



A Correlational Study On Parental Stress And Parental Attitude Towards Seeking Counselling Support Among Parents Of Adolescents.

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Abstract

This study examined parental stress and attitudes toward seeking counselling support among parents of adolescents in Mangalore. A descriptive correlational design was used with a sample of 100 parents of adolescents aged 12 to 19 years, selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using the Parental Stress Scale (PSS) and the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Short Form (ATSPPH-SF), along with a socio-demographic profile sheet. The findings revealed that most participants, both male and female, reported moderate levels of parental stress and moderate attitudes toward seeking counselling support. The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated that parental attitude was not normally distributed, so non-parametric tests were used for analysis. Spearman's rho showed no significant relationship between parental stress and attitude toward seeking counselling ($r = -.002$, $p = .986$), leading to acceptance of the null hypothesis. The Mann–Whitney U test further showed no significant gender differences in either parental stress ($p = .540$) or parental attitude ($p = .757$). These findings suggest that parental stress alone does not determine whether parents are willing to seek professional counselling support, and that other personal and social factors may play a more important role.

Keywords: Parental Stress, Parental Attitude, Counselling Support, Adolescents, Gender of participants

1. Introduction

Everyone experiences stress, especially during tough times or changes. Some stress can motivate us to face problems, but too much for too long can cause anxiety, irritability, or exhaustion. Parenting is rewarding yet stressful, as parents juggle guiding children, daily tasks, setting rules, and ensuring their kids feel emotionally and financially supported. Raising teenagers can be challenging. Teens experience many changes, often leading to more arguments and misunderstandings. Parents may feel overwhelmed by their duties, and this stress can affect their interactions, the parent-child relationship, and children's development. Research shows that excessive parental stress can lead to more negative reactions and behaviour problems in teenagers. Parental attitudes toward seeking counselling play a crucial role in determining whether families access

support during times of stress. Despite its importance, the influence of parental stress on willingness to seek help remains understudied, particularly in settings like Mangalore, where social stigma may deter parents from pursuing counselling. Most previous studies have examined stress or attitudes in isolation or within specific parental populations, highlighting a gap in knowledge regarding general parental stress and help-seeking attitudes within close-knit communities. This study aims to learn more about how stress affects parents' views on seeking counselling in Mangalore, Dakshina Kannada[1]. The results should help create programs that raise awareness of counselling and work to reduce stigma around seeking help in the community Table 1.

1.1.Review Of Literature

A literature review is a thorough summary and



evaluation of existing publications connected to a specific research topic or question. This includes examining sources like journal articles, books, abstracts, conference papers, and dissertations. Ebrahimi et al. (2019) conducted a cross-sectional study at a pediatric psychiatric clinic in Tehran, assessing parents' attitudes toward childhood mental illness and its relationship with help-seeking behaviours[2]. Using convenience sampling, 400 parents or guardians participated. Findings revealed that 93.7% of parents held positive attitudes, yet only 56.25% sought help from official sources. Significant differences in attitude scores were associated with the child's gender, parents' marital status, and both parents' educational and occupational backgrounds. The study highlights the need for improved awareness and access to formal mental health services[3]. Kim et al. (2019) examined how different adult attachment styles affect parenting stress, attitudes, and mental health among 44 parents. Parents with avoidant attachment tended to feel more stressed about parenting, while those with anxious attachment reported more stress, negative parenting feelings, and mental health difficulties. Parents with a secure attachment style were more loving, less hostile, and less stressed. Morawska and Sultan (2016) investigated parents' attitudes toward childhood emotional and behavioural issues in a community sample of 204 parents in Muscat, Oman. Findings indicated that parental education level did not affect beliefs about the causes of child behavior problems; however, parents with higher education and income levels demonstrated more positive attitudes toward utilizing available services. Kochanova (2018) surveyed 333 biological mothers of teens aged 12–17 and found that higher parenting stress was linked to more externalising problems in teens. Stressful parents were more likely to use negative parenting styles such as psychological control, lax discipline, or low acceptance. These parenting behaviours partly explained how stress led to teen behaviour problems[4].

1.2. Significance Of The Study

This study is important because it helps us see how stress affects parents of teenagers and whether they feel comfortable getting help from a counsellor Table

4. Parenting teenagers can be stressful, and stress may stop some parents from asking for help when they need it. By studying this relationship, findings can help parents, counsellors, psychologists, teachers, school counsellors, and policymakers to create programs and support systems that reduce stress and encourage parents to get professional help. Overall, this study can improve the well-being of parents and adolescents and help families have better relationships Table 2.

2. Method

2.1. Objectives

- To assess the level of parental stress among parents of adolescents.
- To assess parents' attitudes towards seeking counselling support.
- To find the relationship between parental stress and their attitude towards seeking counselling support.

2.2. Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between parental stress and attitude towards seeking counselling support among parents of adolescents.

2.3. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to examine the relationship between two variables without trying to change or control them[5].

