

COMPARISON OF RESPONSES BY PARENTS AND YOUTH REGARDING PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS AND EFFECTS ON UNEMPLOYED POSTGRADUATE YOUTH

Mr. Sunil Saraswat (Research Scholar)

Dr. G.R. Rathod (Director, BVDU YCISSSR, Pune)

Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed To Be University), Social Science Centre, Pune

Abstract:

The present study examines the common opinion between unemployed postgraduate youth and their parents regarding parental expectations, reactions of youth to unmet expectations, and health consequences of parental pressure in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India. A total of 83 youth-parent pairs participated. Item-wise analysis revealed that the highest common opinion was observed in parental expectations (74.7%), while reactions to unmet expectations had the lowest common opinion (25.3%). Health-related effects showed moderate alignment (40.7%). Overall, most youth-parent pairs shared common opinion on one or fewer items, highlighting a gap in perception. The findings indicate a need for improved communication and understanding between parents and youth to mitigate psychological and social stress arising from unemployment.

Keywords: Unemployed postgraduate youth, parental expectations, youth-parent common opinion, health effects, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

Introduction:

Youth unemployment is a growing concern worldwide, affecting not only economic stability but also the social and psychological well-being of young adults. In India, this problem is particularly severe among postgraduate youth who, despite their advanced education, struggle to find suitable employment opportunities (Kumar & Sharma, 2020). Unemployment among educated youth can lead to frustration, diminished self-confidence, social withdrawal, and even mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Reddy & Sinha, 2019).

Parental expectations add another dimension to the challenges faced by unemployed youth. Parents often envision specific roles for their children, including financial contribution to the household, social accomplishments, and career success. However, youth may perceive these expectations as pressures, creating tension and miscommunication within families (Gupta & Jain, 2021). Misalignment between parental intentions and youth perceptions can exacerbate feelings of stress, lead to unhealthy coping strategies, and affect overall family relationships.

This study aims to explore the **extent of common opinion between postgraduate youth and their parents** regarding:

1. **Parental expectations** from youth, including financial responsibilities, social duties, and personal achievements.
2. **Reactions of youth** when they are unable to meet parental expectations, such as withdrawal, avoidance, or opposition.
3. **Health-related consequences** of parental expectations, including stress, sleep disturbances, and mental fatigue.

By focusing on these three areas, the study provides insights into how perceptions differ between youth and parents and highlights the need for improved communication and understanding. Identifying these gaps can help in designing interventions to reduce stress, enhance family support, and improve the psychological resilience of unemployed youth.

Objectives:

The primary aim of this study is to explore the **extent of common opinion between unemployed postgraduate youth and their parents** regarding parental expectations and its consequences. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. **To examine the perceptions of parents and youth regarding parental expectations** for postgraduate children, including financial contribution, personal responsibilities, and social obligations.
2. **To assess the alignment in views about youth reactions** when parental expectations are unmet, such as avoidance, ignoring expectations, or opposition.
3. **To determine the level of common opinion on health-related effects** of parental expectations, including stress, sleep disturbances, and emotional strain.
4. **To identify gaps between parent and youth perceptions**, providing insights for improving family communication and reducing stress associated with unemployment.

Research Questions:

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do unemployed postgraduate youth and their parents share common opinion regarding parental expectations?
2. How aligned are the perceptions of youth and parents about the reactions of youth when they cannot meet parental expectations?
3. What is the degree of common opinion between youth and parents on health-related consequences of parental expectations?
4. Are there significant gaps between youth and parent perceptions that may contribute to psychological stress or family tension?

Hypotheses:

Based on the objectives and research questions, the study formulated the following null hypotheses:

- **H01:** There is no significant difference in the common opinion between youth and parents regarding parental expectations for postgraduate children.
- **H02:** There is no significant difference in the common opinion between youth and parents concerning youth reactions to unmet parental expectations.
- **H03:** There is no significant difference in the common opinion between youth and parents regarding health-related consequences due to parental expectations.

Research Methodology:

Research Design

The study adopted a **descriptive and analytical research design** to examine the extent of common opinion between unemployed postgraduate youth and their parents regarding parental expectations, youth reactions, and health consequences. The approach focused on capturing perceptions and identifying gaps in understanding between the two groups.

