

Examination Stress Among Senior Secondary School Students in Relation to Gender and Stream

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Abstract-Our education system has loaded the students with variety of pressure such as vast curriculum, examination fear; neck-to-neck competitions etc. peer and parental pressure add tons to their problem. Examination stress is a crucial problem of a student life in the present scenario. The present study was conducted to know the examination stress felt by male and female of senior secondary school students under arts and science stream of education. The sample consisted of 300 senior secondary school students belonging to Shimla District of Himachal Pradesh. Examination Stress Scale developed by Department of Educational Measurement and Evaluation, NCERT (2005) was used by the investigator. The findings revealed that male students showed high examination stress than female senior secondary school students and the students of arts were found high on examination stress than science senior secondary school students.

Keywords: Examination, Stress, Stream.

INTRODUCTION

Tension and stress have become a part and parcel of today's life. The 21st century has been branded as the age of 'stress and anxiety'. Stressful circumstances are encountered every day and at every stage of human development. Stress is a concept that has been linked to various aspects and operations. According to Chaplin(1982) Stress is a state of strain whether physical or psychological. Brown (1985) felt that stress is an unfavourable perception of the social environment and its dynamics that threaten social and psychological well being. Definitions of stress have focused on stimulus- as external negative force impinging on an individual; response-as an individual's emotional and/ or physiological response to external and internal environmental events and interaction elements- as person, environment problem, resulting from perceptions and appraisal of one's internal and/or external environments (French, Rodgers and Cobb,1974)

Examination Stress

Examination stress is an excessive tension about coming exams and a fear of being checked or evaluated. It is experienced by many normal students. A student with really strong examination stress may even feel like he or she might pass or can't do well in the examination. Almost everyone feels nervous before an examination. Grasping pains in stomach and worrying thoughts – “*Will I be able to crack the examination!*” “*I have not done enough revisions!*” – are indications of examination stress. All of these thoughts can create a negative frame of mind, lead to panic and potentially poor exam performance.

Examination stress is one of the most important problems among moderate and low average students. In the time of examination, many students and parents approach counsellors and psychologists which show the existence of the severity of this problem. It prompted the researcher to make an in depth study of this subject. Examination stress is type of performance stress i.e. a feeling due to which students might have in a situation where performance of the students really counts or when pressure's on to do well. It is present in everyone, yet few will openly admit or admire its presence. Examination stress is one of the most distressing built on enigmas and feelings of student. It is also assumed to be a sign of weakness, so all efforts are made to avoid it. It encompasses tension, nervousness, fear and worry. In this arena of competition, the secondary school students feel fear, tension, nervousness and stress. The examination Stress is a very serious problem as many cases of suicide found in the newspapers during the period of examination. The symptoms of examination stress mainly refers to feeling of nervousness, tension and worry as well as trembling, heart palpitations are increased and the throat being dry, sometimes fever may also occur and loss of appetite.

Factors Affecting the Examination Stress

There are various factors which affect examination stress; some of them are as follows:

- (a) Today's pressure of society (i.e. Lifestyle issues)
- (b) Poor studying styles
- (c) Psychological factors
- (d) Information needs.

Consequences of Examination Stress

Examination stress affects different students of senior secondary schools in different ways:

- ❖ Physical symptoms: Headache, insomnia, upset stomach, sweaty palms, dry mouth, increased heartbeat, shortness of breath, diarrhoea, more frequent urination, etc.
- ❖ Emotional changes: Worry, fear, anger, frustration, discouragement, panic, hopelessness, depression, etc.
- ❖ Behavioural changes: Tense movements, losing focus of actions, less coordinated movements, nail biting, moving or walking faster than normal, escaping behaviour etc.
- ❖ Social changes: Social withdrawal, avoidance of friends and family, etc.

Prevention of Examination Stress for the Students

During the whole Academic Session systematic planned and organized preparation for the examination is very essential for a student. Using time management techniques is also necessary since student life is all about learning how to achieve a balance between studies and other activities. Keeping to a healthy lifestyle is another key to controlling stress.

