

Gender Differences in Parenting Styles, Academic Stress and Self Concept of Secondary School Students

Abstract

This study was conducted to examine the gender differences in academic stress, perceived democratic, autocratic, accepting and rejecting parenting styles and self concept of the adolescents of Punjab. A total of 200(Boys = 100 and Girls =100) students participated in the study and filled the questionnaires of academic stress, perceived democratic, autocratic, accepting and rejecting parenting styles and self concept. Independent sample 't' was employed to test the differences. Results of the study showed that there existed significant gender difference in the scores of perceived accepting and rejecting parenting style and there exist insignificant gender difference in the scores of academic stress, perceived democratic and autocratic parenting styles and self concept of the adolescents. Counselling cell must be established and should specifically develop the gender sensitive intervention programmes. School management should try to make the campus gender sensitive.

Keywords: Gender Differences, Academic Stress, Democratic, Autocratic, Parenting Styles, Self- Concept.

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Introduction

Among all life stages, adolescence is one of the most transitional stages, including social, biological, and psychological changes (Byrne, Davenport & Mazanov, 2007). Adolescence is the stage which clearly establishes self concept of an individual. Self-concept is an important concept of any child's development. Self-concept is affected as children develop a sense of self and interact with and gain experience in the world (Kaur, Rana & Kaur, 2009). The importance of self-concept within educational settings has been discussed by several scholars and has led to the performance of studies examining the role of self-concept in school performance (Oliva 1999). Academic stress makes a significant contribution to the prediction of subsequent school performance and act as a negative predictor of academic performance in school children (Ender et al. 1994).

The root of self-concept lies in family experiences. A favourable home environment constitutes of good parent – child relationship (Kaur, Rana & Kaur, 2009). As Kuppaswamy (1954) says, "The self- concept is not a finished product at birth. But is something which develops and how it develops, what its constituent attitudes are depends upon the family in which the individual is brought up with all the social norms of the group to which the family belongs and the education and experiences of each individual." Adolescent's gender plays the role of determinant of parenting behaviour. Adolescent's gender is one of the important factor which helps to elucidate why parents behave the way they do and subsequent influence on their adolescents' outcome (Belsky, 1984). According to adolescents' own reports, parents restrict girls' more than boys' behaviours and have lower expectations for girls than for boys competencies and achievements (Hoeksema, 2001)

Previous studies revealed that the self-concept of boys and girls is different. Still many studies have found that adolescents boys report higher levels of self concepts than do girl adolescents (Aparna,A.A. (2013); Mom,M. (2007; Sharma 1981; Pandit 1985; Park 2003; and Al-Zyoudi 2007) whereas some studies found exactly the reverse (Wang 1997).

Investigating the association between academic stress, gender differences and self concept of adolescent students are helpful for developing preventive strategies during adolescence. So the present study

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is intended to study the gender differences in academic stress, perceived parenting styles and self concept of the adolescents.

Review of Literature

Lal (2014) studied academic stress among adolescent in relation to intelligence and demographic factors. The sample consisted of 200 students of high school of government managed and privately managed institutions of Hisar. For statistical analysis, t test was used. Major finding was there existed no significant difference in academic stress of male and female students.

Padmavati (2014) explored psychological and educational stress of 120 intermediate students belonging to rural and urban areas. Tools used for the study was Adolescent stress Inventory. Means S.D.S and 't' values were used for analysis of the data. Results revealed that boys experienced more psychological and educational stress than girls in both rural and urban areas.

Dixit and Singh (2015) examined academic stress and self-esteem among school students .The sample consisted 200 School students falling in district of Punjab i.e. Ludhiana from which 100 govt. and 100 private from rural and urban areas, Student Stress Scale developed and standardized by Akhtar and Self-esteem Inventory developed and standardized by Coppersmith (1967) were used to collect the data. The statistical techniques were used the mean, standard deviation, t-value and coefficient of correlation. The results showed that the factors like set-up of the school and gender of the school students influence academic stress and self-esteem.

