

Stress and Parental Involvement

Sakshi Singh^{1*}

ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study titled “Stress and Parental Involvement” was to see the effect of parental involvement on stress in children and whether it exerts positive or negative effect on children. Stress is a state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy. Any event may create stress whether it is good or bad. The stressor can be anything, environmental or physical or emotional. When stress is within the comfort zone, it can help in staying focused, energetic and alert. Parental involvement has been recognized as the most important factor to influence the childhood and adulthood. Educational success is one of the primary outcome of parental involvement. Such children also become well adjusted in the society. Parental involvement also boosts self-esteem and a feeling of self worth in children. They are less likely to get depressed. Children and their parents (60 samples) were selected as sample by incidental cum purposive sampling method. The tools used were Stress Scale and Parent Involvement Scale. Three hypotheses were formulated: (1) There will be low stress level in children having high parental involvement. (2) There will be more parental involvement in female children than male children. (3) Gender difference will be found in level of stress and parental involvement. The findings were that (1) Parents showed average involvement hence, children had moderate level of stress (2) Parental involvement was same for both male and female and (3) Gender difference was not found between the level of stress and parental involvement. Both male and female had same level of stress and parental involvement.

Keywords: *Stress, Parental Involvement*

Stress is a part and parcel of life. Many things that are experienced in the environment can produce stress. When stress is within the comfort zone, it has a motivating effect, it helps in staying focused and energetic. But beyond the comfort zone, stress is harmful. It starts creating damage to mind and body and is precursor of many diseases. Stress lies in the eyes of beholder, what may be stress for one may not be stress for another. While talking about signs and symptoms of stress it must be realized that anything may be a sign and symptom of

¹ Flat no 202, shivlok apartment, road no 3, new patliputra colony, near GS Neuroscience, Patna 800013, Bihar, India

[*Responding Author](#)

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stress and it is not necessary that everyone will show the same sign in a particular situation. It is because everyone perceives the situation differently.

Parental involvement is very important in any child's life. It not only helps in the development of child physically and intellectually but also socially, mentally and emotionally. It has been seen that the child with adequate parental involvement, excels in academics and sports. He is well adjusted in the society and is emotionally and mentally stronger than the children with inadequate parental involvement. Parental involvement creates self-esteem and self-confidence. These children are less likely to face punishments in school due to their age appropriate behavior and discipline. They don't escape classes. They are even less likely to get bullied or bully others. These effects are not dependent on the background or economic status of the family.

Objective

The study was taken with following objectives:

1. To see the relation between stress and parental involvement.
2. Extent of stress in children by parental involvement.
3. To find out gender difference in parental involvement.

Hypotheses

1. There will be low level of stress in children having high parental involvement.
2. There will be more parental involvement in female children than male children.
3. Gender difference will be found in level of stress and parental involvement.

METHOD OF STUDY

Sample

A sample of 60 children age ranging from 12 to 16 years and their parents (N = 60) were selected as sample from a school run by Karmayoga Samaj Trust, Patliputra and Sheikhpura Madhya Vidyalaya, Bailey Road by incidental cum purposive sampling method.

Tools Used

Following tools were used for data collection:

1. **Stress Scale** developed by Lakshmi and Narain to measure stress of adolescents in the age range of 12 to 24 years. It has 40 items measuring four dimensions- Pressure, Physical Stress, Anxiety and Frustration. A score of +1 on Yes and zero on No is given for all the items except question number 21 and 35 (where opposite is followed). Then the score is added. Higher the score, greater the stress. The test re-test reliability is .82 and validity is 0.72.
2. **Parent involvement scale** developed by Chopra and Sahoo is meant to measure involvement of parents with their children. The broad categories of the dimensions of parent involvement scale are school involvement, home involvement and involvement through PTA. It has 34 items. Each of the 34 statements has three options for choice like frequently, occasionally and never. For 'frequently' a score 3, for 'occasionally' a score of 2 and for 'never' a score of 1 was given. The highest score for the scale will be

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102 and the lowest score will be 34. Higher the score, greater the involvement of parents with their children. The test re-test reliability was 0.93.

Procedure of Data Collection

Primary and secondary, both data were collected for the project. The primary data was collected from two different schools using Stress Scale and Parental Involvement Scale. Confidentiality of their response were assured since the identities were not important. Participants were given questionnaire and after they filled up they were collected from them. Parents of the children were contacted during dispersal time. They were explained and got the questionnaires filled. The parents who could not be contacted, questionnaires were sent to them by their children. No incentive was offered for participating in the research. The secondary data was taken from internet and books.

RESULT INTERPRETATION

The result interpretation has been done hypothesis wise both quantitatively and qualitatively. Statistical tools were used for quantitative analysis and manual of scale for qualitatively analysis.

Hypothesis 1: There will be low stress level in children having high parental involvement.

Table number 1 N = 120

Table showing the mean of stress (children) and parental involvement (parents) and their category.

Sample	N	Total	Mean of Stress and Parental Involvement	Category of Stress and Parental Involvement
Children	60	1012	16.867	Moderate Stress
Parents	60	4738	78.967	Average Involvement

The rationale behind the formulation of hypothesis was that the children who get sufficient attention from their parents feel more secure hence they have less stress. In table number 1 the total score of children is 1012 and score of parents is 4738. The mean score of children on stress level is 16.867 and that of parental involvement is 78.967.

