Academic Stress Among The Ninth Standard Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find the level of academic stress of the ninth standard students. Academic stress refers to the uncomfortable psychological conditions that arise as a result of parents, teachers, peers and family members scholastic expectations. Survey method was used in the study. A sample of 800 ninth standard students were selected through stratified random sampling technique. A standardized Academic Stress Scale was used to collect the relevant data. Percentage, Mean, SD, and 't' test was employed to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that the level of overall academic stress perceived by the ninth standard students is moderate. No significant difference exists between male and female students in the overall academic stress, statistically they are found to be the same in the academic stress perceived.

Key Terms Academic Stress, Ninth standard Students.

1.Introduction.

Education is the gate way of knowledge and is an important aspect of human's life. Through the process of education, humans will develop and have progress in preparing for their future. School days are the most important period for student's life. Now a days the school going students especially the high and higher secondary students vulnerably encounter so many problems which stresses them out and in turn impact their low performance in their school studies. Stress has been identified as modern society's diseases and has been viewed as a complex and dynamic transaction between individual and their environments. In today's ultra-competitive world, students face more stress than ever-be it related studies ,examinations, peer, teachers or parenting's pressure.

2. Concept of Academic stress

Now a day's stress has become an important subject matter in research studies in academic as well as in our society. The present study was conducted to find the level of academic stress among the ninth standard students. Stress is an internal state which can be caused by physical demands on the body or by environment and social situations which are evaluated as potentially harmful, uncontrollable, or exceeding the resources of coping (Lazarus & Folman, 1984). It is alto a negative emotional experience associated with biochemical, physiological, cognitive, and behavioral changes that occur when a person tries to manage or deal with the stressors. According to Dixit (2020) "academic stress is considered the leading source of stress experienced by

students". Further, it is an unpleasant physiological situations that mostly occur due to environmental factors, such as educational expectations from parents, teachers, peers, and family members, pressure for academic achievement, the burden of homework etc., . Academic stress is the fundamental problem of the academic journey and impacts learning situations (Saqib and Rehman, 2018); happens as a result of academic overload of an individual beyond personal capacity (Khan, et al ., 2013; Kiani et al ., 2017); emotional imbalance with many causes (Bokhsh and Sayed, 2015). Academic stress decline students' involvement or engagement in terms of school activity, classroom participation, and emotions (Fredrick, Blumenfeld, & Parin, 2004; Raufeldor, etc al., 2014); triggers problems of self-adjustment (Kumar & Hussain, 2008); academic requirements (Struthers, Perry,& Menec, 2000); emotional psychological development with a suicide idea as the worst case (Ang & Huan, 2006) ; pathological internet use (Jun, Choi, 2015); anxiety and depression (Nonterah et al ., 2015) ;violent behavior (Mason & & Smithey , 2012) ; various physical disorders such as heart problems and immune deficiencies (Trube,Smith, Auchus, & Ritz,2013),as well as neurological changes deficiencies related to error processing in the brain (Jianhui et al ., 2014) . Academic stress is associated with high level of anxiety and sleep disturbances (Zunhammer et al; 2014); depressive symptons (Jayanthi et al.,2015) and affect the academic performance (Waqas et al ., 2015; Kelly & Clanton, 2001).

3. Review of Related Literature

Kartika (2021) determined the sources of academic stress among 202 junior high school students. The findings of the study showed that 98% of students had experienced academic stress with the intensities of always (57.4%), often (23.8%), sometimes (16.8%), and never (2%). The sources for their academic stress was Course material (26.7%), Assignment (18.3%), Teacher (16.8%), Exam (16.8%), Homework (14%), and Self-demand (0.5%)

Bethy Koshy (2019) assessed the level of academic stress and to explore the possible factors leading to stress among 100 tenth grade students. The findings of the study stated that 45% had mild stress,51%moderate stress,45 %have severe stress. Further, the most common indicators of the stress level to be parent's expectations. The study also stated that gender was found to be statistically associated with the level of stress and the male students (52%) have perceived more academic stress as compared to female (48%) students.

