



A STUDY ON ACADEMIC STRESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG UG GIRLS STUDENTS

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the academic stress and academic achievement among female undergraduate students. A sample of 200 students of undergraduate girl's students was taken through a random sampling technique. A reliable and valid, academic stress scale was used to collect the data. Mean, SD, correlation and t-test were used for the analysis of the data. Research findings revealed an inverse relationship between academic stress and academic achievement of students. Significant differences were found between the academic stress and academic achievement groups of students, between high and low academic stress groups of students, and also between low academic stress groups of students.

Keywords

Academic Stress, Academic achievement, girl's students.

Introduction

Education provides us with the opportunity for holistic growth and development. It is an activity as well as a process which modifies the behaviour of a person from instinctive behaviour to human behaviour. It transforms our raw personality into a refined personality. We start acting rationally instead of impulsively. It develops our thinking and reasoning power. It is responsible for the supply of good citizens who can contribute to the growth of the country. In all the stages of education right from nursery to university education, the undergraduate stage, is the most important stage, because, this stage provides the base for further education. In fact, the future depends on this stage. As the progress of a nation depends upon its student's academic achievements. Therefore, every nation emphasizes academic achievements.

Significance of the Study

Academic achievement means the achievement level of the students. It can be defined as what a student does or achieve at her college. It is a common practice to promote students from a lower class to a higher class on the basis of their academic achievement. It helps in declaring students successful or unsuccessful, choosing students for various courses and selecting students for different jobs. It is the level of learning in a particular area of the subject in terms of knowledge, understanding, skill and application usually evaluated by teachers in the form of test scores in their annual examination.

Crow & Crow (1969), defined it as the “extent to which a learner is profiting from instructions in a given area of learning i.e., achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill or knowledge has been imparted to him”. C.V. Good (1973), defined it as, “knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects, usually designated by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers, or by both.” In fact, it has become an index of future in today’s highly competitive environment.

Objectives of the Study

The present research study intended to meet the following objectives

1. To study the relationship between academic stress and the academic achievement of undergraduate girl’s students.
2. To compare the academic achievement of high and low academic stress groups of students.

Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were formulated in null form in tune with the objectives of the present study

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between academic stress and the academic achievement of undergraduate girl’s students.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of high and low academic stress groups of students.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of high and low academic stress groups of girl’s students.

Methodology of the Study

This study falls under the category of descriptive research. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Thus, a survey design was adopted to carry out the research work

In the present study, the students in undergraduate colleges of Sivagangai district constitute the population.

Sampling

In the present study, the sample consisted of 200 undergraduate girl’s students. The random sampling technique was used to select the sample of students from colleges in Sivagangai District of Tamilnadu, India. These students are from various streams like science, arts, social sciences and commerce.

Study Tools and Procedure for Implementation

For data collection, Academic Stress tool comprising 20 items with yes or no responses. The tool is reliable and valid. Each item is scored as either +1 or 0. The maximum possible score of the test is 20. Students scoring less than 10 were considered students of the low academic stress group and those scoring higher than 10 were students belonging to the high academic stress group. Marks obtained by the undergraduate students in their previous classes were taken as an index of their level of academic achievement. For demographic information, a personal data sheet for students was developed by the investigators. It comprised information regarding a student's gender (male or female) and achievement scores.

Data Collection

The investigators visited the selected colleges personally and administered the academic stress scale for 200 college students. Investigators also gave full freedom to the students to ask about the meaning of difficult words/sentences. Respondents were given enough time. Filled scales were collected. Partially filled scales were discarded.

Statistical Treatments

For the data analysis mean, standard deviation, correlation and t-test were used.

Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis of data collected by the investigators was done in order to make inferences and generalizations about the population. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 21 was used for this purpose. Hypothesis-wise analysis is as follows.

In order to test the Ho1, Pearson product-moment correlation was applied.

Table No. 1 showing the relationship (Correlation coefficient) of academic stress and academic achievement.

