


# STRESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN SENAPATI DISTRICT MANIPUR

Mairembam Sangita Devi <sup>1</sup>, Dr. Ch. Beda Devi <sup>1</sup>, Langonjam Chingkheinganba Meitei <sup>1</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Department of Education, Manipur University, Canchipur-795003, India



## Corresponding Author

Langonjam Chingkheinganba Meitei,  
[chingkheikhaba@gmail.com](mailto:chingkheikhaba@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to find out the relationship between level of stress and academic achievement among secondary students in Senapati district, Manipur. The sample consisted of 300 students studying in class XI and XII, out of which 150 are class XI and 150 are class XII. To assess stress level of the students, Students Stress Scale developed by Zaki Akhtar was used. For academic achievement of the students, the marks obtained in the last High School Leaving Certificate Examination (H.S.L.C. E) was taken as an indicator of academic achievement. The result of the study reveals that majority of the students fall within the average level of stress. The significance test results indicate no statistically significant difference in stress levels between male and female students, Arts and Science stream students, Class XI and Class XII students, across divisions and the correlation is not strong, it highlights that stress may have some impact on students' academic performance.

**Keywords:** Academic, Achievement, Manipur, Secondary, Senapati, Stress, Students

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Stress has become an inseparable part of our life. It has been reported that most people are experiencing high stress (APA, 2020). In the socio-psychological and physical well being stress has become an influential factor. Parents in the contemporary society has given emphasis to the conative development of their children. Likewise, the conventional system of education has also been focusing on the development of the young learners and thereby creating competitions which are of unhealthy kinds among the learners, parents as well as to the academic fraternity.

Such culture of unhealthy competitions obstructs and become and ingredient for social unrest and thus grooms disorder, unrest, tensions, anxiety, stress, and other psychological disorders among their people and childrens. The family must ensure better socialization to promote proper child growth. Since children are the promise of tomorrow, their mental growth should be balanced. It can be stated that over half of the total population of 20 countries and 85% of the countries are found to be reported of having psychological stress in 2020.

Children under stress often exhibit signs of emotional disabilities (Ogundele M. O., 2018). Children in their teens are the ones who are going through the transitional phase from childhood to adulthood. During the teen's years, a lot of biological, physical, mental, and emotional changes are happening, as well as the changes in responsibility and role (Forbes, E. E., & Dahl, R. E., 2010). To stabilize these changes, the students are always confronted with problems and conflicts. For some students who are incapable of dealing with it, the changes will create stress and tension for them if it is not dealt with in the early stage; the students may experience mental problems. If children fail to manage stress in a timely manner, it can lead to various adjustment problems and even acute stress disorders.

Among adolescent boys and girls, stress is very common. Negligence of parents, peer pressure, high expectations in academics, growing-up tensions, and demand for familial responsibility or any other issue— the youths undergo feelings of stress at some phase of their lives. Parents often cause stress in their children when they are not emotionally available or lack positive coping mechanisms.

## **2. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

Education is the process of developing the capacities and potentialities of the individual so as to prepare the individual to be a successful member of society. It trains the students to adjust in real-life situations (Meitei, L. C., 2024).

Schools today, right from the beginning of formal education, emphasize academic achievement. The school performs the function of selection and differentiation among students based on achievement. As mentioned earlier, while seeking admission to highly competitive professional courses, the main factor considered is outstanding academic achievement. Children perceive examination results as an indicator of their worth. Exam success is a ticket to a prosperous life. The desire for a high level of academic achievement puts a lot of pressure on teachers and schools, including the educational system in general and students in particular. As we can observe that the system of education revolves around the academic achievement of the students. Therefore, the school dedicates a significant amount of time and effort to enhancing students' performance across all academic domains.

Teachers and parents often have a common concern regarding the determination of a student's educational ability and academic achievement. Academic achievement is one of the most important and valuable aspects of a student's academic career. It not only moulds one's vocational career, but it also determines an individual's future life. Academic achievement is the product of formal education.

