

International Journal of Scientific Research and Reviews

A Correlational study to assess the Parental Expectations and level of stress among Adolescents studying in a selected high school, PurbaBardhaman, W.B.”

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ABSTRACT

In this competitive world, the parent's expectations are very much high from their children and this makes the life of adolescents stressful. So, to focus on the parental expectations and level of stress among adolescents, a study has been conducted on adolescents. The objectives of the study are to assess the level of perception among adolescents regarding parental expectations, to assess the level of stress among adolescents, to find the correlation between parental expectations and stress among adolescents, to find the association between parental expectations and selected socio-demographic variables and to find the association between level of stress and selected socio-demographic variables of adolescents. A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. Non-probability convenience sampling and purposive sampling technique followed by stratified random sampling technique was used to select 180 adolescents (90 boys and 90 girls), studying in class VIII – X. A structured questionnaire for selected socio-demographic variables and record analysis for academic performance, structured rating scale for perceived parental expectations and Perceived Stress Scale (PSS -14) by Sheldon Cohen for assessing stress were used as tools to collect data. The tools were validated by seven experts. Reliability of structured rating scale for perceived parental expectations was 0.811. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed that majority (63.89%) of the adolescents had perceived moderate parental expectations and also majority (69.44%) had perceived moderate stress. There was a positive correlation ($r = 0.662$) between perceived parental expectations and stress among adolescents. A significant association was found between perceived parental expectations and selected socio-demographic characteristics like gender, class, age, father's education, mother's education, monthly family income and academic performances and also a significant association between perceived stress and selected socio-demographic characteristics like gender, father's education, monthly family income and academic performances of adolescents. So, the findings of the study revealed that perceived parental expectations and stress among adolescents are positively correlated. Hence, counseling of the adolescents and their parents is very much essential.

Keywords: Adolescents, Perceived parental expectations, Stress, Academic performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. In this transformation, the immaturity of childhood blends with the responsibilities of adulthood. Hence, it is very crucial to understand them from their point of view and give them proper guidance and support so that they grow up to be healthy individuals.

The World Health Organization (WHO)¹ defines an adolescent as any person between ages 10 and 19 years. Adolescents undergo rapid growth and development in physical, physiological, mental and social aspects in the process of growing up to be an adult. The growth spurt and intense urge to be free and be independent in life are the basic components of adolescence. The growth achieved, the experience gained, responsibilities felt and the relationships at this stage destine the complete developed future of an individual. To ensure the proper growth and development of children, a healthy home environment is very crucial.

A certain amount of stress is necessary to drive an individual to work which is called good stress or Eustress. On the other hand, stress on extreme levels which hinder with normal functioning of body and mind and do not allow us to work fruitfully and achieve success is bad stress or distress. However, a single stressor can be perceived by different people in different ways depending on the circumstance in which one is present and the individual's coping skills. Girls and boys experience distinctly different patterns of stress during adolescence. According to a research on stress patterns in adolescence boys and girls, it is reported that, while adolescent girls and boys experience similar levels of stress, adolescent girls are more likely to experience stress in their relations with parents and friends, whereas adolescent boys' stress is more likely to emerge from trouble in school or other factors outside their relationships with others.

Those who are unable to cope up with stress may end up having psychological problems, being depressed, anxious, getting addicted to drugs or other forms of harmful substances. Adolescents under high stress were prone to get indulged in hazardous and risky behaviour ranging from poor eating and sleeping pattern to unprotected sex to substance abuse. Stressful adolescents became depressed with lack of concentration, fear of failure and no hope for the future.²

In India academics have been the pivotal point of stress due to high parental pressure on students to excel in studies. Unfathomably high parental pressure for academic excellence put students under

extreme mental pressure. Their work output decreases under stress and the line of progress graph gradually declines which again leads to rebound stress. Thus, students get trapped in this vicious cycle and may end up taking drastic steps. According to the 2015 study report by National Crime Records Bureau (N.C.R.B.), one student commits suicide in India every hour.³ The rate of students' suicide is increasing in India due to the mushrooming of commercial coaching centres which make students dream about achieving guaranteed success in competitive exams and the students end up committing suicide being unable to tolerate failure. They think it's better to end their lives than to let their family's reputation down.³

