

**The Academic Stress among the Senior Secondary Students enrolled in  
Different Streams**

**A Research Paper**

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**ABSTRACT**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is a competitive era where stress is not only restricted to adults but have also penetrated in the lives of students also mainly in the senior secondary classes. Senior secondary school education is a

very important turning point in the academic life of the individual. At this stage the academic performance of the students plays an important role in deciding about the next higher stage of education and probably career too. Therefore, excessive stage in this stage of life could result in increased prevalence of psychological problems like depression and nervousness, which could ultimately have a negative impact on the outcome of the achievements. Academic stress plays an important role in student's life, thus accounting for variation in academic achievement.

The researcher has tried to find the relation between varying levels of stress among students of various streams of education and according to the results obtained by various other researches it has been observed that students enrolled in science and commerce streams were found academically more stressed as compared to students enrolled in arts stream. However, there was no significant difference found between the levels of academic stress of students enrolled in science and commerce stream. It was also observed that girls and boys enrolled in science stream didn't vary greatly in the levels of their academic stress. Similarly, the same trend was also observed in commerce stream as girls and boys enrolled in commerce stream didn't vary significantly in their academic stress while unlike science and commerce girls and boys enrolled in arts stream vary greatly in the levels of their academic stress. Boys enrolled in arts stream were found academically more stressed as compared to girls enrolled in same stream. It was founded that students enrolled in science and commerce streams are exposed to a variety of stress inducing situations which may increase the levels of stress particularly in academics. It was also founded that boys enrolled in arts stream are exposed to a variety of stress inducing situations regarding their worry about their future responsibilities and inadequacy of academic environment that increase the level of stress among them. It is, therefore, suggested that programmes should be developed and strategies should be made in order to cope up with the students' stressors.

**Key Words:** Senior secondary students, academic stress, different streams

## **Introduction**

Students are the future of any country, where society prepares them as per their needs through imparting education to them, therefore education is most important device to make a student all-rounder in their lives. But today the meaning of education has totally changed in terms of knowledge and skills equally. Education has become a source of income in the eyes of common people, where each student as well as their parents wants their child to be best in academic performances keeping all of the other capabilities aside. Nowadays increased level of competition is a well-known case in the country among the students. Mostly students keep a lot of expectation from own and do compare themselves with the whole better lot in all types of academic performances keeping their own capabilities aside and wants to best them out too. But when they are not able to get desired results, mental or a physical stress starts gaining momentum among them. Stress is a common problem that affects everyone at one point of life or the another, and can be influenced by our lifestyles too. Students are facing many types of stresses such as exam anxiety,

timely submission of assignments ,performance in exams, boring classrooms, excessive homework, ,incorrect answers replies in class, poor attendance, noisy classroom, arriving late in the class, lack of free time, fear of making mistake, and lack of good teachers. Stress directly affect student's achievement and create imbalance in their normal healthy daily life. Thus, sometimes leading those to take unnatural actions like suicide, abduction from home, creating an indiscipline in classroom, not getting regular classes, delinquent behaviour, abnormal behaviour, misbehaviour, involvement in bad peer group etc. In these situation students' needs a social support to overcome this academic stress

The most common problems that teenagers face today are: self-esteem and body image, depression, stress, bullying, drinking and smoking, child abuse, competition and peer pressure.

Surprisingly, all of those problems are connected to one another, like a chain reaction. When the teens face self-esteem body image problems, they can become frustrated, resulting in eating disorder. The teens start feeling stress whenever they are exposed to peer pressure or any competition at school, or child abuse at home. Many teens take to drinking and smoking in order to get relief from their stress, many may run away from home, play computer games and start chatting online with strangers. Computer games and online chatting with unknown as well as known people can result in addiction.

Those who cannot find love at home or support at schools starts to build relationships with friends in school or local areas, resulting in increase in aggressive behaviour as well as priority issues. Many teens resort to crimes once they feel they cannot get any help or support from their family as well as from school. Continuous stress in children is harmful to their activities, health, and development. Stress can be caused by both negative and positive situation.

