



A Study on Academic Stress and its Relationship with Academic Performance and Social Media Addiction among School going Students

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Abstract: Adolescents is the transition stage that brings forth multiple challenges ranging from physical development, hormonal shifts, cognitive advancement, formation of self-identity, academic challenges etc., educational demands have deprived the school going children of their basic social needs owing to huge academic burdens. Academic stress is defined as strain or tension experienced by students due to high academic demands which can have negative consequences on academic performance; also leading to utilization of unhealthy stress managements techniques like drug abuse, smoking and internet addiction. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between academic performance, academic stress and social media addiction among school going students. The sample was taken from a private school (N=150). Standardized psychological scales were administered to measure academic performance, academic stress and social media addiction. The results revealed that academic stress was positively correlated with social media addiction and negatively with academic performance. These findings highlight the significance of reducing academic stress to enhance academic performance and reduce social media addiction. Further research must be conducted to identify potential causes of academic stress also stress management workshop; emotional wellness programs must be done to provide psychological support to students.

Keywords: *Academic Stress, Social Media Addiction, Academic Performance, Adolescents*

1. Introduction

For huge amount of time, it was regarded that school life is the golden period with no stress and easy life; assuming students do not encounter any stress as they only must do is study and enjoy with their friends. Stress is now a global issue affecting every individual irrespective of their age or groups Reddy et al. (2018). In the current time the education system has become highly competitive with sole focus on grades and marks due to which students spend a lot of time working in schools and homes. Majority of the stakeholders support this convention and exert pressure on children to achieve better grades or marks. This results in less scope for socialization, play, hobbies and recreation causing increased stress among school going children's (K & D, 2020). Multiple studies conducted after the year 2000 highlighted that Indian adolescents report 13%- 45% stress. Similarly, a study conducted in Kerala highlighted that 93% -100% of school going children had moderate stress level while 1.9% revealed severe stress (Rentala et al., 2019). Furthermore, research by Deb et al. (2015), highlighted that 63.5% of Indian student population reported academic stress because of high academic pressure.

Adolescents who suffer from high levels of stress are more prone to exhibit maladaptive behavior such as unprotected sex, poor sleep cycle, bad eating habits, increased intake of alcohol or drugs, lack of self- regulation and excessive social media usage (Rentala et al., 2019). Adolescents who have high academic pressure and negative affect tend to exhibit social media addiction (Ariani et al., 2018). According to Bakken et al. (2009) adolescents have internet addiction as they wish to avoid responsibilities or academic stress. At adolescents stage their academic performance explains the attitude of their primary care givers effecting their perception of problems and how they are dealt. High stress levels can result in physiological and psychological issues which can further affect academic performance of adolescents (Kapali et al., 2019). Hence it is significant to do further research which will help to safeguard the adolescents' populations.

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship of academic stress and social media addiction on adolescents' academic performance.

1. Introduce stress management techniques to help alleviate the academic stress.
2. Create interventions or age limit restrictions to help manage social media addiction.

Academic Performance

The lack of unanimity related to the definition of academic performance among students can be clearly seen in the previous literature (Singh, 2021). Academic performance is defined as

achieving one's short-or-long-term academic goals and is assessed in terms of cumulative grade point average (CGPA) in most of the schools (Hailu et al., 2024). Díaz-Morales and Escribano (2015) defined academic performance as the combination of social, mental and economic factors that further lead to holistic development of students. According to Kotter et al. (2017), stress and academic performance are negatively correlated, and it is like a vicious cycle that continues to decrease performance as academic stress increases. Similarly, student's academic performance is impacted by multiple factors like parental expectations, social media consumption, social connectivity etc. (Deng et al., 2022).

Academic Stress

According to Bisht (1989) “academic stress is a demand related to academics that tax or exceed the available resources (internal or external) as cognitively appeared by the student involved” (Lal, 2014). Academic stress is regarded as an adverse issue among multiple countries, state, ethnic groups and culture. Academic stress is an interplay between environmental triggers, student's appraisal of academic stress and their responses. When the academic demands are high and personal resources are less it often leads to physical and psychological issues among adolescents; resulting in huge amount of stress that causes increased mental health issues like anxiety, suicidal thoughts and depression. Academic stress is called “career stopper.” While some amount of stress called eustress is helpful for the students to motivate them towards giving their best in the school. However, if it is beyond the required level, it can have negative impact on students and schools. Thus, it is an important topic and cause for huge concerns in academic settings. Multiple studies have highlighted that academic stress and academic performance are negatively correlated (Reddy et al., 2017).

Social media addiction

Social media has helped people to connect and have online interactions. Without a doubt it is changing how individual interact personally or professionally. According to Kepios (2024) more than 4.7 billion people use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter helping people to connect, express themselves and feel validated. In India 80% of the population use social media, with adolescents being the core consumer in this population. The increased use of social media among adolescents has both advantages and disadvantages, specifically related to psychological health and online safety. Research suggest that social media provide opportunity to connect and access educational content, it also has challenges like, cyberbullying, poor academic

performance, increased cases of anxiety and feeling and utilization of age-inappropriate content (Prakash, 2025). According to Levenson et al. (2016) Indian Urban adolescents reported sleeping for less than 6hrs on an average owing to social media consumption, which further aggravates academic stress and makes them vulnerable to mental health issues. Managing academic demands along with social media addiction further disrupts their sleep and affect academic performance.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose is to study Academic stress and its relationship with academic performance and social media addiction among school going students.

1.2 Hypothesis

H1: Academic stress will have negative relationship with academic performance among school going students.

