

Influence of Academic Stress on Self Concept and Creativity of College Students

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ABSTRACT: Education is the powerful weapon for the social, political, ethical, linguistic, intellectual, cultural, and economic development of a country. Education is a rope that can carry us to greatness because now a day's data and knowledge is a power. A school or University is one of the most important formal agencies of education which plays a pivotal role in moulding the ideas, habits, interest, aptitude, intelligence and attitudes of a child. School is the first major environment and learning place outside the home that provides opportunities for a student to learn, increase his abilities and potentials, and gain respect and admiration. School or University is the miniature of society where students get all round development in supervision of teachers. Education acquired by students in University helps them to develop well balanced personalities, to become physically, mentally and academically strong, mentally alert, emotionally stable, culturally sound, and socially efficient along with the most desired aspects of knowledge and learning. It is a place where the students grow and learn as they travel the road from childhood to maturity. Therefore, the University education is considered to be a necessary component for the students of all the citizens of a nation for the development, betterment and utilization of best side of human resources, especially University goers' resources and potentials.

Key words: Academic Stress, Self Concept, Creativity, University, Bihar, India

dependency needs and independence are associated with this period. The definition given by W.H.O. defines adolescence both in terms of age (10-19 years) and in terms of a phase of life marked by special attributes. These attributes include rapid physical, psychological, cognitive and behavioral changes and developments including, urge to experiment, attainment of sexual maturity, development of adult identity, and transition from socio-economic dependence to relative independence. Adolescence is a period of social expansion and development. Adolescents spend a great deal of their life around the activities, interest and attitudes of their peers. As the result, the peers attain great importance during this period. During adolescence the physical, intellectual, and emotional characteristics and patterns of childhood are gradually replaced by adult ones, and girls and boys progressively evolve into a state of relative socio-economic independence (UNICEF, 1999). Adolescents carry with them a sense of who they are and what makes them different from everyone else. Various research has highlighted that, in addition to the normal stress of developmental changes that accompany the adolescent period, many students today must also cope with the stress of heavy academic workloads, a multitude of extracurricular and athletic engagements, and pressure from the increasingly competitive college application process. Chiang (1995) also stated that school is one of the main sources of stress among adolescents.

I. INTRODUCTION

Students of University belong to adolescence and youth stage of human span of life. Adolescence is the second decade of life; the period of transition between childhood and adulthood which begins with the onset of puberty and ends with the acceptance of adult roles and responsibilities. This is a crucial period of life. Anxieties, tension, frustration, identity crises, looking out for support, indecisiveness,

ACADEMIC STRESS

The only independent variable of the present research article is academic stress. As we know that modern life is full of stresses and strains. All of us in this world face stressors in one or the other area of our life. Even school going children are under constant stress due to cut throat competitions and parental pressures. Stress related to health, love affairs, education demands, work environment, independency and relationships all have their effects on the physical and emotional

welfare of the individual. We all experience stress at times. We can say that stress is a part of life no matter how wealthy, powerful, attractive, or happy a person might be. Stress can sometimes help to motivate us to get a task completed, or perform well. But stress can also be harmful if we become over-stressed and it interferes with our ability to get on with our normal life for too long.

The term stress is derived from Latin word 'stringers', meaning to draw tight, and was used in 17th century to describe hardship or affliction. The concept of stress was first introduced in the life science by Cannon in the 1930s. Cannon considered stress as a pattern of physiological reactions that prepare an organism for action, either "fight or flight". Because of this reaction, people and animals choose to stay and fight or attempt to escape when confronted by extreme danger.

SELF CONCEPT

'Self-concept' is one of the most important aspects of the individual's subjective world. In simple words it is the view s/he has of her/himself, often referred as **self-image**. The **self-concept** is what the person thinks he is, regardless of the actual nature or his appearance to other.

Self- concept has been taken as the first criterion variable of the present research Endeavour. Let us start to discuss the origin, concept and development of self-concept. Discussions about the self have been of interest to early philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Socrates argued that the self is the soul, where as Plato focused on the intellect and the rational part of the soul, where he tied the notion of the self to cognitive principles.

The term 'self-concept' has great significance. The self concept is a very interesting and important aspect of human psychology. It shapes how the individual views his relations with the world and reflects his overall quality of being. The self concept is basically a set of ideas about oneself: who you are as a person, and your place in the world, society, and the lives of people around you. Self concept is an important phenomenon for a healthy and sound personality of an individual. It serves as the frame of reference for the individual to relate himself with others. It is dynamic, unique, and always evolving. The success and failure of one is largely dependent upon one's perceptions of him/her and what others think of him or her.

