



STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND NON- GOVERNMENT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract: The advent of the 21st century witnessed an unprecedented pace of development in almost every sphere of life. In this relentless pursuit of progress, prosperity, and perfection, the most crucial role has been expected to be played by youth in general and adolescents in particular. Contemporary thinkers, however, conceive of adolescence as a developmental period during which young people negotiate important life transitions. These life transitions are characterised by significant challenges that either indirectly or directly have an impact on the adolescent's schooling, social relationships, as well as their entire psychological development. All these transitions mark adolescence as a period of both opportunities and vulnerabilities. In this background, the present study was undertaken to examine the effects of stress, anxiety, and depression on government and non-government higher secondary school students. In order to conduct the study, a sample of 200 students was drawn by a simple random sampling technique from different government and non-government higher secondary schools. The Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scales (DASS) developed by Lovibond and Lovibond in 1995 were applied. It was found that there was a significant difference between government and non-government higher secondary school students in terms of stress, anxiety, and depression. A significant difference was also observed in their academic performance.

Keywords: Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Government Higher Secondary School Students, Non-Government Higher Secondary School Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

The advent of the 21st century witnessed an unprecedented pace of development in almost every sphere of life. In this relentless pursuit of progress, prosperity, and perfection, the most crucial role has been expected to be played by youth in general and adolescents in particular. Contemporary thinkers, however, conceive of adolescence as a developmental period during which young people negotiate important life transitions. These life transitions are characterised by significant challenges that either indirectly or directly have an impact on the adolescent's schooling, social relationships, as well as their entire psychological development. All these transitions mark adolescence as a period of both opportunities and vulnerabilities.

It is customary to regard adolescence as the beginning of sexual maturity and ending with the age of legal maturity. However, in modern times, Hall (1904) described it as a period of "*Storm and Stress*". Contemporary thinkers, however, place adolescence as a developmental period during which young people negotiate important life transitions (Ellis, 2004; Seginer & Somech, 2000). These life transitions are characterised by significant challenges that either indirectly or directly have an impact on the adolescent's schooling, social relationships, as well as their entire psychological development. All these transitions mark adolescence as a period of both opportunities and vulnerabilities. Parents typically bear primary responsibility as caretakers of their children, but the whole society shares the obligation to help adolescents achieve their full potential in adulthood (Casey et al., 2010; Galvan, 2014; Spear, 2000).

A major part of an adolescent's life, and a significant portion of their time are spent in school. A school is an institution that provides learning spaces and environments for students under the direction of teachers. However, students have to face every

day new challenges in curricular as well as in extracurricular activities coming from inside and outside sources. In some instances, however, pressure seriously disturbs our adaptive resources. Stress patterns are unique and changing (Coleman,1988). Each individual faces a unique pattern of adjustment demands. An individual's age, sex, occupation, economic status, family situation, and caste help determine the demands placed on him. In making adjustments, some students succumb to pressure, which eventually triggers stress, anxiety, and ultimately depression. Stress, anxiety, and depression are the most common psychological problems that most school-going adolescents experience today.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

From the review of the literature available in this area of research, it was noticed that a growing body of evidence has confirmed that adolescents not only experience the whole spectrum of mood disorders but also suffer from the significant morbidity and mortality associated with them. Stress, anxiety, and depression nowadays are ubiquitously seen in students in general because of cutthroat competition to get admission or a job. This status of the knowledge gap justifies the present research work.

Stress is the condition that results when person-environment interaction causes the individual to perceive a discrepancy, whether real or not, between the demands of a situation and the resources of the person's biological, psychological, or social systems. Stress associated with academic activities has been linked to various negative outcomes such as poor health (Greenberg, 1981; Lesko & Summerfield, 1989), depression (Aldwin & Greenberger, 1987), and therefore poor academic performance (Clark & Rieker, 1986; Linn & Zeppa, 1984). Lesko and Summerfield (1989) found a significant positive correlation between the incidence of illness and the number of exams and assignments. Similarly, Aldwin and Greenberger (1987) found that perceived academic stress was related to anxiety and depression in college students. Nevertheless, while too much stress can interfere with a student's preparation, concentration, and subsequent performance, positive stress can be helpful to students by motivating them to peak performance (Pfeiffer, 2001).

Anxiety is often an unpleasant and uncomfortable feeling of worry, fear, and apprehension accompanied by one or more bodily sensations over an anticipated problem. Anxiety is an exceedingly complex concept with a variety of overtones and nuances of meaning from ordinary usage, as well as from psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis. The word anxiety means to designate a strongly personal, phenomenally experienced feeling of distress and anguish. Anxiety is a psychological and physiological state characterised by somatic, emotional, cognitive, and behavioural components (Ohman, 2000).

Studies have shown that usual care by primary care physicians fails to recognise 30-50% of depressed patients (Simon and Vonkorff, 1995). It is widely observed that the incidents of depression in adolescents in general and adolescent students who are preparing for competitive examinations in particular have increased over the last two decades. Adolescent depression may affect the teen's socialisation, family relations, and performance at school, often with potentially serious long-term consequences. This problem can definitely contribute too many serious problems in their academic life, such as poor grades. (Sadock BJ, 2007), (Modabernia MJ, Shodjai-Tehrani H, Moosavi SR, Jahanbakhsh-Asli N, Fallahi M, 2007).

Hypotheses:

The present study will be conducted to examine the following hypotheses:

- i. There will be a significant difference between government male and female students on the level of stress, anxiety, and depression.
- ii. There will be a significant difference between nongovernment male and female students on terms of stress, anxiety, and depression.

III. METHODOLOGY:

- a) **SAMPLE:** The study will be conducted on a sample of 400 students randomly selected from different government and nongovernment higher secondary schools spread in Siwan district. In which 200 students will be selected from government schools and the remaining 200 from nongovernment higher secondary schools in Siwan district.

