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Parent's and adolescent's perception on problems associated with parenting

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Abstract
The study was carried out at Barpeta district of lower Assam. The sample comprises of 200 Class XI adolescents in the age group of 16 to 17 years. Biological parents with whom sample adolescents are living from birth were also included under the study. To make the sample representative equal numbers of boys and girls from both rural and urban areas were selected. A semi –structured interview schedule was adopted for collecting data on problems associated with parenting. Home visit was conducted for interviewing parents of the sample adolescents. Frequencies and percentages were computed and tabulated to analyze the findings. Results of the study revealed that most of the rural and urban parent's perceived problems associated with monitoring and controlling of their adolescents. Most of the adolescents also had perception on their parents' problem in parenting them on different aspects of monitoring and controlling.

Keywords: Urban, rural, problems, monitoring, controlling

Introduction
Researchers define parental monitoring as parental behaviors that regulate and provide awareness of their offspring's' whereabouts, conduct and companions (Dishion *et al.,* 1998; Li *et al.,* 2000) [1, 2]. Parental monitoring reduces adolescents' externalizing outcomes; therefore it is one of the important aspects of parenting. Again parental behavioral control involves managing adolescent behavior and activities in an attempt to regulate their behavior and provide them with guidance for appropriate social behavior and conduct (Baumrind, 1996) [3]. Research suggests that behavioral control can protect against problem behaviors. Parenting adolescents is not an easy task. It involves knowledge, patience, understanding, self-regulation of own behavior and lots of love and affections'. As we know adolescents attain maturity cognitively and physically. Establishment of autonomy and identity are normal developmental tasks of adolescents. The normal drive of adolescents to establish themselves as separate individuals with unique identities may clash with the parents' desire to maintain their children's dependence and maintain their own set of values. This leads to conflict over rules, regulations and rights. Again parents always try to meet the biological, physical, psychological need of their adolescent children. Parents make provision, organize and arrange children's home and local environment for learning and overall care of the children. By doing these they encountered different problems. Again for many parents parenting become at risk and costlier day by day. Therefore, an attempt was made to observe different types of problems associated with parenting adolescents in present day context with the following objectives:
1. To study the problems associated with monitoring adolescents from perception of parents and from perception of adolescents
2. To study the problems associated with controlling adolescents from perception of parents and from perception of adolescents.

Research Methods
The study was carried out in Barpeta district of Assam. A total sample of 200 adolescents belongs to the age group of 16-17 years and their 200 biological parents were selected for the study. To get a virgin population, adolescents were selected from both urban and rural area's higher secondary schools and colleges of the districts. A semi structured interview schedule was prepared to elicit information on problems identified by adolescents on their parent's parenting. Same schedule was used for the parents to identify problems in their own parenting. The schedule consisted of 5 open ended statements.

Statements were based on the parent's helplessness due to insecure economic condition, lack of knowledge on the parenting, difficulty in keeping pace with changing world etc. The open ended statements included parental stress due to adolescents' friend circle, parental stress due to adolescents' safety, parental stress for future of the adolescents, problems on acceptance of adolescent's behavior, problems in guiding adolescents in different conflicting situations. The statements were identified by existing literature on adolescents' problems. Some were from reports, magazines and newspapers published locally and some were from current issues broadcasted in local television channels. The questionnaire was prepared in both English and Assamese languages. As the schedule was open ended in nature, it has no scores. The respondents had to answer in the schedule in "yes/no" form. Subsequently, they had to give reasons for their "yes or no" responses. The tools so prepared were evaluated by experts. Based on the expert's comments, necessary modifications of the tools were made. The tool was then subjected to test -retest for establishing the reliability. Same tool was used for both urban and rural population under the study to elicit data. Adolescents were interviewed in small groups consisting of 4-5 members. After establishing rapport, they were requested to fill up the semi-structured schedule individually during the time of interview. As the schedule was semi structured, there was variation in time ranging from 30 minutes to maximum of 1 hour to fill - up the schedule. Both English and Assamese versions of schedule were used whenever necessary. During home visit parents were interviewed after establishing good rapport. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to identify the perception on problems by adolescents and parents for Yes/No responses. Qualitative data were converted into quantitative data. For this at first all the filled up schedule were extensively studied and common responses to a particular problem was converted to tabular form and then frequencies and percentage were calculated for reporting. Results were presented with the help of appropriate graphics whenever necessary.

