

## Relationship between Academic Stress and Adjustment in Adolescents.

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**ABSTRACT:** Adolescence is a critical phase in life and is the period of growth and development, the presence of stress is a matter of concern. Academic stress is a main source of stress for many students. The study examines the level of academic stress and adjustment among adolescent. Correlational research design was adopted and Purposive sampling was chosen for the study by the researcher. A total sample of 40 students participated in this study. The data was collected through standardized test i.e., Academic Stress Scale [Kim-1970 and adopted by Rajendra and Kaliappan (1990) Balaji Rao (2012)] and Adjustment Inventory of School Students [A.K.P Sinha and R.P Singh 1971]. The Data was analysed by calculating 'r' with Pearson product moment correlation method. The study revealed that there exists negative correlation between academic stress and adjustment in the adolescents. For both the variables the association is influenced by many intervening factors. So, the researcher may conclude that it's not only due to academic stress, but other related factors which have an impact on the adjustment of adolescents is school and personal life.

**KEYWORDS:** Academic stress, Adjustment, Adolescent

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### I. INTRODUCTION

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. The term "stress", as it is currently used was coined by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change. 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. Stress was found to be a part of students' life and could give impact on how students cope with the demands of academic life. (Jary and Jary 1985)- defined stress as a state of tension produced by pressures or conflicting demands with which person cannot adequately cope the way you respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to your overall well-being. Stress can be better understood with the help of Transactional Model of Stress - The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping Theory is a framework which emphasises appraisal to evaluate harm, threat and challenges, which results in the process of coping with stressful events (Lazarus, 1966; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The level of stress experienced in the form of thoughts, feelings, emotions and behaviours, as a result of external stressors, depends on appraisals of the situation which involves a judgement about whether internal or external demands exceed resources and ability to cope when demands exceed resources.

### II. ACADEMIC STRESS

Academic Stress defined as a mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even unawareness to the possibility of such failure. Students have to face many academic demands, such as- school examination and tests, answering the questions in the class, showing progress in school subject. Understanding what a teacher is teaching, competing with other classmates, fulfilling teachers and parents' academic expectations. Academic problems have been reported to be the most common source of stress for students (Aldwin & Greenberger, 1987). Academic stress is defined as the body's response to academic-related demands that exceed adaptive capabilities of students. It is estimated that 10–30% of students experience some degree of academic stress during their academic career.

### III. ADJUSTMENT

Adjustment is a process by which an individual learns certain ways of behaviour to cope and adjust with the situation which he or she attains through harmony with his or her social environment. Adjustment in adolescent during school life leads to multiple factors like academic stress academic performance, peer pressure, not liking school environment etc. Adjustment refers to the behavioural process of balancing conflicting needs, or needs challenged by obstacles in the environment, Lazarus, (1976)-

Adjustment as an achievement means how the effectiveness with which an individual can function in changed circumstances and is as such related to his adequacy and regarded as an achievement that is accomplished either badly or well.

#### **IV. ADOLESCENT**

Adolescence is the transitional stage from childhood to adulthood that occurs between ages 13 and 19. The physical and psychological changes that take place in adolescence often start earlier, during the preteen or "tween" years: between ages 9 and 12. Adolescence is usually associated with the teenage years, but its physical, psychological or cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an adolescent as any person between ages 10 and 19. Adolescence is a transitional period of one's life between childhood and adulthood, during which some important biological, psychological and social changes take place. Adolescence is a period marked by significant psychosocial transformations that occur amid rapid pubertal growth, including identity formation, individuation from parents, and the establishment of intimate friendships (Auerbach & Gramling, 1998).

**stages of Adolescence:** Researchers suggest adolescence undergo three primary developmental stages of adolescence and young adulthood –

- 1] Early adolescence (Ages 10 to 13)
- 2] Middle adolescence (Ages 14 to 17)
- 3] Late adolescence/young adulthood (18-21 and beyond)

Adolescent population is about one fourth of the total population of India which constitutes about 20% of world's population. **According to WHO**, an overall prevalence rate of about 20% has been documented for child and adolescent mental disorders, while **Indian Council of Medical Research reported** that about 12.8 per cent of children (1-16 years) suffer from mental health problems in India.

