depression, and stress levels. It also examines the effect on emotional stability and overall mental health. The analysis helps establish a direct relationship between financial stress and mental health issues.

3. To identify coping mechanisms adopted by students

This objective explores the strategies students use to manage financial stress, including both positive and negative approaches. It includes practices such as budgeting, seeking support, or engaging in part-time work. Identifying these mechanisms helps in evaluating their effectiveness and impact on well-being.

4. To evaluate the role of universities in reducing financial stress

This objective assesses how educational institutions contribute to minimizing financial stress through scholarships, counselling services, and financial literacy programs. It also examines institutional policies and support systems. The evaluation helps in understanding the effectiveness of university-level interventions.

5. To suggest measures for improving student well-being

This objective focuses on recommending practical solutions to reduce financial stress and enhance mental health among students. It includes policy suggestions, institutional strategies, and individual-level interventions. The aim is to promote a supportive and balanced academic environment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Type of Research: Descriptive and Analytical Research

The present study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically describe the nature, extent, and characteristics of financial stress and its impact on the mental health of university students. It focuses on presenting factual information regarding students' financial challenges and associated psychological conditions.

In addition, an analytical approach is used to interpret and examine the relationship between financial stress and mental health outcomes. This involves critically analysing existing data to identify patterns, correlations, and underlying causes, thereby providing deeper insights into the issue.

2. Data Collection: Secondary Data Sources

The study is based entirely on secondary data, which involves collecting information that has already been published or recorded by other researchers and institutions. This approach ensures access to a wide range of validated and reliable information.

a) Research Journals

Peer-reviewed research articles are used to understand empirical findings related to financial stress and mental health. These journals provide scientifically tested data, theoretical models, and statistical evidence supporting the study.

b) Government Reports

Reports published by government bodies offer authentic and large-scale data on education costs, student welfare, and mental health statistics. These sources help in understanding national-level trends and policy implications.

c) Academic Publications

Books, conference papers, and academic studies contribute conceptual clarity and theoretical background. They help in developing a strong foundation for analyzing the relationship between financial stress and mental health.

d) Institutional Surveys

Surveys conducted by universities and educational organizations provide direct insights into students' experiences, including stress levels, financial difficulties, and coping behaviours. These surveys reflect real-world situations within academic environments.

3. Tools of Analysis

a) Comparative Analysis

This method is used to compare findings from different studies, regions, or student groups to identify similarities and differences in financial stress levels and mental health outcomes. It helps in understanding variations based on demographic or socio-economic factors.

b) Thematic Interpretation

Thematic analysis involves identifying recurring themes and patterns within the collected data, such as common stressors, emotional responses, and coping strategies. This qualitative approach helps in organizing complex information into meaningful categories for better understanding.

c) Conceptual Framework Analysis

This tool is used to develop and analyse a conceptual model linking financial stress with mental health outcomes. It helps in establishing theoretical relationships between variables such as financial burden, stress levels, and psychological well-being, thereby providing a structured basis for the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. McCloud & Bann (2019)

A rapid review of evidence on higher education students in the UK concluded that financial stress is strongly associated with poor mental health outcomes, including depression and anxiety. The study emphasized that financial difficulties act as a persistent stressor affecting student well-being over time.

2. Peltz et al. (2021)

This study examined the role of financial strain in students' daily lives and found that financial stress negatively affects sleep patterns, working hours, and overall mental health, thereby increasing psychological distress among college students.

3. Campbell et al. (2022)

A systematic review published in *BMC Public Health* identified financial difficulties as one of the key determinants of poor mental health among university students, along with academic pressure and social challenges.

4. Smith et al. (2025)

A systematic integrative review focusing on nursing students found that financial stress significantly reduces quality of life and contributes to emotional distress, with variations based on demographic and socio-economic factors.

5. Mohamed et al. (2025)

This study on Malaysian university students concluded that financial stress has a direct and significant impact on both academic performance and mental health, highlighting the need for targeted institutional interventions.

6. McCloud & Bann (2019 – Extended Findings)

Further findings from the same study indicate that students experiencing financial hardship are more likely to report long-term psychological difficulties, reinforcing the cyclical nature of financial stress and mental health issues.

