

A STUDY OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO GENDER AND AREAS

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the mental health in relation to academic stress among adolescents. Sample comprised 200 adolescents of Sriganganagar city of Rajasthan, out of which 100 were girls and 100 were boys. Mental health battery developed by A.K. Singh and Alpana Segupata and academic stress scale developed by Dr. Abha Rani Bisht were used to collect the data. Descriptive statistics namely mean, S.D., t-test were used for attaining the objectives of the study. Results revealed that there is no significant difference in mental health of boys and girls. But there exists significant difference in academic stress between boys and girls adolescents, Male adolescents are mentally healthier than female adolescents and girls adolescents are more affected by academic stress than boys. There is no significant difference among rural and urban adolescents in relation to mental health and academic stress.

Key Words : Mental health, academic stress, adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is an intriguing stage of development filled with many physical, cognitive, social, and emotional changes. At the same time, the increase in academic demands success for adolescents even more difficult. They feel a sense of emotional strain, tension and anxiety at times. Thus, adolescents are frequently troubled with the daily problems. Stress that starts from school can affect their home life and reverse in some cases. Excessive concern about errors, in addition to high parental and social expectation leads to depression among them. Many youngsters in today's era believe that they are loved for their grades, honour and abilities only. As a result, they do not allow themselves to fail or make mistakes. When they fail, they are overpowered by the feeling of guilt, which in some cases lead to suicide. Sometimes parents who had brilliant academic record may like their adolescents to match, if not excel that standard, without taking into consideration their aptitudes, interests and abilities. Parents multiplied exceptions from their own children play havoc in their children's lives. Often parents look upon their adolescents as means of achieving their own thwarted ambitions. Children have to fulfil not only their own but also the unfulfilled dreams and wishes of their parents. They feel that every

student requires good academic records for getting admission in good and reputed educational institutions

Another important question is why some children who experience high level of stress show resilience in their school adjustment; a subgroup of high-risk children shows academic success and educational investment in the face of resilience, including personal characteristics of children as well as positive school climates. (Guthrie, 2004).

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is an index which shows the extent to which the person has been able to meet his environmental demands i.e., social, emotional or physical; and the extent to which he gets himself mentally strained. This mental strain is generally reflected in symptoms like anxiety, tension, restlessness or hopelessness among others. If it is felt too long and too extensively by the person, these symptoms may take a definite form representing a given illness. "Mental health as such, represents a psychic condition which is characterized by mental peace, harmony and contact. It is identified by the absence of disabling and debilitating symptoms, both mental and somatic in person." (Schneider, 1991). The problem of promoting mental health, in the

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educational context, in a developing country like India, occupies high priority on the agenda for human development. In particular, attaining the goal of mental health for all by AD 2000 is critically related to planning and implementing educational programmers. Also, pursuing education and attaining its goals requires achieving an optimally minimum level of health for the learners and instructors. Any disturbance or disruption in this process is likely to create risks and health hazards. Since the institutions and processes of education are embedded within the broader social, economic and cultural systems, a comprehensive treatment of the issues of mental health in the educational setting cannot be undertaken in isolation from the broader societal context. (Philips, N., 1992; Ramlingaswami, P. 1990). As Cutts and Mosley (1941) said that "Mental health is the ability which helps us to seek adjustmet In the difficult situation of our life" and in the words of Hadfield (1952), "Mental Health is the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality." Mental health is generally viewed as a positive attribute, such that a person can reach enhanced levels of mental health.

ACADEMIC STRESS

Stress is a process in which environment events or personal factors pose a challenge to the physical or mental health of an individual and in stress the individual tries to face such challenge and save himself from the danger created by this condition. These events under certain conditions create stress reactions that are characterized by fear, anxiety and anger. Stress is a poor fit between an individual's resources and the demands of one's environment. Academic stress is common phenomenon negatively affecting the student's academic, emotional, personal and social evils. It viewed as a chronic stress due to the nature of academic demands which was associated with negative health outcomes of depression and physical illness. Academic stress in particular is the product of a combination of academic related demands that exceed the adaptive resources available to an individual. It is an important concern as it adversely affects overall adjustment of students. Thus, Academic stress is a mental distress with respect to some

anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even an awareness of possibility of such failure."

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the mental health among adolescents in relation to gender.
2. To study the academic stress among adolescents in relation to gender.
3. To study the mental health among rural areas adolescents and Urban areas adolescents
4. To study the academic stress among rural areas adolescents and urban areas adolescents.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in the mental health among adolescents in relation to gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the academic stress among adolescents in relation to gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the mental health among rural areas adolescents and urban areas adolescents.
4. There is no significant difference in the academic stress among rural areas adolescents and urban areas adolescents.

