

Early Adolescents Perception of Personal, Parents Related, School Related and Teacher Related Stress

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Abstract- The present study aims to determine "Early Adolescents Perception of Personal, Parents related, School related and Teacher related Stress". The findings in response to personal stress indicated that homework is the greatest stressor and participation in extra-curricular activity is the least stressor according to adolescents. The adolescents perceived that comparison by parents with peers in academics is stressful and comparison with peers in extracurricular activities is the least stressful. The adolescents also perceived that when they do not get appropriate feedback on school work, is a source of stress to them and participation in extracurricular activities is least stressful. When the teacher does not listen to them is the greatest stress and are least stressed when teacher expresses concern about their future goals. There is significant difference in the mean stress of grade VIII and IX adolescents. There is no significant difference in the mean stress between boys and girls.

Index Terms- Early Adolescents, Perception, Stress

I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescent period can be a stressful time for children, parents and adults who work with adolescents. Children are dealing with the challenges of going through puberty, meeting changing expectations and coping with new feelings. Many also worry about moving from an elementary to a middle high school. And some children may have to deal with things that their peers don't have to face such as the death of a family member or moving to a new town. Most children meet these challenges successfully and grow into healthy adults while others have a harder time coping with their problems. Adolescent stresses are from within and from the various social spheres in which the adolescent operates. The early years of adolescence, between 12 and 15, is often accompanied by short-term emotional instability or low self-esteem.

Stress results from the tension between an individual's reaction to difficulties or challenges and his or her ability to handle and resolve the stressful situation. How people cope with stress depends on the resources that are available to them and whether they have the skills to utilize these resources. The term stressor relates to a challenging occurrence that may produce stress.

A major stressor that some students are faced with on a daily basis is completing schooling task. Adolescents are faced with multiple stressors in their lives on a daily basis. These can range from relationship issues, academics, sex, and money related problems. The negative way that some adolescents cope with these stressors include substance abuse, self-harm or

suicide, isolation, which may result in mental health problems including depression or anxiety. Research has shown an increase in resilience and coping skills when managing stress after participating in trainings and other educational school-based programs that focus on stress management and positive coping strategies. Recent research by Byrne, Davenport, and Masanov (2007) yielded ten dimensions (categories) of stressors that were derived from factor analysis of 58 distinct stressors (items) identified by Australian youth ages 13-18. Four of the categories related to schooling; other categories reflected stressors associated with interpersonal relationships, home life, financial pressures, uncertainty about the future, and the presence of emerging adult responsibility.

II. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF STRESS

Stressful life circumstances may influence school adjustment in many ways. First, dealing with stress in other areas of their lives may interfere directly with children's performance at school by depleting the amount of time, energy, and focused attention available for academic tasks and school involvement, such as completing homework or engaging in after-school activities. Second, exposure to high levels of stress may divert coping resources away from efforts to deal with the challenges of school. This lack of resources may lead adolescents to feel overwhelmed, and create a sense of helplessness that results in disengagement from school. Third, stressful circumstances outside of school may lead children to place less of a priority on educational goals, thereby undermining school investment. Finally, if stress originates within the family setting, it is likely that family members have less availability and lower levels of school involvement, which would diminish emotional and instrumental support necessary for educational success.

With the exception of a few research studies (Verma & Gupta, 1990; Verma, Sharma & Larson, 2002), academic stress and adolescent distress has not been explored in great detail in India. Mental health professionals in India, however, have identified academic pressure as an acute stress factor that leads to mental distress, and in extreme cases, to suicide.

III. AIM

To study Early Adolescents Perception of Personal, Parents related, School related and Teacher related Stress.

IV. OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the level of stress among the students of VIII and IX grades.
2. To compare stress among adolescent boys and girls
3. To analyze and compare stress among adolescent in relation to
 - Personal stress
 - Parent related stress
 - School related stress
 - Teacher related stress

Hypothesis

Ho1: Grade IX students are more stressed than grade VIII students.

Ho2: Girls are more stressed than boys.

V. METHODOLOGY

Sampling method

The sampling method used was convenient sampling and purposive sampling. The samples were taken from English medium formal secondary grade school from the western suburbs of Mumbai, India. The total sample size for the study was 335 adolescent students from school of Mumbai city (western suburbs). 4 schools were selected for data collection. The data collected were on the basis of grades i.e. VIII and IX English medium schools.

Tools for data collection

The tools used for data collection was a self-made questionnaire to find out the stress level among the VIII and IX grades. The questionnaire had 2 categories: General information and Levels of stress – 5 point rating scale.