7. Integrative Review on Nursing Students (2024 Data Synthesis)

A comprehensive synthesis of multiple studies revealed that financial stress arises from academic, personal, and clinical factors, and consistently leads to emotional distress and reduced well-being across student populations.

8. Ludlow et al. (2022)

Research on financial hardship and housing stress demonstrated that financial strain significantly lowers self-reported mental health levels, especially among economically vulnerable groups, indicating broader implications beyond student populations.

9. Blair et al. (2022)

This study explored the relationship between financial behaviour and mental health, suggesting that financial instability can act as an early indicator of mental health deterioration, and highlighted the importance of integrating financial and psychological data for better interventions.

Synthesis of Literature

The review of the above studies reveals the following consistent patterns:

- Financial stress is a major predictor of mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, and psychological distress.
- Debt burden and financial insecurity create long-term emotional and psychological consequences.

- Financial stress affects not only mental health but also academic performance, sleep, and social well-being.
- Lack of financial literacy and institutional support intensifies stress levels among students.
- There exists a cyclical relationship, where poor mental health further worsens financial decision-making and stability.

RESEARCH GAP IDENTIFIED

Despite extensive research, the following gaps remain:

- Limited studies focusing on developing countries (especially India)
- Lack of integration between financial counselling and mental health services
- Insufficient focus on preventive strategies and financial literacy education
- Need for more primary data-based and longitudinal studies

These studies collectively establish that **financial stress is a critical determinant of student mental health.**

SOURCES OF FINANCIAL STRESS

Sources of Financial Stress Among Students

Financial stress among students does not arise from a single factor; rather, it is the result of multiple interconnected economic and social pressures. These stressors influence not only students' financial stability but also their psychological well-being, academic performance, and future outlook.

Educational Expenses

Educational expenses are one of the most significant and immediate sources of financial stress for students.

a) Rising Tuition Fees

Over the past few decades, the cost of higher education has increased substantially across both public and private institutions. Students often struggle to afford these escalating fees, especially

in professional and technical courses. This creates constant pressure to secure funds, either through family support or borrowing.

b) Cost of Academic Materials

Beyond tuition, students are required to spend on textbooks, reference materials, digital subscriptions, software, and other academic resources. Many of these materials are expensive and frequently updated, making them a recurring financial burden.

c) Additional Institutional Charges

Institutions often impose extra charges such as examination fees, laboratory fees, library fees, and development charges. Though individually small, collectively they add to the financial strain and are sometimes unexpected, increasing anxiety among students.

Impact: These expenses create a persistent financial obligation, leading to worry, distraction, and reduced focus on academic activities.

Cost of Living

The day-to-day living expenses of students significantly contribute to financial stress, especially for those studying away from home.

a) Accommodation Expenses

Students living in hostels or rented accommodations must bear monthly rent, deposits, and maintenance costs. In urban areas, these costs are particularly high, making housing one of the largest financial burdens.

b) Food and Transportation

Daily expenses such as meals, groceries, commuting, and utility bills add up over time. Fluctuations in prices further increase uncertainty and stress.

c) Urban Lifestyle Costs

Students in cities are often exposed to higher lifestyle expectations, including social activities, internet expenses, and personal consumption. The pressure to match peers' lifestyles can lead to overspending and financial strain.

Impact: Continuous living expenses create a sense of financial instability, forcing students to constantly budget and sometimes compromise on basic needs.

Debt Burden

Debt is a major long-term source of financial stress among students.

a) Student Loans

Many students depend on education loans to finance their studies. While loans provide access to education, they also create a financial obligation that extends beyond graduation.

b) Fear of Repayment

The uncertainty of securing a stable job after completing education leads to anxiety about loan repayment. Students often worry about interest accumulation and repayment deadlines.

c) Long-term Financial Insecurity

Debt can delay major life decisions such as pursuing higher education, starting a business, or achieving financial independence. This long-term pressure contributes significantly to mental stress.

Impact: Debt creates both present and future anxiety, making students feel financially constrained and uncertain about their future.

