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## Exploring the utility of Bach flower remedies in managing stress: A survey study

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### Abstract

Psychosomatic diseases are on a rise today considering the various stressors the youth faces. There is a co-relation between the psyche of an individual and the diseases they suffer. A survey was conducted to understand the various stressors predominantly present among the age group of 15 to 35 years pointed out that almost 95 percent of people had stress due to various causes which can trigger an array of physical, psychological and lifestyle disorders. Dr Bach identified that the emotional disturbances can cause various physical diseases. Modern sciences have been able to confirm the role of Psycho-neuro-endo-Immunologic axis in the pathogenesis of various diseases. The prescription of Bach flower remedies is based on the mental symptoms and aim at correcting the negative emotional state to a positive one and hence averting the physical complaints.

**Keywords:** Bach flower remedies, stress, psycho-neuro-immuno-endocrinology

### Introduction

Bach Flower Remedies offer a natural and holistic approach to managing stress, providing relief from the emotional turmoil that often accompanies our modern lifestyles. The PNEI axis, also known as the psycho-neuro-endocrine-immune axis, refers to the complex interaction between psychological processes, the nervous system, endocrine system, and immune system. Stress can dysregulate this axis, leading to various health issues.

Bach flower essences can address emotional imbalances, including those related to stress. At the core of Bach flower remedies is the belief that emotional imbalances and negative emotions contribute to the manifestation of physical symptoms and illness. Dr. Bach identified 38 different flower essences, each corresponding to a specific emotional state or personality trait, which he believed could restore emotional harmony and promote healing. These remedies rectify the change in the mood of the person wrought by his physical and mental ailments and through this rectification, they remove the cumulative effect of both physical and mental troubles.

### Materials and Methods

A survey was conducted to understand the causes of stress. A questionnaire was made to understand the core emotions and their effects. Questionnaire included questions about age group, sex, causes of stress and questions regarding prominent emotion in stress. 105 participants belonging to the age group 15 to 35 years responded to the questionnaire within a span of 15 days. The participants were mainly BHMS students and Interns, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> students, IT workers, company employees, and homemakers.

**The aim of this study was to have a direct correlation between Bach flower remedies and stress in youth**

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<b>FEAR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASPEN: Dont know the reason for their fear<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• MIMULUS: Fear of known things<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Rock rose: Intense terror leading to panic<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Cherry plum: Fear of losing own control<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Red chestnut: Fear that something will happen to loved ones<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>UNCERTAINTY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CERATO: Doubt your own decision<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• SCLERANTHUS: Unable to take decisions<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• GENTIAN: Feels giving up, but doesnt give up<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• GORSE: Give's up<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• HORNBEAM: Feels tired to start up a new thing<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• WILD OAT: Uncertainty about choosing path in life<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>
<b>LONELINESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WATER VIOLET: Feels lonely, but enjoys their own company<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• IMAPTIENS: Feels lonely but gets irritated when someone doesn't work properly<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• HEATHER: Talks so much that people avoid him<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>
<b>LACK OF INTEREST</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLEMATIS: Dreamy, unable to concentrate<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• HONEYSUCKLE: Constant thinking about past<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• WILD ROSE: Choose not to struggle<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• OLIVE: Mind and body are fully exhausted<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• WHITE CHESTNUT: Repetative negative thoughts<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• MUSTARD: Sudden depression<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• CHESTNUT BUD: Repeat same mistakes<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>OVERSENSITIVITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AGRIMONY: Pretend to be happy when actually suffers<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• CENTUARY: Find difficult to say no<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• WALNUT: Difficulty in adjusting new things<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• HOLLY: Suspicious and jealous<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>DESPAIR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LARCH: Fear of failure<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• PINE: guilty and self blaming<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• ELM: Doubt your own confidence<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• STAR OF BETHLEHEM: Difficult to overcome from bad news/shock<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• WILLOW: Blame others for thier mistakes<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• SWEET CHESTNUT: Total despiar<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• OAK: Exhausted by keep on struggling<sup>1</sup></li> </ul>
<b>OVERCARE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHICORY: Very closed to loved ones, and it is difficult to let go<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• VERVAIN: Over enthusiastic<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• VINE: Tend to dominate others<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• ROCK WATER: Over perfectionist<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• CRAB APPLE: Extreme cleanliness mania<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• BEECH: Find hard to see good in others<sup>6</sup></li> </ul>

