

Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the difference in Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping Strategies among higher secondary school students in Mizoram. This study assessed the relationship between Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies and the difference between male and female in Academic stress, Mental well-being, and Coping strategies. a descriptive study was carried out and the data was collected from an online survey of 130 students. Academic Stress Scale adapted to Indian conditions by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990), Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being scale (Taggart, 2016) and Coping Orientation to problem experiential Inventory (brief-cope) were used to gather the data. Independent sample t-test and Pearson correlation was used to analyse the difference in gender and the relation in Academic stress, mental well-being, and Coping strategies. The result indicates that there is significant relationship between Mental well-being and Academic stress. There was no significant relationship between Coping strategies and Mental well-being and no significant relationship between Coping strategies and Academic stress among higher secondary school students. There was a significant difference in coping strategies in gender and no significant difference in Academic stress and mental well-being in gender.

Keywords: *Academic stress, mental well-being, coping strategies*

ACADEMIC STRESS

Stress is viewed as a negative emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and physiological process that occurs as a person tries to adjust to or deal with stressors (Bernstein, et al, 2008). According to Sindhu (2016), stress is considered as a state of individual that result from their interaction with the environment that is perceived as too demanding and a threat to their well-being. It means to say that the stressors are not only physical, but may also be cognitive and psychological.

WELL-BEING

Well -being is defined as a state of being comfortable, happy, and healthy. It refers to diverse and interconnected dimensions of physical, mental, and social well-being that extend beyond the traditional definition of health. It includes choices and activities aimed at

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Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

achieving physical vitality, mental alacrity, social satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment, and personal fulfilment. Thus, mental well-being is more than absence of mental illness/disorders. It represents the positive side of mental health and could be achieved by people with a diagnosis of mental disorder. Mental wellbeing is comprised of many different components; it is not a singular trait that someone either has or does not have.

COPING STRATEGIES

Coping The word "cope" is derived from the Latin word "colpus" meaning "to alter" and, Webster's Dictionary define as, "dealing with and attempting to overcome problems and difficulties. Coping is a conscious effort to resolve a stressor a difficulty of intrapersonal or interpersonal nature, in order to manage or minimize stress or conflict (Sahaya & Selvam 2014). Pearlin & Schooler, (1978) defined Coping strategies (or specific coping responses) as "behaviours, cognitions, and perceptions in which people engage when actually contending with their life problems".

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aafreen M. M. (2018). The objective of the current study was to assess the stress among students of various professional colleges and its association with various academic, social, and health-related factors. Students were asked to answer a survey prepared in online. The results were presented graphically, inferentially, and descriptively. The study indicates that students studying in science stream had stress more compared to students studying in other streams. It affects them mentally, physically, and emotionally. Students face anxiety and go into depression which later leads to decreased performance in academics.

Dr Sagar P. et. al (2017). The purpose of the study was to examine the level of academic stress among higher secondary school students. Students participated in this study were obtained from 10 higher secondary schools at Bareilly district. The data were collected through self-constructed Academic Stress Scale. The study revealed that there exists high significant difference between the academic stress of male and female participants of higher secondary school students, but no significant difference was found among academic stress of arts, science, and commerce stream students. It was also found that there was no significant difference between academic stress of government aided & self-finance school students and rural & urban area school students.

In a study by Dr. B. E. George Dimitrov (2017) the study attempts to find out stress among higher secondary students in various fields of arts and science streams. The study was selected randomly from various academic institutions in and around Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu. This study utilized the quantitative method of research. As widely accepted, the quantitative method of research involves adequate and accurate interpretation of findings. The technique that was used under method is the normative survey approach and evaluation, which is commonly used to explore opinions according to respondents that can represent a whole population. The study indicated that students who are in the science streams are more likely to be under stress when compared with arts stream students.

This study by Julia L. et al (2000) analysed the differences in the coping strategies adopted by male and female first year students in a higher education environment and the extent to which such strategies had an impact on self-esteem and attainment. Results revealed significant differences between males and females in terms of engagement in coping strategies and academic attainment. Specifically, males exhibited greater ability to detach

Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

themselves from the emotions of a situation, were more inclined to demonstrate emotional inhibition or 'bottling up' of emotions and reported higher self-esteem. In addition, it was observed that females attained at a significantly higher level than males. Practical implications and recommendations for future research are identified.