Pratibha Sagar and Bijender Singh (2017) examined the level of academic stress among 180 Higher Secondary School Students from Bareilly District of Utter Pradesh. The results of the study showed that there exists significant difference between academic stress of boys and girls, but no significant difference was found among Arts, Science, and Commerce Stream Students. Furthermore, no significant difference between academic stress of government- aided and self finance school students as well as rural and urban school students.

Smritikana Mitra Ghosh (2016) studied the academic stress among 200 students studying in different schools located in Ranchi Town. The findings of the study revealed that students in private schools have more academic stress than the students of government schools. Further, girls experienced higher academic stress than the boys.

Zamirullah Khan et al.,(2015) examined the level of stress among 64 school students aged between 14-18 years. The findings of the study revealed that boys experienced very high (19%), high (29%), moderate (39%), low (12%), and very low (11%) level of academic stress; whereas the girls experienced very high (0%), high (14%). moderate (18%), low (41%) and very low (27%) level of stress. The study concluded that school boys are more stressful than boys.

Attri and Neelam (2013) attempted to find the academic stress and academic achievement among 200 ninth standard students of Mandi District of Himachal Pradesh. The results of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in academic stress and academic achievement of male and female secondary school students. The study also revealed that girls were found to be more academically anxious and had better academic achievement than boys.

4. Objectives of the study

1. To find the level of academic stress and its dimensions Academic workload, Time management, Examination anxiety, Family environment, Self-anxiety, Co-curricular activities, Peer influence, Policy adherence and Personal limitations of ninth standard students.

2. To find the significance of difference in Academic stress and its dimensions of ninth standard students with respect to their gender.

5. Hypotheses of the study

1. The level of academic stress and its dimensions Academic workload, Time management, Examination anxiety, Family environment, Self–anxiety, Co-curricular activities, Peer influence, Policy adherence, and Personal limitations of ninth standard students is moderate.

2. There is no significant difference in Academic stress and its dimensions of ninth standard students in respect to their gender.

6. Method and Materials

6.1 Method
The researcher has designed the study in such a way to make use of descriptive survey method.

6.2 Population
All the high and higher secondary school students studying in ninth standard in the schools located in Thiruvallur and Chennai districts form the population of the study.

6.3 Sample
A total of 800 study subjects, 395 male and 405 female students were selected for the study by using stratified random sampling technique.

6.4 Research Instrument used
The self- administered Academic Stress Scale prepared and validated by Dr.Palani.V and Dr.Mani. S (2016) was used to measure the student's level of academic stress.

6.5 Statistical techniques employed

The data were analyzed using Means with SDs with Percentages. The 't' test was applied to find the significance of difference between the means.

7. Operational definitions of the terms Academic stress

Wilks & Spivey (2010) defined academic stress is "the body's response to academic – related demands that exceed the adaptive capabilities of students".

In the present study academic stress means "the score obtained by the ninth standard students on the Academic Stress Scale" prepared by Dr.Palani.V and Dr.Mani.S (2016).

Ninth standard Students

By this the researcher means the students who are studying ninth standard in the high and higher secondary schools located in Thiruvallur and Chennai districts of Tamilnadu.

8. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1 Level of Academic stress perceived by ninth standard students

Academic stress and its Dimensions	N	Level of stress					
		Low		Moderate		High	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Academic workload	800	234	29.3	332	41.5*	234	29.3
Time management	800	276	34.5	241	30.1	283	35.4*
Examinations anxiety	800	241	30.1	323	40.4*	236	29.5
Family environment	800	237	29.6	319	39.9*	244	30.5
Self-anxiety	800	266	33.3	242	30.3	292	36.5*
Co-curricular activities	800	269	33.6	253	31.6	278	34.8*
Peer influence	800	338	42.3*	204	25.5	258	32.3
Policy adherence	800	278	34.8	237	29.6	285	35.6*
Personal limitations	800	226	28.3	255	31.9	319	39.9*
Overall Academic Stress	800	217	27.1	347	43.4*	236	29.5

