

A Probe into the Academic Life Satisfaction of the School-Going Adolescents of Paschim Medinipur District

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ABSTRACT

To assess the academic life satisfaction of school-going adolescents, this study employed a descriptive survey method. The Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (Huebner et al., 1998) was administered to a randomly selected sample of 500 adolescents from schools in the Paschim Medinipur district. The findings revealed that life satisfaction derived from family was exceptionally high, while satisfaction related to school, friendships, and self-perception was also high. Overall, the total life satisfaction of the adolescents was found to be high. However, satisfaction with the living environment was notably low. Female school-going adolescents reported higher academic life satisfaction compared to their male counterparts.

Keywords: Academic Life Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction, Positive Psychology, Quality of Life, Subjective Well-Being

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage characterised by cognitive, emotional, and social changes that significantly influence academic motivation and overall well-being (Steinberg, 2014). Academic life satisfaction, a key aspect of adolescent well-being, is a multidimensional construct encompassing satisfaction with family, friendships, school environment, self-perception, and living conditions (Huebner et al., 2005). Positive academic experiences contribute to students' motivation, self-concept, and psychological well-being, which in turn impact their future aspirations and success (Diener, 2000). The Paschim Medinipur District, with its diverse socio-cultural and educational landscape, provides an important context to examine the academic life satisfaction of school-going adolescents. Research suggests that family support, peer relationships, and school engagement play a critical role in shaping students' academic experiences (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). A supportive school environment with strong teacher-student interactions fosters motivation and learning, while a positive home atmosphere enhances emotional stability and academic confidence (Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, external factors such as the quality of the living environment may also influence adolescents' academic satisfaction, potentially affecting their engagement and well-being (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This study aimed to explore the various dimensions of academic life satisfaction among adolescents in Paschim Medinipur, identifying key strengths and areas of concern.

Objective of the Study

The broad objectives of this study were -

1. To observe the present state of affairs of the **Academic Life Satisfaction** of school-going adolescents of Paschim Medinipur District;
2. To compare the **Academic Life Satisfaction** of the male and female school-going adolescents.

The Hypotheses were –

H₁: The school-going adolescents, considering both male and female as a whole, have high *Academic Life Satisfaction*.

H₂: The **male** and **female** school-going adolescents do not differ with respect to their *Academic Life Satisfaction*.

CONSTRUCT OF THE STUDY: ACADEMIC LIFE SATISFACTION

Academic life satisfaction refers to a student's overall contentment and fulfilment with their educational experiences, including their academic performance, learning environment, and relationships with teachers and peers. The Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale assesses students' satisfaction across various life domains, including family, friends, school, living environment, and self (Huebner, 1994; Huebner et al., 1998). Family life satisfaction encompasses a student's contentment with their family relationships and dynamics. In contrast, friends' life satisfaction pertains to a school-going adolescent's satisfaction with their peer relationships. School life satisfaction refers to a student's enjoyment and fulfilment with educational activities, learning, and overall school experience. Furthermore, self-satisfaction involves a student's self-perceived worth and satisfaction with others' opinions about them, reflecting the concept of the "looking-glass self". Lastly, living environment life satisfaction concerns a student's satisfaction with their immediate community, neighbourhood, and local environment.

A BRIEF REVIEW OF ACADEMIC LIFE SATISFACTION

The studies mentioned provide a comprehensive overview of various factors influencing life satisfaction and self-esteem among adolescents, highlighting the critical roles of gender, parental support, peer communication, and extracurricular activities. Mistry et al. (2024) found that female adolescents reported significantly higher life satisfaction in areas such as family, friends, school, and self-compared to their male counterparts, although satisfaction with living conditions showed no gender differences. Radhika (2024) explored the relationship between life satisfaction and self-esteem, revealing that adolescents with high life satisfaction also exhibit higher self-efficacy in academic, social, and emotional domains. Gender influences both life satisfaction and self-esteem, with academic success and self-esteem acting as predictors of life happiness for both genders. Char et al. (2023) and Manna (2023) further illustrate how supportive family environments in the Purulia District and varying family structures influence adolescents' life satisfaction and self-esteem. Zuo et al. (2022) emphasised the mediating role of physical activity in enhancing life satisfaction through increased parental support. The findings of Saad et al. (2020) showed strong links between life satisfaction and self-esteem among Indian and Afghan students, with gender differences influencing these outcomes.

