



## STRESS MANAGEMENT IN ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The reasons for Stress during adolescence as per the review of literature are because of disturbed family dynamics , peer pressure, inability to cope with studies, drug abuse, lack of competence. One of the important trends which are being observed is getting instant gratification from the electronic media and gadgets. The involvement of adolescents in getting instant gratification of needs has led to lot of stress in them and in their relationships with family and peers. Stress leads to maladaptive behaviour. In this study with the extensive review of literature, Researcher tried to present the causes and symptoms of adolescent students stress and coping mechanism for adolescent students stress.*

**Keywords:** -Stress Management and Adolescents students

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence can be a stressful time for children, parents and also all others who work with them. School students in India have a high stress level and higher rate of deliberate self-harm. Many recent studies have found relation between stress and suicidal ideas in school children. Stress also results in increased likelihood of substance abuse among adolescents. A social and public health response in addition to mental health response is crucial to prevent suicidal behaviour and creating awareness about substance abuse among adolescents. Stress also positively correlates with maladaptive strategies adopted towards schools, teachers, and parents, peers, opposite sex and also at a broader societal level. Management of adolescent stress is therefore, need of the hour. This review article focuses on determinants of adolescent stress and Management.

Adolescents experience stress because they are sometimes trapped between making decisions which is to follow rules and orders or to be free and

discover the world like they should. Adolescents in the previous days were trained for things that were suitable with their age so that they can use it to manage their lives. But now, adolescents have to follow their parents' desires which are preparing them to compete in the social system where the society is scrambling towards modernization so that they are not left behind. If it is not managed well, stress can ignite psychological disturbances among them when they are grown up. These disturbances will cause stress to the adolescents in the future if they are not overcome now.

The problem arises when the adolescents are unable to cope with stressful situations and end-up themselves in the distressed state of mind. In this distressed situation they indulge themselves in Anti-Social and Self-Destructive Activities.

In this study with the extensive review of literature I have tried to present the causes and symptoms of Stress and Coping Mechanism for Stress.



## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Students in their teens are the ones who are going through the transitional phase, which is an intermediate of childhood and adulthood. During the teen years, a lot of biological, physical, mental and emotional changes are happening, as well as the changes in responsibility and role. In order to stabilize these changes, the students are always confronted with problems and conflicts. For some students who are not capable of dealing with it, the changes will create stress and tension to them. If it is not dealt with in the early stages, the student may experience mental problems.

Stress is believed to be caused by the various problems that exist such as problems at school, financial problems, family problems and problems in their surroundings

**Adams (1983)** stated that the biggest problem among schooling teenagers is the matters associated with their schooling. Other than that, problems that female students have to deal with are communication and family problems. For the male students, their side problems are problems with getting involved in sports, recreation and also financial problems. The many responsibilities and pressure cause stress to the high school students like the need to achieve good academic grades, character building and also good attitude besides trying to comprehend with their personal needs.

**Zulkifli (1988)** found that the adolescents always face problems in adjusting. Teenagers especially those who are students always face learning problems, career management and also problems in solving personal and social matters. These are the factors that

contribute to stress in life. Students are starting to shift from a life that is dependent on others to a life that needs them to release the dependency and start carrying their own responsibilities.

**Hains Anthony (1990)** examined the effectiveness of a cognitive intervention to help adolescents cope with stress and other forms of negative emotional arousal. The trained adolescents showed significant reductions in levels of anxiety and anger, and also improvement in self-esteem.

**Morris (1990)** stated that high school students always face Academic stress in school and they compete each other to get better grades. Levine, 1970 (in Dobson, 1980), explained that stress has a relationship with a specific situation like a learning environment in school and the inability to do work perfectly and the failure to achieve anything that is desired. The issues of students doing things like punching teachers, cursing, slandering and hurting teachers, prostitution and others calls for researchers to see the mentioned phenomena is connected to the stress situation among high school students.

**Mates and Alisson (1992)** which finds that among the academic factor that contribute to the stress in high school students is their achievement in academics. Therefore, when stress is associated with academic achievements it is hoped that a suitable teaching and learning method is created so that stress will not exist among students. Other than that, the education curriculum that stresses on academic achievement by focusing on the importance of examinations should be re-evaluated. This is because it may cause stress to the students. The importance of this research is to help avoid stress from the beginning.



**Fariza (2005)** who conducted a research on the stress among high school students found that this age group has trouble with the academic world. Therefore there exists demand and hope for themselves, their parents, teachers and the society to see them succeed.

**SuvarnaSen (2006)** in her study found that academics was found to be major stressor of adolescent students. She touched upon every aspect of the adolescence phase. Through review of research she has put forth the important aspects of adolescence. And they are: a) the role confusion among adolescents b) encouraging adolescents to explore opportunities c) Helping the adolescents with Identity crisis d) Influence on adolescents of family e) the attitude of parents towards and vice-versa.

**James.D.A Parker (2008)** examined the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and several addiction related behaviours like gambling, internet use and video games playing in two community based sample of adolescent 13-15 years old (N 209) and 16-18 years old (N= 458) both were measured using respective scales. Emotional Intelligence was found to be moderate to strong predictor of addiction related behavior in both the groups.

