

PEER PRESSURE AND GENDER DETERMINE STRESS AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

Adolescence is a stage of development and multiple changes as well as personal and social changes are experienced in all aspects of individual's life. The purpose of this research paper was to study the effect of peer pressure on stress of adolescents. For this purpose 120 subjects were selected from Meerut and Modinagar Distt (U.P). There were two groups according the level of peer pressure i.e. high peer pressure and low peer pressure. In each group there were 60 subjects, further each group was again consisted of two groups of gender there were 30 male and 30 female. Peer pressure was measured with the help of peer pressure scale constructed by Singh and Saini (2010) and stress was measured by student stress scale constructed by Akhtar (2011). A 2×2 factorial design was used in the study. On the basis of obtained results it was found that peer pressure have significant effect on stress of adolescents whereas gender has no significant effect on stress of adolescents. The interaction between peer pressure and gender was also found significant.

Keywords: Stress, peer pressure, adolescents



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India is a country where more than 60% of the population is under the age of thirty. A major part of this young population belongs to the adolescents group, found in school to learn everything about the world and countries as well as ethical values are practiced in the concerned society. Adolescents is a stage of growing and attain puberty. At this stage so many hormonal changes lead in them new directions of behavior, perception, expectations of self, peer pressure, academic stress, uncertainty and anxiety always cause psychophysical issues among adolescents. In today's competitive world every adolescent experience one or

the other type of stress at some point of time in their life. A number of adolescents experience more stress compared to others and some adolescents tackle stress more perfectly than others. Adolescence is the transition period between childhood and adulthood and it is a period of stress and strain (Byrne, Davenport, & Mazanov, 2007). A number of biological and environmental stressors such as demands of schools, physiological changes, and family conflict and responsibilities, as well as uncertain future place related at risk for emotional problems are most often experienced by these adolescents. (Lamb, Sereika, Puskas & Corcoran, 1998). The effect of problematic stress may result in depression, eating disorders, elimination disorders, suicidal behaviour and dissociative disorders (Bhola & Kapur, 2000).

Studies reveal that any event or happening in the student life has the potential to be a stressor or major cause of stress. They can rapidly become distressed and experience the signs and symptoms of stress, no matter what the incident quite positive condition can be distressing if they permit them to become so. It is not so much what is happening; it is more the reaction to that happening. The makeup of the personality characteristics of each of them is generally the critical factor and how well they cope with any situation in life (Grant Brecht, 1996). The prevalence of stress was found especially among those students who were, by their nature prone to anxiety (Hodge, 1996). Pramod, (1996) found that in Indian tradition the boys show greater futuristic orientation than female and consequently boys have extra academic anxiety than females. Adolescence is a stressful time for many youth and these stresses can potentially lead to serious disorders (Howard & Medway 2004). The anxiety, among children and adolescents differ according to the properties of the age they are in. Gursory and Yildiz (2005), viewed that among adolescents the anxiety is caused by self-confusing state at this period may be the type of anxiety encountered most. Tredevi and Ojha (2005), found in their study that boys had highly educational anxiety as compared to girls. The most of the regular psychological problems of adolescents is anxiety (Eldelekioglu, 2006).

It has been found in the research that Academic pressure has increased day by day over the past few years; there are examinations, assignments and many other activities that a student has to shuffle through. Not only the parents but parents and teachers also load the students with a lot of stress of getting good grades. These outlooks make the student work relentlessly and end up in creating high stress. Akinboye, (1985) stated that the low academic performance has attributed to unsatisfactory teaching facilities, untrained teachers, students'

poor study habits, and psychological adjustment problems such as anxiety, stress and hopelessness. Most of the problems in adolescents concentrated on academic anxiety regarding their future (Reddy, 1989). Verma and Gupta (1990), found that the reason of basic academic pressure burden the school going adolescents that academic stress was caused due to examination organization, burden of attitude of parents and home work and teachers and psychological pressure of classmates Dawood, (1995) found in his study that stress affected student's performance. Further showed that the most highly related stressor by students was school and fear related stressor.

