

**An Assessment of Academic Stress Among Adolescent Girls and The Effectiveness of Stress Management Techniques**

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**Abstract**

This research findings are based on the responses obtained from the adolescent girls in Sree Narayana College for Women, Kollam, Kerala, India. This paper assessed the academic stress among adolescent girls and the effectiveness of stress management techniques. Total of 100 adolescent girls were selected by random sampling method. Academic stress was assessed by Student Academic Stress Scale (SASS) using questionnaire in the form of Google form. Data obtained was analyzed using descriptive and statistical analysis.

**Keywords:** Adolescent girls, academic stress, stress management techniques

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## 1. Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional period of physical and mental growth that develops between childhood and adulthood. The transition involves biological, social, and psychological changes [1]. The stage of adolescence has a particularly decisive impact on adult personality and is described as one of 'storm and stresses'. The imperiousness of adolescent sexuality is responsible for making adolescence a period of emotional turbulence and instability. There is increased reactivity and the normal adolescent is susceptible to abrupt shifts in mood high spirits at one moment and depths of despair in the next. This tendency to extreme and unpredictable behavior presents society with one of its greatest challenges [2].

Stress is defined as the psychological and physical reaction to certain life events or situations [3]. Stress is a real or interpreted threat to the physiological or psychological and/or behavioral responses [4]. Psychologists cannot agree on a single, universal definition for the term stress [3]. Similarly, the notion of stress is unique in that individuals both perceive and respond to stress differently, whether due to pleasant or unpleasant stimuli, due to environmental factors, personality type, and dispositional affect [5].

The academic stress faced by most of the students is attributed to poor study habits, such as poor time management, studying for exams, and coursework, which may eventually lead to poor academic performance. In order to overcome the pressure from academic stress the students have to employ suitable coping strategies like in any other stressful situation. There are various coping strategies used by students when experiencing academic stress. Some resort to avoidant coping; alcohol/drug abuse, denial, and behavioral disengagement; while others cope actively through acceptance, planning, and positive reframing and taking the necessary steps to overcome the academic stress [6].

Sharma et al. [7] focused on a variety of stress relation techniques. Regular exercise is one of the most effective ways to relax your body and mind. You can also employ the concept of various time management approaches to engage in leisure activities that are beneficial pupils. In addition, it was proposed that universities take step to alleviate stress. Changes in how pupils are communicated with may result in reduction in stress. According to Malach et al. [8], stress is caused by environmental (stressors) and a person's ability to meet these demands. It is critical to pinpoint the source of the stress so that it can be thoroughly addressed and effective remedies may

be devised. Intervening measures to effectively manage academic stress were emphasized in the study.

## **2. Need for the study**

Excessive stress is considered to be one of the main factors affecting student's academic performance [9]. College students are more stressed because of mainly academic factors, personal factors and environmental factors. When compared to male, female would experience higher levels of stress and employ more emotion-focused coping mechanisms [10]. Various stress management techniques are available to used, and it helps to some minimal effectiveness in helping college students cope with stress. Techniques like exercise, yoga, recreational activities and counselling etc. It helps to improve the academic performance and reduce the anxiety.

## **3. OBJECTIVES**

The study is designed with the following objectives.

- To study the academic stress.
- To assess the effect of academic stress on adolescents.
- To know about stress management techniques.
- To study the effect of stress management techniques.

## **4. HYPOTHESIS**

The following hypothesis were formulated for the study.

Ho 1 : There is no relation between psychological or emotional effects of stress and social effects of stress

Ho 2 : There is no significant difference between managing stress slightly and moderately using music and managing stress strongly using music

## **5. METHODOLOGY**

The area selected for the study was Sree Narayana College For Women Kollam district of Kerala. The area selected because of the easy accessibility and convenience of the investigator. Random Sampling method was followed by selecting samples. In random sampling, a sample chosen randomly it is meant to be unbiased representation of the total population. A total of 100 adolescent girls were randomly selected as the sample of study. The tools used for the present study was questionnaire in the form of Google form and student academic stress scale. Busari [11] constructed and validated Student Academic Stress Scale (SASS). The SASS is a self-reported

scale through which individual students describes his/her academic work, according to the extent to which he/she is willing to disclose them. Respondents are asked to indicate on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree), 5 (strongly agree), how often he/she thought or felt in that way [12].

