

ACADEMIC STRESS AMONG COLLEGE ATHLETES AND NON-ATHLETES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the difference among college athletes and non-athletes as well as gender differences on academic stress i.e. male athletes versus male non-athletes, female athletes versus female non-athletes, male athletes versus female athletes and male non-athletes versus female non-athletes. To achieve the purpose of this study 80 athletes (40 male, 40 female) and 80 non-athletes (40 male, 40 female) were selected by using random sampling technique from the three various colleges of Sri Muktsar Sahib district of Punjab. All the selected subjects aged 18 to 25 years. The level of academic stress was measured among athletes and non-athletes through Academic Stress Scale (Jain & Dikshit, 2016). To know the significant difference on academic stress among athletes and non-athletes, t-test was applied at the 0.05 level of significance. The results indicated that there was a significant difference was existed on academic stress between male athletes and non-athletes as well as female athletes and non-athletes. In both cases, it was found that non-athletes had higher level of academic stress as compared to their counterpart. There was no significant difference was observed between male and female athletes as well as male and female non-athletes on academic stress.

Keywords: Academic stress, athletes, non-athletes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Stress is very common and integral part of our life. Stress is considered as a negative emotional, cognitive, physiological and behavioural process that happens when an individual faces adverse situations (Bernstein, Penner, Stewart, & Roy, 2008; Mohammad, Abraham, & Singh, 2011). College students are vulnerable to significant amount of stress. It can cause negative as well as positive consequences on the students. The moderate or appropriate levels of stress motivate the individual to attain and fuels creativity, although higher levels of stress adversely affect individual's performance during tasks (Auerbach & Gramling, 1998). Academics and examinations are the most central stressors for the students (Babar et al., 2004). Stress associated with academic is known as academic stress. It is a feeling of stress conceived by the student due to academic events (Ahsan, & Mohammad, 2017; Akram & Khan, 2012). Academic stress become a matter of great concern nowadays. Competition in higher education is rapidly increasing day by day. Students have a pressure to do well in examinations and their studies. The assignments, small amount of time to study vast syllabus, unable to understand lectures and inadequate facilities at academic institutions are the factors behind the academic stress. Students felt academic stress also due to their own, teachers and parents expectations (Ang & Huan, 2006). Student's mental health and well being is effected the academic stress. Higher levels of academic stress resulted in emotional and internalized

problems (Verma, Sharma, & Larson, 2002). Elevated levels of academic stress are also responsible for anxiety, depression and other psychological problems among the students (Deb, Strodl, & Sun, 2015; Mohammad, & Mohammad, 2015). For the betterment of the students, it must be compulsory to understand the academic stress. Prabu (2015) found no significant difference in academic stress between male and female students of higher secondary school. However, the level of academic stress was slightly higher in male students than female students. While, Razia (2016) observed significant gender differences among adolescent students with regard to academic stress. The researcher found that the female students had significantly higher levels of academic stress than male students. Nazir and Jan (2017) compared the academic stress of male and female college students of Jammu and Kashmir. The female students possessed significantly higher levels of academic stress than male students (Singh, Valsaraj, & Mohammad, 2013a,b). Martin (2018) in his study, which was conducted on 561 students of University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, observed that college athletes and non athletes did not differ significantly in stress levels. In terms of gender differences, the female students had higher levels of stress than male students. Reddy, Karishmarajanmenon and Anjanathattil (2018) investigated academic stress among university students. They revealed that no significant difference was observed between male and female students. Although, female students had slightly higher academic stress than male students. The study was conducted to know the difference in academic stress among male and female athletes and non-athletes.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

2.1 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study consisted 160 college students (80 Athletes, 80 Non-athletes) of three colleges i.e. Dashmesh Khalsa College, Maharaja Ranjit Singh College and Guru Nanak College for Girls located in Sri Muktsar Sahib district of Punjab. These three colleges were selected purposively, but the subjects were taken through random sampling technique. The age of the subjects was ranged between 18 to 25 years. The details of sample break up are presented in the following table.

Name of the colleges	Athletes (n=80)		Non-athletes (n=80)	
	Male (40)	Female (40)	Male (40)	Female (40)
Dashmesh Khalsa College	23	13	16	14
Maharaja Ranjit Singh College	17	06	24	06
Guru Nanak College for Girls	0	21	0	20

The students who regularly participated in organized sports activities considered as athletes and those who did not take part in any kind of organized sports activities considered as non-athletes in this study.

