ACADEMIC STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SCHOOL STUDENTS

C. Prabakaran* and **Dr. N. Balakrishnan****
* Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Annamalai University.
** Assistant Professor. Department of Psychology, Annamalai University.

ABSTRACT

The High school students have an important role in the field of education and leave a remarkable impact in the minds of the students. The study has been conducted to investigate the levels of Academic Stress and Mental health of High school students. It also examines the relationship between the Academic Stress and Mental health of the High school students. The study was engaged with a random sample of 100 High school students in Cuddalore District. The tools used in the study were the Academic Stress scale constructed by the Kohn & Frazer (1986) and mental health scale developed by Sharma (2002). The study reveals the fact that the level of Academic Stress and Mental health are at moderate levels. Further, it is noted that there is a negligible amount of correlation between Academic Stress and Mental health among the High school students.

Keywords: *Academic Stress, Mental health and students.*

Introduction
Academic Stress

Stress is one of those peculiar terms, which is understood by everyone when used in a very general context but understood by few when an operational definition is desired which is sufficiently specific to enable the precise testing of certain relationships. The ambiguity of the term is in part a function of the fact that it is applied by some to situations, conditions, or stimuli evoking the responses of subjects, and by others to the response dimensions, whether subjective, psychological, endocrine, or Central Nervous System (Cohen, 1967).

Mental health

In the world of today everyone is threatened by increasing population and degraded circumstances. Health is and has been always one of the most important areas where we need to focus. Concept of health extends beyond the proper functioning of the body, it includes controlled emotions, a sound and efficient mind. This means that mind and body both are working efficiently and harmoniously (Kaur, 2006-07).

Mental health stands for the health of the mind, "The wholesomeness of mind"– analogous to the wholesomeness of the body as implicit in physical health. Accordingly, mental health is concerned with the health of one's mind and its functioning in the same way as the physical health is concerned with the health of one's physical organs and their functioning. A public health approach to mental health, (WHO, report 2008) the concept of mental health has been defined as "Which includes subjective well- being, perceived self- efficacy, autonomy, competence, intergenerational dependence, and self actualization of one's intellectual and emotional potential, among others. From a cross cultural perspective, it is nearly impossible to define mental health comprehensively. It is however generally agreed that mental health is broader than a lack of mental disorders".

Objectives of the study

1. To study the level of Academic Stress of the High school students.
2. To study the level of mental health of the High school students.
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores of Academic Stress and mental health of the following sub samples:
   a. Male and Female High school students
   b. Government, Private and Aided High school students
   c. Rural and Urban high school students

Hypotheses of the study

1. The level of Academic Stress of the High school students is average.
2. The level of mental health of the High school students is average.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Academic Stress and Mental health of the following sub samples:
   a. Male and Female High school students
   b. Government, Private and Aided High school students
   c. Rural and Urban high school students

Research Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of the present study, the survey method was undertaken. The methodological details like sample, tools, and statistical techniques are given below.

Sample

A sample of 100 High school students studying in the schools was drawn by using random sampling technique.

Tools used

Academic Stress scale were constructed and validated by the Kohn & Frazer (1986) and Mental health scale were constructed and validated by the Sharma (2002).

Statistical Techniques used

For the analysis of the data, the following statistical techniques had been used.

Result and Discussion

Table-1

Correlation Co-efficient between Academic Stress and Mental health

Variables	Mental health	Level of Significant
Academic Stress	.219	0.05

NS=Not significant

It is seen from table – 1 that the correlation co- efficient between Academic Stress and Mental health of High school students is positive and significant at 0.05 levels. The above table shows that the Academic Stress and Mental health is significant and positively correlated. It shows that if High school students show positive level of Academic Stress and Mental health.

Table – 2: Analysis and interpretation of data in Academic Stress

Sl. No.	Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D.	't'/ F Value	LS
1	Type of management	Government	49	91.20	19.51	0.025	0.05 Not Significant
		Private	2	88.50	16.26		
		Aided	49	90.86	15.10		
2	Gender	Male	50	100.62	30.96	2.961	0.05 Significant
		Female	50	91.38	19.35		
3	Location of the school	Rural	98	91.03	17.36	0.218	0.05 Not Significant
		Urban	2	88.50	16.26		

From the above table, the calculated mean score of the type of management there is no difference among the government, private and aided High school students, the calculated 'F' value is found to be 0.025, which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it is inferred that the government, private and aided High school students do not differ significantly in their Academic Stress. Also, from the above table, for the male and female High school students, the calculated 't' value is found to be 2.961, which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it is inferred that the male and female High school students differ significantly in their Academic Stress. Further, the result shows for the rural and urban High school students, the calculated 't' value as 0.218, which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it is inferred that the rural and urban High school students do not differ significantly in their Academic Stress.

Table – 3: Analysis and interpretation of data in mental health

Sl. No.	Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D.	't'/ F Value	LS
1	Type of management	Government	49	60.04	10.57	5.967	0.01
		Private	2	68.50	9.19		
		Aided	49	68.08	12.70		
2	Gender	Male	50	68.22	12.61	3.513	0.05
		Female	50	60.08	10.47		
3	Location of the school	Rural	98	64.06	12.31	0.671	NS
		Urban	2	68.50	9.19		

S- Significant   NS- Not Significant

It is concluded that the level of mental health the calculated mean score of the entire sample is found to be 61.15 and the Standard deviation value is 12.23. Hence, it is inferred that the High school students have a high level of mental health. Government, Private and Aided High school students difference between the calculated 'F' value is found to be 5.967, which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it is inferred that the government, private and aided High school students differ significantly in their mental health.

From the above result, it is found for the difference between male and female High school students, the calculated 't' value is found to be 3.513, which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it is inferred that the male and female High school

students differ significantly in their Mental health For the difference between rural and urban High school students, the calculated 't' value is found to be 0.671, which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it is inferred that the rural and urban High school students do not differ significantly in their mental health.

Findings

The following findings were drawn from the study:

- The government, private and aided High school students do not differ significantly in their Academic Stress.
- The male and female High school students differ significantly in their Academic Stress.
- The rural and urban High school students do not differ significantly in their Academic Stress.
- The government, private and aided High school students differ significantly in their mental health.
- The male and female High school students differ significantly in their mental health.
- The rural and urban High school students do not differ significantly in their mental health.

Conclusion

The result reveals that the correlation co -efficient between the Academic Stress and Mental health of High school students is positive relationship and significant at 0.05 level. The result shows that Academic Stress and Mental health is significant and positively correlated.

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