Results
Problems associated with monitoring
Parental monitoring is one of the important aspects of parenting. The present study attempts to investigate problems in monitoring from both parents and adolescents' perspectives which might produce stress on the part of the parents. Again stress has always been considered as one of the factors which played an integral role in understanding parenting processes and families in general. According to Belsky (1984) [11] the term "parental stress" acknowledges that there is a greater context for the stress parent's experience. Again stress is an inevitable, normal experience that is felt when an individual is unsure if she can meet the demands of her environment (Patnaik, 2014) [1]. Following tables illustrated few of the parental stress as observed in the present study.

Table 1: Perception of parental stress due to adolescents' friend circle

No. of respondents	Statements			
	Feeling stressed about adolescent's friends		The reason for stresses are	
	Yes	No	Not being aware of adolescent's friends	Having many more mobile friends
According to parents' perception N = 200				
Rural N=100	80 (40)	20 (10)	41 (20.5)	80 (40)
Urban N=100	66 (33)	34 (17)	43(21.5)	66 (33)
According to adolescents' perception N = 200				
Rural N=100	66 (33)	34 (17)	63 (31.5)	26 (13)
Urban N=100	73 (36.5)	27(13.5)	68 (34)	19 (9.5)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage
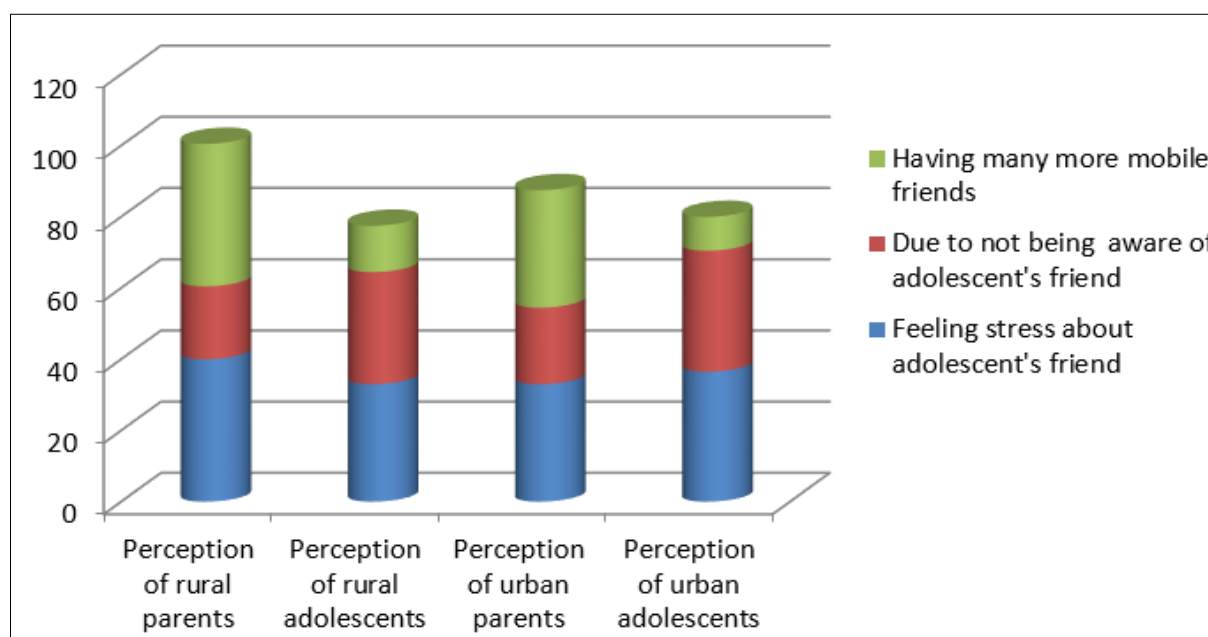
Fig 1: Perception of parents and adolescents on parental stress due to adolescents' friend circl

