



ACADEMIC STRESS AND ITS MANAGEMENT AMONG THE COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT Stress is one of the most discussed topics in today's era of increased globalization and excessive competition. Stress refers to natural phenomenon, a psychological response of an individual to any change which can either be good or bad. Students feel stressed due to different stressors such as academic and career, financial and health related aspects etc. An attempt has been made in the present study to find out the factors causing academic stress and its management among college students. The sample size of the study is 131 higher secondary students studying in the provincialised degree colleges of Tinsukia Town and the data was collected through structured questionnaire by adopting convenience sampling technique. The findings revealed that high expectations of Teachers/Parents in terms of marks/grades, scolding from Parents/Teachers followed by poor performance, excessive competition, financial problem etc. are the factors causing stress among students.

KEYWORDS : Academic Stress, College Students, Provincialised Degree Colleges, Tinsukia Town

INTRODUCTION:

Stress is a subject which is hard to avoid. The concept of stress was first introduced in the life sciences by Hans Selye in the year 1936. It was derived from the Latin word 'Stringere'; it meant the experience of physical hardship, starvation, torture and pain (Nayak, 2008). The term stress is often considered in negative terms. A healthy or moderate level of stress motivates one to be focused, determined, develop new skills, and bring efficiency in performance of an individual. Stress can make a person productive and constructive, when it is identified and well managed. (Chandrasekar, K. 2011). Hans Selye said in 1956, "Stress is not necessarily something bad, it all depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental".

Stress management refers to the measures taken by an individual himself or by the organization/institution to cope with stress, also termed as stress management/ coping strategies. According to Oboegbulem, A. (2004), Stress Management Strategies are coping actions, behaviors or attitudes which an individual exhibits when faced with certain psychological and social demands that tax the individual's adaptive resources.

In today's era of increased globalization and excessive competition, the life of students is highly stressful. They are found stressed due to academic, financial and health related issues etc. Study pressure, examination tension, competition among peers, fulfilling parents/teachers expectations etc. are the factors causing stress among students. The present study aims to study academic stress and its management among higher secondary students studying in the provincialised degree colleges of Tinsukia Town.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The study endeavors to find out the factors causing academic stress among college students and also the various measures adopted by them to manage stress. In this context, several literatures on stress and its management were studied:

1. C, Subramani and S, Kadiravan (2017) carried out their research to study the relationship between academic stress and mental health among high school students. The data was collected from 200 students studying in the government and private schools in and around Salem City, Tamil Nadu by adopting stratified random sampling technique. The findings showed that private school students experience higher level stress and higher mental health as compared to government school students. The study also found that there is significant relationship between academic stress and mental health of students.
2. Devi, R.S. & Mohan, S. (2015) conducted a study on Stress and its effects on college students. The objectives of the paper were to access the level of stress among college students and also to find out the sources and effects of stress. A total number of 200 college students from two reputed colleges of Mannarkkad City

(Palakkad District, Kerala) were taken as sample and the data was collected by using questionnaire by applying convenience sampling method. The findings revealed that 85.71% (female) & 78.04% (male) students feel stressed due to academic problems such as high expectation of teachers (67%), parents (83%) & self (52%). The study further found that family factors like lack of support from parents is another important factor for stress among college students.

