Relationship Between Mental Health And Academic Stress Of Senior Secondary School Students

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Abstract
This paper has been designed to find out the relationship between Mental Health and Academic Stress of senior secondary school students. A total sample of 240 senior secondary school students 120 urban (60 boys and 60 girls) and 120 rural (60 boys and 60 girls) were selected using multi-stage random sampling technique. Mental Health Battery prepared by Singh & Sengupta (2013) and Academic Stress Scale prepared by Bisht (2005) were employed to collect the data. The results showed that there is a significant and negative relationship between Mental Health and Academic Stress of senior secondary school students. There is a significant difference between urban and rural senior secondary school students on the basis of their Academic Stress and Mental Health.

Keywords: Mental Health, Academic Stress, Senior Secondary School Students.

Mental health helps an individual in realizing his/her true potentials, abilities and capacities to handle pressure and stress. The individual who studies only to pass the examination and finds no pleasure in his work is neither having a good health nor a healthy individual. In this manner, mental health is that condition in which the individual manifests self-evaluation, adjustability, maturity and satisfactory social adjustment. Complete mental health is an ideal. Any individual who possesses the greatest number of these qualities will be nearest the ideal.

Mental Health word is made of two words that is 'Mental' and 'Health'. The term 'Mental' usually implies something which is purely related to the intellectual functioning of a person. It stands for one's emotional & affective states. It also establishes the relationship with others and a general quality that might be called one's equilibrium in the socio-culture context. The term 'Health' refers physical health as well as connotes the individual's intra-psychic balance, the fit of his psychic structure with external environment and the individuals social functioning. Health means that both body and mind are working efficiently and harmoniously. Mental health is a state of mind characterized by emotional wellbeing, relative freedom from anxiety and disabling symptoms and coping with ordinary demands and stresses of life (Manjuvani, 2000).

Mental Health stands for the health of the mind as Carter V. Good in The Dictionary of Education (1959) has termed it as "the wholesomeness of the mind" analogous to the wholesomeness of body implicit in physical health. Accordingly mental health is concerned with health of one's mind and it's functioning in the same way as the physical health is supposed to concern with the health of one's physical organs and their functioning.

Educational system, evaluation system, value system, teacher efficiency, school situation, school environment are some of the factor which also effect the mental health of a child.
Academic stress is a combination of environment cum affective factors that greatly influence the mental health of an individual. The mental health of the students especially in terms of academic stress and its impact has become a serious among researchers, academician and policy makers because of increasing incidents of suicides among students across the world.

Academic Stress is made of two words that is 'Academic' and 'Stress'. The term academic has been derived from the term 'academy' which means a school where special types of instructions are imparted. The word stress is derived from the Latin word “Stringe” which means 'to be drawn tight'. It was used in the seventeenth century to describe hardship and affection. Stress is a situation that arouses negative feelings and thoughts in a person. All people do not experience the same negative feelings and thoughts when they are in stress. Stress, which is mental and physical pressure, seems to be everywhere one turns. Although stress begins with a perception of outside events but it affects more our mind. Stress may be felt throughout the entire body. Students face more stress because of the burden of study and competition. In the age of competition, parents want that their children will get good marks. This pressure creates stress among students.

Academic stress is mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration. Students have to face many academic needs, for example school examination, showing progress in school subjects and answering questions in the class. They have to face many difficulties to understand what the teacher is teaching, fulfilling teachers & parent's academic expectations. The students have to compete with other classmates. These needs may exceed available resources of the students. As a consequence, they can be under stress because the need is related to achievement of an academic goal. Bisht (1989) has defined academic stress as a demand related to academics that tax or exceed the available resources (internal or external) as cognitively appeared by the student involved.

According to Gupta and khan (1987), “Academic stress is a mental distress with respect to some apprehended frustration associated with academic failure, apprehension of such failure or even an awareness of the possibility of such failure”

Today academic stress affects the personality of the students most. In the academic area, students have to face a variety of stressors such as examination, qualifying entrance examinations for admission, classroom and coaching assignments, presentations, heavy academic workload, length of working hours etc. The academic stress happens when students face imbalance between demands and resources. Today, the school and the family have become very demanding. The school systems are not good these days. They put a lot of burden on their students with a tremendous amount of assignments and homework and students have to complete this homework by devoting lots of time spending their evenings, weekends and most of the vocations. So, students have no enough time for their own. They do not have enough time to play and participate in other co-curricular activities. So, their mental health is deteriorated day by day. Parents also pressurize their children for performing well and getting good positions in the class.

Researchers have shown that stress in academic institution can have both positive and negative effects. If a student cannot be able to cope effectively with academic stress, then he may have to face serious psychological and emotional health consequences.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study has been designed to attain the following objectives:
1. To study the relationship between mental health and academic stress of senior secondary school students.

