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Education

KEY WORDS: Academic Stress, 10th Class Students, Private Schools, COVID-19 Pandemic

ACADEMIC STRESS OF 10th CLASS STUDENTS AMONG PRIVATE SCHOOLS AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD - A STUDY IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Education is the important for children because they are the future pillars of the Nation. Children are the weapons that will build the Nation with all their knowledge and Education. The present study examines the Academic Stress of 10th class students Among Private schools Amid Covid-19 Pandemic Period. A sample of 279 was selected. The study followed simple random sampling method. The collected data were analyzed and the results were interpreted by using statistical techniques like mean, SD, t-test and f-test. Boys, were found having significantly higher academic stress than the girls, rural students were found having significantly higher academic stress than the urban students, and SC/ST students were found to have higher academic stress than the OC, BC Students.

INTRODUCTION

The term Education has been derived from the Latin words "Educare" which means "to bring forth or to nourish", "Educere" which means "to lead forth or to draw out", "Educatum" which means "act of teaching or training", "Educatus" which means "to bring up, to rear, to educate", "Educatio" which means "a breeding, a bringing up, a rearing".

Ancient Greece Philosopher Socrates advocated the motto "Know thyself" was based on education Education is unipolar as well as bipolar in nature. John Adamson describes, Education is a unipolar process, while John Adam views it as a Bipolar process. In the Bipolar process, Education has two aspects: the teacher and the child. John Dewey stated that Education is a tripolar process that consists of three aspects: the teacher, the child, and the content. Herbert Spencer defines Education as a multipolar process that depends on multiple aspects emphasizing the role of home, school and society in shaping the child.

Private Schools

Private schools also known as independent schools or non-governmental, privately funded which are not supported financially by the government. They are controlled and administered by a private body and partly funded by students' tuition fees. Private schools may have resources, flexibility to design their own curriculum, focus on specialized programmes, modern and well-maintained facilities, independent evaluation, accountability measures, affordability and scholarships. The function of schools is to train and prepare professionals and technicians for society. The difference between Z.P. High School and Private school is funding and administration.

Academic stress means education related stress. In today's competitive world students face various academic problems including academic stress, academic work load, social expectations, inability to understand subject, not interest in attending classes. Academic stress shows in many aspects in students' environment; at school, at home, peer groups and in the neighborhood.

Need for Study

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, 10th class students learned in a regular classroom environment with direct teaching, classwork, homework, peer-group discussions, and continuous guidance from teachers. They had opportunities to clarify doubts, participate in co-curricular activities, and receive proper academic support. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the educational system changed suddenly, and students were forced to shift from classroom learning to online and hybrid modes without proper preparation. This situation created several academic problems such as incomplete syllabus, irregular study habits, poor internet connectivity, lack of digital devices, reduced teacher guidance, limited interaction with classmates, and absence of co-curricular activities. As a result, many students experienced fear, anxiety, emotional instability, and academic stress. Therefore, the present study is needed to understand the level and dimensions of academic stress among these students and to suggest suitable measures for improving their academic and emotional well-being.

Dr. Pratibha Sagar, Mr. Brijender Singh (2020) stated that a highly significant difference between academic stress of male and female students at 0.01 level of significance.

Rao S, V. S. (2021), found that there is no significant difference in the academic stress level among boys and girls. The mean scores indicated that girls were more stressed compared to boys.

Jagiello et al. (2025) through a systematic literature review, reported that academic stress among high school students was strongly linked with examinations, workload, and performance expectations. The study also highlighted that school-based interventions were effective in reducing stress.

METHODOLOGY

Problem Statement

"ACADEMIC STRESS OF 10th CLASS STUDENTS AMONG PRIVATE SCHOOLS AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD – A STUDY IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT".

Objectives

1. To examine the academic stress of 10th class students with regard to Gender.
2. To assess the academic stress of 10th class students in relation to their locality.
3. To define the academic stress of 10th class students in relation to their caste.

