



IMPACT OF ACADEMIC STRESS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON MENTAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS

Psychology

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ABSTRACT

An attempt was made in the present investigation to study the impact of academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents. Sample of the present study consists of 120 adolescents (junior college students) in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh State. Students Academic Stress Scale developed by Kumar Reddy (1999), emotional intelligence scale developed by Nuthan Kumar Thingujam and Usha Ram (1999) and Mental Health inventory was designed by Jagadish and Srivastava (1983) were used to collect the data. A 2X2 factorial design employed. ANOVA was used to analyze the data. Results revealed significant impact of academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health among adolescents.

KEYWORDS

Emotional Intelligence and Mental Health.

INTRODUCTION

Academic stress is mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even unawareness to the possibility of such failure. Students have to face many academic demands, for example, school examination, answering questions in the class, showing progress in school subjects. Understanding what the teacher is teaching, competing with other class mates, fulfilling teachers and parents academic expectations. These demands may tax or exceed available resources of the students. As a consequence, they can be under stress, since the demand is related to achievement of an academic goal. So, academic related to the achievement of an academic goal. Bisht (1989) has defined academic stress as a demand related to academics that tax or exceed the available resources (internal or external) as cognitively appeared by the student involved. According to her, academic stress reflects perception of individuals academic frustration, academic conflict, academic pressure and academic anxiety. Academic Stress is an important factor accounting for variation in academic achievement. It also contributes to major mental health hazards, problems both physical and mental stress related diseases.

Singh and Upadhyay (2008) investigated academic stress in the context of age and sex differences among college students. Findings revealed that first year students experienced higher degree of academic stress in comparison of third year students. At the same time female students perceived more academic stress in comparison of their male counterpart.

Leung, Yeung and Wong (2009) examined the role of paternal support in the relation between academic stress and the mental health of primary school children in Hong Kong. The results indicated that academic stress was a risk factor that heightened student anxiety levels and that parental emotional support was a protective factor that contributed to better mental health among children. However, parental informational support delivered to children during times so high academic stress appeared to heighten student anxiety levels.

Emotional intelligence (EI) can be defined as the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour. Emotional intelligence also reflects abilities to join intelligence, empathy and emotions to enhance thought and understanding of interpersonal dynamics. Goleman (1995) defined emotional intelligence as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationship. A good deal of research has been conducted on emotional intelligence and it was found to be appearing as an important factor in the prediction of personal, academic and career success.

Emotional intelligence is essential for interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships at school, at home and at work. People with high emotional quotient are expected to progress more quickly through the abilities designated and to master more of them. It is the capacity to create positive outcomes which include joy, optimism, success in

school and life. Increasing emotional intelligence has been correlated with better results in leadership, academic performance, marriage friendship and health.

Emotional intelligence is being able to monitor our own and others feelings and education to discriminate among them, and to use this to guide our thinking and emotions and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The emotionally intelligent person is skilled in four areas: Identifying, using, understanding and regulating emotions Salovey & Mayer, (1993).

The preamble of the World Health Organizations charter defined health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (Monopolis & Sarles, 1977). Thus, health is a broader concept including physical, social and mental health. Mental health has been reported as an important factor influencing individuals various behaviors, activities, happiness and performance.

Mental health is a crucial psychological factor with respect to human behavior. Available research evidence have demonstrated that mental health offers an opportunity for investigation as an attribute of human resource development in that empirical research findings indicated that mental health improvements leads to a better utilization of resources while its impairment has led to serious negative and life consequences.

For instance, Brian (2002) reviews etiology and prevention literatures, exploring relationship between problem and positive youth behaviors and reported that risky/unhealthy/anti-social behaviors, poor mental health and poor academic achievement are highly correlated with and predict each other, while positive mental health strongly influences success and happiness.

Objective

1. To assess the impact of academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents.

Hypotheses

1. There would be significant impact of academic stress on mental health of adolescents.
2. There would be significant impact of emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents.
3. There would be significant interaction effect between academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents.

