

**Unpacking the Psychosocial Triad: How Adolescent Self-Expression
Mediates Personality Development, Educational Aspirations, and Peer
Group Dynamics**

Anup Kumar Giri

PhD Scholar, Department of Education, Baba Mastnath University, Rohtak, Haryana-124021,
India

anupgiri11282@gmail.com

Dr. Nitin

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Faculty of Humanities, Baba Mastnath
University, Rohtak, Haryana-124021, India

dnksrtk@gmail.com

Abstract

Adolescent development is a critical transitional period shaped by the intersection of personal identity formation, peer socialization, and future-oriented academic expectations. While individual psychological components are well-documented, limited empirical research has evaluated how communicative competence mediates the structural relationship among personality development, educational aspirations, and peer group dynamics. This study empirically investigates the mediating role of adolescent self-expression in relation to personality development, educational aspirations, and peer group relationships among secondary school students. Adopting a quantitative positivist paradigm and a descriptive correlational research design, a stratified random sample of $N = 600$ secondary school students (Classes IX to X; aged 13 to 19 years; 69.17% male, 30.83% female; 59.83% urban, 40.17% rural) was evaluated across designated institutional locations in West Bengal. Primary data were collected using a bilingual psychometric instrument incorporating a 5-point Likert scale, comprising a Personal Data Sheet, the Self-Expression Scale, the Personality Inventory, the Educational Aspiration Scale, and the Peer Group Relationship Scale. Descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation) were utilized to test hypotheses at an alpha significance level of $p < 0.01$. Bivariate correlation analyses revealed that self-expression maintains positive and statistically significant relationships with personality development ($r = 0.248, p < 0.001, M = 81.20, SD = 9.88$ for self-expression; $M = 77.93, SD = 11.98$ for personality), educational aspirations ($r = 0.211, p < 0.001, M = 84.82, SD = 12.47$), and peer group relationships ($r = 0.212, p < 0.001, M = 76.91, SD = 16.84$). These empirical findings confirm that communicative competence functions as an active psychological mechanism supporting ego maturity, academic ambition, and healthy social integration. The findings validate the biopsychosocial framework of the adolescent psychosocial triad, demonstrating that fostering supportive communication climates enhances personality adjustment, academic motivation, and overall psychosocial wellbeing. These insights provide an empirical foundation for educators and policymakers to design targeted institutional interventions within secondary educational environments.

Keywords: Adolescent Self-Expression, Personality Development, Educational Aspirations, Peer Group Relationships, Psychosocial Wellbeing

Introduction

Adolescence is a formative developmental stage characterized by the continuous refinement of self-concept, heightened sensitivity to peer affiliation, and the recalibration of future-oriented academic and personal goals (van der Cruisen *et al.*, 2023; van Buuren *et al.*, 2022). During this critical transitional window, peer groups assume a primary socializing role as adolescents dedicate more time to peer networks, exhibit increased vulnerability to peer evaluation, and utilize friendship circles as central reference frameworks for identity construction and social norms (Koutamanis *et al.*, 2015). Concurrently, developmental scholarship underscores that peer influence operates through dual pathways: while supportive peer ecologies foster belonging and social capital, maladaptive peer dynamics can exacerbate conformity pressures and amplify psychological vulnerability to rejection and negative feedback (Butterfield *et al.*, 2021; Kornienko, 2024).

In parallel with social development, adolescent psychological progression is tightly coupled with educational trajectories. Empirical evidence indicates that educational aspirations are jointly predicted by emotional school engagement, familial support structures, and the prevailing normative climate of the peer milieu, whereas identity formation and self-concept act as key psychological bridges translating social experiences into academic motivation (Gutman & Schoon, 2018; Yuan & Olivos, 2023; Masinga, 2025; Rachman *et al.*, 2025). Furthermore, personality development during the teenage years is deeply interconnected with identity exploration, self-regulation, and evolving educational self-schemas, confirming that personality traits remain malleable and responsive to ongoing social and motivational transactions (Garaigordobil *et al.*, 2003; Mukherjee *et al.*, 2026). Synthesizing these developmental domains supports the conceptualization of a psychosocial triad wherein self-expression, personality development, and peer group dynamics synergistically drive adolescent adjustment and goal attainment (Albarello *et al.*, 2018; Batool & Shafiq, 2022).

Despite the robust international literature addressing individual components of adolescent development, significant gaps remain regarding how communicative behavior dynamically bridges these psychological and social constructs. Self-expression functions not merely as an overt behavioral output, but as an active psychological mechanism that facilitates identity exploration, emotional regulation, and interpersonal negotiation (Albarello *et al.*, 2018; van Buuren *et al.*, 2022; van der Cruisen *et al.*, 2023). When adolescents utilize authentic channels of communication, they are better equipped to navigate peer hierarchies, consolidate self-concept clarity, and formulate ambitious educational goals. Conversely, constraints on self-expression or exposure to dysfunctional peer milieus can fracture identity consolidation and impede psychosocial adaptation (Throuvala *et al.*, 2019; Hua & Cui, 2026; Erentaite *et al.*, 2019).

Given the complex interplay among communicative competence, personality maturation, educational ambition, and peer socialization within South Asian secondary educational contexts, empirical investigation is warranted. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to examine the structural mediating role of adolescent self-expression in relation to personality

development, educational aspirations, and peer group relationships among secondary school students in West Bengal. Utilizing a rigorous quantitative survey design (N = 600), this research evaluates the empirical magnitude of these psychosocial pathways across diverse rural and urban stratifications. The findings of this study offer direct practical implications for educators, educational psychologists, and school administrators, providing an empirical foundation for designing targeted institutional programs that cultivate supportive communication climates, bolster academic motivation, and promote holistic psychological adjustment during secondary education.

Methodology

2.1 General Description and Theoretical Underpinnings

An exhaustive methodological framework was established to examine how adolescent self-expression operates as a mediator among personality development, educational aspirations, and peer group relationships within a biopsychosocial perspective. Moving beyond procedural steps, the methodology served as the epistemological framework governing how psychosocial knowledge was gathered, validated, and interpreted. This chapter outlines the structural research design, the operationalization of psychosocial variables, the target population, the stratified sampling architecture, and the precise geographic locations utilized for empirical field research.

2.2 Nature of the Study: Quantitative Paradigm

The investigation aligned strictly with a positivist paradigm, adopting a quantitative research approach to ensure maximum objectivity, replicability, and freedom from subjective narrative bias. A descriptive survey method was utilized, which allowed for the empirical measurement of quantifiable psychosocial phenomena within natural educational settings. A cross-sectional survey approach was chosen to capture standardized, empirical data across the designated student cohorts at a single definitive point in time, enabling a comprehensive examination of existing relationships among variables without experimental manipulation.

2.3 Research Design: Descriptive Correlational Framework

A descriptive correlational and mediational research design was utilized to determine the degree, magnitude, and specific direction of association among the variables. Because personality traits, educational aspirations, peer dynamics, and self-expression exist naturally and historically among adolescents within real-world academic environments, experimental manipulation was neither feasible nor ethically permissible. This design allowed for the evaluation of associative patterns and structural pathways, establishing how self-expression functions in relation to psychological and social predictors.

2.3.1 Operational Definitions of the Variables

To ensure precise measurement and replication, the key variables were operationalized as follows:

- **Self-Expression (Dependent/Mediating Variable):** Quantified aggregate scores obtained by respondents on the standardized Self-Expression Scale, capturing emotional, verbal, social, and creative expression subdomains. Higher numerical scores reflected a greater propensity for open communication and expressive behavior.

- **Personality (Independent Variable):** Quantified total and sub-scores derived from the standardized Personality Inventory, evaluating five core dimensions: emotional stability, sociability, self-confidence, responsibility, and adjustment.
- **Educational Aspiration (Independent Variable):** Numerical scores obtained on the Educational Aspiration Scale, reflecting academic ambition, future educational goals, motivation for higher education, and overall career orientation.
- **Peer Group Relationships (Independent Variable):** Total quantitative scores on the Peer Group Relationship Scale, capturing peer support, cooperation, social acceptance, emotional bonding, and communication quality.
- **Adolescents:** School-going students enrolled in Classes IX to X falling within the transitional developmental age range of 13 to 19 years.

