

EFFECT OF ACADEMIC STRESS ON ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

By

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to find out the effect of academic stress on achievement motivation of college students. 50 college students of various professional, arts, and science colleges functioning in and around Puducherry were approached at random to collect data using purposive sampling method. Academic stress scale developed and standardized by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990) and Achievement Motivation Scale by Pratibha Deo and Asha Mohan (1985) were used for data collection. The collected data were statistically analysed using 't' test and one way ANOVA. The findings revealed that moderate stress leads to high achievement motivation.

Keywords: Academic Stress, Achievement Motivation, Place of Living, College Students.

INTRODUCTION

Few decades ago, there were no televisions, mobile phones, computers, tablets, or any electronic gadgets. After returning from college, the students go out of their homes and play with their friends. They share their day to day experiences, the way they faced certain difficult situations, and everything that gave them a kind of emotional outlet and mental diversion. But in the present day, students do not have much choices to go out and play rather they indulge in with electronic gadgets and engage themselves in social medias, or have to go for studies or any private tuition or coaching classes. Nowadays, both the parents are working in many of the families and they also do not find much quality time to spend with their children. In the name of bringing up the children, they either knowingly or unknowingly pressure the children to score more marks to remain in the academic competition. They do not find time or people to share their problems.

The present day education became burdensome. Right from the primary education, the schools focus on training the students only for securing high marks to compete with their choice in higher studies in tune to the demand in the employment market. As the result, many students find it

difficult to cope up with the existing educational system as a result they experience stress. Secondly, to sustain the familiarity and keep themselves in the competitive race, colleges are exercising more pressures on the students to secure more marks. Further, many parents also constantly exert pressure on their children in the name of making them doctors or engineers. A study made by Fairbrother and Warn (2003) reported that too many assignments, heavy home works, competition with other students, coaching classes, worry over grades, poor relationship with teachers make students more stressful. Another study conducted by Marwan Zaid Bataineh (2013) on undergraduate students proved that academic overloads, course awkward, inadequate time to study, workload every semester, exams awkward, low motivation, and high family expectations were drive moderately stress among students. According to Feld (2011), the most important stressors encountered by students include high individual and external expectations, and stressful surroundings as well as academic motivators, such as academic tasks, ranks, and college recognition. Babar and Olsen (2004) found out that the most dominant stressors were that of academics and examinations. Students complained of feeling stressed academically when it comes to facing exams and grade competition

and having too much information to study yet insufficient time to master the knowledge (Carveth et al., 1996; Chandra and Singh, 2015). Failing to cope with stressors during the transition may cause deterioration of academic performance and increase of psychological distress (Dwyer and Cummings, 2001).

1. Literature Review

Many researches were conducted to assess the relationship between stress and academic achievement of undergraduate students and it is found that stress affects students' academic achievement (Elliot et al., 2005; Choi, et al., 2007; Chandra and Singh, 2015). Stress has always been related to academic achievement of the students (Bentley, 1980). Many past research studies proved that many undergraduate students significantly experience stress (Brown and Ralph 1999). A study conducted by Kumari and Gartia (2012) found that there is a positive correlation between stress and academic achievement. It also proved that there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of students having high, moderate, and less stress (Channawar, 2018). Kauts and Sharma (2009) found in their study that low-stress students performed better than high-stress students. Bennett (2003) reported a similar finding that stress is significantly correlated with poor academic performance in his study of business undergraduates (Chandra and Singh, 2015). But, it is also acceptable to an extent, where there are students who proved their calibre irrespective of their academic stress. Hence, the present study was made to understand the effect of academic stress on achievement motivation of the college students.

2. Objective

The study aims to find the effect of academic stress of undergraduate college students on achievement motivation.

3. Hypotheses

- Undergraduate college students do not differ in achievement motivation on the basis of the academic stress experienced by them.
- Undergraduate college students do not differ in academic stress on the basis of their residential status.

4. Method

4.1 Population

The study was conducted among 50 undergraduate students studying in various arts and science colleges functioning in and around Union Territory of Puducherry. Purposive sampling method was employed for collecting the data. The respondents are from different socio-economic status hailing from both rural and urban areas. Each student was approached at their place and the data was collected individually using questionnaire.