Lee-Tarver (1999) examined adolescent coping strategies in high school students with reference to gender and race. Adolescents studying in rural southern Georgia high school in grades 8 through 12 were taken. 343 adolescents completed ways of coping questionnaire by Folkman and Lazarus. Results revealed significant gender differences. Females reported using more wishful thinking strategies than males. However males reported more manipulation and escape strategies than females.

Rao, Maudud and Subbakrishna (2000) studied appraisal of stress and coping in college students. They took a sample of 258 male and female undergraduates; Gender differences were not found to be significant. For both stressors, the coping responses were a combination of problems and emotion focused strategies including support utilization. Gender differences in the emotion-focused coping were present. Females preferred distress – reduced strategies and social support utilization, while males reported active behavioural methods including high risk coping behaviour.

De Souza and Paul (2013) studied the influence of perceived paternal parenting styles on the social competence of middle school children. The sample consisted of 500 middle school students, 250 boys and 250 girls in the age range of 10-12 years. It was found that perceived paternal style has a significant influence on social competence. No

significant gender difference existed in the perceived parenting style.

Kaur (2013) investigated parent child relationship in relation to self confidence of high schools students. The sample of the study consisted of 200 students (100 girls and 100 boys) of 9th class from different schools of Sirsa district. It found that self confidence and parent child relationship was not significantly related at both level of confidence for boys. And parent child relationship partly affected self confidence of girls.

Sharma (2006) conducted study to see the impact of life satisfaction on self concept. The sample of the study comprised 200 students (100 boys, 100 girls). Random sampling technique was used for selecting sample. The findings revealed that sex difference had no significant influence on the life satisfaction and self concept. It was also found that life satisfaction effect positively on self concept of boys but in case of girls, life satisfaction had no significant effect on self concept.

Purpose of the study

To compare the mean differences in academic stress, perceived parenting styles and self concept in relation to gender

Method

Participants

The participants in the study were 200 adolescents (Boys and girls) studying in IX and X classes from senior secondary schools.

Materials

The following tools were used to collect the data-

1. Children's Perception of Parenting Styles by Pyari and Kalra (2005)
2. Self Concept Rating Scale by Dr. Pratibha Deo (2011)
3. Academic stress- Bisht Battery of stress scales (2005)

Objectives of the Study

1. To compare the difference between mean scores of academic Stress of adolescents in relation to their gender.
2. To compare the difference between mean scores of perceived parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - a. To compare the difference between mean scores of perceived democratic parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - b. To compare the difference between mean scores of perceived autocratic parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - c. To compare the difference between mean scores of perceived accepting parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - d. To compare the difference between mean scores of perceived rejecting parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
3. To compare the difference between mean scores of self concept of adolescents in relation to their gender.

Hypotheses

1. There exists no significant difference between mean scores of academic stress of adolescents in relation to their gender.
2. There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - a. There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived democratic parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - b. There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived autocratic parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - c. There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived accepting parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.
 - d. There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived rejecting parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender.

3. There exists no significant difference between mean scores of self concept of adolescents in relation to their gender.

Procedure

The researcher explained and administered the questionnaires to the participants in their schools. The participants provided the best of their cooperation and returned the completed questionnaires after answering.

Data Analysis and Result

Independent sample 't' was employed to test the gender differences among the variables of this study.

The value of means, standard deviations and t-value of academic stress, perceived democratic, autocratic, accepting and rejecting parenting styles and self concept of boys and girls are shown in table 1

Table No. 1
N, Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value of Scores of Academic Stress, Perceived Democratic, Autocratic, Accepting And Rejecting Parenting Styles and Self Concept In Relation to Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
Academic Stress	Boys	100	316.63	63.911	1.015
	Girls	100	326.10	63.542	
Democratic	Boys	100	25.53	4.593	1.484
	Girls	100	24.57	4.553	
Autocratic	Boys	100	27.44	4.439	1.313
	Girls	100	28.28	4.610	
Accepting	Boys	100	27.86	4.314	2.291**
	Girls	100	26.47	4.267	
Rejecting	Boys	100	22.28	8.430	3.385**
	Girls	100	26.21	7.981	
Self Concept	Boys	100	114.91	24.783	.636
	Girls	100	117.20	26.150	

**** Significant at 0.05 Level of Significance**

Individually the 't' test for Academic Stress, perceived Parenting Styles and Self concept for boys and girls is computed. The results are presented in the Table 1.

