

A Study of Social Stress of Adolescence Students in Relation to Their Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract

Adolescence is a period which is full of pressure, stress, strain, storm and strife. Student at this stage are under a lots of stress. During the past decade or so the scenario in our country has changed so much that increased stress has not only brought down the efficiency but tend to provide a futile ground for various kinds of deviances, drug abuse, suicidal cases and alcoholism among adolescents. Suicide is considered to be the second most common cause of unnatural death in adolescents in industrialized countries, and high rates are reported from India as well (Aron et al., 2004; Rey et al., 1997). In addition to it, one of the most worrying factors is the unnatural death of student. According to a survey of National Crime Records Bureau in 2009, among the total suicidal victims reported in 2009, 5.3 per cent (n=1, 27,151) were students. The data discussed so far show that basically students studying in schools and universities are the vulnerable group in context of suicidal ideation. If we look deeply at this scenario, we all will agree that somehow the academic environment and the whole social set-up is responsible for the suicides of the students.

The concept of social stress calls attention to both environment/social demands and individual/family capacities or resources; stress occurs when there is a discrepancy between these capacities and demands. Social-cultural factors have been recognized to be extremely important in causing for succeed in any area. Actually stress is an unpleasant state of emotional and physiological arousal the people experience in situations that they perceive as danger or threatening to their well being. Some people define stress as events or situation that cause them feel tension, pressure, or negative emotions such as anxiety and anger other view stress as the response to these situations. This response includes physiological changes - such as increased heart rate and muscle tension - as well as emotional and behavioral changes.

In this study we find out the status of social stress and emotional intelligence among the adolescence students and answered the question; is there any relation between social stress and emotional intelligence in adolescence students? To achieve the objectives of the present study, the descriptive survey method was used. A total 200 adolescence students of different schools responded to this survey. The result revealed that there is negative relation between social stress and emotional intelligence.

Keywords - Social Stress, Emotional Intelligence, Adolescence Students.

Background Of The Study

During the past decade or so the scenario in our country has changed so much that increased stress has not only brought down the efficiency but tend to provide a futile ground for various kinds of deviances, drug abuse, suicidal cases and alcoholism among adolescents. Keeping all this in mind, handling stress of pupils/adolescents seems to be the most important task of educators and teachers.

“I am stressed out” is a phrase that has been echoed by teens down through the ages. Adolescence can be a stressful time for children, parents and adults who work with teens. Adolescents experience a spectrum of stress ranging from ordinary to severe. Long term exposure to stress is associated with a variety of chronic psychological and physiological illness in addition to smoking; drug abuse and 2 high risk sexual behaviors.

Stress may be considered as any physical, chemical or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental unrest and that may be a factor in disease causation. Physical and chemical factors that can cause stress include trauma, infections, toxins, illnesses and injuries of any sort. Emotional causes of stress and tension are numerous and varied. If stress disrupts body balance and function, then is all stress bad? Not necessarily. A mild degree of stress and strain can sometimes be beneficial. For example, feeling mildly stressed when carrying out a project or assignment often compels us to do a good job, focus better and work energetically.

When stress is over whelming or poorly managed, that its negative effects appear. We can learn to manage stress so that we have control over our stress and its effects on our physical and mental health.

Social stress is the major source of stress among adolescents and it may lead to low emotional intelligence. Many psychological problems such as depression and suicide occur as a result of low emotional intelligence. The primary purpose of the present study was to examine whether any correlation exist between social stress and emotional intelligence.

Social stress: Meaning and Definitions

Stress regulation in students is important for understanding the development and prevention of psychopathology. Research evidence suggests that cumulative life stress increases risk for emotional and behavioral problems, such as negative views of the self, problematic interpersonal relationships and stressful life experience. These developmental costs of emotional distress then put students at risk for further symptoms and lifetime difficulties.

Stress research includes attention to events or conditions that may cause harm and to the responses aroused by those stressful events or conditions. These outcomes include felt distress, disrupted interaction and poorer health. The overall stress process includes both stressful agents and stress outcome. This process also includes two other major sets of variable: social factors that influence exposure to stressful condition, and group resources that shape efforts to cope with stressors.