2.4 Research Hypotheses

To guide the empirical investigation, the following null and alternative hypotheses were formulated:

- **Hypothesis 1:**
 - H_0 : There is no statistically significant relationship between self-expression and personality among school-aged adolescents.
 - H_1 : Personality significantly influences the self-expression of adolescents.
- **Hypothesis 2:**
 - H_0 : There is no significant relationship between self-expression and educational aspiration among school-going adolescents.
 - H_1 : Educational aspiration significantly influences the self-expression of adolescents.
- **Hypothesis 3:**
 - H_0 : There is no significant relationship between self-expression and peer group relationships among school-going adolescents.
 - H_1 : Peer group relationships significantly influence the self-expression of adolescents.

2.5 Study Area and Sampling Design

The geographic scope of the study encompassed designated rural and urban educational zones within West Bengal, structured to capture diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds that might influence adolescent psychological development.

2.6 Population and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised all school-going adolescents enrolled in secondary and senior secondary classes across the designated districts.

To minimize sampling bias and ensure proportional representation across key demographics, a Stratified Random Sampling Technique was employed. Schools and participants were categorized into non-overlapping strata based on gender, geographic locality (rural versus urban), and school administration type.

2.7 Sampling Locations and Sample Size

A statistically powered sample of $N = 600$ adolescents studying in Classes IX and X was selected across four distinct institutional locations divided equally between rural and urban localities:

Table 1: Stratified Sampling Distribution and Institutional Details of Selected Secondary Schools across Rural and Urban Localities

Locality Type	Name of Educational Institution	Location / Address	District / State	Postal Code
Rural Area	Nimpith Ramkrishna Ashram Schools	Nimpith, Jaynagar Majilpur	South 24 Parganas, West Bengal	743338
Rural Area	Gorkhara Vidyamandir High School (H.S.)	Sonarpur Bazar Road, Sonarpur Bazaar, Sonarpur, Mondal Para	Rajpur Sonarpur, West Bengal	700150
Urban Area	Green Park Siksha Sadan High School	Green Park Road, beside Ramakrishna Mission Ashram Stadium, Green Park	Narendrapur, Kolkata, Rajpur Sonarpur, West Bengal	700103
Urban Area	Panchpota Badanchandra Indumati High School	Santi Nagar, Panchpota	Kolkata, Rajpur Sonarpur, West Bengal	700152

2.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were strictly maintained throughout all stages of the research process to protect the rights, welfare, and confidentiality of all participants. Prior to commencing data collection, formal administrative clearance and official approval were secured from the institutional authorities and the respective heads of the selected secondary and senior secondary schools. Given that the study engaged minor adolescents enrolled in Classes IX and X, informed written consent was explicitly obtained from the parents or legal guardians of all participating students. Furthermore, comprehensive verbal and written assent was secured directly from the student participants, ensuring that participation was entirely voluntary and based on a clear understanding of the study's purpose. Participants were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw from the investigation at any given point without incurring any negative consequences or penalties. To ensure strict data privacy and confidentiality, all completed questionnaires, personal data sheets, and psychological inventories were anonymized through unique identification codes, and aggregated data were handled with high-level security to prevent any unauthorized access or disclosure of sensitive student information.

2.9 Validity and Reliability

To ensure the psychometric rigor, methodological soundness, and trustworthiness of the empirical data, rigorous procedures for establishing validity and reliability were implemented

across all research instruments. In quantitative and positivist research, reliability ensures consistency, stability, and dependability of measurement over time and across test administrations, whereas validity ensures that the instruments accurately measure the specific psychosocial constructs they were designed to evaluate.

To guarantee high instrument reliability, internal consistency was evaluated through the computation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Self-Expression Scale, the Personality Inventory, the Educational Aspiration Scale, and the Peer Group Relationship Scale. Standardized psychometric thresholds were strictly maintained, requiring Cronbach's alpha values to exceed the accepted standard of 0.70 across all subdomains and composite scales, thereby confirming high internal consistency and item homogeneity. Additionally, a test-retest reliability method was administered on a pilot subgroup of adolescents over a two-week interval to establish temporal stability, yielding strong correlation coefficients that verified the dependable consistency of scores across repeated applications.

Validity was systematically established through multiple methodological dimensions. Content validity was rigorously ensured by conducting an extensive review of existing theoretical literature and psychological frameworks, followed by evaluations from a panel of senior academic experts and subject-matter specialists in educational psychology. These experts reviewed the items to verify that the domain of interest was comprehensively covered and that each item accurately reflected the target psychosocial construct. Construct validity was assessed through confirmatory item analysis and inter-correlation matrices to ensure that theoretical subdomains (such as emotional, verbal, social, and creative expression) loaded appropriately onto their respective overarching constructs without significant cross-loadings. Furthermore, face validity was confirmed during preliminary pilot testing with adolescent cohorts, verifying that the language, clarity, and bilingual formatting (Bengali and English) were easily comprehended by participants of Classes IX to X without ambiguity or leading phrasing.

2.10 Description of Tools and Instrumentation

Data collection was executed using standardized, psychometrically validated instruments administered in a controlled classroom environment. Personality dimensions were evaluated using the Big Five Inventory (John *et al.*, 2008); global self-esteem and self-concept were measured via the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965); educational aspirations were assessed using validated academic orientation scales (Gutman and Schoon, 2018); and peer group relationship quality was evaluated through standardized attachment and peer inventory frameworks (Armsden and Greenberg, 1987).

Primary data were collected using a comprehensive, bilingual instrument (rendered in both Bengali and English) incorporating a robust 5-point Likert scale, where responses ranged from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1) for positively worded items, with appropriate reverse-scoring applied to negative statements. The instrument was structured into distinct sections:

- **Section A:** Personal Data Sheet capturing demographic details, family type, parental education, and socioeconomic status.

- **Section B:** Self-Expression Scale consisting of 25 items across emotional, verbal, social, and creative subdomains.
- **Section C:** Personality Inventory consisting of 25 items evaluating emotional stability, sociability, self-confidence, responsibility, and adjustment.
- **Section D:** Educational Aspiration Scale consisting of 25 items measuring academic ambition, goals, higher education motivation, and career orientation.
- **Section E:** Peer Group Relationship Scale consisting of 25 items measuring peer support, cooperation, social acceptance, emotional bonding, and communication.

2.11 Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis plan utilized both descriptive and inferential techniques executed via specialized statistical software to test the hypotheses and evaluate structural relationships. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were computed to establish baseline central tendencies and variance across all variables. Inferential statistics relied primarily on Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation to examine linear relationships between self-expression and the predictor variables.

Table 2: Mapping of Empirical Research Objectives and Hypotheses to Corresponding Statistical Analysis Techniques

Objective / Variable Relationship	Statistical Technique
Baseline measurement of psychosocial levels	Mean, Standard Deviation
Relationship between Self-Expression and Personality	Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation
Relationship between Self-Expression and Educational Aspiration	Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation
Relationship between Self-Expression and Peer Group Relationships	Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation

3. Results

3.1 Profile of the Respondents

To understand the sample composition and contextualize the findings regarding self-expression, personality, educational aspirations, and peer group relationships among adolescents, data were collected across eleven personal and background parameters. The sample comprises N = 600 students from secondary classes. The quantitative distributions, frequencies (N), and percentages (%) for each parameter are detailed below.

3.1.1 Age Distribution

The age of the participating adolescents ranged from 13 to 19 years, reflecting typical secondary school enrolment age brackets. As presented in Table 4.1, nearly half of the participants were 14 years old (46.83%), followed by 15-year-olds (21.00%) and 16-year-olds (17.33%). A small fraction of the sample consisted of students aged 13 (12.67%), 17 (1.33%), 18 (0.67%), and 19 years (0.17%).

Table 3: The age of the participating students ranges from 13 to 19 years, with the majority concentrated in the 14 to 16 age bracket.

