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## Research Article

### STRESS INDEX AMONG PARENTS OF ADOLESCENTS OF JAMMU DISTRICT

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#### ABSTRACT

Stress is a physical, mental, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. Stress is the psychological and physiological reaction which occurs when people perceive an imbalance between the level of demand placed upon them, and their capability to meet those demand. The present research was conducted to study the stress index among Parents of Adolescent under the various Domains and to compare the Stress Index of Parents of adolescent girls and boys and also of fathers and mothers. The sample consisted of 120 parents (60 of adolescent boys and 60 of adolescent girls) from urban areas of Jammu district. Random sampling techniques were used to select the areas for the study and purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. The information was collected by interview schedule and Stress Index for Parents of Adolescent Scale. Data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively by using statistical techniques. The results of the study showed that majority of parents of adolescent boys and girls were in the age group of 30-40 years and were graduates. Almost all the fathers of adolescent boys and girls were in government job. Most of the adolescent boys and girls were in the age group of 11-13 years. The results further revealed that majority of the respondents both parents of adolescent boys and girls had obtained within normal limit scores on all domains of Stress Index i.e. Adolescent Domain, Parent Domain, Adolescent-Parent Relationship Domain, Life Stress and Total Stress. The results of the study also revealed that the parents of adolescent girls having higher mean score on all domains than parents of adolescent boys. The mean scores and t-scores of parents of adolescent boys and girls shows highly significant difference on Life Stress and significant difference on Total Stress between Parents of adolescent boys and girls. Over all, the results indicated that both the Parents of adolescent boys and girls have low level of Stress.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Parenting stress is defined as set of process that lead to psychological and physiological reactions arising from attempts to adapt to the demands of parenthood and provides insight as the source of individual difference in parenting stress and how it influences, as well as is influenced by, parental and child adjustment. The sources of parenting stress include major life events such as child illness, marital decomposition and parental unemployment as well as the cumulative daily hassles of child rearing. Parenting stress is viewed parent's judgement of a situation and the resources they have to deal with it (Abidin, 1992; Cooper *et al.* 2009). Parenting stress has been linked to negative parenting and, as a consequence, more problem behaviours in children (Deater- Deckard and Scarr, 1996). Whilst parenting in all families may be considered stressful, the stresses and strains associated with parenting adolescents may be particularly difficult (Coleman, 1997). The key challenge, according to Joshi and Gutierrez (2006), is

maintain a close relationship whilst respecting the adolescents' desire for greater autonomy and privacy. However, coupled with adolescents' increasing socio-cognitive skills and increased tendency to assert their opinions, this may result in more conflict and arguments with in home. Difficulties surrounding interactions with teenagers include the adolescent's increased power, the broader group of significant individuals in the adolescent's interpersonal life, the financial drain associated with the adolescent's needs, and the potential for serious social incompetence or misbehaviour. Studies have shown that an adolescent's deviant behaviour defiance' and loss of attachment to the parent increase stress among mothers and father (Henggele, Edwards and Borduin, 1987).

##### Objectives of the Study

To study the stress index among parents of adolescents under the following domains:

1. Adolescent Domain

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2. Parent Domain
3. Adolescent-parent relationship domain
4. Life stress events
5. Index of total parenting stress

To compare the stress index of parents of adolescent girls and adolescent boys

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The sample of the study comprised of 120 parents drawn from urban areas of Jammu district. The sample was further divided on the basis of gender i.e., 60 parents of adolescent girls and 60 parents of adolescent boys and out of these 120; 60 fathers working and 60 mothers housewives were selected from nuclear families. Random sampling technique was used to select different areas of Jammu. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample i.e. parents, keeping in mind the criteria for sample selection. Interview schedule was used to collect the background information. Stress Index for Parents of Adolescents scale devised by [Sheras, P.L., Abidin, R.R. and Konold, T.R. in 1998](#). SIPA is a screening and diagnostic instrument that identifies areas of stress in parents of adolescent interactions and is appropriate for parents of adolescent ages 11-19 years. The SIPA yields scores on three domains, namely the Adolescent Domain (AD), Parent Domain (PD), and Adolescent- Parent Relationship Domain (APRD), a Life Stressor (LS) scale, and an Index of Total Parenting Stress (TS). Data was analyzed by using various statistical tools.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Background Information of Respondents

All the mothers of the adolescent boys and 53% fathers fall in the age group of 30-40 years. Whereas majority of mothers of adolescent girls (93%) and fathers (80%) in the age group of 30-40 years. Majority of the mothers of adolescent boys (47%) were graduates, and fathers (40%) were higher secondary. Whereas, majority of the mothers of adolescent girls (43%) were higher secondary and fathers (43%) were graduates. Most of the fathers of adolescent boys (57%) and girls (53%) were in government job. All the mothers of the adolescent boys and girls were housewives.

