



## **A Comparative Study on Academic Stress of Secondary School Students**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Adolescents owing to quick and colourful changes in all directions naturally experience many problems like social adjustment problem, emotional problem and educational problem. These problems have tremendous effect upon their personality. Moderate level stress helps to improve particular task or activity. It finishes work accurately or correctly because of fear or punishment. But increased amount for a prolonged period will have deleterious effect on the physical and mental health and academic achievement of the students. In this paper an effort has been made to study about the academic stress of secondary school students. The researcher had selected 200 students (100 males and 100 females) as sample from ten schools of Kamrup (Metro) and Morigaon District, Assam. This study is based on primary and secondary data. Students Academic Stress Scale was used for collecting data.

**Keywords:** Academic stress, Secondary school students.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is a transitional period of life when new and unique stressors are often being encountered such as physical maturation, drive for independence, increased salience of social and peer interactions and brain development. According to Stanely Hall, adolescence is a period of great stresses and strains, storm and strife (Chauhan 1993). Though it may be a time of acute stress for some, it may not always be a stressful time for all. But it is reasonable to assume that a time which is fiery for some is at least smoky for others. It is also true that adolescents owing to quick and colourful changes in all directions naturally experience many problems like social adjustment problem, emotional problem and educational problem. These problems have tremendous effect upon their personality. Moderate level stress helps to improve particular task or activity. It finishes work accurately or correctly because of fear or punishment. But increased amount for a prolonged period will have deleterious effect on the physical and mental health and academic achievement of the students.

The term stress has been derived from the Latin word 'stringere'; which means 'to draw tight'. The concept of stress was first introduced in life sciences by Hans Selye in 1936. He has defined (1993) stress as, 'Stress is the non specific result of any demand upon the body, be the effect mental or somatic.' Again, according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), psychological stress is the emotional response experienced when an environmental stimuli or event could endanger well-being, is perceived as exceeding a person's resources and can be defined by a stimulus-response relationship. This is based on the cognitive-relational theory of stress which emphasizes that the person-environment interaction is continuous and reciprocal in nature. The degree of stress experienced depends on how much of a stake a person has in the outcome of the event: if there is no relevance to the person and no threat, there will be no stress; if their stake is high, the encounter will pose a threat or challenge, triggering a stress reaction.

The Indian exam and marks oriented education system results in excessive academic stress in students. So if a student feels that he or she is unable to fulfil the demand of parents and teachers, he or she may get stressed.

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### **AREA OF THE STUDY**

In this study the researcher will be selected Kamrup (Metro) district and Morigaon District of Assam as area of the study. Administrative headquarters of Kamrup Metropolitan district is at Guwahati city. The district occupies an area of 127.84 sq.km. The district has a population of 12,60,419 (2011 census). Guwahati is the seat of power in Assam. It is a major commercial centre and is the node that connects six other North Eastern Indian States.

The district of Morigaon is situated on the south bank of the river Brahmaputra. It was a sub-division of Nagaon district and was declared a separate district with headquarter at Morigaon in September, 1989. The district has one subdivision which is comprised of five revenue circles, 632 villages, one statutory town and five Census towns. It has seven blocks and 85 Gram Panchayats. According to the Census Report, 2011, the total population of the district was 9,57,853 of which 4,85,328 male and 4,72,525 female. Out of this population 8,84,557

inhabit in rural areas and 73296 in urban areas comprising of both tribal and non-tribal people. Among the tribes the Tiwas are the dominated tribe in the district.

