Guidance Needs of Adolescents: Reflections from Their Type of Family

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KEYWORDS Nuclear Family. Joint Family. Domains of Guidance. Adolescents. Professional Guidance

ABSTRACT The present study is an attempt to assess the guidance needs of senior secondary school adolescents of Imphal districts, Manipur, across type of family. 651 respondents consisting of 272 boys and 379 girls were randomly drawn from 60 schools of Imphal district. Socio-demographic profile of respondents was studied using self-structured performa and their guidance needs was assessed using Guidance Needs Inventory. Results revealed that respondents from both the family types had extreme need for physical, educational and vocational guidance and least need for psychological guidance. Similarly, among the five domains of guidance, respondents from nuclear and joint families expressed need for vocational guidance on top priority. Guidance needs of respondents in all the domains were observed to be insignificantly related to their type of family.

INTRODUCTION

Family is the basic and universal social structure of human society. It fulfils needs and performs functions, which are indispensable for the continuity, integration and change in the social system. Since the birth of a child, his development is influenced markedly by the family. As a child grows up he is guided directly or indirectly by his society comprising of parents and caretakers for his proper growth and development. Guidance is the process of helping a person develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself and of his role in the world of work, to test this concept with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society (National Vocational Guidance Association). Constant guidance and support serves as a stimulus for an individual to achieve the developmental milestones of childhood as well as of adolescence.

Adolescence is derived from the Latin word *"adolescere",* which means to grow, or to grow to maturity. Adolescence is a developmental period characterized by physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, and contextual changes (Morris and Steinberg 2001). Theories propose shifts in psychoanalytic, socio-biological, and cognitive domains of adolescent development resulting in changes in the qualities of relationships as a function of development and the launching phase (Conger and Ge 1999). At home, conflicts with parents arise, especially over autonomy and self-discipline. Parents expect more self-regula-

tion and initiative at the very time that their early teenagers are beginning to experiment with all kinds of risky behaviors (Barber 2002). An adolescent on his own may also employ trial-and-error approach and master the developmental tasks essential for transition to ideal adulthood but in the process, he will waste valuable time that he might spend in learning more constructive activities; and would weaken his self-confidence and motivation to take up tasks that have proved to be difficult.

Guidance by parents or elders at home, during this stage of life will help him in smooth and quick transition from childhood to adulthood with minimum psychological damage. Generally speaking, guidance is essential for everybody at every stage of life but during adolescence in particular since adolescence is the period of transition from a child to an adult on whose shoulders lies the responsibility of fortifying the society and taking the nation to new heights.

The new millennium in which these dynamic adolescents live is characterised by astonishing growth of information of all sorts – censored and uncensored. Ravichandran and Sasikala (2002) showed that most significant changes brought in behaviour of children are by the technological revolution. Migration and Urbanisation has further worsened the situation. It has presented new challenges viz. break up of joint families, emergence of dual income and distant relationship families, disintegration of families wherein parents have limited time, energy and

knowledge to guide today's adolescents who represent a generation of energetic, highly ambitious and brilliant individuals. Family provides significant support to adolescents, and connectedness with the family was found to be favorable for adolescent development (Santrock 2010). It is important to note that while parents may recognize the need for supervision, certain factors including vocational and personal demands influence the availability of parents to supervise their adolescents. It can also be acknowledged that the prevalence of joint families could have minimised the detrimental effects as in such case parents, elders and relatives of the family will be available to guide adolescents. Findings by researchers reflect the influence of family type and well-being of adolescents as reported. Research conducted by Singh and Udainiya (2009) reported that there is no significant differences in context of measure of well-being. However, a close perusal of mean scores indicated that adolescents living in joint families showed higher well-being than living in nuclear families. A study conducted by Ruiz et al. (2007) indicates that close and supportive relationship between grandparents and grandchildren are an important factor of children's emotional well-being and psychological benefits. Raina and Bhan (2013) reported that adolescents of nuclear families were more insecure than those of joint families. In nuclear families, the working parents leave their children at the mercy of their servants and are not able to devote much time towards them which results into the development of insecurity among the kids of such families. These adolescents thus, in the absence of proper guidance as a result of disintegration of families are finding it difficult to adjust themselves in this highly dynamic and competitive world and even sometimes succumb to the environmental pressure. They are more likely to develop problematic behaviour patterns when the opportunities to engage in those behaviours are repeatedly made available through a lack of parental intervention (Gottfredson and Hirshi 1995). It means that adolescents of today require more professional guidance in addition to the general guidance provided to them by the parents and teachers. Disintegration of families no doubt has largely a negative influence on adolescents but it is an inevitable and spontaneous process and there is no other way than to minimise its harmful effects and emphasis its positive impact.

