

A Comparative Study of Anxiety and Stress Level among Rural and Urban Young Adults

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Abstract: The objective of this research was to identify the gender difference in anxiety and stress level among young adults from rural and urban areas of Punjab. With this difference among rural and urban males on anxiety & stress and difference among rural and urban females on anxiety and stress were also identified. The sample consisted of 200 participants having 100 males (50 urban and 50 rural) and 100 females (50 urban and 50 rural). They were selected randomly from various colleges of Patiala district. The obtained data was analyzed by using *t*-test. Results revealed significant gender difference in stress level but there was no significant difference in anxiety. Besides that significant difference were found among rural and urban females on anxiety and as well as on stress but surprisingly no such significant difference was seen among rural and urban males on anxiety and stress.

Thus, the youth especially females are in need of psychological support to cope with these difficulties as it rightly said that when you teach a man, you teach a single person but when you teach a woman you teach whole family. So they should be intervened with specially designed life skills programs for holistic development.

Keywords: Rural, Urban, Anxiety, Stress and Young Adults

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years the burden of work and expectations on the students has increased significantly. The ill effects of this have begun to show in the form of increased depression, stress, anxiety and suicides among young adults. The stress on youth has become a matter of national concern and the need to change the methods of imparting education is being strongly felt. Every-day there has been reports of several suicides by young adults allegedly due to increased level of stress and anxiety among them.

Some students find the transition from adolescence to adulthood stressful. At colleges and universities levels, students newly become responsible for their own life decisions and lifestyle. They need to adapt to a new learning environment and cope with academic and social demands of professional training. High academic expectations are stressful and can pose risks to students' physical and mental health. Need for new social relationships, meeting the expectations of family, enthusiasm to learn with ambition to implement his/her plans in the future, sometimes builds tension on young minds. Lack of skills to handle these disturbances enhances their problem.

The World Health Organization Global Burden of Disease study ranked depression as the fourth leading cause of all disease, accounting for 4.1% of the total burden in youth (Murray and Lopez, 1996). It is estimated that by 2020 it will rise from the fourth to the second leading cause of Disability Adjusted Life Years. Being second only to ischemic heart disease among both sexes. Depression is a mood disorder characterized by feeling of hopelessness, unhappiness, loss of motivation & suicidal tendencies. While anxiety is a sense of fear that something terrible is going to happen and stress is usually characterized by a sense of feeling overwhelmed. This feeling may be due to one's coping being over-stretched or having been under pressure for too long. When not handled with care anxiety and stress can take form of depression.

Stress and anxiety during education causes impairment in cognition (Saipanish, 2003) and produces distortions of perception. As college students are subjected to various stressors such as academic, social or time management problems, it is necessary for the educators and mental health providers to have interventions to reduce anxiety and improve the quality of mental health education. (Vitaliano, 1984).

Misra and McKean (2000) conducted a study surveying 249 college students at a Midwestern university. The study showed that anxiety, ineffective time management and a lack of satisfying activities outside of academia were strong predictors of academic stress. The study also showed that while female students managed their time more effectively than male students, they also experienced the highest levels of stress and anxiety.

Singh and Upadhyay (2008) investigated academic stress in the context of age and sex differences among college students. They found female students had more stress in comparison to their male counterpart. Naresh Kumar (2008) conducted a study on sources of academic stress and their influence on the scholastic

achievement; he found that the urban student was found to be significantly higher in their level of stress as compared to the rural area students.

Objective

1. To study the gender differences on anxiety among young adults.
2. To study the gender differences on stress among young adults.
3. To study the differences in level of anxiety among rural and urban males.
4. To study the differences in level of stress among rural and urban males.
5. To study the differences in level of anxiety among rural and urban females.
6. To study the differences in level of stress among rural and urban females.

Hypothesis

1. There will be no differences among male and female on anxiety.
2. There will be no differences among male and female on stress.
3. There will be no differences among rural and urban males on anxiety.
4. There will be no differences among rural and urban males on stress.
5. There will be no differences among rural and urban females on anxiety.
6. There will be no differences among rural and urban females on stress.

II. METHODOLOGY

Sample: The sample was selected randomly from different colleges of Patiala district. 200 young adults (100 Male and 100 female) young adults were selected from rural and urban areas using random sampling procedure.

Tool Used: These following scale were used:-

- **Sinha's Comprehensive Anxiety Test (SCAT) by Sinha and Sinha**
- **Student stress scale by Dr. Zaki Akhtar's**

Procedure: The young adults from rural and urban areas of Patiala district were approached to assess the gender differences among rural and urban males & females, difference between rural and urban young adults on anxiety and stress level. With the help of random sampling subjects were included in the study. Their consent was taken and data was collected. T-test was used to analyses the results.

RESULTS

TABLE NO. 1 SHOWING GENDER DIFFERENCE ON ANXIETY

	MEAN	S.D	t-test
FEMALE	35.2	16.14	0.01
MALE	35.27	17.47	

Table no. 1, showing gender difference on anxiety among young adults. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference observed in anxiety between male and female was 0.01, which was not significant at 0.05 & 0.01 levels.