2.2 Tools

Academic Stress Scale developed by Jain and Dikshit (2016) was used to measure the academic stress among college athletes and non-athletes. This is a 28-item scale, the five responses namely strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), Disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) for every item are given 5,4,3,2 and 1 score, respectively. The scale was standardized on 300 undergraduate and post graduate students. The test re-test reliability coefficient was 0.86 and reliability index was 0.93. The reliability co-efficient for split half was 0.79 and reliability index was 0.89.

2.3 Data Collection

Data on required variable were collected by approaching to each specified sample. Prior to data collection an informed consent was obtained from each participant of the study.

2.4 Data Analysis

The mean (M), standard deviation (SD) and *t*-test were applied for the analysis of the collected data. Further, the level of significance was taken at 0.05 level of significance.

3. RESULTS

Table 1: Means comparison of academic stress between male athletes and non-athletes

Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference	<i>t</i> value
Male athletes	92.83	10.98	5.35	2.14*
Male non-athletes	98.18	11.34		
*Significant at .05 level				$t_{.05(78)} = 1.99$

Table 1 statistically represent that mean and standard deviation of male athletes on academic stress were 92.83 and 10.98 where in case of male non-athletes mean and standard deviation were 98.18 and 11.34, respectively. The calculated *t* value (2.14) was greater than tabulated *t* value (1.99) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence a statistically significant difference was existed between male athletes and non-athletes on academic stress.

Table 2: Means comparison of academic stress between female athletes and non-athletes

Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference	<i>t</i> value
Female athletes	91.75	12.45	7.30	2.61*
Female non-athletes	99.05	12.50		
*Significant at .05 level				$t_{.05(78)} = 1.99$

Table 2 statistically represent that mean and standard deviation of female athletes on academic stress were 91.75 and 12.45 where in case of female non-athletes mean and standard deviation were 99.05 and 12.50 respectively. The calculated *t* value (2.61) was greater than tabulated *t* value (1.99) on 78 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Hence a statistically significant difference was existed between female athletes and non-athletes on academic stress.

Table 3: Means comparison of academic stress between male athletes and female athletes

Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference	<i>t</i> value
Male athletes	92.83	10.98	1.08	0.41
Female athletes	91.75	12.45		
*Significant at .05 level				$t_{.05(78)} = 1.99$

Table 3 statistically represent that mean and standard deviation of male athletes on academic stress were 92.83 and 10.98 where in case of female athletes mean and standard deviation were 91.75 and 12.45 respectively. The calculated t value (0.41) was less than tabulated t value (1.99) on 78 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Hence no statistically significant difference was existed between male athletes and female athletes on academic stress.

Table 4: Means comparison of academic stress between male non-athletes and female non-athletes

Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean difference	t value
Male non-athletes	98.18	11.34	0.87	0.32
Female non-athletes	99.05	12.50		
*Significant at .05 level				$t_{.05(78)} = 1.99$

Table 4 statistically represent that mean and standard deviation of male non-athletes on academic stress were 98.18 and 11.34 where in case of female non-athletes mean and standard deviation were 99.05 and 12.50 respectively. The calculated t value (0.32) was less than tabulated t value (1.99) on 78 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Hence no statistically significant difference was existed between male non-athletes and female non-athletes on academic stress.

4. DISCUSSION

Results of the study indicated that male athletes and non-athletes as well as female athletes and non-athletes were significantly differ in academic stress level. In both cases non-athletes had higher level of academic stress as compared to their counterpart i.e. athletes. It may be due to the more physical activity. Athletes regularly participate in sports activities, so they do more physical activity than non-athletes. Endorphins (feel good hormones) are released due to physical activity and they help in the reduction of stress (Paluska & Schlenk, 2000). There was no significant difference was observed in academic stress between male and female athletes as well as between male and female non-athletes. Almost same amount of physical activity is performed by male and female athletes as well as by male and female non-athletes. It probably the reason behind no significant difference existed between male and female athletes as well as between male and female non-athletes on academic stress.

5. CONCLUSION

Within the limits and limitation of the study following conclusions were drawn-

- A statistically significant difference was observed in academic stress between male athletes and non-athletes. Male non-athletes had significantly higher academic stress than male athletes.
- A statistically significant difference was observed in academic stress between female athletes and non-athletes. Female non-athletes had significantly higher academic stress than female athletes.
- A statistically insignificant difference was observed in academic stress between male and female athletes. But male athletes had slightly higher academic stress than female athletes.

- A statistically insignificant difference was observed in academic stress between male and female non-athletes. But female non-athletes had slightly higher academic stress than male non-athletes.

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