



A study of examination stress among higher secondary school students in Raipur City

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to investigate examination stress among higher secondary school students in Raipur City. Examination stress has emerged as a major educational and psychological concern due to increasing academic competition, parental expectations, and fear of failure. The study employed the descriptive survey method. A sample of 100 higher secondary students was selected from government and private schools through random sampling technique. The Student Stress Scale developed by Dr. Zaki Akhtar was used for data collection. Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-test were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference in examination stress between boys and girls, urban and rural students, and government and private school students. However, a significant difference was found with respect to school type and place of residence collectively. The study emphasizes the need for counseling services, stress management programs, and supportive educational environments.

Keywords: Examination stress, higher secondary students, academic pressure, anxiety, educational psychology

Introduction

Education is the cornerstone of individual and national development. It facilitates intellectual growth, social adjustment, emotional maturity, and personality development. In the modern educational system, examinations are considered an important tool for evaluating academic achievement and learning outcomes. However, examinations often create anxiety, tension, fear, and stress among students.

Higher secondary education is a crucial stage in students' academic careers because their performance directly influences future educational and occupational opportunities. During this period students face numerous academic challenges including board examinations, competitive tests, parental expectations, and career-related decisions. These factors contribute significantly to examination stress.

Examination stress refers to the emotional, cognitive, physiological, and behavioral reactions experienced by students before, during, and after examinations. Excessive stress may negatively affect concentration, memory, confidence, and academic performance. Therefore, understanding examination stress among higher secondary students is essential for developing effective educational interventions.

Review of Related Literature

Several researchers have investigated academic and examination stress among students.

Pascoe, Hetrick, and Parker (2020)^[5] reported that academic stress negatively affects academic achievement, motivation, mental health, and well-being.

Balaji et al. (2019)^[2] found that engineering and medical students experienced high examination stress and lacked effective coping strategies.

Patel (2014)^[6] reported that frequent examinations significantly increased stress among higher secondary students.

Gupta and Sharma (2010)^[3] found a strong relationship between academic stress and depression.

Singh (2009)^[7] observed that students experienced maximum stress before board examinations.

Agarwal (2007)^[1] found no significant gender differences in academic stress among adolescents.

Kumar (2006)^[4] reported a negative correlation between examination stress and academic performance.

The review indicated that examination stress is a common educational problem requiring systematic investigation.

Statement of the Problem

“A Study of Examination Stress among Higher Secondary School Students in Raipur City.”

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the difference in examination stress between boys and girls.
2. To study the difference in examination stress between urban and rural students.
3. To study the difference in examination stress between government and private school students.
4. To study examination stress with respect to school type and place of residence.

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference in examination stress between boys and girls.

H02: There is no significant difference in examination stress between urban and rural students.

H03: There is no significant difference in examination stress between government and private school students.

H04: There is no significant difference in examination stress with respect to school type and place of residence.

Methodology

Research Method

The present study employed the Descriptive Survey Method, which is considered suitable for collecting factual

information and analyzing existing conditions related to students' stress. This method helped the researcher study the level of stress among higher secondary students without manipulating any variables and provided a systematic description of the problem under investigation.

Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of all higher secondary students studying in Raipur City. From this population, a sample of 100 higher secondary students was selected through the random sampling technique, giving every student an equal chance of being included in the study. Random sampling increased the representativeness of the sample and reduced selection bias.

Tool and Statistical Techniques

For data collection, the researcher used the Student Stress Scale developed by Dr. Zaki Akhtar, which is a standardized tool designed to measure the level of stress among students. After collecting the responses, the data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-test. The Mean was used to determine the average stress level, Standard Deviation measured the variability in scores, and the t-test was applied to identify significant differences between the groups included in the study.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The collected data were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and t-test. The objective of the analysis was to determine whether significant differences existed in examination stress among higher secondary school students with respect to gender, locality, and type of school.