2.4. Population And Sample

The population consisted of parents of adolescents residing in Mangalore, whose children were aged 12 to 19. A total of 100 participants were selected as the sample Table 3.

2.5. Tools

A socio-demographic profile sheet was used to collect details such as name, age, gender, marital status, family details, number of children, age of the adolescent child, type of family, educational qualifications, religion, languages known, and previous experience with counselling. The Parental Stress Scale (PSS) is an 18-item self-report questionnaire measuring parenting stress on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Attitude toward seeking professional psychological help questionnaire: The Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help-Short Form (ATSPPH-SF) is a valid and reliable 10-

item questionnaire[6].

Table 1 Norms for the Parental Stress Scale

Stress Level	Score Range
Low	18-30
Moderate	31-60
High	61-90

Table 2 Norms for the Parental Attitude Scale (ATSPPH-SF).

Attidue level	score range
Low	1-10
Moderate	11-20
High	21-30

2.6.Procedure

Phase I: Participants were selected based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Eligible participants were informed about the study purpose, procedures, and ethical considerations before providing informed consent[8].

Phase II: Data collection was conducted using the socio-demographic profile sheet, the Parental Stress Scale, and the Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help-Short Form (ATSPPH-SF). Questionnaires were administered in person with clear instructions provided.

Phase III: Collected responses were organised and subjected to statistical analysis. Results were interpreted and compiled into a comprehensive research report Figure 1.

2.7.Ethical Considerations

Participants joined the study voluntarily and were clearly informed of what the study involved before

agreeing. Questionnaires were designed to avoid inappropriate language, and all responses remained anonymous and confidential. The research was conducted with objectivity and integrity, and all sources were cited in APA format. Participants' autonomy, privacy, and comfort were respected throughout the study[7].

3. Result And Discussion

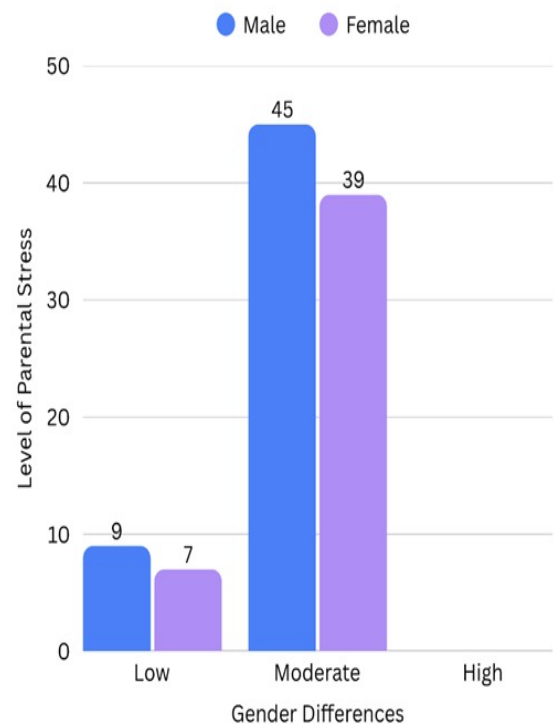


Figure 1 level of parental stress among both male and female participants

This graph illustrates gender differences in levels of parental stress categorised as low, moderate, and high, showing that both males and females predominantly fall into the moderate category. Among males, 9 participants reported low stress and 45 reported moderate stress, while among females, 7 reported low stress and 39 reported moderate stress. There are no participants in the high stress category for either gender. Overall, moderate parental stress is the most common level for both groups, with males showing slightly higher frequencies than females, and the absence of high stress indicates that extreme parental stress is not prevalent in the sample.

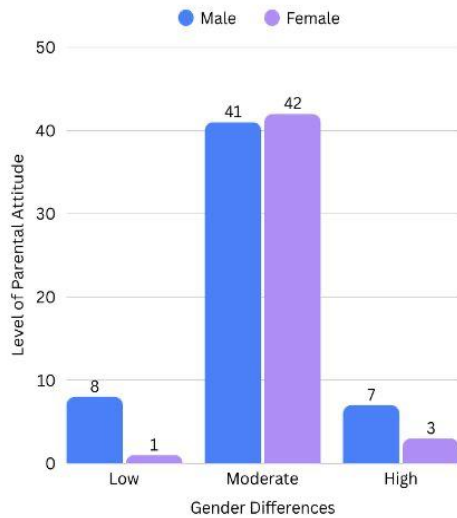


Figure 2 level of parental attitude among both male and female participants

The bar graph shows the levels of parental attitude (low, moderate, and high) among males and females. Most participants fall into the moderate category, with 41 males and 42 females, indicating that both genders primarily have a moderate level of parental attitude. In the low category, there are 8 males and only 1 female, suggesting that fewer females than males have a low parental attitude. In the high category, there are 7 males and 3 females, indicating slightly more males than females at this level. Overall, the graph suggests that there is not a big difference between males and females, as both mostly show a moderate level of parental attitude.

