



EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING PROGRAM ON IMPROVING ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS.

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Abstract: The present study was undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of Assertiveness Training Program on Academic stress among school students in selected school. The study carried out the following objectives. 1. To assess the level of academic stress among the school students. 2. Assess the assertive behaviour of selected students before assertiveness training program. 3. Assess the effectiveness of assertiveness training program in terms of improving assertive behaviour among school students. 4. Find out the association between existing behaviour with selected demographic variables. The study was conducted by using one-group pre-test, post-test design at selected schools, at Barabanki. The population of the study was school students studying in the same school with academic stress. A non-probability (purposive sampling) technique were used to select the sample. The study consisted of 50 school students studying at selected schools at Barabanki with Academic stress. Among school students 21 samples were found to have moderate satisfactory and 29 samples were found to have satisfactory with assertiveness before the assertiveness training program. After implementing the assertive training program it was found that 16 samples had highly satisfactory and 33 samples had moderate satisfactory and 1 sample was satisfactory. Among school students the pre-test mean value 7.58 ± 2.098 was lesser than post-test mean value 12.48 ± 2.90 . The effectiveness of assertive training program, i.e. the obtained 't' test value is 9.69 which is found to be greater than the 't' table value ($p=0.001 < 0.05$ level, therefore research hypotheses (H1) is accepted. This shows that a significant difference exist between the mean score before and after program. This reveals that there is a significant difference in the level of existing behavior before and after intervention. Thus the difference is statistically significant and it confirms that assertiveness training program was effective in enhancing the level of existing behavior among the school students. Among students X² value computed in the post test assertiveness score among the students with selected demographic variables like gender (4.71), school performance (10.98) and type of family (5.11) was significant ($p < 0.05$) and other variables like Age (0.38), family income (3.29), parents education (2.88), breadwinner of the family (3.94), type of residence (0.74), place of residence (2.85) and number of siblings (1.42) were not significant ($p > 0.05$). Thus, it can be concluded that, there is significant association between the existing behavior among school children with their selected demographic variables gender, school performance and type of family. Therefore, the research hypothesis (H2) is partially accepted. There was no significant association between post-test level of existing behaviour and the other demographic variables such as Age, family income, parents' education, breadwinner of the family, type of residence, place of

residence and number of siblings. Assertive training was effective in improving existing behaviour among school students studying at selected school.

Key Words - Effectiveness, Assertiveness training, Academic stress, School students.

I. INTRODUCTION

In India highly competitive world, students face various academic problems including exam stress, disinterest in attending classes and inability to understand the subject. Academic stress is the feeling of anxiety or apprehension over one's performance in the academic activities. It can lead to students being unable to perform to the best of their abilities in examination.

Stress is generally defined as the body's nonspecific response or reaction to demands made on it, or to disturbing events in the environment. Stress can also be defined as, any change in the body's equilibrium. Distress is another name for any harmful stress. When tension builds up throughout daily activities or while performing tasks, there is no longer any enjoyment in them, and it appears that there is no way to release the strain. Poor decision-making could result from this. Over-aroused, tense, difficult to relax, and touchy are the general traits of the distressed individual.

Stress affect that an individual can have possibly anxious thoughts, difficulty to concentrate or remember because of been stress. Stress can lead also to change in people's behaviours such as nail biting, heavy breathing, teeth clenching and hand wringing, cold hand and feet's, stomach butterflies, and occasionally and elevated heart rate are all recognised as common physiological consequences of stress, which can be linked to the emotion of worry.

Academic stress is the anxiety and stress that comes from schooling and education. There is often a lot of pressure that comes along with pursuing a degree and one's education. There is studying, homework, test, labs, reading, and quizzes there is the stress of doing all of the work, balancing the time and finding time for extracurricular activities. Academic stress is especially hard on school student who are often living away from home for the first time. Teacher expects work to be completed on time; student may underestimate that amount of time it takes to complete reading and writing assignment.

There are various sources of academic pressure in school, including the desire for perfection, concern over grades, parental pressure, competition, sports, and a demanding course load. Many younger pupils also exhibit the nervous breakdown, panic attacks, burnouts, and despair. Not everyone experiences stress in the same ways, and not everyone has the same negative emotions or ideas when under pressure.

