A Study Of Academic Stress Among 8th Grade School Students In Relation To Intelligence And Demographic Factors

* Manjinder Singh

Abstract

The present study was focused on the academic stress of 8th grade school students in relation to intelligence and demographic factors i.e. male and female; rural and urban elementary school students. A total sample of 200 students 100 from government and 100 from private managed schools were selected by applying random method sampling. Students Academic Stress Scale and intelligence test was applied to study the academic stress among 8th grade school students. The mean, SD and t-test was applied to test the significance of mean difference in academic stress of school students. Findings of the study indicates that there exist no significant difference in the academic stress of average and low I.Q. school students, urban and rural school students and government vs private school students in case of gender mean academic stress differ significantly. 8th grade girl school students were more academic stress as compared to the boys 8th grade school students.

Introduction

Indian constitution assured that school education is a fundamental right to every child. Due to liberalization and global market, education today became a service-oriented business sector in the hands of private agencies. Students are pressurized to get higher marks by the educational institutions to increase their market value. Parents are under constant pressure to provide their children a better education to get jobs in the global market. As a result, students experience severe stress in their academics.

Academic stress is an important factor accounting for variation in academic achievement (Ender et al., 1994). Academic pressure is a significant source of stress for much school students (Olpin, 1997 and Hashim, 2003) academic related stress have included fear and falling behind with course work, finding the motivation to study, time pressure, financial worries and concern about academic ability (Tyrrelf, 1992). If prevention efforts are to be developed to assist students in dealing with and avoiding academic related stress, a greater understanding of the relationship among school students use of coping strategies, social support, experience of being presented, and academic related stress needs to be gained.

Allen and Hiebet (1991) and Davidson-Katz (1991) examined academic stress by gender and year in school (class status) of college students. They argued that woman not only perceived more stress and anxiety in their environment but they actually experience more symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Rawson (1999) highlighted that “many students reported their experience of high academic stress at predictable times which have resulted from preparing and taking exams, class ranking competition, and mastering huge amount of syllabus in a comparatively very small amount of time”. Fairbrother (2003) recognized that “academic stress as stressors which occurred due to various reasons such as too many assignments, competitions with other students, failures and poor relationships with other students or teachers”. Prabu (2015) reported that “higher secondary students experienced moderate level of academic stress, especially students in private schools experienced high level of stress than the students in government schools”. Deb (2015) indicated that “students’ academic stress and parental pressure as well as psychiatric problems were positively correlated in Indian context. Examination-related anxiety had significant positive association with psychiatric problems among students. It is emphasized by this study that academic stress was a serious issue, affected about two-third of senior high school students”.

* Research Scholar, Department of Education and Community Service, Punjabi University, Patiala, Mobile No. 98784-30349, Email Id: mannjindersingh@gmail.com
The students face various academic problems including exam stress, disinterest in attending classes and inability to understand the subject. Examination stress is the feeling of anxiety or apprehension over one’s performance in the exams. It can lead to students being unable to perform to the best of their abilities in exams. Academic stress is the major source of stress among adolescents and it may lead to low self-esteem. Many psychological problems such as depression and suicide occur as a result of low self-esteem (Nikitha et al., 2014). Huli (2014) revealed that disturbed family dynamics, peer pressure, inability to cope with studies, drug abuse, lack of competence are major reasons for stress during adolescence. Agarwal (2011) found no significant difference between academic stress of male and female adolescents. Baviskar et al. (2013) studied that uncertainty regarding future, past academic performance, low self-esteem may be all contributing to higher levels of depression, anxiety and stress. Jayanthi et al. (2014) revealed that parent and teachers expectations were the main sources of academic stress among the adolescents, while adolescent girls had higher academic stress than boys. Razia (2016) observed that adolescents of private schools have more academic stress than their counterparts in government schools.

Ghatol (2017) studied that academic stress among the secondary school students and found the causes and symptoms of stress as well as coping mechanism for stress. He indicated that reasons for stress during adolescence are because of disturbed family dynamics, peer pressure, inability to cope with studies, drug abuse, lack of competence etc. were the reason of academic stress among school students. The involvement of adolescents in getting instant gratification of needs has led to lot of stress in them and in their relationships with family and peers. The students coming from joint families have slightly higher mean of academic anxiety score than their counterparts coming from nuclear family. He suggested that the family environment should be congenial and the learning process should be made pleasurable and parents should avoid making it as a stressful event for adolescents. He concludes that supportive and stimulating atmosphere is very necessary for the student to progress in their academic life and for reaching their goal.

Objectives Of The Study

1. To study the academic stress of 8th grade school students in relation to intelligence.
2. To study the gender difference in the academic stress of 8th grade school students.
3. To study the academic stress of 8th grade school students into locale.
4. To examine the academic stress of government and private 8th grade school students.

Hypotheses Of The Study

1. There will be significant difference in academic stress of 8th grade school students having average and low level of intelligence.
2. There will be significant gender difference in academic stress of 8th grade school students.
3. There will be significant difference in academic stress of rural and urban students of 8th grade schools.
4. There will be significant difference in academic stress of government and private 8th grade school students.