Parental involvement is a significant part of development of adolescents.⁴ Hence, instead of having unrealistic academic expectations, parents must be cooperative, understanding and a source of positive energy for the students. Parents must strive to be the biggest source of support to students to have a positive effect on the academic performance of their offsprings.⁴

According to the Census of India 2011⁵, the population of adolescents is 236.5 million out of total population of 1205.6 million. Thus, adolescents comprise of 19.6% of Indian population.⁵ Hence, adolescents are a vital portion of India's population and more studies need to be done on them to know more about them.

77% of adolescents face extreme stress due to unrealistic parental expectations for better academic performance. Some students can't cope up with such high levels of stress and end up being emotionally collapsed.⁶ In order to have a better understanding of adolescents and to prevent their breakdown; researchers need to do studies on them.

Appropriate parental involvement leads to positive child outcomes. But over-controlling or "helicopter parenting" often result in dissatisfaction and lead to poor psychological well-being. Thus, more research works need to be done in order to make parents realize that they should not violate student's basic psychological need for autonomy and competence but at the same time provide needed guidance and support.⁷ The students' self-esteem often gets destroyed when they fail to meet up the unrealistic parental expectations and they end up with poor academic performance. When students can't rise up to the expectations or during the process of meeting it, they suffer from frustration, physical stress, lack of peace of mind, that may even cripple their morale and can go to the extent of ruining their lives. So, it is the need of the hour to do vigorous research to make the parents realize that the lives of their children are far more precious than their high academic achievement.

More research need to be done to find out relation between perceived parental expectations and stress among adolescents so that stress can be relieved and adolescents can be protected from self-harm. The present study would focus on adolescents at senior secondary level. Senior secondary level is the most crucial period when career decisions are taken by adolescents. This is the time when adolescent's stress and parent's expectation reach high. We all know that the persistent high level of stress causes many physiological and psychological problems and ultimately, they could not achieve the goal. So, nurses as a health team member should come forward and understand the stress level of adolescents and educate the adolescents and their parents with the goal of relieving their stress, protecting them from self-harm and providing them with a healthy environment to grow and to let them realize true meaning of life. We aimed to identify relationship between perceived parental expectations and stress among adolescents.

METHODS:

We conducted a descriptive survey research with adolescents studying class VIII-X of a selected school of a particular district in West Bengal. Based on the study criteria, school students were recruited from a selected school of West Bengal through purposive sampling. Total 90 boys (30 from each class) and 90 girls (30 from each class) were selected by stratified random sampling. Following Ethics Committee approval, data were collected from 180 students (60 from each class) during January 2019 & February 2019. The study procedure was explained, and informed consent was taken from the subjects & their parents before data collection. To assess the academic performance record analysis of previous year annual examination was done. 100% agreement was established by the experts. A particular student's performance was measured as outstanding (90-100%, AA), Excellent (80-89%, A⁺). Very good (60-79%, A), Good (45-59%, B⁺), Marginal (25-34%, C) and Disqualified (<25% D) according to West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. Structured rating scale was used to assess the perceived parental expectation among adolescents. Validity & reliability of this tool was established and for reliability Cronbach alpha was .811. To assess the perceived stress Sheldon Cohen's perceived Stress Scale was used which is a standard scale and mentioned reliability was 0.78. Pilot study was conducted before final data collection & it was found to be feasible. Descriptive summary of the data has been presented as frequency & percentage for categorical variables, mean & SD for grading & scores of perceived parental expectation level and perceived stress level. Pearson's Co-relation-coefficient was used to analyze the correlation between PPE and stress among adolescents. Chi-square test was used to find out the association between the perceived PPE & selected socio-demographic characteristics of

adolescents. $P < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant. SPSS statistics version 17 (2008, SPSS Inc, Chicago, Illinois USA) software were used for statistical analysis.