CREATIVITY

Creative means to create something new in any field create a new vista and idea. The term Creativity is a goal directed thinking which is

unusual, novel and useful. Many of such creative thinking become so important that they influence the whole human civilization and are called as historical creativity. The Mona Lisa, the laws of thermodynamics, the laws of motion, the theory of relativity are some of the ideas that were never thought before and changed the human civilization altogether in a great way in their respective spheres of life. Although we can accept its existence and importance, it has been a highly difficult task for the researchers to define creativity.

Creativity is the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. useful concerning tasks constrains).

Creativity is the creation of something new and useful and calls them as "products definitions" of creativity.

According to the investment theory of Sternberg, creativity requires a confluence of six distinct but interrelated resources: intellectual abilities, knowledge, styles of thinking, personality, motivation, and environment. Although levels of these resources are sources of individual differences, often the decision to use a resource is a more important source of individual differences.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Now it is clear from the above studies that academic stress, self-concept and creativity are not only relevant but also play a pivotal role in determining the academic success and failure, as well as social, moral, intellectual, linguistic, physical, emotional and psychological well-being of students. Therefore, keeping these things in mind, the following objectives have been set for the present study:

1. To investigate the influence of various facets of academic stress on self-concept as a whole and its different constructs among total sample of college students.
2. To determine the difference between boys and girls on academic stress, self concept and creativity on total sample.

HYPOTHESES

Formulation of hypotheses is a very essential step in research investigation. It is an important aspect of every research, because it provides direction to the investigation. A hypothesis is a tentative solution or statement of any problem about the relationship between two or more variables. Hypothesis is a presumption which provides the bases for investigation and ensures the proper direction in which the study should proceed. The researcher used null hypotheses here.

Ho1: There is no significant influence of various facets of academic stress on self concept as a whole and its different constructs among total sample of college students.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between boys and girls on academic stress, self-concept and creativity for total sample.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

ACADEMIC STRESS: The psychological distress anticipated towards academic challenges or failure or even a apprehension of the possibility of academic non performance is referred as academic stress.

SELF CONCEPT: The **self-concept** is what the person thinks he is and embodies the answer who I am, regardless of the actual nature or his appearance to other.

CREATIVITY: Creativity is the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. useful concerning tasks constrains).

II. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the present article was to study the ‘**Influence of academic stress on student’s self-concept and creativity**’ where academic stress has been taken as predictor variable and self-concept has been taken as criterion variable. Since, it was an empirical research investigation therefore certain procedures have to be adopted.

Methodology is a method or the procedure used by a researcher to accomplish the purpose of his research. It is a very essential step in any research and has its importance in scientific investigation because objectivity in any research investigation cannot be obtained unless it is carried out in a very systematic and planned manner.

In the present proposed research the sample comprised of 400 students of University whose age ranged between 17-22 years hence, sample population in terms of age is highly homogenous.

Out of 400 students, 200 students were taken from Patna University, Patna, comprising of 100 boys and 100 girls, and the remaining 200 students were taken from Amity University, Patna, comprising of 100 boys and 100 girls.

Group	Girls	Boys	Total
Private University	100	100	200
Government University	100	100	200
Total	200	200	400

Academic Stress Questionnaire (ASQ) In order to assess academic stress among high school students, Academic Stress Questionnaire was used. It was developed by Akram Khan and Baby (2013) to assess academic stress among students (17-24 years). The scale consists of 36 items. Responses were scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from No Stress (0), Slight Stress (1), lot of Stress (3) to Extreme stress(4). Higher scores reflect increased academic stress level. The ASQ provides five factors, viz., (i) inadequate academic environment in college/university, (ii) lack of adjustment, (iii) apprehensive about future, (iv) Poor administration, and (v) worries.

STATISTICAL ANALYSES

So by keeping the nature of research investigation and its objective in mind, it was decided to apply multiple regression method on the data.

The present article deals with the findings of the entire research Endeavour. The present study being an empirical one was aimed to examine empirically the predictive influence of academic stress on students’ self-concept and creativity

TABLE 1
 Showing descriptive analysis of sample group and total sample on Psychological variable.

Groups	Academic Stress Mean & (S.D)	Self Concept Mean & (S.D)	Creativity Mean & (S.D)
Total (N=400)	82.47 14.74	175.30 19.51	34.84 14.49
Male (N=200)	82.60 14.53	174.66 17.24	33.25 14.81
Female (N=200)	82.33 14.99	175.94 21.58	36.44 14.03
Private University	82.90 13.87	176.28 22.94	33.44 13.03

