

Perceived stress among adolescents

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Abstract

Background: Stress is a natural feeling of not being able to cope with specific demands and events. It is a situation that triggers a particular biological response. It could be an unavoidable and inevitable experience of life and is closely related with human striving for excellence in the complex world. **Objective:** This study attempts to assess the level of perceived stress among adolescents studying in college (Akhnoor), Jammu. **Method:** The sample consisted of 100 students (50 males & 50 females). Age range of the subjects was selected from (17-19) years and were selected through random sampling technique. For assessment Perceived stress scale (PSS) was used. The informed consent was taken from all the participants. **Results & conclusion:** Male adolescents were more prone to the stressful situations than the female adolescents and the reasons for stressful situations because of career security, academic work load, economic issues in the family, burden of responsibility with increasing age, environmental, social as well psychological changes.

Keywords: Stress, Social, Psychological Changes

Stress is a fact of life which is impossible to eliminate completely. It is an integral part of our lives which includes various faceted processes that occurs in reaction events on situations in our environment. It refers to the extreme condition of force, pressure, strain at physical, psychological & behavioral levels, accounting when a person's internal or external wants exceeds his power, reflecting the depletion of resources available for adaptation. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/stress.html>

Ross, Shannon. E. (1999) found that the major source of student's stress was interpersonal change in eating & sleeping habits, increased work load & responsibility, strong friendship helps and improved student adjustment. Students face stress because of time, sleep deprivations, social conflicts & peer relationships that could lead to lower their academic performance. Several studies also proven that stress is more prevalent among adolescents than the adults as they are at the starting phase of their life to overcome the challenges regarding various situations and tragic outcomes of life. Stress could show better results also when taken in a positive direction to achieve one's goal but otherwise it could be generally do tear & wear of the body's mechanism.

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According to **Selye (1974)** ‘‘ Stress is the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change’’. So, it can be said that stress is a state of psychological & physiological imbalance which results from the disparity between situational demand and the individual’s ability and motivation to meet those needs. It is a word which refers to the physical, emotional, cognitive & behavioral response to those events that are challenging in nature. He also proposed the GAS (general adaptation syndrome) model to explain the bodily consequences of stress which includes three stages- alarm reaction stage, resistance stage and exhaustion stage. Various psychologists believe that prolonged stress could lead to psycho-somatic disorders as like- asthma, ulcer, pains etc. It can’t be eliminated completely but to cope with it, people use variety of coping strategies as- task oriented, emotion focused and ego defensive mechanisms to curtail the stress.

Hence, Stress has become one of the major life style problem which is caused by changes occurring in physical, social as well psychological areas of the individual. It is an inevitable part of our personal and professional lives.

Mboya, Innocent.B, John, Beatrice., and Ngocho, James.S.(2020). had done cross sectional study among undergraduate students in northern Tanzania to identify the several factors associated with the mental distress and its related symptoms. And also, to determine the prevalent rate of distress over psychological as well physical health.

Kalmakis, Karen.A, Chiodo, Lisa.M., and Meyer, Jerrold.S.(2020). had used correlational design to conduct this study for investigating the relationships between adverse childhood experiences , PTSD & self-reported stress among 236 undergraduates and examined the several types of responses given by the students on stress scale for which students are randomly divided into 4 groups for further investigation.

Robotham,D. and Julian,C.(2006). indicates that the prevalence of stress is increasing among students studying in higher education. This study critically reviews the research facts and identifies several issues that had not been explored before focusing on stress. It focuses on the quantitative aspect to find out the results.

Yousaf, U.S., Usman. B. and Akram. M. (2016). had found that stress hinders the efficiency and performance of individuals. Understanding and comprehending the causes of stress and relevant coping strategies is indeed essential for better life performance of the students. The purpose of the study was to explore the stressors produced by academic environment and the coping mechanisms.

Misra, R., McKean, M., West,S. and Russo, T.(2000). examined the perceptions of academic stress among male and female college students, and compared the faculty and student perceptions on student’s academic stress. The sample consisted of 249 students and 67 faculties Results indicates a mismatch between both the selected groups.

Pierceall, A.E. and Keim, C.M. (2007). focused on the degree of stress perceived by the students at two community colleges in southern Illinois. The Perceived stress scale was used to gather data from 212 students enrolled in regular classes of psychology. Of the students, 75% were in moderate, 12% in high and 13% in low stress category. There were no statistically significant differences among the selected groups for study.