Limited Income Opportunities

Students often face challenges in earning income while pursuing their education.

a) Difficulty Balancing Work and Studies

Engaging in part-time work can help financially, but it often interferes with academic responsibilities. Managing both can lead to exhaustion, reduced academic performance, and stress.

b) Limited Part-time Job Availability

In many regions, especially smaller towns, there are limited opportunities for flexible or student-friendly jobs. Even in urban areas, competition for such jobs is high.

Impact: The inability to earn sufficient income increases dependence on loans or family support, intensifying financial pressure and feelings of helplessness.

Socio-economic Factors

A student's background plays a crucial role in determining their level of financial stress.

a) Family Income Background

Students from low-income families often face greater financial constraints. They may feel a strong responsibility to minimize expenses or contribute financially to their households.

b) Lack of Financial Support Systems

Some students lack access to scholarships, grants, or family support networks. This absence of a safety net increases vulnerability to financial crises.

Impact: Socio-economic disadvantages not only create financial challenges but also lead to emotional stress, lower self-confidence, and a sense of inequality.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework provides a structured lens through which the relationship between financial stress and student mental health can be understood. By applying established psychological and socio-economic theories, it becomes easier to explain how financial challenges translate into emotional and behavioural outcomes among students.

Stress Theory – Richard Lazarus & Susan Folkman

Stress Theory, developed by Lazarus and Folkman, emphasizes that stress is not merely a result of external situations, but rather how individuals interpret and respond to those situations.

Core Concept

According to this theory, stress occurs when:

- A person **perceives a situation as demanding or threatening**, and
- Believes that their **resources or coping abilities are insufficient** to handle it

This process involves two types of appraisals:

1. **Primary Appraisal** – Evaluating whether a situation is stressful
2. **Secondary Appraisal** – Assessing one’s ability to cope with it

Application to Financial Stress

In the context of students:

- Financial difficulties such as high fees, debt, and living expenses are seen as continuous (chronic) stressors
- Students evaluate these challenges as threats to their education and future stability
- When they feel they lack adequate financial resources or support, stress intensifies

Impact on Mental Health

- Persistent worry and anxiety
- Feelings of helplessness
- Reduced ability to concentrate on studies
- Emotional exhaustion over time

Interpretation: Financial stress is not only about lack of money, but also about the perception of financial insecurity and inability to cope, which directly influences mental health.

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs – Abraham Maslow

Maslow’s theory explains human motivation through a hierarchy of needs, arranged from basic survival needs to higher-level personal growth needs.

Structure of the Hierarchy

1. **Physiological Needs** – Food, water, shelter
2. **Safety Needs** – Security, stability, financial safety
3. **Social Needs** – Relationships, belongingness
4. **Esteem Needs** – Confidence, respect
5. **Self-Actualization** – Personal growth and fulfilment

Link with Financial Stress

Financial instability directly affects the lower levels of the hierarchy:

a) Basic (Physiological) Needs

- Students may struggle to afford adequate food, housing, or healthcare
- This creates immediate physical and emotional discomfort

b) Safety Needs

- Lack of financial security leads to uncertainty about continuing education
- Fear of losing accommodation or being unable to pay fees increases anxiety

Effect on Higher-Level Goals

When lower-level needs are unmet:

- Students cannot fully focus on education and academic achievement
- Personal growth, skill development, and self-confidence are negatively affected
- Motivation declines due to constant financial worry

Interpretation: Financial stress blocks students from progressing toward higher-level goals, keeping them stuck in survival and security concerns.

Financial Strain Theory

Financial Strain Theory focuses specifically on the relationship between economic hardship and psychological well-being.

Core Idea

The theory suggests that:

- **Insufficient financial resources** create ongoing pressure
- This pressure leads to emotional distress and mental health issues

Unlike short-term stress, financial strain is often long-lasting and cumulative, making it more harmful.

Application to Students

Students experiencing financial strain may:

- Constantly worry about expenses and debt
- Feel socially excluded due to inability to participate in activities
- Experience pressure to succeed academically to justify financial sacrifices

Psychological Consequences

- Anxiety and depression
- Low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy
- Social withdrawal and isolation
- Reduced overall life satisfaction

Behavioural Outcomes

- Increased risk of dropping out
- Lower academic performance
- Avoidance of necessary expenditures (books, nutrition, healthcare)

Interpretation: Financial strain directly affects both emotional stability and behaviour, making it a critical determinant of student mental health.

