

## **STRESS IN RURAL AND URBAN ADOLESCENTS**

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### **Abstract**

Adults commonly tell young people that adolescence period is the 'best years of life' as picture is adolescents energetically involved at dance, part of various events or couple holding hands. The other part of picture is a painful tug of war filled with conflicting demands from parent, teacher, coaches, friends and oneself. The objective of the present study was to compare the stress levels in rural and urban adolescents. The sample of the study consisted of 200 respondents of whom 100 were male (50 rural and 50 urban) and 100 were female (50 rural and 50 urban). Their age levels were 13 - 19. They were selected purposively from different areas of Haridwar district of Uttarakhand. The obtained data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, t-test. Overall findings indicated that there is significant difference between academic stress, emotional stress, social stress and overall stress of rural and urban adolescents.

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## 1. Introduction

Adolescence is the period of transition from childhood to adulthood brings many changes in young one's ways of life. Adolescence is considered as a wonderful time of life, filled with new feelings, a higher level of self-awareness and a sense to explore the various dimensions of life . It is the process of developing from a child into an adult. Stress is feeling bad due to troubles beyond one's control. Stress in humans results from a complex interaction between the events of life and the perception of those events by an individual. Stress is viewed as a negative emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physiological process that occurs as a person tries to adjust to or deal with stressors (Bernstein, et al 2008). The term stress was derived from the Latin word 'Stringere' used in the seventeenth century for hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. The term "Stress" refers to negative emotional experience accompanied by predictable physiological, cognitive, and behavioral changes, which lead to changes in perceiving the stressful situation and ability to deal with (Wang et al., 2011). Stress can be positive or negative. It is positive when it forces one to remind that one is not coping well. It is it is called distress when it is negative and it exceeds one's ability to cope, fatigues body system and causes behavioral and physical problems. Eustress enhances action whereas distress produces overreaction, confusion, poor concentration, performance anxiety and usually results in subpar performance (Girdano et al., 2009). Stress is characterized by feeling of tension, frustration, worry sadness and withdrawal. Stress can be caused by any event that a person considers a threat to his or her coping strategies. Stress can be understand as a feeling of being overloaded tense and worried. Stress is considered as a normal reaction when brain recognizes a threat. The symptoms of stress can include headache, sleep disturbance, anxiety, anger, irritability, fatigue, out of control, low self esteem, ,moody and difficulty in concentrating.

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Stress among students can be caused by various factors like academics, relationship problems, peer pressure, extracurricular activities, time management, family problems, financial troubles etc.

Stress is an individual's physical and mental reaction to pressures. Stress is an unavoidable part of an individual's life. Academic stress is mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even unawareness to the possibility of such failure. Students have to face many academic demands, for example, school examination, answering questions in the class, understanding concepts taught by teacher, competing with other class mate. Social stress is as stress that stem from one's relationship with others and from the social environment in general. Family stress means stressor that concerns one or more members of the family at a defined time, which impacts the emotional connection between family members their mood, well being, and the maintenance of the family relationship. Vocational stress often stems from unexpected responsibilities and pressures that do not align with a person's knowledge and skill. Emotional stress can be understood as a condition which occurs when a person is under stress affecting their emotions. Financial stress is caused by finances, stress comes from being in debt, a sense of scarcity accompanied by physiological stress response.

Bartwal and Raj (2013) examined the relationship between academic stress and emotional intelligence of school going adolescents. The sample consisted of 200 students (100 urban and 100 rural area), further subdivided into 50 male and 50 female students from Bathinda (Punjab). The investigation revealed that the academic stress experienced by both male and female adolescents is similar, high score on emotional intelligence can deal in a better way with the academic stress. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students stress. Dey et al (2014) investigated the relationship between stress and anger of rural and urban adolescents of Chittagong district in Bangladesh. The sample consisted of 120 respondents as 60 were male (30 rural and 30 urban) and 60 were female (30 rural and 30 urban). Results revealed that the stress of urban adolescents was greater than rural; the anger of urban adolescents was more than the rural; the stress of female adolescents was more than the male and the anger of female adolescents was more than male. Results also showed that adolescent's stress was positively correlated with their anger.

