

## A STUDY ON DEPRESSION AND ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS OF KASHMIR

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### **Abstract:**

Depression has emerged as a leading mental health ailment globally in the contemporary era. Moreover it has had its ramifications on adolescents especially the college going ones. Although, several studies have been focused on the theme, but the present paper primarily focuses on the association of depression with academic stress among college students in Kashmir. The data was gathered by means of the Educational Stress Scale, which was used by Sun and colleagues in 2011. The statistical observations were carried out using product moment correlation method of Pearson. According to a study, academic stress and depression are linked. The study was conducted to investigate the relationship between academic stress and depression among Kashmiri students. A sample of 500 individuals was gathered from different districts of the division using randomization method.

**Key Words:** College students, academic stress, depression

## **INTRODUCTION**

The term adolescence has been used to describe a period of upheaval, conflict, and turmoil that can be found in various aspects of life. It is often associated with problems related to the multiple personal transformations that occur during this time. In addition to the lack of responsibilities and privileges, the college environment is also affected by the division of loyalties. He appears to be excessively aggressive, and then suddenly cool and detached. He becomes shy and affectionate. The various problems associated with transition are identified by Peel in 1956. These include the strains and stresses of change, as well as academic issues that can cause further problems. According to a number of studies, college students are more prone to experiencing academic stress than other factors. This issue has been identified as a contributing factor to their overall performance and well-being. Other factors such as social and environmental factors are also known to affect their performance. The concept of academic stress refers to the difficulties that a student encounters when it comes to dealing

with the environmental demands that come with their studies. Some of the factors that can cause this stress include high expectations, exam frequency, time management issues, lack of opportunities, and dissatisfaction with their grades. Factors such as the relationship between educators and pupils and peer interactions are contributing to the issue. Although academic stress is generally considered normal for most students, it can become excessive if it is perceived negatively. This can cause them to feel trapped in a cycle of increasing expectations and demands, leading to various psychological health issues.

Depression is considered a common mental health ailment among adolescents. As per NIH, it can be triggered by various factors such as feelings of hopelessness and pessimism, low energy, and poor concentration. It can also be caused by changes in one's relationship with one's environment. According to studies conducted by various researchers such as Sharma, Pandey, Abdollahi, Khanam, Kashy, Haines, Goldstone, and Norris, depression can have detrimental effects on the functioning of adolescents.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. The study aims to find out association between academic stress and depression among college students.
2. The objective of this research is to determine a link between the work load of students and depression.
3. The goal of this study is to understand a link between anxiety about one's grades and depression.

### **HYPOTHESIS:**

1. Students who attend college are more likely to experience academic stress and depression.
2. There's a correlation between the work load factor and depression among students at college.
3. There's a link between depression and anxiety among students who worry about their grades.
4. Academic stress and students' expectations are linked.
5. College students are more likely to experience a positive correlation between their despondency and academic stress.

### **METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE:**

#### **Sample**

The present study was carried among about 500 students from various colleges in Kashmir division of J&K.

### Tools Used

In 2011, the ESSA was used to measure the academic stress of adolescents. The five factors that were evaluated were pressure from their study, worries about grades, job load, and other self-expectations. The scale has widely been used globally and is considered one with good psychometric properties.

### Statistical Analysis

The data has been analyzed using the product moment correlation method of Pearson.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The collected data has been categorized and presented to attain the objectives of the study.

**Table - 1**

**Showing Coefficient of correlation between Academic Stress and Depression among College Students on Composite Score**

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation	Level of Significance
Academic Stress	500	0.149	Significant at 0.01 level
Depression	500		

The above table reveals the link between academic stress and depression among students. The significance threshold for this parameter was 0.01. The outcome of the analysis describes that there is a positive relationship between the two variables. It also found that those who experienced high academic stress levels were more prone to experiencing depression.

**Table – 2 : Showing Coefficient of correlation between Factor ‘A’ (Pressure from Study) of Academic Stress and Depression among College Students**

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation	Level of Significance
Pressure from Study	500	0.096	Significant at 0.05 level
Depression	500		

Academic stress and depression among college students are examined in the above mentioned table. The obtained value of 0.096 is higher than the threshold at which it would be considered significant. This suggests that the pressure that students experience from their studies can lead to higher levels of depression. The second theory, which states that academic stress and depression are related, has been accepted following the study's confirmation.

**Table -3 : Showing Coefficient of correlation between Factor ‘B’ (Workload) of Academic Stress**

**and Depression among College Students**

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation	Level of Significance
Workload	500	0.091	Significant at 0.05 level
Depression	500		

The above table illustrates the correlation between the workload factor and depression among students. It reveals that there is definitely a positive relationship between the two factors. It further indicates that the high academic workload is associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing depression. The results of the present study has revealed that students exhibited higher levels of anxiety when carrying out daily tasks. It also confirmed the third hypothesis, which states that the workload factor significantly affects the depression among students.