4.2 Tools Used

Academic stress scale developed by Kim and standardized by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990) to Indian conditions was adopted in the present study. The scale comprises of 40 items. Each item has five alternative responses varying from 'No Stress' to 'Extreme Stress'. Each response carries a score of 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively (Rao, 2013). Higher the score is the indication of high academic stress. The test has a reliability of 0.82 and hence the scale was used in its original version.

Achievement motivation scale constructed and standardised by Pratibha Deo and Asha Mohan (1985) was used in this study. This scale comprises 50 statements. Each statement has five responses from Always to Never. Each response for a positive item carries a score of 4, 3, 2, 1, 0 and negative item carries 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 (Rao, 2013). Higher the score indicates high achievement motivation of the students. This scale has the reliability of 0.69 and a validity of 0.54 and hence the scale was used in its original version for data collection.

5. Results and Discussion

From Table 1, it is observed that the mean scores of the achievement motivation of the college students tend to be

Academic Stress Level	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	F	Sig
Slight Stress	16	132.25	24.632	6.158		
Moderate Stress	22	146.41	11.321	2.414		
High Stress	12	125.25	15.004	4.331	6.52	0.003
Total	50	136.80	19.289	2.728		

Table 1. the Mean, Standard Deviation, Standard Error, and F value for Achievement Motivation of the College Students on the basis of their Academic Stress

less (125.25) for those who experience high stress than those who experience slight stress (132.25). But the students who experience moderate stress show high achievement motivation (146.41). The difference between the mean scores are statistically significant as it is evident from the obtained F value (6.52), which is significant at 5% level since the p-value 0.003 is less than 0.05. Hence, it may be concluded that moderate level of stress lead to high achievement motivation than high or slight levels of stress. The result of the present study is supported by the findings of a research done by Bankston and Zhou (2002). They found that there was a significant positive relationship between stress and academic performance of college students (Kumar and Gartia, 2012). It was further supported by another study conducted by Elias et al. (2011) state that undergraduate students experience moderate levels of stress and a negative relationship exists between the undergraduate students stress level and academic achievement.

From Table 2, it is observed that the mean scores of the academic stress of the college students who are hailing from rural areas tend to be less (55.58) than those who are hailing from urban areas (74.53). The difference between the means scores of academic stress is statistically significant as it is evident from the obtained t value (2.96), which is significant at 5% level since the p-value 0.009 is less than 0.05. This may be because of the exposure, opportunities, and too much of consciousness or pressure exerted on them by the institutions or parents than that are experienced by the rural students. Hence, it may be concluded that urban students experience more academic stress than rural students. This finding was also supported by the results of a study conducted by Dey et al. (2014) revealed that the stress of urban adolescents was greater than rural adolescents. A study conducted by Vijaylakshmi and Lavanya (2006) also states that urban

Residential Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	t	Sig
Rural	21	55.58	20.066	5.792	2.96	0.009
Urban	29	74.53	16.499	2.676		

Table 2. The Mean, Standard Deviation, Standard Error, and 't' Value for Academic Stress Experienced by the College Students on the basis of their Place of Dwelling

students experience more stress compared to rural students (Kumari and Garita, 2012).

Conclusion

The best of an individual's ability depends on how he faces the challenges of his life and turns them into stepping stones for the further growth and development of his life. Particularly, the younger generation who takes everything easy should act little seriously and learn to take responsibility for their life and accountability for their behaviours. In order to grow responsibly, they need little anxiety, stress, and motivation. A well motivated individual will be serious about outcomes of his attempts. That seriousness will give a kind of pressure or stress to move towards the desired goals. The present study is one such to find out the effect of academic stress on the achievement motivation of the college students. The study found that students who have moderate level academic stress have high achievement motivation than those who have high or slight level of academic stress. This proves that optimum level of stress leads to high achievement motivation of the college students. Further, the study also explored the influence of residential status on the academic stress experienced by the students. It was concluded that college students who are hailing from urban areas experience more academic stress than the students from rural areas.

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