

## Academic Stress of Adolescents in Government and Private Schools



### Education

**KEYWORDS :** Academic stress; Stressors; Adolescents

**B. Razia**

Dept. of Education, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh

### ABSTRACT

*The present study aims at examining the level of Academic stress of adolescents of Government and private schools. Data was collected through standardized tool in which 216 adolescents from secondary schools participated. Findings of the study indicate that significant difference exists in the Academic stress of adolescents in relation to gender. Female adolescents have higher Academic stress than male adolescents. Adolescents studying in Government and Private schools differ in their level of Academic stress. Adolescents of private schools have more academic stress than their counterparts in government schools. Significant difference was also observed in the Academic stress of male and female adolescents in Government schools but not observed in the case of Private schools.*

### INTRODUCTION

Out of number of stresses faced by adolescents and young adults, Academic stress emerges as significant mental health problem in recent years (Rangaswamy, 1995). Often students at secondary level undergo considerable level of Academic stress that affects their academic performance, psychosocial adjustment along with their overall well-being. Students aged between 12-18 years account for more than one fifth of the world's population i.e., almost 230 millions. In India this age group forms 23 per cent of the total population. Moreover it is necessary to invest in adolescents as the future leaders and guardians of the Nation's development. (Pattanashetty, 2014)

Academic stress is a mental or emotional pressure, tension or stress that comes due to the demands of school/college life. It may arise from being exposed to new educational concepts, adjusting to new social settings and taking on larger workload. Academic stress is the product of a combination of academic-related demands that exceed the adaptive resources available to an individual" (Wilks, 2008). When stress is perceived negatively or becomes excessive, students experience physical and psychological impairment. Methods to reduce stress by students often include effective time management, social support, positive reappraisal, and engagement in leisure pursuits (Murphy & Archer, 1996). Thus it can be said that Academic stress is a mental pressure which is articulated or felt by students during his/ her failure to cope with academic demands excess of which may be exhibited in the form of major health hazards and problems. On the other hand moderate amount of stress can motivate students in their academics and increase their capacity to learn. Sources/stressors influencing students can be categorized as academic, financial, time or health related and self-imposed (Goodman, 1993). According to Wilks (2008) time management issues, financial burdens, interactions with teachers, personal goals, social activities, adjustment to the campus environment, lack of support networks are some of the sources of stress. Tatar (1995) found that parents' choice for high grades and desire to pursue higher education as major actual or potential source of stress among adolescents.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Bartwal & Raj (2014) observed no significant gender differences with regard to Academic stress and Social intelligence among rural and urban adolescents but significant correlation was found between Academic stress and Social intelligence of rural and urban adolescents.

Sharma (2014) observed that adolescents with high Academic stress exhibited more depression as compared to low Academic stress group and concluded that Academic stress had significant effect on depression.

Kadapatti and Vijayalaxmi (2012) found that high aspiration,

poor study habits, more study problems, change in medium of instruction and low socio-economic conditions were the factors responsible for Academic stress.

Yussouf (2010) observed high level of stress among secondary school students. The most frequent coping strategies being used by students included religion, positive reinterpretation, active coping, planning, and use of instrumental support.

Arun and Chavan (2009) conducted a study on students from classes VII to XII and found that 45.8% students had psychological problems, half of them perceived problems in their role as students, 45% reported academic decline, 8.82% reported that life was a burden, 6% reported suicidal ideas and 0.39% students reported suicidal attempt. Students with academic problems and unsupportive environment at home perceived life as a burden and had higher rates of suicidal ideations.

Hussain *et al* (2008) indicated that magnitude of Academic stress was significantly higher among Public school students and inverse but significant relationship between Academic stress and adjustment were found.

Mathew and Jayan (2006) found no difference between boys and the girls of the age group of 15-17 years with respect to their Academic stress. Both experienced more or less similar level of Academic stress and employed similar kinds of coping styles.

From the above mentioned literature review, it is clear that Academic stress is high among adolescents and is related to number of academic related factors. If these factors are not conducive for learning, may lead to Academic stress. Hence the present study was taken up to analyse whether there is any effect of type of schools and gender on Academic stress of adolescents.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To examine the level of Academic stress of adolescents studying in secondary schools.

To ascertain the level of Academic stress of adolescents in relation to gender.

To compare the Academic stress of adolescents of Government and Private schools.

To compare the Academic stress of male adolescents of Government and Private schools.

To compare the Academic stress of female adolescents of Government and Private schools.

To examine the Academic stress of male and female adolescents in Government schools.

1. To examine the Academic stress of male and female adolescents in Private schools

**HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The following null hypotheses were formulated.

1. There will be no significant difference in Academic stress of male and female adolescents studying in Secondary schools.
2. There will be no significant difference in the Academic stress of adolescents studying in Government and Private schools.
3. There will be no significant difference in Academic stress of male adolescents of Government and Private schools.
4. There will be no significant difference in the Academic stress of female adolescents of Government and Private schools.
5. There will be no significant difference in Academic stress of male and female adolescents in Government schools.
6. There will be no significant difference in Academic stress of male and female adolescents in Private schools.

