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ACADEMIC STRESS AND PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT:

The present study is an attempt to explore the relationship between academic stress and parental expectations of higher secondary students. Survey method was used for the study. A sample of 1000 XI standard students was selected in Chennai by using stratified random sampling technique. Data was analyzed t-test and Pearson's Correlation co-efficient. Results revealed that there is significant difference in academic stress and parental expectations of higher secondary students based on gender and group chosen; and there is no significant difference in academic stress and parental expectations of higher secondary students in terms of locality. Finding indicated that there is positive relationship between academic stress and parental expectations of higher secondary students.

KEYWORDS: Academic Stress, Parental Expectations, Higher Secondary Students.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a common phenomenon in everyone's life. Stress is universal irrespective of age, experience, culture and no one can escape from stress. Stress is a general term applied to various mental and physiological feelings experienced by the people in their lives. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stress is a pattern of negative physiological state and psychological responses occurring in situations where individuals perceive threats to their well-being, which they may be unable to meet.

Pressure for students gradually increases from the stage of Preschool education to higher education due to expectations from different quarters on their high profile of academic achievements. Academic stress involves mental distress regarding anticipated academic challenges or failure or even an awareness of the possibility of academic failure (Verma, S. & Gupta, J., 1990). Academic stress is the pressure to perform extremely good in the final school examinations especially at the higher secondary level. Sometimes the academic stress among the higher secondary students leads to a sense of distress which in turn affects the children. Stress may be further increased due to their parents' expectations and peer pressure, which are generally manifested in a variety of psychological and behavioral problems in them. The main aim of education has always been the total development of the student's personality. In the present generation, the higher secondary students are forced to face a lot of pressure from all the dimensions of the society.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Sibnath Deb, Esben Strod and Jiandong Sun (2015) investigated the academic stress, parental pressure,

anxiety and mental health. This study found that 63.5% of the students are stressed because of academic pressure. There were no significant differences in academic stress across gender, age, class, and other factors. Two-thirds of the students reported that their parents pressurize them for better academic performance. Academic stress was found to be positively correlated with parental pressure and psychiatric problems.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the significant difference in academic stress of higher secondary students with respect to gender, locality and group chosen.
- To find out the significant difference in parental expectations of higher secondary students with respect to gender, locality and group chosen.
- To examine the relationship between academic stress and parental expectations of higher secondary students.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no difference in academic stress of higher secondary students based on gender, locality and group chosen.
2. There is no difference in parental expectations of higher secondary students in terms of gender, locality and group chosen.
3. There is no relationship between academic stress and parental expectations of higher secondary students.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The sample comprised of 1000 higher secondary students in Chennai. Stratified random sampling technique was used for the study.

Tools

1. Academic Stress Scale developed by the Researchers.
2. Parental Expectations Scale developed by the Researchers.

Statistical Techniques Used

- Critical Ratio (t-test)
- Pearson's Correlation Co-efficient

Analysis of Data

Table 1: Academic Stress of Higher Secondary Students based on Gender, Locality, and Group Chosen

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P-value	Result
Gender	Boys	500	150.20	26.387	34.385	0.000	Significant
	Girls	500	160.29	27.992			
Locality	Urban	500	155.21	27.516	0.011	0.918	Not Significant
	Rural	500	155.50	28.822			
Group Selected in Class XI	Commerce	505	150.58	25.839	29.885	0.000	Significant
	Science	495	160.00	28.639			

From Table-1, the p-values of academic stress with respect to gender (0.000) and group selected (0.000) are less than 0.05. Hence, there is significant difference in academic stress with regard to gender and group selected. The academic stress is higher in girls and science group students.

Table-1 depicts that the t-value of academic stress with respect to locality (0.011) is not significant at 0.05 level. Thus, there is no significant difference in academic stress of higher secondary students in terms of locality.

Table 2: Parental Expectations of Higher Secondary Students based on Gender, Locality, and Group Chosen

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P-value	Result
Gender	Boys	500	132.99	29.307	241.052	0.000	Significant
	Girls	500	159.16	23.700			
Locality	Urban	500	146.09	29.711	0.001	0.981	Not Significant
	Rural	500	146.02	29.579			
Group Selected in Class XI	Commerce	505	142.00	29.882	19.627	0.000	Significant
	Science	495	150.24	28.917			

From Table-2, the p-values of parental expectations in terms of gender (0.000) and group selected (0.000) are less than 0.05. HENCE, there is significant difference in parental expectations based on gender and group selected. The parental expectations is higher in girls, and science group students.

Table-2 shows that the t-value of academic stress with respect to locality (0.001) is not significant at 0.05 level. Thus, there is no significant difference in parental expectations of higher secondary students in terms of locality.

Table 3: Relationship between Academic Stress and Parental Expectations of Higher Secondary Students

Variable	N	'r' value	Level of Significance
Academic Stress	1000	0.237	0.000
Parental Expectations			

From Table-3, the r-value between academic stress and parental expectations is 0.237 which shows a positive relationship between the variables and p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. So, the hypothesis-3 is rejected.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. There is significant difference between girls and boys with respect to academic stress favoring girls. This is due to the reason that the girls are sensitive and severe in anything and everything and take things seriously and develop stress when compared to boys who are easy going and happy with their achievement.
2. There is significant difference between the science and commerce group higher secondary students with respect to academic stress favoring science group students who aspire for professional courses in the future.
3. There is no significant difference in the academic stress of higher secondary students with respect to locality.
4. There is significant difference between girls and boys with respect to parental expectations favoring girls. This is due to the reason that the girls are more at home with their parents which makes space for more pressure from parents.
5. There is significant difference between the science and commerce group higher secondary students with respect to parental expectations of higher secondary students favoring science group students. The reason may be due to the fact that the parents expect more marks from the science group students to gain admission into professional courses.
6. There is no significant difference between the parental expectations of higher secondary students with respect to locality.
7. There is a positive relationship between academic stress and parental expectations of higher secondary students.

CONCLUSION

The present study reveals that the girls of higher secondary level face higher academic stress compared to boys. The science group students are facing more academic stress compared to commerce group. The parental expectations towards girls are more when compared to boys. Parental expectations is more among

science group students. The academic stress and parental expectations is not affected by the locality. There is a positive relationship between academic stress and parental expectations of the higher secondary students. Parents should have an idea about the abilities of their children and they should never impose undue expectation on their children, they should be given opportunities to plan their future according to their own choice, interest, aptitude and attitude. The teacher should take steps to minimize academic stress among them by providing more cooperative and friendly environment.

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