(N=200)			
Government University(N=200)	82.04 15.59	174.34 15.34	36.24 15.73

FIGURE 1

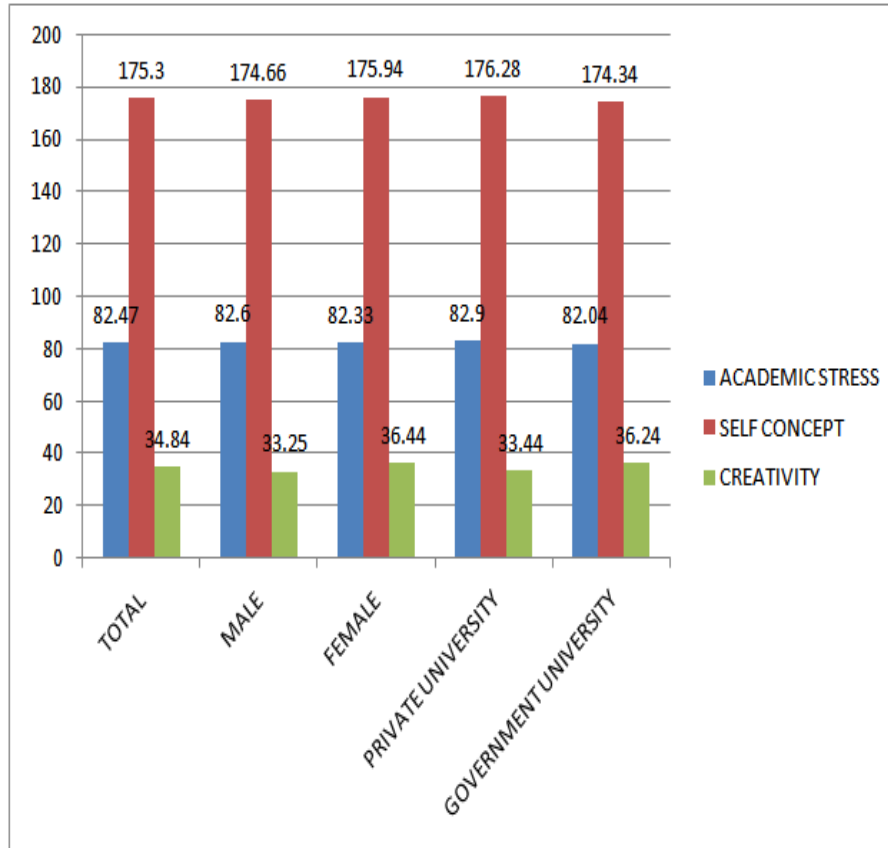


FIGURE 2

Summary of Hierarchical regression analysis for predicting self concept.
 N=400

Variables	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)
Constant	172.552	181.780
Gender	0.41	0.43
FT	0.58	0.56
ST	-0.49	- 0.49
Worries		-0.96

FIGURE 2

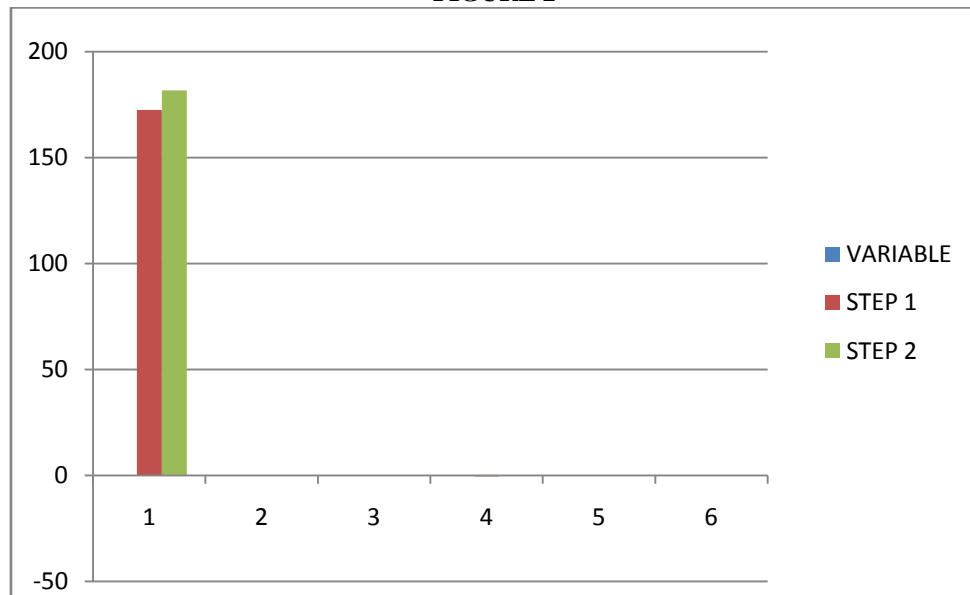


Table no.2 concludes two step hierarchical regression analysis was performed with self-concept as the criterion variable and the results are shown in above table-2. In first step of the regression model demographic variables (gender, family type and University type) were entered as covariates. In model two, dimensions of academic stress were entered. Demographic variables did not accounted for significant variance in self-concept scores of high school students ($R^2 = .007$, $F\text{-change} = .922$, $P > .05$) contributing insignificantly to the prediction of total self-concept. Entering dimensions of academic stress in step two did not make any significant change and there was increase of only 1.3% of the variance in R^2 ($R^2 = .020$, $\Delta R^2 = .013$, $F\text{-change} = 1.086$, $P > .05$) indicating no

contribution of academic stress in predicting total self-concept.

