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ACADEMIC STRESS AND ADJUSTMENT LEVELS OF INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The most important fact concerning stress is its persistence. Wide spread usage is in Biology and Psychology. In today's life, stress has become so significant in everybody's life and it has become pervasive and major concern for scientists in various fields for e.g., Medicine, Psychology, Sociology, Neurobiology, Environmental sciences etc. Thus research in any field is directly or indirectly concerns with the question of understanding. The antecedent and consequences of stress including its management in such a way that quality of life of people can be improved. Such magnitude requires to have proper understanding of the concept 'stress' and its related phenomena, so that it may be handled in our life as well as of others.

INTRODUCTION

The modern world, which is said to be the world of achievements is also the world of stress. Stress exists everywhere, whether it is within the family, business organization, work place, enterprise or any other activity. Right from the time of birth till the last breath every individual is invariably exposed to innumerable stressful situations. Thus, it is not surprising that concerns the issue has been rising especially in the present age which has been called the "Age of Anxiety and stress". The word stress has been derived from the Latin word 'stringere' which means hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. It is commonly used to denote pressure, force, strain or string effects with reference to an object or person. Selve, (1974) defined stress as arising from physiological, psychological and environmental demands. It may be stated in terms of its physical and physiological effects on a person, and can be a mental, physical or emotional strain. It can also be a tension or a situation or factor that can cause stress. When confronted with the stressors, the body creates extra energy and stress occurs because our body does not use all the energy it has created. Thus stress is experienced in terms of cognitive, physiological and behavioural signs. It is the response of the body to demands made up on it.

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Types of stress

- **Neustress**: brain responds neutrally to internal and external demands. But the person moves along with the impact from these demands in one way or other.
- **Distress**: when arousal is too high or too low, distress ensues.
- **Positive stress/eu-stress**: It is important for pushing one's limits and widening that limits is essential for one's own personal development.

Review of Related Literature

Diane and Kalpan, (2005) studied on"School related stress in early adolescence and academic performance three years later: the conditional influence ofselfexpectations". The results suggest that for students in high stress school environments, an increase in academic expectations may serve to increase their school-related stress and impede their academic performance. Gonzales *et al.*, (2005) reported in "Minority Adolescent Stress and coping" that many of stressful life events and daily hassles of adolescence are similar for youth despite differences in cultural background or place of residence. Adolescents face pressures to be accepted by peers, battles with parents over rules, fallouts with friends, difficult family transitions due to parental divorce, and frustrations with

schoolwork and teachers. Kadapatti and Khadi, (2005) investigated on "Inter-relationship of Selected factors with academic stress". The findings are better study habits, lessens study problems and stress, while poor study habits lead to more study problems and academic stress. Kee Jeong Kim, (2005) reported after investigating "Interconnected Accumulation of Life Stresses and Adolescent Maladjustment" that parental depression and anxiety primarily account for emotional problems among children and adolescents.

Statement of the problem

The present study is concerned after careful analysis of the review of the literature, the gaps existing in the areas of both academic stress and adjustment level of students particular intermediate level, the investigator has selected the topic as follows in an elaborated way.

Title of the problem

The title of the present study is **"A Study of academic stress and adjustment levels of intermediate students".**

Objectives of the study

- To study the impact of sex on academic stress of intermediate students.
- To study the impact of medium of study on academic stress of intermediate student.
- .To study the impact of type of family on academic stress of intermediate students
- To study the impact of sex on adjustment level of intermediate students.
- To study the impact of medium of study on adjustment level of intermediate students.
- To study the impact of type of family on adjustment level of intermediate students.

Hypotheses of the study

The following null hypotheses were formulated to test the significance of the difference or relationship or otherwise in relation to the variables considered for the study.

- There is no significant difference between male and female students regarding their academic stress.
- There is no significant difference between Telugu and English medium students regarding their academic stress.
- There is no significant difference between students belonging to nuclear and joint families regarding their academic stress.
- There is no significant difference between male and female students regarding their adjustment level.
- There is no significant difference between Telugu and English medium students regarding their adjustment level.
- There is no significant difference between students belonging to nuclear and joint families regarding their adjustment level.

Sample

The sample selected for this investigation consisted of a total 480 students studying Government and private Intermediate

colleges selected by following stratified random sampling technique. The sample also includes of Male 240, Female 240, Government intermediate 1st year students 120, Government intermediate 2nd year students 120, private Intermediate 1st Year students 120, private Intermediate 2nd Year students 120, English Medium Students 240 and Telugu Medium Students 240.

Method of Investigation

The investigator has considered the survey method is more appropriate to adopt in this study. In all respects the same used in this present investigation.

Collection of Data

The researcher personally went to the 5 Government and 5 private junior colleges in Nellore District to instruct the students towards responding to the tools. They were given sufficient time to complete their marking for all items of the tools. After completion, the investigator has collected the data for further analysis purpose.

Statistical Techniques Used For the Study

In order to test the hypotheses formulated for the study the following statistical techniques were employed.

- Mean and Standard Deviation.
- T-test and F ratio.
- Pearson's product moment correlation.

Significance of the difference between Academic stress means of Male and Female students

Table 1. Significance of the difference between Academic stress means of Male and Female students

S.No	Sex	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	't' - value
1	Male	240	89.48	19.382	7.459**
2	Female	240	77.32	16.201	

Note: - ** Significant at 0.01 level

In the above table the mean value on stress of Male students were found as 89.48 and 77.32 respectively. From the observation of above mean values it can be understood that Male students are having more stress than Female students comparatively. The obtained 't' value 7.459 is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the formulated hypothesis "There is no significant difference between male and female students regarding their stress"is rejected. This shows that there is significant difference between Male and Female students in their stress at 0.01 level of confidence.

