Academic Stress And Time Management In Adolescents

Dr. Ashmeen Kaur
Asst. Professor, Dept. of Psychology, Hans Raj Mahila Mahavidalaya, Jalandhar
Email: ashmeen1975@yahoo.co.in

ABSTRACT:
Adolescence is a stage of storm and stress, identity crisis and role confusions.
Transitions and changes mark this crucial phase of development. Adolescents going through physiological and psychological changes have to decide on their vocational goals and at the same time have to meet their family and social demands. There is too much pressure to decide on vocational goals which leads to stress. Stress is created by parents, teachers, peers and significant others in an adolescent's life .Perception of stress is an individual perceptual phenomenon rooted in psychological process. There is so much to be accomplished in too little a time. Adolescent students feel scarcity of time always. Time management is the ability to prioritize, schedule and execute personal responsibilities. The present paper would give an insight as to how management of time would alter students' perception of stress.

Key Words : Adolescence, Academic stress, Time management

Adolescence is a significant period in life course making the transition from childhood to the responsibilities of adult life. It is a period of rapid change, marked by physical, psychological, and cognitive changes as well as changes in social demands. It is described as a period which is upsetting, full of turmoil, intense, troubling or difficult and a time of powerful, unstable emotions, passionate and political idealism(Arnett, 2002).

There are significant changes and transitions during the period of adolescence. An adolescent tends to become more vulnerable during periods of biological, social and psychological transitions. The transition from middle to high school for many students is ve as from a very protective familiar environment with considerable individual attention, the child moves to an often impersonal and demanding atmosphere where academic standards are more rigorous and there is tremendous parental and peer pressure to excel . Adolescents are under pressure decide on personal, educational and vocational goals and to prepare for the responsibilities of active citizenship. At the same time they are going through a phase of identity crisis(Erikson,1968).Further, today our society is highly competitive ,achievement oriented and commercial and academic grades are an end in itself. Academic achievement is considered a key criteria to judge one's total potentialities and capacities. Too much emphasis is placed on achievement scores and performance in examinations. Society puts pressure on students to succeed often forcing them to set unrealistically high personal expectations. Parents usually try to achieve their unfulfilled aspirations through their children.

Most of the times their interests and aptitudes are not taken into consideration.

Stress is created by parental pressure to perform and stand out among other children. So many things are crammed into children's schedule unmindful of their choices and capabilities that it puts lot of mental pressure on them. In an effort to fulfill their parent's es they often feel stress by being asked to do too much in too little a time. Parental expectations are largely incongruent with their children's ability which leads to academic stress.

As student life coincides with adolescence and academic concerns pervade the lives of students interrupting aspects of their daily routine, students are pressured to perform, to fit in, to commit and to live up to the expectations of others leading to stress. Stress can manifest in children as a reaction to changes in life and academic pressures .An adolescent who is unable to withstand the tremendous academic pressure from self, parents, peers and society at large, suffers from acute stress which may further lead to undesirable complexes, frustration, depression and in some cases even to the extent of attempting or

commiting suicide.

Four. That was the number of times he had attempted suicide. As a spotted deer galloped ahead in the fading evening light, he described how the mind goes blank in those tense seconds. He had calculated with scientific precision the exact moment when death would arrive and how it would shut down his senses. The farewell arrangements

were already in place – a terse message to his family, a suicide note and a bitter facebook status message. Mercifully, his courage failed him in those crucial moments and he lived to tell the tale." ('Life in the stress lane', Hindustan Times, 2011). But many haven't.

Academic stress is a mental stress with respect to some anticipated stress associated with academic failure or even an awareness of possibility of such failure (Gupta and Khan 1987). The sources of academic stress include leaving home, commuting to school and for extra coachings, meeting family demands and getting good grades, meeting the expectation of parents, teachers and friends, having less structure, less time in life to get everything done and organized with little guidance, dealing with multiple orities like getting school work done, socializing, working, handling personal problems etc. Adolescents feel pressured due to unhealthy comparisons being made by parents and teachers. Stress is also created by parental pressure to perform and to stand out among other children.

