

ADJUSTMENT PATTERNS OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN RELATION TO ACADEMIC STRESS

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ABSTRACT: Adolescence is a critical phase in life and is the period of growth and development, the presence of stress is a matter of concern. In the present study an attempt has been made to understand the adjustment patterns of adolescent students in relation to academic stress. A total number of 200 adolescents (100 boys and 100 girls) studying in private as well as government schools of Tarn Taran district were selected randomly. Bisht battery of stress Scale(2005) and Adjustment Inventory (Singh & Sinha, 2007) for school students were administered to assess the stress and adjustment of adolescents respectively. The results revealed that i) Adolescent girls have better adjustment as compared to adolescent boys. ii) Adolescents of government schools have better adjustment as compared to adolescents of private schools. iii) Adolescent boys have more academic stress as compared to adolescent girls. iv) Adolescents of private schools have more academic stress as compared to adolescents of government schools. v) Adjustment is significantly and negatively correlated with academic stress.

Key Words: Adjustment, Academic Stress and Adolescents

INTRODUCTION

In the adolescence period patterns and characteristics of childhood i.e. Physical, intellectual, and emotional gradually get replaced with adult ones and both girls and boys head towards relatively independent socio-economic state (Khan & Alam, 2015). Adolescents in the early stage begin to explore decision-making opportunities, while in the middle stage; they begin to develop a sense of identity, established more fully in late adolescence. Adolescents experience a number of physiological and psychological changes in this transitional period. An adolescent usually is a person of strong impulses. At this stage, adolescents have to start their vocational planning and for them achieving a good score is really necessary. Due to which an unwanted stress arise in their minds (Gouda, Luong, Schmidt & Bauer, 2016). Out of number of stresses faced by adolescents and young adults, academic stress emerges as significant mental health problem in recent years (Rangaswamy, 1995). Often students at secondary level undergo considerable level of academic stress that affects their academic performance, psychosocial adjustment along with their overall well-being. Students aged between 12-18 years account for more than one fifth of the world's population i.e., almost 230 millions. In India this age group forms 23 per cent of the total population. Moreover, it is necessary to invest in adolescents as the future leaders and guardians of the Nation's development (Pattanashetty, 2014). In various studies, the term "academic stress" has been used interchangeably with "academic pressure", "educational stress" and "educational pressure" and is viewed as a negative psychological mood related to academic activities such as tests, exams, schoolwork, homework, grades and future education (Bossy, 2000; Jones & Hattie, 1991; Putwain, 2007; Verma & Gupta, 1990). Lee and Larson (2000) conceptualized academic stress as a disturbance induced by a student's appraisal of academic stressors, is common in children and often leads to psychological and somatic distress. Coffey and Appley (1992) explained that academic stress occurs when there is substantive imbalance between environmental demand and response capability of organism. Academic stress is the product of a combination of academic related demands that exceed the adaptive resources available to an individual (Wilks, 2008). Academic problems have been reported to be the most common source of stress for students (Aldwin & Greenberger, 1987). Stress associated with academic activities has been linked to various negative outcomes, such as poor health (Greenberg, 1981), depression (Aldwin & Greenberger, 1987), and poor academic performance (Clark & Rieker, 1986). Academic stress is mental pressure installed onto the student's brain due to overload of excess and unnecessary load of school work and high parental expectations (Urban Dictionary: Academic Stress, 2017). Good (1959) defines "Adjustment as the process of finding and adopting modes of behavior suitable to the environment or the changes in the environment". Adjustment means the modification to compensate for or meet special conditions (James & Drever, 1952). Adjustment is continual process in which a person varies his behavior to produce a more harmonic relationship between himself and his environment (Gates & Jersild, 1948). Stress is

a very uneasy feeling that most of the adolescents face in their life. Adolescents imbibe both positive and negative things from their parents, environment and academic studies. Among these stressors, academic stress is found to be the major cause of stress among adolescents. Academic stressors may include too much homework, assignments, projects and competitions with other students. Examination related stresses were found to be causing high academic stress followed by classroom assignment overload. The problem arises when the adolescents are unable to cope with these stressful situations and end-up themselves in the distressed state of mind. In this kind of situation they are not even able to adjust themselves. Therefore investigator felt the need to conduct this study.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the difference in adjustment patterns of adolescents with respect to gender.
- 2) To study the difference in adjustment patterns of adolescents with respect to type of schools.
- 3) To study the difference in academic stress of adolescents with respect to gender.
- 4) To study the difference in academic stress of adolescents with respect to type of schools.
- 5) To study the relationship between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents.