#### Analysis of level of Stress Index among Parent of Adolescents

**Table 1** Showing the level of Adolescent Domain among Parents of Adolescents

Level and %ile score range	Parents of Adolescent Boys (N=60)			Parents of Adolescent Girls (N=60)		
	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)
Clinically Severe (95-100)	-	-	-	-	2 (7)	2 (3)
Clinically Significant (90-94)	1 (3)	-	1 (2)	1 (3)	1 (3)	2 (3)
Borderline (85-89)	4 (13)	-	4 (7)	2 (7)	2 (7)	4 (7)
Within normal limits (<85)	25 (83)	30 (100)	55 (92)	27 (90)	25 (83)	52 (87)

Chi-square= 5.235, df=9, p-value= 9, insignificant

Table 1 depicts the level of Adolescent domain among Parents of Adolescents. Results indicate that majority of parents of adolescent boys (83% mothers and all the fathers) and adolescent girls (93% mothers and 83%fathers) had scored

within normal limits. This indicates that parents of adolescent boys and girls were having low level of parenting stress. Moreover, chi-square shows that there is insignificant association between level of adolescent domain among parents of adolescent boys and girls.

**Table 2** Showing the level of Parent Domain among Parents of Adolescents

Level and %ile score range	Parents of Adolescent Boys (N=60)			Parents of Adolescent Girls (N=60)		
	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)
Clinically Severe (95-100)	2 (7)	3 (10)	5 (8)	3 (10)	4 (13)	7 (12)
Clinically Significant (90-94)	4 (13)	4 (13)	8 (13)	5 (17)	7 (23)	12 (20)
Borderline (85-89)	10 (33)	5 (17)	15 (25)	8 (27)	9 (30)	17 (28)
Within normal limits (<85)	14 (47)	18 (60)	32 (53)	14 (47)	10 (33)	24 (40)

Chi-square=3.844, df= 9, p-value = 0.921, insignificant

Table 2 indicates that majority of parents of adolescent boys (47% mothers and 60% fathers) and adolescent girls (47% mothers and 33% fathers) have obtained scores within normal limits. This indicates that parents of adolescent boys and girls were having low level of parenting stress on Parent Domain. Moreover, chi-square reveals that there is insignificant association between levels of Parent domain among Parents of adolescent boys and girls. [Nancy \(2004\)](#) assessed that majority of mothers did not report elevated level of stress at any one of the six measurement point. Criticism- from a parent regarding their child rearing and intimate partner violence were both found to be related to perceptions of parenting stress.

**Table 3** Showing the level of Adolescent- Parent Relationship Domain among Parents of Adolescent

Level and %ile score range	Parents of Adolescent Boys (N=60)			Parents of Adolescent Girls (N=60)		
	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)
Clinically Severe (95-100)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clinically Significant (90-94)	-	-	-	-	1 (3)	1(2)
Borderline (85-89)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Within normal limits (<85)	30 (100)	30 (100)	60 (100)	30 (100)	29 (97)	59 (98)

Chi-square =1.008, df= 3, p-value = 0.799, insignificant

Table 3 reflects that all the parents of adolescent boys and girls have obtained scores within normal limits.

**Table 4** Showing the level of Total Parenting Stress among Parents of Adolescent

Level and %ile score range	Parents of Adolescent Boys (N=60)			Parents of Adolescent Girls (N=60)		
	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)
Clinically Severe (95-100)	-	-	-	1 (3)	2 (7)	3 (5)
Clinically Significant (90-94)	1 (3)	-	1 (2)	-	1 (3)	1 (2)
Borderline (85-90)	5 (17)	4 (13)	9 (15)	4 (13)	9 (30)	13 (21)
Within normal limits (<85)	24 (80)	26 (87)	50 (83)	25 (83)	18 (60)	43 (72)

Chi-square= 4.258, df= 9, p-value= 0.893, insignificant

This indicates that on Adolescent -Parent Relationship Domain, parents have a quality relationship with their adolescent girls

and boys. This indicates a good communication and also affection between them. Moreover, chi-square reveals that there is insignificant association between level of Adolescent-Parent Relationship Domain and parents of adolescent girls and boys.