In the Examination Hall Avoiding anxiety provoking discussion with friends is the best thing to be done. Going to the examination hall in proper time and with positive attitude will be fruitful. The student needs to be comfortable in the examination and read and understand the questions paper before beginning to answer. Planning to answer the questions as per his/her ability and within the stipulated time is always advisable. The questions which can be solved should be taken up first. A little time should be kept to revise the answer sheet. Writing answers to the point can save a lot of time and avoid panic.

Need and Significance of the Study

Our education system has loaded the students with

variety of pressure such as vast curriculum, examination fear, neck-to-neck competitions etc. peer and parental pressure add tons to their problem. Examination stress is a crucial problem of a student life in the present scenario. The psychologist and educationists have been focusing their research proposal in the area of stress new demands are imposed by rapid change in the education, these, in turn cause stress previous study have suggested that the degree of stress experienced by students is affected by characteristics of education, teacher and the students themselves they remained mostly in the fields of occupational stress, stressful life event and stress due to some chronic diseases etc. But less attention is paid to the issues of examination stress, realising the present day need in the area of education where focus is upon mobilising and directing inner potentialities of students to cope with difficulties which achieve better. For the above reason, the researcher opted this study to find out the better solutions, provide guidance and plan strategies for teachers, parents and students in order to cope with examination stress.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

“Examination Stress among Senior Secondary School Students in relation to Gender and Stream.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the examination stress of male and female senior secondary school students.
2. To study the examination stress of senior secondary school students having Science and Arts stream.
3. To study the interactional effect of gender and stream on the examination stress among senior secondary school student.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in the examination stress of male and female senior secondary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in the examination stress of senior secondary school students having Science and Arts stream.
3. There is no significant interactional effect of gender and stream on the examination stress among senior secondary school student

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

In this study, descriptive research method has been used to find out the examination stress among senior secondary school students in relation to gender and stream.

Population and Sample

The population of the present study consisted of all students of 10+1 and 10+2 class studying in Government senior secondary schools of district Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. The sample comprised 300 students of 10+1 and 10+2 class studying in Government senior secondary schools having Science and Arts stream.

Variables

Examination stress was regarded as dependent variable. Gender and Stream were regarded as independent variables.

Tools

Examination Stress Scale developed by Department of Educational Measurement and Evaluation, NCERT(2005) was used for data collection.

Research Design

In the present study a 2x2 research design was used for analysing the data in respect of Examination Stress. There were two levels of gender- boys and girls and also two levels of stream- Science and Arts.

DATA ANALYSIS

Two-way ANOVA was employed in the study of analysis of the data.

Table 1: Summary Table of Analysis of Variance (2x2) For Examination Stress of Senior Secondary School Students in Relation to Gender and Stream:

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-values
Gender (A)	5757.74	1	5757.74	10.37**
Stream (B)	4201.13	1	4201.13	7.57**
AxB	1.67	1	1.67	0.003 NS
Error	164356.32	296	555.26	
Total	174325.80	299		

**Significant at 0.01 level& NS- Not Significant at 0.05 level

Table 2 : Mean and SDs Scores of Examination Stress of Male and Female Senior Secondary School Students

Variable	Male	Female
Examination Stress	M= 120.78 SD= 24.82 N= 156	M= 112.00 SD= 22.60 N= 144

