



## VALUE PATTERN OF DEPRIVED ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND MENTAL STRESS

**Dr. K. Laxmi Senapati**

*Assistant Professor in History, Teacher Education, DPLASE, Konisi, Berhampur, Odisha*

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### Abstract

*Adolescence is an important developmental period during which individuals experience substantial physical, psychological, social and cognitive changes. It is also a formative stage for the development of values, attitudes, aspirations and behavioural patterns. Adolescents growing up in disadvantaged socio-economic and educational circumstances may encounter additional challenges that influence their academic functioning, psychological well-being and development of value orientations. The present study examined the value patterns of deprived adolescents and explored their relationship with academic achievement and mental stress. A descriptive survey method was employed. The sample consisted of 120 Class VIII students selected from four CBSE schools in Khurda city, Odisha. The sample included 60 boys and 60 girls and was selected through a stratified random sampling procedure. Data were collected using a standardized Value Pattern Scale and a Mental Stress Scale, while academic achievement was assessed using students' previous annual examination marks. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, were used to summarize the data. Pearson's product-moment correlation and the t-test were proposed for examining relationships and gender differences. The distribution of value-pattern scores indicated that 31.67% of the respondents demonstrated a high level, 47.50% a moderate level, and 20.83% a low level of value pattern. The mean score for value pattern was 69.80 (SD = 8.45), while the mean academic achievement score was 74.20 (SD = 9.10). The mean mental stress score was 53.60 (SD = 7.80). The study highlights the importance of considering value development, educational achievement and psychological well-being together when addressing the educational needs of adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds.*

**Keywords:** *deprived adolescents, value pattern, academic achievement, mental stress, adolescence, secondary education, socio-economic disadvantage*

### 1. Introduction

Education plays a central role in the intellectual, social, emotional and moral development of individuals. In addition to providing knowledge and academic competencies, education contributes to the formation of attitudes, values, aspirations, social responsibility and personality. These functions become particularly important during adolescence, a

developmental period characterized by rapid changes in physical growth, cognition, emotional functioning, interpersonal relationships and social identity. Adolescence is also a period in which individuals increasingly develop independent opinions and begin to establish relatively stable systems of values. Values provide standards that influence how individuals interpret situations, make decisions, establish priorities, respond to challenges and interact with others. Family, school, peer groups, community, culture, media and socio-economic circumstances can all contribute to the development and expression of values. The developmental experiences of adolescents, however, are not uniform. Young people from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds may have fewer educational resources and opportunities than their more advantaged peers. Financial difficulties, inadequate learning facilities, unstable family circumstances, limited parental support, social exclusion and other environmental constraints may create barriers to educational and psychological development. Such circumstances may influence not only educational achievement but also the ways in which adolescents establish goals, respond to difficulties and develop personal and social values.

The term *deprived adolescents* in the present study refers to adolescents experiencing significant socio-economic, educational, family or environmental disadvantages. Deprivation is understood broadly rather than solely in terms of household income. Limited access to educational resources, inadequate support systems, difficult living conditions and reduced opportunities for personal development may collectively contribute to disadvantage.

Academic achievement is an important indicator of students' educational progress. It is influenced by numerous factors, including cognitive ability, motivation, study habits, emotional adjustment, family environment, school climate, socio-economic circumstances and attitudes towards education. For students experiencing deprivation, academic performance may be affected by circumstances beyond the classroom. Limited access to learning materials, family responsibilities, economic difficulties and psychological pressure can interfere with concentration, motivation and continuity of learning.

Mental stress is another important concern during adolescence. Academic expectations, examination pressure, interpersonal relationships, family difficulties, social comparison, uncertainty about the future and economic hardship can contribute to psychological strain. Persistent or excessive stress may interfere with concentration, emotional regulation, motivation and academic engagement.

Value orientation may be relevant to both academic and psychological adjustment. Values associated with responsibility, discipline, education, cooperation, social concern and personal development may influence how students approach academic tasks and cope with difficult circumstances. At the same time, the relationship between values, achievement and stress is complex and may be influenced by several contextual factors.

Against this background, the present study focuses on the value patterns of deprived adolescents and examines their relationship with academic achievement and mental stress. The study is intended to contribute to a better understanding of the educational and psychosocial circumstances of adolescents experiencing disadvantage.

## **2. Background of the Study**

Values constitute an important component of personality and social development. They represent principles or standards that individuals use to evaluate behaviour, make choices, establish priorities and formulate goals. During adolescence, young people are exposed to

increasingly diverse social experiences and begin to reconsider values acquired from parents and other significant adults.

The development of values is influenced by multiple socializing agencies. The family provides early experiences of moral behaviour and social responsibility, while schools provide opportunities for developing educational, social, civic and interpersonal values. Peer relationships, cultural practices, community environments and socio-economic conditions may further influence value priorities.