METHODOLOGY

Statement of the Problem

The current study was chosen to examine whether the mental well-being and coping strategies of the Mizo youths is related to their academic stress and have better understanding and better knowledge of the state of their mental well-being and try their best to improve to provide the best potential in them and yield a more positive outcome for the society.

Objectives

The present study is designed with the following objectives:

- To determine the relationship between academic stress and mental well-being among students in Higher Secondary school in Mizoram.
- To determine the relationship between mental well-being and coping strategies among students in Higher Secondary school in Mizoram.
- To determine the relationship between coping strategies and academic stress among students in Higher Secondary school in Mizoram.
- To determine the difference between male and female regarding to academic stress.
- To determine the difference between male and female regarding to mental well-being.
- To determine the difference between male and female regarding to coping strategies.

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were set forth for the conduct of the present study:

- There is no significant relationship between academic stress and mental well-being among students in Higher Secondary school in Mizoram.
- There is no significant relationship between mental well-being and coping strategies among students in Higher Secondary school Mizoram
- There is no significant relationship between coping strategies and academic stress among students in Higher Secondary school in Mizoram.
- There is no significant difference between male and female in Academic Stress.
- There is no significant difference between male and female regarding mental well-being.
- There is no significant difference between male and female regarding coping strategies.

Design of the Study

The current study follows Correlation research design and independent sample t-test. Correlational study design explore relation between variables without the control of the investigator or manipulating the variables and *independent sample t-test* is a statistical technique that is used to analyse the mean comparison of two independent groups.

Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

Sample

The sample consists of 130 subjects (N=130, 65 Science students and 65 Arts students in which 65 will be male and 65 will be female) studying in higher secondary schools in Mizoram. The participant represents the Mizo youths studying in the Higher Secondary school. The subjects were drawn through convenient sampling with equal representation based on the 'sex' and 'stream' of the participants. The age of the selected participant ranges from 16-18 years. In general, the subjects were having good mental health and physiological health.

Sampling method

Convenient sampling method was used to draw samples for the present study. This sampling is also known as availability sampling, it is a specific type of non-probability sampling method that relies on data collection from population members who are conveniently available to participate in study.

Inclusion Criteria

- Boys and girls and willing to participate
- Participants not having any major mental/physical illness
- People who can read and write
- People age group between 16-18 years and only from Mizoram
- Participants attending school only from Mizoram

Exclusion Criteria

- People who cannot read and write
- Who cannot understand English
- Participants who were not willing to participate
- Participants who are not attending school from Mizoram

Tools Used in the Study

1. Academic Stress Scale
2. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental well-being scale
3. Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE)

Ethical Consideration

- An informed consent was taken from the participants.
- Confidentiality on their responses were assured.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of Mental well-being, Academic stress, and Coping strategies among students in Higher secondary school in Mizoram. (N=130)

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
MENTALWELLBEING	130	39.61	9.645
ACADEMIC STRESS	130	75.69	10.694
COPING STRATEGIES	130	119.26	26.927

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of Mental well-being, Academic stress, and Coping strategies among students of Mizoram. In mental wellbeing the mean was found to

Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

be 39.61 with a standard deviation of 9.645 and the mean and standard deviation of Academic stress among students are 75.69 and 10.694 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of Coping strategies was found to be 119.26 and 26.927.

Table 2: Correlation of Mental well-being and Academic stress among students in higher secondary school in Mizoram.

Correlation

		MENTALWELLBEING	ACADEMIC STRESS
MENTALWELLBEING	Pearson Correlation	1	.350**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	130	130
ACADEMIC STRESS	Pearson Correlation	.350**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	130	130

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

table 2 shows that the relationship between Mental well-being and Academic stress among the students of Mizoram. The Pearson correlation was found to be .350 and p value was found to be .000 at 0.05 level. (It indicates a significant positive relationship between Academic stress and Mental well-being. Hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Mental well-being and Academic stress among students in higher secondary school students is rejected.

Table 3: Correlation of Coping strategy and Mental well-being among students in higher secondary school in Mizoram.