Age (Years)	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
13	76	12.67%
14	281	46.83%
15	126	21.00%
16	104	17.33%
17	8	1.33%
18	4	0.67%
19	1	0.17%
Total	600	100.00%

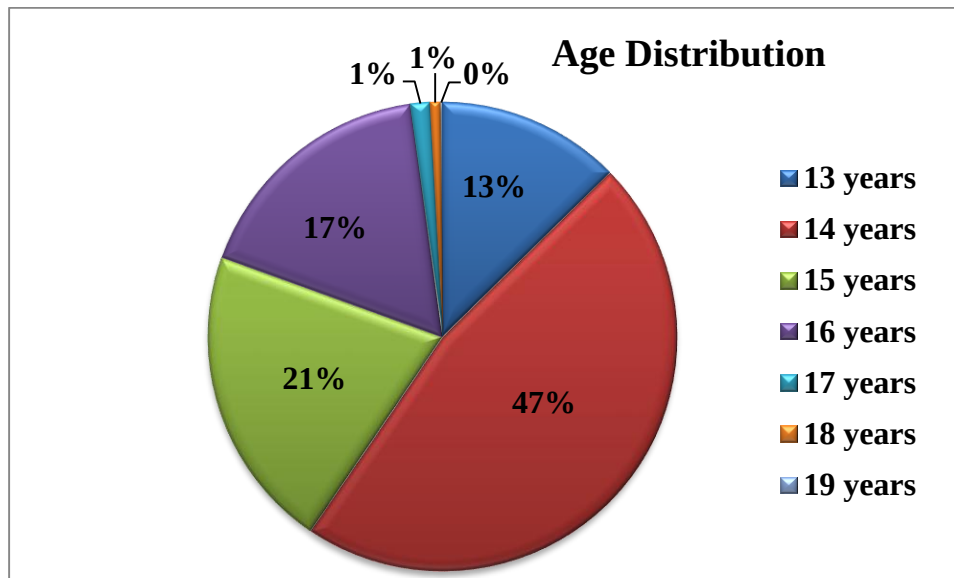


Figure 1: The age of the participating students ranges from 13 to 19 years, with the majority concentrated in the 14 to 16 age bracket.

3.1.2. Gender Distribution

An examination of gender representation indicates that male students formed the majority of the sample. Out of 600 adolescents, 415 were male (69.17%) and 185 were female (30.83%).

Table 4: Distribution of Students by Gender. Participants are divided between Class IX and Class X.

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	415	69.17%
Female	185	30.83%
Total	600	100.00%

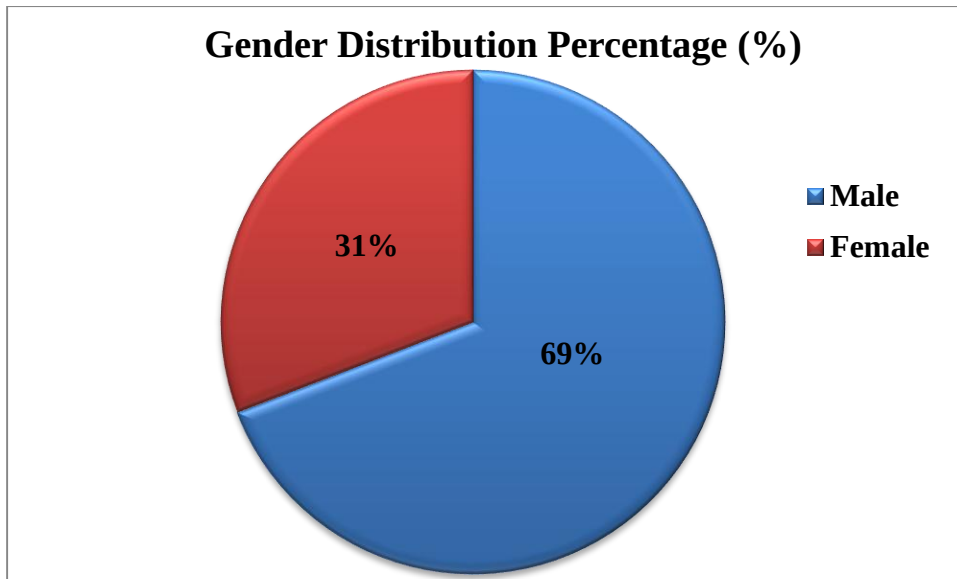


Figure 2: Distribution of Students by Gender. Participants are divided between Class IX and Class X.

3.1.3. Class / Grade Level

The participants were drawn from Classes IX and X. A larger proportion of students belonged to Class IX (N = 417, 69.50%), while Class X accounted for 30.50% (N = 183) of the total sample.

Table 5: Distribution of Students by Class. Participants are divided between Class IX and Class X.

Class	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
IX	417	69.50%
X	183	30.50%
Total	600	100.00%

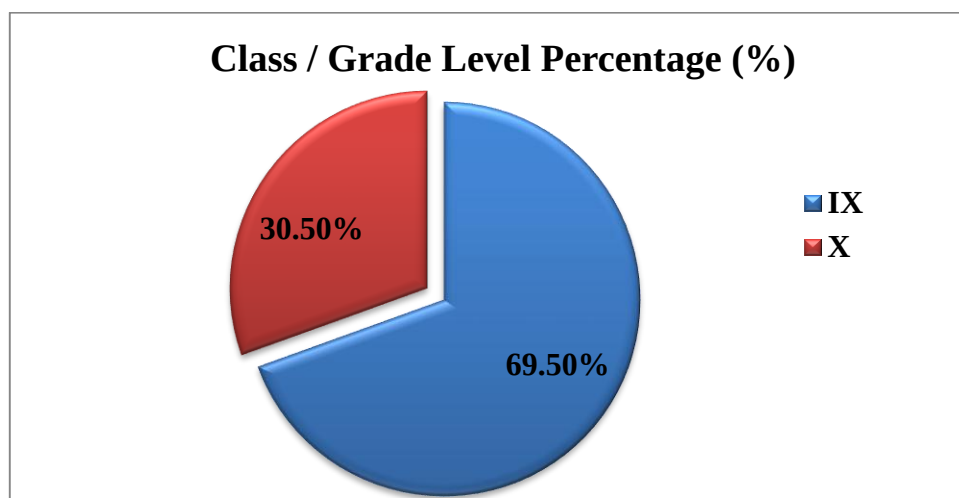


Figure 3: Distribution of Students by Class. Participants are divided between Class IX and Class X.

3.1.4. Type of School

The vast majority of the respondents attended government-administered educational institutions (N = 600, 100%).

3.1.5. Locality

The residential background of the sample was relatively balanced between urban and rural settings, with a slight predominance of urban participants. Specifically, 359 students (59.83%) resided in urban areas, and 241 students (40.17%) hailed from rural localities.

Table 6: Distribution by Locality. The sample provides a balanced representation between rural and urban residential backgrounds, leaning slightly toward urban areas.

Locality	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Urban	359	59.83%
Rural	241	40.17%
Total	600	100.00%

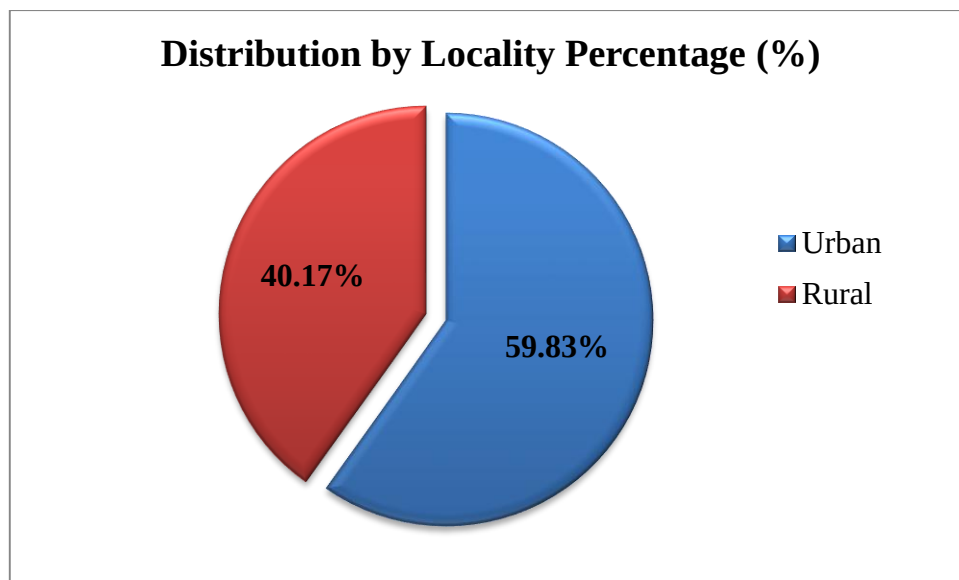


Figure 4: Distribution by Locality. The sample provides a balanced representation between rural and urban residential backgrounds, leaning slightly toward urban areas.

3.2 Relationship between Self-Expression and Personality among Adolescents

The primary objective of this section is to examine the relationship between self-expression (measured via the Self-Expression Scale) and personality development (measured via the Personality Inventory) among adolescents. To determine the nature and magnitude of this relationship, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation coefficient was computed.

