

Original Research Article

Educational stress and coping strategies in school going adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Background: Academic pressure are one of the main causes of stress for young people and this stress is a significant catalyst and precursor to depression. This research uses to assist the teaching units in understanding the related problems of stress of students of modern teaching technology, thereby proceeding to provide assistance and preventive measures. Current study was aimed to find out prevalence of educational stress among school going adolescents and associated factors. In addition to study the use of stress coping strategies.

Methods: It was Cross-sectional study carried out during 2016-2017 at Government and Private Schools of Gwalior. 1400 students were selected randomly. Prepared questionnaire in Hindi and English language adapted from Educational Stress Scale for Adolescent (ESSA) and Academic Stress Scale (ASC). Scales are modified according to our settings.

Results: We found that 43% children have minimal stress, 56.6% moderate stress, 0.4% have highly stress. Female adolescents have more stress than male. 63% adolescents of government school have moderate stress as compared to private school which has 50.9% moderate stress. 11th and 12th standard students have more stress than 9th and 10th standard which is highly significant (p value <0.01). 20.4% adolescents use occasionally coping and 55.3% adolescents used sometimes coping and 23.5% used frequently coping strategies.

Conclusions: The present study reveals that the school going adolescents are having educational stress and which is affected by age, gender, socioeconomic status, examinations, parents expectation and peer and also found that adolescents uses different coping strategies to cope up with educational stress.

Keywords: Adolescents, Coping strategies, Educational stress

INTRODUCTION

According to Stanley Hall adolescence is defined as a period of stress and storm.¹ At present, there is much research on the causes of stress and the coping behaviour of young people.

Research has shown that academic pressure are one of the main causes of stress for young people and this stress is a significant catalyst and precursor to depression. This research uses to assist the teaching units in understanding the related problems of stress of students of modern teaching technology, thereby proceeding to provide

assistance and preventive measures. Consequently, the research is of great value and importance.

Many studies have been conducted on livelihood stress in recent years, and research targets have also included college students. The research of Hurtado, Leong, and Halamandaris and Power, all used university young people as their research targets, determining from the outset that the new adjustment problems young people face are mostly related to school academic stress. Integrating the above-mentioned, most have been collected from studies conducted over the past years. This shows that the academic stressors endured by school

students have been subjected to extensive examination and research.

This research uses reviewed and relevant literature as the basis and views the causes of stress from different points; to assist the teaching units in understanding the related problems of stress of students of modern teaching technology, thereby proceeding to provide assistance and preventive measures. Consequently, the research is of great value and importance.

Current study was aimed to find out prevalence of educational stress among school going adolescents and associated factors. In addition to study the use of stress coping strategies.

METHODS

The study begins with distribution of questionnaire to adolescents of age between 10 to 19 years of age belonging to 5th to 12th standard of different private and government schools. Informed consent taken from school authority, teachers, parents and adolescents. Adolescents are explained how to fill form. The questionnaire after completion (time period of 3 days) is taken back from adolescents. For study three modified scales are used-

- Educational Stress scale For Adolescent (ESSA)²
- Academic stress scale (ASS)³

Where participants were asked to rate each statements on a 4-point Likert scale (0 = not use, 1 = use occasionally, 2 = use sometimes, 3 = use frequently).

Simplified Coping Styles Questionnaire (SCSQ) is used to determine students’ perception of their coping strategies.⁴ This scale was designed based on Folkman and Lazarus’ problem focused and emotion-focused model and the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ). SCSQ consists of 20 items referring to different ways of coping, with a total score range from 0 to 60.

Two subscales are active coping (problem-focused) and passive coping (emotion-focused) with items 1 to 12 for active coping strategies (problem-focused) and items 13 to 20 for passive coping strategies (emotion-focused). Each item uses a 4-point Likert-type scale (0 = not use, 1 = use occasionally, 2 = use sometimes, 3 = use frequently) where respondents indicate how often they have used the coping strategy described in the item. The information gathered from the proforma is then evaluated and assessed statistically.

Statistics analysis

Analysis was done with SPSS version 21 software. Descriptive and frequency analysis was done. Comparison was made by Chi square test. P<0.05 was considered significant.

RESULTS

School going adolescents of age group between 10 to 19 years in number of 1400 taken from government and private schools of city of Gwalior for a study period of one year. Overall prevalence of educational stress are 43% children have minimal stress, 56.6 % moderate stress, 0.4 % have highly stress (Table 1).

Table 1: Prevalence of educational stress.