Srivastava et al (2014) assessed the nature of stress, and coping styles among rural and urban adolescents. 200 students in 10+2 and graduation first year were selected as sample. The Result

revealed that in both environmental settings male reported more stress than their counterparts girls, however, to utilize coping strategies female adolescents are in higher in number than male adolescents. Prabu (2015) examined academic stress among higher secondary students. The sample consisted of 250 students of higher secondary schools situated in Namakkal, Tamil Nadu (India). The study revealed that the higher secondary students are having moderate level of academic stress and irrespective of sub samples of the higher secondary students are having moderate level of academic stress. The male student's academic stress is higher than female students. The urban student's academic stress is higher than rural student. The Government school student's academic stress is less than private school student. The science subject student's academic stress is higher than arts student. The students whose parent's education falls in category of literate level, their academic stress is higher than their counter part.

## **2. Research Method**

### **Sample**

The sample of the present study consisted total 200 of whom 100 were male (50 rural and 50 urban) adolescents and 100 were female (50 rural and 50 urban) adolescents in different areas of Hardwar district. The age range of the adolescents was 13-19 years. The purposive sampling technique was used for selection of sample. They were selected from school in different areas of Hardwar in India. All the respondents were literate adolescents who had different levels of education and were belonging to various socio-economic statuses. Area was categorized as urban and rural. The area which comes under municipal's undertaking was considered as urban area. Rural area had been defined as the area which is included under Gram Panchayat.

### **Test materials used**

The following tool was used in the present investigation:

**Students Stress Scale:** The scale is developed by Taresh Bhatia and Arunima Pathak (2005). It measures six important stress areas of an individual- academic stress, financial stress, vocational stress, family stress, social stress and emotional stress. The scale consists of 30 items out of which each stress area has five items. The items are presented in the simple statements and provide five alternative response option graded on a five point scale.

## Procedure

The Students Stress Scale was distributed to the selected rural and urban adolescents. The adolescents were imparted necessary instructions regarding filling general information about them in the inventory. They were asked to put a tick mark (√) in the category in which they think to be most appropriate for each item at their own convenient time. The responses of the subjects were scored as per the manual for questionnaire.

## Objective

To find out the level of stress of rural and urban adolescents.

## Hypothesis

There would be significant difference between stress level of rural and urban adolescents

## Analysis

Data were analyzed by using t-test. Results are presented in Table 1.

### 3. Results and Analysis

Table 1: Stress scores of adolescents in rural and urban areas with t-values.

Areas of stress	Groups	Mean	SD	t-value
<b>Academic Stress</b>	Rural	12.09	5.4	4.07 <sup>**</sup>
	Urban	17.8	7.2	
<b>Financial Stress</b>	Rural	13.4	3.02	1.77
	Urban	14.2	3.51	
<b>Vocational stress</b>	Rural	12.1	5.25	1.52
	Urban	11	5.03	
<b>Emotional Stress</b>	Rural	15.2	3.14	2.33*
	Urban	16.6	5.23	
<b>Family stress</b>	Rural	12.5	5.30	1.40
	Urban	11.5	4.88	
<b>Social stress</b>	Rural	12.5	3.6	3.48 <sup>**</sup>

	Urban	14.8	5.51	
<b>Overall Stress</b>	Rural	81.3	30.81	2.65**
	Urban	97.8	31.62	

\* significant at 0.05 p level

\*\* significant at 0.01 p level

From table 1, it shows that t-value (4.07) in area of academic stress is significant at 0.01 p level. The mean of urban adolescents is higher than rural adolescents. It means that urban adolescents have more academic stress than rural adolescents. In area of Financial Stress there is no significant difference between urban and rural adolescents. In area of Vocational Stress, there is also no significant difference between urban and rural adolescents as t t-value is not significant. The t-value of emotional stress is 2.33 which is significant at 0.05p level indicates that there is significant difference between urban and rural adolescents. There is no significant difference between urban and rural adolescents in area of Family stress as t value 1.40 is not significant at 0.01 and 0.05 p level. In area of Social stress, there is significant difference between rural and urban adolescents. The mean of urban adolescents is higher than rural adolescents and t-value is 3.48 which is significant at 0.01 p level. In area of Overall Stress, The mean value of rural adolescents (81.3) is lower than the mean value of urban adolescents (97.8) and t-value is 2.65 which is significant at 0.01 p level. The findings indicate that urban adolescents have more stress than rural adolescents. The results were similar to the results of study conducted by Vijaylakshmi & Lavanya (2006) which revealed that urban students experienced more stress as compared to rural students.

#### 4. Conclusion

The objective of the present investigation is to explore stress level of rural and urban adolescents. There is more stress in urban adolescents as compared to rural adolescents in this study. There is significant difference between academic stress, emotional stress, social stress and overall stress of rural and urban adolescents. Necessary initiative should be taken to reduce the adolescents' stress.

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