

EFFECT OF PERCEIVED STRESS ON ADJUSTMENT OF JAWAHAR NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA (JNV) MIGRANTS IN RELATION TO GENDER

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This study examined the effect of gender on perceived stress related to emotional, educational and social adjustment among Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV) migrant students. Data were collected from 97 migrant students studying in ninth grade at various JNVs of Punjab state, India. Data analysis using MANOVA revealed that gender and perceived stress has significant effect on the three dimensions of adjustment (educational, social and emotional). However, combined effect of gender and perceived stress was not found to be significant. Implications for school administration, teachers, counsellors and wardens have also been discussed in the paper.

KEYWORDS: Migrants, Perceived Stress, Gender, Adjustment

INTRODUCTION

MIGRATION IN JAWAHAR NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA (JNV)

In the case of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, a residential school for rural talent, migration scheme was introduced to foster national integration and to minimize the cultural gap. In this scheme, the students migrate from one linguistic region to another linguistic region under three language formula for only one year. When students migrate from their JNV to another JNV, they meet new students from different cultural backgrounds, food habits, environment and language. In the new environment students may learn a lot of

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new things, take up to new challenges and enjoy themselves making new friends, learning different languages, getting involved in new social community but at the same time they might face many problems related to social, emotional and academic areas as well. The challenges to adapt into this new environment, faced by these migrated students can be categorised in terms of culture, language, food habits, medium, method of instruction and environmental changes. As a culturally and spatially transitional stage, the immigration process introduces possibilities for change, as well as resistance to new habits, new behaviours, and new cultural experiences. These changes, in turn affect our physical and mental health, our perceptions of self, and our relations with others (Koc & Welsh, 2002). According to Misra et al. (2003), all migrant students go through the process of adjusting to a new educational system and social environment. Adjustment to these new environments can be a stressful process (Li & Gasser, 2005) for migrants who have the added strain of adjusting to new cultural values, language, and study habits.

PERCEIVED STRESS, GENDER AND ADJUSTMENT

Experience of migration for one year in totally different linguistic school region might put extra stress on the shoulders of the students. In this process of transition which stemmed from trying to find their way in a new hostel environment where they have few or no friends, dealing with different study academic situations, sharing accommodation with unfamiliar roommates, and being miles away from the family they generally turn to support (Lafreniere & Ledgerwood, 1997). Thus previous studies (Dubow et al., 1991; Demaray & Malecki, 2002; Schneider & Ward, 2003; Lidy & Kahn, 2006; Hampel & Peterman, 2006; Laura J. Friedlander et al. 2007; Erdinç Duru, 2008; Chirkova et al., 2008; O'Reilly et al., 2010; Otlı, Fatma Nihal, 2010; Delaney & Smirle, 2010; O. Salami, 2011; Yusoff, Y., 2011; Bahrainian & Yari, 2014; Abdullah, Adebayo & Talib, 2015) found a negative relationship between students' perceptions of stress and overall adjustment of students. Winter and Yaffe (2000) in their longitudinal study found that change in perceived stress is a major predictor of change in adjustment. That is, students who experienced change in perceived stress level across a 10 week period showed improvements in personal, emotional, academic, social, and overall adjustment.

Several empirical studies investigated the migration of students to different cultural environment, and reported that the students' adjustment can be affected by the gender factor (Poyrazli et al., 2004; Hampel & Petermann, 2006; Rosenthal, Russell, & Thomson, 2007; Yeh & Inose, 2003; Yusoff & Chelliah, 2010). Among the factors affecting adjustment, gender is the one on which

contradictory study results have been yielded. In their study of adjustment Ataca and Berry (2002) found that there are difference in the adjustment process and related stress of male and female students. In some studies female students were found to have higher stress levels as well as poorer adaptation (Bang, Muruiki, & Hodges, 2008; Virta et al., 2004). However, contrast to these studies gender has been found to have no significant effect on adjustment (Poyrazli, Arbona, Bullington, & Pisecco, 2001; Sumer, Poyrazli, Grahame, 2008).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of perceived stress and three dimensions of perceived social support in predicting student adjustment of migrant students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya in Punjab state, India.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To study the individual effects of gender and perceived stress on three dimensions of adjustment.
2. To study the combined effect of gender and perceived stress on the dimensions of adjustment.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses of the study were:

1. There is no significant effect of gender on all three dimensions of adjustment among JNV migrants.
2. There is no significant effect of perceived stress on all three dimensions of adjustment among JNV migrants.
3. There is no significant combined effect of gender and perceived stress on all three dimensions of adjustment among JNV migrants.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs survey method in order to investigate the relationships between social support, represented by support from family, support from friends, and availability of special person and its perception with social adjustment and educational adjustment.

SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY

The sample for this study included 110 students ranging in the age group of 13 to 15 years, selected from Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya schools in Punjab State, India.