3.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

Before evaluating the correlational relationship, baseline descriptive parameters—including the mean, standard deviation, and sample size—were established for both variables:

- **Self-Expression Score:** The analysis of N = 597 adolescents yielded a mean score of 81.20 with a standard deviation of 9.87.
- **Personality Inventory Score:** For a sample size of N = 594 adolescents, the mean score was recorded at 77.92 with a standard deviation of 11.98.

3.2.2 Correlation Analysis Results

The bivariate correlation analysis between self-expression and adolescent personality yielded a positive and statistically significant relationship:

- **Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r):** 0.248
- **Significance Level (Sig. 2-tailed):** < 0.001
- **Pairwise Sample Size (N):** 594

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation between Self-Expression and Personality among Adolescents

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	N	Correlation (r)	Sig. (2- tailed)
Self-Expression	81.20	9.88	597	0.248**	< 0.001
Personality	77.93	11.98	594	-	-

*Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The statistical output indicates a positive correlation coefficient of $r = 0.248$ between self-expression and personality among adolescents, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 alpha level ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that students who exhibit higher levels of self-expression tend to score higher on positive personality development traits (such as emotional stability, adaptability, and self-confidence). While the correlation is weak-to-moderate, it confirms that open communication and authentic personal expression play a supportive role in shaping adolescent personality traits. This empirical finding demonstrates that adolescents who exhibit higher degrees of self-expression tend to display higher levels of positive personality development.

Effective communication of thoughts, emotions, and personal opinions acts as a psychological catalyst that supports emotional stability, social confidence, and overall character adjustment during the adolescent years. Consequently, fostering supportive environments that encourage open self-expression can contribute meaningfully to positive personality outcomes in young individuals.

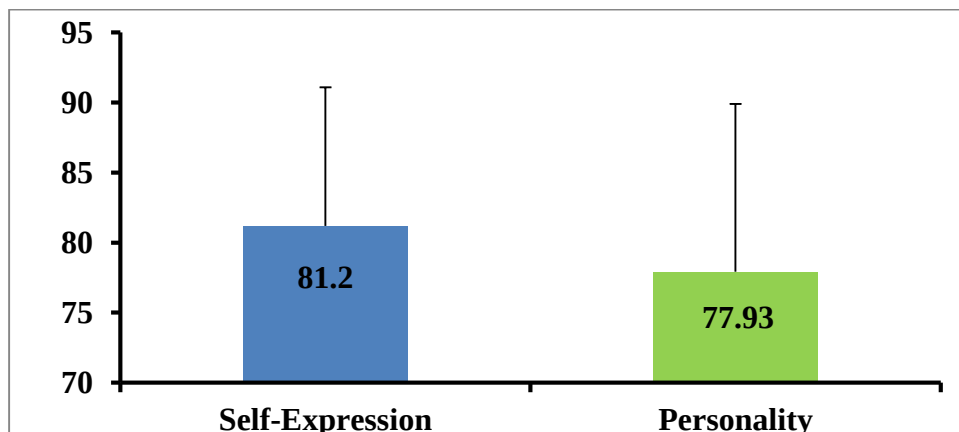


Figure 5: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation between Self-Expression and Personality among Adolescents

3.3 Relationship between Self-Expression and Educational Aspiration among Adolescents

The second objective of this study is to examine the relationship between self-expression (evaluated via the Self-Expression Scale) and educational aspiration (evaluated via the Educational Aspiration Scale) among adolescents. To ascertain the association between these two constructs, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis was conducted.

3.3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Prior to running the bivariate correlation analysis, central tendency and dispersion metrics were established for both variables:

- **Self-Expression Score:** Based on a sample size of $N = 597$, the mean score was calculated at 81.20 with a standard deviation of 9.88.
- **Educational Aspiration Score:** Based on a sample size of $N = 600$, the mean score was recorded at 84.82 with a standard deviation of 12.47.

3.3.2 Correlation Analysis Results

The bivariate correlation evaluation between self-expression and educational aspiration yielded a positive and statistically significant association:

- **Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r):** 0.211
- **Significance Level (Sig. 2-tailed):** < 0.001
- **Pairwise Sample Size (N):** 597

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation between Self-Expression and Educational Aspiration among Adolescents

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	N	Correlation (r)	Sig. (2- tailed)
Self-Expression	81.20	9.88	597	0.211**	< 0.001
Educational Aspiration	84.82	12.47	600		

*Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

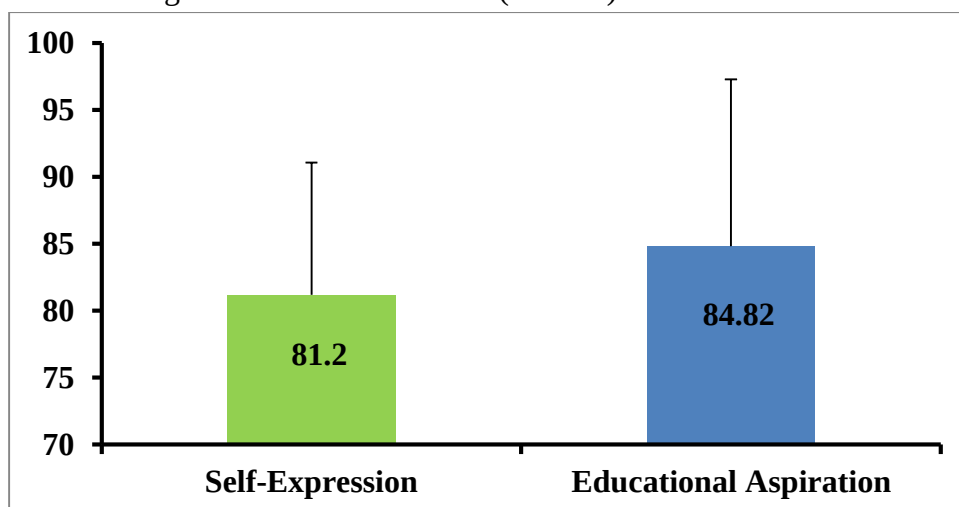


Figure 6: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation between Self-Expression and Educational Aspiration among Adolescents

The statistical results demonstrate a positive correlation coefficient of $r = 0.211$ between self-expression and educational aspiration among adolescents, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.001$). This empirical evidence indicates that adolescents who display higher levels of self-expression correspondingly tend to possess elevated educational aspirations and future academic goals. Articulating thoughts, preferences, and personal objectives enables students to engage more proactively with their scholastic environments, envision academic pathways, and set high benchmarks for their future educational attainment.

4.4 Relationship between Self-Expression and Peer Group Relationships among Adolescents

The third objective of this study investigates the relationship between self-expression (assessed via the Self-Expression Scale) and peer group relationships (assessed via the Peer Group Relationship Scale) among adolescents. To determine the nature and statistical strength of this association, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis was conducted.

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Prior to conducting the bivariate correlation test, baseline descriptive metrics—including mean, standard deviation, and sample size—were established for both variables:

- **Self-Expression Score:** Based on a sample size of $N = 597$, the mean score was computed at 81.21 with a standard deviation of 9.88.
- **Peer Group Relationship Score:** Based on a sample size of $N = 600$, the mean score was recorded at 6.9117 with a standard deviation of 16.84.

3.4.2 Correlation Analysis Results

The bivariate correlation evaluation between self-expression and peer group relationships revealed a positive and statistically significant association:

- **Pearson Correlation Coefficient:** 0.212
- **Significance Level (Sig. 2-tailed):** $p < 0.001$
- **Pairwise Sample Size:** 597

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation between Self-Expression and Peer Group Relationships among Adolescents

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	N	Correlation (r)	Sig. (2- tailed)
Self-Expression	81.20	9.88	597	0.212**	< 0.001
Peer Group Relationship	76.91	16.84	600		

*Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The statistical output demonstrates a positive correlation coefficient of $r = 0.212$ between self-expression and peer group relationships among adolescents, which is highly significant at the 0.001 level ($p < 0.001$). This empirical finding indicates that adolescents who exhibit higher levels of self-expression correspondingly tend to experience superior quality in their peer group relationships. Open communication, the articulation of personal thoughts and feelings, and

authentic social expression enable adolescents to build trust, resolve interpersonal conflicts smoothly, and foster deeper, more supportive connections with their peers.