The main thing help in the stress is assertiveness. As it is a skill regularly referred to in social and communication skill training. Being assertive means being able to stand up for your own or other people's rights in a calm and positive way, without being either aggressive, or passively accepting wrong. Assertiveness means standing up for your personal rights, expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways. Assertiveness is a method of critical thinking, where an individual speak up in defense of their views or in light of erroneous information. Assertive individuals are able to get their points across without upsetting others, or becoming upset them.

Assertiveness can help you control stress and anger and improve coping skills. It will recognize and learn and learn assertive behaviour and communication. It can also help boost your self-esteem and earn others respects. Assertiveness is important for students to make successful relationship with, seniors, peer group, friends, neighbors, teachers and colleagues.

Assertiveness Training is a structural intervention which is used for social relationship improvement, anxiety disorder therapy, and phobias in children, teenagers and adults. This training is a multi-content method which includes guidance, role playing, feedback, modelling, practice and the review of trained behaviours. Assertiveness or Disclosure is one of the most important and fundamental social skills which are parts of behavioural and inter personal skills. It seems that low assertiveness and high anxiety in students simultaneously creates educational dysfunctions, cessation of learning, ability weakness, and decrease in aptitude.

The assertiveness Training program aims to help individuals change their self-image, easily express themselves, express their thoughts and ideas appropriately and consequently increase their self-esteem.

Assertiveness enables to withstand the stress. Those suffering from bullying and even from academic stress need to have a high level of assertiveness to resist and cope successfully. Hence; it was considered vital to increase the level of assertiveness of students. Assertiveness is not something that is inherited. Assertiveness is a skill that anyone could learn if he/she decided to, lack of assertiveness is only rooted to the way of dealing with others you got used to, this way may be letting go of your rights or fear of standing up for yourself. Being assertive requires only thing - Your decision'. Around 80 percent student in classes 9-12 suffer from anxiety due to exams and result a first of its kind survey by the national council for education research and training.

Nearly half of them 4-5% suffer from body image issue, according to the report on mental health of student's released 6 September 2022. The survey was conducted among 379,842 students from classes 6-12 during January-march 2022. More than 33% student reported they complied with peer pressure regularly the study also found. For American middle schoolers, 61% of teens admitted feeling a lot of pressure to get good grades. In contrast 29% feel pressured to look good, 28% need to fit in socially (28%) and feel the pressure to involve themselves in extracurricular activity and be good at sports.

It is important for the academic institutions to maintain well balance academic environment for better learning. Academic stressors are related to studying for university examination, completion of assignments and seminars, parental pressure and above all large amount of content to master within a limitation time. As per the study conducted by national institution of mental health and neuroscience (NIMHANS) about the growing number of suicides in India among school and college going students, 11 percent of college student and 7to 8% of high school students have attempts suicide. Earlier studies also show that 20% of the children had subclinical depression. Another report reveals that depression and stress were taking a toll on the students in the Indian institute of technologies (IITS).

Young people report high level of stress-students in secondary and tertiary education setting face a wide range of ongoing normative stressor, which can be 7 defined as normal day to day hassle such as ongoing academic. Accordingly, secondary/ high school (defined as junior/lower secondary education and senior/upper secondary education) (UNESCO, citation 2012) and tertiary (defined as post-secondary school) UNESCO, citation2012. Students commonly self-report experiencing ongoing stress. Relating to their education, which we refer to academic high marks and concern about receiving poor grades. For example-the organisation for economic co-operation and development (OECD) recently conducted a survey involving 72 countries and consisting of 540000 student's respondents aged 15-16year.

Various studies carried out after the year 2000 revealed that the prevalence of stress among India adolescents varied between 13% and 45%. A study conducted in Thiruvananthapuram, India revealed that 93%-100% of school children had medium to moderate stress, children had medium to moderate stress, while 1.9% exhibited severe stress.

According to a survey conducted by the national council of educational Research and Training, 30% of the students from 6th to 12th grade, the majority of them girls, suffer from mental stress due to academic pressure. The survey has been conducted among 2 lakh girls and the same amount of boys from grades 6th to 12th in the Kashmir Valley. While 12.25% of girls were diagnosed with mental stress and anxiety due to studies and exams, the number of boys suffering from mental stress was 9.98%. 81.1% of the girl who participated in the survey admitted that they sometimes suffer from mental stress and anxiety due to studies and exam, while 77.7% of the boys also admitted that they are stressed due to academic pressure.