Educational stress	No. of student	Percent
Minimal Stress	602	43.0
Moderate Stress	792	56.6
Highly stressed	6	0.4
Total	1400	100.0

Among 1400 adolescents 78% of >15year adolescents have moderate educational stress in comparison to 43.7% of <15 year have moderate educational stress .which is highly significant. (p value <0.01). 59.9% girls are moderately stressed and 54.6% boys are having moderate stress which is significant. So females have more stress as comparison to boys.63% adolescents of government school have moderate stress as compared to private school which has 50.9% moderate stress. which is highly significant (p value <0.01) 11th and 12th standard students have more educational stress than 9th and 10th standard which is highly significant.(p value <0.01) 66.11% adolescents have moderate educational stress belongs to higher income group as comparison to lower income group in which 50.58% adolescents have moderate educational stress. So that higher socioeconomic group have more educational stress (p value <0.01).

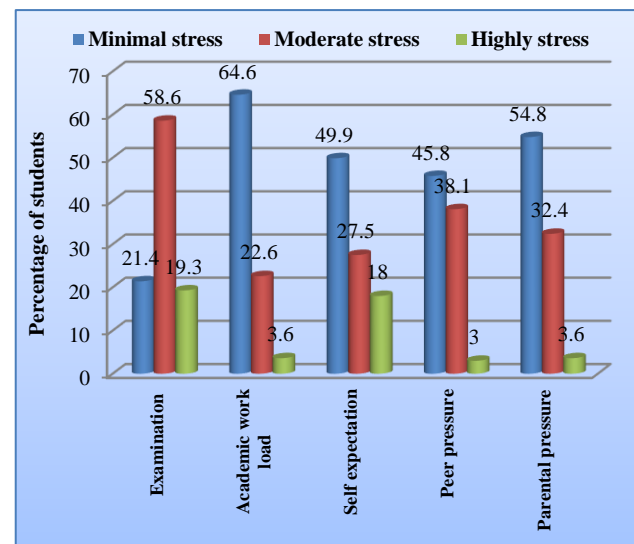


Figure 1: Comparison between various factors leading to educational stress.

Among 1400 adolescents 58.6% have moderate educational stress and 19.3% adolescents experience highly educational stress due to exam pressure. 69.8%

adolescents have minimal educational stress and 49.9% adolescents have minimal educational stress and 27.5% adolescents experience moderate educational stress and 18.0% experience highly educational stress due to self expectation. 45.8% adolescents have minimal educational stress and 38.1% adolescents experience moderate educational stress and 3.0% experience highly educational stress due to peer pressure. 54.8% adolescents have minimal educational stress and 32.4% adolescents experience moderate educational stress and 3.6% experience highly educational stress due to parental expectation (Figure 1).

Among various factors examination is most important factor which cause moderate stress and highly stress, than followed by self expectations.

Table 2: Number of students used coping strategies.

Coping strategies	No. of students	Percent
Not use	11	0.8
occasionally	286	20.4
Sometimes	774	55.3
Frequently	329	23.5
Total	1400	100.0

Among 1400 adolescents 20.4% adolescents uses occasionally coping and 55.3% adolescents used sometimes coping and 23.5% used frequently coping strategies (Table 2) in which adolescents students mainly use self coping strategies for cope up with stress followed by peer coping and also negative coping used sometimes (Figure 2).

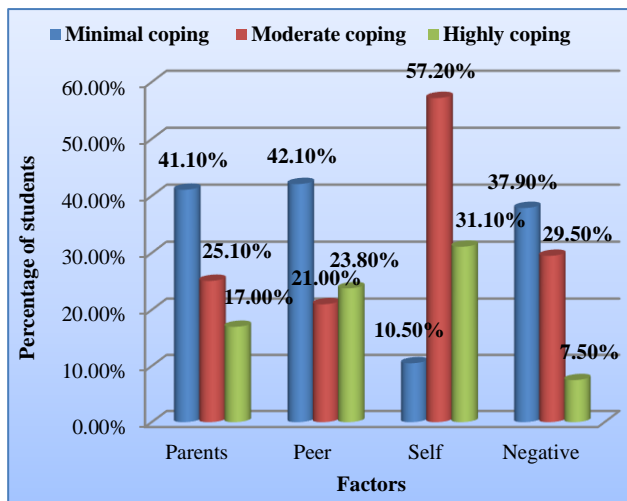


Figure 2: Comparison between various coping strategies.