Hypothesis

1. There would be significant difference between boys and girls in their academic stress.
2. There would be significant difference between rural and urban area students' academic stress.

3.There would be significant difference among OC, BC, SC, ST students' academic stress.

Variables

1. Independent Variables: Gender, Locality, Caste,
2. Dependent Variable: Academic Stress

Tool

A Scale for Assessing Academic Stress (SAAS), it was adopted which was developed by Sinha, Sharma and Mahendra (2001). A Scale for Assessing Academic Stress questionnaire measures the domains of Cognitive, affective, physical, social/interpersonal and motivational states, composed of 2 options.The responses were "Yes", "No".

Sample

The sample consisted of 279 students studying in 18 private schools across 6 mandals under three revenue divisions in Chittoor District.

Statistical Techniques

The collected data can be analysed and the results are interpreted by using statistical techniques like Mean, SD, t-test, f-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Responses of Respondents Towards Academic Stress Academic Stress Factors and Gender Wise Difference: Mean, SD and t-value

Stress Factors	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p value	sig
Cognitive	Boys	113	2.96	1.38	6.062	0.000	**
	Girls	166	1.99	1.26			
	Total	279	2.38	1.39			
Affective	Boys	113	3.50	1.25	3.454	0.001	**
	Girls	166	2.93	1.42			
	Total	279	3.16	1.38			
Physical	Boys	113	2.75	1.18	1.478	0.141	NS
	Girls	166	2.97	1.23			
	Total	279	2.88	1.21			
Social and Interpersonal	Boys	113	2.31	1.04	0.980	0.328	NS
	Girls	166	2.19	1.03			
	Total	279	2.24	1.03			
Motivational	Boys	113	2.77	1.48	6.612	0.000	**
	Girls	166	1.69	1.25			
	Total	279	2.13	1.44			
Note: ** = Significant at 0.01 level: * = 0.05 Level: NS= Not Significant						df= 277	
Table Value: 0.01 = 2.576: 0.05=1.960							

Table 1 indicates that the academic stress factors and Gender wise difference. The obtained 't' value of Cognitive, Affective, Motivational factors is 6.062, 3.454, 6.612 respectively and they are significant at 0.01 level with 277 degrees of freedom. The Physical and Social & Interpersonal factors 't' values are 1.478 and 0.980 respectively not significant. The hypothesis stated that "There would be significant difference between academic stress of 10th class boys and girls". The hypothesis is accepted towards Cognitive, Affective and Motivational factors. It indicates that the boys have prone to Cognitive stress, Affective stress and Motivational stress than the counter parts.

Table 2: Responses of Respondents Towards Academic Stress Overall Academic Stress and Gender wise difference: Mean, SD and t-value

Stress Factors	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p value	sig
Total Stress	Boys	113	14.29	3.82	5.501	0.000	**
	Girls	166	11.77	3.73			
	Total	279	12.79	3.96			
Note: ** = Significant at 0.01 level: * = 0.05 Level: NS= Not Significant						df= 277	
Table Value: 0.01 = 2.576: 0.05=1.960							

Table 2 shows that the overall academic stress and Gender wise difference. The obtained 't' value of 5.501 is greater than the table value 2.576 at 0.01 level of significance with 277 degrees of freedom. The hypothesis stated that "There would be significant difference between academic stress of 10th class boys and girls". The hypothesis is accepted by the warrant of results. It may therefore be said that the boys were found having significantly higher academic stress than the counterparts. As far as Cognitive, Affective and Motivational factors are concerned the boys have received more stress than their counterparts. As a whole the Gender is significantly influencing the academic stress of 10th class students.

The boys who are studying in private schools may not concentrate on online classes during Covid-19 pandemic. They may take liberty to avoid the learning process. These might be the reasons of high academic stress among boys.