Table 4 shows that majority of parents of adolescent boys (80% mothers and 87% fathers) and adolescent girls (83% mothers and 60% fathers) have obtained scores within normal limits. This indicates that parents of adolescent boys and girls were having low level of parenting stress. Rest of the parents of adolescent boys (17% mothers and 13% fathers) and girls (13% mothers and 21% fathers) were having borderline score. There was insignificant association between level of total parenting stress and parents of adolescents both boys and girls. However, present findings are not consistent with the findings of Dellve et al (2006) that shows high parental stress, physical and emotional strain among single mothers. Fathers showed high stress related to competence, which decreased after the intervention. Decreased strain was found among full time working mothers and fathers after the intervention.

**Table 5** Showing the level of Life Stress events among Parents of Adolescent

Level and %ile score range	Parents of Adolescent Boys (N=60)			Parents of Adolescent Girls (N=60)		
	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)	Mothers N (%)	Fathers N (%)	Total N (%)
Clinically Severe (95-100)	9 (30)	11 (37)	20 (33)	3 (10)	6 (20)	9 (15)
Clinically Significant (90-94)	7 (23)	8 (27)	15 (25)	2 (7)	1 (3)	3 (5)
Borderline (85-90)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Within normal limits (<85)	14 (47)	11 (37)	25 (42)	25 (83)	23 (77)	48 (80)

Chi-square= 15.86\*, df= 6, p-value= 0.014, \*significant at 0.05 level

Table 5 reveals that majority of parents of adolescent boys (47% mothers and 37%fathers) and adolescent girls (83% mothers and 77%fathers) have obtained scores within normal limits. Rest of the mothers of adolescent boys and girls were having clinically severe range indicating a need for immediate intervention or support as well as interpretation to parents of the possible reasons for such an elevation. Moreover, chi-square reveals that there was a significant association between level of life stress events and parents of adolescent both boys and girls. Similar results were observed by Brent and Sarah (2002) that revealed a significant, yet some -what different, associations between child temperament and parental stress for mothers and fathers. More significant association was found between perceptions of child temperament and parental stress and involvement differed on the basis of child and parent gender.

**Mean and t-scores of Stress Index among Parent of Adolescents**

Table 6 depicts mean and t-scores on various subscales of Adolescent Domains of parents of adolescent boys and girls. Results reveal that mean score of mothers were higher (28.23±5.06) than fathers (27.90±4.07) of adolescent boys and parents of adolescent girls, mean score of fathers were higher (28.66± 5.10) than mothers (27.93±4.11) of adolescent girls on Moodiness /Emotional Labilty (MEL) dimensions. It indicates that parents had high levels of conflict with adolescents and

adolescents irritability is extreme and parents become wary and avoidant, reducing / her efforts to influence the adolescents.

**Table 6** Mean and t-scores on various subscales of Adolescent Domain of Stress Index among Parents of Adolescent Boys and Girls

Level and %ile score range	Parents of Adolescent Boys			Parents of Adolescent Girls		
	Mothers Mean ± S.D.	Fathers Mean ± S.D.	t-scores	Mothers Mean ± S.D.	Fathers Mean ± S.D.	t-scores
Moodiness/Emotional Labilty (MEL)	28.23±5.06	27.90±4.07	0.28	27.93±4.11	28.66±5.10	0.61
Social Isolation/Withdrawal (ISO)	24.63±4.99	24.10±4.35	0.44	23.80±4.45	25.96±5.30	1.71
Delinquency/Antisocial (DEL)	18.4±3.36	17.56±3.42	0.95	18.03±4.25	18.53±4.47	0.44
Failure to Achieve or Persevere (ACH)	26.9±3.47	26.00±2.79	1.14	26.96±2.95	27.20±3.02	0.30

Insignificant at 0.05 level

On Social Isolation/Withdrawal (ISO) dimension mean score of mothers (24.63±4.99) slightly higher than fathers (24.10±4.35) of adolescent boys and mean score of fathers (25.96±5.30) was higher than mothers (23.80±4.45) of adolescent girls. This indicates that parents show over protection towards their adolescents and they misperceive the parental concern as rejection or devaluation. On Delinquency/Antisocial (DEL) dimension, mean scores of mothers were higher (18.4±3.36) than fathers (17.56±3.42) of adolescent boys and mean scores of fathers were higher (18.53±4.47) than mothers (18.03±4.25) of adolescent girls. This implies that parents are more concerned about issues of control and limits. Mean scores of mothers (26.9±3.47) were higher than fathers (26.00±2.79) of adolescent boys and mean scores of fathers (27.20±3.02) were higher than mothers (26.96 ± 2.95) of adolescent girls on Failure to Achieve or Persevere (ACH) dimension. This shows that parents expression of disappointment and frustration are commonly observed when discussing the adolescent's worn habits at school and at home. An insignificant difference was found on all the subscales of Adolescent Domain between mothers and fathers of adolescent boys and girls.