In the present study 40 per cent rural parents and 33 per cent urban parents felt stressed about their adolescents' friends. Parents identified two stressors, one was lack of knowledge about adolescent's friends and another stressor which both rural parents (40%) and urban parents (33%) felt was of friendship with someone through cell phones (parents named them as mobile friends) and through social networking. They felt it is a very serious problem, because adolescents did not disclose or discuss about these friends with parents. Parents expressed that these friends spoiled their children. They set many examples for such instances. One of many was that of early marriage of a brilliant girl with face book friend who was a married man.
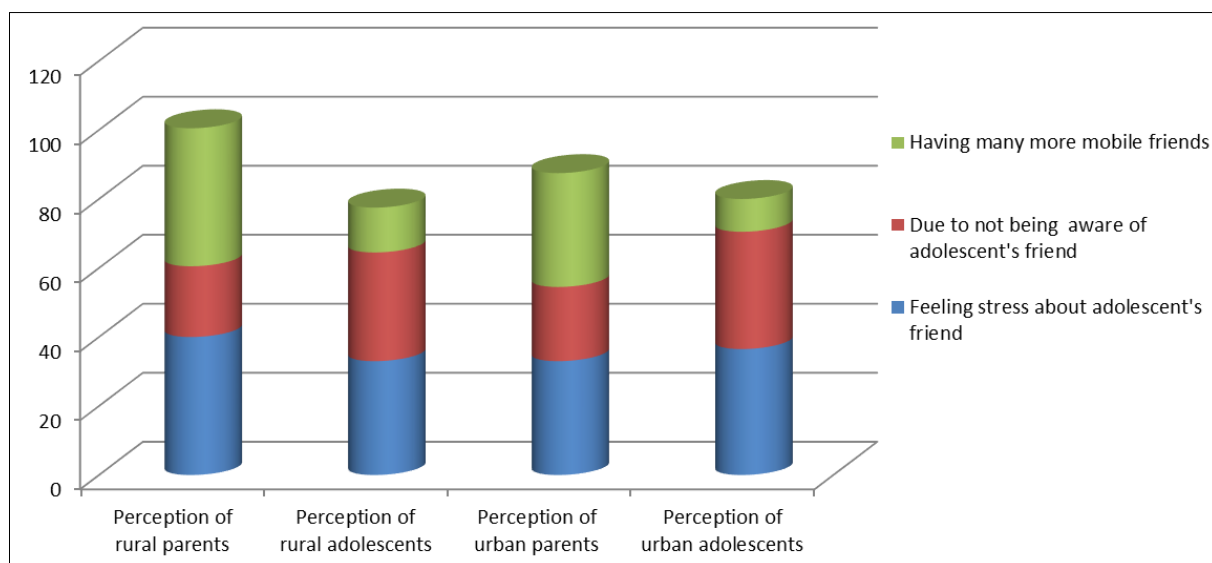
Adolescents' perception on their parents' stress were also investigated. Results (Table 1, Fig.1) reveal that both rural (33%) and urban (36.5%) adolescents had perception about their parents' stress due to their friends. But compared to parents few rural (13%) and urban (9.5%) adolescents admitted that the friends through social network was not the foremost stressor. The differences in perception between parents and adolescents may be due to lack of openness in communication. In this regard, researchers suggested that effective parental monitoring relied upon effective parent-child communication. Stattin *et al.* (2000) [4] noted that the association between parental monitoring and adolescent outcomes was attributed to an adolescent's disclosure of information rather than parents' tracking and surveillance.

Table 2: Perception of parental stress due to adolescents' safety

No. of respondents	Parents are worried about adolescent's safety		Reason for worry					Parents feel secured for children's life because	
	Yes	No	Increasing number of trafficking	Child abuse	Fighting among gangs	Road accidents	Others (drug abused, antisocial act, extremist, love marriage	School, colleges are within at proximate distance	The neighborhood environment is safe
According to parent's perception									
Rural N=100	69 (34.5)	31 (15.5)	17 (8.5)	18 (9)	28 (14)	28 (14)	67 (33.5)	31 (15.5)	29 (14.5)
Urban N=100	96 (48)	4 (2)	14 (7)	41 (20.5)	55 (27.5)	66 (33)	90 (45)	4 (2)	3 (1.5)
According to adolescent's perception									
Rural N=100	72 (36)	28 (14)	6 (3)	21 (10.5)	12 (6)	15 (7.5)	63 (31.5)	24 (12)	26 (13)
Urban N=100	97 (48.5)	3 (1.5)	35 (17.5)	37 (18.5)	36 (18)	81 (40.5)	91 (45.5)	3 (1.5)	0