According to a National report on the state of self-esteem by Dove Self Fund, U.S.A, seven in ten girls believe they are not good enough or do not measure up in some way, including their looks, performance in school and relationship with friend and family members.62% of all girls feel insecure or not sure of themselves, 25% of teen girls with low self-esteem resort to injuring themselves on purpose or cutting when feeling bad about themselves compared to 4% of girls with high self-esteem. 65% of girl aged 13-17 years refrain from telling their parents certain things about themselves to prevent parent from thinking badly about them ,compared to the 49% of girls with low self-esteem want their parents to change their behaviour towards them in at least one way compared to 73% for girls with high self-esteem which includes: wishing

to be understood better (Low: 60%, High: 14%), being listened to more (Low: 52%, High: 18%), spending more time with them (Low: 43%, High: 15%).

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A study to evaluate the effectiveness of assertiveness training program on improving academic stress among school students in selected schools at Barabanki, U.P.

III. OBJECTIVES

- (1) To assess the level of academic stress among the school students.
- (2) Assess the assertive behaviour of selected student before assertive training program.
- (3) Assess the effectiveness of assertive training program in terms of improving Assertive behaviour among school students.
- (4) Find out the association between existing behaviour with selected demographic variables.

IV. HYPOTHESIS

H₁ There will be significant differences in behaviour after Assertiveness Training Program.

H₂ There will be significant association between outcome behaviour with selected demographic variables.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5. 1 Research Approach

Phase I

Survey approach was used to assess the level of academic stress among the school students in selected schools at Barabanki, U.P.

Phase II

An experimental approach was used to determine the effectiveness of assertive training program in terms of increase assertiveness among school students in selected schools at Barabanki, U.P.

5. 2 Research Design

To assess the effectiveness of the intervention the researcher selected an experimental research approach with pre experimental one group pre-test post-test research design.

5. 3 Sample and sampling technique

Samples were the school students who were studying X to XII standard in selected school at Barabanki and those who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. During the phase I the investigator recruited a total sample of 60. During phase II out of the 60 sample the investigator selected 50 samples using purposive sampling technique. Non probability- purposive sampling techniques are adopted for this study.

5. 4 Research Tool and Technique

The research tool consisted of (1) demographic variables (2) Self structured assertive behavior assessment questionnaires were used to assess the assertiveness behavior among school students. It has 20 questions.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6. 1 Frequency and percentage distribution of students based on their age, gender, academic performance, type of family and family income.

Table 6.1: describe the distribution of students based on their age, gender, education, and school performance.

Demographic Variable	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
13 – 15 Years	26	52 %
16 – 19 Years	24	48 %
Above 19 Years	0	0
Gender		

Male	23	46 %
Female	27	54 %
School performance		
Excellent	16	32 %
Good	21	42 %
Average	7	14 %
Poor	6	12 %
Type of family		
Joint family	34	68 %
Nuclear family	16	32 %
Single parent	0	0
Family income		
Below 20,000	3	78 %
20000 – 40000	5	10 %
Above 40000	6	12 %

Table 6.1 shows that the majority of the students 52% belongs to the age group of 13-15 years, 48 % of the students were between 16-19 years and no reports for above 19years. Majority of the students are female 54% and 46% the of them are male Majority of the students 32% school performance is excellent, 42% are good and 14% was average and 12% poor performance. While considering the type of family 68% of them belongs to the joint family, 32%of them were from nuclear family and no report from single parents. 78% of the students were belonging to the family income below 20,000/per month 10% of the students were from 20,000-40,000/per month, 12% were more than above 40,000/per month income.