Methodology

The universe of the study was delimited to 8th grade boys and girls school students studying in government and private managed institutions in the district Sangrur. The study was focused on the academic stress of 8th grade school students in relation to intelligence and demographic factors i.e. male and female; rural and urban. Two lists of government and private managed schools were prepared, out of which three government and three private managed schools were selected for the study. Total number of 200 students, 100 from government and 100 from private managed school were selected. 25 students selected from each school, equal weightage given to boys and girls of 8th grade school students. Students Academic Stress Scale prepared by Dr. Abha Rani Bist and Intelligence Test by R.K. Ojha was applied to study the academic stress among 8th grade school students.
Percentile not-ms were established for the battery. The corresponding groping of high, average, low stress in terms of percentile of interpretation is High stress = P_{70} or above, Average stress = P_{65} to P_{31}, Low stress= P_{30} or below. The mean value with SD and the t-test was applied to test.

**Analysis And Interpretation Of Data**

Comparison of academic stress among 8th grade school students in relation to intelligence and demographic factors is given in the table.

**Table 1.1**

| Mean Score of Academic Stress Among 8th grade School Students in Relation to Intelligence, Gender, Locale and Type of School |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group                  | Mean   | SD  | t-value | SE_D |
| Intelligence           |        |     |         |      |
| Average Intelligence   | 134.30 | 10.37 | 0.76     | 1.11 |
| Low Intelligence       | 133.10 | 11.76 |          |      |
| Gender                 |        |     |         |      |
| Male                   | 132.30 | 11.84 | 3.30*    | 1.12 |
| Female                 | 136.01 | 10.58 |          |      |
| Locale                 |        |     |         |      |
| Rural                  | 132.70 | 12.78 | 1.67     | 1.14 |
| Urban                  | 135.60 | 9.8  |          |      |
| Type of School         |        |     |         |      |
| Government School Students | 134.80 | 11.78 | 2.01     | 1.45 |
| Private School Students | 137.70 | 8.50  |          |      |

*p<0.05

Table 1.1 shows the mean score of 8th grade school students with average and low intelligence in relation to academic stress came out to be 134.30 with SD 10.37 and 133.10 with SD 11.76 respectively. The mean value of average intelligence students in slightly higher than low intelligence students. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference between average intelligent students and low intelligent students of 8th grade school students came out to be 0.76 which is not significant at 0.05 level towards academic stress. The mean score of 8th grade school students with average intelligence were slightly higher than their counterpart with low intelligence.

Table 1.1 shows the mean score of 8th grade boys school students with regard to academic stress came out to be 132.30 with SD 11.84 as compared to 136.01 with SD 10.58 of 8th grade girls school students. The t-value testing significance of mean difference between 8th grade boys and girls school students came out to be 3.30 which is significant at 0.05 level. The mean score of boys school students is lower than mean score of girls school students. It may be concluded that 8th grade boys school students were less academic stress than 8th grade girls school students.

Table 1.1 also shows that the mean score of rural and urban 8th grade students towards academic stress found to be 132.70 with SD 12.78 and 135.60 with SD 9.80 respectively. The mean value of rural school students is lower than urban students. The t-value testing significance of mean difference between rural and urban school students found to be 1.67 which is not significant at 0.05 level. It may be suggests that rural 8th grade school students have less academic stress than their counterpart i.e. urban school students.

Table 1.1 shows that the mean score of government 8th grade school students found to be 134.80 with SD 11.78 and private school students found to be 137.90 with SD 8.50 with regard to academic stress. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference between government and private school students found to be 2.01 which is not significant at 0.05 level. The mean score of government 8th grade school students is lower than private school students with regard to academic
stress. It may suggest academic stress on private 8th grade school students were more than their counterparts i.e. government school students.

Testing Of Hypotheses
1. On the basis of the result pertaining to the difference in the academic stress of average and low intelligence of 8th grade school students, the hypothesis, “There will be significant difference in academic stress of average and low intelligence of 8th grade school students” was rejected.
2. On the basis of the result, the hypothesis, “There will be significant gender difference in the academic stress of 8th grade school students” was accepted.
3. On the basis of the result pertaining to the difference in academic stress of rural and urban 8th grade school students, the hypothesis, “There will be significant difference in the academic stress of rural and urban 8th grade school students” was rejected.
4. On the basis of results, the hypothesis, “There will be significant difference in academic stress of government and private 8th grade school students” was rejected.

Conclusion
On the basis of findings of the study, following conclusions were drawn:
1. There was not any significant difference in academic stress of average and low I.Q level 8th grade school students.
2. The mean academic stress differ significantly between 8th grade boys and girls school students. Girls school students were significantly more academic stress as compared to boys school students.
3. There exists no significant difference in academic stress of rural and urban school students of 8th grade.
4. There was not any significant difference in academic stress of government and private school students. However mean academic stress of private school students were more than government 8th grade school students.

Educational Implications
Findings of the present study indicates that intelligence (average and low intelligence), is not factor to influence the academic stress among 8th grade school students. 8th grade school students with low and average level of I.Q do not effect the academic stress of the students. However, girls school students have more academic stress as compared to boys school students. Location (rural and urban) and type of school (government and private) are not key factor on academic stress. However all type of students of 8th grade school students suffer from equal level of academic stress except gender. A variety of teaching strategies and methods may be used to accommodated all type of academic stress. The teachers in the school may try to remove unnecessary academic stress to enhance the level of academic achievement.

References


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