The above table shows the significance of academic stress in predicting self concept for the whole sample. None of the dimensions of academic stress turned to be significant predictor of self-concept. Inadequate academic environment in the college, lack of adjustment, poor administration and worries dimensions of the academic stress were negatively correlated with self-concept though the correlation was not statistically significant. So the H_0 is states that **“There is no significant influence of various facets of academic stress on self concept as a whole and its different constructs among total sample of college students” is accepted.**

TABLE 3
 Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for predicting creativity.

Variables	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)
Constant	5.603	6.865
Gender	0.120	.109
FT	0.50	.048
ST	-.120	-.125
Worries		-.003

FIGURE 3

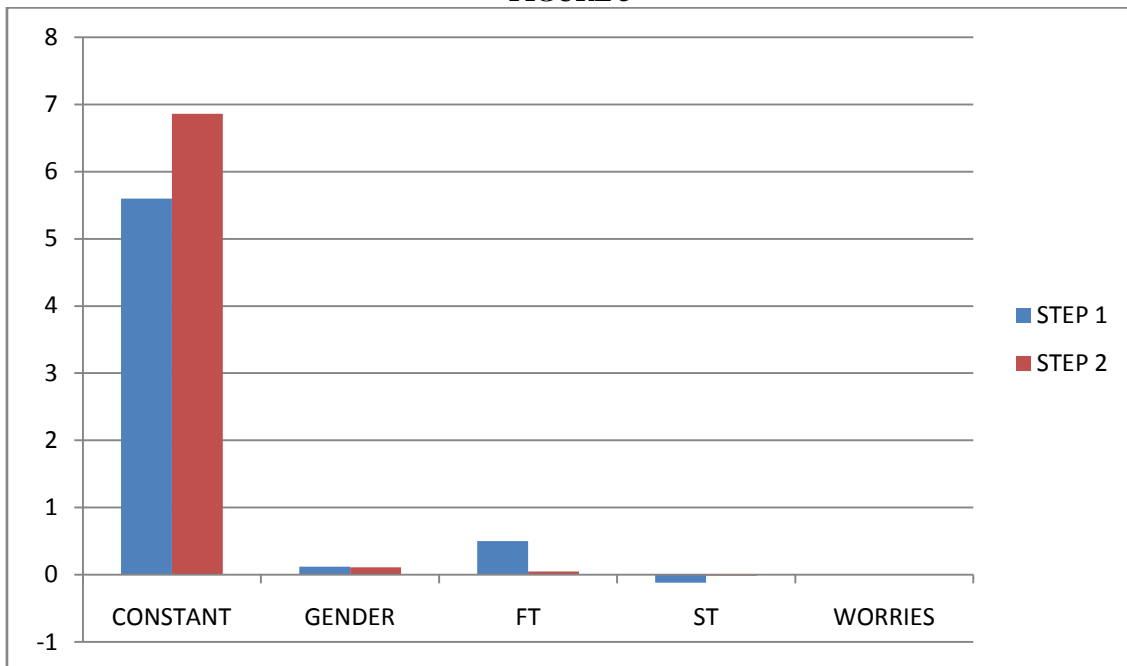


Table no.3 concludes two steps hierarchical regression analysis was performed with creativity as the criterion variable and the results are shown in above table-3. In first step of the regression model demographic variables (gender, family type and University type) were entered as covariates. In model two, dimensions of academic stress were entered. Demographic variables did not accounted for significant variance in creativity scores of University students ($R^2 = .003$, $F\text{-change} = 4.46$, $P > .05$) contributing insignificantly to the prediction of total creativity. Entering dimensions of academic stress in step two did not make any significant change and there was increase of only 1.3% of the variance in R^2 ($R^2 = .075$, $\Delta R^2 = .042$, $F\text{-change} = 3.56$, $P > .05$) indicating no contribution of academic stress in predicting total creativity.

The above table shows the significance of academic stress in predicting creativity for the whole sample. None of the dimensions of academic stress turned to be significant predictor of creativity. Inadequate academic environment in the college, lack of adjustment, poor administration and worries dimensions of the academic stress were negatively correlated with creativity though the correlation was not statistically significant. So the H_0 is states that **“There is no significant difference between boys and girls on academic stress, self-concept and creativity for total sample” is accepted.**

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