ACADEMIC PRESSURE AMONG NEET ASPIRANTS

By

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Abstract

Academic pressure is the stress caused by a heavy workload, extended study sessions, and high-grade expectations. Academic pressure may come from family expectations, the ambitious goals students set for themselves. The education system places a lot of pressure on students to meet academic standards to affect them and help them to attain positive academic outcomes. It has a negative result on students' academic performance and impacts their well-being, which makes them perform poorly in their studies. Students who aspire to become a doctor prepare for NEET, NEET exam are also face academic pressure. The purpose of this paper is to develop a tool to identify and measures the level of academic pressure exists among the NEET Aspirants. The scale on Academic Pressure, with five point likert scale is developed by Belcya Thangakani & Sasikala in the year 2022. The scale has six dimensions, self – imposed, school environment, examination, parent, physical & mental health. The content validity is established through four experts in the field of psychology, education, physics & chemistry. The draft tool consists of 88 statements and distributed among 50 students who studied XI & XII standard in tuticorin district. The sample were randomly selected from six schools in Thoothukudi district. The responses were scored to analyse the internal consistency and establish reliability. The Cronbach alpha value of the tool is 0.842. Thus the scale on Belcy's Academic Pressure Scale (BAPS) was developed.

Keywords: *academic pressure, NEET aspirants.*

Introduction

Entrance Examination is the mode for getting admission into various undergraduate, post graduate and professional degree courses. Basically entrance examination at higher level of education which is conducted by educational institutes and colleges. After clearing the entrance examination student can earn admissions to specialized degree of their choice. National Eligibility Cum Entrance test (NEET) is an entrance exam for Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) and Bachelor Dental Surgery (BDS) conducted at National Level, Medical council of India (MCI). This eligibility exam hadn't been conducted until 2016. In 2013, the supreme court of India offered a stay on the exam in response to petitions received against the NEET and said that Medical Council of

India (MCI) could not interfere in the admission process. NEET again conducted on 2016. It was conducted twice a year. Once in May, considered as first phase of All India Pre Medical Test (AIPMT) and then in July which was considered as second phase of AIMPT. AIMPT was completely replaced by NEET in 2017. Initially Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSC) conducted the NEET exam. Then the responsibility of conducting exam was transferred to National Testing Agency (NTA). NTA is the government agency formed specially for the purpose of conducting entrance examination. NTA conduct first examination for the MBBS and BDS & AYUSH program courses in 2019. Academic pressure is the state in which a person or individual feels overburdened by the demands placed on their time and resources in order to succeed academically. Academic Pressure is the stress, this stress affects students' emotional, mental and intellectual well-being and can be brought on by a variety of circumstances, such as those that are self, family or societally imposed. The stress can come from a variety of potential sources and had impacts on students both emotionally and academically. Academic stress is characterized as the anxiety and tension associated with learning and schooling. Pursuing a degree and one's education can often come with a lot of pressure. Stress comes from having specific goals to complete all the work, manage the time and fit in extra - curricular activities. So it is important to know how much Academic Pressure is on students. Students had a lot of pressure to get through their NEET. It is necessary that the high level of academic pressure to be reduced and managed to ensure that school students are able to perform their best academically and NEET in the education system. So this tool is helpful to measure the level of academic pressure of NEET Aspirants and how much amount of academic pressure they have and to reduce the level of Academic Pressure.

Objective of the study

To develop and validate a Scale to measure Academic Pressure.

Tool Construction

Research tools refer to the devices or instruments used to collect data, such as questionnaire or computer-assisted interviewing system. They are used to measure a variable or to collect the information needed to answer a research question. Tools can be used to make the research more objective, systematic and authentic. The data are collected using instruments such as tests, surveys or through observations and interviews. In this study the researcher adopted a quantitative research method with survey technique to develop a valid scale to measure Academic Pressure.

Questionnaire

Questionnaire is a systematic compilation of questions that are submitted to a sampling of population from which information is desired (Bryman, 2012).

Questionnaire as a device for securing answers to questions by using a form which the respondent fills in himself (Pandey & Pandey, 2015). So the researchers developed a self- made tool to measure the Academic Pressure among NEET Aspirants. The tool named Belcy's Academic Pressure Scale (BAPS) with five-point scale. The items were framed by six dimensions namely Self - Imposed, School environment, Examination, parent, Physical Pressure and Mental pressure.

