

Psychological Counseling: Ways of Alleviating Stress and Anxiety among Senior Secondary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Highly competitive school environment and unexpected parental pressure led the students' life more distress and full of depression. Such pressure and environmental constraints must be dealt with effective counseling process. Hence, they need psychological counseling in all walks of life. The present study aimed to explore the level of Stress and Anxiety among senior secondary school student approaching board exam. It is also an attempt investigate the effect of counseling on alleviation of stress and Anxiety. A sample of 100 students (50girls and 50 boys) from senior secondary school was selected from Jamshedpur .Student stress scale standardized by Akhtar (2011) and Sinha's anxiety inventory developed by D. Sinha's (1961, 1968). The data were analyzed by using T-test and correlation. Result revealed that the pre counseling level of stress and Anxiety differed significantly. Correlation coefficient revealed that there is positive correlation between stress and Anxiety.

Keywords: *Psychological Counseling, Stress, Anxiety, SSS Student*

Student represents the society's investment for future. Their mental health and wellbeing are important not only in its own right but also as a factor contributing to the larger society's well being. Senior secondary school students frequently have more complex problems today than they did over decade ago common stressors in college include greater academic demands, being on your own in a new environment, changes in family relations, changes in social life, exposure to new people ideas and temptations. Stress is a consequence of or a general response to an action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands, or both, on a person. As such, stress involves an interaction of the person and the environment. The physical or psychological demands from the environment that cause stress are called stressors. Stressors can take various forms, but all stressors have one thing in common; in both situations it depends on the individual perception level.

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Academic pressure by the parents as well as the children are themselves tensed about their career and future, when fail to cope up with the situation or fail to satisfy their needs then it results into stress and depression. Adolescents are the budding future of a nation and it is imperative for the teachers, parents and caregivers to understand the factors which might be stressful to adolescents and recognize ways to help them cope up with such situation.

Psychological counseling impacts students from every field. It is the responsibility of the counselor to treat those individuals to understand the students' problem. Anxiety and Stress is a psychological disorder which is spread worldwide. Senior Secondary School students often experience high levels of stress and Anxiety. Most students successfully cope with senior secondary school life; however, some become overwhelmed. A significant number of senior secondary school students have their education and personal lives disrupted by psychological problems. When psychological difficulties go untreated, the results can be serious and include academic failure and even withdrawal from the school. Most psychological problems – even the more serious disorders such as depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder and post traumatic stress – have high rates of recovery if appropriate help is received in time. Unfortunately, many students fail to get the help they need for any number of reasons, including lack of knowledge about the early signs of psychological difficulties, denial, and lack of information about campus resources that can provide help.

Stress has become an important topic in academic circles. Many scholars in the field of behavioural science have carried out extensive research on stress and its outcomes and concluded that the topic needed more attention (Agolla, 2009). Stress in academic institutions can have both positive and negative consequences if not well managed (Stevenson & Harper, 2006). Academic institutions have different work settings compared to nonacademic and therefore one would expect the difference in symptoms, causes, and consequences of stress (Chang & Lu, 2007). Academic stress among students have long been researched on, and researchers have identified stressors as too many assignments, competitions with other students, failures and poor relationships with other students or lecturers (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003). Furong Wang and Huixiang Gong make a comparative study of mental stresses of different types of college students and conclude that the mental stresses of boys are bigger, longer, and stronger than that of girls. The mental stresses grow along with grades, reach the maximum at the junior year, and slightly decrease at the senior year (Furong Wang & Huixiang Gong, 2001).