RESULTS:

Table-1: Frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic characteristics of adolescents.

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Boy	90	50.0
Girl	90	50.0
Age		
12-13 years	47	26.1
14-15 years	133	73.9
Class		
VIII	60	33.4
IX	60	33.3
X	60	33.3
Type of family		
Nuclear family	90	50.0
Joint family	69	38.3
Extended family	21	11.7
No. of family member		
2 – 5	118	65.6
6 - 9	53	29.4
≥10	9	5.0
No. of sibling		
Nil (Single child)	39	21.7
1 - 2 brothers / sisters	139	72.2
≥ 3 brothers / sisters	2	1.1
Father's education		
Primary	34	18.9
Secondary	58	32.2
Higher Secondary	59	32.8
Graduate and above	29	16.1
Mother's education		
Primary	28	15.6
Secondary	63	35.0
Higher Secondary	70	38.9
Graduate and above	19	10.5
Father's occupation		
Govt. employee	19	10.6
Business	68	37.8
Private service	44	24.4
Others	49	27.2
Mother's occupation		
Govt. Service	5	2.8
Private Service	7	3.8
Home maker	148	82.2
Others	20	11.1
Monthly Family income		
≤10,000 /-	43	23.9
10,001 – 20,000 /-	47	26.1
20001 – 30000/-	61	33.9
Above 30,000/-	29	16.1

Data presented in table 1 showed that the majority (73.9%) of adolescents are from 14 –15 years of age. 50% of the adolescents are from nuclear family. Majority (65.6%) of adolescents have 2 – 5 family members and 1 – 2 siblings. Fathers’ and mothers’ education of maximum (65% & 73.9%) adolescents are secondary and higher secondary. Father’s occupation of 37.8% adolescents is business and mother’s occupation of most of the adolescents is home maker. Monthly family income of 33.9% adolescents are from 20,001/- to 30,000/-.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of adolescents according to their academic performance of last annual examination **N = 180**

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage
Academic performance		
Outstanding (AA)	2	1.1
Excellent (A+)	9	5.0
Very good (A)	39	21.7
Good (B+)	61	33.9
Satisfactory (B)	50	27.8
Marginal (C)	19	10.5

Academic performance of 33.9% adolescents are Good (B+) and 27.8% are Satisfactory (B) in their last annual examination.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage distribution of adolescents according to their perceived parental expectations scores. **N = 180**

Perceived Parental Expectations scores	Frequency	Percentage
Very Low Expectations	00	Nil
Low Expectations	36	20.0
Moderate Expectations	115	63.89
High Expectations	29	16.11
Very High Expectations	00	Nil

Data presented in the table 3 showed that majority (63.89%) of the adolescents have perceived moderate parental expectations.

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage distribution of the adolescents according to their perceived stress scores. **N = 180**

Perceived Stress scores	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No stress	02	1.11
Mild stress	33	18.33
Moderate stress	125	69.44
Severe stress	19	10.56
Very Severe stress	01	0.56

Data presented in the table 4 showed that majority (69.44%) of the adolescents have perceived moderate stress.

Table 5: Correlation between perceived parental expectations scores and stress scores among adolescents. **N = 180**

Selected socio-demographic variables	Gender	Calculated value of “r”	P- Value	Tabulated value	Inference
Class – VIII (30 + 30)	Boys	r = 0.901	0.001	0.349	Significant*
	Girls	r = 0.732	0.001	0.349	Significant*
Class – IX (30 + 30)	Boys	r = 0.318	0.087	0.349	Not Significant
	Girls	r = 0.524	0.029	0.349	Significant*
Class – X (30 + 30)	Boys	r = 0.583	0.007	0.349	Significant*
	Girls	r = 0.856	0.001	0.349	Significant*
Total (90 + 90)	Boys	r = 0.633	0.001	0.205	Significant*
	Girls	r = 0.669	0.001	0.205	Significant*
Total 180 adolescents	Boys + Girls	r = 0.662	0.001	0.087	Significant*

Data presented in the table 5 depicted that there is a significant relationship between perceived parental expectations scores and perceived stress scores among adolescents in most of the cases. So, it could be interpreted that there is statistically significant correlation found between perceived parental expectations (P.P.E) and perceived stress among adolescents.