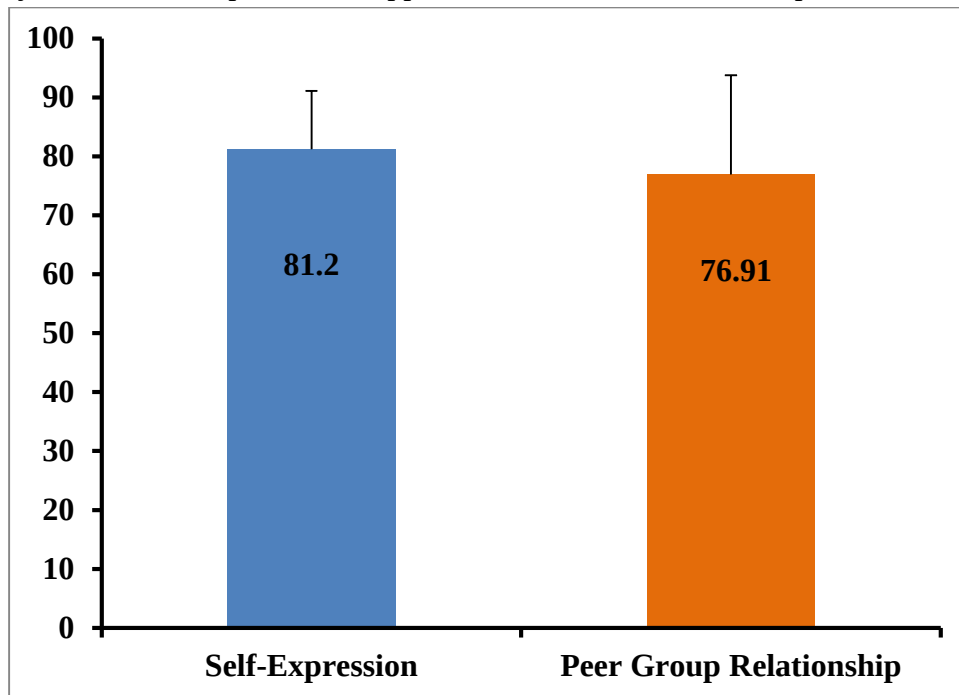


Figure 7: Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlation between Self-Expression and Peer Group Relationships among Adolescents

The results indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between self-expression and peer group relationships ($r = 0.253$, $p < 0.001$). During adolescence, peer interactions rely heavily on mutual communication, sharing feelings, and social validation. The findings suggest that adolescents with strong self-expression capabilities find it easier to connect with peers, build supportive friendships, and cultivate healthy social dynamics within their peer groups.

4. Discussion

4.1 Interpretation of Findings and Psychosocial Context

The empirical findings of this investigation provide robust quantitative support for the biopsychosocial framework governing adolescent development, demonstrating that self-expression serves as a vital psychological mechanism linking personal attributes, academic motivation, and social integration.

The descriptive profile of the sample ($N = 600$) revealed a demographic distribution typical of secondary educational settings in West Bengal, characterized by a concentration of students in the mid-adolescent age bracket (predominantly 14 years old, representing 46.83% of the cohort), a higher proportion of male participants (69.17%), and a balanced representation between urban (59.83%) and rural (40.17%) residential backgrounds. Within this normative framework, the bivariate correlational analyses establish that self-expression maintains positive, statistically significant relationships with personality development ($r = 0.248$, $p < 0.001$), educational aspirations ($r = 0.211$, $p < 0.001$), and peer group relationships ($r = 0.212$, $p < 0.001$).

These empirical outcomes underscore that the ability to articulate thoughts, emotions, and personal viewpoints functions not merely as a communication skill, but as a central catalyst for holistic adolescent adjustment (Holtgraves, 2022; Karnieli-Miller *et al.*, 2021; Zheng *et al.*, 2025; Gebremariam *et al.*, 2024).

4.2 Mechanisms Linking Communicative Competence to Ego Development

The positive association between adolescent self-expression and personality development ($r = 0.248$, $p < 0.001$) highlights the underlying psychological processes connecting communicative competence to ego maturity and emotional stability. According to contemporary developmental theories, adolescence represents a critical transitional phase marked by identity formation (Sawyer, 2018; Banati *et al.*, 2025) self-definition (Sebastian *et al.*, 2008; Van der Aar *et al.*, 2018), and ego consolidation (Michiel Westenberg and Gjerde, 1999). When adolescents are equipped with the capacity for open verbal, emotional, and creative expression, they are better positioned to externalize internal conflicts, process emotional experiences, and integrate disparate aspects of their identity (Di Rinaldi *et al.*, 2026; Park and Yoo, 2026; Liu and Xie, 2026).

Effective self-expression facilitates emotional regulation and self-reflection, allowing young individuals to navigate identity crises with heightened resilience and self-confidence (Sahai and Tiwari, 2026; Hegde and Anil, 2026; Montero Hernandez *et al.*, 2026). By articulating their subjective experiences, adolescents actively construct a coherent sense of self, which directly reinforces adaptive personality traits such as emotional stability, responsibility, and psychological adjustment (Han and Gao, 2026; Grover *et al.*, 2026; Habibi *et al.*, 2026). Conversely, the suppression of thoughts and emotions often leads to internalized distress, anxiety (Aras and Demir-Kaya, 2026; Howard *et al.*, 2026; Tsarev, 2026), and arrested ego development (Hasan and Amjad, 2026; Mayer and Mayer, 2026). Thus, communicative competence acts as a primary vehicle through which internal psychological resources (Özdemir and Çakır, 2026; Liu *et al.*, 2026) are mobilized, reinforcing adaptive personality structures during the formative secondary school years.

4.3 Self-Expression as a Cognitive Catalyst for Academic Ambition

The statistically significant relationship identified between self-expression and educational aspirations ($r = 0.211$, $p < 0.001$) illustrates the cognitive and motivational dimensions of communicative behavior. Educational aspirations are heavily influenced by an adolescent's perceived self-efficacy (Bai *et al.*, 2026; Rubiyanti *et al.*, 2026), academic engagement (Cecalupo *et al.*, 2026; Carmona *et al.*, 2026), and capacity to articulate future goals (Gray and Hill, 2026; Truța *et al.*, 2026). Students who possess high self-expression capabilities demonstrate a greater propensity to actively engage with teachers (Ardianti *et al.*, 2026; Wang, 2026), participate in classroom discussions (Ardianti *et al.*, 2026; Zhang and Hu, 2026), and seek academic guidance (Yu and Shi, 2026; Zhang and Hu, 2026), thereby maximizing their learning opportunities. Furthermore, the formulation of ambitious career orientations and higher education goals requires adolescents (Spangsdorf *et al.*, 2026; Singhal and Prakash, 2026) to conceptualize their future selves and communicate these aspirations to educators and family members. Articulating personal objectives enables students to establish high benchmarks for academic performance (Lipnevich *et al.*, 2026; Aquino and Rivano, 2026) and secure the

necessary social scaffolding required to pursue advanced educational pathways (Almajdoub *et al.*, 2026; Mahmud and Kurt, 2026). Consequently, fostering supportive classroom and institutional environments that encourage open dialogue directly contributes to heightened academic ambition and goal-directed behavior among secondary school students (Lei and Shin, 2026; Marcionetti *et al.*, 2026; Schettino *et al.*, 2026).

4.4 Interpersonal Dynamics and Peer Group Integration

The empirical link between self-expression and peer group relationships ($r = 0.212, p < 0.001$) underscores the fundamental role of communication in adolescent socialization. During adolescence, peer groups assume a primary role in providing social validation (Fisher-Grafy and Malin, 2026; Field *et al.*, 2026; Klesl *et al.*, 2026), emotional support (Ding *et al.*, 2026; Dai *et al.*, 2026; Fisher-Grafy and Malin, 2026), and normative reference points (Leggett-James *et al.*, 2026; Hammer Ashkenazi *et al.*, 2026). The findings indicate that adolescents with superior self-expression skills experience higher quality peer interactions and deeper social integration (Ardianti *et al.*, 2026; Tauseef *et al.*, 2026). Authentic communication—encompassing emotional disclosure, active listening, and the constructive resolution of interpersonal disagreements—enables adolescents to build mutual trust and forge enduring friendships (Reddy and Devassy, 2026; Al Abdwani, 2026). Effective self-expression reduces social anxiety and minimizes misunderstandings within peer networks (Qiu, 2026; Shukla, 2026), allowing young individuals to navigate complex peer group dynamics successfully (Ardianti *et al.*, 2026; Arbabi *et al.*, 2026). By fostering open relational exchanges, adolescents cultivate supportive social ecosystems that buffer against external stressors and promote overall psychosocial wellbeing (Abdurahman, 2026; Allen *et al.*, 2026). The empirical patterns observed in this study align closely with contemporary international developmental literature examining adolescent psychosocial dynamics. Global studies consistently highlight that communicative competence and self-expression are foundational predictors of positive youth development (Hatamleh, 2026; Lee *et al.*, 2026), correlating strongly with emotional resilience, academic persistence, and healthy peer affiliation across diverse cultural contexts. For instance, Western and cross-cultural developmental frameworks emphasize that supportive interpersonal environments—whether situated in urban or rural educational settings—enhance adolescent autonomy and self-concept through open dialogue (Lee *et al.*, 2026; Haider, 2026). The weak-to-moderate magnitude of the correlation coefficients (r values ranging from 0.211 to 0.248) reflects the multifactorial nature of adolescent development, where personality, academic motivation, and peer relationships are simultaneously shaped by socioeconomic status (Shevchuk *et al.*, 2026; Fassaert *et al.*, 2026; Zhou *et al.*, 2026), familial structures (Wang and Zhang, 2026; Fassaert *et al.*, 2026), and gender socialization (Lintner, 2026; Liu and Miao, 2026). By demonstrating consistent psychosocial trends within a West Bengal cohort, this study reinforces universal developmental paradigms while highlighting the specific structural parameters operating within South Asian secondary educational environments.

