



# INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ON THE ACADEMIC STRESS OF JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDENTS IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT

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## ABSTRACT

The present study aims to examine the level of academic stress of junior college students of Chittoor district due to variation in their location of college, type of college, and group of subject. Data was collected through the Academic Stress Rating Scale from 651 second year intermediate junior college students of Chittoor district, selected by using simple random sampling technique. The study reveals that English medium students experience high level of academic stress than Telugu medium students. Significance difference was also observed in the academic stress of students studying different type of colleges. Location of college has also influenced the academic stress of junior college students.

## INTRODUCTION:

Stress is a normal reaction for people of all ages. It is caused by our body's in strict to protect itself from emotional or physical pressure or in extreme situations from danger. Too much stress has a negative effect on one's body, mind and feeling. How one handles his stress has a lot to do with his health. When stress becomes too frustrating and lasts for long period. It can become harmful distress. College students, especially freshers, are a group particularly prone to stress (Zurilla & Sheedy, 1991) due to the transitional nature of college life. They must adjust to being away from home for the first time. In school and college education too, these variables play a vital role in creating academic stress in students. It is important that stress intervention programmes be designed to address stress of college students. However, in order to design an effective intervention, the stressors specific to college students must be determined. The present study is an attempt in this direction to reduce the stress in students.

## Objectives of the Study:

1. To find out the significance difference, if any, in the academic stress of intermediate students due to variations in their location of college (rural/urban).
2. To find out the significance difference, if any, in the academic stress of intermediate students due to variations in their medium of study they are studying-in (Telugu/ English).
3. To find out the significance difference, if any, in the academic stress of intermediate students due to variations in their type of college (govt & aided /Private).

## Hypotheses of the Study:

1. There exists significant difference in the academic stress of second year intermediate students due to variations in the location of college.
2. There exists significant difference in the academic stress of second year intermediate students due to variations in their medium of study they are studying-in.
3. There exists significant difference in the academic stress of second year intermediate students due to variations in their type of college students are studying-in.
4. *Methodology used in the Study:*  
Survey method is used in the study.

## Tools used in the Study:

For the purpose of the study, the researcher has developed Rating Scale to assess the Academic Stress of Second Year Intermediate Students.

The Academic Stress Rating Scale consists of six dimensions with 98 statements i.e. Physical health and Personal Aspects (AS<sub>1</sub>), College Environment Aspects (AS<sub>2</sub>), Teacher-Student- Peer Related Aspects (AS<sub>3</sub>), Academic Related Issues (AS<sub>4</sub>), Home and College Interface (AS<sub>5</sub>), and Academic Stress due to Examinations (AS<sub>6</sub>).

The validity of the tool was established by obtaining the opinion and suggestions of psychologists, educational experts, professionals working in stress related aspects. Based on the discussions, some statements were deleted and few statements were re-modified to avoid ambiguity and repetition of items in the rating scale. In view of the procedure adopted for development of the rating scale, it is said that the research tool possesses face validity, content validity and construct validity. A pilot study was carried to find out the reliability of the rating scales developed for the study with 70 second year intermediate students (10% of the total sample) studying in intermediate junior colleges, randomly selected from two colleges from East Godavari district conducted. The reliability value of split of method is 0.89 and whole test reliability is 0.94. The intrinsic validity of academic stress rating scale as a whole is (0.97). The reliability and intrinsic validity of the research tool is very high and hence the tool possesses high reliability.

## Locale and Sample of the Study:

There are 60 government & aided and 163 private colleges intermediate junior colleges were functioning in both rural and urban area in Chittoor district.

In the first stage, the investigator has randomly selected 4 government & aided and 11 private junior colleges (7% of the total colleges) in this district by using simple random sampling technique. There are approximately 4882 second year intermediate students are studying in the selected sample colleges. In the second stage, 15 percent i.e 651 second year intermediate students were taken as the sample of the study from the different groups such as M.P.C, M.E.C, Bi.P.C, C.E.C & H.E.C, by using stratified random sampling technique.

## Data Collection and Statistical Techniques used in the Study:

The developed tool was administered to the second year intermediate junior college students of Chittoor district. The student's were directed to go through the instructions before rating the statements in the respective tools. The collected data was analyzed by using mean, SD and t/F test.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The calculated t-values in the table-1, for college environment aspects (2.11) and home and college interface (3.68) are significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels respectively. Hence, the stated hypothesis 'there exist significant difference in the academic stress of students due to variations in their gender' is accepted for college environment aspects (2.11) and home and college interface. It indicates that male and female students significantly differ in their academic stress due to the above dimensions.