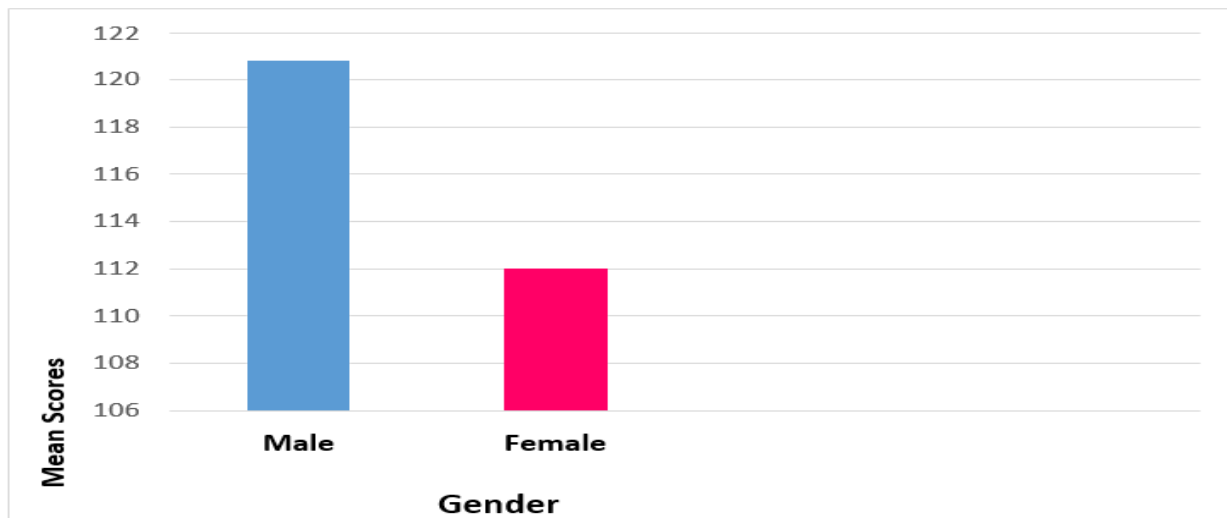


Fig 1: Mean Scores of Male and Female Senior Secondary School Students on Examination Stress

Table 3: Mean and SDs scores of Science and Arts Senior Secondary School Students on Examination Stress

Variable	Science	Arts
Examination Stress	M= 112.87 SD= 24.34 N= 152	M= 120.36 SD= 23.42 N= 148

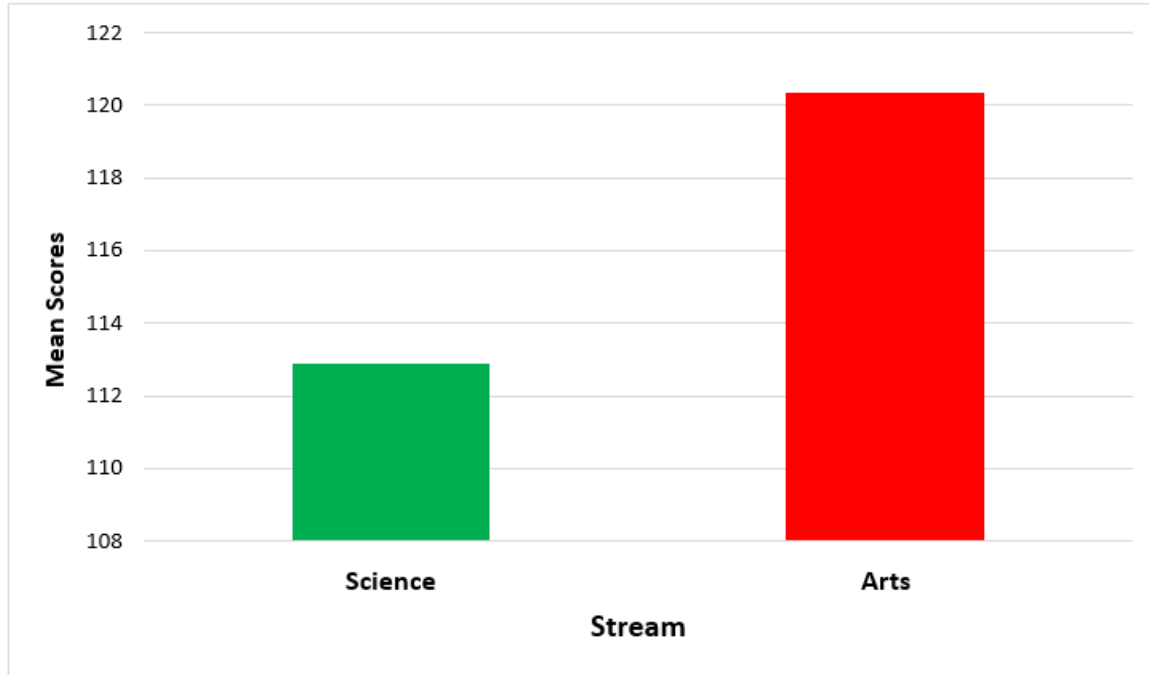


Fig 1: Mean Scores of Science and Arts Senior Secondary School Students on Examination Stress