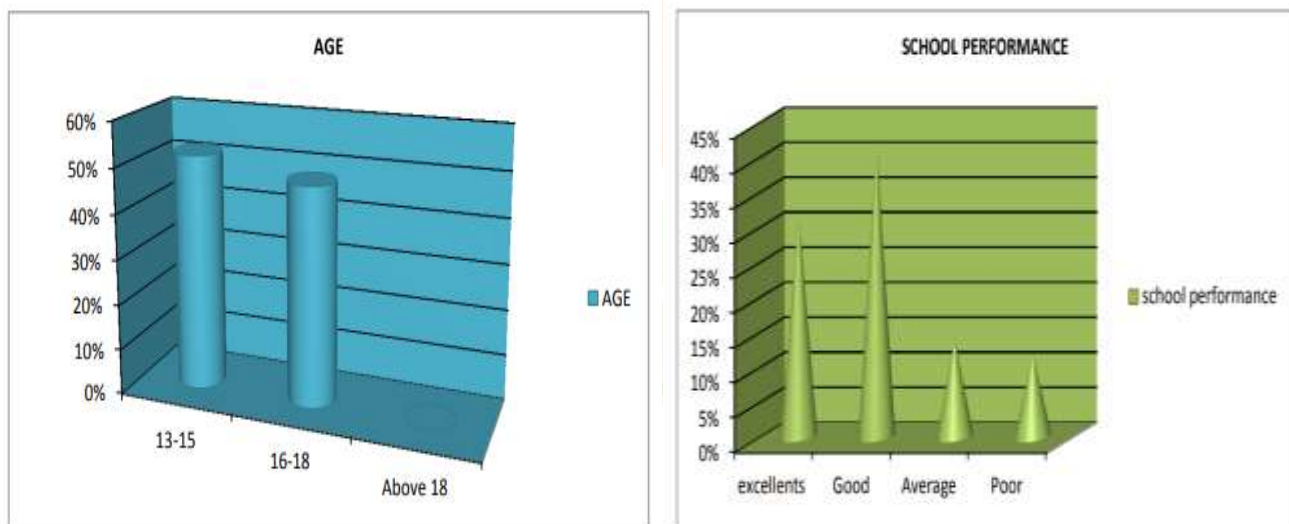


Fig. 6.1.1: frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their age.

Fig. 6.1.2: frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their gender.

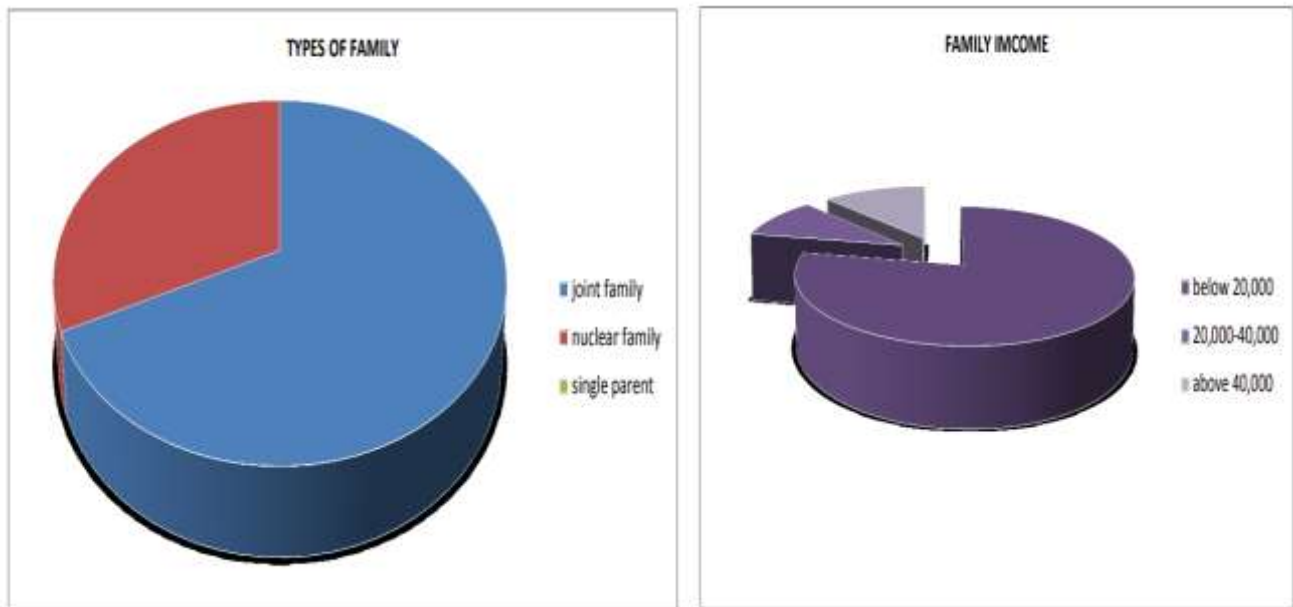


Fig. 6.1.3: frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their school performance.