4.5 Educational Implications

The empirical findings of this study offer vital educational implications for fostering holistic student development within secondary school environments. Because adolescent self-expression serves as a powerful psychological mediator connecting personality traits, peer

relationships, and educational aspirations, educational institutions must move beyond purely academic instruction to actively cultivate environments that support emotional and communicative growth. School administrators and educators should intentionally integrate structured platforms—such as expressive arts programs, debate societies, student governance, and collaborative group projects—into the daily curriculum, providing safe institutional spaces for students to articulate their thoughts, explore identity, and build social confidence. Furthermore, teacher-training curricula should emphasize autonomy-supportive pedagogies that recognize diverse personality profiles (such as introverted versus extraverted learners) and leverage positive peer culture to reinforce academic motivation and personal resilience.

4.6 Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings of this study, educational policymakers, school counsellors, and administrators should implement institutional mentoring programs that actively encourage authentic adolescent self-expression as a core psychological asset. Schools must move beyond rigid instructional compliance by integrating structured forums—such as debate clubs, creative arts, and guided peer-discussion circles—that help students' articulate internal thoughts and manage emotional stressors. Furthermore, because rural adolescents exhibited significant resilience and high educational aspirations, regional resource allocations should be strengthened to support non-urban schools. Finally, targeted counselling initiatives are recommended to address gender-specific socialization pressures and foster supportive, inclusive classroom cultures that promote holistic psychosocial wellbeing and positive peer dynamics.

5. Conclusion

This empirical investigation provides a comprehensive examination of the structural mechanisms through which adolescent self-expression operates as a critical mediator among personality development, educational aspirations, and peer group relationships. Grounded in a positivist quantitative paradigm and a biopsychosocial theoretical framework, the study successfully operationalized and evaluated the psychosocial dynamics of $N = 600$ secondary school adolescents across diverse rural and urban institutional settings in West Bengal. The empirical findings robustly demonstrate that self-expression maintains positive, statistically significant relationships with personality development ($r = 0.248, p < 0.001$), educational aspirations ($r = 0.211, p < 0.001$), and peer group relationships ($r = 0.212, p < 0.001$). These quantitative outcomes confirm that communicative competence functions far beyond a mere behavioral skill; it serves as a foundational psychological catalyst that reinforces emotional stability, ego maturity, academic ambition, and healthy social integration during the formative adolescent years. By establishing these associations within a rigorously controlled stratified sampling design while maintaining strict ethical standards and psychometric reliability, the research contributes valuable empirical insights to the broader landscape of adolescent developmental psychology. Ultimately, the findings underscore the imperative for educators, policymakers, and school administrators to intentionally cultivate supportive, open communication environments within secondary educational institutions, thereby empowering adolescents to navigate psychosocial challenges, enhance their academic trajectories, and achieve holistic personal development.

Acknowledgements

First author is thankful to Prof. Aruna Anchal (Head, Department of Education, Baba Mastnath University), Prof. S.C. Gakhar (Professor, Department of Education, BMU), Dr. Sushila (Associate Professor, Department of Education, Baba Mastnath University) for their invaluable technical support which played a crucial role in refining the methodology and helping to shape the ultimate form of this article.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

All the authors contributed substantially to this study and fulfilled the authorship criteria in accordance with the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) guidelines. A.K.G.: Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Resources, Validation, Visualization, Writing - Original Draft N.: Conceptualization, Project Administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Validation, Writing - Review & Editing. All the authors critically reviewed the manuscript and read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Funding

The authors received no specific financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Declaration of competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

Data availability statement

Data will be available from the corresponding author upon good scientific reason and request.

Declarations

Ethical Approval

Not applicable, as this study did not involve human participants or animals.

Clinical trial number

Not applicable.

Consent to Participate

Given that the study engaged minor adolescents enrolled in Classes IX and X, informed written consent was explicitly obtained from the parents or legal guardians of all participating students. Furthermore, comprehensive verbal and written assent was secured directly from the student participants, ensuring that participation was entirely voluntary and based on a clear understanding of the study's purpose.

Consent to Publish

All the authors have read and approved the final manuscript and approved the consent to its publication.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this manuscript.

AI Declaration:

The authors declare that no Generative AI technologies (such as large language models) were used to generate any core intellectual content, data analysis, or scientific interpretations within this study. Google Gemini AI was utilized exclusively for language refinement, grammatical

correction, and stylistic polishing of the manuscript. Following the use of this tool, the authors thoroughly reviewed and edited all text as needed and take full and sole responsibility for the final content and integrity of this article.

References

- Abdurahman, A. (2026). Integrating Social Networks and Peer Relationships in Strengthening Mental Resilience in Adolescents. *Societas: Journal of Social Issues and Community Studies*, 1(1), 28-40. <https://doi.org/10.67918/societas.v1i1.17>
- Al Abdwani, T. (2026). Introducing the Cross-Cultural Soft Skills Wheel: A Framework for Context-Sensitive Measurement of Communication. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 1-14.
- Albarello, F., Crocetti, E., & Rubini, M. (2018). I and us: A longitudinal study on the interplay of personal and social identity in adolescence. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 47(4), 689-702. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-017-0791-4>
- Allen, J., Homel, R., McLaws, S., Evans-Whipp, T., Olsson, C. A., & PRF Early Relational Health Network. (2026). A Living Scoping Review of Universal Interventions for Promoting Relational Health in Childhood, Adolescence and Young Adulthood. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-025-00553-3>
- Almajdoub, Z., Fidalgo, P., Hashem, R., & Alramamneh, Y. (2026). AI as Scaffold or Shortcut? Metacognitive Regulation in Graduate Students' Educational App Design. *Education Sciences*, 16(8), 1198. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci16081198>
- Aquino, J. M. D. R., & Rivano, E. (2026, April). Evaluating the alignment of vision, mission, goals, and objectives in institutional practices in one college of state university. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 11, p. 1800883). Frontiers Media SA. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2026.1800883>
- Aras, E., & Demir-Kaya, M. (2026). The mediating role of gaslighting as a psychological violence between self-silencing and psychological distress. *Scientific Reports*, 16(1), 12364. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-026-47134-0>
- Arbabi, K., Yeh, C. J., Rahmati Sangkar, P., & Amiri, M. (2026). Navigating anhedonia: a phenomenological study of Iranian adolescents' lived experiences. *Current Psychology*, 45(17), 1421. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-026-09989-4>
- Ardianti, A., Faizzah, N., Amaliah, K. R., Fitri, A., Putri, A. E., Saihid, J. P., ... & Tasane, N. (2026). School Environment as an Ecological Space for Adolescent Identity Formation: A Critical Literature Review of Peer Interaction, Teacher Support, Extracurricular Engagement, and Digital Self-Expression. *Journal of Learning Studies*, 1(1), 73-86.
- Armsden, G. C., & Greenberg, M. T. (1987). The inventory of parent and peer attachment: Individual differences and their relationship to psychological well-being in adolescence. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 16(5), 427-454.
- Bai, H., Wang, G., & Su, J. (2026). The effect of parental educational expectations stress on adolescents' depression in China: The mediating roles of self-efficacy and anxiety, and the moderating role of authoritarian parenting. *Acta Psychologica*, 266, 106845. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2026.106845>