**Table – 4 : Showing Coefficient of correlation between factor ‘C’ (Worry about Grade) of Academic stress and Depression among College Students**

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation	Level of Significance
Worry about Grade	500	0.101	Significant at 0.05 level
Depression	500		

Above table illustrates the correlation between the worry factor known as "C" and depression among students. The value that was calculated exceeded the significance threshold. The data collected during the study showed that there is a link between depression and the worry factor in students. It was found that those who were more concerned about their grades had a higher chance of experiencing this issue. This conclusion supports the hypothesis that the higher the anxiety level about their grades, the greater the likelihood of depression.

**Table – 5 : Showing coefficient of correlation between factor ‘D’ (Self-expectation) of Academic stress and Depression among College Students.**

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation	Level of Significance
Self Expectation	500	0.105	Significant at 0.05 level
Depression	500		

The table 5 summarizes the findings of the research, which showed that college students' expectations of academic success were linked to depression. The r-value clearly points out a positive link between self-expectation and depression among the subjects. The study's results revealed that higher self-expectations were associated with depression. The assumption that there is an association between academic stress and the self-expectation factor also stands confirmed.

**Table – 6 : Showing coefficient of correlation between factor ‘E’ (Despondency) of Academic**

**Stress and Depression among College Students.**

Variables	N	Coefficient of Correlation	Level of Significance
Despondency	500	0.109	Significant at 0.05 level
Depression	500		

Table 6 illustrates the association between depression and academic distress among students. The coefficients were obtained using the r-value and exceeded the threshold of significance. The results of the research paper suggest that there is a correlation between the two variables. The results indicate that college students who are experiencing despondency are more prone to experiencing depression. In a study conducted by Dixon and colleagues, they found that hopelessness is associated with high levels of stress. Their hypothesis is that this condition is caused by the stressful environment that students are experiencing. The study clearly points out that college students are more vulnerable to academic stress and depression.

The primary outcome of the study describes that college students are prone to developing various mental and behavioral disorders. It is also clear that academic stress can have detrimental effects on their health. According to Fan's study in 2017, academic stress is known to be a strong predictor of the development of anxiety and depression among adolescents. In 2016, Niamh's study revealed that students who already have higher levels of academic pressure were more prone to experiencing depression. According to a study conducted by Jayanthi, Rajkumar, and Thirunavukarasu in 2015, those who experienced academic stress were more prone to experiencing depression than those who did not. In 2012, Sun and colleagues found that prolonged academic stress can result in developing various psychological symptoms such as depression and even suicidal thoughts. A study conducted by Kausar in 2010 revealed that students who were stressed out due to their academic workload were more likely to experience depression. According to the findings, excessive academic work is one of the factors that primarily causes stress among students. The results of Wong and Yeung's study in 2009 indicated that academic stress can increase the risk of students experiencing anxiety. Kurpius and Dixon's study in 2008 also showed that academic stress can lead to various depressive symptoms. A study conducted by Rafael in 2008 revealed that students who perceive certain burdens related to their studies are more prone to experiencing mental health issues. In 2001, Li, Zheng, and Wan stated that having a high academic level can increase the risk of anxiety and depression among students. In 1999, Heckert, Ross, and Neibling noted that the increasing workload is one of the primary sources of stress experienced by students. In 1997, Ystgaard's study further revealed that psychological distress and academic stress are linked. Fisher's 1994 study proved a positive association between physical illness and academic stress. Gupta and Verma's 1990 study revealed that academic pressure negatively affected students' emotional states and resulted in various

somatic symptoms. Aldwin and Greenberger's study in 1987 also indicated that students' perceptions of academic stress are related to depression and anxiety.

### MAJOR FINDINGS:

- \* A study has shown that academic stress is associated with depression on a composite score.
- \* The relationship between depression and academic stress is strong. It was revealed that the pressure from study factors influenced the latter.
- \* The positive correlation between the workload factor and depression has been established.
- \* There's a link between academic stress and depression. It can be caused by anxiety about the grade factor.
- \* The relationship between self-expectation and depression has been studied. It has been shown that there is a positive correlation between these factors.
- \* The correlation between depression and academic stress has been found.

### CONCLUSION:

The results of a study revealed that academic stress was the most common risk factor that affected the psychological and physical health of adolescents. It has been shown that academic stress is associated with depression. The detrimental effects of this type of stress on a student's health and performance are well known. This study suggests that students should be carefully managed to avoid excessive academic workload and unrealistic academic demands. The study revealed that there is a need for effective interventions that can help students reduce their academic stress and depression. These include coaching, coping strategies, and counseling programs.

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