Fig. 6.1.4: frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their type of family.

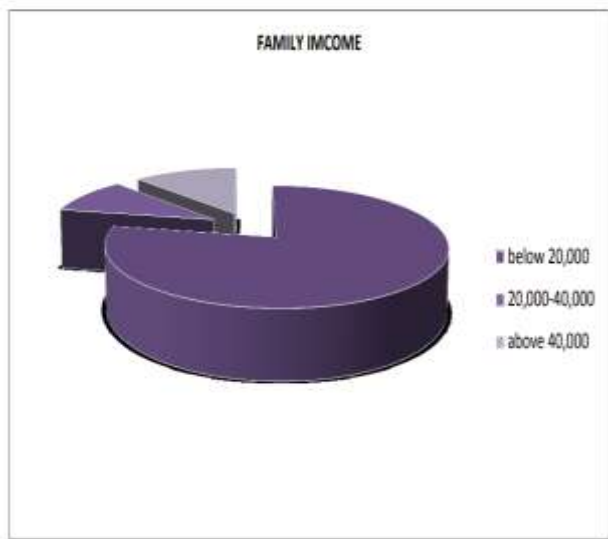


Fig. 6.1.5: frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their family income

6. 2 Frequency and percentage distribution of students based on parent education, breadwinner of the family, type of residence, place of residence and number of siblings.

Table 6.2: Describe the distribution of students based on parent’s education, breadwinner of the family, types of residence, place of residence, number of sibling.

Demographic Variable	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Parents education		
Illiterate	18	36 %
Intermediate	27	54 %
Graduation	5	10 %
Breadwinner of the family		
Father	40	80 %
Mother	2	4 %
Both	8	16 %
Types of Residence		
Kutch house	5	10 %
Pakka House	45	90 %
Place of Residence		

Urban	5	10 %
Rural	42	84 %
Suburban	3	6 %
Number of siblings		
One	6	12 %
Two	21	42 %
Three or more	23	46 %
None	0	0

Table 6.2 describe the distribution of students based on parents education, breadwinner of the family, types of residence, place of residence, number of sibling. 40 Student’s parents education 36 % were illiterate, majority of 54 % were intermediate, and 10 % were graduated. Majority of 80 % father were the breadwinner of the family, 4 % were mother, and 16% were both. 10 % student residence in Kutcha house, majority of 90 % live in pakka house. 10 % of them belong to the urban area, 84 % were from rural area, 6 % were from suburban 12 % students reported with the one number of siblings and 42 % of them were two numbers of siblings, majority 46 % of them were having three numbers of siblings, no report from none.