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

Fig 2: Perception of parental stress due to adolescents' safety

Parents under the study were found to be worried for their adolescents' life safety (Fig. i.2). Rural parents (34.5%) were less worried than urban parents (48%) because they lived in a safe environment (14.5%) and their adolescents studied in nearby colleges (15.5%). A large percentage of urban parents were worried for antisocial behavior of adolescents (45%), road accidents (33%), fighting among gangs (27.5%) and child abuse (20.5%) compared to rural parents. Antisocial behavior of adolescents includes mainly substance use and smoking (drugs, alcohol, gutkha, bidi, cigarette etc.) by the male adolescents. Increasing number of road accidents on National Highway running through the district collapsed / disintrigated many families. Parents were worried for involvement of adolescents in fighting among gangs and child abuse as these were depicted in popular TV channels. Irrespective of the areas, parents were concerned for trafficking of girls (Table 2). Parents concern had similarities with the annual report (2011-12) of Assam mahila samata society that showed that 3 numbers of women and girls of Barpeta district were trafficked and sold in other areas outside the state and the number would increase if unregistered cases be counted. Respondent adolescents had perception about their parents' stress (Table 2) in the way as perceived by their parents for their safety because their parents often reminded

them about the environmental risk hazards as a precaution for upcoming mis happening. Parenting stress of the parents and adolescents of the present study followed the arguments of Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1999) [5-6] that what goes on in the family environment is affected by the community context in which the family resides.

Table 3: Perception on parental stress for future of the adolescents

No. of respondents	Statements						
	Parents are worried/concerned about adolescents' future		Parents are worried, because				Parents are relaxed
	Yes	No	Adolescents' educational success (would adolescents make parents' dream true?)	Adolescent's future married life	They will be destroyed by the –ve environmental influences. pornography, substance use	It seems that to get a secured job in future is difficult/ world becomes more competitive	It depends on their destiny and their hard work
According to parents' perception							
Rural N =100	95(47.5)	5(2.5)	92(46)	35(17.5)	36(18)	80(40)	5(2.5)
Urban N=100	93(46.5)	7(3.5)	83(41.5)	35(17.5)	48(24)	88(44)	7(3.5)
According to adolescents' perception							
Rural N=100	98(49)	2(1)	82(41)	5(2.5)	68(34)	77(38.5)	2(1)
Urban N=100	94(47)	6(3)	64(32)	11(5.5)	79(39.5)	77(38.5)	6(3)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

Findings of the present study reveal that majority of the parents were worried about adolescents' future which included 47.5 per cent rural parents and 46.5 per cent urban parents. Parents from both the localities were worried with few differences for adolescents' future academic success, future career attainment, their future married life and future anti-social behavior related issues. Rest of the other parents felt relaxed about adolescents' future as they believed that it depend on adolescent's own destiny and their hard work. One of the notable stressor all most all parents disclosed was that they had set some dream for their adolescents and they were worried about uncertainty of fulfillment of their dreams.

It was observed from the Table 3 that majority of the adolescents were influenced by their parents' stress. Rural adolescents (49%) and urban adolescents (47%) could understand their parents' expectations and worries for their future. Adolescents viewed parental stress for their future as both motivating factor and some time as a means of anxiety for them. Literature in this aspects suggested that failure of students to fulfill their parent's expectations for both educational and career attainment was likely to lead to tension in the family and possibly to social conflict.

Problems associated with controlling
Parental behavioral control involves managing adolescent behaviour and activities in an attempt to regulate their behaviour and provide them with guidance for appropriate social behaviour and conduct (Baumrind, 1996) [3]. Research suggests that behavioral control can protect against problem behaviors.

