

# ACADEMIC STRESS OF GOVERNMENT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## ABSTRACT

*Academic stress is normal and it happens in life but many students take it in a negative way. During COVID-19, schools were closed and the students missed their studies. At that time, most of the private schools started an alternative teaching method through online but for government schools, there were no online classes. Various reasons were responsible for the student's dropout. The students were made to select/ choose their respective groups in their 11<sup>th</sup> standard without writing board exams. So they were not aware of the group chosen. So within the limited span of time, the teachers had to rush their portions. Now a day's students do not understand the concepts and simply they are mugging up the lessons and writing the test. If they have doubts, they are hesitating to ask from teachers. Apart from this, some students are suffered from personal problems also. The problems of the students must be discussed and proper solution should be taken to make the students, teacher relationship healthy. Plus 2 students are also engaged in sports, music and extracurricular activities in schools according to their interests. Practice of yoga, deep breathing and playing games should reduce the academic stress of the students. Parents and teachers should create a better and positive environment for the students. Academic stress is normal due to some extent but if it affects one's day to day life and activities and it should be addressable and find some effective ways to minimize for better academic performance and to lead a normal life.*

*Key words: Students, Academic stress.*

## INTRODUCTION

Higher secondary education is the turning point for the students' future. Instead of lethargic, students must concentrate on studies. Academic stress is normal and it happens in life but many students take it in a negative way. During COVID-19, schools were closed and the students missed their studies. At that time, most of the private schools started an alternative teaching method through online but for government schools, there were no online classes. Various reasons were responsible for the student's dropout. The students were made to select/ choose their respective groups in their 11<sup>th</sup> standard without writing board exams. So they were not aware of the group chosen. Various reasons were responsible for the students dropout. So within the limited span of time, the teachers had to rush their portions. Now a day's students do not understand the concepts and simply they are mugging up the lessons

and writing the test. If they have doubts, they are hesitating to ask from teachers. Apart from this, some students are suffered from personal problems also.

Most of the students using their mobile phone at any time without parents knowledge. Usage of social media influences the behavior, academic performance, creates academic pressure, reduces study time, changes in sleeping, eating, etc. Attraction towards opposite sex is also a major problem of students in this modern world. If the student understand the reality of their future and if they able to handle the physical and psychological changes during their adolescent age, they become successful in life.

#### CAUSES OF ACADEMIC STRESS

- Syllabus and study materials
- Teachers pressure to score more / high marks
- Physical and psychological issues
- Usage of mobile for long time
- Personal problems
- Parents health issues
- Financial problems
- Usage of alcohol, drugs, etc
- Smoking
- Peer pressure
- Extra marital affair of parents
- Lack of time managements
- House hold activities
- Teaching method of teachers
- Concentration problems
- Fear of examination
- Inferiority complex
- Comparison of one student with others

#### SYMPTOMS OF ACADEMIC STRESS

- Insomnia
- Lack of appetite
- Always thinking about study
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Headache
- Confusion

- Not able to take decision by own
- Being alone
- Anger

#### TIPS TO REDUCE ACADEMIC STRESS

- Time management
- Concentration
- Daily practice to study at least for 2 hours
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Exercise
- Walking, cycling, running
- Hearing music
- Drawing, painting, etc.

#### LITERATURE REVIEWS

■ *Rao and Abha Subba (2008)*, “**Academic Stress and Adolescent Distress: The Experiences of 12th Standard Students in Chennai, India**”. In this study the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative method for data collection. Totally 558 students from 12<sup>th</sup> standard has been selected as sample from south Indian city of Chennai. A majority of students reported that they were stressed by the coming school and rates of depression & anxiety were very high in the sample. Semi-structured interviews were conducted from 28 students to explore their perceptions of academic stress and adolescent distress.

■ *SURESH PRABU (2015)*, “**A Study on Academic Stress among Higher Secondary Students**”. 250 samples from 11<sup>th</sup> standard who are studying in higher secondary schools situated in Namakkal District were taken for this research. The sample was selected by simple random sampling. The study revealed that the higher secondary students are having moderate level of academic stress. Male student’s academic stress is higher than female student. The urban student’s academic stress is higher than rural student. The Government school student’s academic stress is less than private school student. The science subject student’s academic stress is higher than arts student. The students whose parent’s education as literate level academic stress is higher than their counter part.

■ *Michaela C. Pascoe, Sarah E. Hetrick & Alexandra G. Parker (2020)*, “**The impact of stress on students in secondary school and higher education**”. This narrative review highlighted that academic-related stress is a major concern for secondary and tertiary students. The ongoing stress relating to education has demonstrated negative impact on students’ learning capacity, academic performance, education, employment attainment, sleep quality and quantity, physical health, mental health and substance use outcomes. Increasing students’ stress-management skills and abilities is an important target for change.

■ *K M. Neeta & Dr. Divya Rani Singh (2020)*, “**Academic Stress among Higher Secondary School Students: A Critical Study**”. In this descriptive research design, a sample of 110 students participated from 10 higher secondary schools at Gorakhpur district. The data were collected through Academic Stress Scale. The study found that there is a high significant difference between the academic stress of male and female participants of higher secondary school students. It was also found that, there was no significant difference between academic stress of government aided & self finance school students and rural & urban area school students.