In the light of the above reflections, the present study was planned with the objective to assess and find out if guidance needs of senior secondary adolescents vary with type of family in Manipur in specific as it represents a state that has been shaken by such dramatic revolutionary changes in addition to the frequent incidents of *bandhs*, strikes and problems of insurgency which its inhabitants witness. It is affecting the life of every native but its impact on adolescents is a matter of great concern since the future of Manipur and ultimately our nation lies in their hands.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Firstly, the List of Higher Secondary Schools located in Imphal East and Imphal West was procured from the Department of Education, Manipur. Further, from the list of 60 schools in total, fifty percent (50%) of the schools located in Imphal East and Imphal West each were drawn randomly for the proposed study to act as research base. After that, twenty five percent (25%) of the Class XI adolescents from each selected school were picked up as respondents for the present research study making a total of 651 respondents (272 boys and 379 girls). The study was conducted in the year 2010.

Tools

Self-structured performa was employed to study the socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. Guidance Needs Inventory developed by Dr. J.S. Grewal (1982) was administered to identify the guidance needs of the respondents. It is an instrument developed to identify the type and strength of guidance needs of secondary school students in the five areas, namely, (i) Physical, (ii) Social, (iii) Psychological, (iv) Educational and (v) Vocational. The inventory consists of 65 items. All the 65 items are in the form of positive statements. The test-retest reliability of GNI was estimated to be 0.82. The response options available for the items are: Highly True, Mostly True, Quite true, Least True and Not True which are assigned scores of 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

Procedure and Analysis

The test was administered individually to all respondents in classroom setting. After administration of tests, answer sheets were scored and raw scores calculated. Mean values, S.D and Average scores were calculated. Z-test was done to see if differences exist between the mean score of respondents from nuclear and joint families and Chi-square test done to find out if guidance needs is independent of type of family.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 clearly indicates the percentage distribution of senior secondary school adolescents of Imphal districts on guidance needs across the type of family. It is obvious from the figure that majority of the respondents from nuclear (71.02%) and joint (73.91%) families were in extreme need for physical guidance followed by moderate need of it (28.16% and 26.09%, respectively). Unfortunately, there were only 0.82% of the respondents from nuclear family who had least need for physical guidance.

Somewhat similar trend of comparatively less intensity was seen under social guidance domain. 54.29% of the respondents from nuclear families and 52.17% of those from joint families were identified to have extreme need for social guidance and 42.65% and 44.10% of the respondents from nuclear and joint families, respectively had moderate need of it. It can also be brought forth that 3.73% and 3.06% of the respondents belonging to joint and nuclear families respectively reported having least need for social guidance.

On the other hand, under the psychological guidance domain a reverse trend was seen, that is 47.96% and 54.04% respectively were in moderate need for guidance and bit less proportion that is 41.63% and 35.40% of respondents respectively were in extreme need for it. Moreover, it is also evident from the figure that 10.56% of respondents from joint families and 10.41% from nuclear families were in least need for psychological guidance.