Table 4: Perception of problems on acceptance of adolescent's behavior

Areas	According to parent's perception						
	Statements						
	Parents didn't accept some of child's behaviour		The behaviours parent's did not accept are				
	Yes	No	Wakeup lately in the morning	Late night return	Enjoying TV for longer duration	Busy with mobiles/computer	Irregular in study habits
Rural N=100	91(45.5)	9(4.5)	54(27)	29(14.5)	22(11)	72(36)	48(24)
Urban N=100	81(40.5)	19(9.5)	25(12.5)	18(9)	29(14.5)	54(27)	19(9.5)
According to adolescents' perception							
Rural N=100	95(47.5)	5(2.5)	40(20)	8(4)	34(17)	49(24.5)	55(27.5)
Urban N=100	95(47.5)	5(2.5)	22(11)	9(4.5)	31(15.5)	41(20.5)	29(14.5)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage
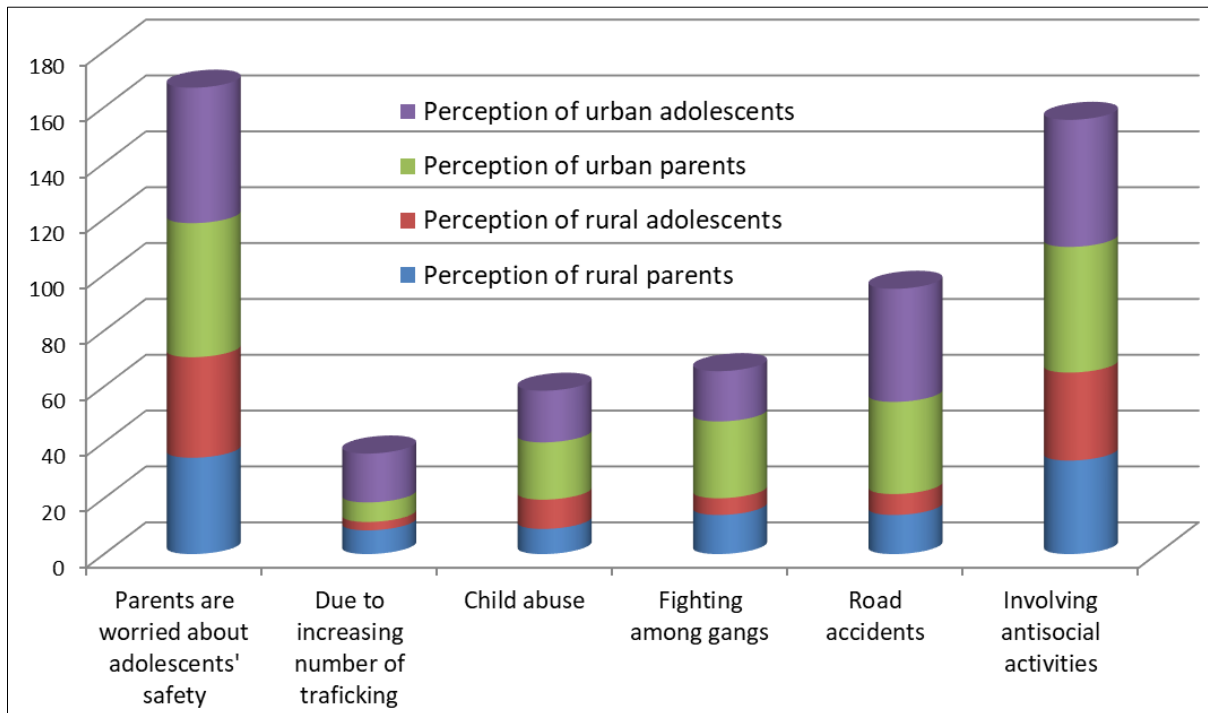
Fig 3: Perception of problems on acceptance of adolescent's behavior