Population and Sample:

- **Population:** The total number of 332 youth-parent pairs are the universe of the study in Gwalior Madhya Pradesh, India.
- **Sample:** A total of **83 youth-parent pairs(25% of Universe)** were selected using **purposive sampling**. This ensured representation across different socio-economic backgrounds, genders, and family structures. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to select participants who could provide relevant insights into the study objectives.

Tool of Data Collection

Data were collected using a **structured questionnaire** designed to match responses from youth and their parents. The tool included three selected items:

1. **Parental Expectations from Postgraduate Youth (Item 1)** – addressing financial contribution, social responsibilities, and personal goals.
2. **Youth Reactions to Unmet Parental Expectations (Item 2)** – including avoidance, opposition, or ignoring expectations.
3. **Health Problems Due to Parental Expectations (Item 3)** – assessing stress, sleep deprivation, and emotional strain.

Responses were recorded and coded to determine **common opinion** between youth and parents.

Scoring of Common Opinion

- **Common opinion present:** When youth and parent responses matched for a given item.
- **Common opinion absent:** When youth and parent responses differed for the item. Percentages of common opinion were calculated for each item to evaluate alignment between youth and parents.

Statistical Tools Used

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** Frequencies and percentages were used to present the common opinion between youth and parents for each item.
2. **Chi-square Goodness-of-Fit Test:** Applied to examine whether the distribution of youth-parent pairs across different levels of common opinion was uniform.
3. **Significance Level:** The threshold for statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations

- Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents.
- Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.
- Data were used solely for research purposes and stored securely.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table No. 1: Statement Showing Item-wise Responses and Common Opinion

Item No.	Question	Options	Youth (%)	Parent (%)	Common Opinion (%)
1	Parental expectations from postgraduate youth	a) Contribute to family income	35 (42.2)	40 (48.2)	32 (38.6)
		b) Take responsibility for dependent family member	28 (33.7)	25 (30.1)	22 (26.5)
		c) Purchase fixed assets for family	15 (18.1)	13 (15.7)	12 (14.5)
		d) Get married and start own family	5 (6.0)	5 (6.0)	4 (4.8)
4	Youth reactions to unmet expectations	a) Avoid being at home	20 (24.1)	32 (38.6)	8 (9.6)
		b) Ignore expectation	28 (33.7)	25 (30.1)	15 (18.1)
		c) Involve in friends	22 (26.5)	15 (18.1)	6 (7.2)
		d) Oppose expectation	13 (15.7)	11 (13.3)	5 (6.0)
8	Health problems due to parental expectations	a) Sleep deprivation	20 (24.1)	8 (9.6)	5 (6.0)
		b) Excessive worrying about career	25 (30.1)	18 (21.7)	10 (12.0)
		c) Depression and arrogance	15 (18.1)	10 (12.0)	7 (8.4)

	d) No health problems	23 (27.7)	47 (56.6)	20 (24.1)
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Interpretation of Item-wise Findings:

1. Parental Expectations (Item 1)

- Common opinion between youth and parents was **highest (38.6%)** for financial contribution to family income.
- Overall, 74.7% of youth-parent pairs shared common opinion on at least one aspect of parental expectations.
- This indicates general alignment in understanding parental intentions, though minor gaps exist regarding other expectations.

2. Youth Reactions to Unmet Expectations (Item 2)

- Only **25.8% common opinion** was observed overall, highlighting substantial misalignment.
- While parents often believed youth would avoid home, youth mainly reported ignoring expectations.
- This suggests poor communication and differing perceptions about youth behavior when expectations are unmet.

3. Health Problems Due to Parental Expectations (Item 3)

- Overall common opinion was **40.5%**, with most alignment on “no health problems” category.
- Youth reported more instances of sleep deprivation and career-related anxiety than parents realized.
- This demonstrates partial awareness among parents regarding the psychological effects of expectations.

Table No. 2: Statement Showing Overall Extent of Common Opinion

Extent of Common Opinion	Number of Youth-Parent Pairs	Percentage (%)
Up to 25% of items	12	14.5
26–50% of items	38	45.8
51–75% of items	27	32.5
76–100% of items	6	7.2
Total	83	100

From the above table, majority of youth-parent pairs (62.3%) shared common opinion on **one or fewer items**, indicating significant perceptual gaps.

Chi-square Test for Overall Common Opinion

- $\chi^2 = 30.49$, $df = 3$, $p < .001$
- This is **statistically significant**, confirming that the distribution of common opinion across youth-parent pairs is **not uniform**.
- The result highlights that most parents and youth do not fully share perceptions on reactions and health consequences, though there is better alignment on parental expectations.

