Comparative Study of Stress and Anxiety between College Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the current study was to evaluate the differences between college male and female students levels of stress and anxiety. 200 students—100 males and 100 females—between the ages of 17 and 19 who attended colleges in various parts of the Sirsa District were chosen at random. The college students were given the Puri, Kaur, and Mehta (2011) Stress Scale and A.K.P Sinha & L.N.K Sinha (1971) Sinha Comprehensive Anxiety Test. The findings showed that these females experience more stress than males. No significant difference found on anxiety in both groups. These findings provide valuable insights into the gender-specific experiences of stress and anxiety in the studied population

Key words: Stress, Anxiety, College Students.

Introduction

Stress

Stress is frequently viewed as a psychological process that includes each person's particular perception of and response to each stressful event. The word stress, which was coined by Hans Selye in 1936, was subsequently defined by him as the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change. Every individual encounters stress in their lives, including pressure, lowered confidence and self-esteem, among other things. Stress has ingrained itself into everyday life.

A physiological or psychological reaction to internal or external stimuli is known as stress. Almost every system in the body experiences changes as a result of stress, which have an impact on how people feel and act (American Psychological Association, 2003). A mental illness marked by a fear of being seen or recognised by other people. Everyone experiences anxiety differently and for various reasons. Varied people have varied reactions to stress and social anxiety. Fook and Sidhu (2015) highlighted eight significant learning obstacles that students in higher education face.

Stress is a state that develops when an individual experiences an imbalance between what is required of them in a given scenario and their biological, psychological, or social systems. This imbalance may or may not be actual. Stress occurs when a person believes that he lacks the resources to meet the demands of the environment. Stress triggers a wide range of physiological and psychological responses. Anxiety is frequently an unwelcome and uncomfortably strong emotion of worry, dread, and anxiety coupled by one or more physical symptoms related to an impending issue.

Everyone's life in this world usually involves some level of stress that cannot be avoided. It presents a detrimental idea that could affect ones mental and physical health. Stress is consistently thought of as a psychological process including a person's unique perception and reaction to each stressful occurrence. Everyone experiences stress at some point in their life, and unless students learn effective coping mechanisms, it may negatively impact their physical and emotional well-being, academic progress, and other aspects of their lives as well.

Anxiety

Changes in one's body, emotions, and behaviours are hallmarks of the emotional state of anxiety. It frequently has associations with particular circumstances or objects, and the majority of those who experience anxiety think that enduring feared circumstances would cause their anxiety to continuously increase to unacceptable levels. We all experience anxiety on a daily basis. At some time in our life, almost everyone will struggle with anxiety. Although anxiety might be unpleasant, it is a natural bodily reaction to threat, fear, or danger and is not harmful. Prior to facing something difficult, such a test, examination, recital, or interview, people frequently feel a general feeling of concern or panic.

Empirical studies on the influence of gender on stress were found to be contradictory and mixed up (Azila-Gbettor et al., 2015). For example, Sulaiman, Hassan, Sapian, and Abdullah (2009) found that female students have experienced a higher level of stress compared to male students because they tend to be extra emotional and sensitive toward what is happening in their surroundings. Jogaratnam and Buchanan (2004) found the same finding that female

students reported a higher level of stress than their male counterparts concerning the time pressure dimension of stress. More to these findings, stress and anxiety levels among female college students were found to be elevated compared to counterparts (Bayram & Bilgel, 2008).

Researchers found that many obstacles of anxiety while study processes such exam anxiety, mathematic anxiety, language anxiety, social anxiety, family anxiety and library anxiety. Anxiety while study is a major predictor of academic performance (McCraty, 2007; McCraty, Dana, Mike, Pam and Stephen, 2000) and various studies have demonstrated that it has a detrimental effect.

Dr. Indira Dhull & Sunita Kumari (2015) undertook a study to examine academic stress among adolescents in relation to gender. 123 males and 89 females of class 10th were selected in the research. It was hypothesized that no significant difference between academic stress of male and female adolescents would be found. Stress Inventory for School Students (S.I.S.S) by Singh & Rani was used to collect the data. For statistical analysis, t-test was used. The results suggested that female adolescents had significantly higher level of stress than male adolescents.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the present field work was to measure and compare the stress and anxiety among male and female college going students.

This present field work was done with following objectives:

To measure and compare the stress level of male students and female students from college

To measure and compare the anxiety level of male students and female students from college.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present study:

Female students will have significantly higher level of stress than male students.

Female students will have significantly higher level of anxiety than male students.

Methodology

Sample

100 male and 100 female students were selected as sample from various government and private colleges from the district Sirsa.

Tools of the Study:

The following psychological tools have been used to collect the information from the sample:

Stress scale by Puri, Kaur & Mehta, (2011)-

This scale is useful to assess the stress level of the students of secondary/senior secondary, college and university level. It was developed on the basis of data of 500 college students. It contains 34 items. The students have to respond how often they have gone through the situations under question and indicate it on a 4-point scale (very often, often, sometimes and never). Though there is no time limit but usually the subjects complete it within 15-20 minutes. For each item scores are awarded according to scoring pattern: Very Often (4), often (3), sometimes (2) and never (1).

Anxiety test by A.K.P Sinha & L.N.K Sinha (1971)

Constructed and Standardized by Sinha, A. K. P. and Sinha L. N. K. (1971), To measure the Anxiety of school and college students. Test Re-Test reliability is shown 0.85 and Spearman Brown formula are 0.92. The validity of test is 0.62.The scale consists of 90 items. The maximum possible score of this test is 90 and minimum possible scores is zero. Each item of the test is scored 01(one) for positive response and 00(zero) for negative response. The sum of all positive or yes responses would be the total anxiety score of the individual.

Results table showing Descriptive Statistics and t-value of Stress and Anxiety in male and female

Variable		Sample size	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
Stress	male	100	57.95	26.17	3.87	.00 S
	female		71.52	23.29		
Anxiety	male		36.61	12.81	.19	.84 NS
	female		36.26	12.79		

The results table presents descriptive statistics and t-values for stress and anxiety levels in both male and female participants. For stress levels, the mean score for males was 57.95 with a standard deviation of 26.18, while for females; it was 71.52 with a standard deviation of 23.30. The t-value for the comparison of stress levels between males and females was 3.872, which is statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level (Level of significance: .000). This

suggests that there is a significant difference in stress levels between males and females, with females reporting higher levels of stress on average compared to males.

On anxiety levels, males had a mean score of 36.61 with a standard deviation of 12.81, whereas females had a mean score of 36.26 with a standard deviation of 12.79. The t-value for the comparison of anxiety levels between males and females was 0.19, which is not statistically significant at the conventional $p < .05$ level (Level of significance: .84). This indicates that there is no significant difference in anxiety levels between males and females based on the sample data.

In summary, the analysis reveals that there is a significant difference in stress levels between males and females, with females reporting higher stress levels on average. However, there is no significant difference in anxiety levels between the two groups. These findings provide valuable insights into the gender-specific experiences of stress and anxiety in the studied population.

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