**Questionnaire**

1. Name
2. Age group
  - a) 16-20 years
  - b) 21-25 years
  - c) 26-30 years
  - d) 31-35 years
3. Do you face any kind of worry?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
4. Which are the areas you face stress a lot?
  - a) Academics (exams, career)
  - b) Financial
  - c) Work related (work load, work pressure)
  - d) Interpersonal stress (relation with family / friends / spouse)
  - e) Health related (self/family)
  - f) Social stress (social media/peer pressure)
  - g) Any other?
5. Prominent emotion which you feel?
  - a) Fear
  - b) Uncertainty
  - c) Lack of interest
  - d) Oversensitive-to slightest things
  - e) Despair-no hope
  - f) Tend to over care

- g) Loneliness
- 6. How exactly do you feel in fear?
  - a) You don't know the reason for your fear
  - b) Fear of illness, darkness, accidents, etc.
  - c) Intense terror leading to panic
  - d) Fear of losing your own control
  - e) Fear that something will happen to your loved ones
- 7. Describe your uncertainty:
  - a) You doubt your own decisions
  - b) Not able to take decisions
  - c) Feeling of giving up, but doesn't give up
  - d) You give up
  - e) Feels tried to start up a new thing
  - f) Uncertainty about choosing path in life
- 8. How do you feel when you are alone?
  - a) You feel lonely but enjoy your own company
  - b) You feel lonely because you get irritated when someone doesn't work properly.
  - c) You talk so much that people avoid talking to you
- 9. Describe reason for your lack of interest:
  - a) You are often dreamy and unable to concentrate on work
  - b) You keep thinking about past
  - c) You choose not to struggle
  - d) Mind and body are fully exhausted
  - e) Repetitive negative thoughts
  - f) Sudden depression for no reason
  - g) You repeat same mistakes
- 10. Oversensitive to ideas/influences because.
  - a) You pretend to be happy, when you actually suffer