Additional studies, such as those by Rath and Patra (2018), Clarke et al. (2023), and Supervía et al. (2023), underline the importance of parental attachment, eudaimonia, and self-efficacy in shaping adolescents' life satisfaction. The role of self-esteem as a mediator between life satisfaction and other psychosocial factors is particularly noteworthy. Research by Lábiscsák-Erdélyi et al. (2022) and Šimunović and Olčar (2022) highlights how school-related factors and participation in extracurricular activities like sports and music programs contribute to life satisfaction, with gender playing a significant role in these dynamics. Lastly, Szcześniak et al. (2022) and Gallego et al. (2021) demonstrate how peer communication and emotional intelligence are crucial for understanding the complex relationships between life satisfaction, self-esteem, and overall adolescent well-being.

METHODS

The present study was carried out through the *Descriptive Survey Method*.

Variables

Academic Life Satisfaction was the only variable of the present study.

Sample

To make the sample representative *multiphasic stratified random sampling technique* was adopted. In the present study, 500 school-going adolescents aged 14-16 years were studied. Studying in the 9th and 10th standards were randomly selected from 11 Government Sponsored Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools (Bengali medium) of Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal.

The Tool of Research

Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS), (Huebner, Laughlin, Ash & Gilman, 1998)

The Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) is a widely used research instrument developed by **Huebner, Laughlin, Ash, and Gilman in 1998**. It assesses students' satisfaction with various aspects of their lives, typically across five domains. The MSLSS consists of 40 items, with respondents rating their satisfaction on a 5-point scale. This scale provides a comprehensive understanding of students' life satisfaction.

Table 4.3: Factor-Wise Distribution of Items of Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS)

Sl. No.	Factors	Items
1.	Family	7
2.	Friends	9
3.	School	8
4.	Living Environment	9
5.	Self	7
	Total	40

The domains contain an unequal number of items. The mean score of each dimension is made comparable by normalising.

The normalisation procedure is as follows:

Normalised Mean = Mean of the item responses in a dimension (or total scale) / number of total items of the dimension (or total scale).

Therefore, the maximum score in each domain is 5, the minimum is 1, and the mid value is 3.

The mean of the scores of each dimension or total scale was interpreted as –

1.00 to 1.99	:	Very Low
2.00 to 2.99	:	Low
3.00 to 3.99	:	High
4.00 to 5.00	:	Very high

RESULTS

Results are presented in two subsections: (a) Descriptive Presentation, and (b) Gender-wise Comparative Analysis

Descriptive Presentation

Here, the results are presented to prove the following hypotheses:

H₁: The school-going adolescents, considering both male and female as a whole, have high **Academic Life**

Satisfaction.

Table 5.1 exhibits the descriptive statistics of scores on different facets and as a total of the Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction (MSLSS) of the school-going adolescents in the present study.

Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics of Scores of Different Dimensions of Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) of the School-Going Adolescents, Considering Both Male and Female as a Whole

Life Satisfaction	N	Range	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
Family	500	3.43	1.57	5.00	4.53	0.80	Very High
Friends	500	3.00	1.78	4.78	3.45	0.48	High
School	500	3.25	1.75	5.00	3.46	0.54	High
Living Environment	500	2.77	1.56	4.33	2.93	0.45	Low
Self	500	3.71	1.29	5.00	3.45	0.61	High
MSLS in Totality	500	2.35	2.28	4.63	3.53	0.41	High

Table 5.1 depicts the descriptive statistics of the different dimensions and the sum total of all the dimensions of **Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction (MSLSS)** scores of the school-going adolescents. In case of the dimension related to satisfaction with **family** life, the “minimum” of the scores was 1.57 and the “maximum” of the scores was 5.00, and the range was 3.43; the “mean” and “standard deviation” of the said distribution were 4.53 and 0.80, respectively. Next, in case of the dimension related to satisfaction of having **friends**, the “minimum” of the scores was 1.78 and the “maximum” of the scores was 4.78, and the range was 3.00; the “mean” and “standard deviation” of the said distribution were 3.45 and 0.48, respectively. Then, in case of the dimension related to satisfaction of having the **school**, the “minimum” of the scores was 1.75 and the “maximum” of the scores was 5.00, and the range was 3.25; the “mean” and “standard deviation” of the said distribution were 3.46 and 0.54, respectively. Then, in the case of the dimension related to satisfaction derived from **living environment**, the “minimum” of the scores was 1.56 and the “maximum” of the scores was 4.33, and the range was 2.77; the “mean” and “standard deviation” of the said distribution were 2.93 and 0.45, respectively. Next, in case of the dimension related to satisfaction derived from **self**, the “minimum” of the scores was 1.29 and the “maximum” of the scores was 5.00, and the range was 3.71; the “mean” and “standard deviation” of the said distribution were 3.45 and 0.61, respectively. Finally, in case of **MSLSS** scores in totality, the “minimum” of the scores was 2.28 and the “maximum” of the scores was 4.63, and the range was 2.35; the “mean” and “standard deviation” of the said distribution were 3.53 and 0.41, respectively.

