






Research Paper in Education	    
Prof. MITA BANERJEE Vice Chancellor, The West Bengal University of Teachers' Training, Education Planning and Administration, Kolkata, West Bengal	STRESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE TRIBAL AND NON-TRIBAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF TRIPURA
DIPANKAR PAL Associate Professor, Department of Education, M.B.B. College, Agartala, Tripura	<p style="text-align: center;">ABSTRACT</p> <p>Stress is a broad term which involves a complete physical, mental and social well-being of the students. It is true that undergraduate students experience high stress due to various stressors. Stressors are external events or conditions that affect the organism. In this study an attempt was made to know and compare the level of stress and educational achievement of 400 undergraduate students in different colleges located in Tripura. Among these, 200 participants were tribal students and 200 were non-tribal students. Stratified Random sampling method was adopted to collect the data. The students' stress scale developed by Dr. P.K. Chakraborty and Ranjita Das (2004) was used to evaluate students stress level. Academic achievement was obtained from the result of Part-I University examination. The findings of the study showed that tribal and non-tribal students have difference in respect of their academic achievement and stress. Correlation between the variables indicates that there is negative and very low relationship between stress and academic achievement.</p> <p>Keywords. Stress, Academic Achievement, Undergraduate Students.</p>

Introduction

Encyclopedia of Psychology (Vol. 3) (1984) states that in the most general sense the term 'stress' is used to refer to a situation, in which a person is overtaxed in some way. Stress has become an important topic in academic circle as well as in our society. Stress is a mental and physical phenomenon formed through one's cognitive appraisal of the stimulation and is a result of one's interaction with the environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The concept of stress may be discussed from different perspectives such as physiological, psychological, and environmental and so on. It can be negative or positive to an individual, depending on the strength and persistence of the stress, the individual's personality, cognitive appraisal of the stress, and social support. Positively used, stress can be a motivator for an improved quality of life. Too much stress can cause physical and mental health problems, reduce students' self-esteem and may also impinge on students academic performance (Silver & Glicker, 1990; Niem & Vainiomaki, 1999). In recent years there is a growing appreciation of the stresses involved in education system (Sreerama Reddy et al., 2007). People find different day to day events that involve conflict, arguments, a frustration, delays, and inability to attain resources, losses, failures and feelings that one's life and efforts are meaningless especially stressful.

Rationale of the Study

Past research shows that some undergraduate students significantly experience stress. First year college students were found to be particularly prone to stress and experience high level of stress due to the college life transition. Failing to cope with the stressors during the transition may cause deterioration of academic performance and increase psychological distress. College students, in the transition period between late adolescence and early adulthood have many special stresses with which they must cope with. Tripura lies in a geographically disadvantageous location in India, as only one major highway connects it with the rest of the country. Tripura is situated far away from the main Bengali speaking area, so it has some special psychological and social problems. It appears from the behavior of the parents and pupils that the present day education exerts much pressure upon them. Education as a whole appears to be a stressor to many pupils. At this stage there may be stressors like course load, pressure of examination, the need to perform well, lower grade than they expected, relationship with classmates, employment requirement are the potential indicators which could affect the academic performance

Many researches were conducted to assess the relationship between stress and academic achievement of undergraduate students and it is found that stress effects students' academic achievement (Elliot et al., 2005; Choi,

Abbott, Arthur & Hill, 2007). Though most of the research findings support the negative relationship between stress and academic achievement, few researchers conclude against them. Felsten & Wilcox (1992) found a significant negative correlation between the stress level of college students and academic performance. Elias, Ping and Abdullah, (2011) mentioned that especially undergraduate students have to handle the possible negative effects of stress concerning their academic achievement. Malik and Balda (2006) also found a negative correlation between stress and academic achievement. Gelow, Brown, Dowling & Torres (2009) stated that a state of emotional stress was reported to have a significant positive relationship with school performance. In another research Womble (2003) did not find any relationship between perceived stress and academic achievement of college students. Farhan and Khan (2015) found that there is no significant relationship between stress, self-esteem and academic achievement. The study also revealed that stress and self-esteem are not as influential as academic achievement. Therefore the present study examined the level of stress among undergraduate college students in relation to academic achievement.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the level of academic achievement of tribal & non-tribal undergraduate students of Tripura.
- To find out the level of stress of undergraduate tribal & non-tribal students of Tripura.
- To examine the relationship between stress and academic achievement of undergraduate students.

Sample. 400 tribal and non-tribal students (19-20 years) of Science and Arts stream were taken by stratified random sampling technique from 10 colleges of Tripura.