Scoring of the tool

Scores are derived for all the five categories by assigning a score from 1 to 5 to the responses given for each statement. For a positive statement, a response of "Not at all Stressful/Irrelevant to me" earned a score of 5, a response of "Little Stressful" earned of 4, a response of "Moderately Stressful" earned as 3, a

response of "Quite Stressful" earned as 2 , while "Very Stressful" earned as score of 1.

Tool Reliability

Table 1. Tool Reliability

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .773 | .773 | 21 |

The scale has a good reliability. A coefficient of ≥ 0.70 .

Procedure for data collection

The procedure of the data collection began with the identification of formal English medium secondary schools. The researcher requested appointment to meet the principle of the school. In all, 10 English formal medium secondary schools were approached. Out of this, 4 English medium secondary schools gave permission to conduct the research study. Meetings were fixed with the principle of the school to explain the importance and objectives of the study. The data was collected after the permission was given by the schools.

Data analysis

The data collected from VIII and IX grade student's questionnaire was qualitatively analyzed. T-test was used to analyze the data quantitatively. Standard deviation and mean analysis was also used for this quantitative data.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The total sample constituted of 335 students from VIII and IX grades. 60.3% of the students were from Grade VIII and 39.7% of the students were from grade IX. The sample had 54% boys and 46% girls. In the sample 4.2% students were 12 years of age, 50.7% students were 13 years of age and 45.1% students were 14 years of age.

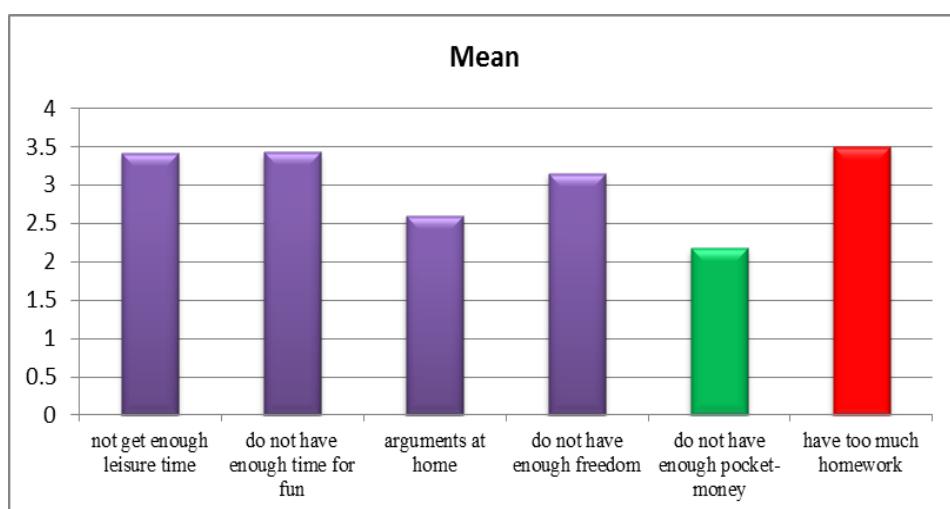


Figure. 1. Response to personal stress.

The above figure shows responses towards personal stress. The adolescents feel that when they have too much homework it is the greatest stress and when they do not have enough pocket money is the least stress for them. However the research finding

was in congruence with a finding of an empirical study done by Galloway & Pope, (2007) which stated that extensive homework in high school is associated with physical symptoms, academic worries, and mental health problems.

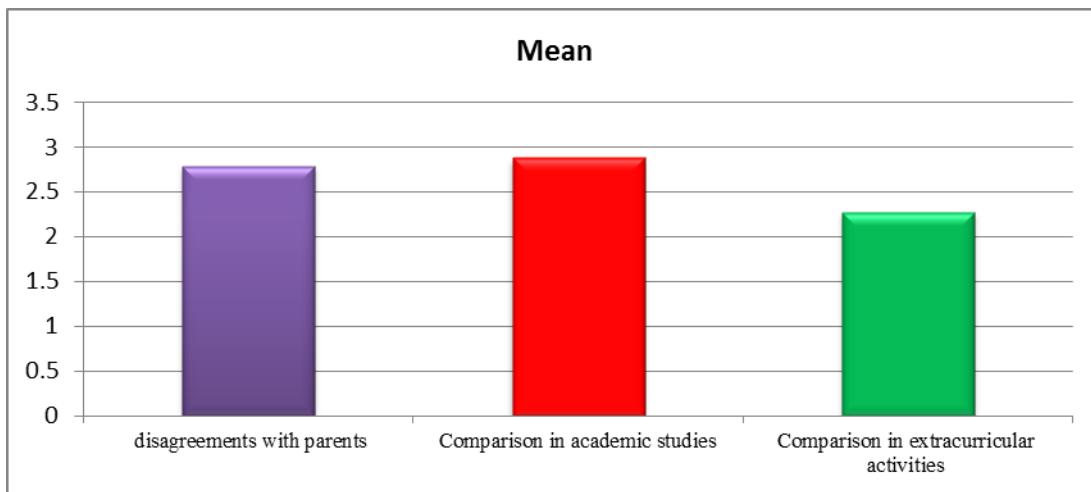


Figure 2. Response to parents' related stress.