- Banati, P., Vedeckina, M., De Rubeis, V., Kalai, S., Massaquoi, L., Sadana, R., ... & Baird, S. (2025). Adolescent experiences and exposures: a systematic review of life course outcomes. *EClinicalMedicine*, 88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2025.103453>
- Batool, S., & Shafiq, S. (2022). Self-regulation as mediator in peer relationship, rejection sensitivity with positive development among adolescents. *Khyber Medical University Journal*, 14(4), 245-50. <https://doi.org/10.35845/kmuj.2022.20889>
- Butterfield, R. D., Price, R. B., Woody, M. L., Morris, A. S., & Silk, J. S. (2021). Adolescent girls' physiological reactivity to real-world peer feedback: A pilot study to validate a Peer Expressed Emotion task. *Journal of experimental child psychology*, 204, 105057. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2020.105057>
- Carmona, J., Ketrings, S. A., & Bean, R. (2026). Parental involvement, social capital, and academic aspirations among Hispanic adolescents: A structural equation modeling approach. *The Family Journal*, 10664807251413780. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10664807251413780>
- Cecalupo, A., Scarci, F., Marini, M., Prislei, L., Parisse, C., Sorvillo, S., & Livi, S. (2026). School and its educational value: the role of parental influences in shaping adolescents' values, academic beliefs, and expectations. *Social Psychology of Education*, 29(1), 8. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-026-10177-2>
- Dai, C., Dang, Y., Zhao, X., & Shi, C. (2026). Unleashing the superpowers of peer group empathy: a study on bullying intervention tendency and behavior in primary school students. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 108762. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2026.108762>
- Di Rinaldi, S. S., Esteves, F., Rousseau, A., & Sudres, J. L. (2026). Music therapy, adolescence, and anorexia nervosa: An integrative songwriting protocol to support self-narration and emotional expression. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 102514. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2026.102514>
- Ding, R., Xia, A., Pan, J., Zhang, P., & Liu, T. (2026). Who plays a more crucial role in adolescent well-being: Interactions with parents or peers? An investigation of adolescents aged 10 to 18 years. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being*, 18(2), e70128. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aphw.70128>
- Erentaitė, R., Vosylis, R., & Crocetti, E. (2019). Longitudinal associations of identity processing styles with prodiversity and proequality values in adolescence. *Child development*, 90(5), 1490-1502. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13291>
- Fassaert, I. M., Schoonmade, L. J., van der Kamp, J., & de Bruijn, A. G. (2026). Peer relationships and social networks in physical education: A scoping review. *European Physical Education Review*, 1356336X261445057. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356336x261445057>
- Field, N. H., Bailey, N. A., Hunt, G. L., & Allen, J. P. (2026). Susceptibility to peer influence as a value-neutral phenomenon: Preliminary validation of a novel self-report measure. *Developmental Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0002230>

- Fisher-Grafy, H., & Malin, Y. (2026). Peer Rejection and Group Autonomy in the Latency Stage: A Qualitative Analysis of Children's Voices in the Classroom Context. *Children*, 13(4), 463. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children13040463>
- Garaigordobil, M., Cruz, S., & Pérez, J. I. (2003). A correlational and predictive analysis of self-concept with other behavioural, cognitive and emotional factors of personality during adolescence. *Estud. Psicol*, 24, 113-134. <https://doi.org/10.1174/021093903321329102>
- Gebremariam, H. T., Dea, P., & Gonta, M. (2024). Digital socialization: Insights into interpersonal communication motives for socialization in social networks among undergraduate students. *Heliyon*, 10(20). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e39507>
- Gray, N. D., & Hill, N. E. (2026). Balancing Aspiration and Obligation: Gendered Cultural Scripts and Adolescents' Educational Pathways. *Youth & Society*, 0044118X261470039. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118x261470039>
- Grover, N., Rastogi, K., & Chakraborty, S. (2026). Psychosocial adjustment of institutionalised children: A thematic analysis of caregiver perspectives in Delhi. *Annals of Neurosciences*, 09727531261435741. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09727531261435741>
- Gutman, L. M., & Schoon, I. (2018). Emotional engagement, educational aspirations, and their association during secondary school. *Journal of Adolescence*, 67(1), 109-119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2018.05.014>
- Habibi, D., Parsaei, R., Afshar, H., & Feizi, A. (2026). Personality traits and family functioning: insights from middle-aged adults in Iran. *BMC psychology*, 14(1), 310. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-03955-2>
- Haider, S. I. (2026). Beyond the Collectivist-Individualist Dichotomy: Parenting Styles and Adolescent Development in South Asian and European Contexts-A Systematic Review. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 10693971261483500. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10693971261483500>
- Hammer Ashkenazi, N., Eilat, E., & Kogut, T. (2026). Recalibrating the 'average': gender differences in adolescents' normative social comparisons in schools of excellence. *Social Psychology of Education*, 29(1), 67. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-026-10233-x>
- Han, F., & Gao, X. (2026). "Am I My Sibling's Keeper?": the Lived experiences of adult siblings of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder in China. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 21(1), 2625293. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482631.2026.2625293>
- Hasan, H. A. A., & Amjad, F. A. (2026). A Psychoanalytic Examination of Female Trafficking Depicted in Rashel Lloyd's *Girls Like Us*: Insights from Sigmund Freud's Theoretical Framework. *Journal of Daoist Studies*, 19(S9), 1302-1315.
- Hatamleh, I. H. M. (2026). Expressive communication skills: impact on content engagement and personal branding in Jordan. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 11, 1848223. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2026.1848223>
- Hegde, R., & Anil, E. (2026). Mindfulness Interventions and Student Well-Being. *International Journal of Special Education*, 41(17s), 1231-1253. https://doi.org/10.35542/osf.io/7ghfp_v1

- Holtgraves, T. (2022). Implicit communication of emotions via written text messages. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*, 7, 100219. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chbr.2022.100219>
- Howard, L. R., Earleywine, M., DeCount, T. A., & Forsyth, J. P. (2026). Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) for comorbid generalized anxiety disorder and premenstrual dysphoric disorder: A transdiagnostic approach. *Clinical Case Studies*, 25(3), 212-230. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15346501261421541>
- Hua, A. Y., & Cui, L. (2026). Self-Disclosure and Psychological Well-Being in Chinese Adolescents: Exploring the Role of Self-Perception. *Journal of Adolescence*, 98(4), 1409-1414. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.70124>
- John, O. P., Naumann, L. P., & Soto, C. J. (2008). Paradigm shift to the integrative big five trait taxonomy. *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*, 3(2), 114-158.
- Karnieli-Miller, O., Michael, K., Gothelf, A. B., Palombo, M., & Meitar, D. (2021). The associations between reflective ability and communication skills among medical students. *Patient education and counseling*, 104(1), 92-98. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2020.06.028>
- Klesl, M., Liebenwein, C., & Schmuck, D. (2026). Austrian adolescents' sources of political information and trust in them: The reconfiguration of information authority on social media. *Journal of Children and Media*, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2026.2705214>
- Kornienko, O. (2024). Social network analysis. *Encyclopedia of adolescence*, 2, 528-539. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-323-96023-6.00083-X>
- Koutamanis, M., Vossen, H. G., & Valkenburg, P. M. (2015). Adolescents' comments in social media: Why do adolescents receive negative feedback and who is most at risk?. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 53, 486-494. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.07.016>
- Lee, Y. K., Min, J., & Seo, E. (2026). Social self-concept and communication competency: reciprocal relations and their predictors and outcomes. *Educational Psychology*, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2026.2692562>
- Leggett-James, M. P., Veenstra, R., Kaniūšonytė, G., & Laursen, B. (2026). Different peers influence different behaviors: Conformity to best friends and status-based norms across the transition into adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0954579426101138>
- Lei, C., & Shin, C. (2026, May). Learning environment, school–enterprise cooperation, and student motivation as predictors of employment competitiveness among undergraduates in application-oriented universities. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 11, p. 1805477). Frontiers Media SA. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2026.1805477>
- Lintner, T. (2026). Friendship fosters well-being, exclusion may hurt girls' mathematics: a two-wave cross-lagged panel model of peer relations, affect, and achievement. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 41(2), 79. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-026-01138-6>

