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A study of relationship of stress among students in relation to academic achievement and working status of their mothers

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Abstract

The present study investigates the stress level of school going students in Chandigarh in relation to their academic achievement and working status of their mothers. For this study a sample of 100 students were taken from the school of Chandigarh. The sample completed the scale on stress (i.e.) Standard Stress scale by Gross and Seebab, 2014 and a self made questionnaire to collect the information on academic achievement and working status of mothers. Results: It was found that there exists significant relationship between the mean scores of stress and academic achievement of the students. It was also observed that that there exists no significant relationship between the mean scores of stress of the students and working status of their mothers.

Keywords: Stress level, academic achievement, working status, mothers, Gross and Seebab

Introduction

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) [7] Stress occurs whenever the perceived demands of a situation tax or exceed the perceived resources of the system (individual, family, group, or community) to meet those demands, especially when the system's wellbeing is judged or perceived as being at stake.

Pestonjee (1999) [10] noted that it is natural and healthy to maintain optimal levels of stress. When stress is left unchecked and unmanaged, it creates problems in performance and affects the health, well-being and emotional intelligence of an organism.

Stress results from both from pleasant, exciting, thrilling experiences as well as from unpleasant, frustrating and uncontrolled experiences. Thus stress can be categorized as eustress and distress. E.g. the experience of parasailing may be pleasant, thrilling for one person that is eustress and for another person parasailing experience can be threatening or scary that is distress for another person. Same experience can have different effect on different persons. This is because of the difference in their abilities to deal with the situations. Imbalance between demands and coping resources occurs in two ways:

1. Alteration in the perceived nature of demands.
2. Change in the perceived ability to cope.

Thus when the demands are more than the perceived ability to cope, distress increases and when the ability to cope is higher than the perceived demands then that is eustress.

Adolescents are unable to understand the emotional turmoil happening within them and thus are unable to tackle effectively emotional pain, conflicts, frustrations and anxieties about the future which are often the driving force for high risk behavior (Chhadva & Kacker, 2013) [4].

With a tremendous shift in the structure of society, there is reported rise in teen stress, which can be because of disturbed family dynamics, peer pressure, inability to cope with studies, drug abuse, lack of competence etc. leading to maladaptive behavior. There are certain factors which lead to stress among adolescence which include desire for autonomy, pressure to be socially acceptable, exploring sexual identities, quality of their home life and relations with peers. (WHO, report 2018)

Adolescents who have high academic achievement were found to have higher levels of emotional intelligence and emotional intelligence was found to have significant inverse relationship with adolescent stress. (Marikutty and Joseph, 2016) [8].

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The study was conducted on secondary school students as at this age adolescents mature cognitively and their mental processes become more analytical. If the stress levels of adolescents are diagnosed at this age, then they can be guided to cope with stress, so that they can enhance their psychological well being. Further, it was investigated that do the working status of mothers and academic achievement have any relationship with the stress level of adolescents.

Objectives

To assess the relationship between the mean scores of stress and academic achievement of the students
 To assess the relationship between the mean scores of stress of the students and working status of their mothers

Hypothesis

There exists no significant relationship between the mean scores of stress and academic achievement of the students
 There exists no significant relationship between the mean scores of stress of the students and working status of their mothers

Sample

In the present study there were 100 school going students of 9th grade belonging to age group 13 to 15 years. For the purpose of the study, incidental sampling was used to select the school. Then the sections were selected through lottery method and intact classrooms were taken to collect the data.

Tools

The Standard Stress Scale by Gross and Seebab, 2014 was used to collect the data about mental health of adolescents. The scale consisted of 11 items measuring stress levels of adolescents. Each item was answered using a 5-point Likert scale.

A self made questionnaire was employed by the investigator to know the academic achievement of students and working status of mothers.