Academic stressors include the student's perception of the extensive knowledge base required and the perception of an inadequate time to develop it (Carveth et al, 1996). Most people encounter stress that lead them to rapid bodily changes such as feelings of emotional unrest causing the body strains with body aches. With repeated stressful situations, causes tension and pressures on the body that contribute to physical and psychological problems (Dixon &

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Robinson, 2005). Defining stress from a medical dictionary dwells on any situation that evokes negative thoughts and feelings among persons or groups. It means that people who encounter stress will have different experiences in their feelings and thoughts (D’Zurilla & Sheedy, 1991). This is imperative to the amount of stress involvement they encounter when stressed. This can be influenced by individual’s ability to effectively cope with stressful events and situations (Segal, 2013). Disclosed to this is when college students meet such nervous tension and is not dealt with effectively, they feel lonely and nervous with excessive worrying due failure to cope with their negative feelings. College students had almost the same patterns of encounters about stress related problems (Gittins, 2007). This involves many factors such as interpersonal, academic and environmental. The 2001 National College Health Assessment of the American Association Report (2001) revealed that during the year 2000, 76% of students felt “overwhelmed” and 22% were unable to function as a result of anxiety. This means that stress among college students caused body strains with body aches where they are unable to normally function in times of stress.

Anxiety is normal in stressful situations, and can even be helpful. For example, most people will be anxious when threatened by an aggressive person, or before an important race. The burst of adrenaline and nerve impulses which we have in response to stressful situations can encourage a 'fight or flight' response.

Anxiety is normal to feel tense and worried before exams, Önder Kavakci and associates (2014) found that 48% of those taking a university entrance exam experienced test anxiety. This tip sheet will focus on ways to help you manage exam anxiety to help you complete your exams. Neuderth and others (2009) examined the strategies for reducing test anxiety and optimizing exam preparation in German university students. They suggested that study skills training and cognitive behavioural skills for anxiety reduction were the best approach.

Objectives

1. To see the effect of counseling session on elevation or reduction of Stress among senior secondary school students.
2. To see the effect of counseling session on elevation or reduction of Anxiety among senior secondary school students.

Hypotheses

1. Pre counseling and Post counseling session will not having effect on Stress.
2. Pre counseling and Post counseling session will not having effect on Anxiety.
3. A boys and girls would not differ significantly in pre and post counseling session in terms of Stress.
4. A boys and girls would not differ significantly in pre and post counseling session in terms of Anxiety.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Sample consists of 100 senior secondary school students (50 Boy students and 50 Girl students). The age range of senior secondary school student was 14 to 19 years. Purposive sample technique was applied for the selection of the sample.

Measures

1. Personal Data Questionnaire
2. Sinha's anxiety inventory developed by D. Sinha's (1961, 1980).
3. Stress scale standardized by Akhtar (2011).

Personal Data Questionnaire: Personal data questionnaire developed by researcher includes questionnaire Name, Age, Sex, Parent's Education, Parent's Occupation, and Nature of Schools.

Sinha's Anxiety Inventory Developed by D. Sinha's (1961, 1980): Sinha Anxiety Scale developed and standardized by D.Sinha (1961) formerly professor and Head department of Psychology University of Allahabad. The Scale consists of 100 items. The Scale measure anxiety on following ten dimensions; 1) Health, Appearance and Injury. 2) Area of ambition (success or failure in work, money and occupation), 3) Family anxieties, 4) Anxieties regarding friendship and Lone. 5) Social relations and Social approval.6) Worries regarding the future, 7) Worries about civilization, War and virtue 8) Guilt and Shame, 9) Physical and physiological manifestations and 10) Purely psychological manifestation.(Sinha,1961).

The split half reliability of the test is 0.86 and test retest reliability found 0.75 the validity of this scale is 0.69.

Stress Scale Standardized by Akhtar (2011): This was developed and standardized by Akhtar (2011) and was used to assess the stress level of students. It is a one-dimensional scale having 51 items. The split half and test retest reliability are 0.64 and 0.61, respectively. The scale has a construct validity of 0.72.

Cognitive Behavioural Strategies

Strack and Esteves (2015) found that the more students interpreted their anxiety as helpful to their study, the less they felt emotional exhaustion as exams approached, and the better there marks were for the exam and the course.

Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies might include:

1. Reminding yourself that you have studied and might include you has done exams before.

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2. Reminding yourself that exam anxiety is a normal experience.
3. A counselor can help you work out more strategies specific to you.