2. To compare the mental health of rural and urban senior secondary school students.

3. To compare the academic stress of rural and urban senior secondary school students.

**HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

Directed towards the objectives of the study, following hypotheses are formulated for verification:

1. There will be significant negative relationship between mental health and academic stress of senior secondary school students.

2. There will be no significant difference in the mental health of rural and urban senior secondary school students.

3. There will be no significant difference in the academic stress of rural and urban senior secondary school students.

**METHOD**

Descriptive survey method has been used for the present study.

**SAMPLE**

In the present study, the population was very large and scattered over various Senior Secondary School students studying in 22 districts of three regions i.e. Majha, Malwa & Doaba regions of Punjab. The investigator, therefore, employed the multi-stage random sampling technique in order to select a representative sample of the Malwa Region of Punjab. Out of the total 10 districts exiting in Malwa Region of Punjab 2 i.e. Bathinda & Shri Muktsar Sahib were randomly selected for investigation. Again from each of two districts, a sample of 240 students studying in the 12th class was selected from various schools affiliated to P.S.E.B.,Mohali. Randomisation was done through the lots and care was taken to keep the equal number of students residing in rural and urban areas.

**RESEARCH TOOLS USED**

The following tools were used in the present study to collect data:


2. Bisht Battery Stress Scale (BBSS) development by Dr. Abha Rani Bisht (2005).
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1
Showing Coefficient of correlation between Mental Health and Academic Stress of Senior Secondary School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Coefficient of Correlation (r)</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Academic Stress</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As from the table 1, it is inferred that coefficient of correlation between mental health and academic stress of senior secondary schools students is found to be -0.33 (N=240, df=238) which is negative and significant at .05 level. The negative and significant relationship between academic stress and mental health clearly indicates that with the increase in the level of academic stress, mental health of the senior secondary school students deteriorates or decreases. Hence, it is found that there exists significant and negative relationship between mental health and academic stress of senior secondary school students. These results are in consonance with the studies conducted by Aggarwal (2011), Kaur (2014) who concluded negative and significant relationship between academic stress and mental health.

Table 2
Showing the Results of t-test applied on the difference in the Mean Mental Health Scores of Rural and Urban Senior Secondary School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SED</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>86.13</td>
<td>7.53</td>
<td>1.105</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>83.43</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 presents the results of t-test applied to Rural and Urban senior secondary school students on the basis of mean mental health scores. It is clear that the value of mean score of mental health of rural senior secondary school students is 86.13 and of urban students is 83.43 respectively. The values of standard deviation of rural and urban senior secondary school students are 7.53 and 9.50. The calculated value of t-ratio is 2.44 which is significant at .05 level. Hence, it is inferred that there is significant difference in the level of mental health of rural and urban senior secondary school students as represented in fig. 1.
Fig. 1: Representing the mean Mental Health scores of Rural and Urban Senior Secondary School Students

Table- 3

Showing the Results of t-test applied on the difference in the Mean Academic Stress Scores of the Rural and Urban Senior Secondary School Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SED</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>278.18</td>
<td>43.90</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>290.27</td>
<td>45.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 presents the results of t-test applied to Urban and Rural senior secondary school students on the basis of mean academic stress scores. It is clear that the value of mean score of academic stress of rural senior secondary school students is 278.18 and of urban students is 290.27 respectively. The values of standard deviation of rural and urban senior secondary school students are 43.90 and 45.69. The calculated t-value is found to be 2.09, which is significant at .05 level. Hence, it is inferred that there is significant difference in the level of academic stress of rural and urban senior secondary school students as represented in fig. 2.

The above result is in line with the studies conducted by Lal (2014) and Prabu (2015) who found that academic stress of urban students was higher than their counterpart rural students.
MAIN FINDINGS

Following main findings have been drawn by the investigator:

1. There exists a significant negative relationship between the mental health and academic stress of senior secondary school students.
2. There exists significant difference between rural and urban senior secondary school students on the basis of their mental health.
3. There exists significant difference between rural and urban senior secondary school students on the basis of their academic stress.

CONCLUSIONS

Following conclusions were drawn by the investigator:

1. Significant and negative correlation indicated that less the academic stress level better will be the mental health and vice-versa.
2. Rural senior secondary school students were found to be having less academic stress and better mental health than their urban counterparts.

Hence, the teachers, parents and administrators are required to use such methods and techniques of teaching which can alleviate the academic stress of the students at senior secondary level. Moreover, the policy planners should make efforts in reducing the curriculum and the guidance and counsellors should employ and develop psychological techniques for reducing the academic stress and improving the mental health of those urban students.
REFERENCES


