



## **RELATIONSHIP OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT WITH ADOLESCENT DEPRESSION**

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### **Abstract:**

*The image of adolescence as a time of storm and stress, intense moodiness, and preoccupation with the self has permeated both professional and lay perspectives on this developmental period. It is an important developmental period for understanding the nature, course, and treatment of depression. Today's adolescents have multiple roles and obligations to fulfill. Having too many roles or obligations may result in severe depression. Recent research concerned with the relationship of perceived social support from different areas (i.e. family, friends and significant other) with depression in adolescents. The sample of 100 adolescents (50 boys and 50 girls) completed the Beck Depression Inventory II (Beck, 1996) and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988). The findings revealed high negative relationship of perceived friend's support and significant other support with adolescent depression. Moderate negative relationship has found between perceived family support and adolescent depression.*

**Key Words:** Perceived Social Support & Adolescent Depression

### **Introduction:**

Functional mutilation, future academic failure, unemployment, suicide, marital difficulties, substance abuse, and legal problems are coupled with depression in adolescents (Lewinsohn, Hops, Roberts, Seeley & Andrews, 1993). For the reason that depression is so insidious, research has focused on identifying risk factors for this commotion.

A leading viewpoint is that deficits in social support increase the risk for depression (Monroe, 1983; Windle, 1992). Theoretically, the perception that one is accepted and valued in one's interpersonal environment strengthens regard, self-confidence, and efficiency, which guard against depression. The stress-buffering model (Windle, 1992) states that social support mitigates the relationship between stressful life events and depression. Deficits in perceived support have predicted future increases in depressive symptoms during adolescence (Sheeber, Hops, Alpert, Davis, & Andrews, 1997; Slavin & Rainer, 1990; Stice & Bearman, 2001; Windle, 1992).

Social support can be depicted as long as of assistance or soothe to other people to assist them deal with a multiplicity of troubles. Support comes from interpersonal relationships, family members, neighbors, support groups, religious groups and friends. The mutual sharing of personal, social, or moral ideas by peers supports the individual and his/her social development (Turner, 1999). Regardless of the level of depression in the adolescent's life, social support sources positively affect the individual's adaptation in a positive way (Cohen & Wills 1985).

In many studies, low social support has shown to be linked with adolescent depression (Bettge et al., 2008; Lewinsohn, Gotlib, & Seeley, 1997; Newman, Newman, Griffen, O'Connor, & Spas, 2007) and high social support has been found to have a buffering effect against the emergence of adolescent depression (Denny, Clark, Fleming, & Wall, 2004; Piko, Kovacs, & Fitzpatrick, 2009). Adolescents turn to look for support

from peers instead of their family in their developmental period. In childhood, families are the strongest source of support followed by peers and teachers (Ezzell et al., 2000). Among children in prospective study from 1st grade to 10th grade, most common support provider was biological father followed by grandparents (Appleyard, England, & Sroufe, 2007). During adolescence, the perception of source of support has reported to turn from family to peers (Garnefski, 2000).

**Objectives:**

- To study the relationship of perceived family support with depression in adolescents.
- To study the relationship of perceived friend's support with depression in adolescents.
- To study the relationship of perceived significant other support with depression in adolescents.

**Hypotheses:**

- There will be significant relationship of perceived family support with depression in adolescents.
- There will be significant relationship of perceived friend's support with depression in adolescents.
- There will be significant relationship of perceived significant other support with depression in adolescents.

**Sample:**

A total of 100 adolescents with depression out of which, 50 were males and the other remaining 50 were females from Dayalbagh Educational Institute Agra and R.N.S World School Jhansi completed the Beck Depression Inventory II and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support. The age range of participants was 15-18 years. The data was collected through purposive sampling technique. The participants who assessed depressive at the baseline of BDI-II were included in the sample only.

**Tools:**

- **Beck Depression Inventory - II (Beck, 1996):** Its second edition (BDI-II) is a self report instrument for measuring the severity of depression in adults and adolescents aged 13 years and older. The coefficient alpha of the BDI-II for the out patients was .92 and for college students .93.
- **Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988).** This 12-item self-report scale measures a child or adolescent's perceived social support. Items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale, with higher scores corresponding to greater social support. Items were summed in each of these subscales to get a total score for perceived family, perceived peer and perceived significant other support. The range of coefficient alpha was .81-.93 for the family, .78 -.94 for friends and .79 -.98 for significant other.

**Results:**

To find out the relationship between variables Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the data. The results of the present study are as follows-

**Table No. 1** presents the correlation between perceived family support with depression in adolescents:

Group	N	Correlation
Adolescents	100	-.53

**P<.01**

It shows from table no. 1 that there is significant negative moderate correlation of perceived family support with depression in adolescents therefore the hypothesis no.1 is accepted that “there will be significant relationship of perceived family support with depression in adolescents.”

**Table No. 2** presents the correlation between perceived friend’s support with depression in adolescents:

Group	N	Correlation
Adolescents	100	-.78

**P<.01**

It shows from table no. 2 that there is significant negative high correlation of perceived friend’s support with depression in adolescents therefore the hypothesis no.2 is accepted that “there will be significant relationship of perceived friend’s support with depression in adolescents.”

**Table No. 3** presents the correlation between perceived significant other support with depression in adolescents:

Group	N	Correlation
Adolescents	100	-.75

**P<.01**

It shows from table no. 3 that there is significant negative high correlation of perceived significant other support with depression in adolescents therefore the hypothesis no.3 is accepted that “there will be significant relationship of perceived significant other support with depression in adolescents.”

**Discussion and Conclusion:**

The present study examined the relationship of perceived social support from family, friends and significant other with depression in adolescents. The first hypothesis was supported by the significant negative moderate correlation that was obtained between perceived family support and depression in adolescents. This indicates that if adolescents perceive family support, the symptoms of depression will minimize moderately. At the time of early adolescent developmental stage, family is the main supporting factor for personal, social and emotional development of an adolescent’s life.

The second hypothesis of the present research was accepted as the significant high negative correlation was found between perceived friend’s support and adolescent depression. Adolescents turn to look for support from peers instead of their family in their developmental period. During adolescence, the perception of source of support has reported to turn from family to peers (Garnefski, 2000). Low perceived support from friends has been associated with later depression in some studies on mid-adolescent samples (McDonald et al., 2010; Schraedley et al., 1999).

The significant high negative correlation between perceived significant other support and depression also proves the third hypothesis of the current study. As low perceived social support from significant other was predictive to later depression among both genders, it seems that in middle and late adolescence both boys and girls need a close person to support them apart from their family and friends. In conclusion, these results are consistent with the theory that social support deficits increase the risk for depression.

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