Although early stress research focused on unpleasant physical stressors (Seley, 1976) social scientist studying families have been particularly interested in social stressors – events or conditions that are linked to individuals and families' social characteristics, positions and roles.

The concept of social stress calls attention to both environment/social demands and individual/family capacities or resources; stress occurs when there is a discrepancy between these capacities and demands. Such stressors can come from external demands on families and family members, or they can arise within family roles themselves.

Theoretically a discrepancy can be in either direction: demands could be far below, individual capacities. Thus, restricted opportunities can be at least as stressful as high demands. Researchers call attention to stressors that occurs when aspects of the social environment obstruct an individual's ability to attain sought after ends.

Social stress is one of the important variables which can affect academic achievement. It is a hidden and less noticed psychological problem. Social stress has been defined as stress that occurs as a result of one's being concerned about others' evaluation and perception of oneself (Leary & Kowalski, 1995). Watson and Friend (1969) defined social anxiety as the experience of distress, discomfort, fear and anxiety in social situations, and as a fear of negative evaluations which leads to the intentional escaping from social situations. Richards (2007) described social stress as the fear of social situations and interaction with other people that can create the feelings of self-consciousness, judgment and inferiority in an individual.

After critically analyzing various definitions, it can be concluded that social stress is fear of being judged and evaluated negatively by other people in real or imaginary social context which can create the feelings of inadequacy, embarrassment, humiliation and inferiority in an individual and can lead to deliberate avoidance from social situations.

Social stress is common, uncomfortable, and unwanted. Some of the people having high level of social stress prefer to select isolation. They seldom have intention for seeking support from others, availing an opportunity offered to them, or enjoy a recreational activity. Extreme levels of social anxiety in adults, causes serious adjustment problems in daily life (Buss, 1980). People with chronically high levels of social stress are found to display avoidance behavior such as avoidance of social interaction, work-related commitments, and opportunities. Such people are vulnerable to serious clinical problems such as social phobias, alcohol and drug abuse, and depression. Social anxiety may create a sense of negative self-evaluation in an individual, which may lead to further increase in social stress level. In severe cases, children with social anxiety may refuse to go to school (Beidel 1998). The life decisions and choices of young adults, suffering from social stress are significantly affected by their fears; they are inclined to avoid classes, and oral presentations.

Stress And Emotional Intelligence

Actually stress is an unpleasant state of emotional and physiological arousal the people experience in situations that they perceive as danger or threatening to their wellbeing. Some

people define stress as events or situation that cause them feel tension, pressure, or negative emotions such as anxiety and anger other view stress as the response to these situations. This response includes physiological changes - such as increased heart rate and muscle tension - as well as emotional and behavioral changes.

Researches pointed out that social and emotional skills result in higher achievements in life. It means that both emotional and social abilities have an important place in a student's life from teachers and parents point of view. Researchers argued about the importance of social and emotional abilities for personal success in life. Katyal&Awasthi (2005) argue about emotional intelligence and say that emotional intelligence is popular because persons use EI in making clear understanding of their own feelings. The EI is also useful in predicting performance of an individual in different settings such as at work, home, school etc.

Emotional intelligence means being aware of emotions. Emotional intelligence is an umbrella term because its concept comprises of various skills and dispositions of the individual which are generally called "soft skills or interpersonal and intrapersonal skills". According to Katyal&Awasthi (2005, p.153) "the broad cluster of these skills lies outside the traditional areas of specific knowledge, general intelligence, and technical or professional skills". They mean by interpersonal skills; "the ability to understand other's feelings, empathies, maintain and develop interpersonal relationships, while on the other hand; intrapersonal skills are comprised of the skills relating to understanding of one's own motivation" (p.153). Now a days nearly all models of EI study emotional variables such as sensitivity, memory, processing, and learning, etc. and explore the environmental effects on these variable. The pioneer researchers of this field, Salovey& Mayer (1990) define emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor and regulate one's own and other's feelings and to use feelings to guide thought and action. According to them an emotionally intelligent person is skilled in identifying emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and regulating emotions. Mayer &Salovey (1997 as cited in Kierstead, 1999, p.4) clarify the role of emotional intelligence in a person's life: We know that IQ does predict academic achievement and occupational status, but it still only predicts about 20% of personal variation in these areas. Psychologists have yet to understand what predicts the other 80% of success in these areas of life. We believe that Emotional Intelligence is one of the abilities which are related to life successOur best guess is that Emotional Intelligence will make a unique contribution in the 5% to 10% range.

