

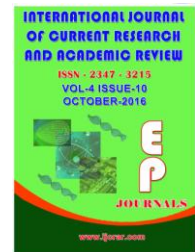


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### Self-Emotive Therapy to Improve Stress Levels of Adolescents

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#### KEYWORDS

Self-Emotive Therapy, Stress Levels of Adolescents, high school girl students.

#### A B S T R A C T

The primary purpose of the present investigation is to study cognitive restructuring: a self controlled procedure to reduce the stress level of high stress high school girl students in Delhi who are appearing for exams and experiencing too much of academic demands and social pressure. Specific objectives of the study were to test the relative efficacy of self controlled technique (cognitive restructuring) effective in reducing the stress level of high stress high school girl students in Delhi as compared to their control group counterparts. A multistage sampling technique was used for selecting the final sample out of the target sample of 500 girl students from various schools of Delhi. For the final sample 200 girls were selected on the basis of their scores on Stress Inventory. Extreme groups of high and low stress were formed by taking the subjects above and below  $M \pm 1SD$  on Stress Inventory. Further, each of two groups were divided in to two equivalent groups of 50 subjects on random basis to be assigned to two therapeutic intervention; i.e. Systematic Rational Restructuring and Control Group. The low and moderate stress subjects are included to serve as in-built control groups for high stress subjects. The subjects in non treatment control group were also treated exactly in the same manner as that of the treatment group. The only difference being that instead of cognitive therapy the therapist asked them about school life. The data was analyzed by using descriptive, multivariate analysis and t-test. Results indicated that high stress, high school girls in treatment group in general improved in terms of their stress scores in comparison to the control group.

#### Introduction

Stress is the subjective feeling that is produced by events that are perceived as overwhelming and beyond one's control. Lazarus & Folk man (1984) defined stress as a "particular relationship between the person

and the environmental that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her wellbeing." Thus stress occurs when people perceive demands on them. Shannon, et al.

(1999) determines the major sources of stress among students. Examination of interpersonal, intrapersonal, academic and environmental sources of stress.

Stress has become an important subject in academic contain as well as in our culture.

School and College study is very tax-up physically, mentally and socially. Stress and anxiety are believed to be the part of the clinical picture of many different conditions and may result from or be associated with various medical conditions too. These epidemiological observations clearly reveal the vulnerability of today's population in general towards maladaptive behavior. Stressors affecting students can be categorized as academic, financial, time or health related, and self-imposed (Goodman, 1993; LeRoy, 1988). Students report experiencing academic stress at predictable times each semester with the greatest sources of academic stress resulting from taking and studying for exams, grade competition, and the large amount of content to master in a small amount of time (Archer & Lamnin, 1985; Britton & Tesser, 1991; Kohn & Frazer, 1986). When stress is perceived negatively or becomes excessive, students experience physical and psychological impairment (Murphy & Archer, 1996). This emphasized the need for primary interventions that can act as a buffer against this susceptibility to stress and anxiety (Mishra *et al.*, 2000).

Even Sareson (1972) pointed out that much research is needed in the West to fill the gap in the present knowledge. Draguns (1975) pointed out that different culture differ in their typical therapeutic techniques and psycho therapy across cultural times and can render a significant service by bringing to light the culturally characteristic themes, pre occupational fantasies and conflicts.

Thus, the study will give an interesting insight into what are mental health's issues specially stress amongst the school going students. The finding that we get through this study would help to plan out international strategies as per the needs of the students.

### **Present Study**

In the present study high stress high school Delhi girl students in the treatment group were compared with high stress high school Delhi girl students in non treatment control group in term of cognitive restructuring.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- i) To assess the stress levels in high school going girl students appearing for board exams in various Schools in Delhi
- ii) To test the relative efficacy of self controlled technique (cognitive restructuring) effective in reducing the stress level of high stress high school girl students in Delhi as compared to their control group counterparts.

### **Methodology**

#### **Sample**

High school girls from XI grade were selected in the proposed study so as to continue the study as a follow up for next year when these students were in XII class. XII class appears for board exams which is stressful. Moreover, class room as unit will be taken in this study instead of age criterion in the reality of Indian school system where experimentation in laboratory conditions is impracticable and social situation itself need to be taken for the conduct of the study.

Thus, for the collection of preliminary data a sample of about 500 high school girls of IX grade onwards had been taken from the 5 selected Government schools of Delhi

### **Phase-1**

At the first stage the Stress Inventory prepared by the researcher was administered to a total group of 500 high school girls under standard instructions. All the five GOVT. Schools were quite homogeneous with regards to methods of teaching and evaluating and having the same syllabi but belonging to different socio-economic level.