**Table 1:** Mean and S.D. of Academic Stress Scores of students studying in rural and urban area Junior colleges and the calculate t- values.

| Dimensions                            | Location of College |        |               |        | Calculated 't' value |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|--------|---------------|--------|----------------------|
|                                       | Rural (N=246)       |        | Urban (N=405) |        |                      |
| Academic Stress Dimensions            | Mean                | SD     | Mean          | SD     |                      |
| Physical, Health and Personal Aspects | 36.66               | 6.978  | 36.19         | 6.959  | 0.84@                |
| College Environment Aspects           | 42.54               | 9.961  | 40.84         | 9.925  | 2.11*                |
| Teacher-Student- Peer Related Aspects | 57.33               | 13.020 | 56.37         | 14.773 | 0.85@                |

|                                      |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Academic Related issues              | 60.41  | 12.790 | 60.46  | 13.590 | 0.05@  |
| Home and College interface           | 36.78  | 9.482  | 33.79  | 10.425 | 3.68** |
| Academic Stress due to Examinations  | 40.05  | 8.318  | 40.19  | 9.028  | 0.19@  |
| Academic Stress dimension as a Whole | 273.78 | 46.537 | 267.84 | 48.428 | 1.54@  |

Note: @Significant at 0.05 level \*Significant at 0.05 level (> 1.96) \*\*Significant at 0.01 level (> 2.56)

Further, the mean values of college environment aspects and home and college interface reveal that the rural area college students (AS2- 42.54 & AS5: 36.78) are experiencing more academic stress than urban area college students (AS2- 40.84 & AS5: 33.79). The colleges located in urban areas generally may have better infrastructure facilities than the colleges located in rural areas. At intermediate stage, students need better lab facilities apart from computer literacy. In the absence of well structured labs with adequate instruments/apparatus, it is natural that the students may experience stress in the college as well as in home environments. Probably, this may be the reason that the students studying in the colleges located in rural areas experiencing higher level of stress than their counterparts studying in urban colleges. Moreover, parents of rural area are less educated and they may not be able to guide their children in academics. Adding to this, most of the private junior colleges are located in urban area so that rural area students unable to compete with them. This result is in support with the findings of Nirmala (2013) and Suresh (2015).

Further, physical health and personal aspects (0.84) teacher-student-peer related

aspects (0.85), academic related issues (0.05), academic stress due to examinations (0.20) and academic stress as a whole (1.54) are not significant at 0.05 level indicating location of college has no influence on academic stress of college students caused due to the above said dimensions.

The mean and SD scores of the academic stress dimensions of intermediate junior college students belonging to different medium of study and the calculated t-values are presented in table-2.

Table-2 illustrates that the variable 'medium of study' has significant influence on the academic stress of students causing due to physical health and personal aspects (AS<sub>1</sub>: 3.19), college environmental aspects (AS<sub>2</sub>: 3.09), academic related issues (AS<sub>3</sub>: 4.06), home and college interface (AS<sub>4</sub>: 4.67), and academic stress due to examinations (AS<sub>5</sub>: 3.70) as their t-values are significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the corresponding hypothesis 'there exist significant difference in the academic stress of second year intermediate junior college students due to variations in the education of the parents' is accepted for the above said dimensions.

**Table 2:** Mean and S.D. of Academic Stress Scores of students studying in Telugu and English medium the calculate t- values.

| Dimensions                            | Medium of Study       |        |                         |        | Calculated 't' value |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------|----------------------|
|                                       | Telugu Medium (N=202) |        | English Medium (N= 449) |        |                      |
| Academic Stress Dimensions            | Mean                  | SD     | Mean                    | SD     |                      |
| Physical, Health and Personal Aspects | 35.08                 | 7.010  | 36.95                   | 6.873  | 3.19**               |
| College Environment Aspects           | 39.69                 | 9.855  | 42.29                   | 9.920  | 3.09**               |
| Teacher-Student- Peer Related Aspects | 55.51                 | 13.694 | 57.28                   | 14.309 | 1.47@                |
| Academic Related issues               | 57.32                 | 13.009 | 61.84                   | 13.181 | 4.06**               |
| Home and College interface            | 37.65                 | 9.540  | 33.69                   | 10.223 | 4.67**               |
| Academic Stress due to Examinations   | 38.26                 | 7.870  | 40.98                   | 9.014  | 3.70**               |
| Academic Stress dimension as a Whole  | 263.52                | 48.109 | 273.03                  | 47.380 | 2.36*                |

Note: @ Not significant at 0.05 level, \*Significant at 0.05 level, \*\*Significant at 0.01 level

The mean values indicates that private college students are undergo more academic stress (AS<sub>1</sub>: 36.95, AS<sub>2</sub>: 42.29, AS<sub>3</sub>: 61.84, AS<sub>4</sub>: 40.98 and ASW: 273.03) than govt & aided college students (AS<sub>1</sub>: 35.08, AS2: 39.69, AS4: 57.32, AS6: 38.26 and ASW: 253.52) due to physical health personal aspects, college environment aspects, academic related issues, academic stress due to examinations and academic stress as a whole. On other hand, Telugu medium students (AS5: 37.65) are with more academic stress than the English medium students (AS5: 33.69) due to home and college interface. These findings are in line with the study of Anuradha (2015) and Eswaran (2016). After completing intermediate education, the students has to join either in professional courses (Medical/Engineering/Architecture/CA) or other general higher education degrees where the medium of instruction is mostly English. Realizing this, most of the students try to enter in English medium at intermediate level inspite of their English language competence. The students who prefer Telugu medium rely on the class teaching and also these students are mostly studying in government colleges, where facilities are not up to the expectation and where teachers are not sensitive to the result orientations. This in turn, reflects on Telugu medium students academic stress.

