IJCRT.ORG ISSN : 2320-2882

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

STUDY OF ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG THE STUDENTS OF DIFFERENT STREAMS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GUJARAT[1]

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Abstract: The present study was undertaken to investigate the comparison in academic stress among students of different streams of higher secondary schools in Gujarat. The study is based on primary data collected from the selected sample students consists of 1000 students from aided and un-aided higher secondary schools (XI and XII) in Anand district of Gujarat. The data were collected from randomly selected students from 13 schools in Anand district having seven schools in urban area and remaining six schools from rural area. The results of analysis of comparison of the students of different streams and academic stress scores indicate that there is no significant difference between academic stress of students of all three streams (science, commerce and arts) of higher secondary school.

Index Terms: Academic Stress, Streams, Students.

1. INTRODUCTION:

As the society is influenced by modernization and westernization, the path from adolescence to adulthood is endowed with stress. This is true especially in the case of adolescents in the middle income group families as they have to face greater stress in the form of parental expectations and pressures and highly competitive academic and job environment. Academic stress is a major problem for college students everywhere, which causes many issues with emotional and physical health. One of the most frightening consequences of college student's academic stress is suicide because of depression. As per the National Crime Record Bureau Report 2015, total 8934 students had committed suicides in India, which accounted for about 6.7 per cent of total suicides recorded in our country. Gujarat state ranks ninth place and share about 5.25 per cent cases of students' suicides in the country (http://ncrb.gov.in).

The imbalance between demand and response capability of student under certain conditions where failure to meet demand is considered as stress. For academic excellence as well as taking advantage of future opportunities learning is very important particularly it assumes a great importance at 11th and 12th standard where from path of the next stage of education level is determined. The students of all three streams, viz. Arts, Science and Commerce faces the academic stress during this stage to perform better to catch up next stage despite of the fact that all three streams would have different roads to walk ahead after examination for carrier development. Expectations of the youth are generally unrealistic and unusual which unintentionally lead to frustration and a result in misbehaviours like- suicides, addiction to drugs, intolerance etc. and therefore present study is the need of the days.

[1] This is abridged version of doctoral dissertation undertaken by the first author.

The motivation for this research was that there have been reported cases of stress among the students that has resulted in loss of their lives at such young age. The exact causes for suicidal actions of these individuals are not known since the victim/s of stress are never present to tell their stories, causes and effects. Although the counseling/advisory centre within the College/Institution/University keep track and records of students who seek help from them, but this alone has failed to help and identify strongly the causes and providing the coping mechanisms. Again, there have been some cases of reported aggression among students, and everywhere same story of very poor class/lecture attendance. It is needless to mention here that the future of any nation/society lies heavily on the youth as they are the tomorrow's leaders, policy makers, doctors, educationist and lawyers, etc. and therefore, it is important to identify not only the causes of stress but also the various symptoms and consequences of stress on life of student. This will certainly help the administrators and policy makers to come up with the best possible strategies to enable the students to cope up with these stressors while pursuing their academic career.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Some of the studies have attempted to address this issue in their research work. Bataineh (2013**)** investigated the academic stressors experienced by the 232 students at university. The results showed 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. The fear of failure is the major source of stress among undergraduate students. Moreover, the study found that there were positive correlation between religiosity sources and academic stress. There were no significant differences in academic stress among students with different, level of study and specializations. While Nandamuri and Gowthami (2011) investigated the sources of academic stress among the 500 post graduate management students in Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh, India. Authors found that the academic stress was more prominent among the students of professional courses. Among the components, curriculum and instruction aspects were found to be largely responsible for stress among the management students. Chothani (2014) examined the level of academic stress and adjustment among Gujarati and English medium school students from different types of schools of Ahmedabad, Gujarat (India) covering 120 students (class IX and X students) from different types of schools of Ahmedabad and found that there is a significance difference in the area of academic stress between students of Gujarati medium school and that of English medium school. Students of English medium school are high academic stress than Gujarati medium school, means students of English medium school have higher academic stress, which indicate that they have an impending fear from the environment in the form of teacher and subject. The study also found that there is a significant difference between students of Gujarati medium school and that of English medium school in the area of total adjustment, means students of Gujarati medium school well adjusted than the English medium school students. While studying the level of academic stress among higher secondary students covering 250 XI standard students studying in higher secondary schools situated in Namakkal District of Tamil Nadu, India, Parbhu (2015) found that science subject student\'s academic stress is higher than arts student. The students whose parent's education is as literate level, academic stress is higher than their counter part.

