Research Paper

Study of Emotional Intelligence (Eq) And Life –Stress in Adolescent Students from Joint & Nuclear Families of Navi-Mumbai

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ABSTRACT

In this digital age, with increase in stress factors for adolescents from various quarters including lifestyle, society, peers, parents, and academics, there has been constant discussion and research on the interplay of emotional intelligence & life-stress among adolescents. This is one such comparative study between these variables for adolescent students in Navi Mumbai area, using standardized questionnaires on EQ and life -stress to collect the primary data. This study also explores the impact of family status- Nuclear or joint, as well as gender of the students on these factors. The study population is from Navi-Mumbai urban school students only. Correlation and regression analysis through SPSS/Excel were conducted to analyze and interpret the result. One-way ANOVA revealed female adolescent students having significantly higher emotional intelligence and significantly higher life-stress. However, no significant relation was found between Emotional intelligence & life Stress ($p = .49$).

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence, EQ, Adolescence, Life-stress, Nuclear-Family, Joint-Family*

One in five persons of India today is an adolescent. Adolescent population in India is 243 million. According to 2011 population census, the population of India was 1207 Million and about 19.05% is adolescent population. It is of extreme importance that their physical and emotional well-being is taken care of.

Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and mental human development. Adolescence is characterized by several cognitive, emotional, physical, and attitudinal changes, which can be a cause of conflict on one hand and positive personality development on the other. Adolescence is also a time of rapid cognitive development. Piaget described adolescence as the stage of life in which the individual's thoughts start taking more of an abstract form and the egocentric thoughts decrease. In addition to abstract thinking, several other interlocking capacities contribute to formal operations. This allows the individual to think and reason in a wider perspective. Their changing mind, body, and relationships often present themselves as

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stressful and that change, they assume, is something to be feared. Adolescents have long been regarded as a group of people who are searching for themselves to find some form of identity and meaning in their lives (Erickson, 1968).

The concept emotional intelligence was first proposed by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990 in the 'Journal of Imagination and Personality' and later Goleman popularized it in his book Emotional Intelligence. There are five domains of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and handling relationship. According to Bar-on (1997) emotional intelligence is an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.
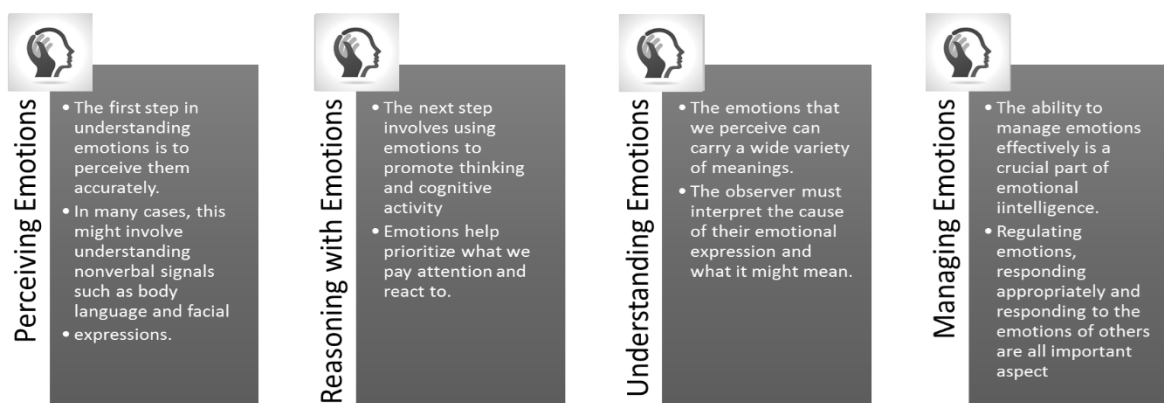
Emotional Quotient

Emotional quotient (EQ) is a measure of one's emotional intelligence, as defined by the ability to use both emotional and cognitive thought. Emotional intelligence skills include but are not limited to empathy, intuition, creativity, flexibility, resilience, stress management, leadership, integrity, authenticity, intrapersonal skills, and interpersonal skills. It involves the lower and central sections of the brain, called the limbic system. It also primarily involves the amygdala, which can scan everything that's happening to us moment to moment to see if it is a threat. As defined by Dr. Daniel Goleman, the components of emotional intelligence are "simple, yet powerful enough to effect change." Hence, if Goleman and Darwin are to be believed, it is emotionally intelligent individuals who are most able to adapt to dynamic environments and therefore most likely to survive.

