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Academic Stress Among Adolescents In Relation To Gender And Type Of School

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Abstract:

The present paper attempts to explore the level of academic stress among adolescents studying in secondary schools. Furthermore an attempt has been made to find out whether any significant difference exists between their level of academic stress in relation to Gender, and type of school. The sample included total 80 students of 10th class. Stratified random sampling was used to select the respondents. Scale of academic stress from the Bisht Battery of stress scale (BBSS) by Bisht Abha (1987) was used for data collection. It has been found that female adolescents have more academic stress than male adolescents. Adolescents studying in private schools have more academic stress than the adolescents studying in government schools.

Introduction

During the 21st century, life, globally, is undergoing significant transition and change. Children are pushed to do much more than customary to get the desired acceptance and acknowledgement from the family and society circle. The stress faced by the adolescent in such a current situation is enormous. This is reflected by raising suicide rates and growing crime among young persons. There is an urgent need to provide today's youth with a new set of ways and systems to deal with the demands of life. Stress is an inevitable and necessary component of life- to a degree. Excessive stress can become a disease promoting agent and constitutes a major health concern today. While some stressors can be avoided and others need to be confronted Stress occurs through the life span of an individual. From birth to death numerous life stressors (events) occur affecting people in different ways and with varying degrees of intensity. Adolescents face the challenges of stress nearly every day and often report that pressure to have good grades, money, relationships, parents, being a teen parent, jobs, sex, STD's/AIDS, violence and fighting, and friends are all contributing factors to raising stress levels.

Academic Stress

Academic stress is of great concern among adolescents. Academic stress is mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even unawareness to the possibility of such failure. There are lots of factors responsible e.g. examinations, tensions, feelings of insecurity, low achievement, negative consequences of failures, excessive competition etc. Peace & stress free life for today's student appears to be mirage. We live in a result oriented age in which lives of many people are influenced by their

tests performance. The degree of success attained in the educational system is measured largely by examinations & tests. One of the main causes to academic stress is test anxiety. Most adolescents seem to be more emotionally vulnerable due to examinations. Increased anxiety from tests has a debilitating effect on their performance after completing an examination there is a period of depression when students reflect on their performance & compare it with others. Poor confidence & a perception of poor performance can be an important reason for depression that occurs after examination & no future changes are possible. **Bisht (1989)** has defined academic stress as a demand related to academics that tax or exceed the available resources (internal or external) as cognitively appeared by the student involved. According to her, academic stress reflects perception of individual's academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety.

Academic Stress among adolescent students has been increasing day by day because of various factors, some of which are enumerated below.

- Severe competition at all academic levels
- Parental pressure for excellence in performance irrespective of the potential of the student.
- Uncertainty in choosing the right option
- Constant comparison at home in school and within peer group.
- Distraction as a result of media exposure
- Loss of value system.
- Negative influence of western culture.

Review Of Related Literature

Sharma (1995) found that academic stress had a positive effect on the learning outcomes of secondary school students. **Kaur, Kanwalpreet (2000)** in a study concluded that academic achievement of secondary school students was different under high, average & low academic stress conditions. Mean achievement score of low stress group was higher as compared to that of high stress group. **Rapee (2001)** found that children may experience low self-efficacy and high anxiety in presence of high control by their parents. **Emily, Peggy (2003)** found that there is a positive relationship between academic stress & achievement goal orientation. **Poonamdeep (2004)** found that the academic stress affect the mental health of the students. **Opdenakker and Damme (2005)** indicated that parental pressure and activities like coaching and support to the formal education of their child affect children's achievement positively, although it is less related with parents' socioeconomic status. **Malik & Balda, (2006)** found academic achievement to be negatively related with stress among high IQ adolescents. **LaRue and Hermann (2008)** conducted a study on 120 adolescents and found that students at their young age feel pressurized for grades, money related issues, conflicts with parents and relationship with friends and significant others. These findings explain that family, school and social circles are the three main dimensions of adolescents' stress and they are relevant across cultures. **Rao (2008)** found that students of twelfth class from Chennai (India) reported feeling of stress, high rates of depression and very high level of anxiety. Almost all of the students reported stress related with 12th standard. **Singh & Upadhyay (2013)** studied personality dimensions as predictors of academic stress and found neuroticism scores to be significantly positively related

with academic stress in female but not in male undergraduate students. However no significant relation between academic stress and extraversion scores has been found in any group (male/female).

Statement Of The Problem

Academic Stress Among Adolescents In Relation To Gender,
And Type Of School

Objectives Of Study

The objectives of the study were as follows.

1. To compare the level of Academic stress between male and female adolescents.
2. To compare the level of Academic stress among adolescents studying in government and private secondary schools

Hypotheses

As per the objectives of study, the present study was undertaken to test the following hypotheses.

1. There is no significant difference between the level of Academic stress among male and female adolescents.
2. There is no significant difference between the level of Academic stress among adolescents studying in government and private secondary schools

Design Of The Study

In the present study, descriptive survey method was employed to investigate Academic Stress among adolescents in relation to Gender, and type of school.

Sample

The study was conducted on 80 students (40 boys and 40 girls) of 10th class which were randomly selected from govt. and private senior secondary schools of Moga District.

Tool Used

Scale of academic stress from the Bisht Battery of stress scale (BBSS), Hindi version by Bisht Abha (1987) was used for data collection.

Statistical Techniques Used

Mean, S.D and t-test were used for analysis of data.

Analysis And Interpretation Of The Data

Table 1

Difference between the level of Academic stress among male and female adolescents.

Category	No. of students	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio
males	40	145.875	18.69	2.72
females	40	155.9	13.88	

Significant at 0.01 level

Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation and t-ratio of academic stress of male and female adolescents. The calculated mean scores of male and female adolescents on academic stress are 145.87 and 155.9 respectively. The t-ratio is 2.72 which is significant at 0.01 level. Hence hypothesis *there is no significant difference between the level of Academic stress among male and female adolescents* stands rejected

Table 2

Difference between the level of Academic stress among adolescents studying in government and private secondary schools

Category	No. of students	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio
Govt.	40	146.625	16.176	2.286
private	40	155.15	17.168	

Significant at 0.05 level

Table 2 shows that the mean scores of academic stress among adolescents studying in government and private secondary schools. The calculated mean scores of government and private school students on academic stress are 146.625 and 155.15 respectively. The mean score of private school students is more than that of students studying in govt. schools. The t-ratio is 2.286 that indicates that the difference between the two mean scores is significant at 0.05 level. Hence hypothesis *There is no significant difference between the level of Academic stress among adolescents studying in government and private secondary schools* stands rejected.

Findings Of The Study

1. Significant difference between the level of Academic stress among male and female adolescents has been found. It has also been found that female adolescents have more academic stress than male adolescents.

2. Significant difference has been found between the level of Academic stress among adolescents studying in government and private secondary schools. It has been found that private school students have more academic stress than govt. school students.

Conclusion

Adolescence is an age of stress & strain & the adolescents have to cope up with much type of stressful situations. Stress is an inevitable and necessary component of life--to a degree. Excessive stress can become a disease promoting agent and constitutes a major health concern today. Knowledge of stress management can help the students to cope up with the problem of stress. There is a need to develop effective interventions to help the students better manage their stress and anxiety. Life skills can be taught to assist adolescents successfully deal with stressful life events, even before they occur. Successfully coping with stressful events at an early age can minimize the acquisition of unhealthy stress coping responses which could promote illness and disease. The goal of parenting should be to build up the strengths of the children so that they may not only face the challenges of academic life but also prepare them for adult role taking.

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