

The Level of Stress in Male and Female School Students

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Abstract

This study aimed at the level of stress in male and female school students. For the purpose of the study the researcher randomly selected 64 school students aged between 14-18 years. To collect the data researcher used students stress scale (SSS) developed by Dr. Zaki Akhtar (2011). During collection of data researcher used means and method fit for this scale. The result of the study showed boys having much more stress in comparison to girls. The study concluded that school boys are more stressful than school girls.

Introduction

Stress is an integral part of our life. Stress could be positive as well as negative. When we are doing our work properly and systematically then it is because of positive stress or eustress but when we lose our rhythm for same work, it is negative stress or distress. So, stress is good in one way and bad in other way.

Hans Selye (1956) first popularized the concept of "stress" in the 1950s. Selye theorized that all individuals respond to all types of threatening situations in the same manner, and he called this the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS).

Lazarus & Folkman (1984) defined that, stress is a mental or physical phenomenon formed through one's cognitive appraisal of the stimulation and is a result of one's interaction with the environment. The existence of stress depends on the existence of the stressor. Chang's Dictionary of Psychology Terms, stress is "a state of physical or mental tension that causes emotional distress or even feeling of pains to an individual" (Lai et al., 1996). Vijaya and Karunakaran (2013) stated that stress is a complex phenomenon. It largely depends on one's temperaments, environmental conditions, experiences and situations. It is experienced by every individual in any one situations or the other. It is a part of life and it is generated by constant changing situations that one has to face. It refers to an internal state, which results from frustration or under dissatisfactory conditions. To a certain extent in every one's life it is unavoidable, because it is complex in nature. It is a part of fabric of life. But it can be managed to some extent. Piekarska (2000) pointed out that the essential factors for the formation of stress are frequent and strong. There is a related connection between the results of stress and psychological and personality characteristics. Selye (1976) stated that in most approaches stress now designates bodily processes created by circumstances that place physical or psychological demands on an individual. Selye (1976) theories that focus on the specific relationship between external demands (stressors) and bodily processes (stress) can be grouped in two different categories: approaches to 'systemic stress' based in physiology and psychobiology (among others,) and approaches to psychological stress' developed within the field of cognitive psychology. McGrath (1982) said that the external forces that impinge on the body are called stressors. Feng (1992) and Volpe (2000) defined stressor as anything that challenges an individual's adaptability or stimulates an individual's body or mentality. Stress can be caused by environmental factors, psychological factors, biological factors, and social factors. It can be negative or positive to an individual, depending on the strength and persistence of the stress, the individual's personality, cognitive appraisal of the stress, and social support.

Vijaya and Karunakaran (2013) in their study found that majority of boys expressed high level of stress and moderate stress compared to girls. Whereas majority of girl students exhibited low level of stress compared to Boys. Chiang (1995) proposed that school is one of the main sources of stress among adolescents. Such stress comes from too much homework, unsatisfactory academic performance, preparation for tests, lack of interest in a particular subject, and teacher's punishment. Generally, parents are very concerned about their children's academic achievement and moral behaviors. Parents expect their children not only to respect teachers and follow moral norms but also become elite in the future. Chang & Lu (2007) suggested that academic institutions have different work settings compared to nonacademic and therefore one would expect the difference in symptoms, causes, and consequences of stress. Stevenson & Harper (2006) pointed out that stress in academic institutions can have both positive and negative consequences if not well managed. Goodman (1993) revealed that students have different expectations, goals, and values that they want to fulfill, which is only possible if the students' expectations, goals, and values are integrated with that of the institution. Goodman (1993) stated that stressors affecting students can be categorized as academic, financial, time or health related, and self-imposed.

After going through available literature in hard copy as well as soft copies on internet the researcher found that sufficient work has not been done in this area. So researcher goaded to carry out this investigation to fill the gap in the domain of knowledge. The type of stress which is analysed in this paper is distress among school going students.

Methodology

The purpose of the present study was to know the level of stress among school going children.

Sample

The sample of the present study was taken from Jawahar Navodaya School Bareilly (U.P.). For the purpose of the study 42 male and 22 female students were randomly selected. Their age ranged between 14-18 years.

Tools used

The researcher used students stress scale developed by Dr. Zaki Akhtar (2011) Jamshedpur. The scale consisted of 51 statements related to the major kind of stress prevalent in students at adolescent age, and all kinds of situations faced by students.

Statistical Technique Used

Descriptive statistical technique, Mean and Standard Deviation were used

	Mean	SD	N
Boys	158.96	11.40	42
Girls	163.57	5.63	22

RESULTS

Gender	STRESS LEVELS						TOTAL
	Very High Stress	High Stress	Moderate Stress	Low Stress	Very Low Stress	Low	
Boys	08	12	12	05	05		42
Girls	00	03	04	09	06		22

From the table it is evident that most of the boys showing very high stress (Boys 19% and girls 0%) and high stress (boys 28.5% and girls 13.6%) as well as moderate stress where as girls are having 18.1% and boys 28.5%.

DISCUSSION

From the result we can find out that majority of girls have shown low stress and very low stress. Some research worked on level of stress showing the same result i.e., research work done by Vijaya and Karunakaran (2013). This study resulted that boys are much more stressful than girls. There can be many reason for this, it may be their parents expectation from them or it may be boy's high goal and target for their bright and successful career. Teachers should take care of male students and try to resolve their problems which are responsible for their high stress. Parents also can play a vital role to reduce the stress of their children as they are more close to them. Chiang (1995) has also stated that generally parents are very concerned about their children's academic achievement and moral behaviors. Parents expect their children not only to respect teachers and follow moral norms but also become elite in the future. School is also a best medium to work on the stress level of the students and treat them accordingly as it is revealed by the Goodman (1993) that students have different expectations, goals, and values that they want to fulfill, which is only possible if the students' expectations, goals, and values are integrated with that of the institution.

Conclusions

The researcher concluded that schools going male students are more stressful in comparison to female students.

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