

**Executive Summary of the Report of
Minor Research Project (UGC)**

**Title: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND PERCEIVED ACADEMIC
STRESS OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS FROM SCHEDULED
CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE COMMUNITIES**

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This report provides a brief account of the study on academic performance and perceived academic stress of adolescent girls belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities. The study was carried out among secondary school students from fourteen districts of Kerala. Educational research has shed light on various issues related to the socially excluded groups. Such studies have undertaken gender as one of the classificatory variables and fail in focusing on the gender issues beneath a surface level. The present study draws attention to the academic stressors in relation to academic performance of lower caste adolescent girl students. The study was initiated by the investigator since it is learned that effects of race and gender demonstrate the same tendency for inequalities which exist in the wider society is reproduced in the process of schooling as well.

Methodology

Survey method was followed and data were collected from a sample of 862 scheduled caste / scheduled tribe girls. Data on perceived academic stress were obtained by administering an Academic Stress scale constructed by the investigator. School Annual Grade sheets on academic performance were collected in respect of the sample. The data obtained were statistically analysed.

Findings

- (i) High stress was perceived by 16.01% and low stress was perceived by 17.52% of the total sample. A high percentage (66.47%) perceived moderate academic stress. High level of curricular stress was perceived by 30.05% of the sample. The lowest level of personal stress was perceived by 17.75%.
- (ii) Moderate academic performance was found for 57.31% and 25.97% showed high performance score and 16.32% low scores.
- (iii) Academic stress and academic performance were significantly negatively related.
- (iv) Academic performance and stressors related to family, school, curriculum and personal stressors were significantly negatively related.

Conclusion

The report finds it necessary that the peers, teachers, school, family and immediate community have to play significant roles in reducing the ill-effects of all types of academic stressors. Girls should receive motivation, mental strength and inspiration from the family. Through a comfortable girl friendly approach of the school, a gender sensitive curriculum and a

facilitating teacher we can establish feeling of worthiness, equality and development.

Recommendations

To ensure an inclusive gender space for the socially excluded marginalized communities, a collaborative, communicative and creative route is to be undertaken by the academic and social spheres at both the levels of beneficiaries and administrators. Survey, experimentation, supervision and sustainable growth will be the appropriate strategy. The suggested recommendations include:

- Girl friendly, conducive attractive school environment with flexible timing, free mode of conveyance, adequate resources and self help groups.
- Involvement of local community members from scheduled caste and scheduled tribes in curricular and co-curricular programmes.
- Gender sensitive, context based curriculum and training for regular and prospective teachers.
- Conscientization programmes for parents, teachers and community members regarding Child Rights, Rights of Girl Child and development of off-school gender sensitive environment.

- Government should see that the resources spent for the educational and social uplift of girl students from the marginalized sections are utilized appropriately.