

## **Impact of Gender and Socio-Economic Status on Academic Frustration and Anxiety of the Adolescents**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Frustration is that the state of some need or tendency being unsuccessful. Evidently frustration is the outcome of impediment in the part of an individual's goal or purpose. Adolescence is the period of psychological and social transition between childhoods to adulthood. Adolescents struggle with their anxieties, conflicts and confusion. The present global world is the world of achievements but also a world of stress, and has therefore rightly been called the "Age of Anxiety and Stress" (Pestonjee, 2009). In recognizing the instability of adolescence, there is, however, a risk that these stress-related problems could be regarded as an unavoidable norm – rather than as an indication that adolescents need help and support. Therefore an attempt was made to know the impact of gender and socio-economic status on academic frustration and anxiety of adolescents. For the aim a complete sample of three hundred adolescents from 6 schools of Lucknow district were arbitrarily chosen, whereby one hundred fifty boys and one hundred fifty girls were further selected for this study. Hundred fifty boys and equal number of girls were further divided into fifty respondents belonging to lower, middle and higher Socio-economic status. For the study Bisht Battery of stress scale by Abha Rani Bisht and Socio-economic scale by Kuppu swami was used. The result indicated that, there was a non significant effect of gender and socio-economic status on academic frustration and anxiety.

**Key Words :** Academic frustration, Academic anxiety, Adolescents, Gender, Socio-economic status

### **INTRODUCTION**

The modern world, which is said to be a world of accomplishment, is also a world of stress. In today's highly cutthroat world, students face different academic problems including exam stress, disinterest in attending classes and inability to understand the subject. Examination stress is the feeling of anxiety or apprehension over one's performance in the exams. It can lead to students being unable to perform to the best of their abilities in exams (<http://www.iitr.ac.in>). Academic stress is the major source of stress among adolescents and it should result in low self-esteem. Several psychological issues like depression and suicide occur as a result of low self-esteem (Nikitha *et al.*, 2014). Schafer (1996) Observed that the most irritating daily hassles were

usually school-related stressors such as continuous pressure of studying, too little time, writing term papers, taking tests, future plans and boring instructor etc.

### **Review of literature:**

Sulaiman *et al.* (2009) studied the relationships between stress level and academic achievement among students in urban and rural secondary schools in Malaysia. The subjects of the study comprised of 155 students from two secondary schools in Malaysia. This study used the survey method by administering Students-life Stress Inventory questionnaires. The study showed that no students intimate high stress, twenty nine per cent students intimate medium stress and seventy one per cent students intimate low stress. Using the t-test, the findings of the study additionally indicated that there are important

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variations in level of stress for gender and between students in rural and urban secondary school. The analysis additionally finds that completely different stress level exists between male and feminine students.

Landstedt and Gillander (2012) conducted cross-sectional study by patterns of perceived stress and reported stressor in a sample of 17 year old adolescent students. The study revealed that the girl students were highly stressed. Considering the relationship of perceived stress with class indicated by academic orientation, no class differences were found. Performance-related stressors were predominately indicated by girl students in academic programmes. Looks-related stresses were more common among girl students than boy students. Economic stressors and relational stressors were mostly shown particularly by girl students studying for vocational programme. There existed complex gender and class patterning of stress due to demands of money and lack of money.

Kumar *et al.* (2011) while studying the methods of overcoming stress concluded that as stress level differs among the genders and therefore the methods cannot be the same for boys and girls, which should be based on the factors causing stress rather than any other basis and the parents and teachers associations in the schools can play a lead role.

Leung *et al.* (2010) indicated that educational stress was a risk issue that heightened student anxiety levels which parental emotional support was a protecting issue that contributed to higher mental health among children. However, paternal informational support delivered to children during times of high educational stress seemed to heighten student anxiety levels.

Huan *et al.* (2008) conducted a study on students in Singapore and examined the different characteristic features of adolescent concerns on the academic stress of adolescent students. Data was obtained using the Adolescent Concerns Measure and the Academic Expectations Stress Inventory. The study on Stress and Coping among Adolescent Students examined personal, family, peer and school concerns of the adolescent students. The differences in academic stress experienced by the adolescents with respect to the gender of the respondents were explored. The scores on the Personal Concerns subscale were positively associated with the academic stress arising from self and other expectations, irrespective of gender. The school-related concerns were also predictive of academic stress arising from other

expectations, for the females. The females obtained significantly higher scores on the Academic Expectations Stress Inventory than that of males.