For adolescents living under conditions of deprivation, the development and expression of values may take place within a particularly challenging environment. Economic insecurity, inadequate educational facilities, limited parental availability and social disadvantage can affect opportunities for exploration and development. Nevertheless, deprivation should not be assumed to result automatically in negative values or poor academic outcomes. Adolescents may also develop resilience, responsibility, cooperation, perseverance and strong educational aspirations in response to challenging circumstances.

Understanding the value pattern of disadvantaged adolescents is therefore important from both educational and psychological perspectives. It may provide insight into their academic attitudes, interpersonal behaviour, aspirations and approaches to coping with difficulties.

**3. Concept of Value Pattern:** A value pattern refers to the organization, relative importance, and prioritization of values held by an individual. It reflects the principles that influence behaviour, attitudes, choices and life goals.

In the educational context, values may include moral, social, educational, economic, religious, aesthetic and personal dimensions. An adolescent may attach different levels of importance to these values depending on family background, school experiences, cultural environment, peer relationships and personal aspirations.

The present study considers value pattern as the overall orientation of adolescents toward different value dimensions assessed through the selected standardized instrument.

#### **4. Deprived Adolescents**

Deprivation may involve economic, educational, social, familial, or environmental disadvantage. In the present investigation, deprived adolescents are students approximately 13–18 years of age who experience disadvantaged socio-economic circumstances, limited educational support, inadequate resources, or unfavourable living conditions.

Deprivation is a multidimensional phenomenon. Economic disadvantage may restrict access to educational materials and opportunities, whereas social and familial difficulties may affect emotional security and academic support. These circumstances can interact with one another and may influence adolescents' educational and psychological experiences.

#### **5. Academic Achievement**

Academic achievement refers to the level of educational performance attained by a student. It is commonly reflected through examination marks, grades or other measures of scholastic performance.

Academic achievement is not determined by intellectual ability alone. Motivation, study habits, attendance, emotional adjustment, family support, school environment, teacher support, socio-economic conditions and psychological well-being can all influence students' academic performance.

In the present study, academic achievement was operationalized in terms of students' marks obtained in their previous annual examination.

## **6. Mental Stress**

Mental stress refers to psychological tension or emotional strain experienced when individuals perceive that environmental or personal demands exceed, or threaten to exceed, their available coping resources. Adolescents may experience stress arising from academic demands, family circumstances, peer relationships, social expectations, financial difficulties and personal concerns.

The effects of stress may differ among individuals depending on their coping resources and social support. In educational settings, elevated stress may be associated with difficulties in concentration, motivation, emotional regulation and academic engagement.

In this study, mental stress was assessed using a standardized scale designed to measure stress experienced by adolescents across relevant domains.

## **7. Need and Significance of the Study**

Adolescents from disadvantaged backgrounds represent an important population for educational research because their developmental experiences may be shaped by multiple interacting social and environmental factors. Examining their values alongside academic achievement and mental stress can provide a broader understanding of their educational adjustment.

The study is significant for several reasons. First, it draws attention to the role of value development during adolescence. Second, it considers academic achievement within the broader context of socio-economic disadvantage. Third, it recognizes mental stress as an important component of students' educational experiences. Finally, the findings may be useful to teachers, school counsellors, parents, educational administrators and researchers concerned with the holistic development of adolescents.

Schools may use such information to strengthen counselling and student-support programmes, develop value-oriented educational activities and identify students who may benefit from additional academic or psychosocial assistance.

## **8. Statement of the Problem**

The problem investigated in the present study is entitled:

**“Value Pattern of Deprived Adolescents in Relation to Academic Achievement and Mental Stress.”**

## **9. Objectives of the Study**

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To study the value patterns of deprived adolescents.
2. To assess the academic achievement of deprived adolescents.
3. To examine the level of mental stress among deprived adolescents.
4. To determine the relationship between value pattern and academic achievement.
5. To determine the relationship between value pattern and mental stress.
6. To determine the relationship between academic achievement and mental stress.
7. To examine gender differences in value pattern among deprived adolescents.
8. To examine gender differences in mental stress among deprived adolescents.

## **10. Hypotheses of the Study**

The following null hypotheses were formulated:

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between value pattern and academic achievement among deprived adolescents.

**H02:** There is no significant relationship between value pattern and mental stress among deprived adolescents.

**H03:** There is no significant relationship between academic achievement and mental stress among deprived adolescents.

**H04:** There is no significant difference between boys and girls in their value-pattern scores.

**H05:** There is no significant difference between boys and girls in their mental-stress scores.

## 11. Methodology

### 11.1 Research Method

The study employed the **descriptive survey method**. This method is appropriate for investigating existing characteristics, attitudes, values, behaviours and relationships among variables without manipulating the study conditions.