*indicates the level of academic stress

Figure 1 Level of Academic stress perceived by ninth standard students of Tiruvallur& Chennai District
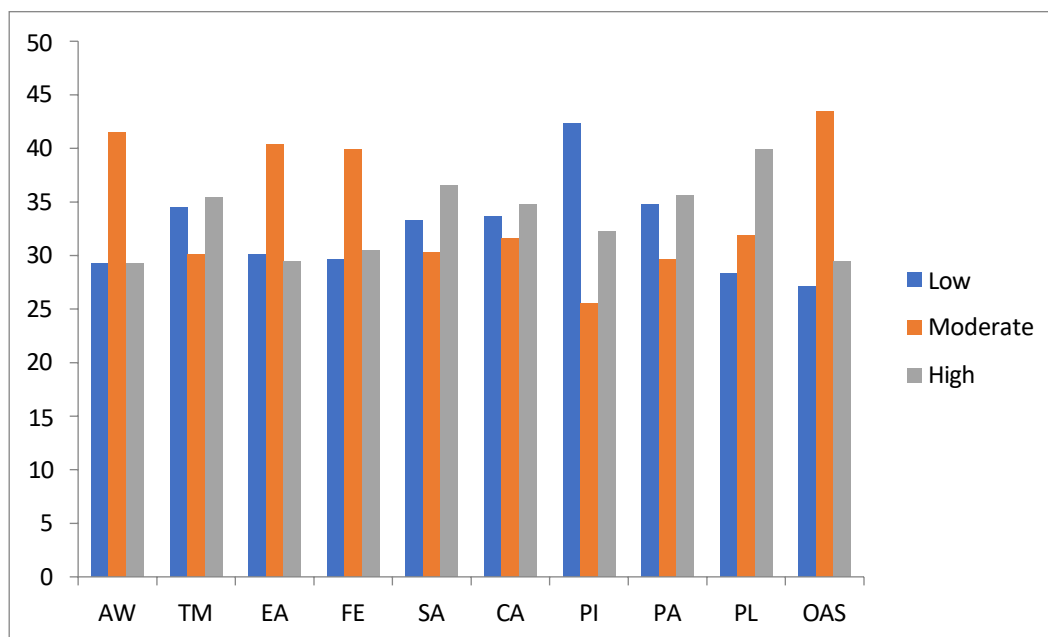
- The level of overall academic stress perceived by the ninth standard students in the schools of Thiruvalllur and Chennai Districts is found to be moderate as 43.4% of them has fallen under this category.

- In the case of the dimensions Academic workload (41.5%) , Examination anxiety (40.4%), Family environment (39.9%), the ninth standard student have recorded moderate; whereas in the dimensions Time management (35.4%), Self–anxiety (36.5%), Co-curricular activities (34.8%), Policy adherence (35.6%), and Personal limitations (39.9%) they are found to be high. In the case of the dimension Peer influence (42.3%), the ninth standard students have recorded low.

Table 2 Level of Academic stress perceived by the ninth standard Boys and Girls

Variable	Gender	N	Level of Academic stress					
			Low		Moderate		High	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
Academic workload	Boys	395	111	28.1	164	41.5*	120	30.4
Time management		395	140	35.4*	119	30.1	136	34.4
Examinations Anxiety		395	115	29.1	162	41.0*	118	29.9
Family environment		395	112	28.4	170	43.0*	113	28.6
Self-anxiety		395	127	32.2	120	30.4	148	37.5*
Co-curricular activities		395	141	35.7*	132	33.4	122	30.9
Peer influence		395	175	44.3*	106	26.8	114	28.9
Policy adherence		395	145	36.7*	122	30.9	128	32.4
Personal limitations		395	115	29.1	132	33.4	148	37.5*
Overall Academic Stress		395	104	26.3	181	45.8*	110	27.8
Academic workload		405	123	30.4	168	41.5*	114	28.1
Time management		405	136	33.6	122	30.1	147	36.3*

Examinations anxiety	Girls	405	126	31.1	161	39.8*	118	29.1
Family environment		405	125	30.9	149	36.8*	131	32.3
Self-anxiety		405	139	34.3	122	30.1	144	35.6*
Co-curricular activities		405	128	31.6	121	29.9	156	38.5*
Peer influence		405	163	40.2*	98	24.2	144	35.6
Policy adherence		405	133	32.8	115	28.4	157	38.8*
Personal limitations		405	111	27.4	123	30.4	171	42.2*
Overall Academic Stress		405	113	27.9	166	41.0*	126	31.1