3. Emmanuel, A.O. et al. (2014) carried out their research with the objectives to find out the academic performance of senior high school students and the relationship between perceived stress and academic performance in western region, Ghana. For the study stratified sampling technique was used with a sample of 30 students. The findings revealed that male students performed better academically as they are less stressed than their female counterparts. The study also found there is no significant relationship stress and academic performance.
4. Jayakumar, A. & Sumathi, K. (2014) carried out their research on Stress Management for Higher Secondary Students in Salem District- Tamil Nadu. The objectives of the study were to estimate the level of stress in higher secondary students and to identify the various strategies for reducing stress & to evaluate the effectiveness of stress management programs. A total of 100 students were taken as sample. The data was collected by using stratified sampling method for the purpose of the study. The findings revealed that the examination of stress within students is real cause for worry and the issue of stress among students.
5. Pariat, L. et al. (2014) carried out their research on Stress Levels of College Students: Interrelationship between Stressors and Coping Strategies. The study was carried out by convenience sampling method with a sample of 537 degree students from 5 reputed colleges of Shillong city. The study found that academic stress was highly correlated with social and financial stress. Positive coping strategies like meditation, prayer and sleep are useful to reduce academic stress. The study also found that academic stress was negatively correlated with coping strategies like using drugs etc.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Academic stress has a direct impact on the performance and health of the students. Students feel stressed due to study pressure, examination tension, poor performance, financial problem, meeting parents/teachers' expectations, unsupportive parents, and biased behavior of teachers etc. cause stress among them, leading to health and psychological issues, involvement in unfair practices in examination hall, dropouts, and develop suicidal tendencies etc. Therefore, management of stress among students is essential. Hence, the present study aims to study academic stress and its management among college students.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the factors causing academic stress among the college students.

2. To study the measures taken to manage academic stress among college students.

SCOPE:

The scope of the study is confined to the college students studying in the provincialised degree colleges in Tinsukia town. The inferences apply only to the college students of Tinsukia town and not applicable to any other place and hence may not be generalized.

METHODOLOGY:

The present study aims to study the factors causing stress and its management among the college students.

Type of Data:

The study is based on primary data collected using structured questionnaire.

Sampling Unit:

The universe of the study is Higher Secondary students studying in the provincialised colleges of Tinsukia Town namely Tinsukia Commerce College, Women's College, Tinsukia and Tinsukia College.

Sampling Technique:

Convenience sampling technique has been adopted for the purpose of the study.

Sample Size:

A total of 131 students from the provincialised colleges of Tinsukia Town are taken for the study.

Period of Study:

The study was conducted during the period May 15 to July 15, 2017.

RESULT & DISCUSSION:

Table 1 showing factors causing stress among college students

Factors	Mean Score	Rank
Study pressure	1.96	6
Examination/Homework/Assignment tension	1.96	6
High Expectations of Teachers/parents in terms of marks/grades	1.18	1
Poor performance	1.45	3
Excessive competition	1.46	4
Scolding from Parents/Teachers	1.44	2
Insufficient sleep	2.01	7
Financial problem	1.89	5
Biased behavior of teachers	2.82	8

Source: Field Survey

It appears from the above table that high expectations of Teachers/Parents in terms of marks/grades, Scolding from Parents/Teachers followed by poor performance, excessive competition, financial problem etc. are the factors causing stress among students.

FINDINGS:

The following are the precise findings of the study:

1. It is found that majority of the respondents (53%) fall sick due to examination tension.
2. It is clear from the data that high expectations of Teachers/Parents in terms of marks/grades, lack of support from Parents followed by poor performance, excessive competition, financial problem etc. are the factors causing stress among students.
3. The majority (67%) of the respondents revealed that they listen to music/watch movies/T.V. to overcome stress, while 13% of the respondents do yoga/meditation to manage stress, 20% of the respondents spend several hours in social networking sites/mobile chats.
4. The study also found that the most influential persons/groups causing stress is the society representing 38% of the population followed parents, peer group and teachers representing 34%, 20% and 8% respectively.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. Parents and teachers should guide and encourage the students to

study the lessons with understanding and making them skilled in their respective field.

2. Moral education classes should be conducted from time to time to boost their confidence level and to make them a good citizen of the nation.
3. The education policy makers of the nation should pay due attention to syllabus framing relevant to their day-to-day lives.

CONCLUSION:

From the above study it is inferred that high expectations of Teachers/Parents in terms of marks/grades, scolding followed by poor performance, excessive competition, financial problem etc. are the factors causing stress among students. The study also revealed that most of the respondents listen to music/watch movies/T.V. to overcome stress.

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