



Resilience and Stress Coping in school Students Under Continuous Academic Pressure

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Abstract: All students face stress at some point during school, whether through pressure to do well in a class or through experiencing unpleasant interactions with other students or teachers. Studies of coping and resilience have examined how students respond to stress and succeed in spite of risk factors. Although coping and resilience are related constructs, they are distinct in that coping refers to a wide set of skills and purposeful responses to stress, whereas resilience refers to positive adaptation in response to serious adversity. A sample of 30 adolescent students in the age 12 to 17 years were taken. Standardized scales were used to measure resilience, coping stress and academic pressure. The result found out that there is negative significant relationship between stress coping and academic stress. Strategies such as Journalizing, mindfulness & other self-care strategies need to be incorporated to help the students of all age groups to Mental cope better.

Keywords: *Resilience, Stress Coping, Students, Academic Pressure*

1. Introduction

“It’s not stress that kills us; it is our reaction to it.”

Hans Selye

High-stakes exams and workload create chronic stress, with many students feeling their entire future depends on performance. Mental health problems are leading contributors to the global disease burden in adolescents.

Academic stress has emerged as a significant risk factor for mental health development during adolescence. Schools have a considerable influence on adolescents’

development but increasing academic pressures and social expectations have caused students to experience higher levels of stress, impacting their mental health and overall development.

Resilience refers to an individual's ability to cope and recover effectively in the face of setbacks and adversity and maintain normal physiological function and psychological health.

Resilience is a dynamic process for adapting to stressful situations, characterized by continuous development over time. Children and adolescents are in a critical stage of physical and mental development, making them susceptible to stressors from family, school, and peers, including parental divorce, academic pressure, teacher-student relationships, and school bullying. Resilience can effectively help them overcome stressful situations, maintain psychological balance, and promote their positive development.

Resilience can be defined as “a dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of serious adversity” (Luthar et al., 2000, p. 543). Coping can be defined as “constantly changing efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141).

1.1 Resilience

According to Fran Norris (2012) resilience is defined as “the process through which, after a disturbance, a set of adaptive capacities is linked to a positive trajectory of functioning and adaptation”. According to Bonanno (2004) resilience is defined as “a stable trajectory of healthy functioning after a highly adverse event.” Resilience is “a dynamic process characterized by positive outcomes despite adversity or stress” (Luthar et al., 2015).

Tasijawa (2022) aimed to analyse the effectiveness of school-based interventions to increase resilience in adolescents. The researcher stated that resilience can help adolescents to have positive adaptations in dealing with difficulties, stress, and trauma, as well as preventing mental disorders. Articles were searched using different electronic databases. Findings revealed that five school-based intervention programs have a significant effect on adolescent resilience levels.

Rao et al. (2018) a study was conducted on adolescent school students. The sample was taken from a public school in North Bangalore. The standardized scale with 30 questionnaires was used. The result found that early adolescents are less resilient compared to late adolescents.

A study was conducted Banerjee et al. (2018) on 151 adolescent school students. A pre-designed, pretested, structured, self-administered questionnaire along with CYRM-12

(‘Child and Youth Resilience Measure-12’) questionnaire was used. The results found out that quality parental time for children and engagement in physical activity will help to increase resilience level and build up the coping capacity.

1.2 Stress Coping

According to S and JT (2004) coping is defined as “the thoughts and behaviours mobilized to manage internal and external stressful situations.” According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stress coping is defined “coping as efforts to manage demands that could exceed our resources.”

A study was conducted to find the relationship between school adjustment and stress-coping styles among adolescents. The descriptive correlation survey was used on the sample of 701 middle school students in Seoul, Gyeonggi, Incheon, Jeonbuk, and Gangwon province, Korea. The results found positive correlations were identified between positive stress-coping styles and the adjustment to school life of adolescents. It is suggested to develop stress management programs to help middle school students adjust to school life (Lee & Gyuyoung, 2013).

According to Hess et al. (2013) a study was conducted to find the relationship between two stressful life change events and reported coping strategies among early adolescents. The sample was comprised of 92 students (44 females and 48 males). It was found that the coping factors of social activities and seeking professional support significantly predicted high school dropout status, whereas family involvement was negatively related to this outcome. It was also suggested the need for school psychologists and other school mental health professionals to offer coping skills training.

A study was conducted by Suldo et al. (2008) to investigate the relationships among stress, coping, and mental health in 139 students participating in an International Baccalaureate (IB) high school diploma program. It was found that students in an IB program perceive significantly more stress than their general education peers, and that specific coping styles are differentially related to mental health outcomes in this subgroup of high-achieving high school students.

1.3 Academic Stress

According to Wilks and Spivey (2010) academic stress is defined as “stress directly related to testing, assessments, and academic assignments in learning environments, and students feel expectations from their parents and teachers” (Zhang et al. 2015).