- Lipnevich, A. A., Mattern, K., & Feddock, C. (2026). Formative assessment and feedback in medical education: A practical guide: AMEE Guide No. 189. *Medical Teacher*, 48(6), 921-940. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159x.2025.2569623>
- Liu, H. J., Den Hartigh, R. J., van der Poel, M. H., & Bosma, S. (2026). A novel perspective on intercultural communication education: Insights from ecological psychology and complex systems theory. *Culture & Psychology*, 1354067X261480123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067x261480123>
- Liu, X., & Xie, S. (2026). Influence of dance therapy mode of intangible cultural heritage on children's emotional regulation and psychological wellbeing: a randomized controlled intervention study. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 14, 1896823. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2026.1896823>
- Mahmud, S. K., & Kurt, M. (2026). Enhancing inclusive sustainability-oriented learning in higher education using adaptive learning platforms and performance-based assessment. *Sustainability*, 18(3), 1489. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su18031489>
- Marcionetti, J., Parola, A., Benini, S., Pettignano, M., & Stevanovic, T. (2026). Parental resources profiles to foster learning and their influence on children academic achievement and aspirations. *Applied Developmental Science*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2026.2728708>
- Masinga, N. (2025, October). Navigating aspirations: the role of self-concept in shaping academic performance among diverse adolescents. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 10, p. 1634375). Frontiers Media SA. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1634375>
- Mayer, L. J. P., & Mayer, C. H. (2026). A psychobiography of Carl Gustav Jung: an ego development perspective. *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/mhsi-03-2026-0080>
- Montero Hernandez, V., Hey, K., Chelise, R., & Mejia, I. (2026). A Student Empowerment Program to Support the Holistic Development of Community College Female Afghan Refugee Students. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2026.2666821>
- Mukherjee, N., Rajendra, K. M., & VijaySagar, J. (2026). The lived experience of adolescents with dissociative symptoms: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *European Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 100663. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejtd.2026.100663>
- Özdemir, E., & Çakır, G. (2026). The relationship between sports managers' emotional intelligence and communication skills and employee voice and performance: A path analysis. *BMC psychology*, 14(1), 831. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-026-04512-7>
- Westenberg, P. M., & Gjerde, P. F. (1999). Ego development during the transition from adolescence to young adulthood: A 9-year longitudinal study. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 33(2), 233-252. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jrpe.1999.2248>
- Park, M., & Yoo, G. E. (2026). Bridging internal states with music: An exploratory analysis of music-induced embodied emotion regulation in autistic youth and young adults. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 168, 105180. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2025.105180>

- Qiu, Y. (2026). The Dual Impact of Social Media on Teenagers' Self-Expression and Mental Health. In SHS Web of Conferences (Vol. 236, p. 03023). EDP Sciences. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202623603023>
- Rachman, Y. A., Sumarwan, U., Latifah, M., & Herawati, T. (2025). Social-emotional development in adolescents: the role of peer interaction, social media engagement, and self-esteem. Multidisciplinary Science Journal, 7(8), 2025363. <https://doi.org/10.31893/multiscience.2025363>
- Reddy, K. J., & Devassy, V. P. (2026). Positive Psychology in Leadership: Cultivating Resilient, Engaged, and Purpose-Driven Leaders. Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-25498-6_7
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). Society and the adolescent self-image (Vol. 11, p. 326). Princeton, NJ: Princeton university press.
- Rubiyanti, Y., Agustiani, H., Jatnika, R., & Syahlaa, S. (2026). Influence of mothers' positive parenting on adolescents' future orientation: Mediating role of career self-efficacy. Acta Psychologica, 264, 106450. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2026.106450>
- Sahai, S., & Tiwari, P. (2026). The art of becoming: exploring self-awareness and emotional regulation through art therapy. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2026.2643714>
- Sawyer, S. M., Azzopardi, P. S., Wickremarathne, D., & Patton, G. C. (2018). The age of adolescence. The lancet child & adolescent health, 2(3), 223-228. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2352-4642\(18\)30022-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2352-4642(18)30022-1)
- Schettino, G., Trocino, M. F., Poderico, I., & Capone, V. (2026). Student Employability in the Transition from University to the Labor Market: The Role of Faculty Support and Self-Compassion. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 23(5), 557. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph23050557>
- Sebastian, C., Burnett, S., & Blakemore, S. J. (2008). Development of the self-concept during adolescence. Trends in cognitive sciences, 12(11), 441-446. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2008.07.008>
- Shevchuk, A., Pit-ten Cate, I. M., Dickert, J., & Glock, S. (2026). Student teachers' judgements of students' academic and social characteristics: exploring the roles of teaching motivation and students' socioeconomic status. European Journal of Teacher Education, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2026.2619933>
- Shukla, A. (2026). The impact of social media on youth identity and self-expression. Naveen International Journal of Research in Education (NIJRE), 2(1), 77-85. <https://doi.org/10.71126/nijre.v2i1.19>
- Singhal, S., & Prakash, N. (2026). Can Tradition and Ambition Coexist? Unpacking Career and Collective Identity Integration Among Indian Emerging Adults. Human Arenas, 9(3), 2422-2458. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-025-00515-9>
- Spangsdorf, S., Ryan, M. K., Kirby, T. A., & Bongiorno, R. (2026). Do Boys and Girls Differ in their Perception of Ambition? Exploring the Conceptualisation of Adolescent Ambition. Trends in Psychology, 1-32. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43076-026-00522-x>

- Tauseef, M., Watkins, A., Ingram, Z., Zhang, R., Ullal, A., Ghosh, R., ... & Sarkar, N. (2026, April). Autistic Adults' Perspectives on Self-Expression and Dyadic vs. Group Interactions in AR Telepresence. In Proceedings of the 2026 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (pp. 1-16). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3772318.3791141>
- Throuvala, M. A., Griffiths, M. D., Rennoldson, M., & Kuss, D. J. (2019). Motivational processes and dysfunctional mechanisms of social media use among adolescents: A qualitative focus group study. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 93, 164-175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.12.012>
- Truța, C., Cazan, A. M., Stoica, R. E., Unianu, E. M., & Adamuti-Trache, M. (2026). The role of beliefs and social-emotional skills in shaping educational expectations among Romanian adolescents. *British Educational Research Journal*, 52(1), 750-775. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.70035>
- Tsarev, A. (2026). Rethinking Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) through Internal Family Systems (IFS): a conceptual integration and narrative analysis of Inside Out films. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 21(3), 436-460. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2026.2639545>
- van Buuren, M., Sijsma, H., Lute, N., van Rijn, R., Hollarek, M., Walsh, R. J., ... & Krabbendam, L. (2022). Development of the neural correlates of self-and other-referential processing across adolescence. *NeuroImage*, 252, 119032. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2022.119032>
- Van der Aar, L. P. E., Peters, S., & Crone, E. A. (2018). The development of self-views across adolescence: Investigating self-descriptions with and without social comparison using a novel experimental paradigm. *Cognitive Development*, 48, 256-270. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cogdev.2018.10.001>
- van der Crujsen, R., Blankenstein, N. E., Spaans, J. P., Peters, S., & Crone, E. A. (2023). Longitudinal self-concept development in adolescence. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 18(1), nsac062. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsac062>
- Wang, H., & Zhang, W. (2026). Peer, family, and teacher relationships and adolescent internet gaming addiction: Mediating roles of social interaction and emotional needs. *Acta Psychologica*, 263, 106282. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2026.106282>
- Wang, Y. (2026). Cultural divergences in student creative thinking development: An exploratory analysis of PISA 2022 data. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 124, 103629. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2026.103629>
- Yu, A., & Shi, Z. (2026). The psychometric properties of the self-expression and emotion regulation in art making scale (SERAMS) in Chinese university students majoring in art and design. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 17, 1586568. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1586568>
- Yuan, X., & Olivos, F. (2023). Conformity or contrast? Simultaneous effect of grademates and classmates on students' educational aspirations. *Social Science Research*, 114, 102908. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2023.102908>



- Zhang, L., & Hu, Z. (2026). Innovative approaches to organizing the learning process in an opera choir to increase student motivation and self-expression. *The Journal of General Psychology*, 153(2), 153-180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00221309.2025.2541590>
- Zheng, H., Feng, Q., & Wang, G. (2025). From discourse to effectiveness: A communication studies perspective on college counselors' individual psychological counseling. *Acta Psychologica*, 261, 105828-105828. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2025.105828>
- Zhou, J., Hu, Y., Liu, Y., Song, J., & Tang, J. (2026). Developmental Cascades Linking Academic Achievement, Prosocial Behavior, Peer Relationships and Teacher–Student Relationships in Chinese Early Adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-026-02369-y>