

Stress among School Going Adolescents

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Abstract: *Stress has become an inevitable word in this fast spinning technical world. Stress is been experienced by almost everyone around irrespective of the age they are in. The word stress which was threatening in earlier ages has now been accepted as normal part of life. Adolescence is a period when individuals become independent from their parents. The period of adolescence itself was well recognized as a period of 'stress and storm'. Apart from the home environment adolescents spend most of their time in their school or college environment. School environment, curriculum design, examinations and social support definitely would influence the level of stress experienced by the adolescents. The objective of the study is to find the level of stress experienced by the school going adolescents and to find the associated variables that contribute towards their stress level. This study is descriptive in nature. The data was collected from 50 adolescent school students using random sampling technique in a private school located at Tiruchirappalli district, TamilNadu. Students Stress Rating Scale developed by Dr. M. Balamurugan and Dr. D. Kumaran, University of Madras, was utilized to elicit the level of stress among the respondents. The study reveals that most of the students are experiencing stress and the study also suggests some of the suitable measures to reduce the level of stress among the school going adolescents.*

Keywords: *Stress, School Students, Adolescents, Adolescent Stress*

I. Introduction

Stress has become an inevitable word in this fast spinning technical world. Stress is been experienced by almost everyone around irrespective of the age they are in. The word stress which was threatening in earlier ages has now been accepted as normal part of life. This acceptance about stress has come on experiencing some of the positive effects of stress which is widely called as Eustress, a kind of stress which serves as a motivating factor for achievements. But when the stress level increases unmanageably it turns into Distress which depletes the energy core of the person and pushes him towards a variety of psychological disturbances.

Adolescence is a period when individuals become independent from their parents. The period of adolescence itself was well recognized as a period of 'stress and storm' as an adolescent has to undergo a lot of physical and mental changes during this stage^[1]. Psychologists refer adolescence as Transition Stage as this is the period where the adolescents transform from a child to an adult^[2]. Apart from the home environment adolescents spend most of their time in their school or college environment. School environment, curriculum design, examinations and social support definitely would influence the level of stress experienced by the adolescents. The lifetime prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among adolescents and young adults around the world is currently estimated to range from 5% to 70%, with an Indian study reporting no depression among college going adolescents^[3].

II. Reviews

According to Kai-wen (2010)^[4] students at this level may sometimes experience incompatibility of their mental development with their physical changes or social environment and thus suffer from problems arising from inadequate adaptation. These problems may further cause psychological troubles and may even induce deviant behaviour. Kai-wen in his study has also said about factors that influences stress among school going adolescents such as physiological or mental changes, school factors, relationship with opposite sex and family environment.

Tung and Chahal (2005)^[5] examined relationship between stress and adjustment and found no significant causal relationship between stress and the adjustment. However direction of the results implied that level of adjustment influences the number of stress full events and amount of stress experienced by them.

Torbjorn Torsheim (2001)^[6] in his study has identified a positive relationship between classmate support and academic stress among high school students at Norway. Dawood (1995)^[7] in his study found that students stress affects their academic performance. He further showed that the most frequently mentioned stressor by students was school and fear related stressors.

III. Methods

Based on the concepts and reviews studied, the researcher framed the following aim and objectives for the study.

Aim

To find the level of stress among the school going adolescents in Tiruchirappalli.

Objectives

- To study the socio-demographic profile of the respondents.
- To find the level of stress among the respondents.
- To find the associations and differences between the socio-demographic variables and stress among the respondents.

Hypothesis

- It is found that there is a significant difference in the level of stress among the respondents with regard their gender.
- From the above table it is inferred that there is no significant association between the type of family of the respondents and their level of stress.
- From the above table it is inferred that there is a significant association between the fear of the respondents talk to their teachers and their level of stress.

Research Design

The researcher attempts to describe the stress experienced by the school going adolescents, the associated variables and about their socio-demographic profile. Hence the researcher has adopted Descriptive Research Design to carry out the study.