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## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In this competitive world, Adolescents feel stress due to their over burden activities. According to 2017 Lancet Report, India has the highest suicide rate between the aged 15-19 years. Between 2010 and 2017, suicide rates per 100 000 adolescents increased by 7.9% per year. I.V.LalithKumari (2013), in her article provides different causes of academic stress such as school environment, extracurricular, peers, workload, time management and parental pressure. Now-a-days, broken families like single parent, divorcee parent, frequent conflict between parents or conflict among family members, death of parents etc. develop emotional and behavioural problems. Sometimes family problems spoil the mental peace of the children. The common symptoms include diminished pleasure in learning, addiction to drugs or alcohol, smoking, irritability, fatigue, depression, insomnia and physical problems, ranging from migraine, back pain and ulcers. (Vivekananda Kendra Yoga Research Foundation,1999). Stressful negative school experiences affect adolescents' academic performance, achievement and social adjustment. When academic stress problems are not recognized, students may be unable to reach their academic potential. The present study will be useful for teachers to identify the causes of student's academic stress. This study will also provide an insight to the teachers and parents to deal effectively with their children. This understanding will also assist the teachers to create a more affectionate, harmonious, warm and democratic emotional atmosphere at school.

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## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

**Prabu (2015)** conducted a study on academic stress. Normative survey method was used in the study. A sample of two hundred fifty students was selected randomly. The tool administered in the study was the Academic Stress Scale. The major findings of the study were: 1. Students had moderate level of academic stress. 2. There was no difference between rural and urban school students in their academic stress. 3. There was no difference between male and female school students regarding academic stress. 4. There was no difference between government and private school students regarding academic stress.

**Rose (2016)** conducted a study on academic stress and academic achievement and their impact on time management, locus of control level of aspiration and learning styles. A sample of five hundred twenty secondary school students was selected randomly in the study. The tools administered in the study were: Bisht Battery of Stress Scale, Time Management Competency Scale, Level of Aspiration Measure, Style of learning and thinking and Levenson's Locus of Control Scale. The major findings of the study were: 1. Academic stress was negatively correlated with time management. 2. Academic stress and locus of control were positively correlated. 3. Academic stress and level of aspiration were not significantly correlated. 4. Academic stress and style of learning were not significantly correlated.

**Sagar and Singh (2017)** conducted a study on academic stress. A sample of hundred eighty students was selected randomly. The tool administered in the study was self structured Academic Stress Scale. The major findings of the study were: 1. Male had more academic stress compared to female. 2. There was no difference between government aided and self finance school students regarding academic stress. 3. There was no difference between rural and urban school students regarding academic stress.

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## OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED

**Academic Stress:** Academic stress is a mental and emotional pressure on students due to specific academic demands. In the present study academic stress will be defined on the basis of adolescents studying in class X.

**Secondary school students:** A students admitted to class X and appearing SEBA IX examination in the year 2019.Only government secondary schools are considered under the study.

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## OBJECTIVE

- To study the gender differences in academic stress among secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district.
- To study the gender differences in academic stress among secondary school students of Morigaon district.
- To compare the academic stress of secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) and Morigaon districts.

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## HYPOTHESES

- There is no significant difference between academic stress of male and female secondary school students of Morigaon district.
- There is no significant difference between academic stress of male and female secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district.

- There is no significant relationship between secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district and secondary school students of Morigaon district regarding academic stress.

## METHODOLOGY

### Method

Descriptive survey method has been applied for the present study.

### POPULATION

All the students studying in class X of government secondary schools of Kamrup (metro) and Morigaon districts of Assam form the population.

### SAMPLE

The study was conducted on a sample of 200 students, who are studying in class X of 10 secondary schools. Stratified random sampling method has been applied for the present study. Stratification was based on gender (Male and female). Schools were namely: Jagi bhakatgaon Higher Secondary School, Jagiroad Higher Secondary School, Hatibat Anchalik High School, Swahid Lakhi Deka High School, Nagabandha Secondary School, Arya Bidyapeeth Higher Secondary School, Ulubari Higher Secondary School, Ulubari Higher Secondary School, Dispur Govt Higher Secondary school, Narengi High School and Rukmini Gaon Baalika Vidyalay High school.