Table 1: Comparison of Examination Stress between Boys and Girls

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Table Value (0.05)	Result
Girls	50	132.32	57.50	0.04	2.02	Not Significant
Boys	50	131.25	54.66			

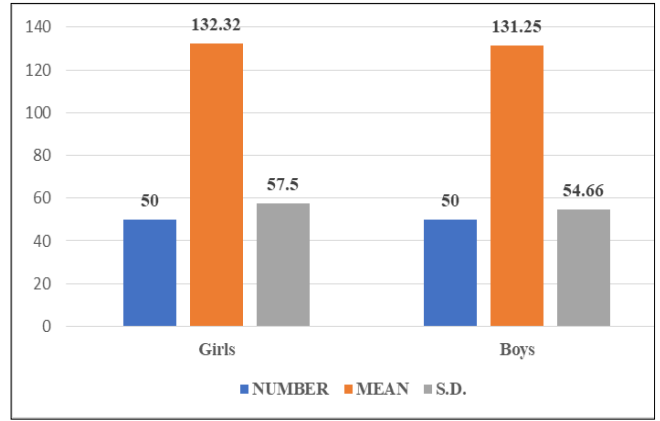
Degree of Freedom (df) = 98

Interpretation

The above table shows the comparison of examination stress between boys and girls studying at the higher secondary level. The mean score of examination stress among girls was 132.32, whereas the mean score among boys was 131.25. This indicates that girls experienced slightly higher examination stress than boys. The standard deviation values were 57.50 and 54.66 respectively, showing a similar level of variability in stress scores in both groups.

The calculated t-value was 0.04, which is considerably lower than the table value of 2.02 at the 0.05 level of significance with 98 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated value is less than the critical value, the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant.

Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that "There is no significant difference in examination stress between boys and girls" is accepted. It may be concluded that gender does not significantly influence examination stress among higher secondary school students in Raipur city. Both boys and girls experience almost similar levels of examination stress.



Graph 1: Comparison of Examination Stress between Boys and Girls

Table 2: Comparison of Examination Stress between Urban and Rural Students

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Table Value (0.05)	Result
Urban Students	50	131.67	12.60	1.31	2.02	Not Significant
Rural Students	50	127.47	15.90			

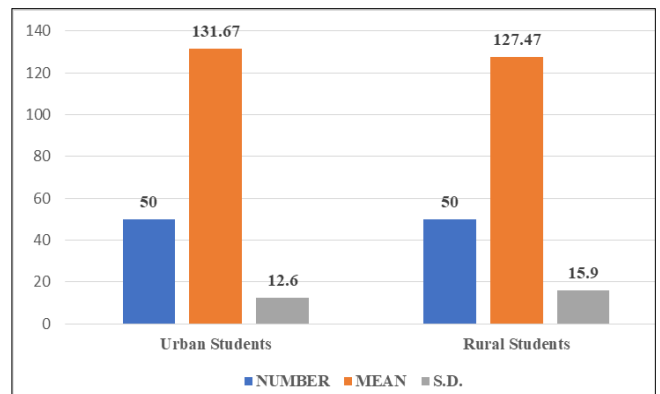
Degree of Freedom (df) = 98

Interpretation

The above table presents the comparison of examination stress between urban and rural higher secondary school students. The mean stress score of urban students was 131.67, while the mean stress score of rural students was 127.47. The findings indicate that urban students experienced slightly higher examination stress than rural students. The standard deviation values were 12.60 and 15.90 respectively.

The calculated t-value was 1.31, whereas the table value at the 0.05 level of significance and 98 degrees of freedom was 2.02. Since the calculated value is less than the table value, the difference between urban and rural students is not statistically significant.

Hence, the null hypothesis stating that "There is no significant difference in examination stress between urban and rural students" is accepted. The findings suggest that locality does not significantly affect examination stress among higher secondary school students. Both urban and rural students experience comparable levels of stress during examinations.



Graph 2: Comparison of Examination Stress between Urban and Rural Students

Table 3: Comparison of Examination Stress between Government and Private School Students

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Table Value (0.05)	Result
Government School Students	50	132.47	11.96	1.01	2.02	Not Significant
Private School Students	50	130.10	8.75			