Further, the t-values for teacher- student- peer related aspects (AS<sub>3</sub>: 1.47) is not significant at 0.05 level, indicating that the variations in the medium of study has no significant influence on their academic stress due to above dimension.

The mean and SD scores of the academic stress dimensions of intermediate junior college students belonging to different type of colleges and the calculated t-values are presented in table-3.

The obtained t-values in table-2 clearly shows that, the academic stress dimensions college environment aspects (AS<sub>2</sub>: 6.75), academic related issues (AS<sub>3</sub>: 5.37), home and college interface (AS<sub>4</sub>: 2.93) academic stress due to examinations (AS<sub>5</sub>: 3.19) and academic stress dimension as a whole (AS<sub>6</sub>: 3.76) are significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the stated hypothesis 'there exist significant difference in the academic stress of intermediate students due to variations in their type college the students are studying-in is accepted for the above said dimensions. This indicates that the govt.& aided and private college students differ in their academic stress due to the above said dimensions.

**Table 3:** Mean and S.D. of Academic Stress Scores of students studying in govt.& aided and private junior colleges and the calculate t- values

| Dimensions                            | Type of College      |        |                 |        | Calculated 't' value |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|----------------------|
|                                       | Govt.& Aided (N=140) |        | Private (N=511) |        |                      |
| Academic Stress Dimensions            | Mean                 | SD     | Mean            | SD     |                      |
| Physical, Health and Personal Aspects | 36.36                | 6.425  | 36.37           | 7.111  | 0.02@                |
| College Environment Aspects           | 36.31                | 8.866  | 42.82           | 9.841  | 6.75**               |
| Teacher-Student- Peer Related Aspects | 53.39                | 15.945 | 57.65           | 13.469 | 0.59@                |
| Academic Related issues               | 55.21                | 14.248 | 61.87           | 12.649 | 5.37**               |
| Home and College interface            | 37.14                | 9.456  | 34.31           | 10.290 | 2.93**               |
| Academic Stress due to Examinations   | 38.06                | 9.301  | 40.71           | 8.527  | 3.19**               |
| Academic Stress dimension as a Whole  | 256.76               | 51.090 | 273.73          | 46.210 | 3.76**               |

Note: @ Not significant at 0.05 level, \*Significant at 0.05 level, \*\*Significant at 0.01 level

The mean values indicates that private college students are experiencing high level of academic stress ( $AS_2$ : 42.82,  $AS_3$ : 61.87,  $AS_4$ : 40.71 and  $ASW$ : 273.73) than the govt & aided college students ( $AS_2$ : 36.31,  $AS_3$ : 55.21,  $AS_4$ : 38.06 and  $ASW$ : 256.76) due to college environment aspects, academic related issues, stress due to examinations and academic stress as a whole. On other hand, govt & aided college students ( $AS_2$ : 37.14) have more academic stress than the private college students ( $AS_2$ : 34.31) due to home and college interface. This findings are in tune with the findings of Eswaran (2016) and Santhosh (2014).

Whereas, the calculated t-values for teacher-student-peer related aspects ( $AS_3$ : 0.59) are not significant at 0.05 level, indicating that the type of college the students are studying-in is not having any significant bearing on their academic stress.

#### IMPLICATIONS:

The junior college managements should give importance to the recreational activities such as games and sports, NCC, NSS etc. along with their regular academics. Private colleges especially corporate colleges should provide congenial environment in the college and they should maintain teacher student ratio in the class room. Rural area students need to provide better facilities by govt. in the name of scholarships, special coaching centers, career guidance centers, hostels facilities and free education in corporate colleges. Schools and colleges should organize varied activities to tap the potentialities of children and nurture them according to their taste and will, than focusing for better grades in academics. Parents should aware of the abilities of their children to join them the particular medium of study and the students of Telugu medium background are in need of special coaching particularly in English communication skills in order to avoid academic stress. It is the pressure put on children to excel and score top marks that cause stress. The policy of government in appointing lecturers in colleges should be changed. The teachers who have trained in pedagogy should be appointed as lectures in junior colleges. The government should appoint committees to inspect the corporate junior colleges regularly. The board of intermediate education should be strengthened with sufficient staff according to the number of colleges in each district. The mindset of parents and private college managements in imposing goals and targets to students needs to be changed, so that their children can enjoy the learning process rather than be intimidated by it.

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