Results and discussion

The analysis of data was done by employing descriptive statistics and correlation methods. Mean, median, mode,

standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis was calculated to understand the nature of data. Mean, median and mode nearly coincide with each other. The values of kurtosis and skewness were within the range -2 to +2 (Bachman, 2004)^[1] and the values of standard error of skewness and standard error of kurtosis were in the range of +/- 1.96 (Peat & Barton, 2008)^[9]. As the values lie within the range, data for the total sample shows that the sample scores were normally distributed. Thus data is normally distributed and parametric tests can be employed to analyse the data.

Table 1: Showing descriptive statistics of stress

Stress	
N	100
Mean	29.54
Std. Error of Mean	.706
Median	30.00
Mode	29
Std. Deviation	7.065
Skewness	-.408
Std. Error of Skewness	.241
Kurtosis	-.585
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.478

Testing of hypothesis H₀₁

There exists no significant relationship between the mean scores of stress and academic achievement of the students. To test the hypothesis, statistical analysis was done employing Pearson moment correlation.

Table 2: Showing correlation scores of stress and academic achievement

Stress	Academic Achievement	
	Pearson Correlation	.443**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the table 2, it has been observed that there exists significant relationship between the mean scores of stress and academic achievement of the students. Thus null hypothesis was not accepted.

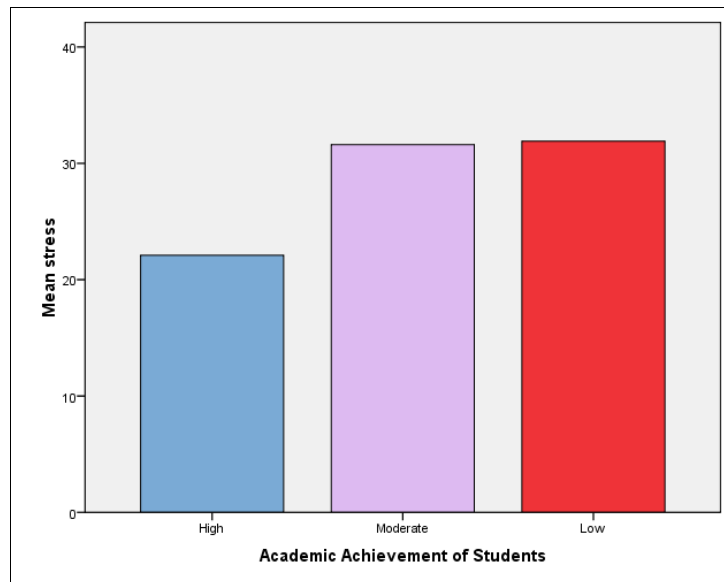


Fig 1: Graph showing the mean scores of students with high, moderate and low academic achievement scores.

- The mean score of stress of students with high academic achievement was found to be 22 which is lower than the mean score of stress of students with moderate and low academic achievement.
- The mean score of stress of students with moderate and low academic achievement was comparable to each other.

Thus it was observed that students with low stress scores perform better in academics.

Testing of hypothesis H₀₂

There exists no significant relationship between the mean scores of stress of the students and working status of their mothers. To test the hypothesis, statistical analysis was done employing Pearson moment correlation.

Table 3: Showing correlation scores of stress of students and working status of their mothers

		job_of_mother
Stress	Pearson Correlation	-.186
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.080
	N	100

From the table 3, it has been observed that there exists no significant relationship between the mean scores of stress of the students and working status of their mothers. Thus null hypothesis was not rejected.

From the results of the study it was observed that the students with higher academic achievement have low stress as compared to students with moderate and low academic achievement. The results of the study are in consonance with the studies (Gustafsson *et al.* (2010) [6]; Bhatnagar (2007) [3]; Bactor (1995) [2]. Thus elevated stress levels among students can result in a decreased performance in the academic accomplishments and can affect both the physical and mental health of students. Therefore, studies on coping with stress will have a significant impact in higher education. It has also been observed that there exists no significant difference between the mean stress scores of students with respect to the working status of their mothers.

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