**Table 7** Mean and t-scores on various subscales of Parent Domain of Stress Index among Parents of Adolescent Boys and Girls

Level and %ile score range	Parents of Adolescent Boys			Parents of Adolescent Girls		
	Mothers Mean ± S.D.	Fathers Mean ± S.D.	t-scores	Mothers Mean ± S.D.	Fathers Mean ± S.D.	t-scores
Life Restrictions (LFR)	30.7±4.84	31.06±5.00	0.29	31.33±4.72	32.93±4.11	1.30
Relationship with spouse/Partner (REL)	20.70±3.77	20.96±4.48	0.25	21.20±3.45	21.30±3.07	0.12
Social Alienation (SOC)	17.83±2.66	17.33±2.96	0.69	18.50±3.12	18.33±3.32	0.20
Incompetence/ Guilt (INC)	24.63±3.39	23.03±4.41	1.57	22.83±3.56	23.20±3.80	0.37

Insignificant at 0.05 level

Table 7 depicts that mean score of fathers were higher than mothers of adolescent boys and girls on Life Restrictions (LFR) dimensions. It indicates that fathers had poor coping with the adolescent boys physical needs or problem behaviours or a reflection of the inability of fathers and adolescent boys to negotiate the developmental task of autonomy. On the other hand, parents of adolescent boys and girls on Relationship with Spouse/Partner (REL) dimension, fathers were having higher mean score than mothers. This shows that fathers inability to develop a relationship based on mutual respect, trust and



cooperation. With regard to Social Alienation (SOC) dimension mean scores of mothers were higher than fathers of adolescent boys and girls. This implies that mothers frequently feels socially isolated and lack of social support and assistance in the parenting role. With respect to Incompetence/Guilt (INC) dimension, mean score of mothers were having higher scores (24.63±3.39) than fathers (23.03±4.41) of adolescent boys. On the other hand, mean score of fathers were having higher (23.20±3.80) than mothers (22.83±3.56) of adolescent girls. This means that parents have anxiety, self-doubt problems obtaining the adolescents compliance to relatively routine requests and parents have difficulty enforcing normal limits for their children than parents. An insignificant difference was found on all the subscales of Parent Domain between mothers and fathers of adolescent boys and girls.

**Table 8** Mean and t-scores on various domains of Stress Index among Parents of Adolescent Boys and Girls

	Parents of Adolescent Boys			Parents of Adolescent Girls		
	Mothers Mean + S.D.	Fathers Mean + S.D.	t- scores	Mothers Mean + S.D.	Fathers Mean + S.D.	t- scores
Adolescent Domain(AD)	97.53±12.60	95.50±9.29	0.71	97.06±11.09	100.06±13.41	0.94
Parent Domain(PD)	93.80±10.60	92.36±12.47	0.48	93.53±11.13	96.51±10.163	1.09
Adolescent- Parent Relationship domain(APRD)	31.36±3.41	31.56±4.49	0.19	32.83±4.29	33.60±5.01	0.63
Life Stressors(LS)	4.63±1.65	4.80±1.62	0.39	3.43±1.52	3.70±1.76	0.62
Index of Total Parenting Stress(TS)	222.70±21.94	219.43±19.15	0.61	223.10±21.48	230.23±23.57	1.22

Insignificant at 0.05 level

Table 8 depicts the Domains of Stress Index among Parents of Adolescents boys and girls. Results reveal that parent of adolescent boys on Adolescent Domain (AD) mean scores of mothers (97.53±12.60) were higher than fathers (95.50±9.29). Whereas in parents of adolescent girls, mean scores of fathers (100.06±13.41) were higher than mothers (97.06 ±11.09). It indicates that parents perceive the adolescent boys characteristics rather than her own characteristics or the relationship with the adolescent to be the primary source of stress. With regard to Parent Domain (PD) mean scores of mothers (93.80± 10.60) were higher than fathers (92.36±12.47). On the other hand parents of adolescent girls, mean scores of fathers (96.53±10.16) were higher than mothers (93.53±11.13). This indicates that parents is overwhelmed by her responsibilities as a parent of adolescents and often has difficulty coping. On Adolescent Parent Relationship Domain (APRD) parents of adolescent boys and girls, mean scores of fathers were higher than mothers. It indicates that father’s does not have a close and mutually supportive relationship with his adolescent boys, which is a major risk factor for dysfunctional parenting and a major source of stress. Findings reveal that parents of adolescent boys and girls on Life stressor (LS) mean scores of fathers were higher than mothers. It indicates that the father experience the number of stressful life events in the past year than mothers. Further results revealed that parents of adolescent boys on Index of Total Parenting Stress (TS), mean score of mothers (222.70±21.94) were higher than fathers (219.43±19.15). Parents of adolescent girls, mean scores of fathers (230.23±23.57) were higher than mothers (223.10±21.48). It means that adolescent girls misbehave and have conflict with their parents. Table shows that on comparing the values of the adolescent boys and girls parents t-scores found insignificant difference between mothers and fathers