Tools

Students Academic Stress scale developed by Kumar Reddy and Srinivas (1999), Emotional Intelligence scale developed by Nuthan Kumar Thingujam and Usha Ram (1999) and Mental health status inventory designed by Jagadish and Srivastava (1983) were administered to assess academic stress, emotional intelligence and mental health used respectively.

Sample

120 adolescents (Junior College Students) both men and women in the

age group of 13-18 years were taken to the present study. A 2X2 factorial design was adapted to analyze the results.

Table-I. Distribution of the Sample.

Emotional Intelligence	Academic Stress		
	low	High	
Low	15	15	60
High	15	15	60
Total	60	60	120

Variables Studied

Independent Variables

1. Academic Stress
2. Emotional Intelligence

Dependent Variable

1. Mental Health

Method of Study

The investigator conducted in two Sessions. In the first session, the investigator distributed the academic stress scale and emotional intelligence scale to a group of 20 subjects and they were instructed in greater detail and their responses were obtained on separate answer sheets. In the second session, mental health inventory was administered to the same subjects and obtained their responses on separate answer sheets.

Statistical Analysis

The obtained data were subjected to statistical analysis such as Means, SDs, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table-II: Means and SDs for scores on Mental Health.

Emotional Intelligence		Academic Stress	
		Low	High
Low	Mean	129.00	108.71
	SD	29.94	27.71
High	Mean	137.11	122.91
	SD	25.52	24.30

Grand Means

Low Emotional Intelligence=118.5 Low Academic Stress=133.05
High Emotional Intelligence=130.01 High Academic Stress=115.81

Table-II shows that students with low academic stress and high emotional intelligence have obtained highest mean score (M=137.11) indicating their good mental health, whereas students with high academic stress and low emotional intelligence have obtained lowest mean score (M=108.71) indicating their poor mental health.

In terms of comparisons, students with low academic stress (M=133.05) have good mental health than the students with high academic stress (M=115.81). Students with high Emotional Intelligence (M=130.01) have good mental health than students with low Emotional Intelligence (M=118.85).

As there are differences between the groups with regard to the mental health of college students, the data were further subjected to Analysis of Variance to find out whether the differences between the groups are significant or not, and the results are presented in table-III.

Table-III: Summary of ANOVA for scores on mental health.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Sum of Squares	F-values
Academic Stress (A)	14508.150	1	14508.150	21.97**
Emotional Intelligence (B)	3315.267	1	3315.267	5.02**
AXB	9907.350	1	9907.350	15.05**
Within	155820.967	196	660.258	-
Corrected total	183551.733	199	-	-

**--Significant at 0.01 level

Hypothesis-1. There would be significant impact of academic stress on mental health of adolescents.

It is evident from table-III that the obtained F value of 21.97 is significant at 0.01 level implying that academic stress has significant influence on mental health of adolescents. As the Fvalue is significant,

the hypothesis-1, which stated that academic stress would significantly influence the mental health of adolescents, is accepted as warranted by the results. Students with low academic stress (M=133.05) have good mental health than the students with high academic stress (M=115.81).

Hypothesis-2. There would be significant impact of emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents.

It is evident from table-III that the obtained F value of 5.02 is significant at 0.01 level implying that emotional intelligence has significant influence on mental health of adolescents. As the F value is significant, the hypothesis-1, which stated that emotional intelligence would significantly influence the mental health of adolescents, is accepted as warranted by the results. Students with high Emotional Intelligence (M=130.01) have good mental health than students with low Emotional Intelligence (M=118.85).

Hypothesis-3. There would be significant interaction effect between academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents.

It is evident from the table-III that there is significant first order interaction among academic stress X emotional intelligence (AXB), 15.05 in causing the effect on mental health of adolescents. This indicates that there are significant interaction between academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health in causing the effect on dependent variable mental health. Hence, hypothesis-3 which stated significant interaction effect interaction between academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents is accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

1. There is significant impact of academic stress on mental health of adolescents.
2. There is significant impact of emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents.
3. There is significant interaction effect between academic stress and emotional intelligence on mental health of adolescents.

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