Relatively larger sample for the present study was helpful to pick up extreme groups on stress. School population was preferred over college population in order to get larger variability on high stress. The relevant values for stress inventory are given in table-1

Thus, two experimental groups have been formed as follow:

High Stress  
Low Stress

### **Phase-11**

For the final sample 200 girls have been selected on the basis of their scores on Stress Inventory. Extreme groups were formed by taking the subjects above and below  $M \pm 1SD$  on Stress Inventory. The relevant values for Stress Inventory are given in table-2

The two experimental groups of 100 high stress subjects each have been selected Further each of two groups were divided in to two equivalent groups of 50 subjects on random basis to be assigned to two

therapeutic intervention; i.e. Systematic Rational Restructuring and Control Group. The low and moderate stress subjects are included to serve as in-built control groups for high stress subjects. The relevant values for Stress Inventory for experimental and control groups are given in table-3

### **Tools**

#### **Stress Inventory**

This scale is developed by the researcher herself. Here are some questions to help you think about what causes you stress in the following different part of your life. The student stress inventory has been used to determine the major sources of stress among school going students. The inventory has been consisted of 25 potentially stressful situations. The respondents considered to be giving them mild, moderate, or severe stress or alternatively no stress at all. On a four point rating scale, if the respondent felt that the stress trigger gives “no stress”. If she thought it gave ‘mild stress’ then 1 mark was given. If she thought it gave ‘moderate stress’ then 2 marks were given and 3 marks for ‘severe’ three equal divisions of maximum possible stress scores were made. The degree of stress was categorized as follows in table-4

#### **Scoring of the Test**

Scoring was done on the basis of total no of responses given by the subject the scale will address interpersonal, intrapersonal, academic and environmental sources of stress. The items in the scale have been classified as either daily hassles or major life events.

The content validity of the tool was established by giving it to seven experts in the field of stress management. A request

letter statement of problem, objective and criteria for rating scale was made. Based on expert's suggestions, necessary modifications were made. Hence the Tools were found to be valid for the purpose of the study. Reliability of the tool was established by using Cronbatch's Alpha was.322 for the stress related to interpersonal, intrapersonal, academic, and environmental sources of stress.

### **Cognitive Therapy (prepared by the researcher)**

#### **Procedure**

All the 100 high school girls (50 High-Stress high school girls of 11<sup>h</sup> grade in Experimental group and 50 High -Stress high school girls of 11<sup>h</sup> grade in Control group) who were selected for the final sample on the basis of their scores on Stress Inventory, were called individually for the treatment conditions. Subjects were assigned to cognitive restructuring, in different six sessions and given instructions that were either high or low with respect to the suggestion of therapeutic gain. After completing the whole procedure Stress Inventory was given in order to see their stress scores.

The subjects in non treatment control group were also treated exactly in the same manner as that of the treatment group. The only difference being that instead of cognitive therapy the therapist asked them about school life. Also, Stress Inventory was administered to those students in the similar manner.

The self controlled technique cognitive restructuring was administered by the researcher herself. When the experiment was over all the subjects were individually asked not to reveal the procedure to other students who has yet participated. The students were

ensured to perfect security of results. The instructions, written on title page in each questionnaire were read out verbally, the scoring was done as per the scoring key device.

#### **Analysis of scores of stress questionnaire**

This section deals with the findings of stress questionnaire of high stress high school girls in experimental group and control groups before starting the treatment and after the treatment was over.

Data given in table-5 reveals that the mean score for stress questionnaire in experimental group pre and post are 54.52,15.92 and Std. Ds are 6.11 and 6.33, whereas mean score for stress questionnaire in control group pre and post are 53.68,53.92 and Std. D are 5.19 and 5.39. Findings related to the significance of difference in mean stress scores of high stress high school girls in pre and post experimental group.

Data tabulated in table 6 shows that the Sig.(2-Tailed) value in this study is.000 because of this, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean number of students in experimental group (pre and post) as evident from t-value of 31.376 against the table value is 2.01 for degree of freedom (df) 49 at.05 level of significance. High mean scores of pre experimental group showed high degree of stress scores as compared to their counter parts in post experimental group. The mean values of pre and post training program have worked out. This means that cognitive capacity significantly effects to reduce the stress level of high stress high school girls in experimental group.

Data tabulated in table -7 shows that the Sig.(2-Tailed) value in this study is.743 because of this, we can conclude that there

is a no statistically significant difference between the mean number of students in control group (pre and post) as evident from t-value of -.334 against the table value is 2.01 for degree of freedom (df) 49 at.05 level of significance. High mean scores of pre control group showed no high degree of stress scores as compared to their counterparts in post control group. The mean values of pre and post training program have not been worked out.