Figure 5.1 (a) depicts the histogram with a normal curve of **Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction (MSLSS) Scores** of the school-going adolescents (considering both male and female as a whole). By visually examining, we come to know that the said distribution was about normal (Fein, Gilmour, Machin and Hendry, 2022).

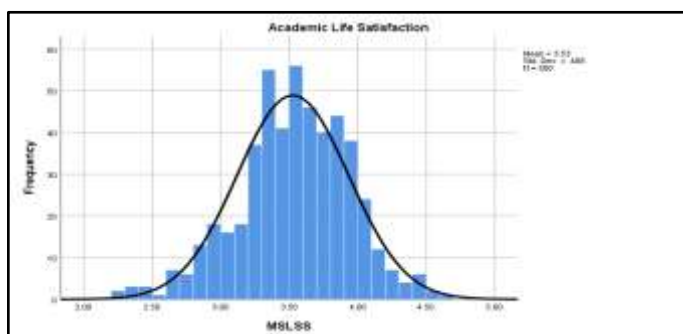


Figure 5.1 (a): Histogram with normal curve of Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) Scores of the School-going Adolescents Considering Both Male and Female as a Whole

Figure 5.1 (b) depicts the bar diagram of different facets of the Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) Score of the school-going adolescents, considering both male and female as a whole.

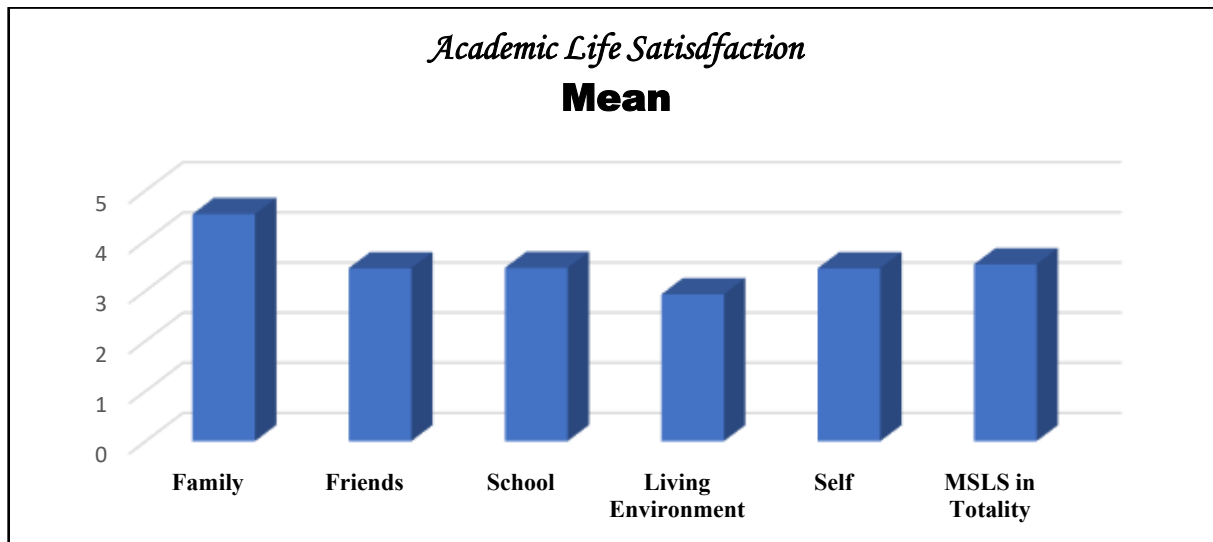


Figure 5.1 (b): Bar Diagram of Different Facets of Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) Score of the School-going Adolescents Considering Both Male and Female as a Whole

Comparative Analysis

Here, the gender-wise (i.e., male and female school-going adolescents) comparison was made. To prove the hypothesis H₂[The **male** and **female** school-going adolescents do not differ with respect to their *Academic Life Satisfaction*.], a comparison of the two groups, here an independent sample t-test was done.

Here, the result of the gender-wise comparative analysis for academic life satisfaction is placed.