Table 3 Test of normality

Variables	Statistic	df	Sig.
Parental stress	.989	100	.561
Parental attitude	.969	100	.018

This is the lower bound of the true significance

The test of normality was conducted using the Shapiro–Wilk test to determine whether the data is normally distributed. The results show that parental stress has a significance value of 0.561, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that it follows a normal distribution. In contrast, the parental attitude p-value is 0.018, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the distribution is not normal. Therefore, it can be concluded that parental stress is normally distributed, while parental attitude is not. Hence, the data will be analysed using a non-parametric statistical method Figure 2.

Table 4 Correlation between parental stress and parental attitude

			Parental Stress	Parental Attitude
Spearman's rho	Parental Stress	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.002
		Sig.(2tailed)	.	.986
		N	100	100

The correlation between parental stress and parental attitude toward seeking counselling support was analysed using Spearman's rho. The significance value obtained was $p = .986$, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the result is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, which states that there is no significant relationship between parental stress and parental attitude. The correlation coefficient ($r = -0.002$) is very close to zero, further confirming that there is no relationship between the two variables. This implies that parental stress does not influence parents' attitudes toward seeking counselling support.

Table 5 Maan-Whitney test parental stress

	Gender	N	Means Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Sum Of Rank	P Value
Parental Stress	Male	46	52.42	-.613	2411.50	.540
	Female	54	48.86		2638.50	
	Total	100				

The table shows that the Mann–Whitney test was used to compare parental stress levels between male and female participants. The mean rank for males was 52.42 and for females was 48.86, indicating that males have slightly higher levels of parental stress than females. However, the U value was 0.613, and the p value was 0.540, which is

greater than 0.05, indicating that the result is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, this suggests that there is no significant difference in the level of parental stress seeking counselling support Table 5.

Table 6 Maan-Whitney test parental attitude

	Gender	N	Means Rank	Mann-Whitney U	Sum Of Rank	P Value
Parental Stress	Male	46	49.53	-.309	2278.50	.757
	Female	54	51.32		2771.50	
	Total	100				

The table shows that the Mann–Whitney test was used to compare differences in parental attitudes towards seeking counselling support between male and female participants. The mean rank for females was 51.32, and for males, 49.53, indicating that females have a slightly higher parental attitude than males. However, the p-value obtained was 0.757, which is greater than 0.05, indicating that the result is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, this suggests that there is no significant difference in the level of parental attitude seeking counselling support Table 6.

The present study examined parental stress and attitude toward seeking counselling support among 100 parents of adolescents in Mangalore. The findings showed that most male and female participants had moderate levels of parental stress, and none fell into the high-stress category. Most participants also showed a moderate attitude toward seeking counselling support. The normality test showed that parental stress was normally distributed ($p = .561$), but parental attitude was not ($p = .018$), so non-parametric tests were used. Spearman's rho showed no significant relationship between parental stress and parental attitude ($r = -0.002$, $p = .986$), and the null hypothesis was accepted. The Mann–Whitney U test also showed

4. Discussion



no significant gender difference in parental stress ($p = .540$) or parental attitude ($p = .757$). These findings are supported by previous studies. Ebrahimi et al. (2019) found that parents can have positive attitudes yet still not seek professional help, suggesting that attitudes depend on factors beyond stress alone. Ma et al. (2023) also showed that stigma and personal beliefs matter more than stress in help-seeking. Cavagnaro (2023) noted that stress affects participation in counselling but not attitude directly. Reardon et al. (2017) and Tapp et al. (2018) found that barriers like stigma, lack of time, and limited awareness are the main reasons parents avoid seeking help. Regarding gender, Kim et al. (2019) and Kochanova (2018) found that parenting style and personal situations affect stress more than gender does. Morawska and Sultan (2016) and Tang and Zakaria (2022) found that education, income, and personal factors, such as assertiveness, influence attitudes more than gender. Overall, cultural norms, stigma, and personal factors seem to shape parents' attitudes toward counselling more than stress or gender alone.

Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between parental stress and attitudes toward seeking counselling support among 100 parents of adolescents in Mangalore, Dakshina Kannada. The majority of participants reported moderate levels of both parental stress and attitude toward counselling. Statistical analysis using Spearman's rho revealed no significant relationship between parental stress and parental attitude ($r = -0.002$, $p = .986$), leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis. Mann–Whitney U tests further confirmed that there were no significant gender differences in parental stress ($p = .540$) or parental attitude ($p = .757$). These findings suggest that parents' attitudes toward seeking professional counselling are shaped more by cultural norms, social stigma, personal beliefs, and environmental factors than by stress levels alone—particularly in a close-knit community like Mangalore. The results underscore the importance of community-based mental health awareness programs, destigmatization initiatives, and accessible

counselling services. Future research should explore additional variables such as cultural values, stigma, social support, and socioeconomic status to gain a more comprehensive understanding of parents' help-seeking behaviour in the Indian context.

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