The above figure shows responses towards parents' related stress. The adolescents feel that comparison by parents with peers in academics is the greatest stress and comparison by parents with peers in extracurricular activities is the least stress among adolescent students. The research finding was supported with finding of the study by Putnick, et al (2008) which stated that mothers' and fathers' parenting stress was related to

children's perceptions of acceptance and psychologically controlling behavior, and psychologically controlling behavior was related to adolescent self-concept. Parenting stress was related to specific parenting behaviors, which were, in turn, related to specific domains of self-concept in adolescence. Parenting stress appears to exert its effects on early adolescent self-concept indirectly through perceived parenting behavior.

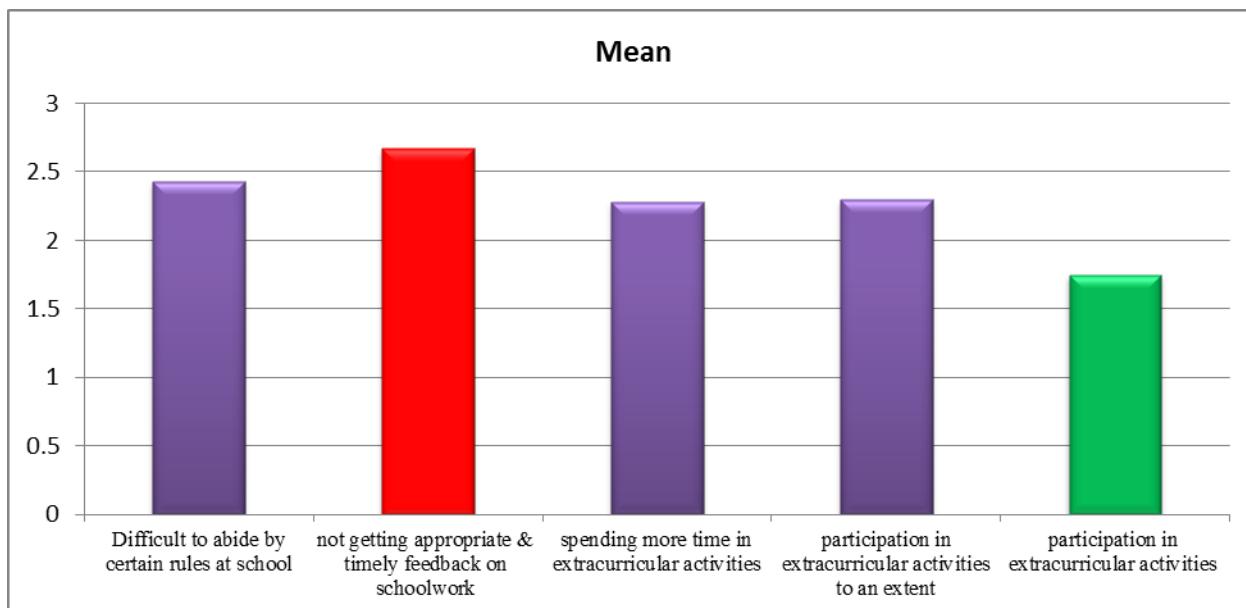


Figure 3. Response to school related stress.

The above figure shows the response to school related stress. The adolescents feel that when they do not get appropriate and timely feedback on school work is a great source of stress to

them and participation in extracurricular activities is least stressful.