Correlations

		COPING STRATEGY	MENTALWELLBEING
COPING STRATEGY	Pearson Correlation	1	-.156
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.076
	N	130	130
MENTALWELLBEING	Pearson Correlation	-.156	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.076	
	N	130	130

As it can be observed from table 1, the mean and standard deviation of Coping strategy of students are 119.26 and 26.927 and the mean and standard deviation of Mental well-being of the students are 39.61 and 9.645 respectively. As table 3 shows there is no significant relationship between Coping strategy and Mental well-being among students in higher secondary school ($r = -0.156$; significant at .05 level). Hence the null hypothesis, there is no significant relationship between Coping strategy and Mental well-being among students in higher secondary school students is accepted.

Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

Table 4: Correlation of Coping strategies and Academic stress among students in higher secondary school in Mizoram.

Correlations

		COPINGSTRATEGY	ACADEMICSTRESS
COPINGSTRATEGY	Pearson	1	.115
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.190
	N	130	130
ACADEMICSTRESS	Pearson	.115	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.190	
	N	130	130

Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation of Coping strategies among the students are 75.69 and 10.694 and the mean and standard deviation of Academic stress among students are 119.26 and 26.927 respectively. As table 3.1 shows that there is no significant relationship between Coping strategies and Academic stress among students in higher secondary school ($r=.190$; significant at .05 level). Hence the null hypothesis, there is no significant relationship between Coping strategies and Academic stress among students in higher secondary school students is accepted.

Table 5: Independence sample t-test on Academic stress based on gender.

	GENDER	N	M	St. deviation	t	p
ACADEMICSTRESS	1	65	113.69	26.706	-2.391	0.18
	2	65	124.74	26.199		

Table 5 shows the difference between male and female students with regard to academic stress. the mean and standard deviation of academic stress for males are 113.69 and 26.706 and the mean and standard deviation for females are 124.74 and 26.199 respectively. The t value obtained is -2.391 with a corresponding p value of 0.18($p>0.05$) which is greater than 0.05 level. This shows that there is no significant difference between male and female regarding academic stress among higher secondary school students in Mizoram hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female is accepted.

Table 6: Independence sample t-test on Mental well-being based on gender.

	Gender	N	M	St. Deviation	t	p
MENTAL	1	65	40.65	9.991	1.222	.224
	2	65	38.59	9.254		

Table 6 shows the mean and standard deviation of Mental well-being for males are 40.65 and 9.991 and the mean and standard deviation for females are 38.59 and 9.254. The t value obtained between the two groups on Mental well-being is 1.222 at a corresponding value .224($p>0.05$). This shows that there is no significant difference between male and female regarding Mental well-being among higher secondary school students in Mizoram hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female is accepted.

Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

Table 7: Independence sample t-test on Coping strategy based on gender.

	Gender	N	M	St. Deviation	t	p
COPING	1	65	73.78	11.849	-2.045	0.00
STRATEGY	2	65	77.56	9.127		

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 7 shows the mean and standard deviation of Coping strategy for males are 73.78 and 11.849 and the mean and standard deviation for females are 77.56 and 9.127. The *t* value obtained between the two groups on Mental well-being is -2.045 at a corresponding value .43($p>0.05$). This shows that there is significant difference between male and female regarding Coping strategies among higher secondary school students in Mizoram hence the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female is rejected.

Limitation and Further Direction

The limitation of the present study was that for the present study only one age group that is young adults 16-18 years were used as participants. So, in future studies participant from different age group could be used. The present study included only students from Mizoram and for future studies larger sample from different regions can be used for more reliable results.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between Academic stress, Mental well-being, and coping strategies among students in higher secondary school in Mizoram. From the results of the present study, it can be concluded that there is relationship between Academic stress and Mental well-being and no relation between Coping strategies and Mental well-being, Academic stress, and Coping strategies. The study also reveals that there is no difference in male and female regarding Academic stress and Mental well-being but a difference in the coping strategies of male and female. Although we cannot generalize this study alone.

Implications

The research will give an insight on the academic stress, mental well-being, and the coping strategies of the youths to have better understanding and better knowledge of the state of their mental well-being and how to cope with their academic stress try their best to improve so as to provide the best potential in them and yield a more positive outcome for the society. The present study will help the students to improve their well-being and how they deal with the stress it will prepare the students to be psychologically healthy and happy and also able them to accelerate performance and profitability.

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Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

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Academic stress, Mental well-being and Coping strategies among Higher Secondary Students in Mizoram

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Conflict of Interest

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