**METHOD AND PROCEDURE**

**The Sample**

The sample of the study consisted of 216 adolescents studying in class IX, selected from 6 different secondary schools of Aligarh using incidental sampling technique. 106 students belonging to 3 government schools (affiliated to U P board) and 110 students belonging to 3 Private schools (affiliated to CBSE) participated in the study. The mean age range of adolescents in the study was 14 to 15 years.

**Research Tool**

Academic stress Questionnaire standardized by Akram, Khan and Baby (2013) was used to assess the Academic stress. The scale consists of 36 items. Responses were scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from No Stress (0), Slight Stress (1), lot of Stress (3) to Extreme stress(4). Higher scores reflect increased Academic stress level. According to the authors reliability was established using Cronbach's Alpha and appeared to be .829. The factorial construct validity revealed high loadings of each item ranging from 0.41 to 0.88.

**Statistical Techniques**

Statistical analysis was done by applying Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD) and t-test.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Table 1: Mean Academic stress scores of adolescents**

Number of Students	N	Mean(M)	Standard Deviation(SD)	t-value
Total	216	54.79	13.67	
Male	106	52.34	12.12	2.56*
Female	110	57.27	15.22	

\* Significant at 0.05 level

It is clear from table 1 that 216 adolescents participated in the study and their mean Academic stress score was 54.79 with S D =13.67 and the mean score indicates that adolescents experienced lot of academic stress similar to the findings of Yussouf (2010).

Computed t value for male and female groups was found to be 2.56 which was significant at 0.05 level indicating that male and female adolescents differ in their Academic stress. Null hypothesis was rejected. Further by comparing the mean of the two groups it is clear that female adolescents have higher Academic stress than male adolescents. The result is inconsistent with the findings of Bartwal and Raj (2014), Mathew and Jayan (2006).

**Table: 2 Mean Academic stress scores of adolescents of Gov-**

**ernment and Private schools**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t value
Government total				
Private total	106	50.48	16.52	5.19*
	110	58.99	10.83	
Government Male	52	46.47	15.04	4.60*
Private Male	54	58.01	9.21	
Government Female	54	54.48	18.00	1.77NS
Private Female	56	59.97	12.44	

\* Significant at 0.05 level      NS Insignificant at .05 level

Table 2 indicates that adolescents studying in government schools had mean Academic stress score of 50.48 and adolescents of Private schools had mean score of 58.99. The observed t value was 5.19 which was found to be significant at 0.05 level. It can be said that there exists significant difference between the groups under study on Academic stress measure. Thus null hypothesis was rejected. It is quiet clear that adolescents in Private schools have more Academic stress than their counterparts in Government schools similar to the findings of Hussain et al (2008)

Result of t-test applied to Male groups of Government and Private schools was observed to be 4.60 which indicate that there exists significant difference between the two groups on Academic stress measure as a result of which null hypothesis was rejected and from the Mean it is evident that Male adolescents of Private schools have high stress in comparison to Male adolescents of Government schools.

t value obtained for Female groups of Government and Private schools was 1.77 found to be insignificant. It can be said that no significant difference exists between female adolescents of Government and Private schools on Academic stress measure. Hence null hypothesis was accepted.

**Table: 3 Mean Academic stress scores of male and female adolescents in Government and Private schools**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t value
Government Male	52	46.47	15.04	2.39*
Government Female	54	54.48	18.00	
Private Male	54	58.01	9.21	0.89NS
Private Female	56	59.97	12.44	

\* Significant at 0.05 level      NS Insignificant at .05 level

The above table points out that the calculated t value (2.39) for male and female groups studying in Government schools was significant at 0.05 level . This indicates that adolescent males and adolescent females in Government schools differ in their Academic stress and hence null hypothesis was rejected. It is quite clear that adolescent females in Government schools have more Academic stress than their male counterparts.

No significant difference was observed between male and female groups of Private schools as the t value Of 0.89 was found insignificant indicating that male and female adolescents of Private schools have similar level of Academic stress.

**EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

The present investigation was an attempt to examine the Academic stress of adolescents studying in Government and Private schools. It was found that significant differences exist in

Academic stress of adolescents in relation to gender and type of school. The study suggests that it becomes the responsibility of family and school to provide stress free and congenial environment to adolescents for their academic growth and well being. Necessary programmes should be conducted in schools regularly to reduce the stress level of adolescents to an optimum level so that they can attain better academic performance. Schools must give due importance to co-curricular activities like sports, music, swimming etc. Yoga must be a part of curriculum since it plays an important role in increasing the concentration power and bringing down the stress level moreover Guidance and counseling programmes must be strengthened to help the adolescents to overcome their academic related stress.

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