

Effect of Family Type on Emotional Maturity of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT The current study assessed and compared the emotional maturity of 320 senior secondary school students across different family type from both Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar districts of Uttarakhand. Adolescents between the age ranges of 16 to 20 years were selected using Simple Random Sampling without Replacement. Self-designed socio-demographic questionnaire and Emotional Maturity Scale was used to study the socio-demographic characteristics and emotional maturity of respondents, respectively. Z-test was employed to find out the significance across different family type and emotional maturity of respondents. Results revealed that adolescents from joint families were more emotionally progressive, socially well adjusted, had adequate personality and were independent than those from nuclear families. The prominent reason for a significant difference in emotional maturity across family setup was observed to be family composition, climate and traditions, and confounding factors.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are the future citizens of a country. They are the greatest wealth and strength of any nation. If adolescents of a nation are not groomed well in time, the nation is intended to doom. Since reigns of any country are held by adolescents and their maturity steers the nation to either zenith heights or to abysmal failure. Though adolescents are the foundation of a nation they are characterised by innumerable and unique problems. With the demands of globalisation, the nature and number of challenges have increased.

Adolescence is a phase that occurs in between childhood and adulthood where mental and physical development occurs at a high pace. This transition includes biological, social, emotional, and psychological changes. Emotional and attitudinal changes often take place throughout this period, and this can be a cause of conflict, stress and depression.

To become more idealistic, achieve academic or career-related goals, to develop self-confidence and to become independent are some of

the developmental milestones of adolescents, which can be achieved only when the adolescents are emotionally mature. According to Walter (1974), emotional maturity is a process in which the personality is continuously striving for a greater sense of emotional health, both intra-psychically and intra-personally. The most exceptional mark of emotional maturity, according to Cole (1944) is the ability to bear tension and deal with their surrounding environment.

Environment plays an important role in the growth of adolescents as is quite evident from Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological system theory. A healthy family atmosphere is mandatory for the overall welfare of adolescents. Virginia Cooperative Extension (2009) in an article suggested that family environment acts effectively in shaping out the personalities of the children and developing life skills among them. It means that family structure and the environment of a family are crucial for their overall development. Nanda and Chawla (2010) investigated and found that the age and family structure has definitely a great influence on the emotional maturity of urban adolescent girls. Mogre and Batham (2011) investigated and found that Joint family system had a positive impact on the emotionality of girls as they were found to be stable and no girl was found to be externally unstable in the joint family. The reason may be that in joint family system, there are more members in a family wherein there are more chances of disclosure of pent up emotions and there are more adults

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advising young ones during their stressful period whereas such intimacy is not found in nuclear family, where the number of family members is very less. Lakshmi and Krishnamurthy (2011) also found that adolescents who hail from the joint family system were emotionally more mature than those who come from the nuclear family system. Rakies and Thompson (2006) referred to their previous research stating that children who maintain more secure relationships with their family members, and who openly discuss emotions with their family, acquire a more deeper understanding of emotions than other children.

Keeping in view the above discussion, it can be concluded that family type plays a distinct role in overall development of adolescence. So, it might be possible that emotional maturity of adolescents can be affected by different family type. Therefore, the present study has been undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To assess the influence of family type on the emotional maturity of adolescents.
2. To investigate if statistical differences exist in the emotional maturity of adolescents across family type.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Udham Singh Nagar and Uttarkashi districts of Uttarakhand were purposively selected. As government schools selected from these two different geographical areas had an adequate number of senior secondary girls and boys required for the present research, therefore Udham Singh Nagar and Uttarkashi districts of Uttarakhand were purposively selected as a locale for the study. GIC Joshiyada, GGIC Kriti Inter College and GIC Boys Inter College were selected from Uttarkashi and GIC Shantipuri, GIC and PIC were selected from Udham Singh Nagar. Total 320 samples were chosen using Simple Random Sampling without Replacement.

Tools

The self-designed general questionnaire was used to study the socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents. Emotional maturity of the respondents was evaluated through Emotional Maturity Scale by Y. Singh and M. Bhargava. Emotional Maturity

Scale is a self-reporting Five-Point Scale. The tool consists of 48 items. The first 10 items examine emotional stability, the second 10 items examine emotional progression, the third 10 items assess social adjustment, the fourth 10 items assess personality integration and the last 8 items examine independence. Since it is a standardised scale for Indian setting, no pre-testing is required before employing them in the current study.