Significance of the difference between stress Meansbetween Telugu and English as medium of instruction

Table 2. Significance of the difference betweenacademic stress Means between Telugu and English as medium of instruction

S.No.	Medium of Instruction	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	't' - value
1.	Telugu	240	79.55	19.240	4.569**
2.	English	240	87.25	17.671	

Note: ** Significant at 0.01 level

In the above table the mean values on stress of Telugu and English medium students were found 79.55 and 87.25 respectively. From the observation of above mean values it can be understood that English medium students are having more stress than Telugu medium students comparatively. The obtained 't' value 4.569 is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the formulated hypothesis **"**There is no significant difference between Telugu and English medium students regarding their stress" is rejected. This shows that there is significant difference between Telugu and English medium students in their stress at 0.01 level of confidence.

Significance of the difference between stress means of Joint and Nuclear Family students

Table 3. Significance of the difference between stress means of Joint and Nuclear Family students

S.No.	Family Type	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	't' - value
1	Joint	109	81.76	18.764	1.037 ns
2	Nuclear	371	83.88	18.873	

Note:- @ Not Significant at 0.05 level

In the above table the mean value on stress of students belonging to Joint and Nuclear were found 81.76 and 83.88 respectively. The obtained 't' value 1.037 is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the formulated hypothesis **"**There is no significant difference between students belonging to different types of family regarding their stress" is not rejected.

Significance of the difference between adjustment level means of Male and Female students

Table 4. Significance of the difference between adjustment level means of Male and Female students

S.No.	Sex	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	't' - value
1.	Male	240	58.83	11.831	4.745**
2.	Female	240	53.89	10.991	

Note: - ** Significant at 0.01 level

In the above table the mean value on adjustment level of Male students were found as 58.83 and 53.89 respectively. From the observation of above mean values it can be understood that Male students adjustment are higher than Female students. The obtained 't' value 4.745 is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the formulated hypothesis "There is no significant difference between Male and Female students regarding their adjustment level" is rejected. This shows that there is significant difference between Male and Female students in their adjustment level at 0.01 level of confidence.

Significance of the difference between adjustment level of students between Telugu and English medium

Table 5. Significance of the difference between adjustment level of students between Telugu and English medium

S.No.	Medium of Instruction	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	't' - value
1.	Telugu	240	54.49	11.968	3.558**
2.	English	240	58.23	11.080	

Note: ** Significant at 0.01 level

In the above table the mean values on adjustment level of Telugu and English medium students were found as 54.49 and 58.23 respectively. From the observation of above mean values

it can be understood that English medium students are more than Telugu medium students in adjustment. The obtained 't' value 3.558 is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the formulated hypothesis "There is no significant difference between Telugu and English medium students regarding their adjustment level" is rejected. This shows that there is significant difference between Telugu and English medium students in their adjustment level at 0.01 level of confidence.

Significance of the difference between adjustment level means of Joint and Nuclear Family students

Table 6. Significance of the difference between adjustment level means of Joint and Nuclear Family students

S.No.	Family Type	Sample Size	Mean	S.D	't' - value
1.	Joint	109	56.84	11.637	0.484 ns
2.	Nuclear	371	56.22	11.694	

Note: - @ Not Significant at 0.05 level

In the above table the mean value on adjustment level of students belonging to joint and nuclear were found 56.84 and 56.22 respectively. The obtained t' value 0.484 is not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level. Hence the formulated hypothesis "There is no effect of joint and nuclear families regarding their adjustment level "is not rejected.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

From the analysis of the data the following findings were drawn:

- From the above analysis it is found that means 89.48 male of students have more stress when compared to mean 77.32 female students. The difference between these two means were tested and found that there is a significant difference. Girls reported grater stress than boys. This is conceding with the findings of Wagner and Compas (1990), Jones (1993) Anneshensel and Rosen (1978), Grower Thomas and Shoffner (1992), Fash (1986), Naidu and Thapa (1978), Selvam (2001).
- With regard to the influence of medium of study on academic stress of students the following findings may be drawn.
  a. The mean of academic stress score of English medium students was 87.25 and Telugu medium students was 79.55 The difference between these two means was tested and found that there is a significant difference between English & Telugu medium students. This is conceding with the finding Bhattacharji (1989).
- With regard to the influence of type of family on academic stress of students, the following findings may be drawn.
  a. The mean on academic stress score of joint family was 81.76 and nuclear family was 83.88. The difference between these two means was tested and found that there is no significant difference.
  b. Joint family students have less academic stress when compared to nuclear family students.
- From the above analysis it is found that Male mean 58.83 students are more adjusted when compared to Female 53.89 students. This is conceding with the findings of Chanda and Chandra (1985), Fash (1987)

- With regard to the influence of medium on adjustment level of the Students, the following findings may be drawn.
  a. The mean adjustment level score of Telugu Medium was 54.49 and English medium was 58.23. The difference between there two means was tested and found that there is a significant difference English Medium students are more adjusted when compared to Telugu Medium students.
- With regard to the influence of type of Family on adjustment level of students, the following findings may be drawn.
  a. The mean adjustment level score of Joint Family was 56.84 and Nuclear Family was 56.22. The difference between these two means was tested and found that there is no significant difference.

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