Data tabulated in table 8 shows that the Sig.(2-Tailed) value in this study is.32.072.This value is more than.05.because of this, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between

the mean number of students in experimental and control groups (post) as evident from t-value of 32.07 against the table value is 1.98 for degree of freedom (df) 98 at.05 level of significance. High mean scores of post control group showed high degree of stress scores as compared to their counter parts in post experimental group. The mean values of pre and post training program have been worked out. this means that low mean scores of experimental group in post therapy sessions helps to reduce the stress level of high stress high school girls. On the basis of above findings we can conclude that our main objective of the study is approved.

**Table.1 Means and Standard Deviations of High School Girls in Stress Inventory (N=500)**

Group	Means	Std.D	M+1Std.D	M-1Std.D
Stress	36.17	13.36	49.53	22.81

**Table.2 Means and Standard Deviations of High School Girls in Stress Inventory (N=200)**

Group	N	Mean	Std.D
High Stress	100	53.81	5.46
Low Stress	100	15.68	6.52

**Table.3 Means and Standard Deviations of High Stress High School Girls for Experimental and Control Groups in Stress Inventory (N=50)**

Group	N	Mean	Std.D
High Stress Experimental Group	50	54.52	6.11
High Stress Control Group	50	53.68	5.19

**Table.4**

Degree of Stress	Stress Scores
Mild Stress	Below25
Moderate Stress	26-50
Severe Stress	51-75

**Table.5** Mean and standard deviation of total stress scores of high stressed high school students in experimental and control group pre and post (25+25=50)

Groups		Mean	N	Std.D
	Pre	54.52	50	6.11
Experimental				
	Post	15.92	50	6.33
	Pre	53.68	50	5.19
Control				
	Post	53.92	50	5.48

**Table.6** Mean, standard deviation and t-value showing the significance of differences of scores of stress for high stress high school girls in pre and post experimental group

**Paired Samples Statistics**

Groups		N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Si (2 tail)
	Pre	50	54.65	5.76			
Experimental					<b>31.376</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>.000</b>
	Post	50	15.92	6.40			

Significance at.05 level

**Table.7** Mean, standard deviation and t-value showing the significance of differences of scores of stress for high stress high school girls in pre and post control group

Groups		N	Std.D	t-value	df	Si(2 tail)
	Pre	50	5.19			
Control				<b>-.334</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>..740</b>
	Post	50	5.48			

**Table.8** Mean, mean difference, standard error and t-value showing the significance of differences of scores of stress for high stress high school girls in posts experimental and control group

**Independent Samples Test**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
POST EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS	.323	.571	<b>-32.072</b>	98	.000	-38.00	1.18	-40.35	-35.64
			<b>-32.072</b>	96.00	.000	-38.00	1.18	-40.35	-35.64

The results of the present study showed that intervention technique in the study i.e. cognitive therapy reduces the stress level of high stress high school girls in Delhi. The results substantiate the main hypothesis of the study formulated i.e. the treatment group as a result of treatment will show decrease in the stress level as compared to control group. Since no treatment was given to control group, The findings of the present study are in line with the expectation of previous researches that control group will not show any improvement in terms of stress as compared the treatment group (Mishra *et al.*, 2000; Sagvi, 1994; Manjula, 2012). The use of control group has been the accepted standard in psychotherapy outcome research (POR) with a number of researches supporting their ongoing and regular use (Gupta, 1986, 1992, 1993, 2006, 2010, 2011, Sagvi, 1994 ; Sharma, 2002; Sharma & Sud, 1982; Sud & Sharma, 1989; G. Kagg *et al.*, 2006).

In comparative outcome studies the researchers can be assured of obtaining statistically significantly significant or waiting list condition has been employed. There is significant improvement in reducing stress level of treatment group i.e. cognitive therapy as compared to the control group which was not administered any treatment.

Most of the studies using therapies support the findings of the present study that cognitive therapy would be helpful in reducing stress level of high school girls than the non treatment group (Armstrong, 1986; Lavigne, 1974; Mechenbaum, 1972; Majula, 2012; Kagg *et al.*, 2006; Liza, 2011). The subjective and objective evolution of various aspects of treatment is mostly favorable. These points were also stressed by Depreeuw (1982). These points support using the verbal reports of some of

the subjects in the present study also for understanding results, As quoted by subjects in cognitive therapy group many subjects said “they are worrying less”. In this group only few subjects reported on the 4<sup>th</sup> session that it help them to concentrate better, study better, can make themselves more prepared for exams. These verbal protocols of the subjects also indicate that active involvement of the subject both physically and mentally helps in better control of stress and anxiety and improving mental health then just merely expressing fear about anxiety and stress.

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