Table 4 reveals that both rural parents (45.5%) and urban parents (40.5%) perceived problems in accepting some of the adolescents' behaviour. It was observed that types of adolescents behaviour parents did not accept were same for both the areas but differed in terms of their numbers (Fig. ii.1). Compared to urban parents a higher percentage of rural parents could not accept their adolescents to rise up lately in the morning (27%), roaming for late evening (14.5), busy with mobiles and computers for longer duration (36%). Respondent parents expressed that they wanted their adolescents to awake up early in the morning because they felt that such type of habit is good for their health and the cool climate in the morning helped them to concentrate on their studies. Rural adolescents (20%) and urban adolescents (11%) were concerned for their parent's problems due to their late awakening up in the morning. They instead of following parents' advice expressed that they would be able to manage their studies and that parents should not worry for them. Parents under study hold the perception that roaming late evening would be a sign of engaging in antisocial behaviour like drinking alcohol with harmful peers. But compared to their parents few rural adolescents (4%) and few urban adolescents (4.5%) were concerned for their parents' stress and admitted that they drank alcohol or smoked cigarette or "bidi" with their peers. As larger number of parents indicated that computers/lap tops /tablet provided by government became a stressor for them because most of the time especially in late night (3-5 hrs/day) their adolescents were busy with them which would hamper in their studies. Parents' felt it serious because many of them did not know how to operate those things. Compared to parents, few rural adolescents (24.5%) and urban adolescents (20.5%)

concerned about parents stress due to their computers/mobile uses but denied parent's complain and stated that these would be helpful for them rather than harmful for their academic success. Results indicate that urban parents perceived problems in restricting adolescents from enjoying TV for longer duration (14.5%) and found less problems due to roaming the adolescents for late night (9%) and irregular study habits (9.5%). Research elsewhere found that adolescents spent an enormous amount of recreational time utilizing mass media, including television, movies, music, magazines, and the Internet (Roberts *et al.,* 1999). Present study reveals that adolescents under the study grew up in homes that were full of media and technology. Nearly every household had at least one mobile phone and television set. Therefore, adolescents were exposed to media from their childhood and these became a part of their lives. Parents of the present study were concerned for use of internet (mobiles/ tablet/ computers) which was found to be in the line with research of Livingstone and Bober (2004) that concluded that internet-related risky behaviour among adolescents had been simultaneously attracting parental attention, as many parents were concerned that internet use may lead their children to become isolated from others, expose them to sexual or violent images, displace more worthwhile activities, and risk their privacy.

The findings of present study on parental perception of problems related to adolescent's behaviour was supported by the findings of Singh and Mishra (2012) [8] who documented that lifestyle of present Indian adolescents included inappropriate dietary practices, irregular sleeping habits, less religiosity, mild activity pattern, unhealthy daily routine and pursuance of different forms of risk behaviours.

Table 5: Parents' perception of problems in guiding adolescents in different conflicting situations