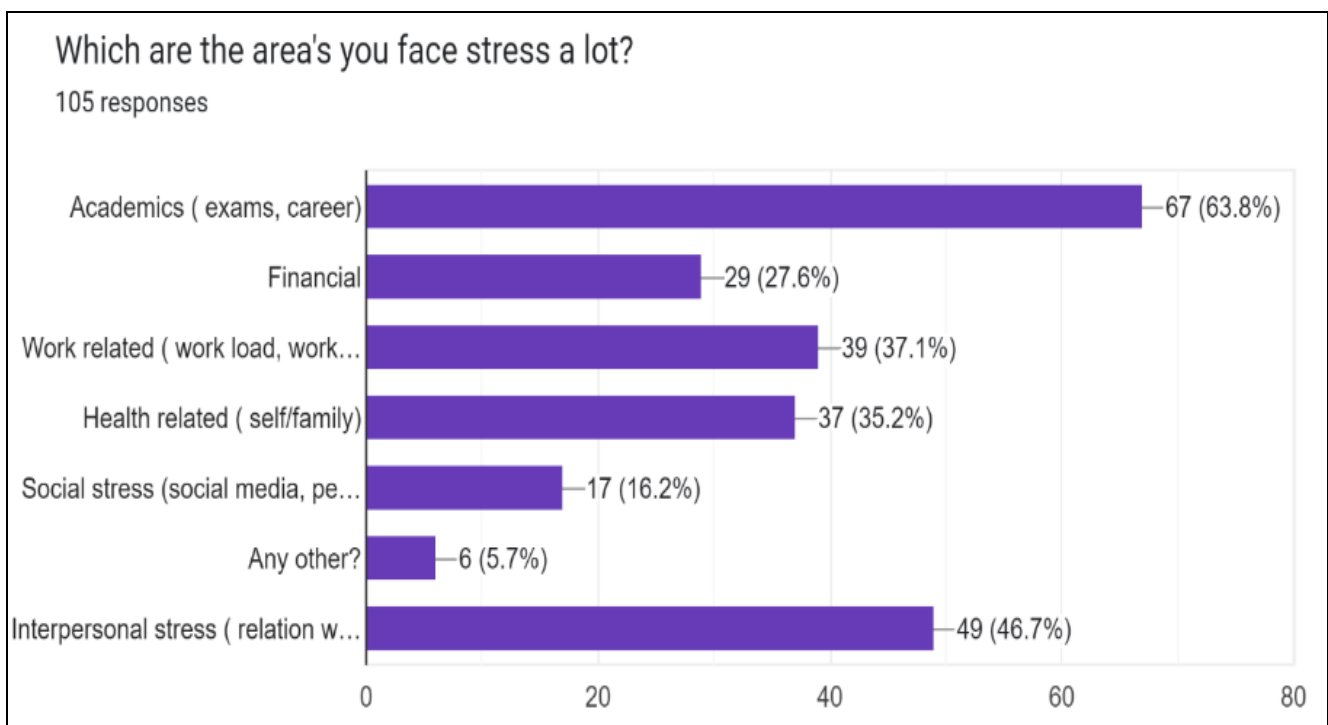
- b) You find difficult to say NO
- c) Difficult to adjust in new jobs/house/things
- d) You are suspicious and jealous
- 11. You feel despair (hopeless) due to?
  - a) You have fear of failure
  - b) You often become guilty and self-blame
  - c) You doubt your own confidence
  - d) You have suffered from shock/bad news from which it is difficult to overcome
  - e) You blame others for your own mistakes
  - f) Total despair-no hope at all
  - g) You are exhausted, but you struggle on!
- 12. You tend to over-care because?
  - a) You are very close to your loved ones and it's difficult to let go
  - b) You are over enthusiastic
  - c) You tend to dominate others
  - d) Over perfectionist to set an example
  - e) Extreme cleanliness mania
  - f) You find hard to see good in others

**Results, Discussion and Conclusion**

**Age group**

67.6% people were of age group 21-25 years, 21% of people were from 16-20 years age group, 7.9% were from age group 26-30 years and Rest 3.5% were from 31-35 years of age of which about 95.2% people have some stress or worry.