Universe and Sampling

The universe of the study was 154 school students doing their 12th standard in a private school located at Tiruchirappalli district, TamilNadu. The sample size 50 was selected using Simple Random Sampling technique which is a probability sampling method.

Tools:

A self-prepared interview schedule was developed by the researcher to study the demographic profile of the respondents with 31 items. Students Stress Rating Scale developed by Dr. M. Balamurugan and Dr. D. Kumaran , University of Madras, was utilized to elicit the level of stress among the respondents. The scale has 35 items with 7 point response ranging from Every day to Never.

IV. Findings

From the statistical analysis it was found that majority (80%) of the respondents belong to the age group of 17-18 years, more than half of the respondents (62%) were male, more than half (54%) of the respondents belong to vocational group, majority (62%) of the respondents parents were daily wagers, majority (64%) of the respondents belong to nuclear family, more than half of the respondents (60%) feel that their home environment was sometimes causing stress to them, a majority (78%) of the respondents are sharing all kinds of problems to their parents, more than half of the respondents (56%) feel that their parents are interfering in their privacy, majority of the respondents (60%) feel that their parents are restricting them too much, majority of the respondents attend regularly classes regularly, majority (80%) of the respondents are worried when they get low marks, majority of the respondents (74%) blame themselves for their failure in examinations, a considerable percentage (46%) of respondents are fearing to talk to their teachers, majority (88%) of the respondents are not taking 3 meals per day, majority (60%) of the respondents feel that they do not have adequate relaxation and half of the respondents (50%) have moderate level of stress.

Table : 1 Difference Between The Gender Of The Respondents And Their Level Of Stress

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Statistical inference
Stress	Male	13	1.46	.519	t =0.594 Df = 36 P < 0.05 Significant
	Female	25	1.36	.490	

It is found that there is a significant difference in the level of stress among the respondents with regard their gender.

Table : 2 Association Between Type of Family of The Respondents and Their Stress Level

Sl.no	Type of Family	Level of Stress			Statistical inference
		Low(n=13)	Moderate (n=25)	High(n=12)	
1	Nuclear	8	16	8	X ² =0.071 Df=2 P >0.05 Not Significant
2	Joint	5	9	4	

From the above table it is inferred that there is no significant association between the type of family of the respondents and their level of stress.

Table : 3 Association Between Respondents' Fear To Talk To Their Teachers And Their Stress Level

Sl.no	Fear	Level of Stress			Statistical inference
		Low (n=13)	Moderate (n=25)	High(n=12)	
1	Yes	5	11	7	X ² =1.073 Df=2 P <0.05 Significant
2	No	8	14	5	

From the above table it is inferred that there is a significant association between the fear of the respondents to talk to their teachers and their level of stress.

V. Suggestions

From the statistical analysis it is evident that adolescent students do suffer stress due to various reasons. The following suggestions would help the adolescent school students to reduce their level of stress with the active support of the environment.

- Appointing professional social workers in all schools.
- Giving equal importance to the extra-curricular activities of the students.
- Creating conducive school environment for the students.
- Focusing on the mental health aspects of the adolescent school students.
- Providing Life-skills training to the adolescents which would help them to handle the difficult situations positively.
- Having periodical parents-teachers meet to discuss on the 'holistic' development of the student rather than discussing only about academic progress.

VI. Conclusion

This study has established that adolescent school students especially in their higher secondary education face stress which was overlooked many a times by calling it a mere 'age factor'. Parent's expectation of their child to be a 'winning horse' further makes the situation worse. It is shocking to know that many students fear to talk to their teachers which show that sharing of problems with them is also low. It is also observed in Indian setting that very few schools appoint professional social workers. Professional workers not only take care of the psychological needs of the students but can prevent the adolescents from becoming deviant. Thus, this study emphasizes that stressed feelings among adolescents should not be neglected, but has to be properly intervened, so as to avoid a larger destruction.

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