TABLE NO. 2 SHOWING GENDER DIFFERENCE ON STUDENT'S STRESS

	MEAN	S.D	t-test
FEMALE	78	13.95	3.12**
MALE	85	12.53	

Table no. 2, showing gender difference on student stress among young adults. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference observed in student stress between male and female was 3.12, which was significant at 0.05 & 0.01 levels.

TABLE NO. 3 SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE AMONG RURAL AND URBAN MALES ON ANXIETY

	MEAN	S.D	t-test
RURAL	33.51	12.74	1.45
URBAN	36.81	9.80	

Table no. 3, showing the mean difference among rural and urban males young adults on anxiety. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference observed in anxiety between rural and urban males was 1.45, which was not significant at 0.05 & 0.01 levels.

TABLE NO. 4 SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE AMONG RURAL AND URBAN MALES ON STUDENT STRESS

	MEAN	S.D	t-test
RURAL	84.51	11.92	0.37
URBAN	85.44	13.22	

Table no. 4, showing the mean difference among rural and urban males young adults on student stress. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference observed in student stress between rural and urban males was 0.37, which was not significant at 0.05 & 0.01 levels.

TABLE NO. 5 SHOWING DIFFERENCE AMONG RURAL AND URBAN FEMALES ON ANXIETY

	MEAN	S.D	t-test
RURAL	24.40	8.48	8.76**
URBAN	45.62	14.65	

Table no. 5, showing the mean difference among rural and urban females young adults on anxiety. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference observed in anxiety between rural and urban females was 8.76, which was significant at 0.05 & 0.01 levels.

TABLE NO. 6 SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE AMONG RURAL AND URBAN FEMALES ON STUDENT STRESS

	MEAN	S.D	t-test
RURAL	73.93	12.25	3.96
URBAN	84.16	13.66	

Table no. 6, showing the mean difference among rural and urban females young adults on student stress. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference observed in student stress between rural and urban females was 3.96, which was significant at 0.05 & 0.01 levels.

III. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Our research results showed that there was no significant gender difference on anxiety. This can be because both male and female have same academic environment in student life and they have similar problems attending classes, public impressions, such as getting good marks and struggling for job opportunities etc. So they were more or less found to be similar on anxiety. On the other hand, there was significant gender difference in student stress level. Male and female have different life style in education field and boy's take less stress about grades as compare to the girls. Calaguas (2011) claimed significant difference between male and female student because of their view of subjects, lecturers, academic program, classroom their attitude toward the stressors. The stress levels are different between male and female students (Amr, Gilany&El-Hawary, 2008). It is also interesting to highlight significant difference in the perception. Dey, Rehman, Bairagi and Roy (2014) found that the stress and anger of female adolescents was more than the male. Girls appear to be more vulnerable to the negative psychological health effects of stress than boys (Charbonneau, Mezulis&Hyde, 2009). Boys experience less stress than girls do regarding their bodily self-esteem, self-image and health. Girl experiences more stress than boys in adolescence period. Society expects different behaviour from boys and girls. The girls are supposed to be submissive, well mannered, docile, while the boys are supposed to be aggressive and independent. For these reasons, girls do not express their emotion and it leads to the emotional problem including stress, anger, depression and anxiety.

Surprisingly, there was no significant difference among rural and urban male on anxiety and stress. Bartwal and Raj (2013) found no significant difference in rural and urban male's anxiety level. Fatima (2015) conducted a study on adolescents and shows no significant difference was found between urban and rural

adolescents in relation to their anxiety. This shows that the academic stress is present in same amount in rural and urban males. The reason can be traditional demands of family to stay dependent on male members. The male students feel more pressure to be something in life, to manage the demands of self & family and to be the earning hand.

Others findings showed significant difference on anxiety as well as stress among rural and urban females. Urban females showed high anxiety and stress in comparison to the rural females. The differences exist due to their culture, life styles and locality. Urban females are more exposed to stress of environment as comparison to rural females. Naresh Kumar (2008) conducted a study on sources of academic stress and their influence on the scholastic achievement; he found that the urban students were significantly different on stress in comparison to rural students. Urban females have higher vocational needs because of demanding society. The need to stand out in society, to be independent and prove one's worth maintain status particularly life styles and help to family economically for better life in urban areas, they feel higher level of anxiety and stress as compared to the rural counterparts. Vijaylakshmi & Lavanya (2006) also revealed that urban students experienced more stress as compared to rural students.

Thus, in order to make our adolescents stress free we have to find better methods of teaching to eradicate their psychological problems. Youth is in need of skills. The skills to manage their personal and professional life's effectively. They are in need to have better coping, emotional and self-regulation skills with optimistic life style. Female oriented programs are in immediate need as they are more vulnerable to psychological problems due to higher levels of sensitivity and conventional social demands. Their multitasking ability of managing work and family life enhances their life stressors. More significantly teaching female means teaching whole family as she convey the same strength to her descendants. Thus, specially designed skills programs should be imparted at colleges & universities levels for holistic development of young adults.

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