Table 3 depicts that the academic stress factors and locality wise difference. The obtained 't' values of Cognitive, Affective, Physical, Social and Motivational factors are 3.222, 3.072, 3.488, 3.179, 3.686 respectively and significant at 0.01 level with degrees of freedom 277. The obtained 't' values are more than the table value i.e. 2.576. The hypothesis stated that "There would be a significant difference between academic stress of 10th class rural and urban students". As far as five factors are concerned, the hypothesis is accepted by the warrant of results. It shows that rural students are having Cognitive stress, Affective stress, Physical stress, Social & Motivational stress.

Table 3: Responses of Respondents Towards Academic Stress Academic Stress Factors and Locality Wise Difference: Mean, SD and t-value

Stress Factors	Locality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p value	sig
Cognitive	Rural	140	2.64	1.39	3.222	0.001	**
	Urban	139	2.12	1.34			
	Total	279	2.38	1.39			
Affective	Rural	140	3.41	1.35	3.072	0.002	**
	Urban	139	2.91	1.38			
	Total	279	3.16	1.38			
Physical	Rural	140	3.13	1.15	3.488	0.001	**
	Urban	139	2.63	1.22			
	Total	279	2.88	1.21			
Social and Interpersonal	Rural	140	2.43	1.01	3.179	0.002	**
	Urban	139	2.04	1.02			
	Total	279	2.24	1.03			
Motivational	Rural	140	2.44	1.56	3.686	0.000	**
	Urban	139	1.81	1.24			
	Total	279	2.13	1.44			
Note: ** = Significant at 0.01 level: * = 0.05 Level: NS= Not Significant						df= 277	
Table Value: 0.01 = 2.576: 0.05=1.960							

Table 4: Responses of Respondents Towards Academic Stress Overall Academic Stress and Locality Wise Difference: Mean, SD and t-value

Stress Factors	Locality	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p value	sig
Total Stress	Rural	140	14.05	3.84	5.627	0.000	**
	Urban	139	11.52	3.67			
	Total	279	12.79	3.96			
Note: ** = Significant at 0.01 level: * = 0.05 Level: NS= Not Significant						df= 277	
Table Value: 0.01 = 2.576: 0.05=1.960							

Table 4 shows that the Overall academic stress of 10th class

students and locality wise difference. The obtained 't' value 5.627 is greater than the table value of i.e. 2.576. It is significant at 0.01 level with degrees of freedom 277. The hypothesis is stated that "There would be a significant difference between the academic stress of 10th class rural and urban students". The hypothesis is accepted as warranted by the results.

It may therefore be said the rural students were found having significantly higher academic stress than the urban students.

The locality is significantly influencing the academic stress of 10th class students. As a whole, the rural students have prone to more academic stress than the urban students. Even though the students are studying in private schools, the rural background and circumstances are always influencing on academic achievements. Some students may not have smartphones, internet facilities, continuous electricity facilities which are prime to attend the online class during Covid-19 pandemic period. These might be the reasons of high academic stress among the rural students.

Table 5: Responses of Respondents Towards Academic Stress Academic Stress Factors and Caste Wise Difference: Mean, SD and f-value

Stress Factors	Caste	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	f-value	p value	sig
Cognitive	OC	105	2.47	1.48	3.355	0.019	*
	BC	132	2.18	1.34			
	SC	34	2.97	1.24			
	ST	8	2.00	0.93			
	Total	279	2.38	1.39			
Affective	OC	105	3.04	1.42	1.121	0.341	NS
	BC	132	3.16	1.34			
	SC	34	3.50	1.50			
	ST	8	3.50	0.93			
	Total	279	3.16	1.38			
Physical	OC	105	2.90	1.22	2.178	0.091	NS
	BC	132	2.74	1.25			
	SC	34	3.29	1.00			
	ST	8	3.25	0.89			
	Total	279	2.88	1.21			
Social and Interpersonal	OC	105	2.16	1.00	4.057	0.008	**
	BC	132	2.14	1.05			
	SC	34	2.74	0.83			
	ST	8	2.75	1.28			
	Total	279	2.24	1.03			
Motivational	OC	105	2.11	1.53	0.334	0.801	NS
	BC	132	2.08	1.42			
	SC	34	2.35	1.39			
	ST	8	2.12	0.99			
	Total	279	2.13	1.44			
Note: ** = Significant at 0.01 level: * = 0.05 Level: NS= Not Significant						df= 3,275	
Table Value: 0.01 = 3.78: 0.05=2.60							