The nature and determinants of academic achievement are quite complex. The academic performance of students is the product of socio-economic, psychological, and environmental factors (Kocak, O., et al., 2021; Rahman, S., et al., 2023). Secondary students face various types of non-intellectual factors like stress, anxiety, and other psychological and sociological factors, which may affect their academic achievement. Several other variables can influence the academic performances of higher secondary students. Such variables may be the socio-economic background of the family, comprising income, levels of parental education, occupation, etc.

### **2.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

**The objectives of the study are:**

- 1) To find out the overall level of Stress among Higher Secondary Students in Senapati District Manipur.
- 2) To find out whether there is a difference in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, with respect to gender differences.
- 3) To find out whether there is a difference in stress among the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of Stream.
- 4) To find out whether there is a difference in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their class.
- 5) To find out whether there is a difference in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their academic achievement.
- 6) To find out the relationship between stress and academic achievement of the students.

### 3. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

- 1) There is a notable variance in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, with respect to gender differences.
- 2) There is a significant difference in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, with regards to the academic stream they are enrolled in.
- 3) Stress levels vary significantly among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their class.
- 4) There is a notable variance in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their academic achievement.
- 5) A positive correlation exists between stress levels and academic achievement of higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their class year.

### 4. METHOD

In the present study the researchers employ a descriptive method of research to study the level of stress and academic achievement of the higher secondary school students in the Senapati district of Manipur.

Population

For the present study, all the higher secondary schools recognised under the Council of Higher Secondary Education Manipur (COHSEM) situated in Senapati district Manipur is the population of the study.

### 5. SAMPLE & SAMPLING METHOD

Using the random sampling technique, the investigator then selected 300 students, i.e., 50 students from each higher secondary school, respectively, irrespective of gender. The study employed a simple random sampling technique to ensure an unbiased selection of participants. A total of 300 students were selected for the study, 50 students from each higher secondary school, irrespective of differences.

**Table 1** Sample of the study

School	Class		Total
	XI	XII	
Azufii Christian Institute, Mao	31	19	50
Don Bosco Higher Secondary School, Maram	22	28	50
Don Bosco Higher Secondary School, Senapati	27	23	50
Mt. Everest Higher Secondary School, Senapati	25	25	50
Mt. Pisgah Higher Secondary School, Senapati	25	25	50
St. Joseph Higher Secondary School, Tadubi	21	29	50
Total	151	149	300

#### Tools

To assess the stress level of the students, the Students Stress Scale developed by Zaki Akhtar was used. To measure the academic achievement of the students, the marks obtained in the last public examination, i.e., the X class examination (H.S.L.C.), are considered an indicator of academic achievement. In this study, the researchers used descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

### 6. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Table 2: Overall level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur.

Levels of Stress	Frequency	Percent
Extremely High	1	0.3%
High	21	7.0%
Above Average	65	21.7%
Average	171	57.0%
Below Average	34	11.3%
Low	7	2.3%
Extremely Low	1	0.3%
Total	300	100%

The study on the overall level of stress among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, reveals that the majority of students experience an average level of stress, accounting for 57.0% (171 students) of the total sample of 300. A significant proportion, 21.7% (65 students), reported stress levels above average, while 11.3% (34 students) experienced below-average stress. High stress levels were observed in 7.0% (21 students), whereas only 2.3% (7 students) reported low stress. The extremes were minimal, with both extremely high and extremely low stress levels reported by just 0.3% (1 student each). These findings indicate that while most students fall within the average stress range, a considerable number still experience above-average or high stress, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to support their well-being.

H1: There is a notable variance in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, with respect to gender differences.