**Causes of the stress**

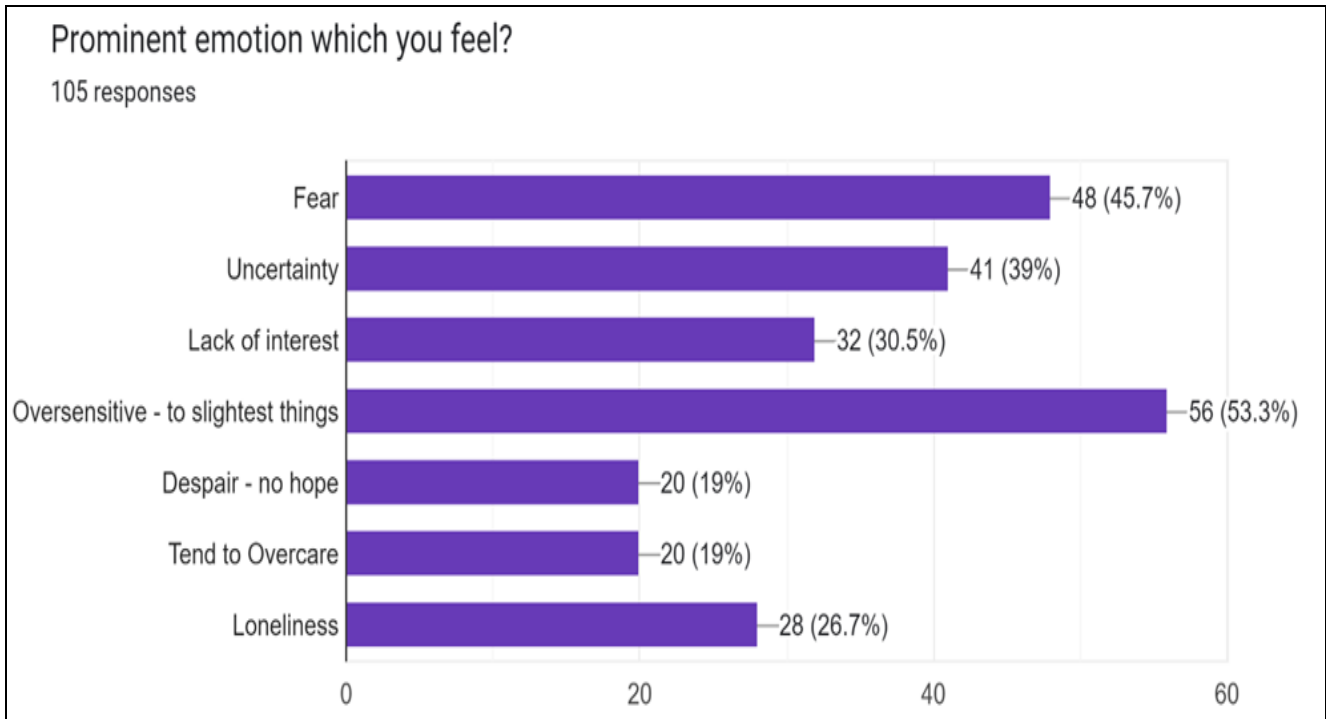


**Fig 1:** Show which are the area's you face stress a lot?

Majority of people (67 out of 105 responses) in this age group faces stress due to exams, career, or academics (63.8%). The second major cause (46.7%) of stress is stress due to interpersonal relations with family, friends or spouse. The stress due to work pressure, work load stands 3<sup>rd</sup> major cause for the stress or worry in this age group. (37.1%). Around 35.2% of the people had health related issues of

either themselves or health of family. 27.6% of people have financial troubles. Around 16.2% of people had social stress related to social media and peer pressure and about 5.7% of people have some other stress factors.

**Prominent emotion/feeling**



**Fig 2:** Show prominent emotion which you feel?

Out of 105 people who responded to the survey, it was noticed that different people fall into 7 major groups of emotions and within those 7 groups various people can

relate to various different emotions. These different emotions can be related to the Bach flower remedies which is described along with the causes of the stress.

**Table 1:** Show Fear group and Bach flower remedy

Fear group	Results	Bach flower remedy
Do not know the reason for their fear.	51.6% (48 responses out of 93)	Aspen
Fear of known things like darkness, illness, etc.	10.8% (10/93 responses)	Mimulus
Intense terror leading to panic	18.3% (17/93 responses)	Rock rose
Fear of losing own control	28% (26/93 responses)	Cherry plum
Fear that something will happen to loved ones	29% (27/93 responses)	Red chestnut

**Table 2:** Show uncertainty group and Bach flower remedy

Uncertainty group	Results	Bach flower remedy
Doubt your own decision	54.3% (50/92 responses)	Cerato
Unable to take decisions	31.5% (29/92 responses)	Scleranthus
Feels giving up, but doesn't give up	41.3% (38/92 responses)	Gentian
You give up	2.2% (2/92 responses)	Gorse
Feels tried to start up a new thing	31.5% (29/92 responses)	Hornbeam
Uncertainty about choosing path in life	37% (34/92 responses)	Wild oat