Procedure and Data Analysis

The investigators approached the school principals through a letter of request from the department which clarified the purpose of the study. After the permission for the study in the selected schools was granted by their respective principals, the investigators approached the respondents in a group of 4 to 5 in the school itself. Firstly the purpose of the study was made clear to them. Then, they were requested to give honest responses and were assured that their identity would be kept confidential and information provided by them would be used only for research work. After the selection of the eligible subjects, self-prepared background information form was administered to collect the detailed information about the aspects which have strong bearing on research variables. Emotional Maturity Scale was also administered in the classroom setting to each subject individually after providing necessary instructions.

The data collected was classified and tabulated in accordance with the objectives to arrive at meaningful and relevant inferences. The data was analysed using statistical techniques like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and Z-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The frequency and percentage distribution of senior secondary school students of Distt. Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar on emotional maturity across family type are presented in Table 1. It is clear from the table that more number of the respondents belonging to the joint family system (64.29% and 40.00%) of Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar were extremely stable emotionally, whereas only 27.27 percent and 30.97 percent of respondents were seen emotionally stable in nuclear family system respectively. More percent of the respondents

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of senior secondary school students of Distt. Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar on emotional maturity across family type

Components of emotional maturity	Level of emotional maturity	Distt. Uttarkashi (n ₁ =160)			Distt. U.S. Nagar (n ₂ =160)			Total sample (n=320)		
		Nuclear family (n _{1a} =132)	Joint family (n _{1b} =28)	%	Nuclear family (n _{2a} =155)	Joint family (n _{2b} =5)	%	Nuclear family (n ₁ =287)	Joint family (n ₂ =33)	%
<i>Emotional Stability</i>	Extremely stable	36	18	64.29	48	02	40.00	84	20	60.61
	Moderately stable	34	0	0.00	40	02	40.00	74	02	25.78
	Unstable	28	05	17.86	32	01	20.00	60	06	18.18
<i>Emotional Progression</i>	Extremely unstable	34	05	17.86	35	0	0.00	69	05	15.15
	Extremely stable	28	05	17.86	54	04	80.00	82	09	27.27
	Moderately stable	32	15	53.57	32	01	20.00	64	16	48.48
<i>Social Adjustment</i>	Unstable	42	06	21.43	39	0	0.00	81	06	18.18
	Extremely unstable	30	02	7.14	30	0	0.00	60	02	6.06
	Extremely stable	42	17	60.71	36	03	60.00	78	20	60.61
<i>Personality Integration</i>	Moderately stable	24	05	17.86	48	01	20.00	72	06	18.18
	Unstable	30	04	14.29	47	01	20.00	77	05	15.15
	Extremely unstable	36	02	7.14	24	0	0.00	60	02	6.06
<i>Independence</i>	Extremely stable	41	11	39.29	49	04	80.00	90	15	45.45
	Moderately stable	26	10	35.71	32	0	0.00	58	10	30.3
	Unstable	24	04	14.29	43	01	20.00	67	05	15.15
<i>Composite Emotional Maturity</i>	Extremely unstable	41	03	10.71	31	0	0.00	72	03	9.09
	Extremely stable	29	08	28.57	51	03	60.00	80	11	33.33
	Moderately stable	23	14	50.00	39	01	20.00	62	15	45.45
<i>Emotional Maturity</i>	Unstable	43	02	7.14	30	0	0.00	73	03	9.09
	Extremely unstable	37	04	14.29	35	0	0.00	72	04	12.12
	Extremely stable	31	09	32.14	43	03	60.00	74	12	36.36
<i>Emotional Maturity</i>	Moderately stable	32	10	35.71	37	02	40.00	69	12	36.36
	Unstable	26	05	17.86	41	0	0.00	67	05	15.15
	Extremely unstable	43	04	14.29	34	0	0.00	77	04	12.12

from nuclear family system of Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar (25.76% and 22.58%) were observed to be extremely unstable whereas only 17.86 percent of respondents belonging to joint family system of Uttarkashi were unstable emotionally. It was very pleasurable to note that none of the respondents belonging to joint family system of U.S Nagar were extremely unstable. Overall it was seen that more than the half of the respondents from joint family system (60.61%) were extremely stable, whereas only 29.27 percent of respondents of nuclear family system were emotionally stable. More number of respondents from nuclear family system (24.04%) were emotionally unstable as compared to those belonging to joint family system (15.15%).