Behavioural Strategies

Some behavioural strategies that may be important include:

Physical exercise, Hashmat, and colleagues (2008) studied factors causing exam anxiety in medical students; they found the most important factors contributing to exam anxiety were extensive course loads (90.8%), lack of physical exercise (90%) and long duration of exams (77.5%). While you cannot change course load and duration of exams you can maintain your exercise levels during the lead up to exams.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation, Zargarzadeh and Shirazi (2014) found that performing progressive muscle relaxation method was effective in reducing test anxiety among nursing students. You can find an audio track to do progressive muscle relaxation in our audio downloads area.

Mindfulness practice has also been found helpful (Sohrabi, et.al 2013) in reducing exam anxiety. There are a range of different mindfulness audio tracks for down load on our site.

In addition, behavioural strategies that maintain your wellbeing could also be an important factor in assisting you to manage exam anxiety. These include regular sleep managing alcohol intake, as already mentioned physical exercise, social contact and enjoyable activities that are not work related.

Managing your breathing, has been shown in other areas to help with anxiety, and may be useful to manage exam anxiety. Learning some skills to relax on cue has also shown some effect for exam anxiety (Russell & Sipich, 1973 and Russell, et.al, 1974).

RESULT

Table 1 Level of Stress among senior secondary school boy students.

Session	N	MEAN	SD	SED	t-test	Level of Significant
Pre Counseling	50	40.68	6.82	1.12	12.22	Significant
Post Counseling	50	28.68	3.94			

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TABLE 2 Level of Stress among senior secondary school girl students

Session	N	MEAN	SD	SED	t-test	Level of Significant
Pre Counseling	50	47.44	4.6	0.77	14.15	Significant
Post Counseling	50	37.96	3.02			

TABLE 3 Level of Anxiety among senior secondary school boy students.

Session	N	MEAN	SD	SED	t-test	Level of Significant
Pre Counseling	50	38.56	4.91	0.94	1.33	Not significant
Post Counseling	50	36.69	4.52			

TABLE 4 Level of Anxiety among senior secondary school girl students

Session	N	MEAN	SD	SED	t-test	Level of Significant
Pre Counseling	50	29.06	3.62	0.80	1.52	Significant
Post Counseling	50	27.16	4.38			

DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that significance of difference between pre counseling and post counseling session in terms of stress among senior secondary school students. Both the group differed significantly in terms of pre and post counseling session in the experience of stress. Those male students who have been given counseling session reducing their stress as compare to their counter parts.

Studies too revealed that counseling have a positive effect among senior secondary school students. A study conducted by Akhtar (2011) on stress anxiety and adjustment among government and private students found that mere listening problem of the students, may reduce level of stress. Thus, counseling play vital role in solving day to day problems. Students must consult their counselors for propounding out insight for their problems.

Table 2 shows that significance of difference between pre counseling and post counseling session in terms of stress among senior secondary school students. Both the group differed significantly in terms of pre and post counseling session in the experience of stress. Those female students who have been given counseling session reducing their stress as compare to their counter parts.

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Table 3 shows that significance of difference between pre counseling and post counseling session in terms of Anxiety among boys of senior secondary school students. Boys in the group did not differ significantly in terms of pre and post counseling session in the experience of Anxiety. Those male students who have been given counseling session not reducing their Anxiety as compare to post counseling session.

Table 4 shows that significance of difference between pre counseling and post counseling session in terms of Anxiety among female students in senior secondary school. Both the group differs significantly in terms of pre and post counseling session in the experience of anxiety. Those students who have been given counseling session not reduced their level of anxiety as compare to the post counseling session. Same findings were reported by Akhtar(2011).

CONCLUSION

Thus, it may be concluded that counseling play important role in reducing stress among boys and girls senior secondary school students. Whereas depression needs more therapeutic session for its cure. Both the variables must be studied in very extensive manners.

Significance of the Study

School students should pay attention to their physical and mental health and Examine their emotions at all times to avoid onset of stress induced Anxiety or physical disorders. Schools should work on those students' troubles with learning and apply appropriate strategies to enhance their learning effectiveness. In addition, schools should provide courses on life stress coping on a regular basis to consolidate students' psychology and teach them how to relax themselves along with stress management skills.

Limitation and Suggestions

1. In the present investigation, only senior secondary school students were taken as a sample further investigation can be done on college and university level students.
2. Secondly, the sample size is too small that it cannot be generalized.

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