**Table 3** Level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of sex.

Levels of Stress	Sex			
	Female	Percent	Male	Percent
Extremely High	1	0.55%	0	0.00%
High	13	7.18%	8	6.72%
Above Average	31	17.13%	34	28.57%
Average	113	62.43%	58	48.74%
Below Average	18	9.94%	16	13.45%
Low	4	2.21%	3	2.52%
Extremely Low	1	0.55%	0	0.00%
Total	181	100%	119	100%

**Table 4:** Showing the significant level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of sex.

Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.
Female	181	162.51	19	0.59	298	0.44
Male	119	163.83	18.48			

The analysis of stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on sex differences, reveals notable variations. Among female students, the majority (62.43%) experience an average level of stress, whereas among male students, 48.74% fall within this category. A higher proportion of males (28.57%) report above-average stress compared to females (17.13%), indicating that stress levels tend to be slightly higher among male students. High stress is experienced by 7.18% of females and 6.72% of males, while extreme stress is reported by only 0.55% of females and none among males. Conversely, 9.94% of females and 13.45% of males experience below-average stress, with low and extremely low levels being minimal in both groups.

The significance test results indicate no statistically significant difference in stress levels between male and female students ( $t = 0.59$ ,  $df = 298$ ,  $p = 0.44$ ). This suggests that while there are variations in the distribution of stress levels between sexes, the overall difference is not significant, implying that both male and female students experience stress at comparable levels.

H2: There is a significant difference in stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, with regards to the academic stream they are enrolled in.

**Table 5:** Level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of stream.

Levels of Stress	Stream			
	Arts	Percent	Science	Percent
Extremely High	1	0.44%	0	0%
High	18	8.00%	3	4%
Above Average	40	17.78%	25	33.33%
Average	133	59.11%	38	50.67%
Below Average	28	12.44%	6	8%
Low	5	2.22%	2	2.67%
Extremely Low	0	0.00%	1	1.33%
Total	225	100%	75	100%

**Table 6:** Showing the significant level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of Stream.

Stream	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.
Arts	225	162.69	18.51	0.55	298	0.76
Science	75	164.07	19.66	2.26984		

The analysis of stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their academic stream, shows notable differences in stress distribution. Among Arts students, the majority (59.11%) experience an average level of stress, while 17.78% report above-average stress, and 8.00% experience high stress. In contrast, Science students have a higher percentage (33.33%) reporting above-average stress, though a similar proportion (50.67%) fall within the average stress category. Extremely high stress is observed in only 0.44% of Arts students, while none is reported among Science students. Below-average stress is found in 12.44% of Arts students and 8% of Science students, with low and extremely low levels being minimal in both groups.

The significance test results ( $t = 0.55$ ,  $df = 298$ ,  $p = 0.76$ ) indicate no statistically significant difference in stress levels between Arts and Science students. This suggests that while Science students tend to have a slightly higher mean stress level (164.07) compared to Arts students (162.69), the overall difference is not significant, implying that both groups experience stress at comparable levels.

H3: Stress levels vary significantly among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their class.

**Table 7:** Level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of class.

Levels of Stress	Class			
	XI	Percent	XII	Percent
Extremely High	1	0.66%	0	0%
High	9	5.96%	12	8.05%
Above Average	36	23.84%	29	19.46%
Average	83	54.97%	88	59.06%
Below Average	19	12.58%	15	10.07%
Low	3	1.99%	4	2.68%
Extremely Low	0	0.00%	1	0.67%
Total	151	100%	149	100%

**Table 8** Table: Showing the significant level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of class.

Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.
XI	151	163.45	18.35	0.38	298.00	0.92
XII	149	162.62	19.25			

The analysis of stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on class differences, reveals variations in stress distribution between Class XI and Class XII students. Among Class XI students, 54.97% experience an average level of stress, while 23.84% report above-average stress and 5.96% experience high stress. In contrast, a slightly higher percentage of Class XII students (59.06%) fall within the average stress category, while 19.46% report above-average stress and 8.05% experience high stress. Extremely high stress is observed in only 0.66% of Class XI students, with none reported in Class XII. Below-average stress is slightly more common among Class XI students (12.58%) compared to Class XII students (10.07%). Low and extremely low stress levels remain minimal in both groups.