The peer relationships play an importance role in a person's life his social skills, his development, and even his self-concept (Klarin, 2012). The theory of peer influence is related to a mutual influence process through which peers became gradually more similar over time and share similar quality (Dishon & Dodge, 2005). Many studies explore that peer pressure is to be related with a host of unwanted outcomes for adolescents, including greater alcohol consumption, cigarette use, petty theft, drug use, delinquency, stress, depressive symptoms, risky sexual behaviour etc (Allen, 2006). Stress among the adolescence can be important in the well-being of the family as a whole. The reasons for stress throughout adolescence as per the review are because of disturbed family dynamics, peer pressure, inability to cope with stress, drug abuse and lack of competence (Huli, 2004).

Soponar, Bajian and Lorga (2016) found that girls are more stressed by home life/peer pressure, and uncertain future, money pressure and adult responsibilities. Sangeetha V and chetan S V (2015), in their paper titled 'Happiness and peer pressure among adolescents' found that there was a significant negative relationship between happiness and peer pressure among adolescents and there were no significant gender differences among adolescent in happiness. According to Le Beau & Yonder (2009) the type of behaviour these adolescents expose is believed to be highly motivated by peer pressure which leads to them commit crimes under the influence of alcoholic peers. Li and Yen (1998), conducted study to assess high school student's perception of stress from daily events and to identify its associated factors. From the principal component analysis, school work, concern with prospects, parent's teen's relationship and peer connection were found to be the major sources of day to day life stress perceived.

Peer pressure has been outcome as a key risk factor of adolescent's depression (Rudolph, 2002). Exposure to stressful peer events may reason youth to focus enormously on their problems and negative emotions and to feel socially ineffective, leading to social

withdrawal, low self – worth, depression and stress others symptoms of sadness. Indeed, stressful peer events are associated with concurrent (Rudolph, 2002) and perspective (Aseltine et al., 1994; Hankin, 2007) depressive symptoms for the period of adolescence.

In the current time stress level increasing day by day, Adolescence is more prone to stress; because, they are feel alteration in terms of physically, mentally and socially changes which make them over-conscious about their identity. How can they be able to cope up stress is a main question that this study to seeks the answer.

Further, peer pressure is an emerging area of research, affecting the adolescent's group and stress individuals, but also contributes to mental health issues, depression, sadness, low self worth and stress of normal persons. This study of peer pressure has become imperative, because stress has become a part and parcel of individual's life due to present highly industrialized, competitive and challenging era. For that reason, the investigator felt the need to examine and analyze the relationship of peer pressure on stress of adolescents.

Considering the above discussion following hypothesis were formulate:

Hypothesis

1. There will be significant effect of peer pressure on stress of adolescents.
2. There will be significant effect of gender on stress of adolescents.
3. There will be significant interaction effect between peer pressure and gender on stress of adolescents.

Methods

Sample

The sample for the study was 120 subjects. These subjects were taken from Modinagar and Meerut city. There were two groups according the level of peer pressure i.e. high peer pressure and low peer pressure. In each group there were 60 subjects. Further each peer pressure was consisted of 30 male and 30 female. In this way 2×2 factorial experimental design was employed in this research.

Instruments

Peer pressure scale constructed by Sandeep Singh and Sunil Saini, (2010) has been used. The scale consisted of 25 items that measure of peer pressure. Second scale was student stress scale constructed by Zaki Akhtar, (2011) has been used. It consisted of 51 items that measure of student stress.

Design

In this study 2×2 Factorial design was used. There were two independent variables, first independent variable was peer pressure which was varied at two levels i.e., high peer pressure and low peer pressure. The second independent variable was gender varied at two levels i.e. male and female. The dependent variable was stress.

Results

The aim of present research was to examine the effect of peer pressure on stress of adolescents. The data was statistically analyzed by Mean, SD, and ANOVA. ANOVA and shown in table no.1. Mean scores and interaction are exhibited in table no.2, 3, and 4 respectively. ANOVA table 1 reveals that ‘F’ value for factor peer pressure is (1,116) = 348.330 ** P<.01. It means, F ratio for factor A is significant at 0.01 levels. It indicates that peer pressure significantly affects the level of stress among adolescents. Table no.2 indicates that the mean stress score for High peer pressure is (209.56,) is significantly low than Low peer pressure is (142.25) in adolescents. Table no. 3 indicates that there also indicate no significant effect of gender on stress of adolescents. Table no.4 also indicate interaction between peer pressure and gender have been found significant (F, 4.616 = P>.05). It indicates that peer pressure have different effect on the stress in male and female adolescents.