Procedure for Tool Construction

There are some general principles and procedures, which one has to follow while constructing a tool. In a research process the researchers choose the most appropriate instrument and procedures of research tools that provide for the collection and analysis of data upon which hypotheses may be tested.

The following are involved in tool construction

- Planning
- Writing items for the tool
- Preliminary draft
- Validity
- Content Validity
- Pilot Study
- Final Draft

Planning

Planning is the process of thinking about the activities required to achieve a desired goal. It is the first and foremost activity to achieve desired results. Planning is an initial step in construction of tool. The construction of tool must start by consideration of the limitations under which the tool has to be developed. Self - developed instruments are measures created by the researcher for a specific setting or group of participants (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtle, 2010). The nature of population, type and nature of tools, item and method of scoring the scale are some basic considerations which has to be taken into account in advance. It involves the creation and maintenance of a plan. The investigator had a discussion with guide regarding format and dimensions of the study. The investigator constructs the tool under the dimension, Self - imposed, School environment, Parent, Examination, Physical health and Mental Health. The researcher planned to write 108 items with 5 point Likert scale.

Writing items for the tool

The good test items measure the variable what we want to measure. Items have clarity in reading, not too difficult, not have two negative word in a sentence, items have positive and negative sentence too and item words get to the point. The researcher prepared items regarding Academic Pressure which include such as Self-imposed, School, parent, Examination, Physical Health and Mental Health. The investigators before writing the items had discussions with school teachers, teacher educators' about academic pressure, and gathered suggestions from experts' and based on information in newspapers.

Preliminary draft

It means proceeding and preparation for something important. The items framed withsix dimensions namely Self - Imposed, School environment, Parent, Examination, Physical Pressure and Mental Pressure. The final manuscript of the preliminary draft consisted of 108 items which were carefully framed and pruned by the researchers. Overlapping and unclear items were modified and reconstructed according to the suggestions of the experts. After the necessary modifications, the preliminary draft was printed.

Validity

Validity is defined as the extent to which an instrument measures what it asserts to measure (Mohajan, 2017). Validity of a research instrument assesses the extent to which the instrument measures what it is designed to measure. It is the degree to which the results are truthful. Validity is concerned with the meaning and interpretation of a scale. Validity is not absolute. It is a matter of degree rather than an all or nothing concept (Smith, & Smith, 2018).

Content Validity

Content validity is based upon the judgment of several subject experts. To establish the content validity, the researcher made the tool and gave to four experts. They went through the tool and finalized the suitability of the items in the tool. On the basis of their recommendation items were modified. The investigator developed the tool and gave the preliminary draft to four experts. The experts panel consisted of an educationalist, School head master and teachers who teach Physics and Chemistry for higher secondary students. After the content validity 88 questions selected to the pilot study.

Pilot study

Pilot study refers to mini version of a full scale study and it also called as feasibility studies. Pilot study is a trial collection of data to detect weaknesses in design and instrument and provide proxy data for selection of a probability sample (Edwin & Hundley, 2001). A pilot study is a small study designed to gather information prior to a larger study in order to improve the quality of final study. Pilot study is helps to define the research question, it aids to test the propose study design and process. It educates our self on different techniques related to our study, it also asses the feasibility of a study by collecting preliminary data and by developing research question and research plan. Pilot study provides the researcher with the ideas, approaches and clues the researcher may not have foreseen (Fraser, Arscott & Guillor, 2018). The investigator conducted the pilot study 88 items with a sample of 50 higher secondary students who aspire for NEET from Thoothukudi district. It has 70 positive questions and 18 negative questions. The preliminary draft was administered to a purposive sample of

population for which the tools were constructed. The school children were instructed to select the options the statement by making a tick (✓) in relevant column.

Table 1. Dimensions in BAPS

S. No.	Dimension	Item Numbers
1	Self - Imposed	9
2	School	14
3	parent	15
4	Examination	18
5	Physical Health	10
6	Mental Health	22
	total	88

(71 items are positive and 17 items are negative)

Table 2. Scoring procedure

Options	Positive statement Scores	Negative Statement Scores
Strongly Agree	5	1
Agree	4	2
Undecided	3	3
Disagree	2	4
Strongly Disagree	1	5

Item Selection

In order to select the relevant and consistent items for the tool, the investigator computed the item whole correlation to establish reliability. The row and column of items in the preliminary draft Academic Pressure scale scores of each respondent were recorded item wise in the table. The sum of the scores obtained by all the respondents was calculated individually. The co-efficient of correlation between each item by all the scores and the sum of scores of all items for each scorer was calculated using the following Cronbach's alpha formula. The items with an 'r' value of 0.26 and above were retained. Thus 34 items were selected and 56 items were deleted.