Salovey and Mayer (1997) suggested four major factors of EI shown below pictorially:

Four Factors of Emotional Intelligence
Salovey & Mayer

Perceiving Emotions
- The first step in understanding emotions is to perceive them accurately.
- In many cases, this might involve understanding nonverbal signals such as body language and facial
- expressions.

Reasoning with Emotions
- The next step involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity
- Emotions help prioritize what we pay attention and react to.

Understanding Emotions
- The emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings.
- The observer must interpret the cause of their emotional expression and what it might mean.

Managing Emotions
- The ability to manage emotions effectively is a crucial part of emotional iintelligence.
- Regulating emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspect

Life-Stress

The word 'Stress' is derived from a Latin word 'Stringi', which means "to be drawn tight". Stress, which is the mental and physical pressure one experiences from circumstances felt to be threatening, seems to be everywhere one turns. Although stress begins with a perception of outside events, it affects far more than the mind. Stress may be felt throughout the entire body. Teens face an assortment of stresses. The release of all these hormones will cause their muscles to be tense. A teen may feel unsettled and have head, neck, and shoulder pain. If

stress continues over a longer period, it may impact an adolescents' ability to compete his or her schoolwork, and the grades may fall. Some teens eat too little or too much and may neglect their appearance. Others may have trouble concentrating and relating to other people. In addition, some teen may become irritable and have emotional outbursts. Severe stress may lead to a depression. Some teens attempt to feel better by using tobacco, drugs, or alcohol. In addition to failing to solve their problems, these actions may result in the development of a substance abuse disorder. Not all stress is bad. A life without any stress would be boring. But no one wishes to feel overwhelmed every day. As in the case of most teens, much of the stress comes from school. Between classes, after school activities, homework, sports, and friends, the days are full. Stress is a fact and part of everyday life. It is all around us-at work, in our environment and in our personal lives. Its management and coping have become a great concern for physiologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, or clinicians.

METHODOLOGY

Statement of Purpose

This Study aims to understand how the ability to handle emotional changes in adolescence helps student to better handle their life stress and cope up in their life and vice versa. It also intends to study the possible impact of demographic variables like gender and family status (Nuclear or Joint) on these two variables.

Objectives

The study will be conducted with the following objectives:
1. To study the relationship between emotional intelligence (EQ) & life-stress of adolescent students studying in Navi-Mumbai schools.
2. To study the impact of gender and family dynamics (Nuclear or Joint) on emotional intelligence (EQ) & life-stress of adolescent students studying in Navi-Mumbai schools.

Significance of the Study

This research intends to help parents, teachers, and guardians of adolescent children of Navi Mumbai schools in identifying the specific areas of strength in their respective ward/children and provide them with necessary guidance and support in the areas where they need improvement. The findings of this research can validate some previous studies done in the similar field, with a specific context to settings in the Navi Mumbai adolescents, majority of whom are migrant residents who have moved in from various parts of the country over last two decades, especially because Navi Mumbai is a newly developed city.

Hypothesis

The following 3 Null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H_1: There is no significant difference between the emotional intelligence of male & female adolescent students of selected Navi-Mumbai schools.

H_2: There is no significant difference between the life Stress levels of male & female adolescent students of selected Navi-Mumbai schools.

H_3: There is no significant relation between the emotional intelligence (EQ) and their life-stress levels of adolescent students of selected Navi-Mumbai schools.