The study focused on deprived adolescents studying in Class VIII and examined their value patterns, academic achievement and mental stress.

### 11.2 Population

The population consisted of Class VIII students studying in selected CBSE schools in Khurda city, Odisha. For the purpose of the investigation, the study focused on students identified as belonging to disadvantaged socio-economic circumstances.

The schools included in the study were:

- Xavier School
- Aryabhat Ancient Academy
- Naidu International School
- Sigma Public School

### 11.3 Sample

A sample of **120 Class VIII students** was selected for the study. The sample consisted of an equal number of boys and girls.

| Gender       | Number     | Percentage     |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Boys         | 60         | 50.00%         |
| Girls        | 60         | 50.00%         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>120</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to provide equal representation of boys and girls.

### 11.4 Variables

The major variables considered in the investigation were:

- **Value Pattern**
- **Academic Achievement**
- **Mental Stress**

The study examined value pattern in relation to academic achievement and mental stress.

### 11.5 Tools for Data Collection

The following instruments and records were used:

### **Value Pattern Scale**

A standardized Value Pattern Scale was used to assess the respondents' value orientations. The instrument covered relevant dimensions such as moral, social, educational, economic, religious and aesthetic values. Responses were scored according to the prescribed scoring procedure.

### **Mental Stress Scale**

A standardized Mental Stress Scale appropriate for adolescents was administered to assess the level of psychological stress. The scale included areas such as educational, family, social, and emotional stress. Higher scores represented greater levels of mental stress.

**Academic Achievement Record:** Academic achievement was determined using students' marks obtained in the previous annual examination. Relevant academic records were obtained from the schools with the required permission.

### **11.6 Reliability and Validity**

The standardized instruments used in the study were selected on the basis of their reported psychometric adequacy. The reliability coefficients reported by the respective test developers indicated satisfactory consistency. The instruments were also reported to possess appropriate forms of validity, including content, construct and criterion-related validity.

### **11.7 Procedure of Data Collection**

Permission was obtained from the heads of the selected schools before data collection. The purpose of the study was explained to the participating students and rapport was established before administration of the instruments.

The Value Pattern Scale and Mental Stress Scale were administered according to standardized instructions. Students were informed that their responses would be treated confidentially and used only for academic purposes. After completion, the response sheets were collected and checked for completeness. Academic achievement information was subsequently obtained from the relevant school records.

### **11.8 Scoring Procedure**

Responses to the Value Pattern Scale were scored according to its prescribed scoring key. The resulting total scores represented the respondents' overall value orientation.

The Mental Stress Scale was scored according to the instructions provided in the test manual. Higher scores indicated higher levels of reported mental stress.

Academic achievement was represented by marks obtained in the previous annual examination. Where required, marks were converted into percentages for purposes of analysis.

### **11.9 Statistical Techniques**

The following statistical techniques were considered appropriate for analysing the collected data:

- Frequency and percentage
- Mean
- Standard deviation
- Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient
- Independent-samples t-test

Frequency and percentage were used to describe the distribution of respondents across categories. Mean and standard deviation were used to summarize the central tendency and variability of scores. Pearson's correlation coefficient was proposed to examine relationships among the major variables. The t-test was proposed for examining gender differences.

## 12. Results and Analysis

### 12.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

The sample comprised 120 deprived adolescents. Sixty respondents were boys and sixty were girls. Thus, boys and girls each constituted 50% of the total sample.

The equal distribution of the sample provided comparable representation of both gender groups for the proposed gender-based analysis.

### 12.2 Distribution of Respondents According to Level of Value Pattern

The respondents were classified into high, moderate and low value-pattern categories.

| Level of Value Pattern | Frequency  | Percentage     |
|------------------------|------------|----------------|
| High                   | 38         | 31.67%         |
| Moderate               | 57         | 47.50%         |
| Low                    | 25         | 20.83%         |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>120</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |

The data show that 38 respondents (31.67%) were categorized as having a high level of value pattern, while 57 respondents (47.50%) fell within the moderate category. A further 25 respondents (20.83%) were classified in the low category.

The moderate category therefore represented the largest proportion of the sample. This distribution indicates variation in value orientation among the adolescents included in the investigation.

### 12.3 Descriptive Statistics of Major Variables

The descriptive statistics reported for the principal variables are presented below.

| Variable             | Mean  | Standard Deviation |
|----------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Value Pattern        | 69.80 | 8.45               |
| Academic Achievement | 74.20 | 9.10               |
| Mental Stress        | 53.60 | 7.80               |

The mean value-pattern score was **69.80**, with a standard deviation of **8.45**. The mean academic-achievement score was **74.20**, with a standard deviation of **9.10**. The mean mental-stress score was **53.60**, with a standard deviation of **7.80**.