HYPOTHESES

In order to achieve the forecasting objectives the following hypotheses were framed:

1. There will be no significant difference in adjustment patterns of adolescents with respect to gender.
2. There will be no significant difference in adjustment patterns of adolescents with respect to type of schools.
3. There will be no significant difference in academic stress of adolescents with respect to gender.
4. There will be no significant difference in academic stress of adolescents with respect to type of schools.
5. There will be no significant relationship between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

SAMPLE

The stratified random sampling technique was used to select 200 students studying in IX and X class (both male and female adolescents) from private as well as government schools of Tarn Tarandistrict.

TYPE OF RESEARCH

The study falls under the domain of descriptive research as it intends to study the adjustment patterns of adolescent in relation to student's academic stress.

TOOLS USED

Following tools were used:

- Adjustment Inventory for school students by Singh and Sinha (2007)
- Bisht battery of stress Scale (2005)

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Hypothesis No. 1

First hypothesis was framed to examine the significant difference between adjustment patterns of adolescents with respect to gender.

To test the hypothesis, t- test was applied to determine the significant difference between adjustment patterns of adolescent with respect to gender. The result of this analysis has been reported in table 1.

Table 1:t- ratio of adolescent boys and girls on adjustment scores

Gender	Number	Mean	S.D.	SE _D	t-value
Boys	100	18.51	7.58	1.094	2.84**
Girls	100	15.41	7.87		

**Significant at 0.01 level, df 198

The table 1 reveals that calculated t- value 2.84 was found to be more than tabulated (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance. So, it suggests that there is significant difference between adjustment of adolescent boys and girls. An examination of the means of two groups suggests that adolescent girls have better adjustment as compared to adolescent boys because the scoring of the scale is opposite i.e. less score means more adjusted and vice versa. The null hypothesis stating that there exists no significant difference in adjustment patterns of adolescent with respect to gender was therefore rejected at the specified level.

The result is consistent with the study conducted by Rao, (2009). The results of the study revealed that there exists significant difference on adjustment scores of adolescents in relation to their gender. The result shows that girls are better adjusted as compared to adolescent boys.

Hypothesis No. 2

Second hypothesis was framed to examine the significant difference between adjustment patterns of adolescents with respect to type of schools.

To test the hypothesis, t- test was applied to determine the significant difference between adjustment patterns of adolescents with respect to type of schools i.e. government and private. The result of this analysis has been reported in table 2

Table 2: t- ratio of adolescents of government and private schools on adjustment scores

Type of school	Number	Mean	S.D.	SE _D	t-value
Government	100	15.51	7.979	1.096	2.65**
Private	100	18.41	7.518		

**Significant at 0.01 level, df 198

The table 2 reveals that calculated t- value 2.65 was found to be more than tabulated (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance. So, it suggests that there is significant difference between adjustment of adolescents of Government and private schools. As the scoring of the adjustment is in reverse pattern i.e. less score more adjusted and vice versa so examination of the means of two groups suggest that adolescents of government schools have better adjustment as compared to adolescents of private schools. The null hypothesis stating that there exists no significant difference in adjustment patterns of adolescent with respect to type of schools was therefore rejected at the specified level.

The result is consistent with the study conducted by Hussain (2008) which revealed that Government school students were significantly better in terms of their level of adjustment as compared to adolescents of private schools.