DATA ANALYSIS (SECONDARY INTERPRETATION)

Based on various studies:

- Students facing financial stress report higher levels of anxiety and depression
- Financial difficulties lead to poor academic performance
- Students with debt experience long-term psychological pressure
- Limited financial resources reduce social participation, increasing isolation

Interpretation

Financial stress acts as a multi-dimensional problem, affecting emotional, academic, and social aspects simultaneously.

IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

Anxiety and Depression

- **Constant worry about finances**
 - Students continuously think about managing fees, rent, and daily expenses.
 - This persistent concern creates mental pressure and restlessness.
 - Over time, it leads to chronic anxiety and emotional fatigue.
- **Fear of debt accumulation**
 - The burden of loans and increasing interest creates fear of long-term repayment.
 - Students feel trapped in a cycle of financial obligation.
 - This fear often contributes to depressive thoughts and hopelessness.
- **Uncertainty about future**
 - Financial instability makes future planning difficult and unclear.
 - Students worry about career opportunities and financial independence.
 - This uncertainty increases stress and lowers confidence.

Psychological Distress

- **Sleep disorders**
 - Financial stress leads to overthinking, especially at night.
 - Students may suffer from insomnia or irregular sleep patterns.
 - Lack of proper sleep further worsens mental health.
- **Mood swings**
 - Financial pressure affects emotional stability.
 - Students may feel irritated, frustrated, or suddenly demotivated.
 - These fluctuations impact both personal and academic life.
- **Low self-esteem**
 - Inability to manage finances may create feelings of inadequacy.
 - Students may compare themselves with financially stable peers.
 - This lowers confidence and self-worth.

Academic Consequences

- **Reduced concentration**
 - Financial worries distract students from studies.
 - They find it difficult to focus during lectures or exams.
 - This directly affects learning outcomes.
- **Lower grades**
 - Stress and lack of focus result in poor academic performance.
 - Students may fail to complete assignments effectively.
 - This creates a negative academic cycle.
- **Increased dropout rates**
 - Severe financial problems force some students to leave education.
 - Inability to pay fees or sustain living costs is a key reason.
 - These impacts long-term career prospects.

Social Isolation

- **Limited participation in activities**
 - Students avoid extracurricular or social events due to financial constraints.
 - They may feel uncomfortable spending money unnecessarily.
 - This reduces overall campus engagement.
- **Reduced peer interaction**
 - Financial stress can cause withdrawal from social circles.
 - Students may feel embarrassed or different from others.
 - This leads to loneliness and emotional disconnection.

Severe Outcomes

- **Burnout**
 - Continuous stress without relief leads to mental and physical exhaustion.
 - Students feel drained and lose motivation completely.
 - Burnout affects both health and academic performance.
- **Substance abuse**
 - Some students turn to alcohol or drugs as a coping mechanism.
 - This provides temporary relief but worsens the situation.
 - It can lead to addiction and serious health issues.

- **Suicidal tendencies in extreme cases**
 - Severe financial and emotional stress may lead to hopelessness.
 - Students may feel trapped with no solution to their problems.
 - In extreme situations, this can result in suicidal thoughts.

COPING MECHANISMS

Positive Coping

- **Budgeting and financial planning**
 - Students can manage expenses by tracking income and spending.
 - Proper planning helps avoid unnecessary financial stress.
 - It promotes a sense of control and stability.
- **Seeking scholarships**
 - Applying for scholarships reduces financial burden.
 - It provides relief from tuition and other expenses.
 - This support improves both confidence and focus.
- **Counselling support**
 - Professional counselling helps students manage stress effectively.
 - They learn coping strategies and emotional regulation.
 - It improves overall mental well-being.

Negative Coping

- **Avoidance behaviour**
 - Students may ignore financial problems instead of addressing them.
 - This leads to accumulation of stress over time.
 - Problems become more difficult to handle later.
- **Overworking**
 - Taking excessive part-time work affects health and studies.
 - Students may experience fatigue and poor academic performance.
 - This creates more stress instead of reducing it.
- **Substance use**
 - Some students rely on harmful substances for stress relief.
 - This negatively impacts physical and mental health.
 - It can worsen financial and emotional problems.

ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES

Financial Support

- **Scholarships and grants**
 - Universities can provide merit-based or need-based financial aid.
 - This reduces students' dependence on loans.
 - It enables equal access to education.
- **Fee concessions**
 - Institutions may offer reduced fees for financially weak students.
 - This helps them continue education without interruption.
 - It lowers financial stress significantly.

Mental Health Services

- **Counselling centres**
 - Universities should provide accessible mental health support.
 - Students can discuss stress and emotional issues openly.
 - This promotes psychological well-being.
- **Stress management programs**
 - Workshops and sessions help students handle pressure effectively.
 - They learn techniques like relaxation and time management.
 - This improves resilience and coping ability.

Financial Literacy Programs

- **Budgeting workshops**
 - Students are taught how to manage money efficiently.
 - They learn to plan expenses and save resources.
 - This reduces financial mismanagement.
- **Debt management training**
 - Guidance on handling loans and repayments is provided.
 - Students understand interest and repayment strategies.
 - This reduces fear and financial uncertainty.

Flexible Learning Options

- **Online courses**
 - Digital learning reduces accommodation and travel costs.
 - Students can study from their own location.
 - This makes education more affordable.
- **Part-time study programs**
 - Flexible schedules allow students to work while studying.
 - They can earn income without sacrificing education.
 - This balances financial and academic needs.

FINDINGS

- **Financial stress is a major predictor of mental health issues**

The study clearly indicates that financial stress plays a central role in shaping students' mental health outcomes. Students facing financial difficulties are more likely to experience anxiety, depression, and emotional instability. This establishes financial stress as a key determinant rather than a secondary factor.

- **Students with financial difficulties show lower academic performance**

Financial challenges divert students' attention from academics to survival concerns such as managing expenses and debt. This reduces concentration, class participation, and study time. As a result, students often achieve lower grades and struggle to maintain academic consistency.

- **Debt burden leads to long-term psychological stress**

Education loans and financial liabilities create ongoing pressure that extends beyond the academic period. The fear of repayment, interest accumulation, and job uncertainty contributes to chronic stress. This long-term psychological burden affects decision-making and future planning.

- **Lack of institutional support worsens student well-being**

The absence of adequate support systems such as scholarships, counseling, and financial guidance increases students' vulnerability. Without institutional intervention, students are left

to manage stress independently. This often intensifies both financial hardship and mental health issues.

- **Financial literacy reduces stress and improves coping ability**

Students who possess financial knowledge and management skills are better equipped to handle economic challenges. Budgeting, planning, and informed decision-making reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Financial literacy thus acts as a protective factor against stress.

CONCLUSION

Financial stress among university students has emerged as a significant and multifaceted issue that affects not only their economic stability but also their psychological well-being and academic success. The study highlights that financial difficulties extend beyond monetary limitations and function as continuous stressors that influence emotions, behaviour, and overall development.

Students experiencing financial strain often face challenges such as anxiety, lack of concentration, reduced academic performance, and social withdrawal. These effects demonstrate that financial stress has both immediate and long-term consequences, impacting students' present academic journey as well as their future career prospects.

The findings emphasize the need for a holistic and integrated approach to address this issue effectively. Universities and policymakers must recognize that financial stress cannot be resolved through financial aid alone. Instead, a combination of financial support systems, accessible mental health services, and financial literacy programs is essential to create a supportive educational environment.

Furthermore, proactive institutional policies such as flexible learning options, counseling services, and awareness programs can significantly reduce the burden on students. By addressing both the financial and psychological dimensions of stress, institutions can enhance student well-being, improve academic outcomes, and promote overall development.

Final Insight:

Financial stress is not just an individual problem but a systemic issue that requires coordinated efforts from educational institutions, families, and policymakers to ensure that students can achieve their full potential without being hindered by financial constraints.

SUGGESTIONS

- Strengthen financial aid and scholarship programs
- Integrate financial counselling with mental health services
- Promote financial literacy education
- Encourage part-time employment opportunities
- Develop supportive campus environments

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