No. of respondents	Statement				
	We find problems in guiding adolescents in some conflicting situations		Areas of conflicting are		
	Yes	No	Conflict due to independence for movement/peer relation	Conflict due to household chores	Difficult circumstances eg involving in social activities, falling in love, attending cultural functions etc
According to parent's perception					
Rural N=100	31(15.5)	59(29.5)	24(12)	25(12.5)	29(14.5)
Urban N=100	64(32)	36(18)	50(25)	46(23)	58(29)
According to adolescent's perception					
Rural N=100	45(22.5)	55(27.5)	38(19)	22(11)	32(16)
Urban N=100	59(29.5)	41(20.5)	30(15)	37(18.5)	54(27)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage
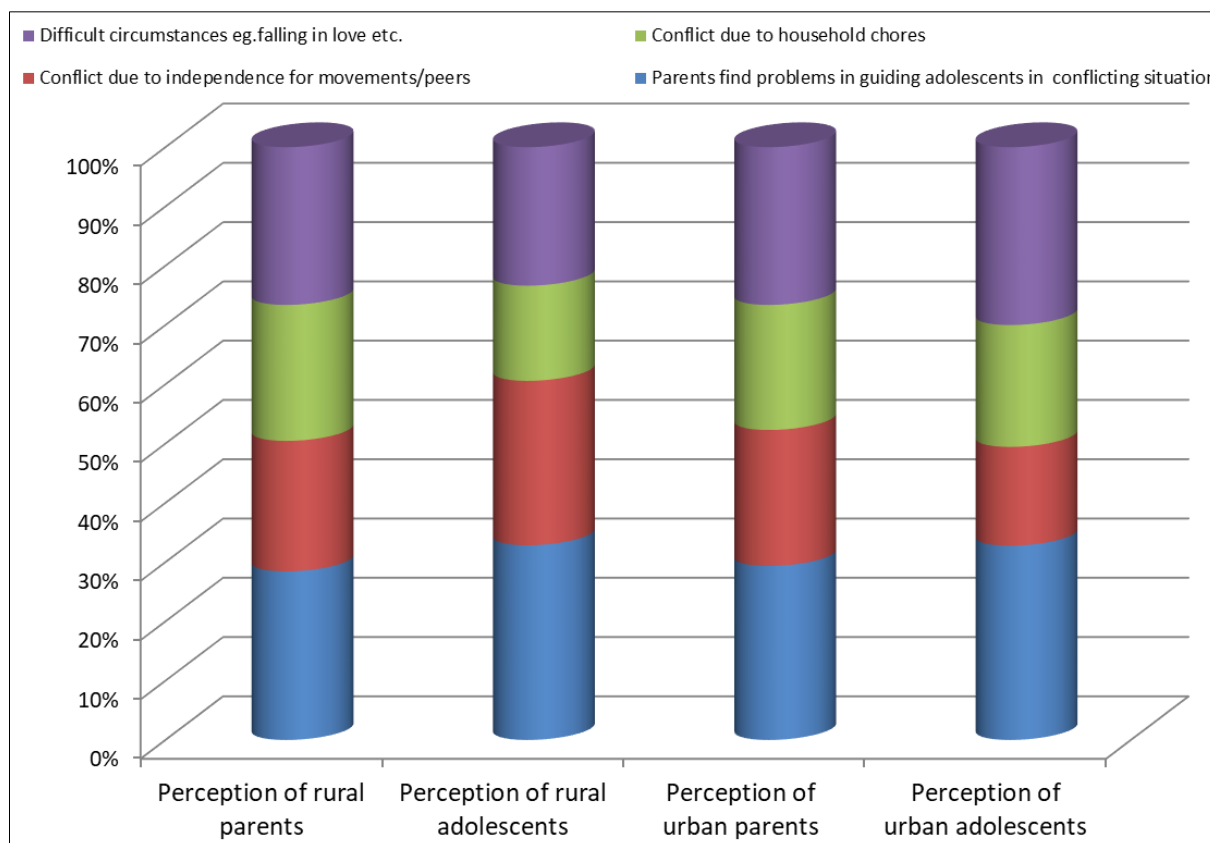
Fig 4: Parents' perception of problems in guiding adolescents in different conflicting situations

Autonomy and conflict are the two important characteristics of adolescence. Previous research suggested that family conflict had the potential to teach adolescents important conflict-resolution skills. Adolescents whose parents model constructive conflict resolution were able to resolve conflict with their peers more productively (Cooper, 1988) [9] Research revealed that most arguments between teens and their parents had revolved around the mundane issues of daily life such as chores, attire, and curfew (Montemayor, 1983) [10]. Findings of the present study reveals that a large number of urban parents (32%) had faced problems in guiding adolescents in the conflicting situations such as greater independence in movement (25%), household chores (23%) and some other situations which parents identified as difficult circumstances like adolescents involvement in social activities, romantic relationship with peers, attending cultural functions (29%) etc. According to Table 5 and Fig 2 irrespective of areas adolescents under the study were found to be almost equal in perceiving parents' problem in

conflicting situations. Rural adolescents (22.5%) and urban adolescents (29.5%) found that their parents were rigid in some situations like independence in their movement, peer relation and in some cases romantic relationships. According to them, though such types of behaviors of parents were for their betterment still it was difficult to tolerate disagreement

Conclusion
Parents under the study perceived different types of stresses in parenting adolescents. The stresses were regarding adolescent's safety, adolescent's peer circle, excessive internet use (busy with mobiles/computers) and future of their adolescents. Parents had perception that due to adverse economic condition and their limited educational level they were not able to meet some of the adolescent's needs and care related to their academics. Adolescent's had perception for their parental stresses and problems as that of their parent's perception. Adolescent's perceived that some of their parental behaviour put them in trouble.

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