

Name of Scholar: Himakshi Bhardwaj

Name of Supervisor: Prof. Nazirul Hasnain

Name of Department: Deptt. Of Psychology

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ABSTRACT

A considerable proportion of an adolescent's life is spent at school in the pursuit of educational endeavors, it is reasonable to assume that a substantial proportion of stressors affecting adolescents may originate in this area. Studies indicate that family environment also plays important roles in developing and controlling the stress of students. Teachers, educationists, social scientists and parents are increasingly becoming concerned about issues related to academic stress, examination anxiety and their effect on students' learning process, well-being and mental health and measures to control and curb delirious effects of these. In such a condition, it becomes the prime duty of social scientists particularly of psychologists to develop scientific tools and measure the stress and ways of coping with stress among adolescents emanating from educational and academic arena.

In the light of the above stated context, the present study was planned and carried out with the objectives to measure and compare academic stress of students and their coping in relation to their academic achievement, familial and gender context. For this purpose initially 502 students studying in Class XI were taken from different schools of Delhi on availability basis. Out of these 502 students, 200 students were finally taken as per the requirement of the study consisting of eight groups each consisting of 25 participants. Family environment scale was administered to 502 participants and Q1 and Q3 were calculated. Those scoring Q1 and below score were taken as students belonging to distressed family and those scoring Q3 and above were taken as students belonging to normal family. In the same way Q1 and Q3 of percentage of marks obtained by students

in the Board examination were calculated. Those scoring Q1 and below were put in the low academic achievement group and those obtaining Q3 and above were taken as high academic achievers. These finally selected 200 respondents were taken as per the requirements of eight groups of the design. A 2x2x2 factorial design was used where two types of family environment, two genders and two levels of academic achievement were treated as independent variables, and two variables i.e. academic stress and coping as a whole and dimensions of coping with academic stress were treated as dependent variables. Academic stress was measured by Student Stress Inventory developed by Dobson and Metcalfe, family environment was measured by Family Environment Scale developed by Moos and Moos and coping with academic stress was measured by a tool developed and standardized by the researcher following standard procedure of test development. However, in order to measure academic achievement, the percentage of marks obtained by the students at Class X board examination was noted down from school records. ANOVA and t-test were used to analyze the data. The following results were obtained:

On the basis of research findings it can be concluded that students from distressed family environment and students who are high achievers experience more academic stress than their counterparts. In case of coping with academic stress as a whole, it seems that the coping is used by all the adolescents in almost equal and moderate degrees which is a healthy trend. However, with respect to dimensions of coping with academic stress, family environment emerged as the most important variable in moderating adolescents' ability to utilize different coping strategies to deal with academic stress.