



Depression Among Adolescents in Relation to Their Academic Stress

KEYWORDS

Depression and academic stress

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ABSTRACT The present study was aimed to find the relationship between depression and academic stress among adolescents. For the study, a sample of 200 adolescents (studying in XI class) was taken. Beck Depression Inventory-II (Beck, Steer & Brown, 1996) and Scale of Academic Stress (Bisht, 1995) were used for data collection. For the analysis of data statistical techniques like Pearson product moment method and t-ratio were used. Results of the study showed that depression was significantly and positively correlated with academic stress and its dimensions i.e. academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety. This positive relationship demonstrated that as the academic stress increases among adolescents, depression also increases among them. No significant gender difference was observed on depression. Boys and girls significantly differed only on academic frustration dimension except all other dimensions and total academic stress. It also demonstrated that girls exhibited higher level of academic frustration than boys.

INTRODUCTION

Depression is a condition in which one feels blue or sad. But these feelings are usually for a short period of time. Depression interferes with daily life activities of an individual. It is a common but serious illness (National Institute of Mental Health, 2011). It is a major cause of disability across the regions and it causes fatigue, suicide, decreased ability to do work and attend school (Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, 2013). Depression disrupts a person's thinking processes, emotional reactions and day-by-day behaviours (Williams, 1984; Farby, 1980). There are many factors that contribute to depression such as loneliness, lack of social support from family, peers, neighbours, financial strain, stress due to studies etc. Academic stress is anything that imposes an extra demand on a person's ability to cope, often with something that is new and different in academics (Firman, 1992). It is a type of stress that arises due to academic factors such as heavy school schedule, unrealistic expectation and demands of parents and teachers, low academic performance, poor study habits and not having enough time to deal with school's multiple priorities (Banerjee, 2011).

Experience of school related stress such as poor academic performance, negative feedback from parents and teachers about school work; daily hassles in the school environment, stressful life events and negative affect states during school work were all leads to increase in depression (Liu & Lu, 2012; Gray-Stanley et al., 2010; Rao, 2008; Hamad, Fernald, Karlan & Zinman, 2008). Nash (1994) showed no relationship between stress and depression, but many of the studies showed positive relationship between academic stress and depression (Moreira & Furegato, 2013; Skipworth, 2011; Antonio et al., 2010; Bhasin, Sharma & Saini, 2010). The researchers showed varied results at times supporting each other but sometimes contradicting each other. Hence, the present study was attempted to fill these research gaps.

OBJECTIVES

For the present study following objectives were framed:

1. To study the relationship of depression with academic stress among adolescents.
2. To study the gender differences on the variables of depression and academic stress.

HYPOTHESES

On the behalf of above stated objectives following hypoth-

eses were formulated:

1. There is no significant relationship between depression and academic stress among adolescents.
2. There are no significant gender differences on the variables of depression and academic stress.

DELIMITATIONS

The study was delimited to the following:

1. The study was delimited to Government Model Senior Secondary Schools (co-educated) of Chandigarh only.
2. The study was delimited to XI class students only.
3. The study was further delimited to the variables of depression and academic stress.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

Descriptive survey method was used to find out the relationship of depression with academic stress in a sample of adolescents.

Sample

For the present study, a sample of 200 adolescents (100 boys and 100 girls) was selected from Government Model Senior Secondary Schools of Chandigarh by employing stratified random sampling. There was no clinical history of adolescents.

Tools

1. Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II):

The Beck Depression Inventory-II (Beck, Steer & Brown, 1996) was used to measure depression among adolescents aged 13 year or older. It has 21 items. The test-retest reliability for BDI-II was 0.93 ($p < 0.001$).

2. Scale of Academic Stress (SAS):

Scale of academic stress (Bisht, 1995) was used to measure academic stress among adolescents. It contains a total of 80 items. It has four dimensions namely Academic Frustration, Academic Conflict, Academic Pressure and Academic Anxiety. The scale consisted of item and content validity. The dependability, stability and internal consistency of scale were found to be 0.87, 0.82 and 0.88 respectively.