Singh and Upadhyay (2008) observed that first year students experienced higher degree of academic stress in comparison of third year students and at the same time female students perceived more academic stress in comparison of their male counterpart.

### Objectives of the study:

1. To assess the impact of gender and socio-economic status on academic frustration of male and female adolescents.
2. To study the impact of gender and socio-economic status on academic anxiety of male and female adolescents.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Lucknow city, drawing sample from the six schools of the city. The sample for the study was collected adopting stratified random sampling technique. The sample for the study consisted of 300 adolescents of class 7 to 12 between the age group of 12-18 years, studying in co-educational Senior Secondary schools belonging to lower, middle and upper socio-economic groups. A total sample of 300 adolescents was selected, wherein 150 boys and 150 girls were selected for the present study. Hundred fifty boys and equal number of girls were further divided into 50 respondents each belonging to lower, middle and upper Socio-economic Status.

### Tools used:

Bisht Battery of stress scale (BBSS) by Dr. Abha Rani Bisht and Socio-economic status scale by Kuppu Swami were administered for data collection.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result in the Table 1 reveals that the gender and the socio-economic status do not affect the level of academic frustration in adolescents as there was a non-significant effect of the gender, on the academic frustration was found where,  $F(\text{value}) = .039, p = .844$ . Non-significant effect of socioeconomic status on the academic frustration was also found as the  $F(\text{value}) = .691, p = .502$ . This indicates that academic frustration was not affected by either gender or socio-economic

**Table 1 : Analysis of variance of academic frustration due to gender and socio economic groups of the respondents**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F value	P value	Result
Due to gender	21.333	1	21.333	.039	.844	Non significant
Due to socio-economic status	757.087	2	378.543	.691	.502	Non significant
Error	161051.960	294	547.796			
Total	3227908.000	300				

**Table 2 : Analysis of variance of academic anxiety due to gender and socio economic groups of respondents**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean Square	F value	P value	Result
Due to gender	142.830	1	142.830	.589	.443	Non significant
Due to socio-economic status	240.980	2	120.490	.497	.609	Non significant
Error	71233.380	294	242.290			
Total	1048885.000	300				

status. The probable reason may be that adolescents of every socio-economic status and gender want to achieve good grades and they also want to be academically sound so that they can fulfill their and their parent’s dreams and aspirations.

Watson (2002) also supported the study he found no significant difference in the perceived stress between male and female students when the researcher made a comparison of perceived stress levels and coping styles of junior and senior students in Nursing and Social Work programs. This study identifies academic stress among first year university students in Universities from six geo-political zones in Nigeria with reference to gender differences.

Olsen *et al.* (1991), also stated that age and class level did not have significant effects on academic stress and this is consistent with previous studies. The inclusion of age and class level in the analysis may have accounted for the non-significant results observed.

Table 2 indicates that the gender and socio-economic status do not affect the level of academic anxiety in the adolescents as result showed a non-significant effect of the gender, on the academic anxiety was also found as the  $F$  (value) = .589,  $p$  = .443. A non-significant effect of socioeconomic status on the academic anxiety was also found as  $F$  (value) = .497,  $p$  = .609. This indicates that academic anxiety was not affected by gender and socio-economic status. Regular attendance, assessments in the class rooms, parental expectations to achieve good grades, extended syllabus etc. causes academic anxiety in adolescents.

Deb *et al.* (2010), also found the same result of

higher anxiety among female students in Bengali Medium schools in India.

Interestingly, Misra and Mckean (2000) found positive association between anxiety, academic stress and trait anxiety being a significant predictor of academic stress. According to them, “individuals who scored high on trait anxiety experienced higher stressors and reactions to stressors. Females exhibited higher anxiety (both trait and state) than males.”

Also Busari (2000) found that there was a significant difference between male and female adolescent underachievers managed with Stress Inoculation Training Techniques to reduce test anxiety.

Campbell and Rapee (1994), also found Gender to be significantly associated with examination-related anxiety and psychiatric caseness. That is, female students experience more examination-related anxiety and psychiatric caseness than their male counterparts. This confirms previous findings that adolescent girls report a greater number of worries, more separation anxiety, and higher levels of generalized anxiety than do boys of the same age.

**Conclusion:**

The study concluded that academic frustration was not affected by either gender or socio-economic status. The result also indicated that academic anxiety was not affected by gender and socio-economic status.

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