Goleman (1995) says that EI plays an important role in the successful life outcomes as compared to the cognitive intelligence. It seems that through emotional intelligence one can understand one's own and other's feelings and become able to regulate one's emotions well not only within self but also in keeping relationships with others in the society. Persons require some other abilities; the "emotional intelligence" along with traditional intelligence (IQ) to get success in life. Balance in one's emotions may be helpful in acquiring success in all areas of life including academic success and social adaptations.

Mayer &Salovey (1997, p.10) also see the use of emotional intelligence in one's progress and say that, "people high in emotional intelligence are expected to progress more quickly through the abilities designated and to master more of them". Hein (2004) reviewed that emotional intelligence is our inborn mental ability, which relates to our emotional sensitivity and to our

potential for learning management skills which would help us in maximizing our long term health, happiness and survival in the society. In short, emotional intelligence predicts success as Harrod (2005) summarizes that EI is the collection of a person's success-oriented traits. It appears that people's emotional intelligence predicts their progress and achievements of goals in all areas of life including learning, behaviour and relationships.

Realizing the sensitivity of influence of these psychological, social, educational changes on student behavior, investigator's interest arise to explore the facts in the area of social stress and its relation with emotional intelligence. As past researches show that social and emotional skills result in higher achievements in life (Katyal & Awasthi, 2005, Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It means that both emotional and social abilities have an important place in a student's life. Therefore researcher intends to study what is the relationship of and social stress with emotional intelligence.

Hence the investigator took the present study to account for this issue which has been stated as below:-

“A STUDY OF SOCIAL STRESS OF ADOLESCENCE STUDENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE”.

Objectives Of The Study:

- 1- To know the Social Stress level of Adolescence Students.
- 2- To know the Emotional Intelligence level of Adolescence Student.
- 3- To study the relationship of Social stress with Emotional Intelligence of Adolescence Students.

Hypothesis:

Ho1- There will be no significant relationship between Social stress and Emotional intelligence.

Definition Of Key Terms:

Specific terms and words with regard to variables have been frequently used in the title are defined as follows:

Social stress-

Social stress is stress that stems from one's relationship with other and from the social environment in general.

The score obtained by the respondent on the social stress scale by Bisht (1987) were taken as the index of social stress in the present study.

Emotional intelligence-

According to Goleman “emotional intelligence refers to the capacity of recognizing one’s own feeling and those of others, for motivating ourselves and in our relationships”.

The score obtained by the respondent on the emotional intelligence inventory by Dr. Rakesh Pandey and Dr. Julika Anand were taken as the index of Emotional intelligence in the present study.

Adolescence students-

In this investigation Higher secondary student are those who are studying in class 11th .

Delimitation Of The Study-

According to the nature of the problem the present study is delimited in the following:

- 1- Only higher secondary schools of Varanasi district affiliated to U.P. board is included in the study.
- 2- Students of Higher secondary level of academic session 2015- 2016 is only included in the sample.

Method:

In the study, Descriptive survey method is used to achieve the objectives of the study.

Poppulation:

The population of the study consists of all higher secondary school students studding in 11th class for academic session 2015-2016 of Varanasi district, U.P., including government, government aided and self-financed higher secondary school affiliated to U.P. board of high school & intermediate education, Allahabad.

Sample and Sampling Design

The sample selected should be adequate and true representative of the population. The present study was a descriptive survey which was conducted on students. There are many techniques of selection of sample i.e. probability and nonprobability sampling. Keeping in view the objective of the present study, ‘Multi stage sampling design’ will be employed for drawing sample from the population.