Table 3. Item - whole Correlation

R-Retained D-Deleted

US. No.	r- Value	R/ D	S. No	r- Value	R/ D	S. No.	r- Value1	R/ D
1	0.24	D	31	0.22	D	61	0.40	R
2	0.21	D	32	0.03	D	62	0.20	D
3	0.04	D	33	0.37	R	63	0.53	R
4	0.14	D	34	0.11	D	64	0.13	D
5	0.05	D	35	0.05	D	65	0.45	R
6	0.14	D	36	0.39	R	66	0.33	R
7	0.12	D	37	0.02	D	67	0.44	R
8	0.13	D	38	0.32	R	68	0.43	R
9	0.21	D	39	0.15	D	69	0.26	R
10	0.08	D	40	0.11	D	70	0.54	R
11	0.40	R	41	0.05	D	71	0.46	R
12	0.40	R	42	0.54	R	72	0.40	R
13	0.01	D	43	0.27	R	73	0.40	R
14	0.24	D	44	0.33	R	74	0.27	R
15	0.46	R	45	0.16	D	75	0.24	D
16	0.56	R	46	0.14	D	76	0.34	R
17	0.15	D	47	0.08	D	77	0.35	R
18	0.12	D	48	0.26	R	78	0.17	D
19	0.3	D	49	0.13	D	79	0.17	D
20	0.37	R	50	0.11	D	80	0.11	D
21	0.02	D	51	0.35	R	81	0.46	R
22	0.57	R	52	0.12	D	82	0.13	D
23	0.08	D	53	0.10	D	83	0.007	D
24	0.15	D	54	0.15	D	84	0.11	D
25	0.007	D	55	0.20	D	85	0.25	D
26	0.40	R	56	0.16	D	86	0.54	R
27	0.20	D	57	0.12	D	87	0.07	D
28	0.22	D	58	0.27	R	88	0.12	D
		29	0.48	R	59	0.12	D	
		30	0.37	R	60	0.02	D	

Table 4. Item Total Correlation of BAPS

Item	r	Item	r	Item	r	Item	r	Item	r	Item	r	Item	r	
1	0.40	6	0.57	11	0.38	16	0.26	21	0.45	26	0.54	31	0.35	R
2	0.40	7	0.40	12	0.32	17	0.35	22	0.34	27	0.46	32	0.35	
3	0.46	8	0.48	13	0.55	18	0.27	23	0.44	28	0.41	33	0.46	
4	0.56	9	0.37	14	0.27	19	0.40	24	0.43	29	0.41	34	0.54	
5	0.37	10	0.37	15	0.34	20	0.53	25	0.26	30	0.27			

Reliability

Reliability is the research tool is consistent and stable hence predictable and accurate. The greater the degree of consistency and stability in a research instrument, the greater the reliability. Reliability is the degree of accuracy or precision in the measurements made by a research instrument (Bolarinwa, 2015).

The reliability refers to a measurement that supplies consistent result with equal values. It indicates the extent to which it is without bias and insures consistent measurement cross time and across the various items in the instruments (Bannigan & Watson, 2009).

Cronbach's Alpha

The investigator employed Cronbach's alpha method to establish the reliability of the tool. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, that is how closely related a set of items are as group. It is considered to be a measure of scale reliability. A high value for alpha does not imply that the measure is uni dimensional. Then the reliability of the tool is estimated by the Cronbach's alpha formula. The investigator used split half technique to split the items into two equal half and then cronbach' s Alpha method was used,

$$A = n/(n-1)(1 - \frac{\sum_i V_i}{Vt})$$

Where,

n is the number of items

V_i is the variance the item scores

V_t is the variance of the total scores.

Table 5. Reliability Co-efficient of the tool

Tool	Cronbach'sAlphaMethod
Academic Pressure among NEET Aspirants	0.842

Since the 'r' value is 0.842, it shows that the tool has good internal consistency

Conclusion

The final version of the instrument consisted 34 items. Scale on Academic Pressure BAPS (Belcy's Academic Pressure Scale) is a valid and reliable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.842) tool to assess the Academic Pressure among NEET Aspirants. The scale is formed with five point likert scale. This tool is helpful to measure the level of Academic Pressure among NEET Aspirants.

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