**Raymond Monte mayor (1986)** conducted study and elicits that parents and adolescents who have good communication between them and when parenting style is helping the adolescents to communicate their stress have better relationship. And parents also facilitate the adolescents to combat stress.

### 3. CAUSES OF ADOLESCENTS STRESS

#### ➤ The Biological Cause:

Stress occurs due to sexual and other physical maturation that occurs during puberty and results in hormonal changes. To support the biological cause of stress a study conducted on adolescents by BJ Cassey, Rebecca M. Jones et al (2010) indicate that the adolescence is the time of storm and stress.

#### ➤ Cognitive development

This is one of the important causes of stress because during cognitive development adolescents try to experience the world on their own. According to "Jean Piaget's theory an adolescent is capable of thinking like an adult about the age of 16. He proposed that the basic process we use to think do not change much beyond this stage. The process what Piaget calls is Formal Operations. It involves stages and they are Abstract Thinking, Hypothetical Thinking, Inter Propositional Logic and Reflective Thinking. Cognitive development in the form of: thinking, reasoning, learning, reflecting takes place during adolescence.

#### ➤ Decision making

Building on Piaget's work Lawrence Kohlberg (1976) and his associates (Colby et al 1983) studied the development of moral reasoning by asking people of various age to resolve moral dilemmas. Kohlberg argued that moral reasoning passes through three levels as we grow. They are pre conventional level, Conventional, and Post Conventional level. Most theorists agree that as both males and females move from childhood into adolescence



they rely mostly entirely on abstract moral principles to make decisions.

➤ **Achieving identity of Adolescence**

According to Erikson Adolescent who forms a sense of Identity gains twokey benefits they are „A feeling of being at home in one’s body“and a sense of psychological Well-being“. He also speaks about Psychosocial Moratorium that is an Adolescent may delay in taking up responsibilities and showing Rebellion Pattern where in the Adolescents go against their parents and well-wishers in spite of being told for their own good. To seek out the confusion the Adolescents make use of their Abstract Thinking. In confusion and Identity crisis an individual tries to understand himself about his strength and weakness. He seeks to establish his identity in the world around him. Confusion sets in when he is not sure of his potentialities and skills. So, he has to hone up his skills and set them a tune to his personality. He has to identify his role in the society and strive towards that goal. Once he is focused about his role there ends its confusion, as, he has goal to reach and thus works towards it.

➤ **Social development**

This is also one crucial Stressor because it is the phase where Adolescents prefer to spend their timemore outside family and demand for freedom. A study conducted by Rex Forehand et al (1991)on Adolescents and their parent’s stress. The Study indicated that the stress in the family like divorce, intrapersonal conflict and maternal depression leads to stress in the adolescents which deteriorates functioning. Further a positive Parent-Adolescent relationship as perceived by the Adolescents was associated with less deterioration in all areas of functioning.

**Peer relationships**

A peer group membership assumes more importance during adolescence than at any other time of life.A peer group can provide a refuge and a source of support for youngsters in conflict with their families.Adolescents spend great deal of time with other Adolescents. One study which used beepers to contact adolescents at random times (Larson et al 1977), found that they spend more time talking with peers than doing academic work or being alone. The structure of peer groups seems to change over the course of adolescence. (Coleman, 1980,Dunphy, 1963)Adolescents move from small unisex groups to large groups and later develop contact with opposite sex. Dominance hierarchy it is the leadership quality that is developed during adolescence (Hartup,1983, Savin-williams, 1980).

The other important problems that cause stress are Substance Abuse, Instant Gratification fromElectronic Media and Gadgets, Lack of Competence, Risk Behaviours, Emotional disturbance, bullying, Cyberbullying.

**4.SYMPTOMS STRESSFUL BEHAVIOURS OF ADOLESCENTS**

Adolescents may be experiencing irritability because of lack of proper sleep at night. Adolescents may be unable to concentrate on academics and sports. Adolescents may be having unexplained fears or increased anxiety. Adolescents isolate from family activities or peer relationships. Adolescents may be experimenting with drugs and alcohol. Adolescents may complain about headaches or stomach aches. Adolescents may have poor appetite and low immunity.



## 5. STRESS MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS

Adolescents must learn to solve problems. Should develop positive relationships at home, school, with peers and adults. Adolescents should have Clear Goals. Adolescents should have Permission and ability to learn from mistakes. Adolescents should develop competencies (academic, social, life skills). Adolescents being Consistent, Positive and disciplined helps in combating stress. Adolescents should take good nutritional food and exercise regularly. Adolescents should take time out to relax or to do recreational activities. Adolescents should develop hobbies.

## 6. CONCLUSION

People of all ages are affected by stress an. Adolescent students seem especially vulnerable to this reality. Adolescence is a time of rapid biological change, personal development, social interactions, social expectations, and peer influence. The locus of much of this phenomenon is in the school environment. For many students, high school may be stressful. Students feel the effects of stress in harsh and also negative ways. Some of these effects include a sudden drop in grades, depression, general fatigue, insomnia, mood swings, temper tantrums and aggression. Because of the biological, cognitive and social causes the adolescents go through a harsh period in their life. So the parents have to be alert in managing the stress during adolescence. In order to overcome deviant behaviours the parents play a constructive role in channelizing energies of the adolescents. Proper care should to be taken in helping to take the right decisions which may affect their future.

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