Tools Used

- Student's Stress Scale by Dr. P.K. Chakraborty & Ranjita Dutta (2004).
- Academic achievement was measured through the percentage of marks achieved in the Part-I University examination. Moreover, in the questionnaire, the student's academic achievement was obtained which is a common measure of academic performance.

Analysis of Data

Table 1. Comparison between Stress and Academic Achievement

	Stress			Academic		
	Tribal	Non-tribal	Total	Tribal	Non-tribal	Total
Mean	163.79	164.05	163.92	45.58	45.86	45.72

	200	200	400	200	200	400
N	200	200	400	200	200	400
SD	21.172	21.741	21.432	6.965	6.844	6.897
Median	162	161	161	45	46	46
Sum	32758	32810	65568	9116	9171	18287
Minimum	106	111	106	32	32	32
Maximum	240	244	244	61	61	61
Range	134	133	138	29	29	29
Variance	448.24 7	472.69 1	459.33 2	48.50 6	46.83 8	47.57 2
Kurtosis	0.469	0.911	0.685	-0.62	- 0.491	- 0.566
Skewness	0.323	0.663	0.498	0.098	0.075	0.085

From Table-1, it is concluded that stress scores of non-tribal students (M=164.05 & SD= 21.741) are higher than the tribal student (M= 163.79 & SD= 21.172). The academic score of non-tribal students (M=45.86, SD=6.844) is higher than the tribal students (M=45.58 & SD=6.965)

Table 2. t-values for Stress and Academic Achievement

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Stress	-0.121	398	0.904	-0.26
Academic	-0.398	398	0.691	-0.275

From Table-2, t-value between the scores indicates that in case of stress t-value is -0.121. This t-value is significant at .01 levels which indicated that tribal and non-tribal students differ significantly in stress score. Since mean value of tribal students (163.79) is lower than the mean value of non-tribal students (164.05). It may be concluded that tribal students had less stress than the non-tribal students. The t-value between the academic achievement scores reveals -0.398 which is also significant at 0.01 levels. The mean difference (t=-0.398) clearly indicate that there is no true difference between the tribal and non-tribal students in academic score.

Table 3. Correlation between Stress and Academic Achievement

		Stress	Academic Achievement
Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.869
	N	400	400
Academic	Pearson Correlation	-0.008	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.869	-
	N	400	400

From Table-3, it is found that the correlation value between stress and academic achievement of undergraduate students is -0.008 which was not significant at 0.01 levels. It is clear from the table that no significant correlation existed between stress and academic

achievement. This indicates that there is negative and very weak correlation between stress and academic achievement. The finding is in line with the past researches (Choi, Abbott, Arthur & Hill, 2007; Rafidh, Azizah Noraini, 2007).

Conclusion

So, on the basis of the present findings and discussion it can be concluded that the tribal students possess slightly low academic achievement and stress scores than the non-tribal undergraduate students. Further, there is insignificant relationship between stress and academic achievement. The findings of the present study reveal that there is negative and very weak relationship. The finding of the study clearly indicated that there were differences in stress and academic achievement between tribal and non-tribal students.

Among various empirical studies conducted regarding academic achievement of tribal, and research by Sujata (1987) Govinda (2002) suggests that tribal students do possess the basic cognitive abilities and psychological dispositions for successful participation in schools and colleges. In spite of this, studies on learning achievements, tribal students, have shown lower levels of achievements as compared to non-tribals (Singh 1996). Our study indicates tribal students possess low stress may be due to their minority status and low quality of life.

It is commonly held view that stress has a negative effect on academic performance. The result of present study does not provide any additional support for the often-observed negative relationship between stress and academic achievement of undergraduate students. This finding of the present study is consistent with Womble (2003) who found that student stress was not significantly correlated with academic achievement of the college students. Elias, et al. (2011) also found that there was a significant, but weak and negative relationship between stress and academic achievement. The finding of the present study is also corroborated with the findings of the study conducted by Farhan and Khan (2015), where they found that there was no significant relationship between stress, self-esteem and academic achievement. It can be concluded that stress is not the only influential factor for academic achievement of undergraduate students.

Educational Implications

- These research findings have practical implications for parents, teachers, and educational planners and of course students.
- The finding of the study could provide better insights to the academic administrators for initiating efforts to reduce the intensity of stress.
- Guidance and Counseling services should be provided to develop confidence among students for better adjustment in the classroom, family and society.

Limitation of the Study

- a) The population is limited to arts and science students of undergraduate level in Tripura.
- b) To cover each and every districts of Tripura at least two colleges were chosen for data collection.
- c) The participants in this study were from lower middle to upper middle class residing in sub division town. Therefore these results can be generalized to similar population only.

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