■ *Minani Gurung, Natkamol Chansatitporn, Kanittha Chamroonsawasdi and Punyarat Lapvongwatana (2020)*. “**Academic Stress among High School Students in a Rural Area of Nepal: A Descriptive Cross-sectional Study**”. Descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in 6 schools in Rolpa from July to October 2019. The sample size calculated was 521. Out of a total of 521 students, the prevalence of academic stress was seen among 138 (26.5%) students at a 95% confidence interval (22.72-30.28). The prevalence of academic stress in our study was high and was consistent with other South Asian studies. Understanding academic stress and providing help and support to the students would help ease the burden for them.

■ *Chandan.K.P and R.Shivappa (2020)*. “**Academic stress among higher secondary school students: an overview**”. The current study made an attempt to review the existing literature on academic stress experienced by the higher secondary school students and made an effort to find the causes and stressors of academic stress as well as coping strategies for academic stress. The Literature reviews showcased that the causes for academic stress during schooling are lack of competence, inability to cope with studies, disturbed family dynamics and peer pressure. A lack of support from parents or teachers, even if it is only perceived, can add a lot of stress to students. The author concludes that the support system and conducive environment is much required for the students to advance in their academic life and for reaching greater heights and goals.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main purpose of the research is to assess the level of academic stress of government higher secondary school students. The researcher used descriptive research design for this study. The universe of the study consists of students who are studying 12<sup>th</sup> standard in government school in madathukulam block. Purposive sampling method was adopted for this study. Sample includes 60 students and they were selected using probability random sampling. The students who are given assent by self and consent from their parents have to be selected for the study. The investigator used “Academic Stress Scale” that was originally developed by Kim (1970) and it was adapted to Indian conditions by Rajendran and Kaliappan (1990) for collecting data. It is a five point Likert scale.

0	No stress
1	Mild stress
2	Moderate stress
3	High stress
4	Extreme stress

## RESULTS

- Majority (73%) of the respondents are falls in the age of 17.
- 91.7% of the respondents are male students.
- 58% of the students are in arts group and 42% of the students are in science group.
- 83.3% of the respondent's parents monthly income is from 10000 – 20000.
- 73% of the students are from rural areas, 27% are from semi urban areas
- 40% of the students are studying one hour daily in their home, 26% of the students are not studying daily, 20% of the students are studying 2 hours and 13% of the students are studying more than 2 hours daily at home.
- 46.7% of the students said that teacher's pressure is the main reason for academic stress.
- 36.7% of the students stated that syllabus and study materials are the reason for stress.
- Most of the respondents (75%) are having moderate level of academic stress.
- 13% of the students are in low academic stress.
- 12% of the students are having high level of academic stress.
- There is no significant difference of academic stress between the male and female respondents.

## DISCUSSION

According to this research, majority of the respondents falls in the age of 17. It is the correct age to study 12<sup>th</sup> standard. Due to the willingness of the students, male students came forward to fill the questionnaire. So the majority belongs to male students. In this school, arts group students are high as compared to science group. So the arts group students are quite high. 83% of the parents monthly income is below 10000. So most of the student's family is below the poverty line. 73% of the respondents are from rural area because agriculture is high in this area. At the time of covid 19, the schools were closed for more than a year. So the students are free from attending schools. Many students don't have touch in study. So the school students have low academic performance. So the teachers pressurize them to study well. 75% of the respondents have moderate level of stress. It is also an addressable issue and it can be minimized through some efforts taken by the parents and teachers. It was found that only 12% of the students have high level of academic stress. It must be minimized by using some therapies such as doing yoga and deep breathing will reduce the stress in an effective way. For low grade students, the students should help them to study well by easy teaching technique. In current study, it was identified that there is no significant difference between the academic stress of male and female because after covid-19, all students are having stress in studying. So there is no difference between both genders.

## SUGGESTIONS

- Students have to limit the usage of mobile phones.
- Teachers and parents should educate about social issues and changes occur during adolescent period.
- Teachers should take care of the students in a proper way.
- To reduce academic stress, students should be engaged in sports, music, dance, etc.

- Extra focus should be given for the late bloomers.
- Parents should create a positive and peaceful environment to the students.
- Social workers/counselors should be appointed in block level or school to solve the issues of the students and make them to perform well in academics.

## CONCLUSION

Now a day, teachers are giving their maximum effort but the students do not understand their sacrifices. Students are not willing to do hard work. They want to be free birds, they are very adamant in doing what they think. The problems of the students must be discussed and proper solution should be taken to make the students, teacher relationship healthy. Plus 2 students are also engaged in sports, music and extracurricular activities in schools according to their interests. Practice of yoga, deep breathing and playing games should reduce the academic stress of the students. Parents and teachers should create a better and positive environment for the students. Academic stress is normal due to some extent but if it affects one's day to day life and activities and it should be addressable and find some effective ways to minimize for better academic performance and to lead a normal life.

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