DESIGN

Descriptive survey method of research was used to conduct the study.

TOOLS

I have used mental health battery (2005) developed by A.K. Singh and Alpana sen gupta was to study the mental health among adolescents it has 130 items. Academic stress scale (1987) developed by Dr. Abha Rani Bishet was used to study the academic stress among adolescents. It has 80 items.

SAMPLE

A stratified random sample comprising 200 adolescents – 100 boys and 100 girls . It had equal representation from rural area adolescents and urban area adolescents. The sample was selected from the city of Sriganganagar of Rajasthan.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

To achieve the objectives of the investigation, collection data was recorded in the tabular form for the statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics namely mean, S.D., t-Test was used for attaining the objectives of this study. Result and interpretation of data :-

1. In order to find out gender differences in mental health among adolescents, Means, S.D. and T – value were computed and the results are given below :

Table – 1: Mental health among adolescents in relation to gender

S.No.	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	Results
1	Boys	100	81.5	8.53	1.43	No Significance difference
2	Girls	100	78.7	9.25		

Table 1 Shows that the mean of Mental health score of boys adolescents and girls adolescents came out to be 81.5 and 78.7. The T-value testing the significant of mean difference of mental health of boys and girls adolescents came out to be 1.43, which is not significant at 0.05 level. This shows that there is no significant difference in mental health among boys and girls adolescents. The null hypothesis “There is no significant difference in the mental health among adolescents in relation to gender” is accepted.

2. In order to find out gender differences in academic stress among adolescents, Means, S.D. and T-value of boys and girls adolescents were computed and the results are given below:

Table – 2 : Academic Stress among adolescents in relation to gender

S.No.	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	Results
1	Boys	100	110.7	27.5	12.86	Significance difference
2	Girls	100	164.7	11.7		

The table 2 shows that the mean of academic stress score of boys and girls adolescents came out to be 110.7 and 164.7. The value testing the significant difference of academic stress of boys and girls adolescents came out to be 12.86, which is significant at 0.05 level. This shows that there exist significant mean difference in academic stress among boys and girls adolescents. The null hypothesis “There is no significant difference in the academic stress

among adolescents in relation to gender” is rejected. The mean score of academic stress of boys and girls adolescents shows that girls adolescents are affected more by academic stress than boys adolescents.

3. In order to find out area differences in mental health among adolescents mean, S.D. and T-test of rural and urban adolescents were computed and the results are given below:-

Table–3 : Mental health among rural adolescents and urban adolescents

S.No.	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	Results
1	Rural Adolescents	100	80.7	8.89	0.94	No Significance difference
2	Urban Adolescents	100	82.1	9.57		

Table shows that the mean of mental health score of rural and urban adolescents came out to be 80.7 and 82.1 the T-value testing significant difference of mental health of rural and urban adolescents came out to be 0.94, which is not significant of 0.05 level. This shows that there exists no significant mean difference in mental health among rural and urban adolescents. The null hypothesis “There is no significant difference in the mental health among rural and urban adolescents” is accepted.

4. In order to find out area differences in academic stress among rural and urban adolescents mean, S.D. and T-test of rural and urban adolescents were computed and the results are given below:-

Table – 4 : Academic stress among adolescents in relation to rural and urban adolescents

S.No.	Category	N	Mean	S.D.	T-Value	Results
1	Rural Adolescents	100	160.5	25.8	0.55	No Significance difference
2	Urban Adolescents	100	162.6	27.9		

Academic stress among rural and urban adolescents.

Table shows that the mean of academic stress score of rural and urban adolescents came out to be 160.5 and 162.6 the T-value testing significant difference of academic stress of rural and urban adolescents came out to be 0.55, which is not significant of 0.05 level. This shows

that there exists no significant mean difference in academic stress among rural and urban adolescents. The null hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the academic stress among rural and urban adolescents" is accepted.

CONCLUSIONS

1. There exists no significant difference in mental health among boys and girls adolescents. In other words gender is not affected to mental health of adolescents.
2. There exists significant difference in academic stress among boys and girls adolescents. The mean score of academic stress of boys and girls adolescents shows that girls adolescents are affected more by academic stress than boys adolescents.
3. There exists no significant difference in mental health among rural and urban adolescents. In other words area is not affected to mental health of adolescents.
4. There exists no significant difference in mental academic stress among rural and urban adolescents. In other words academic stress is not affected by area.

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