These descriptive findings provide an overall picture of the scores obtained by the respondents. However, mean scores alone do not establish whether statistically significant relationships exist among the variables. Inferential statistical results would therefore be required to draw conclusions regarding the stated hypotheses.

## 13. Discussion

The findings indicate that the adolescents in the sample displayed considerable variation in their value-pattern scores. Nearly half of the respondents were classified in the moderate category, while approximately one-third were classified in the high category and one-fifth in the low category. The presence of different levels of value orientation within a disadvantaged adolescent population suggests that socio-economic disadvantage should not be treated as a uniform psychological experience. Adolescents exposed to similar external circumstances may differ in their family relationships, educational experiences, aspirations, peer influences, coping resources and personal beliefs. The findings also indicate that academic achievement and mental stress varied across the respondents, as reflected in their respective standard deviations. The reported mean scores provide useful descriptive information, but they do not

by themselves establish the direction or strength of relationships among the study variables. The conceptual relationship among values, academic functioning and stress is potentially important. Values may influence how adolescents approach educational responsibilities, respond to challenges, establish priorities and regulate behaviour. Similarly, academic experiences and psychological pressures may themselves influence adolescents' attitudes and priorities. Consequently, relationships among these variables should be interpreted as interconnected rather than necessarily reflecting a simple one-way causal process.

The study also emphasizes the importance of educational environments that address both academic and psychosocial needs. For adolescents experiencing disadvantage, academic support alone may not address all the factors affecting educational participation and well-being. Value-oriented activities, counselling, supportive teacher-student relationships, parental involvement and access to appropriate educational resources may all form part of a broader support system. Importantly, the present descriptive findings should not be interpreted as evidence that deprivation itself determines an adolescent's values, academic performance or stress level. The experiences of disadvantaged adolescents are heterogeneous and individual, family, school and community factors may contribute to observed differences.

#### **14. Educational Implications**

The findings of the study have several potential implications for educational practice.

First, schools can provide opportunities for systematic value education through classroom activities, discussions, cooperative learning, community participation and extracurricular programmes. Such activities can encourage responsibility, empathy, social cooperation, respect and constructive decision-making. Second, teachers can pay attention to the psychosocial circumstances of students experiencing disadvantage. Academic difficulties should not automatically be interpreted as a lack of ability or motivation because environmental and emotional factors may also affect performance. Third, school counselling services can provide adolescents with opportunities to discuss academic pressure, family difficulties, peer relationships and other sources of stress. Early identification of students experiencing substantial difficulties may facilitate appropriate support. Fourth, schools and families can work collaboratively to create learning environments that provide encouragement and realistic academic expectations. Additional academic support, access to learning materials, mentoring and opportunities for participation may be particularly useful for students with limited resources. Finally, educational administrators and policymakers may consider integrated programmes that address educational achievement, value development and adolescent well-being rather than treating these areas as completely separate concerns.

#### **15. Limitations and Delimitations**

The study was delimited to 120 Class VIII students from four selected CBSE schools in Khurda city. Only adolescents identified as belonging to disadvantaged backgrounds were included. The investigation was restricted to value pattern, academic achievement and mental stress. Academic achievement was assessed using school examination performance, while value pattern and mental stress were assessed using standardized instruments. The geographical coverage and sample size limit the extent to which the findings can be generalized to adolescents from other regions, school systems, age groups or socio-economic backgrounds. The study also used a descriptive survey design. Consequently, relationships observed among variables should not be interpreted as evidence of causal relationships.

## 16. Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were considered throughout the research process. Permission was obtained from the concerned school authorities before data collection. The purpose of the investigation was explained to the participating students and participation was treated as voluntary. Confidentiality of respondents' information was maintained and collected data were used exclusively for academic and research purposes. Care was taken to avoid unnecessary disclosure of individual students' scores or personal information.

## 17. Conclusion

The present study examined the value patterns of deprived adolescents and considered their academic achievement and mental stress within an educational context. The findings showed that the respondents differed in their levels of value orientation, with the moderate value-pattern category accounting for the largest proportion of the sample. The descriptive statistics also indicated measurable variation in academic achievement and mental stress among the participating adolescents. The study highlights the importance of viewing adolescent development from a holistic perspective. Educational achievement cannot be considered independently of students' social circumstances, psychological experiences, personal values and support systems. Adolescents experiencing socio-economic disadvantage may require educational environments that combine academic assistance with opportunities for value development, counselling, emotional support and positive social interaction. The present investigation provides a basis for further research into the interaction among values, educational performance and psychological well-being among disadvantaged adolescents. Future studies may employ larger and more diverse samples, include students from different educational systems and geographical areas and use longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to examine how these variables develop over time.

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