DISCUSSION

The study was conducted in the city of Gwalior in schools both government and private. Total 1400 adolescents of age group between 10 years to 19years

were taken and analysed. These constituted cases for the study. Adolescents are most vulnerable age group which suffers the transition from childhood to adulthood in all forms including stress.

Overall In this study we found that 43% children have minimal stress, 56.6 % moderate stress, and 0.4 % have highly stress. As compared to A study by World Health Organization (WHO) in 2001 shows that the prevalence of distress among secondary school students world-wide was 20% (WHO, 2001).⁵ A recent study by Saiful et al. (2011) reveals the figure for Malaysian students is higher at 32.8% of stress. According to Sibnath et al Nearly two-thirds (63.5%) of the students reported stress due to academic pressure.⁶ Prabu S found in his study that 69.00 %, 15.60%and 15.40% of the students experienced stress, high stress and low stress respectively.⁷ The secondary outcome of the study is to determine association of various factors with academic stress.

Authors found that ≤15 years children have minimal stress than >15 years, but >15 years children have moderate stress . as compared to Sibnath et al which investigates the academic stress and mental health of Indian high school students and the associations between various psychosocial factors and academic stress.⁶

Nearly two-thirds (63.5%) of the students reported stress due to academic pressure-with no significant differences across gender, age, grade, and several other personal factors. Present study indicate that, there is significant difference between academic stress of male and female adolescents. Female subjects were found to be under more academic stress as compared to their male counterparts. as compared to Prabu S who found that Male and female students do not differ significantly in their academic stress scores.⁷

According to Rao SA Female students reported experiencing stress more than male students, which is consistent with another previous research studies have found (Verma et al).^{8,9} In study we found that 63% adolescents of government school have moderate stress as compared to private school but all highly stress adolescents are of private school which is highly significant. As compared to Prabu S reveals a non significant relationship between government and private school (p value -0.71).⁷ Ghosh SM studied on a group of 10th grade adolescent students and found that there exists significant difference between the private and government school similar to the findings of Hussain et al.^{10,11}

In study 64.6% adolescents have minimal stress and 22.6% adolescents experience moderate stress and 3.6% experience highly stress due to work load as compared to Yumba W study examined the perceptions of major of sources of academic stress among male and female and found that the academic sources of stress (increased class workload) were the most stressful stressors for both male

and female undergraduate students.¹² Deb S et al investigates the academic stress and mental health of Indian high school students and the associations between various psychosocial factors and academic stress and found that nearly two-thirds (63.5%) of the students reported stress due to academic pressure.⁶

49.9% adolescents have minimal stress and 27.5% adolescents experience moderate stress and 18.0% experience highly stress due to self expectation found in study that as compared to Rao et al and found that a majority of students (77.5%) reported feeling stressed about their senior year.⁸ These findings are consistent with prior research, which suggests that female students are more stressed by academic expectations (Verma et al).⁹ 66.11% adolescents have moderate stress in higher income group as comparison to lower income group in which 50.58% adolescents have moderate stress. So we conclude that higher socioeconomic group have more stress as compared to study done by Chatterjee et al which found that adolescents belonging to the middle class (middle socio-economic group) suffered more anxiety than those from both high and low socio-economic groups ($p < 0.01$).

Among 1400 adolescents 45.8% have minimal stress, 38.1% have moderate stress, and 3% have highly stress. as compared to Sibnath et al in which nearly two-thirds (63.5%) of the students reported stress due to academic pressure – with no significant differences across gender, age, grade, and several other personal factors.⁶ According to Caprara et al, when students have to face peer pressure for indulging in any antisocial behavior, self-regulatory self-efficacy regulate their actions according to personal norms.¹³

Authors found that due to parents pressure 54.8% have minimal stress, 32.4% have moderate stress, and 3.6% have highly stress. As compared to Bandura et al reported that those with higher levels of general self-efficacy experience the least level of acculturative stress among international students.¹⁴ Larson et al found that Indian parents are found to be greatly involved in their children's education.¹⁵ Desforges and Abouchaar findings suggest that parent involvement influence child's achievement positively.¹⁶

Authors found in study that 20.4% adolescents use occasionally coping and 55.3% adolescents uses coping sometimes and 23.5% uses coping strategies frequently as generally compared with other studies. Amongst the total sample population, 76% were satisfied with their coping strategies. Males were more content (78%) with their coping mechanisms as compared to females (73%). Day-scholars were more satisfied with their coping mechanisms (78%) as compared to the hostilities (73%) ($w^2 = 0.99$, $p = 0.32$, $CI = 95\%$).

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