The results in table 1 clearly show that the t-value for academic stress of adolescents came out to be 1.015 which is insignificant at 0.05 level. From the table, it is observed that the mean scores in academic stress of the boys and girls are 316.63 and 326.10 respectively. It indicates that girls have higher level of academic stress as compared to boys but this difference in their mean scores is insignificant.

Thus the hypothesis that "There exists no significant difference between mean scores of academic stress of adolescents in relation to their gender" was accepted.

The t- value for perceived democratic parenting style of adolescents came out to be 1.484 which is insignificant at 0.05 level. The mean scores on perceived democratic parenting style of the boys and girls are 25.53 and 24.57 respectively. It indicates that boys perceive their parents as more democratic as compared to girls but this difference in their mean scores is insignificant.

Thus the hypothesis that "There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived democratic parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender" was accepted.

The t- value for perceived autocratic parenting style of adolescents came out to be 1.313 which is insignificant at 0.05 level. The mean scores on perceived autocratic parenting style of the boys and girls are 27.44 and 28.28 respectively. It indicates that girls perceive their parents as more autocratic as compared to boys but this difference in their mean scores is insignificant.

Thus the hypothesis that "There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived autocratic parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender" was accepted.

The t- value for perceived accepting parenting style of adolescents came out to be 2.291 which significant at 0.05 level. The mean scores on perceived accepting parenting style of the boys and girls are 27.86 and 26.47 respectively. It indicates that boys perceive their parents as more of accepting as compared to girls and this difference in their mean scores is significant.

Thus the hypothesis that "There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived accepting parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender" was rejected.

The results in table 1 clearly show that the t-value for perceived rejecting parenting style of adolescents came out to be 3.385 which is significant at 0.05 level. The mean scores on perceived rejecting

parenting style of the boys and girls are 22.28 and 26.21 respectively. It indicates that girls perceive their parents as more rejecting as compared to boys and this difference in their mean scores is significant.

Thus the hypothesis that "There exists no significant difference between mean scores of perceived rejecting parenting style of adolescents in relation to their gender" was rejected.

The results in table 1 clearly show that the t-value for self concept of adolescents came out to be .636 which is significant at 0.05 level. The mean scores on self concept of the boys and girls are 114.91 and 117.20 respectively. It indicates that the girls have higher self concept as compared to their counterparts but this difference in their mean scores is insignificant.

Thus the hypothesis that "There exists no significant difference between mean scores of self concept of adolescents in relation to their gender" was accepted.

Discussion

This study aimed at exploring the gender differences on the various profiles viz. academic stress, perceived democratic, autocratic, accepting and rejecting parenting styles and self concept. It was hypothesised that there exist a no significant gender difference in the above mentioned profiles of the adolescent students. The findings of the study revealed that magnitude of academic stress among adolescent students was found to be high particularly among the girls than the adolescent boys. The reason behind this may be girls are more conscious of their grade points as compared to boys. The result is supported by Subrahmanyam, 1986; Verma & Gupta, 1990; Verma et al., 2002 and Mishra and Michelle, 2000). Particularly it is observed that girls has high self-concept than the boy students. The result is contradicted by previous study of Aparna,A.A. (2013); Mom,M. (2007). Girls perceive their parents to me more autocratic and rejecting as compared to boys. Boys perceive their parents as more democratic and accepting as compared to girls. The result is consistent with Wu,M. (2009); Anjana, S.C. (2015); Gandharva R.S. (2015).

Since gender differences on all the profiles of adolescent students were observed though only significant for perceived accepting and rejecting parenting style, all the concern authorities should take this into their consideration while dealing with adolescent students. Counselling cell must be established and should specifically develop the gender sensitive intervention programmes. School management should try to make the campus gender sensitive. Since girls scored more on perception of autocratic parenting styles, such parents should be counselled to adopt more positive parenting style. Teachers too should take care of gender differences in the class, and should try to facilitate the girls.

Several limitation of the study should be noted for this study. Sample of the study is limited to one state only which may affect the generalisation of the study result. Lastly, self-report measures were used to collect data.

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