H2: Academic stress will have positive relationship with social media addiction among school going students.

2. Method

2.1 Sample

The study sampled 150 students aged 12-17 from Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh

2.2 Measures

Social Media Addiction Scale for Adolescents (SMASA): The Social Media Addiction Scale for Adolescents was used to measure social media addiction for the study. The self-report scale was developed by Ozgenel, Canpolat and Eksi (2019). The scale consists of 9 items and was scored on 5-point Likert scale which included Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4) and Always (5).

Academic Stress Scale (ASS): The Academic Stress Scale was used to measure Academic Stress of participants. The self-report scale was developed by Kumar et al. (2024). The scale was divided into two dimensions exam stress and classroom stress. The scale consists of 30 items and was scored on 5-point Likert scale which included Strongly agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) and strongly disagree (5).

Academic Performance Questionnaire (APQ): The Academic Performance Questionnaire was used to measure academic performance of the participants. The self-report scale was

developed by Birchmeier et al. (2015). The scale consists of 8 items which included Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (4) and Strongly Disagree (5).

Procedures

Participants were primarily told about the purpose and objectives of the study. They were informed that their participation is voluntary and all the data taken will be kept confidential. The study was carried out through Goggle forms. The survey included standardized psychometric test assessing academic stress, social media addiction and academic performance. Participants were instructed to respond to the items as accurately as possible. After completion of the study each participant was thanked for their cooperation and time.

3. Results

Table 1. *N, Mean and Standard Deviation*

	Exam Stress	Classroom Stress	Academic Performance	Social media
N	150	150	150	150
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	31.2	28.6	29.3	20.0
Median	30.0	28.0	29.0	20.0
Standard Deviation	9.77	7.75	4.13	7.21

Table 2: *Correlation between Social edia addiction, Academic performance and Academic Stress*

	Exam Stress	Classroom Stress	Academic Performance	Social media
Exam Stress	—			
Classroom Stress	0.690***	—		
Academic Performance	-0.270***	-0.322***	—	
Social media	0.432***	0.402***	-0.412***	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The primary aim of the study was to examine the relationship between academic performance, academic stress and social media addiction of school going students. Academic stress was further calculated in two dimensions classroom stress and exam stress. The findings indicate that Exam stress is positively correlated with social media addiction ($r = 0.432$, $p < 0.001$) implying that stress doing exam period enhance the social media usage conversely exam stress is negatively correlated with academic performance ($r = 0.270$, $p < 0.001$), implying that higher

examination stress leads to poor academic performance. Additionally, classroom stress was positively correlated with social media addiction ($r=0.402$, $p<0.001$) explaining that greater classroom related stress leads the students to use more social media platforms conversely classroom stress was negatively correlated with academic performance ($r=0.322$, $p<0.001$) implying that classroom stress depreciates academic achievement. Also, academic performance was negatively correlated with social media addiction ($r=0.412$, $p<0.001$) suggesting that good academic performance reduces social media consumption of students.

These findings are consistent with our hypothesis that academic stress will be positively correlated with social media addiction and negatively correlated with academic performance. The findings are confirmed in a study conducted by Zaho (2023) on 372 college student who found that both academic stress and social media addiction negatively affect students' academic performance. Additionally, it was confirmed that academic stress mediates the relationship between academic performance and social media addiction. Similarly, Sarialioğlu, & Oluç, (2024) conducted a study on 716 adolescents (grade 9th-12th) found that as the social media addiction increases among adolescents, the stress levels also enhance. Furthermore, few variables like type of social media platforms, purpose of using social media platforms affected the SMASA score likewise, age, school success, gender, consumption time affected the perceived stress of adolescents.

Sampasa-Kanyinga et al. (2019) studied the relationship between social media usage and academic performance along with moderating role of age, gender, school type (middle, high school adolescents). They took a sample of 10,076 of students studying grade 7-12. The results revealed that academic performance is negatively correlated with social media addiction in middle and high school adolescents. Also suggested that social media usage must be limited to 2h per day to avoid its harmful effects. Aafreen et al. (2018) conducting the study on 80 students of different streams and the results showed that science students had more stress as compared to other stream. The increasing stress levels is causing physical, mental and emotional strain which further leads to mental health issues like anxiety and depression impacting their academic performance. Together, these findings suggest that managing academic stress is crucial to prevent increasing social media consumption among school going students and enhance their academic performance.

4. Conclusion

The present study examined the relationship between academic stress (Examination stress & Classroom stress), academic performance and social media addiction. It was found that examination stress and classroom stress was positively correlated with social media addiction and negatively correlated with academic performance. Additionally, academic performance was negatively correlated with social media addiction. The findings suggest that higher academic stress is related with poor academic performance and increased social media usage. By analyzing responses from 150 adolescents in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, the study asserted the idea that managing academic stress plays a key role in navigating the challenges experienced by school going students.

As education system is changing it is leading to increased uncertainty and insecurity among students hence it is crucial to focus on their mental health. The primary stakeholders must take multiple initiatives targeted at self-control, emotional-intelligence, resilience, leisure time and self-awareness to reduce academic stress. Support in these areas will help the students to identify primary stressors, use healthy coping and effectively deal with the social and academic pressure. The study had certain limitations, including a small and localized sample and utilization of self-report measure, and the sample was collected during exam period which could be the reason for high academic stress. Additionally, it was a cross-sectional study which do not promise high applicability and scientific interpretations. Further research needs to conduct to get clear picture. Ultimately, managing academic stress into school education may help students to effectively deal with stress, manage uncertainty, utilize healthy coping and enhance mental health.

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