According to various findings of the researcher, it can be said that there is a great level of academic stress among the students of senior secondary classes irrespective of their streams but the degree of stress varies among students of different streams. Anand and Devi (2012) conducted a study on "Academic stress in relation to self-efficacy and peer relations among college students". They found that academic stress was significantly negatively related with self-efficacy and peer relations. In a study on depression, anxiety and stress among arts, commerce & science junior college students in rural area of India Baviskar et al. (2013) found that students of rural area are vulnerable to depression, anxiety and stress. Bataineh (2013) conducted a study on academic stress among undergraduate students and found that academic overloads, inadequate time to study, workload every semester, low level of motivation, and higher family expectations were major driving force for stress among students. Kumari and Jain (2014) reported a relation between examination stress and various anxieties among college students. Students of arts stream were found having highest stress and anxieties during examination as compared to students of commerce stream. In a study on effect of gender and stream on depression among adolescents Sharma (2014) found out that gender and stream had significant effect on depression among adolescents. Girls showed higher levels of depression as compared to boys, and arts students were more depressed as compared to science

and commerce students. Tina and Annayat (2014) conducted a study on the topic academic anxiety of adolescents in relation to their educational interest and founded that there exists significant difference in levels of academic anxiety among adolescent boys and girls. Dhull and Kumari (2015) conducted a study on the topic “Academic stress among adolescents in relation to gender”. Results indicated that, there is significant difference between academic stress of male and female adolescents. Female adolescents were found to be under more academic stress as compared to their male counterparts. Kaur and Kaur (2016) conducted a study on the topic “Academic Stress in Relation to Emotional Stability of Adolescent Students”. Results revealed that there is no great difference between academic stress (academic frustration, academic conflict and academic anxiety) with respect to gender but academic pressure showed significant difference in its levels between boys and girls. Girl were founded out to be more under academic pressure as compared to boys’ counterparts. According to Ghosh (2016) students in private schools have more academic stress than their counterparts in government schools. Female students experienced higher levels of academic stress than male students.

Major findings of the various studies are-

1. When students of science and arts stream were compared, it was found out that the students of science stream have a greater level of academic stress as compared to the arts ones. The inadequate academic environment causes more academic stress in students enrolled in science streams and fear as well as worries about future causes more academic stress in students enrolled in arts stream.
2. Students enrolled in science and commerce stream doesn’t vary greatly in academic stress, it is due to similar academic as well as stress level
3. students enrolled in commerce and arts streams differed significantly in their academic stress. Students enrolled in commerce stream were found academically more tensed and the levels of their academic stress were higher as compared to students enrolled in arts stream. The inadequate academic environment causes more academic stress in students enrolled in commerce stream while lack of adjustment and fear and worries about future causes more academic stress in students enrolled in arts stream.
4. girls and boys enrolled in science stream didn’t vary significantly in their academic stress. However, lack of adjustment and poor adjustment capability causes more academic stress in boys while worries causes more academic stress in girls enrolled in science stream.
5. girls and boys enrolled in arts stream vary significantly in their academic stress. Boys enrolled in art stream were found academically more stressed as compared to girls enrolled in arts stream. The inadequate academic environment, fear and

worries about future cause more academic stress in boys as compared to girls enrolled in arts stream

6. girls and boys enrolled in commerce stream didn't vary significantly in their academic stress. However, poor administration causes more academic stress in boys as compared to girls enrolled in commerce stream.

## **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that students enrolled in science and commerce streams come across a variety of stress inducing situations like- lack of adjustment, worries about future, poor administration etc. which increases the stress particularly in academics. It was also found that boys enrolled in arts stream might come across a variety of stress inducing situations regarding their worry about their greater responsibilities towards their families that increase the level of stress among them. It is, therefore, suggested to develop programmes and strategies to cope up with the students' stressors in which social support plays an important role. It is also recommended that parents should not impose extra pressure upon their children and teachers should also understand them.

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