RESULTS

The obtained results of two way ANOVA in respect of Examination Stress have been given in table 1. Mean scores of male and female senior secondary school students of examination stress where differences were found to be significant are presented in table 2. Further the mean scores of science and arts senior secondary school students have been reported in table 3 of Examination Stress for which the F-ratio was found to be significant.

It may be observed from Table 1 that gender and stream had main effect on Examination Stress. However, there was no interactional effect of gender and stream on Examination Stress was found.

As regards gender differences, it was observed (vide table 2) that male senior secondary school students have higher examination stress as compared to female senior secondary school students.

The mean scores disclosed that arts senior secondary school tended to rate higher on Examination stress than science counterparts.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1: stated that there would be no significant differences in Examination stress of male and female senior secondary school students. This was not retained with regard of Examination Stress. The findings revealed that male senior secondary school students were having high mean scores on examination stress than female senior secondary school students. It may be because most of the male students take their studies very lightly and don't follow deep and detailed study. Only just before the examination they are in hurry to complete the course materials which leads them to experience stress of examination.

Such findings of the study is in conformity with the findings of Taragar (2009); Menaga and Chandrasekaran (2014); Malhotra (2015) & Sembulingam, Prema and Sridevi (2016).

Hypothesis 2: anticipated no significant differences in Examination stress of Science and Arts senior secondary school students. This was not retained with

reference of Examination Stress. Arts students were found to have higher mean scores on Examination Stress than science senior secondary school students. The courses provided by Arts stream are not as job oriented which perhaps create stress among the students. Another reason is that most of the students from Arts stream take their courses very lightly and don't follow deep and detailed study. Only just before the examination they are in hurry to complete the course materials which leads them to experience stress of examination. The studies supporting these findings are Shahmohammadi (2011); Kumari Archana & Jain Jagrati (2014); Kumari(2015) ; Saharia Dipannita and Goswami Marami (2020).

The results of interaction of gender and stream did not emerge out to be significant. Hence research hypothesis 3 was not accepted. Since so far few studies have been conducted on the theme of present investigation, empirical support could not be extended with reference to interaction effect of gender and stream on Examination Stress. Further research in the concerned area may highlight this aspect.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

If you fail, Never give up because F.A.I.L. means First Attempt In Learning” End is not the end, in fact E.N.D. means “Effort Never Dies” If You get No as an answer, Remember N.O. means “Next Opportunity”

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

The findings of the study suggest there is need of stress management programmes at school level. At the same time the administrators and policy makers need to take this issue seriously and take immediate steps to introduce stress management programmes in educational institutions, especially in the final years of schooling like in 10th and 12th standard. The results of the study showed that male students experience more examination stress than the female students. So, they should be given special importance. This result will help the teachers, parents and school administration to become extra careful in dealing with the male students and providing separate counselling and stress management programmes according to their requirement.

It has also been found in the study that students from Arts stream have more examination stress than the students having Science stream of study. One of the main reasons is that the courses provided in the stream

of Arts are not job oriented and give little scope to the students to choose their career. It gives an indication to the policy makers that it's time to make appropriate changes in the course content and introduce some new courses. So, apart from the stress management programmes, courses of study should also be designed in such a way that it caters to the future needs of the students of Arts stream. The results also point out the necessity of awareness programmes and capacity building programmes to be provided to the parents and teachers so that they can identify those with examination stress and take care of them effectively.

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