According to R et al. (2000) academic stress is defined as “a student's psychological state resulting from continuous social and self-imposed pressure in a school environment that depletes the student's psychological reserves.”

A study was conducted by Qi et al. (2025) on 80 psychology students to find the typology and effectiveness of stress management strategies among higher education students. It applies both questionnaires and surveys. It was found that students tend to prefer passive coping mechanisms, including avoidance and distraction. As these were providing only short-term relief from psychological discomfort but fail to resolve underlying causes in the long run. The findings also highlight the importance of cultivating active stress management strategies, including self-organisation, problem analysis, and decision-making skills, which enable students to address difficulties constructively.

According to Park and Kim (2018) a study was conducted on 11 adolescents who were preparing for the college entrance examination. The purpose was to examine the characteristics of coping strategies on the academic stress experienced by senior high school students in Korea. The result found four themes as strategic attributes of stress-coping for academic stress among Korean adolescents: (a) creating coping strategies in a physically active manner; (b) creating coping strategies in a non-physical and positive form; (c) utilizing maladaptive coping mechanisms; and (d) relying upon religious belief and spiritual power.

According to Yan et al. (2018) a study was conducted on 757 adolescent students between 12-16 years. The purpose was to find the mediating effect of burnout and depression on the relationship between adolescent academic stresses and sleep quality. Self-report questionnaires were assessed. Results showed negative correlation of academic stress with sleep quality.

1.4 Purpose

The purpose is to study the relationship between resilience and stress coping in school students under continuous academic pressure

1.5 Hypothesis

H1: There will be a significant relationship between stress coping and academic stress.

H2: There will be a significant relationship between resilience and academic stress.

H3: There will be a significant relationship between stress coping and resilience.

2. Methods

2.1 Sample

A total of 30 adolescent school students in the age of 12 to 17 years from Delhi NCR.

2.2 Measures

Adolescent Resilience Scale: The adolescent resilience scale was used to measure resilience among students for the study. The scale was developed by Bulut et al. (2013). The scale consists of 29 items and the rating scale included not exactly suitable for me (1), not suitable for me (2), suitable for me (3), exactly suitable for me (4).

Adolescent Stress coping Scale: The scale was developed by Connor-Smith et.al (2000). The scale consists of 57 items rated on the scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (A lot) to measure the stress coping of adolescent students.

Educational Stress Scale for Adolescent: The Educational Stress Scale for Adolescent was developed by (Sun et.al, 2011) is 16 items scale used to measure the academic stress. Respondent were asked to rate the scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

2.3 Procedure

The data were collected through the Google Form. The questionnaire link was created and shared with participants through an online platform. Before data collection, participants' voluntary participation was ensured.

3. Results

Table 1: *N, Mean and Standard Deviation*

	Academic Stress	Resilience	Stress Coping
N	30	30	30
Mean	57.3	33.4	43.4
Standard deviation	10.8	3.65	5.42

Table 2: *Correlation between Academic Stress, Resilience and Stress Coping*

	Academic Stress	Resilience	Stress Coping
Academic Stress	—		
Resilience	0.112	—	
Stress Coping	-0.481**	0.133	—

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

4. Discussion of Result

The result found out that there is negative significant relationship between stress coping and academic stress ($r=-0.48$, $p<.01$). The result found out that there is no significant relationship between resilience and academic stress and also Stress coping and resilience. This finding is inconsistent with previous research. For instance, Connor and Davidson (2003) suggested that resilience acts as a protective factor against stress, helping individuals adapt positively to adversity. Similarly, Hartley (2011) found that higher resilience was associated with lower stress and better adjustment among college students.

This finding is supported by the work of Folkman and Lazarus (1984), who emphasized that effective coping strategies, particularly problem-focused and emotion-focused coping, play a crucial role in managing stress. Another theory suggests that individuals who actively deal with stressors are less likely to experience high stress levels, which aligns with the current findings. Similarly, a study by Misra and McKean (2000) found that students who used adaptive coping strategies reported significantly lower academic stress, supporting the negative relationship observed in this study.

5. Conclusion

The study examined the relationship between academic stress, stress coping, and resilience among students. The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between stress coping and academic stress, indicating that students who use effective coping strategies tend to experience lower levels of academic stress. This suggests that coping skills play an important role in helping students manage academic demands and pressures.

However, the results showed no significant relationship between resilience and academic stress, and no significant relationship between stress coping and resilience. This indicates that resilience may not directly influence academic stress in the present sample, and coping strategies may operate independently of resilience.

Excessive levels of academic pressure on students can lead to issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, and physical conditions like fatigue. While mild academic pressure is healthy and helpful, other negative effects of academic pressure on students are not to be underestimated. Using tools such as stress management worksheets can be helpful, but it is also important to address the root cause of academic pressure. The students of today are the future of tomorrow, so necessary steps must be taken to ensure their well-being.

Overall, the study highlights the importance of developing effective stress coping strategies to help students reduce academic stress and improve their psychological well-being.

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