Research Design

In this study, the detailed methodology of the research has been described based on research design, sampling design, data collection method and analysis. With reference to the nature of

data, it is both qualitative and quantitative research. A survey design was used to obtain the required information. The population we chose for this research comprised of adolescent students studying in various schools in Navi Mumbai from Std.9th to Std.12th. We used Questionnaire, Personal Interview and Observation techniques to collect the Primary data relating to the various aspects of emotional intelligence, life-stress, and intelligence. We also collected Secondary data relating to theoretical concepts and allied research from different Journals, Reports, Books, Research Articles, Internet websites, etc. This data collection was done during the month of March and April 2019. Various statistical tools like Percentage Analysis, Mean Analysis, Correlation, multiple Regression analysis & ANOVA (single factor) were used to analyze the data. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Excel Data Analysis pack was used for the statistical analysis

Operational Definitions
1. **Emotional intelligence**: In this study, emotional intelligence is defined as appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion and utilization of emotion in solving problems. The Operational definition of Emotional intelligence will be the score obtained by the adolescent students on administering the Assessing Emotions Scale (AES).
2. **Life stress**: In this study life-stress is measured by Student-life Stress Inventory (SLSI) and the score obtained by the respondent will be the measure of the extent of life stress.
3. **Adolescents:** In this study, adolescent refers to male students and female students studying in 9th -12th standard in the selected schools in the age group of 14-18 years.
4. **Urban School**: An urban school refers to a co-education school within the city municipal limits of Navi Mumbai.

Inclusion criteria for sampling
• Adolescents who are studying in 9th to 12th standard in the selected urban school.
• Adolescents who are willing to participate and were permitted by the school authorities.
• Adolescents who are available during the time of data collection.

Exclusion criteria for samplings
Adolescents who had recently suffered any chronic illness or had lost some dear one.

Research Instruments & Tools
1. Demographic variables were collected using demographic proforma which was manually filled by students.
2. To assess the emotional intelligence of the participants, a self-report measures of emotional intelligence, **Assessing Emotional Scale (AES)** by Nicola Schutte, John, Maioof and Bhullar, (2007) was used. This scale has been termed as Emotional Intelligence Scale Test or The Schutte emotional Intelligence in earlier literature. This scale is based upon the Salovey and 82 Mayer's (1990) model of emotional intelligence, which consist of four components, i) appraisal of emotion of self and others, ii), expression of emotions, iii) regulation of emotions in self and others being third and vi) utilization of emotions in solving problems. The assessing Emotions Scale emphasizes to measure the trait emotional intelligence. It is a trait approach of assessing emotional intelligence. This Scale consist of 33 items on five-point scale (*1, strongly disagree; 2, Somewhat Disagree; 3, Neither agree nor disagree; 4, Somewhat agree; 5, Strongly*

Agree) The factor analytic studies suggested a four-factor solution of 33 items. The four factors of the scales are represented by the following items (**Ciarrochi et al., 2001**) a:

- Perception of Emotion: Items No. 5,9,18,19,22,25,29,32,33
- Managing own Emotions: Item No. 2,3,10,12,14,15,21,23,28,31
- Managing Others Emotion: Item No. 1, 4, 11, 13, 16, 24, 26, 30
- Utilization of Emotions: Item No. 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 27

the internal consistency of Assessing Emotion Scale (AES) as measured by Cronback's Alpha, is .90 as reported by Schutte et al. (1998) in the developmental sample of 346 participants. Several other studies have also reported the internal consistency measured through Cronbach's Alpha for diverse sample. The mean alpha across sample was .87. Schutte et al (1998) reported a two-week test Retest reliability of .78 for final scale score. Validity of the scale has been tested by Schutte et al. (1998) who found that score on assessing the emotions scale were substantially related to greater attention to emotions, greater clarity of emotions and less alexithymia. On being compared with other measures of emotional intelligence EQ-I relationship was substantial r = .43.

3. **Student-Life Stress Inventory (SLSI):** The SLSI is a 51-item questionnaire with a Likert type response (1 to 5) format and consisted of two sections: Types of stressors and Reactions to stressors. The types of stressors section comprised five categories which include frustrations, conflicts, pressures, changes, and self-imposed with a reported internal consistency of 0.69, 0.75, 0.68, 0.71, and 0.73, respectively. The reactions to stressors section comprised four categories including physiological, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive with a reported internal consistency of 0.79, 0.85, 0.88, and 0.71, respectively. To determine the reliability of the items in the SSI categories, internal consistencies (alphas) were computed for each of the nine categories and for the whole group. The lowest alpha (.61) was for the Self-imposed and the highest (.86) was for the Changes category. The internal consistency for the whole inventory was 0.92.

ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and demographical analysis of the data obtained through survey revealed the following results which are presented below.

Table 01 Demographics of the study

Demographics	Dimensions	Count	Percent
Age	13 -14 Years	25	**25.5%**
	15-16 Years	34	**34.7%**
	17-18 Years	41	**39.8%**
Gender	Male	43	**43%**
	Female	57	**57%**
Family Status	Nuclear	62	**62%**
	Joint	38	**38%**
Parent earning status	Single Parent	36	**36%**
	Both Parent	64	**64%**

Inferential Statistics

I. Hypothesis 1 (H$_1$): There is no significant difference between the emotional intelligence of male & female adolescent students of school.

Table 02 *One-way ANOVA table for differences in EQ across Gender*

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Emotional Quotient (EQ) Females	43	5351	124.442	77.0144
Emotional Quotient (EQ) Males	55	6488	117.964	324.776

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1012.78	1	1012.78	4.68057	0.03299*	3.94016
Within Groups	20772.5	96	216.381			
Total	21785.3	97				

*Variation is significant at the 0.05 level

Interpretation: One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare EQ scores across Gender. The values of Table 02 confirm the fact that there is significant difference in the EQ of Males and Females [F = 4.680> F Crit = 3.940 and p = .0329 < .05].

Conclusion: The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. It states that there is a significant difference in the EQ of Males and Females adolescent students with Female adolescent students showing higher emotional intelligence than their male counterparts.

Review of past studies reveal that similar results were obtained in a study done by **Mathivanan D & Clement Chileshe (2013)** in which the female athletes in the Lusaka province universities evinced higher emotional competency (with the mean score, 112.47) compared to the males (with the mean score 90.69), when faced with emotionally challenging situations. The difference of 9.43 in the mean score between males and females is found to be statistically significant.

II. Hypothesis 2 H$_2$: There is no significant difference between the life-stress levels of male & female adolescent students of school.

Table 03 ANOVA analysis of the life stress levels across gender.

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
Life Stress Females	43	6669	155.093	867.705		
Life Stress Males	55	7795	141.727	939.239		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	**SS**	**df**	**MS**	**F**	**P-value**	**F crit**
Between Groups	4311.14	1	4311.14	4.74825	0.03178*	3.94016
Within Groups	87162.5	96	907.943			
Total	91473.7	97				

*Variation is significant at the 0.05 level

Interpretation: One-way ANOVA was conducted to compare life Stress scores across Gender. The values of Table 03 confirm the fact that at 95% confidence level there is significant difference in the life Stress scores of Males and Females [F = 4.748 > F Crit = 3.940, p = .0317 < .05].

Conclusion: The null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. It states that there is a significant difference in the life-stress levels of Female and Male gender. The average value of life Stress scores being higher for Females (Mean 155.09 > 141.72) students.

The results of this study proved that indeed there was strong evidence that the perception of stress between males and females was very different. The difference in the perception of stress between males and females complements the earlier studies conducted. For example, in the study conducted by Gentley et al. (2007), results suggest that significant gender differences exist in the experience of stress. These differences according to the researchers can be attributed to differences in perception although the study was conducted among adults living in Hawaii. Misra and Castillo (2004) found that perception of males and females regarding stress differed and the study was conducted among American and international students.

Hypothesis 3 H₃: There is no significant relation between the emotional intelligence (EQ) of adolescents and their life-stress levels.

Table 04 Regression 1: Predicting Correlation between Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Life-Stress levels.