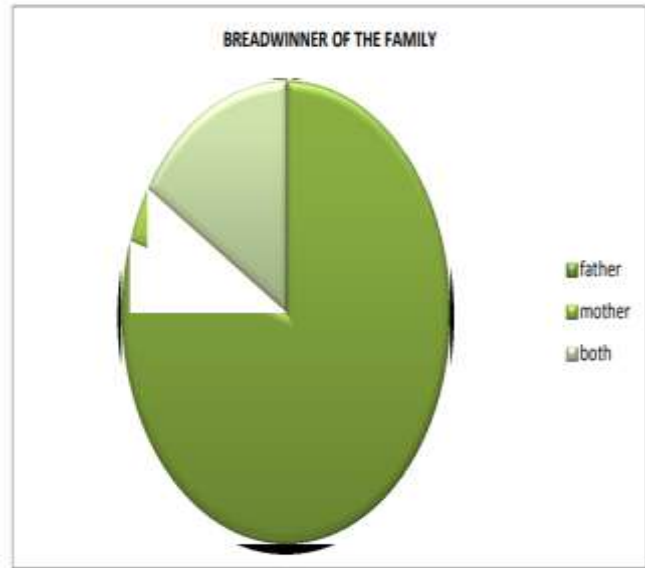
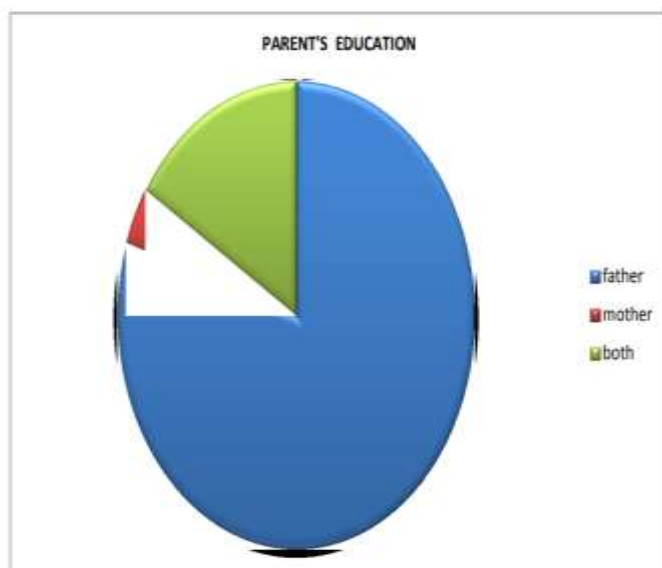


Fig. 6.2.1: Frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their parent’s education.

Fig. 6.2.2: Frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their breadwinner of the family.

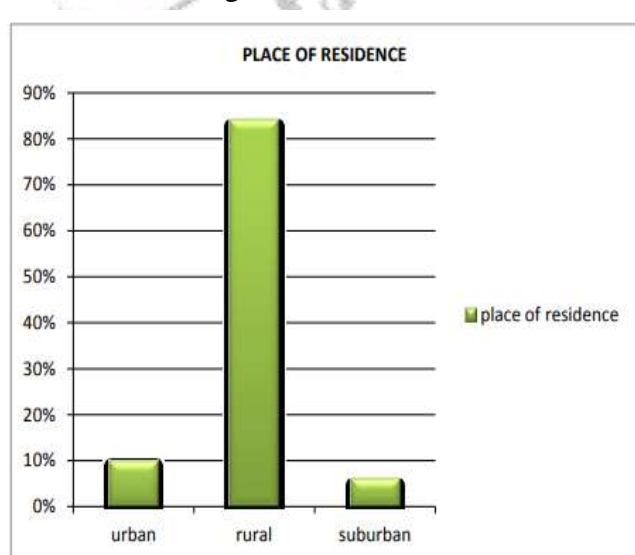
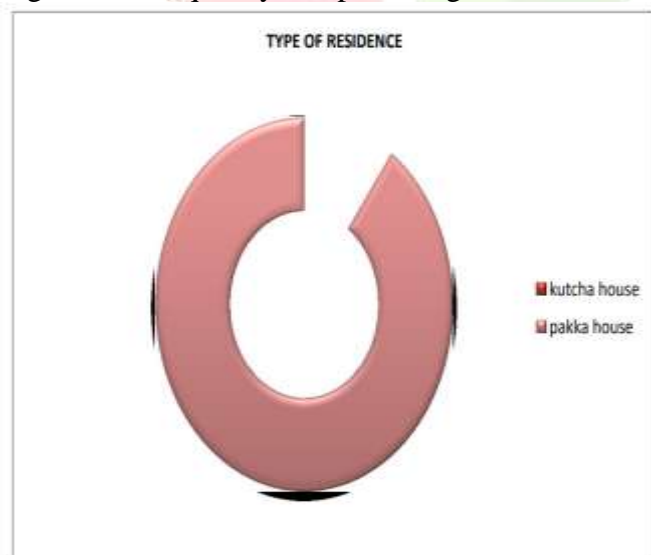


Fig. 6.2.3: Frequency and percentage distribution of students according to their type of residence.

Fig. 6.2.4: Frequency and percentage distribution of students according the place of residence.