Procedure

For data collection a prior permission was taken from school

principals. The investigator explained the purpose of present study to adolescents. The subjects were assured that their responses and information given about them will be kept confidential and used for research purpose only. After assurance tools were administered with a time period of 40 minutes.

Statistical Techniques to be Employed

For the analysis of data statistical techniques like Pearson's product moment method and t-test were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis and interpretation of results have been done hypothesis wise which is presented ahead.

Table 1: 6x6 Intercorrelation Matrix of the Dependent Variable Depression with Independent Variable of Academic Stress for Adolescents (N = 200)

Var. No.	Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Depression	1					
2	Academic Frustration	0.396**	1				
3	Academic Conflict	0.367**	0.249**	1			
4	Academic Pressure	0.172*	0.046	0.436**	1		
5	Academic Anxiety	0.417**	0.406**	0.549**	0.285**	1	
6	Total Academic Stress	0.482**	0.644**	0.776**	0.620**	0.771**	1

** Significant at 0.01 level (0.181), * Significant at 0.05 level (0.138)

Table 1 represents the correlation of dependent variable depression with the independent variable of academic stress and its dimensions. From the table it is observed that depression was significantly and positively correlated with academic frustration ($r = 0.396$), academic conflict ($r = 0.367$), academic pressure ($r = 0.172$), academic anxiety ($r = 0.417$), and total academic stress ($r = 0.482$). This showed that adolescents who felt academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety were also showed depression. Also, it is found that as the academic stress among adolescents' increases, depression level also increases among them. Hence, the null hypotheses, "There is no significant relationship between depression and academic stress among adolescents" stands rejected.

Similar results have been reported by Moreira and Furegato (2013), Liu and Lu (2012), Skipworth (2011), Antonio et al. (2010), Gray-Stanley et al. (2010), and Bhasin et al. (2010).

Table 2: Comparison of Boys (N = 100) and Girls (N = 100) on the Variables of Depression and Academic Stress

Variables	Boys		Girls		t-value
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.	
Depression	16.22	10.475	18.49	10.893	1.50
Academic Frustration	92.83	15.686	103.17	15.549	4.68**
Academic Conflict	55.99	12.537	53.86	13.883	1.14
Academic Pressure	97.66	16.032	94.86	12.538	1.38
Academic Anxiety	58.35	12.049	58.37	12.237	0.01
Total Academic Stress	304.83	40.359	310.04	37.994	0.94

** Significant at 0.01 level (2.60), * Significant at 0.05 level (1.97)

Table 2 presents the comparison of boys and girls on the variables of depression and academic stress and its dimensions. From the table it is observed that no significant gender difference was found on the variable of depression. Thus, the null hypotheses, "There is no significant gender difference on the variable of depression" stands accepted.

Also, it was found that boys and girls significantly differed only on academic frustration dimension ($t = 4.68$) of academic stress except all other dimensions and total academic stress. This showed that girls ($M = 103.17$) were more academically frustrated than the boys ($M = 92.83$). Thus, the null hypotheses, "There is no significant gender difference on the variable of academic stress" stands rejected only for academic frustration dimension of academic stress except all other dimensions and total academic stress.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Depression was significantly and positively correlated with academic stress and its dimensions (academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety).
- No significant gender difference was found on the variable of depression.
- Boys and girls significantly differed only on academic frustration dimension of academic stress except all other dimensions and total academic stress.

CONCLUSION

Findings of the present study revealed that academic stress plays an important role in the development of depression. Academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure, and academic anxiety contribute to academic stress which leads to depression. Thus, academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety should be minimized which can reduce the academic stress. If the level of academic stress reduces, the depression level also reduces among adolescents. The findings of the present study have important implications not for students and their family members but also for those who play more assertive role in the education of adolescents i.e. teachers, counselors, and researchers. To reduce the academic stress schools should use different strategies to overcome this. Thus, it is the duty of family and school to provide stress free and congenial environment to students for their academic growth and well being.

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