- b) **MEASURING INSTRUMENTS:**

The following measuring tools and instruments will be applied to obtain data:

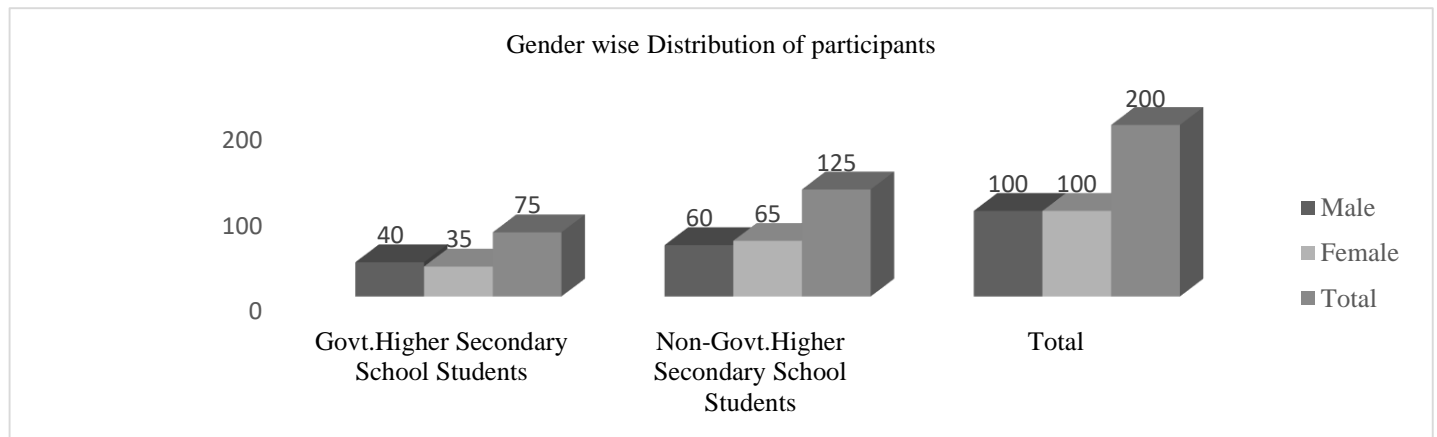
- i. The Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scales (DASS) developed by Lovibond and Lovibond in 1995 will be applied.
- ii. Personal Data Sheet (PDS)

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1

Gender-wise distribution of participants

Variables	Govt. Higher Secondary School Students	Non-Govt.Higher Secondary School Students	Total
Male	40 (53.33%)	60 (48%)	100
Female	35 (46.66%)	65 (52%)	100
Total	75 (37.5%)	125 (62.5%)	200



In government higher secondary schools, the female's proportion was higher than that of males (53.33% vs. 46.66%) while in private schools, 52% were female and the male number was 48%.

Table -2

Distribution of Government Higher Secondary School Male and Female Students on the Level of Stress, Anxiety, and Depression.

Grade	Male (N=40)			Female(N=35)		
	Depression	Anxiety	Stress	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	2(5%)	4(10%)	6(15%)	4(11.42%)	4(11.42%)	6(17.14%)
Mild	1(2.5%)	2(5%)	4(10%)	1(2.85%)	1(2.85%)	2(5.71%)
Moderate	1(2.5%)	2(5%)	2(5%)	1(2.85%)	1(2.85%)	1(2.85%)
Severe	4(10%)	3(7.5%)	4(10%)	2(5.71%)	2(5.71%)	4(11.42%)
Extremely Severe	2(5%)	1(2.5%)	2(5%)	1(2.85%)	3(8.57%)	2(5.71%)
Total	10 (25%)	12 (30%)	18 (45%)	09(25.71%)	11(31.43%)	15(42.87%)

Both the school's anxiety and stress were found to be higher among study participants. Depression was observed to be lower. But if they have more anxiety and stress and if they are not taking proper care at this point in time, they might get into a state of depression. Most students in non-government schools said they are anxious and stressed out because of exam fear as well as their parent's pressure. So, teachers and parents should be educated not to put pressure, on their children. They should also be told about the consequences of depression, anxiety and stress on their children's lives.

Table 3

Distribution of Non-Govt.Higher Secondary School Male and Female Students on the Level of Stress, Anxiety and Depression.

Level	Male (N=60)			Female(N=65)		
	Depression	Anxiety	Stress	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	5(8.33%)	6(10%)	10(16.67%)	3(4.62%)	5(7.69%)	6(9.23%)
Mild	2(3.33%)	4(6.67%)	4(6.67%)	2(3.08%)	3(4.62%)	5(7.69%)
Moderate	2(3.33%)	2(3.33%)	3(5%)	2(3.08%)	4(6.15%)	6(9.237%)
Severe	4(6.67%)	6(10%)	6(10%)	5(7.69%)	6(9.23%)	10(15.38%)
Extremely Severe	2(3.33%)	2(3.33%)	2(3.33%)	2(3.08%)	3(4.62%)	8(12.30%)
Total	15 (25%)	20 (33.33%)	25 (41.67%)	14(21.54%)	21(32.31%)	35(53.85%)

Both the school's anxiety and stress were found to be higher among study participants. Depression was observed to be lower. But if they have more anxiety and stress and they are not taking proper care at this point in time, they might get into a state of depression. Most students in non-government schools said they are anxious and stressed out because of exam fear as well as their parent's pressure. So, teachers and parents should be educated not to put pressure on their children. They should also be told about the consequences of depression, anxiety and stress on their children's lives. It was also observed that female students were susceptible to severe stress in comparison to their male counterparts.

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