Table 6: Association between perceived parental expectations and selected socio-demographic characteristics. N = 180

Socio-demographic variables	Below Median No. (%)	At & Above Median No. (%)	Chi Square	P-value	Tabulated Value	Inference
Gender						
Boy	53 (29.4)	37 (20.6)	5.689	0.017	3.84	Significant*
Girl	37 (20.6)	53 (29.4)				
Class						
Class VIII	36	24	19.733	0.000	5.99	Significant*
Class IX	38	22				
Class X	16	44				
Age						
12-13 years	16 (8.9)	31 (17.2)	6.479	0.011	3.84	Significant*
14-15 years	74 (41.1)	59 (32.8)				
Type of family						
Nuclear	47 (26.1)	43 (23.9)	1.383	0.501	5.99	Not Significant
Joint	35 (19.4)	34 (18.9)				
Extended	8 (4.4)	13 (7.2)				
No. of Family Member						
≤5	69 (38.3)	49(27.2)	3.638	0.056	3.84	Not Significant
>5	27 (15.0)	35(19.4)				
No. of Sibling						
0 (Nil)	17 (9.4)	22 (12.2)	4.458	0.108	5.99	Not Significant
1-2	79 (43.9)	60 (33.4)				
>2	0 (0.0)	2 (1.1)				
Father's Education						
Primary &Secondary	63 (35.0)	29 (16.1)	14.566	0.001	5.99	Significant*
Higher Secondary	21 (11.7)	38 (21.1)				
Graduation & Above	6 (3.3)	23 (12.8)				
Mother's Education						
Primary & Secondary	55 (30.6)	36 (20.0)	8.648	0.013	5.99	Significant*
Higher Secondary	26 (14.4)	44 (24.4)				
Graduation & Above	9 (5.0)	10 (5.6)				
Father's Occupation						
Service	27 (15.0)	36 (20.0)	3.814	0.149	5.99	Not Significant
Business	33 (18.3)	35 (19.4)				
Others	30 (16.7)	19 (10.6)				
Mother's Occupation						
Service	5 (2.8)	7 (3.9)	3.777	0.151	5.99	Not Significant
Home maker	71 (39.4)	77 (42.8)				
Others	14 (7.8)	6 (3.3)				
Monthly Family Income						
≤20000	56 (31.1)	34 (18.9)	10.756	0.001	3.84	Significant*
20000	34 (18.9)	56 (31.1)				
Academic Performance						
Marginal &	49 (27.2)	20 (11.1)	26.428	0.000	5.99	Significant*
Good &Very Good	41 (22.8)	59 (32.8)				
Excellent &	0 (0.0)	11 (6.1)				

Data presented in the table 6 depicted that the chi square (χ^2) value computed between perceived parental expectations of adolescents and their class, father's education, mother's education, academic performance and gender, age, monthly family income is significant at 0.05 level. The data further showed that the chi square (χ^2) value computed between perceived parental expectations of adolescents and their type of family, number of sibling, father's occupation, mother's occupation and number of family member is not significant at 0.05 level.

Table 7: Association between perceived stress of adolescents and their selected socio-demographic characteristics. N = 180