In stage one, from the set of wards by employing ‘simple random sampling technique’, wards will be selected randomly, in this stage, ward will be treated as a collective type of unit, each consists of multiple schools. Varanasi city is divided among nine educational wards (Adampur, Bhelupur, Chauk, Chetganj, Dashaswamedh, Jaitpura, Kotawali, Shivpur and Sikaroul). By

employing ‘Simple random sampling’ design, out of nine educational wards, five educational wards will be randomly selected. Sample ward will be randomly selected. Sampled wards will be Bhelupur ,Chetganj, Kotawali and Sikaroul.

Then after, in second stage, school will be selected randomly from sampled wards, school will be treated as collective units, and each school consists of multiple elements in the form of students. From each sampled educational wards, by employing ‘sample random sampling’ design, 2 schools will be randomly selected.

In third stage, from each sampled school, minimum 50 students will be selected randomly. 500 students will be selected in the sample for the study (as mentioned in the following table).

TABLE

Ward	School Name Name	No Of Girls	No Of Boys	No Of Total Students
Bhelupur	Gopi Radha Balika I.c. Ravindrapuri	50	0	50
	Bengali Tola Inter College	0	65	65
	Brahmarshi Baldev Sanskrit Vidyalay Laxmikund Varanasi	28	22	50
Chetganj	Arya Mahila Inter College	73	0	73
	Rajkiya Queence Inter College Lahurabeer	0	57	57
Kotawali	Sri Harishchandr Balika I. College Maidagin	44	0	44
	D. A. V. Inter College	14	56	70
Sikaroul	J.p. Mehta Nagar Nigam Inter College	0	20	20
	Kamalpati Tripathi Girls	43	0	43

	I.c. Shastrinagar (Cantt) Premchand Smarak I.c. Pandeypur	41	9	50
Total	10	293	229	522

Tools Used In The Study:

The following standardized tools will be used for the study:

- Social Stress Scale developed by Bisht was used For accessing Social Stress.
- For accessing Emotional intelligence, Emotional intelligence scale developed by Dr. Rakesh Pandey and Dr. Julika Anand was used.

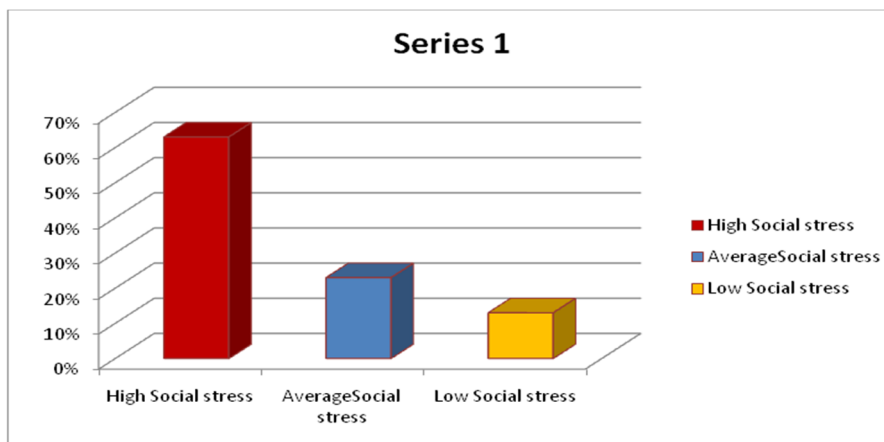
Statistical Technique Used:

For statistical analysis, mean, standard deviation, kurtosis, product moment correlation were used and to test whether their relation were statistical significant at the 0.05 level.