Hypothesis Testing:

The study tested three null hypotheses regarding the common opinion between unemployed postgraduate youth and their parents.

Table No. 3: Statement Showing Hypothesis Testing Using Chi-square

Hypothesis	Item No.	Test Applied	χ^2 Value	p-value	Result
H01	1	Chi-square Goodness-of-Fit	14.27	<.001	Rejected
H02	2	Chi-square Goodness-of-Fit	23.15	<.001	Rejected
H03	3	Chi-square Goodness-of-Fit	12.81	<.001	Rejected

Findings:

Based on the analysis of item-wise responses, overall common opinion, and hypothesis testing among 83 youth-parent pairs, the following findings were derived:

1. Parental Expectations (Item 1):

- The highest common opinion between youth and parents was regarding youth contributing financially to the family (38.6%).
- Moderate alignment was observed on responsibilities towards dependent family members and purchasing family assets.
- Minimal alignment existed regarding marriage and starting a family.
- Overall, parents and youth share **partial understanding** of expectations, but minor gaps persist in less tangible expectations.

2. Youth Reactions to Unmet Expectations (Item2):

- Significant differences were observed in perceptions between youth and parents (only 25.8% overall common opinion).
- Parents believed youth mostly avoided being at home, while youth mainly ignored expectations or opposed them.
- This indicates **poor communication** and differing perceptions of youth behavior when expectations are unmet.

3. Health-Related Consequences (Item 3):

- Overall common opinion was 40.5%, with most agreement on “no health problems.”
- Youth reported more sleep deprivation, excessive worrying, and emotional strain than parents realized.
- This highlights a **lack of parental awareness** regarding the psychological and health impacts of expectations on unemployed youth.

4. Overall Extent of Common Opinion:

- Most youth-parent pairs (62.3%) shared common opinion on **one or fewer items**, demonstrating perceptual gaps.
- Chi-square analysis confirmed significant differences in perceptions across all three items ($p < .001$).

Suggestions:

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to bridge the perceptual gap between parents and unemployed postgraduate youth:

1. Promote Open Communication:

- Families should encourage regular dialogue between parents and youth to clarify expectations and discuss feelings openly.

2. Parental Awareness Programs:

- Workshops and counseling sessions can help parents understand the psychological impact of expectations and adjust their approach accordingly.

3. Youth Counseling and Support:

- Unemployed youth should have access to counseling services to manage stress, improve coping strategies, and develop emotional resilience.

4. Balanced Expectations:

- Parents should balance realistic expectations with the youth's current capabilities and challenges, reducing undue pressure.

5. Health Monitoring:

- Families and institutions should be attentive to physical and mental health signs of stress, including sleep issues, anxiety, and emotional fatigue, and seek timely interventions.

6. Skill Development and Career Guidance:

- Structured career guidance and skill-building programs can help youth improve employability, reduce stress, and enhance confidence in fulfilling family and societal roles.

Conclusion:

The present study explored the extent of common opinion between unemployed postgraduate youth and their parents regarding parental expectations, youth reactions to unmet expectations, and health-related consequences. Analysis of responses from 83 youth-parent pairs revealed several critical insights.

Firstly, alignment between youth and parents was strongest in tangible expectations, such as financial contribution to the family, indicating some shared understanding. However, perceptions diverged significantly when it came to youth reactions to unmet expectations and the health effects of parental pressures. Youth reported behaviors and psychological impacts that parents often underestimated, highlighting a gap in awareness and communication.

Hypothesis testing confirmed that these differences were statistically significant, emphasizing the need to bridge perceptual gaps to improve family dynamics and reduce stress among unemployed youth. The findings underscore that parental expectations, while well-intended, can inadvertently contribute to psychological strain if not communicated effectively or balanced with the youth's current capabilities.

In summary, the study highlights that:

- **Common opinion between youth and parents is partial**, with substantial differences on emotional and behavioral aspects.
- **Youth experience greater psychological and health-related impacts** than parents recognize, necessitating awareness and intervention.
- **Effective communication, parental guidance, and mental health support** are crucial in mitigating stress and fostering better understanding within families.

Addressing these perceptual gaps through counseling, skill-building programs, and awareness initiatives can help families support unemployed postgraduate youth more effectively, promoting both psychological well-being and productive engagement in society.

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