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Ross, E.S., Niebling, C.B. and Heckert, M.T. (1999). had used The Student Stress survey (SSS) to determine the major sources of stress among college students. The scale consisted of 40 potentially stressful situations that focuses on academic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and environmental stressors. Participants were 100 students at a mid-sized, Midwestern university and varied in school, age, gender etc. More often, hassles and other major life events could be the source of stressful situation they faced.

These studies were based on stress and its related phenomenon which is an inescapable aspect of one's life. Everyday there is a situation which deals with stressful situations overtime which could be positive or negative in perceiving and response to that. Stress could lead to the wear and tear of the body's physical, psychological & social state. Hence, this study focuses on the perception of stress among college going students to find out the differences and various stressors that could lead to that particular stressful condition.

Hypotheses

- H₁.** Significant difference exists among the male & female adolescents perceiving stress at the college level.
- H₂.** Male adolescents were more prone to stressful situations than the females.

METHODOLOGY

Sample: The sample of this study comprised of 100 undergraduate adolescents (50 males & 50 females) in (Akhnoor), Jammu District. They were selected through random sampling technique and their data was kept confidential.

Instrument: The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), developed by 'Kamarck and Mermelstein' (1983) was used for this study. PSS is widely used scale for perceiving the level of stress and its reliability & validity have been established. The scale measures the degree which is appraised towards the stressful situations. It comprised of 10 items and for each of the item, the respondents are required to respond between 0 to 4 (0 for never, 1 for almost never, 2 for sometimes, 3 for fairly often and 4 for very often). Scoring procedure is reversed for item nos. 4,5,7 and 8. Scores ranging from 0-13 indicates low stress, 14-27 indicates medium stress and 28-40 indicates high stress.

Statistical analysis used: For the derivation of results of the study, following statistical techniques are used-

- Mean
- Standard deviation
- t-test, were used for deriving out the results.

RESULTS & INTERPRETATION

After the data has been collected and the calculation part is over, following results were derived from the presented data:

Table 1.: Results of both the groups taken for study

Groups	Sample taken (100)	Mean	SD	95% Of C.I diff.	t	Stan. diff.
Males	50	29.520000000	4.900693830	From 5.8088690479 to 9.6711309521	7.9538	0.973
Females	50	21.780000000	4.830279500			

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From the above table, it can be interpreted that Mean, standard deviation scores are higher in case of Male students than the Female students. While finding out the significant difference, the value of (t) is more than the calculated value i.e. (7.9538) which is significant at both the levels and at 95% of confidence limit it falls between (5.8088690479 to 9.611309521) and Thus It can be said that probability of its significance could be accepted at both the levels. Thus, it could be interpreted that there is a highly significant difference exists among both the groups taken for study which reveals that Male students are more stressful than the females at college settings. Our hypothesis is framed to test that there is a significant difference among both the groups taken for study and the Male students were more prone to stressful situations than the females. Hence, our hypothesis gets accepted and justified.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The present research is mainly based on the college students (Males & Females) from (Akhnoor), Jammu region who were selected for assessment of Perceived stress level among both selected groups and to know what could be the possible reasons behind their stressful situations. Comparing both the groups taken for the study, it can be analyzed from the above **table- 1.**, which indicates that Male students are more prone to stressful situations than the females. This can be noticed by the higher scores attained by the male students on Perceived stress scale and there is an existence of extreme significant difference between both the groups taken for study. With this, our hypotheses get accepted and the studies which are reviewed and taken for reference also supports our study and concludes that Male adolescents are much more prone to stress than the females. This study also focuses on several environmental factors that could lead to the possibility of stressors to increase and the probable rate of stress could become enough high. With this, our hypothesis gets accepted and justified and the latest studies which are reviewed and taken for reference also supports our research as male students are much more prone to stress than the females with several factors with respective situation within a given period of time. **Mboya, Innocent.B, John, Beatrice., and Ngocho, James.S.(2020).**

So, it can be analyzed that our study is also in lined with the research done earlier and the results are going in the same direction as the other studies had already proved. **Kalmakis, Karen.A, Chiodo, Lisa.M., and Meyer, Jerrold.S.(2020).**

Hence, from the whole presented study, it can be concluded that there are some reasons which could be responsible for the increased level of stress in colleges especially for male students are- tensed about their job placements, career security, academic workload, economic issues in the family, burden of responsibility with increasing age, peer group's effect if they were settled, unclear ideas about what to do in future, environmental, social as well psychological changes. But there is a need of an academic or career counselor in the colleges so that various problems related with adolescent's development could be easily solved out and the various options related to different fields of career could be told to the students so that they could easily find out their right tracks for their conserved future and lead their better life.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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