Degree of Freedom (df) = 98

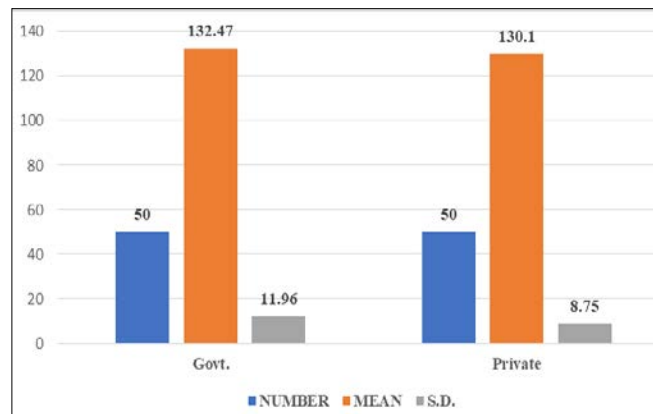
Interpretation

The above table shows the comparison of examination stress between government and private school students. The mean stress score of government school students was 132.47, whereas the mean stress score of private school students was 130.10. This indicates that government school students experienced slightly higher examination stress than private school students.

The standard deviation values were 11.96 and 8.75 respectively, showing some variation in stress scores among students of both school types. The calculated t-value was 1.01, while the table value at the 0.05 level of significance with 98 degrees of freedom was 2.02.

Since the calculated t-value is lower than the table value, the difference between government and private school students is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference in examination stress between government and private school students” is accepted.

It can be concluded that the type of school does not significantly influence examination stress among higher secondary school students in the present study.



Graph 3: Comparison of Examination Stress between Government and Private School Students

Table 4: Comparison of Examination Stress with Respect to School Type and Place of Residence

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Table Value (0.05)	Result
School Type	100	233.34	42.46	6.54	2.59	Significant
Place of Residence	100	258.22	42.66			

Degree of Freedom (df) = 198

Interpretation

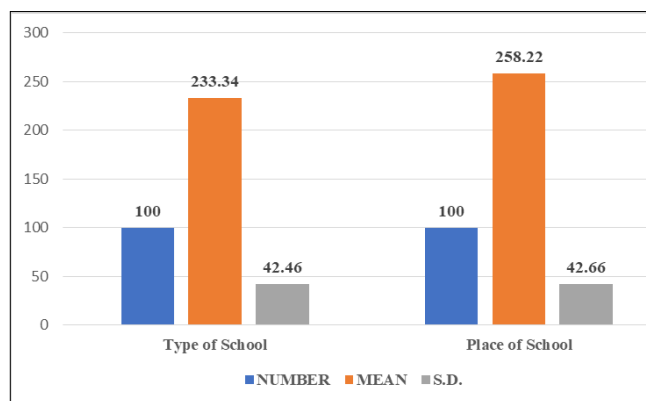
The above table presents the comparison of examination stress with respect to school type and place of residence among higher secondary school students. The mean score for school type was 233.34, whereas the mean score for

place of residence was 258.22. This indicates a noticeable difference between the two variables.

The standard deviation values were 42.46 and 42.66 respectively, showing almost equal variability in the scores. The calculated t-value was 6.54, which is substantially higher than the table value of 2.59 at the 0.05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom.

Since the calculated t-value exceeds the critical value, the difference is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that “There is no significant difference in examination stress with respect to school type and place of residence” is rejected.

It may be concluded that examination stress among higher secondary school students differs significantly with respect to the combined influence of school type and place of residence. These factors appear to play an important role in shaping students’ examination-related stress experiences.



Graph 4: Comparison of Examination Stress with Respect to School Type and Place of Residence

Findings

1. No significant difference was found between boys and girls.
2. No significant difference was found between urban and rural students.
3. No significant difference was found between government and private school students.
4. A significant difference was found with respect to school type and place of residence.
5. Examination stress was prevalent among higher secondary students.

Educational Implications

1. Schools should establish counseling services.
2. Teachers should create supportive classroom environments.
3. Parents should avoid excessive academic pressure.
4. Students should be trained in stress management techniques.
5. Guidance programs should be strengthened.

Suggestions

For Students

- Follow proper study schedules.
- Practice relaxation techniques.
- Maintain healthy lifestyles.

For Parents

- Provide emotional support.
- Avoid unrealistic expectations.

For Schools

- Organize counseling programs.
- Conduct stress management workshops.

Conclusion

The study concluded that examination stress is a common educational and psychological issue among higher secondary school students. Although no significant differences were found among gender, locality, and school categories individually, examination stress remains an important concern that requires attention from teachers, parents, and educational administrators.

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