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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF STRESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Stress Is A Part Of Human Life And Each Individual Is Faced With Circumstances That Expose Them To Stress From Time To Time. The Negative Impact To Stress Is Widely Known With The Growing Attention Given To Mental Health, Which Highlights The Crucial Need To Control Stress In An Individual. Secondary School Students Who Are Mostly In Their Adolescence Are Characterized By The Growing Level Of Stress Due To Their Physiological, Neurological And Behavioural Changes As Well As Their Induction As Young Adults In The Society. Though Certain Level Of Stress Proves To Be Beneficial, There Is A Need To Help Adolescents Cope With Stress To Prevent The Negative Impact That It Can Have At This Stage. The Present Study Is Conducted Among Secondary School Students Of Lunglei, Mizoram With A Sample Of 185 Students. 'Students Stress Scale' Developed By Dr. Zaki Akhtar Was Used For Collection Of Data In The Study. The Study Revealed That Majority Of The Secondary School Students Have Low Level Of Stress With Boys Having Higher Stress Than The Girls.

Keywords: Stress, Secondary School, Students

Introduction

Stress is a common occurrence throughout the entirety of the human lifespan. It has, is still and will continue to be a part of everyone's life. The complexity of the human social, personal, and ecological environment, the various and simultaneous ways that people deal with environmental challenges, and the variety of ways that people exhibit stress are the causes of stress' increasing prevalence and inclusivity in the contemporary world.

'Stress is defined by psychological sciences as a feeling of pressure and tension in the mind. The first and most widely accepted definition of stress was proposed by Hans Selye "the non-specific neuroendocrine response of the body" (Selye 1936; as cited in Szabo, Tache, & Somogyi, 2012 p.474). Later studies on stress have widened the scope of stress which ultimately gives new meaning to the concept of stress. Stress thus, may be defined as a psychological condition that is influenced by physiological, neurological and other related factors that creates pressure and tension in an individual. There however is a misconception that stress is always a negative label, which is not entirely true. Low amounts of stress may be desirable, practical, and even beneficial. Positive stress can enhance psychosocial well-being and boost productivity. Positive stress is considered to enhance motivation and productivity, it is thus more of an accelerating factor that not. But excessive stress may cause physical, psychological, and social issues as well as grave injury to people.

Rationale of the study

It is crucial to remember that stress can affect people positively and negatively. This suggests that stress may be a typical, adaptive response to threats or challenging circumstances. Its purpose is to alert people to danger and get them ready to defend themselves. On the other hand, high level of stress resulting in chronic stress can pose grave threat to the individual. Adolescents make up the population of secondary school students and the stage of adolescence is characterized by the prevalence of stress on a high level. Many times, stress among adolescents escalated to conditions that harm the well being of an adolescent, like that of depression and chronic stress. Therefore, every effort to enhance the well-being of adolescents has to incorporate the subject to stress. The study is conducted to reveal the stress level of secondary school students with the hope to pave the way for necessary intervention.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the stress level of secondary school students.
2. To compare the stress level of secondary school students with regards to gender.
3. To compare the stress level of secondary school students with regards to type of school management.

Hypotheses of the study

1. There is no significant difference in the stress level of male and female secondary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in the stress level of government and private secondary school students.



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Methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature, hence descriptive survey method is used to conduct this study.

Population and Sample

Population of the study comprises of all the secondary school students in Lunglei, Mizoram. A sample of 185 students were selected randomly from three government and four private secondary schools of Lunglei.

Tool Used

'Students Stress Scale' developed by Dr. Zaki Akhtar was used for collection of data in the study.

For reliability of the scale, internal consistency or coefficient alpha reliability was established 0.78 and is significant at .01 level of significance. For validity, the scale has constructed validity of .72.

Findings of the study

1. Objective no.1: To find out the stress level of secondary school students.

The finding in relation to objective no.1 is that majority of the secondary school students (70.26%) have 'Very Low Stress', while only 1 student i.e., 0.54% have 'Very High Stress'. The percentage of secondary school students having 'High Stress', 'Moderate Stress' and 'Low Stress' are 5.41%, 7.03% and 16.76% respectively.

Sl. No.	Level of stress	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Very High Stress	1	0.54%
2.	High Stress	10	5.41%
3.	Moderate Stress	13	7.03%
4.	Low Stress	31	16.76%
5.	Very Low Stress	130	70.26%

2. Objective no.2: To compare the stress level of secondary school students with regards to gender.

The finding in relation to objective no.2 revealed the existence of significant difference in the stress level of male and female secondary school students in Lunglei. The t-value for the comparison of the stress level of male and female secondary school students is found to be 5.05 which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Hence, the null hypothesis stating "There is no significant difference in the stress level of male and female secondary school students" cannot be accepted.

Variables	No. of students	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Female	107	132.61	17.57	5.05	Significant at 0.01 level
Male	78	147.14	21.59		

3. Objective no.3: To compare the stress level of secondary school students with regards to type of school management.

The finding in relation to objective no.3 revealed that there is no significant difference in the stress level of government and private secondary school students in Lunglei. The t-value for the comparison of the mean scores of the stress level of government and private secondary school students is found to be 1.71, which is not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis stating "There is no significant difference in the stress level of government and private secondary school students" is accepted.

Variables	No. of students	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Government	90	141.4	23.75	1.71	Not significant
Private	95	136.21	16.86		



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Discussion and Conclusion

The study conducted to measure the stress level of secondary school students revealed that majority of the secondary school students of Lunglei, Mizoram have low level of stress. The low level of stress among the secondary school students indicates a healthy mental state when it comes to stress. As stated earlier, certain amount of stress is beneficial for an individual as it keeps them motivated. The comparison based on gender revealed that the male students have relatively higher stress as compared to the female students. This finding is in consonance with the findings of Misra and McKean (2000) and Khan, Lanin & Ahmad (2011). However, the stress level of students does not differ based on the type of school management i.e., government and private schools.

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