**Statement of the problem :** To study the relationship between academic stress and adjustment in adolescents.

**Purpose of the Study :** The researcher chooses this particular topic for research to analysis and explore student's perception of major sources of academic stress and its effect on adjustment in adolescent. Researcher wanted to know how students perceive academic stress and how they cope with it on daily basis, as they are struggling to reduce and control the negative effects on their academics and adjustment in school. In researcher's opinion, it is very important for students to learn how to manage the academic stress, even if it cannot be eliminated.

#### **V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Following objectives are framed for the present study.

1. To Study stress level in adolescents.
2. To Study adjustment level in adolescents.
3. To study the relationship between adjustment and academic stress of adolescents

#### **VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Husain, Kumar and Husain (2008)** explored the level of academic stress and overall adjustment among Public and Government high school students and also to see the relationship between the two variables academic stress and adjustment by using Academic stress scale and Bisht battery of adjustment. Results indicated that magnitude of academic stress was significantly higher among the Public-school students whereas Government school students were significantly better in terms of their levels of adjustment. However, inverse but significant relationships between academic stress and adjustment were found for both the group of students and for each type of school.

**Putwain (2007)** studied the academic stress and anxiety in students. That is, academic stress in school children was measured by using Academic stress scale test and how it may affect emotional well-being, health and performance on school assessments. In many cases stress is being used to refer to the properties of a stimulus (e.g. an examination) and in other cases to the subjective experience of distress.

**Yellaiah (2012)** also conducted a research work on the topic "A study of Adjustment and Academic Achievement of High School Students." The research was conducted by using Adjustment inventory for school students. The results conclude that adjustment and academic achievement cause significant difference between male and female students, rural and urban school students and government and private school students.

**Raju and Rahamtulla (2007)** conducted a study on adjustment problems among school students and found that adjustment of school children is primarily dependent on the school variables like the class in which they are studying, the medium of instruction present in the school and the type of management of the school.

**Farmer et al, (2007).** Explains Adolescents' as associates and peers may negatively or positively impact academic adjustment. As children progress developmentally, their exchanges with other individuals play a valuable part in their thinking, 24 principles, and how they behave.

**Kingery & Erdly, (2007).** Explained early adolescent as a complex process. As adolescence is a developmental phase distinguished by social, cognitive, and physical changes occurring in conjunction with the transition to middle school, owing to declines in school focus, educational success, and confidence as well as rises in mental and emotional stress, positive middle school adjustment in early adolescence is difficult for many youths to attain.

**Hypothesis :** In order to achieve the forecasting objectives, the following hypothesis was framed:  
1) There will be significant relationship between academic stress and adjustment of adolescents.

**Sample**

**Purposive sampling:** A purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling which is used for the present study.

Sample group	N	Age ( in Years)
Girls	40	12-19
Boys	40	12-19

**Statistical Analysis :** Mean, Standard Deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation method was used for data analysis.

**Result and Interpretation**

Categories	Mean	S. D	Correlation
Academic Stress	71.67	21.17	-0.11**
Adjustment	28.33	7.36	

\*Significant level- 0.05

**X. CONCLUSION**

Above results conclude, the following conclusion.

- 1) There is significant relationship between academic stress and adjustment in adolescent for the chosen sample in the present research study.

**XI.LIMITATIONS**

- 1) Size of the sample were limited.
- 2) The time restriction in order to reach the target population.
- 3) The collection of data genderwise was not possible.
- 4) The research is only limited to (Nashik) city area.

**XII.Suggestion/ Recommendations**

- 1) In the future research, adjustment can be studied in relation to demographic factors.

2]A comparative study can be also done on adjustment level of government and private schools, rural or urban areas etc in relation to study perceived stress, anxiety, level of aspiration and even academic performance can be measured.

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