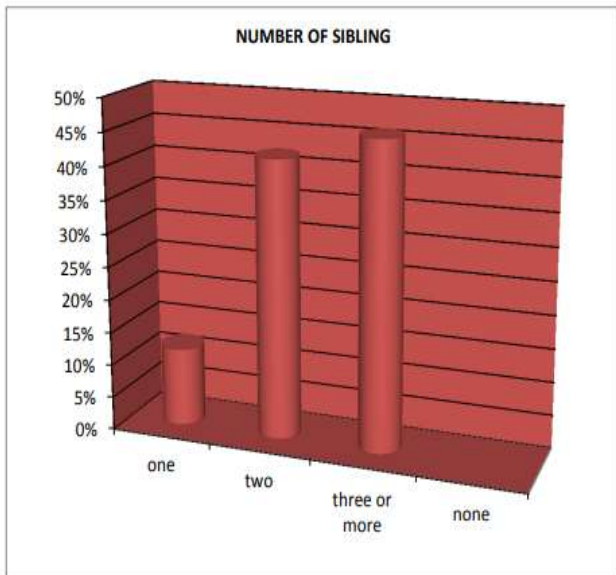


Fig. 6.2.5: Frequency and percentage distribution of students according to no. of sibling.

6.3 Comparison on level of Assertiveness pre-test and post-test

Table 6.3: Comparison on level of Assertiveness pre-test and post-test

Pre test Level of assertiveness	Pretest		Post test	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Highly satisfactory	0	0	16	32
Moderate satisfactory	21	42	33	66
Satisfactory	29	58	1	2

Table 6.3 shows that 29 samples were found to have satisfactory and 21 samples were found to have moderate satisfactory, No one is reported with highly satisfactory before the assertive training program. After implementing the assertive training program it was found that 33 samples had highly satisfactory and 16 samples had highly satisfactory and 1 sample was satisfactory.

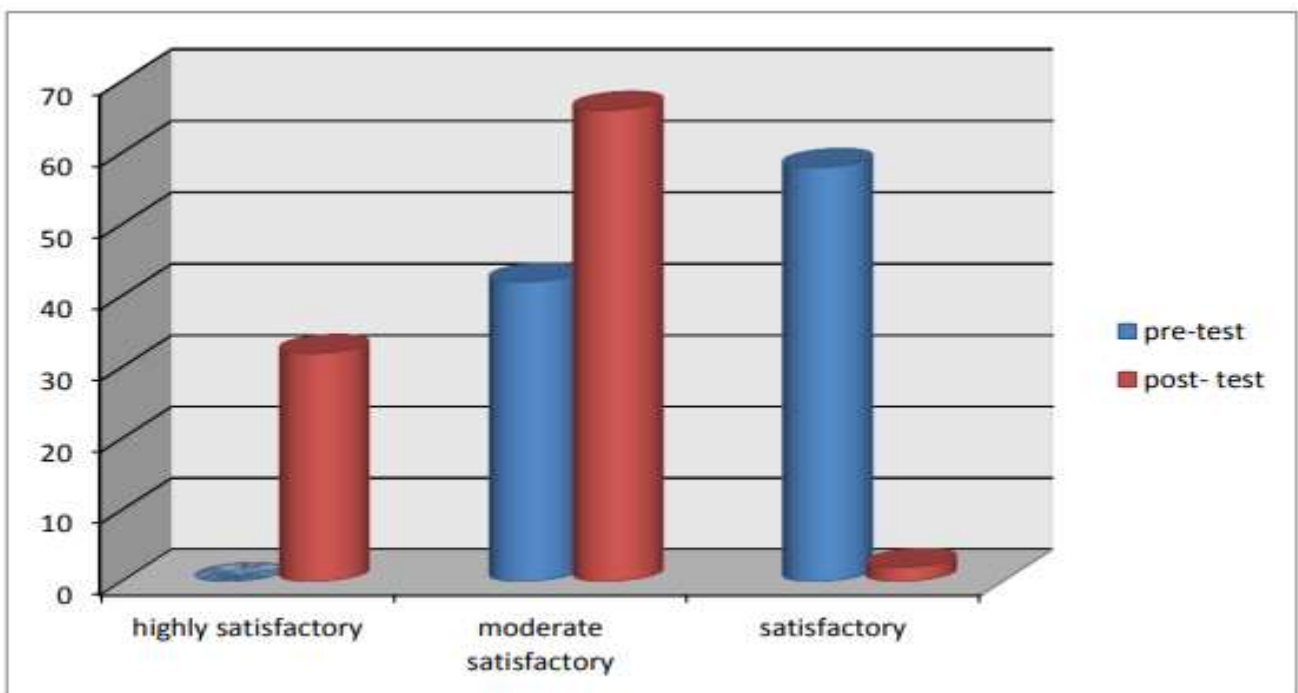


Fig. 6.3.1: Comparison on the level of assertiveness before and after assertiveness training program.