stress. These results are also supported by Vig and Jaswal (2008) results showed that mothers were significantly more stressed than fathers. There were no significant differences in the parenting pattern of low stressed mothers were found more accepting and realistic in their expectations by their sons and daughters. Sons perceived their moderately stressed fathers as significantly more careless rejecting and physically punishing while moderately stressed mothers as indifferent. However, daughter did not differentiate between the parenting of low stresses.

**Table 9** Mean and t-scores of stress index of parents of adolescent boys and girls

Domains of Stress Index	Parents of Adolescent Boys		Parents of Adolescent Girls		t-scores
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Adolescent Domain(AD)	96.51	11.02	98.56	12.29	.961
Parent Domain(PD)	93.08	11.36	95.03	10.67	.969
Adolescent –Parent Relationship Domain(APRD)	31.46	3.95	33.21	4.64	-2.220*
Life Stressors(LS)	4.71	1.62	3.56	1.64	3.856**
Index of Total Parenting Stress(TS)	221.06	20.48	226.66	22.64	1.420

\*\* Highly Significant at 0.01 level, \* Significant at 0.05 level

Table 9 show mean and t-score of Stress Index of Parents of both adolescent girls and boys. Results reveal that mean score on Adolescent Domain (AD) dimension of Parents of adolescent girls were higher (98.56±12.29) than Parents of adolescent boys. It implies that Parents of adolescent girls possibly shows overreaction to the adolescent girls behaviour due to the unrealistic standards and expectations that they has for the adolescent girl. On Parent Domain (PD) dimension mean scores of adolescent girls were (95.03±10.67) than the Parents of adolescent boys. It indicates that Parents of adolescent girls lack sustained energy to consistently follow up with and monitor their adolescent girls. With respect to Adolescent –Parent Relationship Domain (APRD) dimension mean scores of Parents of adolescent girls were higher (33.21±4.64) than Parents of adolescent fathers (31.46±3.95). It means that Parents does not have a close and mutually supportive relationship with their adolescent girls which are a major source of Stress among Parents. T-scores indicates negative significant difference at 0.05 level (-2.220\*) on this domain. Findings reveals that Parents of adolescent boys have higher mean score (4.71±1.62) on Life Stressor (LS) dimension than Parents of adolescent girls (3.56±1.64). It means that adolescent boys misbehave and have conflict with their parents than girls. In Life Stressor scale t-scores shows highly significant difference between parents of adolescent boys and girls parents at 0.01 level (3.856\*\*).

**CONCLUSION**

Stress is a physical, mental, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. Stress is the psychological and physiological reaction which occurs when people perceive an imbalance between the level of demand placed upon them, and their capability to meet those demand. The sources of parenting stress include major life events. Such as child illness, marital decomposition and parental unemployment as well as the cumulative daily hassles of child rearing.

- Analysis of the levels of Stress Index among Parents of Adolescent indicate majority of mothers and fathers of adolescent boys and girls had obtained scores within normal limits score on Adolescent domain, Parent Domain, Adolescent-parent relation and Index of total parenting stress level.
- Results found that on Adolescent domain of Stress Index among Parents of adolescent, mothers of adolescent boys have higher mean scores than fathers, and on the other side on the same domain fathers of adolescent girls have higher mean scores than mothers. An insignificant difference was found on all the subscales of Adolescent domain between mothers and fathers of adolescent girls.
- Result reveals that on domains of Stress Index of Parents of Adolescent boys, mothers have higher mean score on Adolescent domain, Parent domain and fathers have higher mean score on Adolescent-Parent Relationship domain and Life Stress. On the other side fathers of adolescent girls have higher mean score on all domains than mothers. This shows on insignificant difference between mothers and fathers Stress.
- The mean and t-scores of Parents of adolescent boys and girls shows highly significant difference on Life stress and significant difference on Index of Total Parenting Stress between parents of adolescent boys and girls. Overall, results of Stress Index among Parents of adolescent concluded that both the Parents of adolescent boys and girls have low level of stress.

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