***indicates the level of academic stress**   (37.5%).

The gender wise analysis has recorded that the male ninth standard students are moderate in their overall Academic stress (45.8%), as well as in the dimensions Academic workload (41.5%), Examination anxiety (41%) and family environment (43%); however, they are noted be low in the dimensions Time management (35.4%), Co-curricular activities (35.7%), Peer influence (44%) and Policy adherence (36.7%). The ninth standard male students are found to be high in the dimensions Self-anxiety (37.5%) and Personal limitations

The female ninth standard students also have recorded moderate level of overall Academic stress (41%), and also its dimensions Academic workload (41.5%), Examinations anxiety (39.8%), Family environment (36.8%); however, they are noted be high in the dimensions Time management (36.3%), Self-anxiety (35.6%), Co-curricular activities (38.5%), Policy adherence (38.8%) and Personal limitations (42.2%). Whereas, the ninth standard female students are found to be low in the dimension Peer influence (40.2%).

Table 3 Difference in Overall Academic stress and its dimensions perceived by ninth standard students in terms of gender

Academic stress and its Dimensions	Gender	N	Mean	SD	't'value	'p'value
Academic workload	Male	395	43.81	13.79	1.37	0.17
	Female	405	42.51	12.76		
Time management	Male	395	16.01	5.28	0.34	0.73
	Female	405	16.15	6.15		
Examinations anxiety	Male	395	24.90	7.80	0.89	0.37
	Female	405	24.40	8.08		
Family environment	Male	395	26.70	8.75	0.11	0.90
	Female	405	26.63	9.05		
Self-anxiety	Male	395	15.06	5.47	0.91	0.36
	Female	405	14.71	5.46		
Co-curricular activities	Male	395	14.02	5.36	1.03	0.30
	Female	405	14.41	5.37		
Peer influence	Male	395	8.61	3.82	2.20	0.03*
	Female	405	9.21	3.89		
Policy adherence	Male	395	8.93	3.69	1.03	0.30
	Female	405	9.20	3.48		
Personal limitations	Male	395	7.82	3.41	0.69	0.49
	Female	405	7.98	3.25		
Overall Academic Stress	Male	395	165.89	43.94	0.27	0.78

	Female	405	165.23	43.93	

*Significant at 0.05 level

- It could be observed from the above table, it is found that no significant difference exists between male and female ninth standard student in their overall academic stress, statistically they are found to be the same in their academic stress perceived.

- In the case of the dimensions of Academic stress, significant difference has been recorded between male and female ninth standard students in the dimension – Peer influence, with female ninth standard students scoring significantly higher than their male counterparts. All other dimensions of Academic stress – Academic workload ,Time management, Examinations anxiety, Family environment, Self-anxiety, Co-curricular activities, Policy adherence and Personal limitations have shown no significant difference between the male and female ninth standard students.

9. Findings with Discussion

- The level of Overall Academic Stress perceived by ninth standard students is moderate (43.4%). This finding is more or less similar to the findings of the study done by Betty Koshy (2019) who found that 51% of the tenth grade students level of stress is moderate.

- The male (45.8%) and (41%) female ninth standard students level of academic stress is moderate. However, the male students perceived higher academic stress than the female students. This finding is contrast with the studies of Smritikana Mitra Ghosh (2016) and Attri and Neelam (2013) who stated that girls experienced higher academic stress than the boys.

- There is no significant difference exists between male and female ninth standard students overall academic stress, statistically they are same in their academic stress perceived. This result is contrast with the findings of Attri and Neelam (2013) who reported that there is significant difference in the academic stress of secondary school students.

10. Conclusion

In the fast-changing world academic stress among the students especially the high and higher secondary school students is inevitable one. The findings of the study showed that the ninth standard students experienced a moderate level of stress. Stress cannot be completely eradicated but it can be reduced. Hence, the schools, teachers, and parents should evolve suitable strategies to reduce level of the stress among the school students.

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