From the table 5 is evident that the academic stress factors and caste wise difference. The obtained 'f' value of cognitive factors is 3.355 which is significant at 0.05 level with degrees of freedom 3,275. A part from that the social and interpersonal factors 'f' value is 4.057 which is significant at 0.01 level with degrees of freedom 3,275. It indicates the mean scores are differ significantly in different castes. In the light of these the null hypothesis "There would be significant difference between academic stress of 10th class OC, BC, SC, ST students", is accepted.

For these the affective, physical and Motivational stress factors 'f' values are 1.121, 2.178, 0.334 respectively, which are not significant. It shows that the mean scores of different castes in affective, physical, motivational stress factors did not differ significantly. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

It may therefore be said that the scheduled caste students found to have high academic stress in cognitive factor and scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students found to have high academic stress in social and interpersonal factors.

Table 6: Responses of Respondents Towards Academic Stress Overall Academic Stress and Caste Wise Difference: Mean, SD and f-value

Stress Factors	Caste	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	f-value	p value	sig
Total Stress	OC	105	12.68	4.17	4.038	0.008	**
	BC	132	12.30	3.76			
	SC	34	14.85	3.71			
	ST	8	13.62	2.93			
	Total	279	12.79	3.96			
Note: ** = Significant at 0.01 level: * = 0.05 Level: NS= Not Significant						df= 3,275	
Table Value: 0.01 = 3.78: 0.05=2.60							

From the table 6 it can be seen that the overall academic stress and caste wise difference. The obtained 'f' value is 4.038 is more than the table value i.e. 3.78 which is significant at 0.01 level with degrees of freedom 3,275. It shows that the mean scores of differ significantly. In the light of these the null hypothesis is "There would be significant different between academic stress of 10th class OC, BC, SC, ST students' academic stress" is accepted.

It may therefore be said that the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students were found to have high academic stress than the OC and BC students. The caste is influencing significantly the academic stress of 10th class students who are studying private schools.

As far as Socio Economic backgrounds are concerned the majority of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students are in deprived conditions in terms of financial support and cultural constraints. They may not have proper support from the parents to attend online classes during Covid-19. The family heads could not understand the importance of education and learning. These might be the reasons of high academic stress of 10th class students who's belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe category.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study revealed that academic stress among 10th class students in private schools during the COVID-19 pandemic period was significantly influenced by gender, locality, and caste. It was found that boys experienced higher academic stress than

girls, particularly in the cognitive, affective, and motivational dimensions. The study also showed that rural students had higher academic stress than urban students across all dimensions of stress, indicating the influence of locality on students' learning experiences during the pandemic. Further, SC and ST students were found to have comparatively higher academic stress than OC and BC students, especially in the cognitive and social/interpersonal dimensions. These findings suggest that students from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds were more prone to academic stress. Lack of digital access, poor academic support, limited learning resources, and socio-economic difficulties during the pandemic period may have contributed to the higher stress levels among these groups.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

By and large the study identified that the academic stress increased in Coved-19 pandemic period. The study also found and highlight the unequal access to digital learning, lack of academic guidance, and socio-economic support among students. Therefore, schools should strengthen interms guidance and counselling services are needed to support students emotionally and academically. Teachers should be trained in digital teaching methods. The government and private school management should ensure the availability of smart devices, internet connectivity, and digital infrastructure, particularly for rural and disadvantaged students. Parents should also play an active role in providing emotional support, monitoring academic progress, and encouraging healthy study habits.

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