**Table 3:** Show lonely group and Bach flower remedy

Lonely group	Results	Bach flower remedy
Feels lonely, but enjoy their own company	68.2% (58/85 responses)	Water violet
Feels lonely because you get irritated when someone doesn't work properly	30.6% (26/85 responses)	Impatiens
You talk so much that people avoid you	9.4% (8/85 responses)	Heather

**Table 4:** Show oversensitivity group and Bach flower remedy

Oversensitivity group	Results	Bach flower remedy
Pretend to be happy, when they actually suffer	45.9% (39/85 responses)	Agrimony
Find difficult to say NO	65.9% (56/85 responses)	Centuary
Difficulty in adjusting to new things/jobs/house, etc.	23.5% (20/85 responses)	Walnut
Suspicious and jealous	16.5% (14/85 responses)	Holly

**Table 5:** Show Lack of interest group and Bach flower remedy

Lack of interest group	Results	Bach flower remedy
Often dreamy, and unable to concentrate on work	31.9% (29/91 responses)	Clematis
Keep thinking about past	35.2% (32/91 responses)	Honeysuckle
Choose not to struggle	9.9% (9/91 responses)	Wild rose
Mind and body are fully exhausted	33% (30/91 responses)	Olive
Repetitive negative thoughts	38.5% (35/91 responses)	White chestnut
Sudden depression for no reasons	37.4% (34/91 responses)	Mustard
Repeat same mistake	18.7% (17/91 responses)	Chestnut bud

**Table 6:** Show despair group and Bach flower remedy

Despair group	Results	Bach flower remedy
Fear of failure	35.3% (30/85 responses)	LARCH
Guilty and self-blaming	30.6% (26/85 responses)	PINE
Doubt your own confidence	54.1% (46/85 responses)	ELM
Suffered from shock/bad news from which it is difficult to overcome	20% (17/85 responses)	STAR OF BETHLEHEM
Blame others for your own mistakes	7.1% (6/85 responses)	WILLOW
Total despair	7.1% (6/85 responses)	SWEET CHESTNUT
Exhausted but keep on struggling	30.6% (26/85 responses)	OAK

**Table 7:** Show Over care group and Bach flower remedy

Over care group	Results	Bach flower remedy
Very closed to loved ones, and it is difficult to let go	72% (59/82 Responses)	Chicory
Over enthusiastic	17.1% (14/82 Responses)	Vervain
Tend to dominate others	8.5% (7/82 Responses)	Vine
Over-perfectionist	23.2% (19/82 Responses)	Rock water
Extreme cleanliness mania	11% (9/82 Responses)	Crab apple
Find hard to see good in others	8.5% (7/82 Responses)	Beech

It was observed that majority (95%) youth face stress manifesting as oversensitivity, fear and anxiety. Based on these core emotions, we can correlate the respective Bach flower remedy and help the person deal with these emotions and the physical ailments that may follow. Bach flower remedies can also act as a preventive for the psychiatric disorders. If the mental disturbances and emotions are taken care of and corrected in the beginning a full-blown Psychiatric disorder can be averted.

Bach flower remedies, sourced from natural medicines, can be instrumental in creating a balance in the state of mind and hence promote health at all the physical, mental, social and spiritual sphere. The utility of Bach Flower Remedies in managing stress lies in their ability to gently rebalance negative emotions, promoting a sense of inner harmony and peace. Bach Flower Remedies offer a natural and holistic approach to managing stress, providing relief from the emotional turmoil that often accompanies our modern lifestyles.

Bach Flower Remedies are of non-invasive nature and lack side effects, making them suitable for people of all ages, including children and pets. They can be conveniently administered by adding a few drops to water or taken directly under the tongue, allowing for easy integration into daily routines.

Other complementary adjuvants to healing like Homeopathy, Mindfulness meditations, Yoga, counselling can be used along with Bach Flower remedies to bring about a Holistic Healing.

This is a short study on stress management by Bach flower remedies. Further study on this topic is required and encouraged.

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