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## Does Psychological Well-Being Mediate the Relationship Between Parental Expectations and Academic Achievement?

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### INTRODUCTION

- According to previous research, high parental expectations can positively impact children's academic success and longevity (David-Kean, P. D. 2005).
- The inability for children to fulfill their parent's high expectations can lead to increased levels of stress and depression (Ang & Huan, 2006).
- A recent study found that high parental expectations are indirectly positively associated with academic achievement and are directly positively associated with depression in adolescents (Ma et al., 2018).
- The current study explored the relationship between parental expectation, academic achievement and mental health in undergraduate students.

#### Hypothesis:

- We hypothesize that mental health will mediate the relationship between parental expectations and academic achievement.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Participants

- 49 undergraduate students
- 36 freshman, 8 sophomores, 3 juniors, 2 seniors
- Mean age = 18.88, ( $SD = 2.06$ )
- 35 participants identified as female, 12 identified as male, 1 identified as non-binary, 1 self-identified as queer
- Participants were predominantly Caucasian (65.31%)

#### Procedure

- Participants were recruited from the General Psychology participant pool, selected a study session and then completed measures in a supervised computer lab.
- Students were awarded a half credit for their participation.

#### Measures

- **Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS-21):** 21-item measure where higher scores reflect greater symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995).
- **Academic Success Inventory for College Students (ASICS):** Higher scores reflect greater academic achievement (Prevatt et al., 2011). We used subscales of General Academic Skills, Internal Motivation/Confidence, Concentration/Self-Regulation and Lack of Anxiety.
- **Living up to Parental Expectations Inventory (LPEI):** Perceived Parental Expectations scale (PPE) of LPEI is a 9-item measure where higher mean scores demonstrate perceptions of higher parental expectations (Wang & Heppner, 2002).

### TABLE 1

**Multiple Regression analysis:** Standardized betas and standard errors for regression analyses between measures.

	IV	DV	<i>b</i>	SE
Model 1	Parental Expectations (PPE)	Academic Achievement (ASICS)	.242	2.96
Model 2	Parental Expectations (PPE)	Mental Health (DASS-21)	.085	3.44
Model 3	Mental Health (DASS-21)	Academic Achievement (ASICS)	-.220	.133
Model 4	Parental Expectations (PPE)	Academic Achievement (ASICS)	.255	.094
	Mental Health (DASS-21)		-.253	.097

### TABLE 2

**Bivariate correlations:** Means, standard deviations, and correlations for total ASICS scores, mean PPE scores and total DASS scores.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
1. Academic achievement (ASICS)	83.24	20.33	-	.242	-.220
2. Parental expectations (PPE)	3.20	.99		-	.085
3. Mental health (DASS-21)	42.75	22.85			-

### RESULTS

- Regression analysis was conducted to test for mediation using the Baron & Kenny method (1986).
- Mean PPE scores were not significantly related to total ASICS scores,  $b = .242, p = .114$ .
- Mean PPE scores were not significantly related to total DASS scores,  $b = .085, p = .569$ .
- Total DASS scores were not significantly related to total ASICS scores,  $b = -.220, p = .152$ .
- Total ASICS scores were not significantly related to mean PPE scores,  $b = .255, p = .094$ , or total DASS scores,  $b = -.253, p = .097$ .
- There were no significant correlations found between variables.

### DISCUSSION

- Although the results did not reach significance, the coefficients were in the predicted direction of our hypothesis.
- Our study had a small sample size recruited through convenience sampling which limited our statistical power.
- Our coefficients approached significance, indicating that a larger sample size may have yielded significant results.
- A formatting error with scaling of ASICS occurred which gave participants a "0" item option which may have reduced the total ASICS scores.
- Directions for future studies include a larger sample size of a more diverse population of students.

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