Hypothesis no. 3

Third hypothesis was framed to examine the significant difference in academic stress of adolescents with respect to gender .To test the hypothesis, t- test was applied to determine the significant difference between academic stress of adolescents with respect to gender. The result of this analysis has been reported in table 3

Table 3: t- ratio of adolescents of boys and girls on academic stress scores

Gender	Number	Mean	S.D.	SE _D	t-value
Boys	100	17.79	6.506	.879	5.33**
Girls	100	13.10	5.918		

**Significant at 0.01 level, df 198

The table 3 reveals that calculated t- value 5.33 was found to be more than tabulated (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance. So, it suggests that there is significant difference between academic stress of boys and girls. As shown in fig 3.3 the mean of adolescent girls is 13.10 and that of boys is 17.79. An examination of the means of two groups suggests that adolescent boys have more academic stress as compared to adolescent girls. The null hypothesis stating that there exists no significant difference in academic stress of adolescents with respect to gender was therefore rejected at the specified level.

The above result is consistent with the result of the studies conducted by Busari (2012) and Calaguas (2011) that there is significant difference between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents in relation to gender. The result revealed that boys have more academic stress than girls, is consistent with previous study conducted by Rao (2009).

Hypothesis No. 4

Fourth hypothesis was framed to examine the significant difference between academic stress of adolescents with respect to type of schools.

To test the hypothesis, t- test was applied to determine the significant difference between academic stress of adolescents with respect to type of schools i.e. government and private. The result of this analysis has been reported in table 4

Table 4: t- ratio of adolescents of government and private schools on academic stress scores

Type of schools	Number	Mean	S.D.	SE _D	t-value
Government	100	13.87	6.548	.913	3.45**
Private	100	17.02	6.369		

**Significant at 0.01 level, df 198

The table 4 reveals that calculated t- value 3.45 was found to be more than tabulated (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance. So, it suggests that there is significant difference between academic stress of adolescents of government and private schools. As shown in fig 3.4 the mean of adolescents of Government schools is 17.02 and that of private schools is 13.87. An examination of the means of two groups suggests that adolescents of private schools have more academic stress as compared to adolescents of government schools. The null hypothesis stating that there exists no significant difference in academic stress of adolescent with respect to type of schools was therefore rejected at the specified level.

The above results are consistent with the previous study conducted by Hussain (2008) that private schools have more academic stress than government school.

Hypothesis No. 5

Fifth hypothesis was framed to examine the significant relationship between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents. To test the hypothesis, product moment correlation was applied to determine the significant relationship between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents. The result of this analysis has been reported in table 5.

Table 5:co- efficient of correlation between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents

Variables	N	df	r
Adjustment scores	200	198	.019
Academic stress scores	200		

** Significant at 0.05

From the calculations, we concluded that co-efficient of correlation (r) = .019**.

The table no. 5 indicates that adjustment is significantly correlated with academic stress ($r = .19$ significant at 0.05 level). Thus the null hypothesis stating that there exists no significant relationship between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents was therefore rejected. Here positive sign in the value of r actually indicates a negative correlation because the scoring of the adjustment test is in reverse pattern.

The above result is consistent with the previous study conducted by Hussain(2008), that academic stress and adjustment are significantly correlated.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- 1) Adolescent girls have better adjustment as compared to adolescent boys.
- 2) Adolescents of government schools have better adjustment as compared to adolescents of private schools.
- 3) Adolescent boys have more academic stress as compared to adolescent girls.
- 4) Adolescents of private schools have more academic stress as compared to adolescents of government schools.
- 5) Adjustment is significantly and negatively correlated with academic stress.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it may be concluded that private school students by and large suffer from higher level of academic stress than their Government school counterparts. Not only that their level of adjustment was also much poor than the Government school students. On the basis of results it can be said that academic stress adversely affects overall adjustment of students. By understanding the stressors and its impact efficient management strategies should be developed. Techniques like yoga, life-skills training, mindfulness meditation, and psychotherapy should be utilized to reduce academic stress among students. The boys perceived more academic stress as compared to their female counterparts; therefore teachers and parents should provide an open and friendly environment as well as proper guidance and counseling sessions for students so that they feel comfortable to share their academic related issues frankly. The parents should help their wards and also provide them guidance to adjust properly in this world. The parents should also give extra time to their wards so that there should be more communication and sharing of views and feelings between them.

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