To find out the level of stress and parental involvement the help of manual was taken. On the basis of manual of Stress Scale the stress level of children is moderate. And on the basis of Parental Involvement Scale the level of parental involvement is average.

The hypothesis number 1 was formulated with a view that when parents show high involvement in their children then their stress will be less and if less involvement then their stress will be of high level. The finding reveals that as parents have not shown high level of involvement, so instead of having low level of stress their children were having moderate level of stress. Had it been high parental involvement or low parental involvement then level of stress also would have been low or high respectively. So it can be said that hypothesis number 1 that "There will be low stress level in children having high parental involvement" has been rejected.

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The study report on how influential parents are with teens by National Centre on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University (2012) concludes that when child feels parents understood their day-to-day lives made teens feel supported then it reduced their stress. So the previous study supports the formulated hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: There will be more parental involvement in female children than male children.

Table number 2 N = 60

Table showing mean and level of parental involvement of female and male children.

Sample	N	Mean of Parental Involvement	Level of Parental Involvement
Female	32	78.906	Average
Male	28	78.607	Average

It is a general opinion that girl child is more vulnerable in society than male child. Hence, parents are more involved in their security during their rearing practices. Besides this there is a general thought that they will go to other family after their marriage where new adjustment will be needed. Hence, their involvement is more in upbringing the female child in comparison to male child. Therefore, hypothesis number 2 was formulated that “there will be more parental involvement in female children than male children”. The findings are mentioned in table number 2. The mean of parental involvement of female is 78.906 and of male children, it is 78.607.

To find out the level of parental involvement the help of manual was taken. On the basis of manual for Parent Involvement Scale, the parental involvement level of both male and female children is average.

The hypothesis number 2 was formulated with a view that there will be more parental involvement in female children than male children as parents are more protective for their girl child. The finding does not support the hypothesis because parental involvement was same for both male and female. The obtained result is an indicative of rejection of traditional thinkings of the parents. Secondly, it is also indicating that the life within the family has changed. Both parents are working. So, parents do not have much time to get involved in their children’s activities. Due to these reasons average level of parental involvement have been measured. Had it been high parental involvement in the case of female then stress in female children would have been low. So, it can be said that the hypothesis number 2 that ‘There will be more parental involvement in female children than male children’ is not proved.

The study report on Gender Differences in Parental Involvement and Adolescents’ Mathematics Achievement by Chandra Muller (1998) concludes that the relationship between parental involvement and achievement is similar for girls and boys and diminishes over the course of high school to the point that parental involvement has essentially no relationship to

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the gains in achievement made by seniors. So, the previous study also supports the formulated hypothesis number 2.

Hypothesis 3: Gender difference will be found in the level of Stress and Parental Involvement.

Table number 3 N = 60

Table showing level of stress and parental involvement in female and male children.

Sample	N	Mean of Stress	Level of Stress	Mean of Parental Involvement	Level of Parental Involvement
Female	32	17.468	Moderate	78.906	Average
Male	28	16.178	Moderate	78.607	Average

Hypothesis number 3 says that gender difference will be found in the level of stress and parental involvement. The hypothesis was formulated keeping in mind that female children are protected more by their parents than male children. Together they spend much time at home with parents than males. As their parents are more involved with them, so, they feel less stressed. It was also opined that sometimes much parental involvement may also lead to high stress.

To find out the level of stress and parental involvement, the help of manual was taken. In the manual of Stress Scale the score falling in the range of 14 to 24 (female) and the range of score from 12 to 21 (male) falls in the category of moderate level of stress. The mean of female is 17.468 and male is 16.178 which falls in the category of moderate level of stress. Hence, it can be concluded that both male and female children were having moderate level of stress.

In the manual of Parent Involvement Scale, the score falling in the range of 49 to 80 falls in the category of average level of parent involvement. The mean of parental involvement in case of female is 78.906 and of male is 78.607 which falls in the category of average level of parental involvement. Hence, it can be concluded that male and female children were having average level of parent involvement.

The hypothesis number 3 was formulated with a view that gender difference will be found in the level of stress and parental involvement. The finding does not support the hypothesis because the level of stress and the level of parental involvement was same for both male and female. As no gender difference has been found so, it can be said that hypothesis number 3 'Gender difference will be found in the level of Stress and Parental Involvement' is not proved.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The following conclusions were drawn:

1. Parents showed average involvement hence children had also moderate level of stress. So, hypothesis number 1 has not been confirmed.

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2. Hypothesis number 2 has not been proved as parental involvement was same for both male and female.
3. Hypothesis number 3 “Gender difference will be found in the level of stress and parental involvement” has also not been proved as no gender difference was found. Both male and female were having the same level of stress as well as parental involvement.
4. The reason for three hypothesis not getting confirmed may be as:
 - a. Size of the sample was small.
 - b. The variables like family background, socio-economic status, selection of sample from two different schools might have been the factors which affected the result.

Following points have been suggested:

1. Parents must show involvement with their children for their better future- academic, social and emotional life.
2. The amount of involvement should be kept in check because over-involvement will worsen the situation.
3. Equal amount of parental involvement must be provided to both, male and female children.
4. If any sign and symptom is shown by the child, it should not be neglected and must be dealt immediately.
5. Better coping strategy must be developed to handle stress.
6. The study must be conducted on a large sample for accurate and more conclusive result.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors colorfully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

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