6.4 Analysis on Effectiveness of Assertiveness training program on academic stress by using paired 't'- test.

	N	Mean	SD	"t"	df	Significance
Pre-test	50	7.58	2.098	9.69	98	0.001 (S)
Post- test	50	12.48	2.90			

Significant at 0.05 Level

PAIRED –'t' test was used to analyze the effectiveness of assertive training program on academic stress among school students.

Table 6.4 shows, the pre-test mean value 7.58 ± 2.098 was lesser than post-test mean value 12.48 ± 2.90 . The effectiveness of assertive training program, i.e. the obtained 't' test value is 9.69 which is found to be greater than the 't' table value ($p=0.001 < 0.05$ level, therefore research hypotheses (H1) is accepted. This shows that a significant difference exist between the mean score before and after program. This reveals that there is a significant difference in the level of existing behavior before and after intervention. Thus the difference is statistically significant and it confirms that assertiveness training program was effective in enhancing the level of existing behavior among the school students.

6.5 Data on association between existing behaviour regarding assertiveness among school children with selected demographic variables by using Chi-Square test.

Table 6.5: Chi-square analysis to find out the association between existing behaviour of school children with the demographic variables.

Sl. No	Demographic variables	Highly satisfactory	Moderately satisfactory	Satisfactory	Calculated value (x2)	Df	P value
1	Age				0.383668	1	0.535647 (NS)
	13 – 15 Years	0	15	9			
	16 – 19 Years	0	14	12			
	Above 19 Years	0	0	0			
2	Gender				4.710724	1	0.029975 (S)
	Male	0	9	13			
	Female	0	20	8			
3	School performance				10.97864	3	0.011842 (S)
	Excellent	0	12	5			
	Good	0	12	9			
	Average	0	5	1			
	Poor	0	0	6			
4	Type of family				5.108576	1	0.023808 (S)
	Joint family	0	18	19			
	Nuclear family	0	11	2			
	Single parent	0	0	0			
5	Family income				3.293503	2	0.192675 (NS)
	Below 20,000	0	23	14			
	20000 – 40000	0	1	4			
	Above 40000	0	5	3			
6	Parents education				2.877382	2	0.237238 (NS)
	Illiterate	0	0	2			

	Intermediate	0	26	17			
	Graduation	0	3	2			
7	Breadwinner of the family				3.943767	2	0.139194 (NS)
	Father	0	25	13			
	Mother	0	1	2			
	Both	0	3	6			
8	Types of Residence				0.738916	1	0.390008 (NS)
	Kutcha house	0	2	3			
	Pakka House	0	27	18			
9	Place of Residence				2.850106	2	0.240496 (NS)
	Urban	0	2	3			
	Rural	0	24	18			
	Suburban	0	3	0			
10	Number of siblings				1.423098	2	0.490883 (NS)
	One	0	3	3			
	Two	0	10	10			
	Three or more	0	16	8			
	None	0	0	0			

Table 6.5 shows that Chi-square value computed in existing behaviour with the selected demographic variable gender (4.71), school performance (10.98) and type of family (5.11) was significant ($p < 0.05$) and other variables like Age (0.38), family income (3.29), parents education (2.88), breadwinner of the family (3.94), type of residence (0.74), place of residence (2.85) and number of siblings (1.42) were not significant ($p > 0.05$). Thus, it can be concluded that, there is significant association between the existing behaviour among school children with their selected demographic variables gender, school performance and type of family. Therefore, the research hypothesis (H2) is partially accepted.

VII. CONCLUSION

It is statistically evidenced that assertiveness training was effective in improving the academic stress among school students. This is cost effective, non-invasive, non-pharmacological complementary and alternative therapy to improve the existing behaviour.

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