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Stress experienced by visually challenged adolescent girls

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to analyze the level of stress experienced by visually challenged adolescent girls at Government Girls Higher Secondary School for the Blind, Puthur, Tiruchirappalli. A sample of sixty respondents was selected through Census method. Perceived Stress Questionnaire (PSQ) revised by Fliege H (2004), was used to assess the level of stress among the respondents. It was observed that 55per cent of the respondents had high level of stress.

Keywords: Visually challenged, blind, adolescent, stress

1. Introduction

Interventions for adolescents are often aimed at helping them deal constructively with the stressors in their daily lives. Achieving positive outcomes depends on understanding ones wellbeing and the actual stressors faced by adolescents, the ways they make sense of stressful events, and how adolescents react to and cope with problems. The findings of the study would help to derive methods to improve wellbeing and also to identify the stressors and introduce stress management techniques for better living. Thus the researcher has made an attempt to analysis the level of stress among the visually challenged adolescents. Walker J (2005) ^[4] discussed that Life for many young people is a painful tug of war filled with mixed messages and conflicting demands from parents, teachers, coaches, employers, friends and oneself. Growing up negotiating a path between independence and reliance on others—is a tough business. It creates stress, and it can create serious depression for young people ill-equipped to cope, communicate and solve problems. Melanie J *et al* (2008) ^[2] reported that approximately 25% of adolescents will experience at least one significant stressor, including the death of a loved one or witnessing a traumatic event. Jose & Brown, (2008) ^[2] reported that the possibility that stressful events will result in mental health problems seems to be compounded when adolescents ruminate about stressors. Rumination involves focusing on the negative and anxiety-provoking aspects of stressful events, which draws attention to and magnifies negative emotions. This is more common among adolescents as compared to preadolescents, and for some adolescents rumination escalates across the teen years. Hallemani S *et al* (2014) ^[3] conducted a study with a sample consisting of 80 adolescents with visual impairment and purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample for this study. Findings revealed that the overall level of stress experienced by adolescents with visual impairment reveals that 52.5% of respondents had moderate level of stress, 45% of respondents had mild level of stress and 2.5% of the respondents had severe level of stress. The overall coping strategies reveals that 91.25% of respondents had moderately adequate coping strategies, 8.75% of respondents had adequate coping strategies and none of the respondents had inadequate coping strategies. The analysis revealed that there is a statistical significant association between the stress levels of adolescents with visual impairment.

1.1 Objectives

- (1) To study the socio demographic characteristics of the respondents.
- (2) To analyze the level of stress among the respondents.
- (3) To suggest suitable measures to reduce the level of stress and improve their wellbeing.

2. Method and Materials

The present study is an attempt to analyze the level of stress experienced by the visually challenged adolescent girls at Government Girls Higher Secondary School for the Blind, Puthur, Tiruchirappalli. A sample of sixty respondents was selected through Census method. A self-prepared interview schedule was used to collect the personal data from the respondents along with Perceived Stress Questionnaire (PSQ) revised by was used to assess the level of stress among the respondents.

2.1 Major Findings

The findings revealed that 33% were in the age group of 15 years, 65% were from rural background. 65% were partially blind. 35 % lost their sight due to unknown fever. 32% lost

their sight at the age of two years. All the respondents (100%) were staying in hostel. 43% of the respondents parents visit them every month, 43% preferred staying in hostel due to safety reasons. 52% reported that they were not able to cope with school activities due to difficulty of subject, psychological issues and other personal reasons. 46% of the respondents had adjust mental problems with their friends and family. 42% were not interested in group studies as they preferred studying alone. 40% of the respondents preferred getting academic help from their fellow classmates than with their teachers. 55% were not aware of personal hygiene and 42% were not aware of menstrual hygiene.

Table 1: Overall Level of Stress

S. No.	Overall Level of Stress	No. of Respondents (n = 60)	Percentage
1.	Low	27	45.0
2.	High	33	55.0

The above table shows the respondents level of Stress. It was observed that 55% of the respondents had high level of stress and 45 per cent had low level of stress.

3. Discussion

To reduce the level of stress counselors or psychiatric social workers can be appointed in schools to provide counseling services for the visually challenged students. Stress management techniques like yoga and meditation classes can be included as regular classes in educational institutions for the disabled. Special classes on personality development, building positive attitude and special classes on various subjects should be introduced to improve their self-esteem and reduce academic related stress. Educational institutions, NGOs and other voluntary institutions should understand that visually challenged students have similar feelings, doubts and development issues as their sighted counterparts. Keeping this in mind academic institutions should follow the same management and development techniques like normal schools. Further research could be carried out to find out whether personality development classes, stress management techniques have anything to do to improve their wellbeing and reduce the level of stress among the visually challenged students.

4. References

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