Variables	r - value	Significance level at 5%	Null Hypothesis
Academic Stress & Academic Achievement	0.732	S	Rejected

*Correlation is significant at a .05 level

An inspection of Table 1 reveals that the Product moment correlation between academic stress and academic achievement is significant at a .05 level. This means there is a significant relationship between academic stress and academic achievement. Therefore, Ho1 is rejected. Positive correlation indicates that as the level of academic stress increases, academic achievement decreases and vice-versa. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous research.

In order to test the Ho2, a t-test was applied,

Table No.2 showing the comparison of the academic achievement of high and low academic stress groups of students.

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Academic achievement of high academic stress group	105	237.65	46.43	198	2.063*
Academic achievement of low academic stress group	95	250.81	43.46		

*Significant at .05 level

A close examination of Table 2 shows that the 't' value 2.063 is statistically significant at .05 level. This means there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of high and low academic stress groups. Therefore, Ho₂ is rejected. Higher mean scores of academic achievement of low academic stress group than the academic achievement of high academic stress group indicate that the academic achievement of low academic stress group is better than the academic achievement of high academic stress group. This finding is in consonance with the findings of several researchers.

In order to test the Ho₃, a t-test was applied.

Table No. 3 Showing the comparison of the academic achievement of high and low academic stress groups of girls students.

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Academic achievement of high academic stress group of girls	105	245.84	43.50	198	2.481*
Academic achievement of low academic stress group of girls	95	260.47	39.48		

* Significant at .05 level

Table No. 3 shows that the 't' value 2.481 is statistically significant at .05 level. This means there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of high and low academic-stress groups of girl's students. Therefore, Ho₃ is rejected. Higher mean score of academic achievement of low academic stress group of girl's students than the academic achievement of high academic stress group of girl's students indicates that the academic achievement of low academic stress group of girls is better than the academic achievement of high academic stress group of girl's students.

Findings of the study

1. An inverse relationship was found between the academic stress and academic achievement of undergraduate girl's students. More specifically, as the level; of academic stress increases, academic achievement decreases and vice-versa.
2. A significant difference was found in the academic achievement of high academic stress group and low academic stress group of students. More specifically, the academic achievement of law academic stress group is better than the academic achievement of high academic stress group.

3. A significant difference was found in the academic achievement of high and low academic stress groups of girl's students. More specifically, the academic achievement of low academic stress groups of girls is better than the academic achievement of high academic stress groups of girl's students.

Suggestions for the Study

This research study was conducted on the students of college level only. It is suggested that the same research may be conducted at the school level. In the future research, qualitative research methods may also be included to check the validity of quantitative research methods. In qualitative research methods test stress and can be measured by observations and interviews instead of questionnaires. For the enhancement of the validity, this research may also be expanded in the whole country.

Educational Implications of the Study

The findings of this research study have implications for teachers and professionals in addressing the academic stress of the students at undergraduate level. As high academic stress is responsible for low academic achievement. Therefore, various measures must be applied by the teachers to manage academic stress among students, these can be as simple as the inculcation of confidence among the learners, teaching them the best strategies for examination preparations, training regarding seeking social support, training of relaxation, and of using humour in a best possible way etc. Teachers should create a low-stress environment that allows students to concentrate on the test rather than being distracted by academic stress. Students with higher academic stress must be identified and treated to increase their academic achievement and for timely and effective gender-sensitive counselling and therapeutic interventions for undergraduate college students. The academic achievement of the high academic stress group of females is better than the academic achievement of high academic groups of males. So, the males in the colleges need to be motivated more than females to achieve better performance. This gap can be bridged by the college authorities and teachers by providing special training to the male students in their colleges. Measures should be adopted by the teachers and administrators such as special/remedial coaching classes, training and making use of different methods to enhance the academic achievement of male students.

Conclusion

Moderate level of academic stress is essential for the students to keep them motivated towards their studies and for achieving high standards in education. High academic stress can block learners' performance in several ways. It affects their mental process that leads to a breakdown in their learning process. This results into a low achievement in students' performance. Therefore, academic stress decreases students' learning capabilities and academic stress and academic achievement among colleges in Sivagangai District of Tamilnadu, India. Therefore, college and family must assist students in managing their academic stress through counselling, relaxation and behavioural techniques. Selected preventive activities can be undertaken at college students with academic problems. As the academic achievement of high academic stress group of females is better than the academic achievement of high academic-stress group.

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