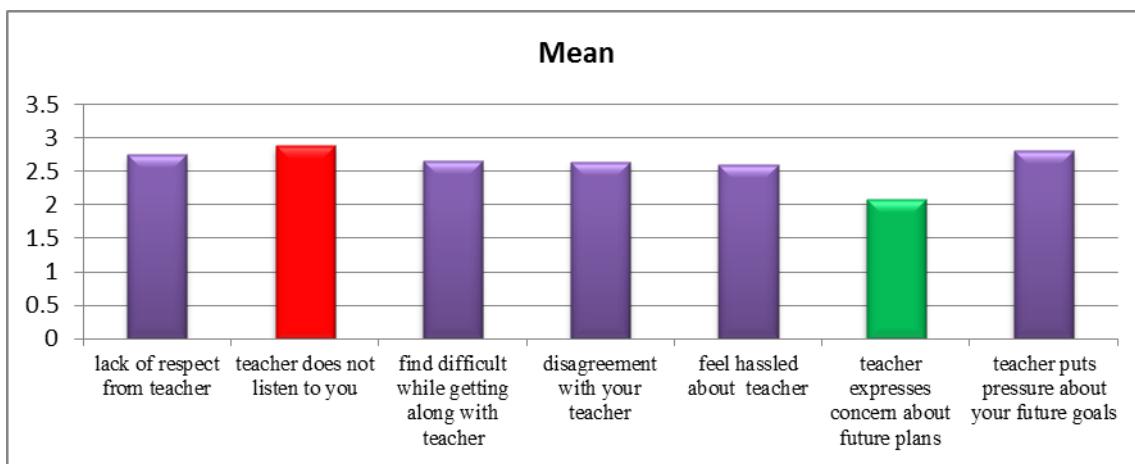


Figure. 4. Response to teacher related stress.

The above figure shows response to teacher related stress. When their teacher does not listen to them is one of the greatest

stressors in adolescent students. The students are least stressed when teacher expresses concern about their future goals.

Table 2. Mean difference between stress level among VIII and IX grade.

| | Class | N | Mean % | S. D | SD Error Mean | t-test for Equality of Means | | |
|--------|-------|-----|--------|-------|---------------|------------------------------|-----|-----------------|
| | | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Stress | VIII | 202 | 43.08 | 14.08 | .99 | 2.18 | 333 | .029 |
| | IX | 133 | 39.77 | 12.62 | 1.09 | | | |

The above table shows the mean difference between stressors level among VIII and IX grade students. The p value is 0.029 which is < 0.05 hence there is a significant difference in the mean stress of grade VIII and IX adolescent students. The

results indicate that Grade VIII students have more stress than grade IX Students. Therefore the hypothesis Grade IX students are more stressed than grade VIII students is rejected.

Table 3. Mean difference between stress level among boys and girls.

| | Gender | N | Mean % | S.D | S.D. Error Mean | t-test for Equality of Means | | |
|--------|--------|-----|--------|-------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|----|-----------------|
| | | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Stress | Boy | 181 | 41.31 | 13.73 | 1.02 | -.66 | 33 | .505 |
| | Girl | 154 | 42.30 | 13.47 | 1.08 | | | |

The above table shows the mean difference between stress level among boys and girls. The p value is 0.505 which is > 0.05 hence there is no significant difference in the mean stress between boys and girls. Therefore the hypothesis girls are more stressed than boys is rejected.

VII. CONCLUSION

The present study was conducted to examine the levels of stress among adolescent students of VIII and IX grade. Adolescence is a period in which parents and teachers role is important in it. This is said to be life formation period. Therefore it has been considered necessary to study stress of adolescents with a view to have scientific understanding of the problem.

The findings in response to personal stress indicated that homework is the greatest stressor and participation in extracurricular activity is the least stressor according to adolescents. The adolescents perceived that comparison by parents with peers in academics is stressful and comparison with peers in extracurricular activities is the least stressful in response to parents' related stress. The adolescents also perceived that when they do not get appropriate and timely feedback on school work from the teacher, is a great source of stress to them and participation in extracurricular activities is least stressful in response to school related stress. When the teacher does not listen to them is the greatest stress and are least stressed when teacher expresses concern about their future goals in response to teacher related stress. There is a significant difference in the mean stress of grade VIII and IX adolescent students. The results indicate that Grade VIII students have more stress than grade IX Students. The p value is 0.029 which is < 0.05 hence there is a significant difference in the mean stress of grade VIII and IX adolescent students. Therefore the hypothesis Grade IX students are more stressed than grade VIII students is rejected. There is no significant difference in the mean stress between boys and girls hence the hypothesis girls are more stressed than boys is rejected. The p value is 0.505 which is > 0.05 hence there is no significant difference in the mean stress between boys and girls.

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendations for teachers:

- Training sessions on "Identify Stress and Help children cope with stress" should be conducted for teachers in schools in order to enhance their skills in dealing with stress issues of adolescent children.
- It is advisable for teachers to practice and implement the coping skills to help children cope with stress.

Recommendations for parents:

- Parents should make it a habit to open up lines of communications towards their children and discuss issues that their adolescent child would like to talk about.
- Parents need to acquire knowledge and skills to help their adolescent child deal with life situations in the right manner.

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