The significance test results ( $t = 0.38$ ,  $df = 298$ ,  $p = 0.92$ ) indicate no statistically significant difference in stress levels between Class XI and Class XII students. Although there are slight variations in stress distribution, the overall mean stress levels are nearly identical (163.45 for Class XI and 162.62 for Class XII), suggesting that both groups experience stress at comparable levels.

H4: Stress levels vary significantly among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their academic achievement.

**Table 9** Level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of academic achievement.

Levels of Stress	Division					
	1st Division	Percent	2nd Division	Percent	3rd Division	Percent
Extremely High	1	0.68%	0	0%	0	0%
High	12	8.22%	9	6.29%	0	0%
Above Average	41	28.08%	22	15.38%	2	18.18%
Average	71	48.63%	93	65.03%	7	63.64%
Below Average	17	11.64%	16	11.19%	1	9.09%
Low	4	2.74%	2	1.40%	1	9.09%
Extremely Low	0	0.00%	1	0.70%	0	0%
Total	146	100%	143	100%	11	100%

**Table 10** Showing the significant level of stress present in the higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur with regards to the difference of division.

Division	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	df	Sig.
1st Division	146	165.46	19.00	2.39	2	0.09
2nd Division	143	160.73	18.14			
3rd Division	11	160.91	21.73			
Total	300	163.04	18.78			

The analysis of stress levels among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on academic divisions, highlights some variations. Among students in the 1st Division, 48.63% experience an average level of stress, while 28.08% report above-average stress, and 8.22% experience high stress. In contrast, a higher proportion of 2nd Division students (65.03%) fall within the average stress category, with 15.38% reporting above-average stress and 6.29% experiencing high stress. Among 3rd Division students, the majority (63.64%) report average stress, while 18.18% experience above-average stress, and none report high or extremely high stress. Extremely low stress is reported only among 2nd Division students (0.70%), while low stress levels are minimal across all divisions.

The significance test results ( $F = 2.39$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = 0.09$ ) indicate no statistically significant difference in stress levels across divisions. Although students in the 1st Division have a slightly higher mean stress level (165.46) compared to those in the 2nd (160.73) and 3rd (160.91) Divisions, the overall difference is not significant. This suggests that academic performance does not play a major role in determining stress levels among students in the district.

H5: A positive correlation exists between stress levels and academic achievement of higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, based on their class year.

**Table 11:** Relationship between stress and academic achievement of higher secondary school students in Senapati District Manipur.



Variables	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
Division	300	-0.118	0.04*
Students stress			

The analysis of the relationship between stress and academic achievement among higher secondary school students in Senapati District, Manipur, reveals a weak negative correlation. The Pearson correlation coefficient between stress levels and academic division of the students is -0.118, with a significance value of 0.04. This indicates that there is statistically significant but weak reverse relationship. It suggests that as students' stress levels increase, their academic achievement (division) tends to decrease slightly. As the correlation between stress and academic achievement is not strong, it signifies that stress may have some impact on the academic performance of students', it signifies the need for stress management strategies to support the well-being of students as well as academic success.

## 7. CONCLUSION

Academics are the major source of tension amongst the students. Every student differs their needs. Due to different in the needs, a different in their personality they differ in experiencing stress levels. Stress primarily impedes the academic performance. So great care to be taken to ensure the standards of excellence are expected and maintained should make use of certain strategies to reduce stress level of their students. At the same time adequate efforts should be taken to enable the students to manage the stressful situations. situations.

Therefore, from the above findings, it can be stated that stress is associated with the student's academic achievement. Implementing a suitable teaching and learning method to reduce the learners' stress is recommended. Moreover, today's academics are more focused on the learners' educational attainment; it demands more from the learners due to peer, parental and social pressure, too. These perspectives of society and other stakeholders need to be reviewed and reevaluated to reduce the learners' stress.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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