The review of literature indicates the different level of stress across the streams. While there was only a study carried out in Gujarat, this study is an attempt to fill up this research gap.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY:

The present study is conducted in Anand district of Gujarat and data were collected from the students of higher secondary schools located in rural and urban areas of Anand district. The study covered students of all three streams following Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Gujarat State Education Board (GSEB) teaching standards. Stratified random sampling technique was used for selection of sample students. To fulfill the objectives of the study, the survey method was used. The primary data were collected from the selected sample students consists of 1000 students (boys and girls) of three streams (Science, Arts and Commerce) of higher secondary schools (XI and XII). The data were collected from randomly selected students from 13 schools in Anand district having seven schools in urban area and remaining six schools from rural area. The hypotheses of the study were as follows:

1) There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of academic stress in relation to science stream and arts stream students of higher secondary school.
2) There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of academic stress in relation to science stream and commerce stream students of higher secondary school.
3) There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of academic stress in relation to arts stream and commerce stream students of higher secondary school.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

As mentioned in earlier chapter, data were collected from the 1000 students (boys and girls) from rural and urban area studying across three streams, viz. arts, science and commerce. Using Likert Scale technique (closed ended questions), data were collected from sampled students on 75 questions pertaining the academic stress. The Likert Scale 5 point rating scale ranges from "1" to "5"; 1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3= Sometimes; 4= Mostly; 5= Always. The comparison of the students across the stream and areas in relation of their academic stress scores are presented and discussed below.

Table 1 presents the comparison of the students of science and arts stream in relation to their academic stress scores. It can be seen from the table that the t value obtained from the mean score of streams of science and arts is -0.384. The significance value obtained in this case is 0.701 which is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference between the mean scores of academic stress in relation to science stream and arts stream students of higher secondary school is not rejected. Hence, the academic stress of students of science and arts stream of higher secondary school does not indicate any significant difference between them.

The comparison of the students of science and commerce stream in relation to their academic stress scores presented in Table 2 indicates that the t value obtained from the mean score of streams of science and commerce is 0.077. The significance value obtained in this case is 0.938 which is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference between the mean scores of academic stresses in relation to science stream and commerce stream students of higher secondary school is not rejected.

Table 1: Comparison of the Students of Science and Arts Stream in relation to their Academic Stress Scores

Descriptives

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Arts	200	165.5000	43.22374	3.05638	159.4730	171.5270	75.00	311.00
Science	400	166.9325	42.92633	2.14632	162.7130	171.1520	83.00	326.00
Total	600	166.4550	42.99491	1.75526	163.0078	169.9022	75.00	326.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	273.608	1	273.608	.148	.701
Within Groups	1107015.178	598	1851.196		
Total	1107288.785	599			

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Arts and Science	Equal variances assumed	.077	.781	-.384	598	.701	-1.43250	3.72612	-8.75037	5.88537
	Equal variances not assumed			-.384	395.674	.702	-1.43250	3.73472	-8.77488	5.90988

Hence, the academic stress of students of science and commerce stream of higher secondary school does not indicate any significant difference between them.

Table 2: Comparison of the Students of Science and Commerce Stream in relation to their Academic Stress Scores

Descriptives

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Commerce	400	166.7025	41.14452	2.05723	162.6581	170.7469	79.00	308.00
Science	400	166.9325	42.92633	2.14632	162.7130	171.1520	83.00	326.00
Total	800	166.8175	42.01870	1.48559	163.9014	169.7336	79.00	326.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10.580	1	10.580	.006	.938
Within Groups	1410680.775	798	1767.770		
Total	1410691.355	799			

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Commerce and Science	Equal variances assumed	.193	.661	-.077	798	.938	-.23000	2.97302	-6.06586	5.60586
	Equal variances not assumed			-.077	796.570	.938	-.23000	2.97302	-6.06588	5.60588

While the results pertaining to comparison of the students of arts and commerce stream in relation to their academic stress scores depicted in Table 3 indicates that the t value obtained from the mean score of streams of arts and commerce is -0.332. The significance value obtained in this case is 0.740 which is greater than 0.05, so there is no significant difference between the mean scores of academic stress in relation to arts stream and commerce stream students of higher secondary school is not rejected.

Hence, the academic stress of students of arts and commerce stream of higher secondary school does not indicate any significant difference between them.

Table 3: Comparison of the Students of Arts and Commerce Stream in relation to their Academic Stress Scores

Descriptives

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Arts	200	165.5000	43.22374	3.05638	159.4730	171.5270	75.00	311.00
Commerce	400	166.7025	41.14452	2.05723	162.6581	170.7469	79.00	308.00
Total	600	166.3017	41.81680	1.70716	162.9489	169.6544	75.00	311.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	192.801	1	192.801	.110	.740
Within Groups	1047245.597	598	1751.247		
Total	1047438.398	599			

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Arts and Commerce	Equal variances assumed	.004	.949	-.332	598	.740	-1.20250	3.62413	-8.32008	5.91508
	Equal variances not assumed			-.326	381.143	.744	-1.20250	3.68424	-8.44648	6.04148

4. CONCLUSIONS:

The present study was undertaken to investigate the comparison in academic stress among students of different stream of higher secondary schools in Gujarat. The results of analysis of comparison of the students of different streams and academic stress scores indicate that there is no significant difference between academic stress of students of all three streams (science, commerce and arts) of higher secondary school. The findings are opposite to the findings of Tiwari (2020) which calls for further such studies at different locations for better policy formulation and adoption of same in stressless academic culture in the school.

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