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.050217857
R Square	0.002521833
Adjusted R Square	-0.007868564
Standard Error	30.829334
Observations	98
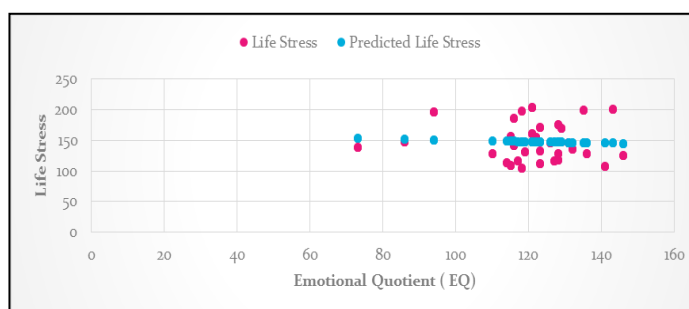
ANOVA

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	230.6813389	230.6813	0.242708	0.623381928
Residual	96	91242.99213	950.4478		
Total	97	91473.67347			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	160.0230421	25.42458214	6.294028	9.23E-09
Emotional Quotient (EQ)	-0.102902114	0.208872953	-0.49265	0.623382

Interpretation: The values of Table 04 confirms that there is a no significant relationship between life Stress and Emotional Quotient of adolescent students, with Pearson's r (d.f = 96) is 0.050, with p = .623 (which is greater than Alpha p = .05)

Conclusion: Since p value is greater than alpha 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted which means that there is no significant correlation between the emotional intelligence levels and

the life-stress levels of adolescent students. Which means the EQ of the adolescent students has very little effect on their life stress levels. These finding matches with that of Jessica Elizabeth Largen (2004) of Western Kentucky University who did a study titled "The Relationship Between Stress, Satisfaction, and Emotional Intelligence in College Students". The results of this study indicated that stress and emotional intelligence were not related; however, when the effects of stress were factored out, a relationship was found between emotional intelligence and satisfaction. Miri, Kermani, Khosbakht, and Moodi (2014) also found that in their study of emotional intelligence and life stress, out of 260 students, 65.8% of which were females and 33.1% were males, the score of EI was 130.31 ± 26.42 (from the total score of 165). There was no correlation between mean of EQ and life stress. The findings indicated that the students of the school had a moderate to high level of EQ and that the total score of EQ was not correlated with life stress.

Dimension-wise analysis of Emotional Intelligence Scale
When examining the psychometric properties of the Assessing Emotions Scale (AES), the four-factor structure of the AES was assessed by examining item-scale correlations. The four AES factor scores were computed by summing the responses to the relevant items and expressed on a 1-5 scale. Scores were also computed by gender as female students consistently show higher trait EQ scores.
   1) As seen in Table 05 below, female students scored higher on all four EQ factors, however a significant difference between gender scores was observed only for *managing other's emotions* ($p<0.01$). This may be attributed to the typical social structure & dynamics of Indian families, where female gender is more encouraged to understand others, right from childhood and hence develop empathy and concern as a natural course.

Table 05 Gender-wise EQ Factor analysis

Factors of AES	Mean (S.D.) Male (N=55)	Mean (S.D.) Female (N= 43)	P-Value
Perception of Emotion	30.58 (4.9)	32 (3.13)	0.106
Managing Own Emotions	32.1 (7.1)	33.5 (5.1)	0.299
Managing Other's Emotions	29.2 (4.8)	32 (3.1)	0.0011*
Utilization of Emotions	25.9 (4.9)	26.8 (3.1)	0.324

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

   2) Similarly, the analysis of impact of family status (Joint; Nuclear) on the four factors of emotional traits reveal (Table 06) that the adolescents from Nuclear family show consistently high on all four factors, with significant difference shown in perception of emotions ($p < 0.01$) and Managing other's emotions ($p < 0.01$). This shows that adolescents in nuclear family can perceive their emotions better than their joint family counterparts and that they are able to manage the emotions of others much better. Despite the p value for other two factors (Managing Own Emotions; Utilization of Emotions) being slightly higher than $p=0.05$, the means are higher for Nuclear family raised adolescents.