Selected Socio-demographic variables	Below Median No. (%)	At & Above Median No. (%)	Chi Square	P-value	Tabulated Value	Inference
Gender						
Boy	57 (31.7)	33 (18.3)	7.232	0.007	3.84	Significant
Girl	39 (21.7)	51 (28.3)				
Class						
Class VIII	34	26	4.052	0.132	5.99	Not Significant
Class IX	35	25				
Class X	25	35				
Age						
12-13 years	25 (13.9)	22 (12.2)	0.001	0.982	3.84	Not Significant
14-15 years	71 (39.4)	62 (34.5)				
Type of family						
Nuclear	44 (24.4)	46 (25.6)	3.879	0.144	5.99	Not Significant
Joint	43 (23.9)	26 (14.4)				
Extended	9 (5.0)	12 (6.7)				
No. of Family Member						
≤5	69 (38.3)	49 (27.2)	3.638	0.056	3.84	Not Significant
>5	27 (15.0)	35 (19.4)				
No. of Sibling						
0 (Nil)	17 (9.4)	22 (12.2)	4.458	0.108	5.99	Not Significant
1-2	79 (43.9)	60 (33.4)				
>2	0 (0.0)	2 (1.1)				
Father's Education						
Primary & Secondary	63 (35.0)	29 (16.1)	7.436	0.024	5.99	Significant
Higher Secondary	24 (13.3)	35 (19.4)				
Graduation & Above	9 (5.0)	20 (11.1)				
Mother's Education						
Primary & Secondary	56 (31.1)	35 (19.4)	5.057	0.080	5.99	Not Significant
Higher Secondary	32 (17.8)	38 (21.1)				
Graduation & Above	8 (4.4)	11 (6.1)				
Father's Occupation						
Service	31 (17.2)	32 (17.8)	1.752	0.416	5.99	Not Significant
Business	35 (19.4)	33 (18.3)				
Others	30 (16.7)	19 (10.5)				
Mother's Occupation						
Service	5 (2.8)	7 (3.9)	4.662	0.097	5.99	Not Significant
Home maker	76 (42.2)	72 (40.0)				
Others	15 (8.3)	5 (2.8)				
Monthly Family Income						
≤20000	55 (30.6)	35 (19.4)	4.375	0.036	3.84	Significant*
>20000	41 (22.7)	49 (27.3)				
Academic Performance						
Marginal & Satisfactory	47 (26.1)	22 (12.2)	11.221	0.004	5.99	Significant*
Good & Very Good	46 (25.6)	54 (29.7)				
Excellent & Outstanding	3 (1.7)	8 (4.4)				

Data presented in the table 7 depicted that the chi square (χ^2) value computed between perceived stress of adolescents and their father's education, monthly family income, academic performance and at gender of adolescents is significant at 0.05. The data further showed that the chi square (χ^2) value computed between perceived stress of adolescents and class, type of family, number of sibling, mother's education, father's occupation, mother's occupation and age, number of family member of adolescents is not significant at 0.05 level.

DISCUSSION

In the present study, it is found that the perceived parental expectations are higher among the adolescents of non - graduate parents. Deb et al⁸ also found in their study that most of the students (63.5%) felt stressed because of academic pressure. Education level of the father was significantly associated with academic pressure – participants whose fathers were non-graduates were found to be more likely to report academic pressure. Patel V and Kleinman A⁹ also found in their study that, parents with low level of education i.e., nongraduates, pressure their children more than the parents with graduation and post-graduation background.

In the present study, it is found that the perceived parental expectations are higher among the adolescents whose monthly family income are more and among the adolescents whose academic performance are better than others. These findings correspond to the study findings by Patel V and Kleinman A⁹ and they found that the child's mother's occupation, number of private tutors and the academic performance of the students were some of the other factors associated with academic stress. People from lower and middle class social strata wanted their children to do well in studies since that was often the only means to an honourable vocation for them. In a review of studies from low and middle-income countries, Patel and Kleinman⁹ confirmed the association between indicators of poverty and the risk of common mental disorders.

Deb S et al⁸ found in their study that examination-related anxiety has been reported by 81.6% of the students, especially the female students who were coming from Bengali medium schools and were not proficient in English. The students from the lower socio-economic group got admitted in government-sponsored schools and study primarily in the local language since in government schools in West Bengal. Compelled to learn a foreign language at a late age and then to study all other participants in that ill-mastered language, the students in these schools' faced communication and comprehension problems, which affected their academic performance as well as their self-confidence. This leads to

anxiety causing school avoidance, decreased problem-solving abilities, and lower academic achievement.