Table 5.2 (a): Group Statistics of Scores on Different Dimensionsof Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) of the male school-going adolescents and the female school-going adolescents

Life Satisfaction	Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
Family	Male	197	4.34	0.93	Very High
	Female	303	4.66	0.67	Very High
Friends	Male	197	3.38	0.52	High
	Female	303	3.50	0.45	High
School	Male	197	3.36	0.52	High
	Female	303	3.53	0.54	High
Living Environment	Male	197	2.89	0.49	Low
	Female	303	2.96	0.43	Low
Self	Male	197	3.38	0.63	High
	Female	303	3.50	0.58	High
MSLS in Totality	Male	197	3.43	0.45	High
	Female	303	3.59	0.36	High

Table 5.2 (a) shows group statistics of the scores of different dimensions of the **Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS)** of the **male** school-going adolescents and the **female** school-going

adolescents. In case of satisfaction derived from **Family**, the means of male and female were 4.34 and 4.66, respectively; again, the standard deviations were 0.93 and 0.67, respectively. Next, in case of satisfaction derived from **Friends**, the means of male and female were 3.38 and 3.50, respectively; again, the standard deviations were 0.52 and 0.45, respectively. Then, in case of satisfaction derived from **School**, the means of male and female were 3.36 and 3.53, respectively; again, the standard deviations were 0.52 and 0.54, respectively. Next, in case of satisfaction derived from **Living Environment**, the means of male and female adolescents were 2.89 and 2.96, respectively; again, the standard deviations were 0.49 and 0.43, respectively. Then, in case of satisfaction derived from **Self**, the means of male and female were 3.38 and 3.50, respectively; again, the standard deviations were 0.63 and 0.58, respectively. Finally, in the case of **Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction in totality**, the means of **male** and **female** were 3.43 and 3.59, respectively; again, the standard deviations were 0.45 and 0.36, respectively.

Figure 5.2 shows the bar diagram of the means of scores of different dimensions of the **Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS)** of the **male** school-going adolescents and the **female** school-going adolescents.

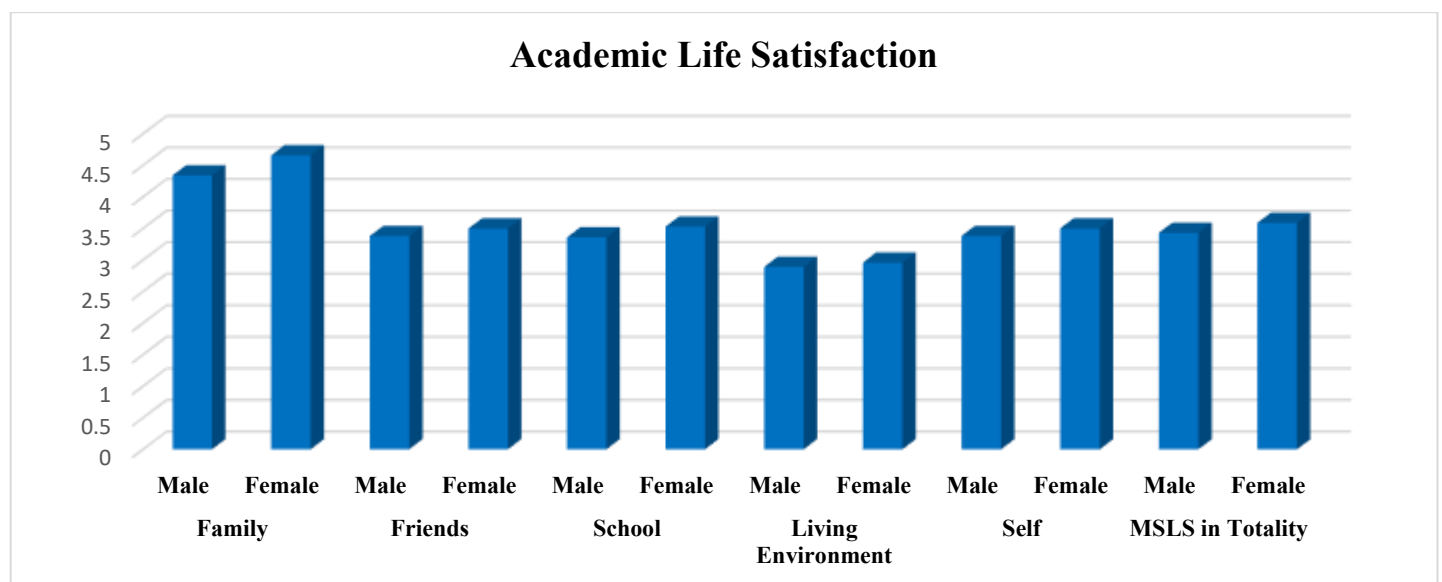


Figure 5.2: Bar Diagram of Means of the scores in Different Dimensions of Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) Scores of the male school-going adolescents and the female school-going adolescents.