TOOLS USED

Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) by Sinha and Singh: The adjustment inventory has been designed for use with school students of India. The inventory seeks to segregate well-adjusted secondary school students (age group 14 to 18) from poorly adjusted students in three areas of adjustment i.e. emotional, social and educational. The inventory has 60 questions indicating the significant problems of school students in the above mentioned three areas of adjustment. The questions have to be answered in 'Yes' or 'No'.

Perceived Stress by Cohen, Kamarck, and Marmelstein (1983): Cohen's PSS-10 (perceived stress scale-10) was used to assess the degree to which each participant perceived his/her experience and environment to be stressful. The PSS-10 is a short, 10-item Likert type self-report scale. Participants rated each statement on a scale of 0 = "Never" to 4 = "Very often" in terms of stress over the previous month. A total stress score was computed. Score of 13 on the scale indicates average perceived stress and a score of 20 on this scale indicates higher perceived stress.

The researcher explained and administered the questionnaires to the participants in their schools. The participants provided the best of their cooperation and returned the completed questionnaires after answering. Of the 113 questionnaires distributed, 97 were found properly filled and were used for analysis.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The study employed MANOVA to analyse the data using SPSS. The data is represented in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of Measures of Male Students.

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Perceived Stress	55	2.13	.695
Educational Adjustment	55	15.82	2.84
Social Adjustment	55	16.25	2.57
Emotional Adjustment	55	16.31	2.23

Table 2
Mean and Standard Deviation of Measures of Female Students.

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Perceived Stress	42	2.19	0.71
Educational Adjustment	42	15.50	2.62
Social Adjustment	42	15.31	2.50
Emotional Adjustment	42	16.36	2.15

Table 3
MANOVA Results of Dimensions of Adjustment by Perceived Stress And Gender.

	Wilks λ	F	p
Perceived Stress	0.609	8.36	0.00*
Gender	0.896	3.43	0.02**
Perceived Stress* Gender	0.872	2.11	0.54

*Significant at 0.01 level **Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 1 it can be observed that overall effect of perceived stress and gender was not significant ($F= 2.11$, $p=0.54$) on the three dimensions of adjustment (educational, social and emotional). Further the table revealed that perceived stress has a significant effect ($F=8.36$, $p= 0.00$) on educational, social and emotional adjustment. Further, the independent ANOVA revealed that perceived stress has significant effect on educational adjustment ($F=7.08$, $p=0.01$), social adjustment ($F=15.96$, $p=0.00$) and emotional adjustment ($F=14.9$, $p=0.00$). MANOVA analysis also revealed that gender has significant effect ($F=3.43$, $p=0.02$) on all the three dimensions of adjustment. Independent ANOVA revealed that gender has only significant effect ($F= 5.6$, $p=0.02$) on social adjustment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the study was to examine the effect of perceived stress and gender along with the combined effect of gender and perceived stress on the three dimensions of the adjustment among the JNV migrant students. Analysis of the data using MANOVA revealed that both the perceived stress individually effects the combined three dimensions of adjustment, which is consistent with previous studies (Dubow et al., 1991; Demaray & Malecki , 2002; Schneider &

Ward , 2003; Lidy & Kahn, 2006; Hampel & Peterman, 2006; Laura J. Friedlander et al. 2007; Erdiñ Duru, 2008; O'Reilly et al., 2010; Otlu, Fatma Nihal, 2010; Delaney & Smirle, 2010; O. Salami, 2011; Yusoff, Y., 2011; Bahrainian & Yari, 2014; Abdullah, Adebayo & Talib, 2015). Further, the analysis revealed that gender also significantly effects all the three dimensions of the adjustment (educational, social and emotional), which is also consistent with previous studies (Dubow et al., 1991; Hampel & Peterman, 2006; Yacob et al., 2013). Interaction effect of gender and perceived stress on all the three dimensions of adjustment was not found to be significant; this result is consistent with previous studies (Hampel & Peterman, 2006; Laura J. Friedlander et al. 2007; Glozah, 2013).

The results of the study point towards the crucial role of perceived stress in relation to adjustment. Perceived stress is not only found to be having significant effect on combined three dimensions of the adjustment but also on separate dimensions of the adjustment (educational, social and emotional). In the case of migrant students, it becomes particularly important for counsellors to provide proper guidance on arrival of the migrant students to cope with new social, educational and emotional environment as the students are of small age to get migrated. Particularly it is important for the administration to understand the need of migrated students regarding their food habits, language and accommodation. School should encourage the participation of migrant students in co-curricular activities to let the migrant students mingle with the host school students to develop a suitable environment for the migrants. In the area of educational adjustment, teachers are particularly having a central role to play by adopting appropriate medium of instruction which may solve the language issue of migrant students. Hostel wardens are also important in helping the migrant students to cope with the problems of social adjustment by providing them secure environment in the hostel. As the gender factor was also found to be an important variable to be considered in relation to adjustment, so all the concerned people (principal, teachers, counsellor and warden) are required to be sensitive regarding the gender differences.

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