Under emotional progression component, majority of respondents from joint family of U.S Nagar and Uttarkashi (80% and 53.57% respectively) were seen emotionally stable as compared to those belonging to nuclear family of Uttarkashi where more number of respondents 31.82 percent were emotionally unstable. Different picture was seen in case of respondents belonging to nuclear family of U.S Nagar, where more percent of adolescents were emotionally stable. It was clearly depicted from the Table 1 that respondents belonging to nuclear family of Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar (22.73% and 19.35% respectively) were highly emotionally unstable as compared to those belonging to joint family (7.14%). Similar to emotional stability component none of the respondents belonging to joint family of U.S Nagar were found extremely unstable emotionally. Overall irrespective of districts it was seen that more of respondents from joint family (48.48%) were moderately stable, whereas in nuclear family (28.57%) of respondents were emotionally unstable.

Just like emotional progression component more than the half of the respondents from joint family of Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar (60.71% and 60% respectively) were found extremely stable as compared to nuclear family (31.82% and 23.23%) on social adjustment component of emotional maturity respectively. 22.73 percent and 30.97 percent respondents from nuclear family of Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar were unstable, whereas less number of respondents from joint family (14.29% and 20% respectively) were unstable. Only 7.14 percent of joint families of Uttarkashi were found extremely unstable, whereas in U.S Nagar none of the respondents of joint family were found extremely unstable on social

adjustment component. In contrast to this 27.27 percent and 15.48 percent nuclear family of both Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar were found extremely unstable. Overall irrespective of districts it was seen that more than half of the respondents from joint family (60.61%) were socially well-adjusted than those belonging to nuclear family. Respondents belonging to nuclear family (20.91%) were socially maladjusted whereas only 6.06 percent of respondents belonging to joint family were socially maladjusted.

Analysis of respondent's level of maturity on personality integration component of emotional maturity displays that 80 percent and 39.29 percent of those from joint families of U.S Nagar and Uttarkashi were extremely stable, whereas only 31.61 percent and 31.06 percent of those from nuclear families were extremely stable respectively. More percent of respondents from nuclear families of Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar (31.06% and 20% respectively) were found to be extremely unstable whereas only 10.71 percent from joint families were found unstable. It was surprising to note that on personality integration component, none of the respondents of U.S Nagar belonging to joint families were found unstable emotionally. Overall irrespective of districts it was seen that more percent of respondents from joint family (45.45%) were extremely stable as compared to those belonging to nuclear families (31.36%). In case of respondents residing from nuclear families (25.09%), it was observed that more percent of respondents were emotionally unstable whereas only 9.09 percent of respondents belonging to joint family were emotionally unstable.

On independence component, more than half of respondents from joint families of U.S Nagar (60%) were found extremely stable, whereas 50 percent of such respondents of Uttarkashi were found moderately stable on independence component. Respondents from nuclear families of Uttarkashi (32.58%) were found unstable, whereas respondents belonging to nuclear families of U.S Nagar (32.9%) were observed to be independent.

Overall irrespective of districts it was seen that more percent of respondents from joint families (45.45%) were moderately stable. 25.09 percent of respondents from nuclear families were extremely unstable whereas only 12.12 percent of respondents belonging to joint family were extremely unstable.

An overview of composite emotional maturity reveals that respondents of U.S Nagar and Uttarkashi (60.00% and 35.71% respectively) belonging to joint families were extremely and moderately stable, whereas it was found that respondents of nuclear families (21.94% and 32.58%) across both the districts were observed to be extremely unstable respectively. Overall irrespective of districts it was seen that more percent of respondents from joint families (36.36%) were extremely mature as compared to those belonging to nuclear families (26.83%) that were more emotionally immature.