Table 06 Family Status-wise EQ Factor analysis

Factors of AES	Mean (S.D.) Joint Family (N=55)	Mean (S.D.) Nuclear Family (N= 43)	P-Value
Perception of Emotion	29.8 (5.2)	32.1 (3.2)	0.0067*
Managing Own Emotions	31.4 (7.1)	33.6 (5.6)	0.094
Managing Other's Emotions	29 (4.9)	31.5 (3.6)	0.0038*
Utilization of Emotions	25 (4.0)	27 (4.2)	0.076

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

3) Dimension-wise analysis of EQ with life-Stress revealed (Table 07) that Stress is weakly correlated with the factors of EQ, with only one of the four factors (*Perception of Emotion*) showing significant p value ($< .05$) and that too with a negative coefficient, meaning inverse relationship between stress and perception of emotions.

Table 07 Regression: Life-Stress correlation with EQ factors

Regression Statistics

Multiple R	0.28826012
R Square	0.083093897

ANOVA

	F	Significance F
Regression	2.107013	0.086116779

	Coefficients	P-value
Intercept	152.738596	4.29E-08
Perception of Emotion	-1.845032595	0.042139*
Managing Own Emotions	-0.509457165	0.396947
Managing Other's Emotions	1.272000969	0.160603
Utilization of Emotions	1.150733979	0.192571

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

CONCLUSION

This study examined the two significant concepts of adolescent student: life stress and emotional intelligence. It sought to discover the relationships that exist between these two variables and see the impact of demographic variables like gender and family status on the relationships of these variables. This study used descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses to identify relationships and interpret & determine their practical and statistical significance in respect to answering the research questions proposed in the three hypotheses. The data was gathered from a total of 100 participants from randomly selected schools in Navi Mumbai for filling survey design questionnaires with a response rate of 98%. The respondents comprised of 55 Male and 43 Female students. Correlation and regression analysis through SPSS/Excel Data analysis tool pack were conducted to analyze and interpret the result. Gender-wise analysis using one-way ANOVA revealed Female adolescent students having significantly higher emotional intelligence (p = .03, F = 4.68) and significantly higher

life-stress (p = .031, F = 4.74). Hypothesis testing was done for finding any significant relation between these two variables. However, there was no significant relation found between Emotional intelligence & life Stress (p = .49). Dimension-wise analysis of the emotional intelligence inventory showed females again displaying higher scores across all four factors (*perception of emotion, managing own emotions, managing other's emotions, and utilization of emotions*). Adolescents from nuclear family had an edge over those from joint family in all these four dimensions of EQ, with stronger correlation with factors of perceiving *of emotions and managing other's emotions*. This ability to regulate other's emotion can help them maintain their mood and emotions as students, motivate others towards a constructive behavior, avoid unnecessary conflict that can put strain on interpersonal relations which eventually can lead to generation of stress. On the other hand, life-stress was weakly correlated with these EQ sub-factors with only *perception of emotions* showing significant negative correlation with life stress. These results are consistent with other similar research works based on adolescent samples in India & abroad.

Limitations of the present study

While interpreting the results of this study, it must be noted that most of the students who participated in the study were from urban middle and upper middle-class families. The limited demographics represented in this study restricts its generalizability to a broader context. The diversity among adolescent school students that exists within the general population was not accurately represented in this sample of 98 students and a replication of this study with a different sample may not reproduce the findings of this study. It is hence recommended that this study be replicated with a larger, more diverse sample to examine the validity of these findings. However, the findings of this study are consistent with other studies that have investigated stress in school going students.

The broad range of students' age group taken in this study also can be delimiting in this study because the stress experienced by the senior students studying in 11th and 12th standard may be higher compared to those in 9th and 10th standard as the former are seeking college admissions in near future. In another observation, it was seen that participants in this study identified their reactions to stressors as being low level. It is possible that the participants may have associated physical reactions questions in the survey with medical conditions rather than symptoms of stress. This misunderstanding related to the relationship between stress and involuntary physical reactions may serve as a starting point for discussing issues of stress with the adolescents in their academic setups so that they are better prepared and aware.

Suggestions for further work

This study had several limitations. It is a cross-sectional study, which has been conducted with students from one local municipal area. Therefore, the findings do not represent the whole adolescent students in Maharashtra, or even India. It is suggested that longitudinal study to be conducted for better understanding on this comparative study. The inference is that the ability to perceive, utilizing and managing (own and others) emotions are found to be influential in reducing stress.

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