

# A Study to Assess the Level of Stress Among Adolescents in a Selected School at Puducherry

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Adolescence is a critical transitional phase characterized by significant physical, psychological, and social changes. Academic pressure and social expectations often contribute to stress during this period. **Objective:** The study aimed to assess the level of stress among adolescents in a selected school in Puducherry and to associate these levels with selected demographic variables. **Methods:** A non experimental descriptive research design was adopted. A sample of 200 adolescents (aged 13–19 years) was selected from Professor Annoussamy Higher Secondary School, Puducherry, using a non-probability convenience sampling technique. Data were collected using a socio-demographic questionnaire and the standardized Adolescents Stress Scale (ADOSS). **Results:** The findings revealed that 115 students (57.5%) had low levels of stress, 85 students (42.5%) had moderate levels of stress, and none reported high stress levels. Demographic variable such as age, class of study, number of siblings and use of social media was significantly associated with stress level p value ( $p < 0.05$ ). Other demographic variable such as gender, religion, place of residence, type of family, parental education, parental occupation, family monthly income and sleep duration were not significantly associated with stress level. **Conclusion:** While the majority of adolescents in the study area experience low to moderate stress, ongoing monitoring and mental health support within the school environment are recommended to prevent escalation.

**Keywords:** Adolescents, Stress level, Academic stress, Mental health, School students, ADOSS.

## 1. Introduction

Adolescents period begin between ages 13 and 19 years and it is the transitional face from childhood to adulthood. Stress has become predictable word in the fast turning technical world. Stress has been experienced by almost everyone in all segment of life. The stress was ominous in earlier period now it becomes a normal part of life.

The objectives of study were to assess the level of stress among the adolescents, to delineate the factors causing stress among the adolescents. 200 adolescents in the age group of 14 to 16 years were selected randomly from school.

Although there are varying definitions of adolescence, adolescence is generally viewed as a stage where young people experience rapid growth of their body and mentality to full maturity during 12-25 years of age. In education system, adolescents are those receiving education in junior high school, senior high school, vocational high school. Due to physical changes and mental development at this stage, students may sometimes experience incompatibility of their mental development with their physical changes and with the social environment, thus problems arising from inadequate adaptation. These problems may further cause psychological troubles and even induce deviant behaviours

Adolescence is a dangerous period of time where young people experience self organization and role confusion. For them, stress mainly comes from academic tests, interpersonal relations, relationship problems, life changes and career exploration. Such stress may usual cause psychological, physical and behavioral problems.

Students are experiencing increase in the amount of stress they are experiencing, due to the fact that they are required to fulfill every stage of their lives this fast – passed society. The education system in India has become more achievement oriented with more focus on marks and grades, making children work for longer hours in schools and homes. Majority of the parents support this system and pressurize their children to perform better and achieve best or better marks or grades.

People started living with maximum facilities, with maximum strain. So life is too mechanical and people are subjected to a high degree of stress that predisposes them to many problems.

Adolescents are generally perceived as a homogeneous group, yet they can be stratified on the basis of gender, caste, class, geographical location and religion. They also include a whole gamut of categories school and non school going, drop- outs, sexually- exploited children, working adolescent, both paid and unpaid, unmarried adolescents.

One of the main developmental tasks of adolescence is the formation of identity. The identity encompasses physical appearance, feelings about self and sexuality, cognition and the ability to communicate efficiently, social status, value system, relationship with others and independence.

This study was conducted to evaluate the current stress landscape among school-going adolescents in Puducherry to provide baseline data for targeted mental health interventions.

## 2. Need for the study

Adolescents is a vulnerable stage of life characterized by physical and psychological changes. Academic stress, peer pressure, emotional conflicts contribute to increased family problems and stress among adolescents.

A study published in PubMed Central (2025) reported that, 74% have high level of academic stress, 17% have medium level of stress. Male students experienced significantly higher stress level in study pressure, grade- related anxiety, self-expectation and self-dependency ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The study published in BMC Psychology (2024) reported that, boys had experienced considerable stress in their lives despite their limited understanding of the concepts and their coping skills focused on engaging in sports or distraction themselves from stressors while relying less on social support from peers, school staff or family.

A study published in BMC Psychiatry (2022) reported that, approximately 65% of adolescents experienced moderate stress and 9% adolescents experienced high stress associate with the stress included physical inactivity, poor sleep quality and self- perception of being overweight.

An empirical study published in The International Journal of Indian Psychology (2022) reported that, boys had (99%) extreme stress and girls had (95%) stress. The boys scored significantly higher average stress score as compared to girls ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The study published in Research Gate (2015) reported that, stress was observed in 139 (89.7%) female students and 209 (86.4%) male students and academics, parents, teachers and friends were major stressors.

The study published in PubMed Central (2015) reported that, adolescents who had academic stress were at 2.4 times (95% CI= 0.9- 2.4) ( $p < 0.001$ ) higher risk of depression than adolescents without academic stress.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research design

A quantitative research approach with non-experimental descriptive research design was used.

#### 3.2 Setting and population

The study was conducted in Professor Annoussamy Higher Secondary School, Bahour, Puducherry. The target population consisted of adolescent school students in grades of IX, X, XI.

#### 3.3 Sampling

A convenience sampling technique was used to select 200 participants. Inclusion criteria included students aged about 14-16 years, studying in Professor Annoussamy Higher Secondary school, willing to participate, available during data collection.

#### 3.4 Research tool

Two tools were used for data collection:

1. Socio-demographic Questionnaire: Covering age, gender, religion, family type, parental education/occupation, income, and social media usage.

2. Adolescents Stress Scale (ADOSS): A standardized 20-item Likert scale (Never, Sometimes, Often, Nearly everyday) designed to assess stress across various domains including academic and social factors.

### 4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Chi-square test) to determine the association between stress levels and demographic variables.

### 5. Results

#### 5.1 Demographic Profile

The majority of the participants were aged 13–15 years (83%), male (63.5%), and from rural areas (87%). Most belonged to nuclear families (60.5%) and reported a family monthly income below Rs. 10,000 (50.5%). Regarding social media use, 52.5% used it for less than one hour per day.

#### 5.2 Level of Stress

The assessment of stress levels among the 200 participants is summarized in the table below:

| Stress level | Frequency(f) | Percentage(%) |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Low          | 115          | 57.5%         |
| Moderate     | 85           | 42.5%         |
| High         | 0            | 0%            |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>200</b>   | <b>100%</b>   |

### 5.3 Association with Demographic Variables

Demographic variable such as age, class of study, number of siblings and use of social media was significantly associated with stress level p value ( $p < 0.05$ ). Other demographic variable such as gender, religion, place of residence, type of family, parental education, parental occupation, family monthly income and sleep duration were not significantly associated with stress level.

## 6. Discussion

The present study states that there is an association between level of stress with selected demographic variables such as age, class of study, number of siblings and use of social media with significant p value ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The study findings were similar to **Renu. S et. al, (2025)** conducted a descriptive survey on academic stress among adolescents in selected higher secondary school, Thiruvananthapuram. The research study revealed that a substantial correlation between academic stress and factors such as age, physical activity, study habits, sleeping duration, peer relationship, using social media, managing one's time effectively.

## 7. Conclusion

The present study conducted among 200 samples of schools students in Annousamy Higher Secondary School, Bahour, Puducherry to assess the level of stress among Adolescents in selected school, Puducherry. This study revealed, 115 (57.5%) of students had low stress, whereas 85 (42.5%) of the students had moderate stress and None of the students 0 (0%) reported high stress.

## 8. Acknowledgements

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