

# Descending Academic Performance in Adolescent Female Students: Role of Personality and Perceived Social Support

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**Background:** Increased concern regarding academic achievement in school and college students is prevailing among the urban families. Parents' desire their offspring to do well academically notwithstanding the youngsters' altered mindset. Teenage girls with recent problems with academics warrant for psychological investigations once the related physical issues are ruled out. National institute of Behavioural Sciences (NIBS) has been running a fully equipped psychiatric outdoor facility at the Salt Lake Government Hospital, Kolkata, which was the site for present investigation.

**Methods:** The study included total of fifty (N=50) teenage girls who came to the Psychiatry outdoor of the Salt Lake Government Hospital for their recent academic problems. The average age was 14 and they came from middle to high income group. They were seen first by psychiatrist and then by psychologist for at least three times for investigation, diagnosis and follow-up. Subjects with apparent organicity or with psychotic components were excluded from the study. A control group without any psychopathology and having no academic holdings was used to compare. The subjects with same socio-economic and other backgrounds are chosen for the study. ICD personality assessment (IPD), State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI), Scale for Perceived Social Support (MPSS) had been used for the study.

**Results:** Majority (30%) of the subjects were assessed to have emotionally unstable personality disorder (impulsive type). Most of them reflected significantly higher ( $p=0.01$ ) expressed anger and significantly lower ( $p=0.01$ ) perceived social support compared to the control group. The study group indicated lesser control on expressed anger. Table I shows the various diagnostic status of the study group.

Unstable Personality Disorder	Dependent Personality	Other Personality Disorder	Anxiety	Depression	Other psychological problem
15	3	3	4	7	4

**Discussion:** In urban areas the school-going teenage girls are faced with multiple stress factors. The high expectation from the parents, and may also be from the society, make them decidedly career concern notwithstanding their own interest or choice. The more stringent rules are laid for their academic activities, the more intensive desire to do opposite has been watched. Impulsivity has been reported and results indicate a good number of unstable personalities in this group. Expressed anger was higher significantly than the control group which supports the impulsive personality pattern. When the area of perceived social support was looked at, these students indicate that they perceive receiving lesser support and thus remain discontented with their environment.

**Conclusion:** The study results indicate that adolescent female students having academic recede may be assessed for personality disorder and those with personality disorder can benefit from intervention toward lowering the impulsivity and changing the way to look at the social support they receive from their environment.

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