### TOOLS

In the study the investigator employed Students Stress Scale, which was developed by Zaki Akhtar (2011). It consists of 51 items (41 positive and 10 negative items) and administered on 13 to 18 years age range of students. It is a five point scale varying from the response of “Always” to “Never” with regards to the degree of stress. In addition to assessing the stress level, it claims to be helpful in exploring basic academic pressures or burdening of school going children. Split-half and test-retest reliabilities of the scale are .78 and .71 respectively and construct validity is .72.

## PROCEDURE FOR DATA ANALYSIS

Academic Stress Scale was administered to the students. Data was collected and scoring was done with the help of scoring key. Means and SDs were calculated for Academic Stress Scale score. Comparison was made by applying t test. To find out the relationship between secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district and secondary school students of Morigaon district regarding academic stress, Pearson’s product moment method of coefficient of correlation was computed.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

In order to present the result systematically the collected data was tabulated and was analyzed in the light of hypotheses framed.

- **Hypothesis: 1-** There is no significant difference between academic stress of male and female secondary school students of kamrup (Metro) district.

**Table-1** shows the Means, SDs and t values of male and female students on academic stress of kamrup (Metro) district

Academic Stress	Mean	SD	N	‘t’ value	Significant Level
Male	15.94	3.96	100	3.18	Significant
Female	17.85	4.62	100		

From the Table 1, it has been observed that the t- value was found significant at both 0.01 and 0.05 levels which indicate that the academic stress of male and female secondary school students of kamrup (Metro) district differ significantly. So, the null hypothesis i.e. there is no significant difference in the academic stress of male and female secondary school students of kamrup (Metro) district, is rejected.

- **Hypothesis: 2-** There is no significant difference between academic stress of male and female secondary school students of Morigaon district.

**Table-2** shows the Means, SDs and t values of male and female students on academic stress of Morigaon district

Academic Stress	Mean	SD	N	‘t’ value	Significant Level
Male	8.26	1.38	100	6.04	Significant
Female	9.59	2.01	100		

From the Table 2, it has been observed that the t- value was found significant at both 0.01 and 0.05 levels which indicate that the academic

stress of male and female secondary school students of Morigaon district differ significantly. So, the null hypothesis i.e. there is no significant difference in the academic stress of male and female secondary school students of Morigaon district, is rejected.

- **Hypothesis: 3-** There is no significant relationship between secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district and secondary school students of Morigaon district regarding academic stress.
- **Table-3** shows the Coefficient of correlation between secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district and secondary school students of Morigaon district regarding academic stress.

Variables	N	Coefficient of correlation	Interpretation
Academic stress of Kamrup (metro) district secondary school students	200	0.43	Significant at 0.01 level
Academic stress of Morigaon district secondary school students			

Table 3 indicates that the coefficient of correlation between secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district and secondary school students of Morigaon district regarding academic stress is 0.43, which is significant at 0.01 level of significant. Thus, the null hypothesis i.e. there is no significant relationship between secondary school students of Kamrup (metro) district and secondary school students of Morigaon district regarding academic stress is rejected.

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following findings were revealed by this study:

1. The findings showed that male and female group differed significantly.
2. The study revealed that female group has experienced more academic stress than male group. Due to their serious nature of females about academic career.
3. It was also found that academic stress of secondary school students of Kamrup (Metro) district is higher than Morigaon district.

## CONCLUSION

The study clearly reveals that academic stress of secondary school students of Kamrup (Metro) district is higher than Morigaon district. So, the immediate need for counselling programmes and remedial techniques such as yoga, meditation etc. were needed to reduce the academic stress among secondary school students. To deal with academic stress among students, it is also necessary that the students, parents, teachers, administrations and the government should work hand in hand. Teachers should adopt right methods of teaching; use appropriate motivational techniques etc. The parents should know and understand the capacities of their children and expect the results accordingly. Good teachers, good parenting, healthy relationships, good environment at school and at home, good peer relationship, positive outlook in life will help any student to face the challenges in life.

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