Table 5.2 (b): Results of the Independent Samples Test of Gender Wise Comparison of Means of Scores of Different Dimensions of the Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) of the male school-going adolescents and the female school-going adolescents

Life Satisfaction		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Family	Equal variances assumed	27.18	0.00	-4.52	497.00	0.00
	Equal variances not assumed.			-4.23	328.64	0.00
Friends	Equal variances assumed	4.09	0.04	-2.71	497.00	0.01
	Equal variances not assumed.			-2.63	376.36	0.01
School	Equal variances assumed	0.35	0.56	-3.56	497.00	0.00

	Equal variances not assumed.			-3.58	428.98	0.00
Living Environment	Equal variances assumed	1.03	0.31	-1.73	497.00	0.08
	Equal variances not assumed.			-1.68	376.40	0.09
Self	Equal variances assumed	0.36	0.55	-2.21	497.00	0.03
	Equal variances not assumed.			-2.17	395.16	0.03
MSLS in Totality	Equal variances assumed	11.71	0.00	-4.24	497.00	0.00
	Equal variances not assumed.			-4.04	353.35	0.00

From table 5.2 (b), it is observed that the two groups (**male & female**) **differed** (statistically) significantly in multidimensional students' life satisfaction score in totality and four dimensions of Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS), except the dimension related to Living Environment.

DISCUSSION

The results in Table 5.1 indicated that, on average, school-going adolescents in Paschim Medinipur District experienced high levels of life satisfaction across various domains, leading to a strong overall academic life satisfaction. Hence, **hypothesis H₁ was accepted**. Exceptionally high family life satisfaction suggested that nurturing and supportive family relationships played a key role in promoting both emotional well-being and academic success. Likewise, high satisfaction with friendships highlighted the value of positive peer connections in fostering emotional security, recreation, and a sense of belonging. Elevated school life satisfaction reflected the benefits of engaging in academic activities, supportive teacher-student relationships, and an inclusive school environment in enriching their educational experiences. Additionally, high self-satisfaction demonstrated that adolescents maintained a strong self-concept, confidence in their abilities, and high self-esteem, which reinforced their academic motivation and success. However, lower satisfaction with the living environment pointed to concerns regarding safety, inclusivity, or recreational opportunities, indicating areas needing improvement. Nevertheless, the overall high satisfaction levels in other domains contributed to a positive academic life satisfaction among these adolescents.

Table 5.2 (a) presents the group statistics for 'Multidimensional Students Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS)' scores among male and female school-going adolescents. Table 5.2 (b) clearly indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in the facets of Family, Friends, School, Self, and overall MSLSS scores. However, no significant difference was observed in the Living Environment dimension. On average, female school-going adolescents reported significantly higher life satisfaction in the areas of Family, Friends, School, Self, and overall life satisfaction compared to their male counterparts. Hence, the **Null hypothesis H₂ was rejected**. The findings indicated that female adolescents in Paschim Medinipur were more likely to develop positive relationships with family members, friends, and teachers, contributing to their greater life satisfaction. Their higher family life satisfaction could be attributed to stronger familial bonds and supportive interactions, fostering mutual understanding within the household. In the friends' domain, female adolescents likely experienced more meaningful and supportive peer relationships, enhancing their emotional well-being. Regarding school life satisfaction, they may have benefited from more positive teacher-student interactions, a stronger sense of belonging, and greater participation in school activities, all of which contributed to their higher scores. Furthermore, their elevated self-satisfaction suggested a more positive self-concept and higher self-esteem, both key predictors of life satisfaction. In contrast, male adolescents reported lower satisfaction in these areas, possibly reflecting greater challenges and stressors in their daily lives. However, the absence of a significant difference between males and females in the living environment dimension suggested that both groups were equally satisfied with their living conditions, likely due to their shared socio-economic background in Paschim Medinipur.

Therefore, hypothesis H₂ was rejected.

CONCLUSION

From the result and subsequent discussion of the Descriptive Presentation, it might be concluded that the school-going adolescents of Paschim Medinipur District, considering both genders (male and female) as a whole, experienced high life satisfaction in family, friends, school, self-facets of MSLSS and also in academic life satisfaction (in totality).

From the results and subsequent discussions of the *Gender-wise Comparative Analysis* of the present study, it might be concluded that, on average, female school-going adolescents expressed higher academic life satisfaction than their male counterparts.

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