Analysis And Interpretation

The findings of present study are systematically arranged in accordance with the objectives of the study as following:-

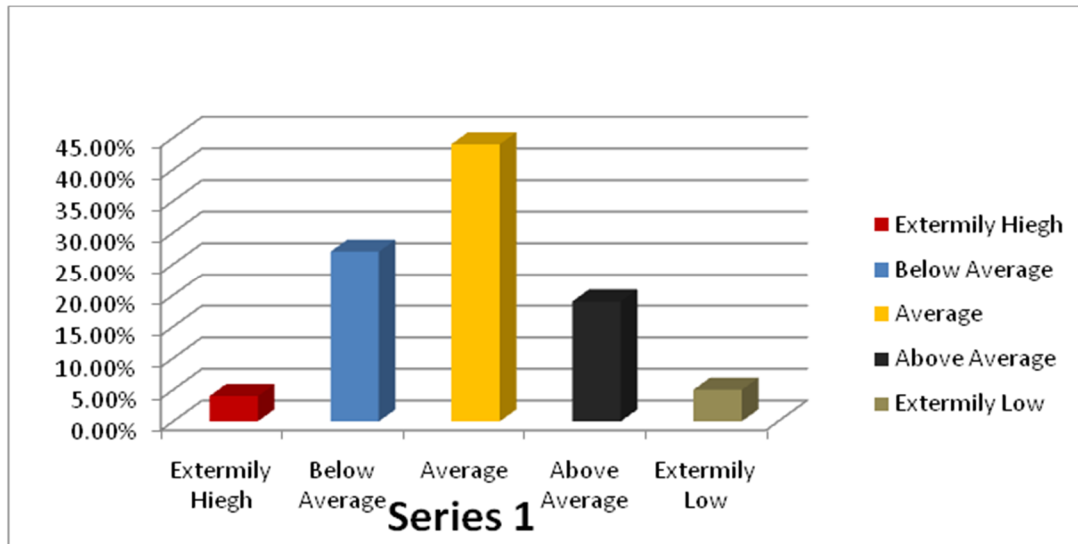
1- To know the Social Stress level of Adolescence Students. Social stress level of higher secondary students



It is clear from figure that out of 522 students studying in higher secondary, 63% students were identified as having high Social Stress level, 23% students as having average Social stress level and 13% were identified as low level of Social stress. It's clearly showing above 50% students suffering from high Social Stress.

2- To know the Emotional Intelligence level of Adolescence Student.

Emotional intelligence level of higher secondary students



From figure most of the students belong to average group, out of 522 students 44% students were identified as average emotional intelligence level, and 27% students as having above average emotional intelligence level, after that 19% students as having below average emotional intelligence level and 5 and 4 % students were identified as extremity low and extremely high level of emotional intelligence.

3- To study the relationship of Social stress with Emotional Intelligence of Adolescence Students.

To study the relationship between Social stress and emotional intelligence, product moment correlation was employed. Tables for computing r value have been given below.

Product moment r value for Social stress and emotional intelligence

		Social Stress	Emotional Intelligence
Social Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	.372**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	522	522
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.372**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	522	522

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the above table it observed that the value of r for Social stress and emotional intelligence was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of confidence. It suggests that academic stress and emotional intelligence correspond to each other. Hence, the null hypothesis H₃₀ i.e. there is no relationship between social stress and emotional intelligence of higher secondary students, is retained in the present study.

Discussion Of The Above Result

Over the period of time considerable research has supported the idea that a positive correlation exists between social stress and emotional intelligence. Finding from the past research have suggested that the experience of stressful social life events could have negative consequence on the emotional behaviour of students. There exists relationship between emotional factors and vulnerability to stress (De Anda et al. 1997, Wesley & Courtney 1999, Ansari et al. 2001, Calicchia 2006). The result from the present study supports this trend. Social stress was found to have significant direct association with emotional intelligence.

Implication Of The Study

1- The study is significant in understanding the social behavior that the students exhibit as they progress to higher secondary classes. Early experience of students put pressure and challenges on them which sometimes may result in withdrawal, lack of interest towards studies, anxiety that lead them towards misbehave. The results of this study is helpful for the teachers in understanding the reasons of unacceptable social behaviors of the students and in enabling them to organize the school environment in such a manner that all students find it conducive for academic and social growth and stability.

2- The teachers to impart encourage and develop emotional intelligence of their students which ultimately may modify the social and interaction of individuals in different sets of social settings.

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