Table 1: Summary Table for ANOVA for Stress

Sources of variance	SS	Df	MS	F. ratio
A (Peer pressure)	135946.01	1	135946.01	348.330 **
B (gender)	21.68	1	21.68	0.055
A×b	1801.86	1	1801.86	4.616 *
Within group (error)	45272.44	116	390.279	
Total	183041.99	119	1538.167	

**P<.01, P>.05

Table 2: Mean scores of stress based on factor A (Peer pressure)

A1 High peer pressure			A2 low peer pressure		
Total	N	Mean	Total	N	Mean
12574	60	209.56	8535	60	142.25

Table 3: Mean scores of stress based on factor B (Gender)

B1 male				B2 female			
Total	n	mean	Sd	total	N	mean	Sd
10580	60	176.33	40.53	10529	60	175.48	35.27

Table 4: Mean scores of stress and SD of stress based on factor A×B (Peer pressure and gender)

B (gender)	A1 (high)				A2 (low)			
	Total	N	Mean	Sd	Total	N	Mean	Sd
B1 (male)	6416	30	213.86	8.16	4164	30	138.8	20.63
B2(female)	6158	30	205.26	16.87	4371	30	145.7	20.28

Discussion

The obtained results of the present research clearly show the peer pressure significantly affects the stress of adolescents. The obtained results suggest that people who have high peer pressure have may experience high stress among adolescents in comparison of low peer pressure groups. The reason for this difference may be related to the fact that adolescents is a phase of transformation from childhood to adulthood. The adolescent's children have to manage physical, emotional and social changes at a same time. Therefore it is an initial age from the point of view of education. While dealing with the development of the adolescents, the impact of the peer cannot be overlooked along with family, relatives and society. The teenage are influenced by peers too. Many times, the behaviour of the adolescents is found to be altered because of the impact of their friends. Chandrkant Borse, (2014) suggested that during the present age, the system of family is very weak and teenager children in these families are more confused and worried. Anda et al (2000), found that identified four main stressful domains in their research on young people, school, siblings, parents and friends increasing academic pressure, sibling and parental conflicts, peer pressure and romantic relationship problems were the main issues children encountered day by day. Spirito et al (1991), identified school as a major stressor for adolescent. Pressure surrounding future goals was reported as most stressing, with personal expectations, academic performance and homework also significant anxiety is provoking situation. Huli, (2004) Stress among the adolescents can be crucial in the well-being of the family as a whole. The

reason for stress during adolescence as per the review are because of disturbed family dynamics, peer pressure, inability to cope with stress, drug abuse, lack of capability.

The second independent variable of present research was gender, varied at two levels, i.e. male and female. There is no significant difference in the stress male and female subjects. Verma & Gupta (1990), studied girls tend to perform better academically compared to boys, suggesting that they may adapt their daily schedules better to prepare for exam attitude and behaviour of girls did not show any significant relationship with level of stress it is clear that stress has an adverse on student the present study do not show gender unfairness. Glozan, (2013) found that perceived social support buffer the effect of academic stress on psychological well-being girls reported higher scores on perceived social support but reported highly depression boys reported higher academic stress and better psychological well-being and these have been attributed partly to the socialisation role of gender. Gonales, (2001) examined the effect of four coping dimensions active coping, avoidance; distraction and support-on conduct problems, depression, and achievement in a multiethnic, inner-city of young people. Kaur, (2014) recognized that mental health of adolescents get affected due to the educational stress. Girls with educational stress were found to have poor mental health as compared to the boys. This was accounted on the study to parents at times put pressure and strain on student that leads to deteriorated mental health.

Interactions between peer pressure and gender have been found significant at 0.05 levels. It indicates that peer pressure have different effect on the stress of male and female adolescents. Simons and Morton, (2011) the female's youth had experienced more peer pressure than males sample in study area. Girls more influenced than boys by peer pressure. Umashankari.et al, (2020), found that levels of peer pressure among gender revealed that males had higher levels of peer pressure compared to females.

Conclusion

Based from the results of the research study, it can be conclude that peer pressure positively affect the level of stress. It turns out that like what most people think, it is not toxic for the mental health for it can be beneficial given that the purpose of the peer pressure is for the common good. If peers contribute more to distress rather than resolves the solution he is facing, than it would be the right time to stop connection with them.

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