The pilot study was conducted among 10 adolescent girls. This was done in order to test the feasibility and accuracy of the questionnaire. Based on the result of the pilot study necessary modifications are made. The modified questionnaire was used as the tool for the conduct for the final study.

The collection of data is a vital part of the investigation. Data collection involves the collection of raw data directly from the respondent [13]. The data after collection has to be processed and analysed by the outline laid down for the purpose at the time of developing the research plan [14].

## **6. MAJOR FINDINGS**

The baseline information of the adolescent girls showed that majority of forty-eight percent of the adolescent girls belongs to 20 years of age. Majority of sixty-two percent of the respondents opted science stream. It was revealed that, regarding father's occupation twenty-two percent each were involved in business and driving. Regarding mother's occupation majority of the fifty-four percent were home makers. Majority of forty-eight percent of the respondent's father's highest level of education were high school. Thirty-six percent respondent's mother's highest level of education were high school. Majority of eighty-one percent of adolescent girls, belonged to nuclear family.

Student academic stress scale revealed that a majority of fifty-three percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the amount of workload was excessive. Forty-four percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the time allocated to class and academic work was not enough. Forty-two percent of the respondents strongly agreed that higher education and employment brought lots of academic pressure. Thirty-five percent of the respondents strongly agreed that parents cared about their academic grades too much, which brought lots of pressure. Forty-three percent of the respondents strongly agreed that they had pressure related to daily studies. Forty-one percent of the respondents strongly agreed not interested certain subjects that they were. Thirty-six percent of the respondents agreed that they had disappointed with their teacher as the teachers didn't listen their ideas. About forty-seven percent of the respondents strongly agreed that stress made negative effects in their studies.

The effects of stress revealed that the symptoms of physical effects of stress, forty-two percent of the respondents had headache. With respect to the symptoms of psychological or emotional effects of stress, twenty-nine percent of the respondents reported irritability or anger. Regarding the frequency of experiencing stress, a majority of fifty-nine percent of the adolescent girls experienced academic stress. Regarding the behavioral changes of the stress, thirty percent of the respondents felt anger. With respect to the social effects of stress, a majority of forty-two percent of the respondents reported difficulty in sharing ideas.

Regarding the stress management techniques, majority of the respondents, that is eighty-two percent of the respondents were aware about stress management techniques. Majority of sixty-six percent of the respondent's occasionally shared their stress with others. Majority of fifty-one percent of the respondents had the ability to manage stress. It was revealed that thirty-six percent of the respondents listened to music, nineteen percent of the respondents did meditation, fifteen percent of the respondents did deep breathing, twelve percent each of the of them carried out exercise and yoga, and six percent of them had counselling session to manage stress. A majority of fifty-nine percent of the respondents always listened to music for stress management. Thirty-six percent of the respondents did stress management technique 1 -3 times per week.

Regarding the effects of stress management techniques majority of fifty-nine percent of the respondents strongly agreed that they got comfort after doing stress management techniques. Forty-two percent of the respondents never got comfort after doing meditation as stress management technique. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents reported that they never got comfort after doing yoga to relieve stress. It was revealed that thirty-five percent of the respondents reported that counselling was helpful in relieving some stress. Sixty-two percent of the respondents reported that they got comfort after listening to music to relieve stress. A huge majority of sixty-three percent of the respondents reported that they felt more positive after deep breathing exercise. Majority of fifty-nine percent of the respondents strongly agreed that the use of stress management techniques made the situation better without stress.

The statistical analysis showed that the resulted p value was 0.628972 is greater than the alpha value 0.05. Hence accept the hypothesis that there is no relation between psychological or emotional effects of stress and social effects of stress. The calculated |t| value was 2.13 is greater than the t alpha value 1.65. Hence reject the hypothesis that there is no significant difference

between managing stress slightly and moderately using music and managing stress strongly using music.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to investigate an assessment of academic stress among adolescent girls and the effectiveness of stress management techniques. It confirms that a substantial proportion of adolescent girls faced stress in their academics. Student Academic Stress Scale used for collecting the data for this study, it helps to get an accurate information about the stress of adolescents. This study shows that the adolescents were aware about stress management techniques, and they were try to made the situation better without stress by using stress management techniques.

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