The present study results also revealed that there is a significant association between perceived stress levels of adolescents with their academic performance. These findings are consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Bhasin S. K. et al¹⁰ on depression, anxiety and stress among Indian adolescent students studying 9th – 12th class. The result revealed that the scores in the three domains were found to be remarkably correlated. It was seen that stress was significantly higher among the ‘board classes’ i.e., 10th and 12th as compared to the classes 9th and 11th. There was inverse relationship between stress and the academic performance of the students.

On the other hand, the result of the present study found that there is no significant association between perceived stress level of adolescents with family type, number of family member, number of sibling and parents’ occupation. The study was consistent with the study by Taragar Shilpa¹¹ on stressors among the students of High School. The results revealed that there was no significant relationship between selected demographic variables i.e., age, number of siblings, family size, occupation of father, qualification of father, occupation of mother and qualification of mother and stress. The adolescents with lower socio-economic status experienced more stress as compared to the adolescents with higher socio-economic status.

The findings of the present study are consistent with the study conducted by Saurabh Kumar et al¹², where they found significant relationship between perceived parental expectations and academic stress but not in case of academic achievements. The results showed that a positive correlation existed between perceived parental expectations and levels of stress.

In the present study, it is found that majority of the adolescents (63.89%) had perceived moderate parental expectations. The study was almost consistent with the study conducted by ShriharshaC¹³ on Parental expectations and stress of adolescents among 100 adolescents in Basaveshwar High School, Bagalkot. The results revealed that 41% adolescents had perceived moderately high parental expectations and 24% had perceived moderate parental expectations.

In our study, it is found that majority of the adolescents (69.44%) had perceived moderate stress, no one perceived severe stress. Whereas the study conducted by ShriharshaC¹³ showed that 48% adolescents had perceived moderate stress and 31% had perceived severe stress, which is little different finding than our study. In our study we didn’t get anyone with severe stress because in this study XI-XII students’ data were not included because they were absent in school because of their upcoming

examination and we know class XI-XII students' stress levels are apparently high. Besides these, in the present study, there is a strongly positive correlation ($r = 0.662$) between perceived parental expectations and perceived stress among total 180 adolescents. This finding corroborate with the study findings of Shriharsha, C¹³ which revealed that there was also a positive correlation between perceived parental expectations and stress of adolescents ($r = 0.4$).

So, on the basis of above discussion it can be said that there is a positive correlation between perceived parental expectations and perceived stress among adolescents.

The findings of this study have several implications for nursing practice, nursing education, nursing administration and nursing research. Counselling centre may be organized by nurses working in the community or in school set up to provide guidance and counselling to the students, teachers and parents and also educate the students, teachers and parents to assess the level of stress among adolescents to prevent the intensity of stress or a stage of crisis and to improve their mental health status. Community health nurses have also to encourage people's participation to organize mental health programme for the student and thus lessen stress among them. School teachers also need to be taught and encouraged to take care of their students by adopting coping strategies in stressful life situations. The research studies related to underlying factors and causes associated with stress must be conducted to prevent or minimize the perceived stress among adolescent boys and girls.

The study covered an important area which remains uncovered so far and it included homogenous sample in the study, so findings are generalizable. This study has limitations too. First sample size was small. More importantly we could not include students from class XI-XII therefore we important data related to stress & PPE.

On the basis of findings, the following recommendations are offered for future research:

- The subsequent study can be done on the adolescents studying in class XI and XII.
- A subsequent study may be attempted where teachers' report and parents' report should also be considered along with students' self-report to assess the level of stress. .
- Longitudinal studies may be conducted on perceived stress and success in life.
- Co relational studies may be conducted on perceived stress and adjustment problem of the adolescents.

CONCLUSION

The present study result revealed that majority of the adolescents have perceived moderate parental expectations and majority have perceived moderate stress. Positive correlation found between perceived parental expectations and perceived stress among adolescents so the counselling of the adolescents and their parents is very much essential to relieve the stress among adolescents.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: The investigators express cordial thanks to Head Masters of the selected schools for their permission and support. The investigators expressed their gratitude to study participants for extending their co-operation.

Source of funding: Self

Conflict of interest: None