Mean difference of emotional maturity of senior secondary school students of Distt. Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar across type of family are presented in Table 2. It was clearly revealed that in all the five components of emotional maturity, adolescents from joint families were more emotionally mature as compared to those residing in nuclear families of both the districts. As the mean scores in all the domains of emotional maturity of adolescents, living in joint families were substantially low, as compared to mean scores of respondents of nuclear families.

Analysis across emotional maturity of adolescents, regardless of districts, also showed that adolescents from joint families were more emotionally progressive (Z=2.76), socially well adjusted (Z=3.21), had adequate personality (Z=2.18) and were independent (Z=2.85) compared to those from nuclear families. These results were in line with Audichya (2005), who found that adolescents from joint families were having high emotional maturity. Singh et al. (2014) also found that adolescents from joint families were more emotionally stable, socially well adjusted, had adequate personality and were independent as compared to those from nuclear families. Similarly, Mogre and Batham (2011) also supported it by stating that Joint family system had a positive impact on the emotionality of girls, as they were found to be stable and no girl was found to be externally unstable in the joint family. Shafiq and Khan (2016) investigated and arrived at a similar result that adolescents from joint family were more emotionally mature than those from nuclear family.

The reason could be that in a joint family system adolescents have to deal with larger number of family members to share resources where they learn how to adjust in any situation.

Table 2: Mean difference in emotional maturity of senior secondary school students of Distt. Uttarkashi and U.S Nagar across type of family

Components of emotional maturity	Distt. U.S Nagar (n ₁ =160)		Distt. Uttarkashi (n ₂ =160)		Total sample (n=320)				Z				
	Nuclear family (n _{1a} =155)		Joint family (n _{1b} =5)		Nuclear family (n _{2a} =132)		Joint family (n _{2b} =28)			Nuclear family (n ₁ =287)		Joint family (n ₂ =33)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Emotional stability	22.07	5.73	19.60	3.78	23.14	6.32	21.18	5.75	22.60	6.10	20.94	5.48	1.62
Emotional progression	21.19	5.23	18.00	3.80	21.99	6.41	18.64	5.32	23.61	6.12	20.90	5.25	2.76*
Social adjustment	20.90	5.14	16.80	3.70	23.61	6.12	21.64	5.19	21.60	5.85	18.55	5.08	3.21*
Personality integration	17.41	5.02	12.00	4.00	18.95	6.68	17.10	6.61	20.24	6.01	17.41	5.02	2.18*
Independence	15.96	5.00	11.20	3.96	17.85	4.88	16.25	4.33	18.13	5.30	15.79	4.36	2.85*
Composite emotional maturity	97.36	19.96	77.60	10.33	105.06	23.54	94.82	22.99	104.16	22.31	93.82	21.97	2.55*

Note: (a) *Significant at 0.05 level
(b) Lower score represents higher maturity

During the times of stress, adolescents have relatively better emotional support from various family members, whereas adolescents of nuclear family are deprived of such healthy emotional support. In joint families adolescents find more opportunities to evolve interpersonal, personal and social adequacy and hence become more emotionally stable. Presence of elders in joint families lead to moral development of adolescents and they are more optimistic. Whereas nuclear families are more secluded and prefer privacy which leads to restlessness in adolescents.

CONCLUSION

It is apparent from the study that for sure family setup has great impact over the emotional maturity of adolescents. Results were similar across both the districts. It was found that adolescents hailing from joint families were significantly better on emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration and independent components of emotional maturity than those living in a nuclear family. Adolescents from joint families were noted to be righteous, contented, confident in social interaction and self-reliant, whereas those living in nuclear families were restless, had feeling of inferiority, hostility, were more aggressive, lacked in social adaptability, had phobia formation, were pessimist, immoral and were highly relying. On the whole, it can be concluded that family setup plays momentous role in overall development of adolescents. Substantial efforts to maximise its positive influence on the personality of adolescents can be made on the part of parents, school setup and all others who are directly or indirectly related to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Co-educational settings should be given priority as it provides a positive opportunity for both the genders to explore their life and learn to adjust emotionally with each other, as ultimately they have to live in the same environment.
- In today's competitive world, educational environment should be highlighted by scholars and philosophers in further researches, so that the future generations of the nation are more emotionally mature.

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