Transactional Model of Stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) implicates stress is an individual perceptual phenomenon rooted in psychological process. The event or situation is not stressful in itself, it becomes a source of distress when a person appraises it as to be a threat for him and tend to exceed his capacity to deal with it.

Time-management may be defined as the ability to prioritize, schedule and execute personal responsibilities .The concept of time management is generally defined in terms of clusters of behaviour that are deemed to facilitate productivity and alleviate stress (Lay and Schouwenberg, 1993). The Britton and Glynn (1989) model conceptualizes time-management practices as consisting of what could be considered inter-related macro, intermediate, and micro level components.

Macan (1994) proposed a process model of time management which emphasizes the importance of setting goals & priorities, the mechanisms of task execution (e.g scheduling; making lists) and preference for organization. Thus time-management may be defined as 'behaviours that aim at achieving an effective use of time while performing certain goal directed activities. These behaviours comprise :

- Time Assessment behaviours which aim at awareness of here and now or past present and future (Kaufman et. al. 1991) and self awareness of one's time use (attitudes, cognitions e.g. Wratcher and Jones, 1988); which help to accept tasks and responsibilities that fit within the limit of one's capabilities.

- Planning behaviours, such as setting goals, planning tasks, prioritizing, making to do lists, grouping tasks (e.g. Britton and Tesser, 1991; Macan 1994, 1996) which aim at an effective use of time.

- Monitoring behaviours, which aim at observing one's use of time while performing activities, generating a feedback loop that allows a limit to the influence of interruptions by others (e.g. Fox and Dwyer, 1996; Zijlstra et. al. 1999).

Time-management implies taking an active role in choosing how time is used as opposed to just letting things happen or allowing others to plan. It also implies that there is a degree of decision making involved which can include setting goals and priorities, manipulating resources, monitoring progress and taking responsibility for the outcome. It is a set of skills, tools and system that work together to help one to get more value out of one's time with the aim of improving the qualities of one's time.

Time-management refers to the development of processes and tools that increase efficiency and productivity. It includes tools or techniques for planning and scheduling time with the aim to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of personal and academic time. Efficiency in time planning refers to issues of planning and structuring time by creating an appropriate balance of work and leisure time.

To use time effectively, one needs to take a proactive flexible and strategic approach to planning and managing one's workload, with the goal of getting the work done with minimum pain and maximum effectiveness. Students must discover and create the structure according to their needs and the demands of their courses in order to work effectively.

REFERENCES

Arnett, J.J. (2002). Adolescent storm and stress, reconsidered. Addictive Behaviours.24(2), http://www.sciencedirect.com.

Britton, B.K. and Tesser, A. (1991). Effects of time-management practices on college grades. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 83(3), 405-410.

Britton, B.K., and Glynn S.M. (1989). Mental Management and creativity: A cognitive model of time management for intellectual productivity.

Erikson,E.H.(1968). Identity, Youth and crisis. New York: Norton Fox, M.L. and Dwyer, D.J. (1996), "Stressful job demands and worker health: an

investigation of the effects of self-monitoring", *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, Vol.25, pp.1973-95.

Gupta, K. and Khan, B.N. (1987).Anxiety level as factor in concept formationIndian Journal of Psychological Reports, 31(3); 187-192.

Kaufman, C.J., Lane, P.M. and Lindquist, J.D. (1991), "Time congruity in the organization: a proposed quality of life framework", *Journal of Business and Psychology*, Vol. 6, pp. 79-106

Lay, C. H. & Schouwenburg, H. C. (1993). Trait procrastination, time management and academic behavior. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 8 (4), 647-662.

Lazarus, R.S. and Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping.* New York, NY: Springer Publishing.

Macan, T.H. (1994). "Time management: test of a process model", Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol.79, pp.381-91

WratcherM.A. and Jones, R.O. (1988), "A time management workshop for adult learners" *Journal of College Student Personnel*, Vol. 27, pp.566 - 7

www.hindustantimes.com.

Zijlstra, F.R.H., Roe, R.A., Leonora, A.B. and Krediet, I. (1999), "Temporal factors in mental work: effects of interrupted activities", *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, Vol. 72, pp.163-85.