Just like under physical guidance, majority of the respondents from nuclear (74.90%) and joint (75.16%) families were observed to have
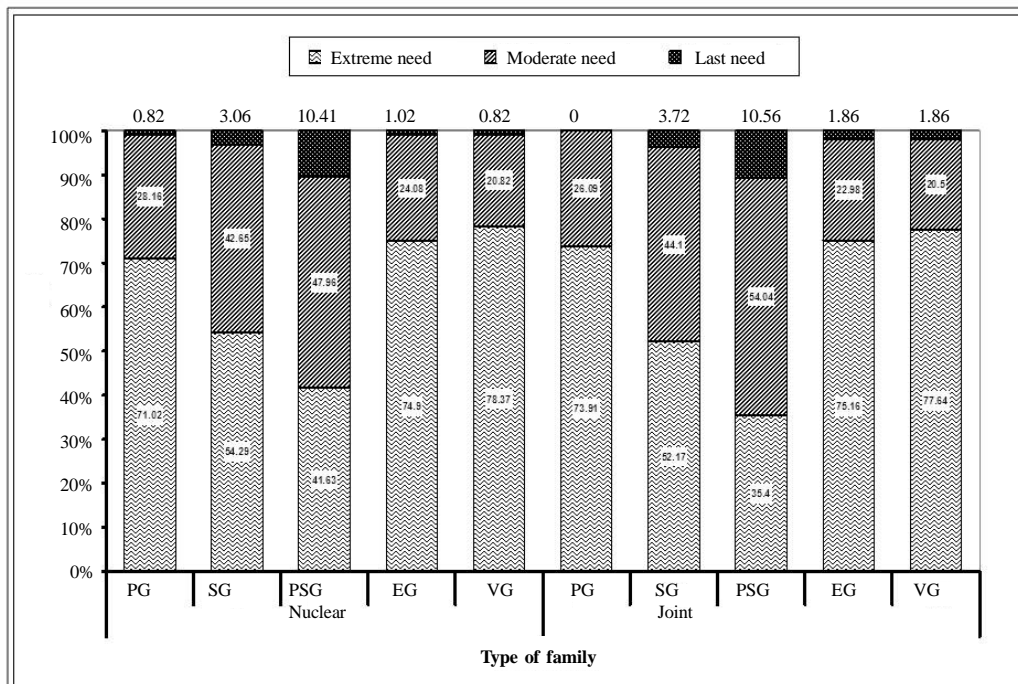
Fig. 1. Percentage distribution of senior school adolescents of Imphal districts on guidance needs across type of family

Table 1: Average score and ranking of areas of guidance needs of the respondents across type of family

Areas of guidance needs	Nuclear family(n_1=490)		Joint family(n_2=161)	
	Avg. score	Rank	Avg. score	Rank
Physical	2.70	III	2.74	II
Social	2.51	IV	2.48	IV
Psychological	2.31	V	2.25	V
Educational	2.74	II	2.73	III
Vocational	2.78	I	2.76	I

extreme need for educational guidance followed by moderate need for it (24.08% and 22.98%). Only 1.02% of the respondents from nuclear families and 1.86% of those from joint families were in least need for educational guidance.

Likewise, in the area of vocational guidance, majority of the respondents from nuclear (78.37%) and (77.64%) joint families exhibited extreme need for guidance. Least need for guidance in this area was reported by only 0.82% of the respondents from nuclear families and 1.86% from joint families.

It can be deduced from Table 1 that the respondents from nuclear families and joint families both placed their vocational guidance needs on top priority. Least need for guidance was expressed in psychological domain by the respondents irrespective of their family type.

Close perusal of the Table 2 clearly shows that the type of family to which the respondents of the study belonged had no significant influence on their guidance needs in any of the five areas of guidance. In a similar study, Bahadur and Dhawan (2008) studied the focus on individual level changes affected by the modifica-

tions that are taking place in the family under rapid on-going socio-cultural changes in contemporary Indian society. Results of the study reported that there was a significant difference between the social values of parents and children in nuclear families, as opposed to those in joint families in contrast to the present study. Palaniswamy and Ponnuswami (2013) reported that peer group influence is found to be more among adolescents from nuclear families thereby indicating the need for guidance and counselling to adolescents hailing from nuclear families.

From Table 3 it can be clearly concluded that type of family and guidance needs are independent of each other. In contrast, Kauts and Kaur (2011) reported that children living in joint families show better behaviour and have less behavioural problems than children living in nuclear families and thus the need for less professional guidance as compared to their counterparts from nuclear families. In a similar vein, Suleman et al. (2012) examined the effects of family structure on the academic performance of students and recommended that small family size

Table 2: Mean and SD of scores of guidance needs of senior secondary school adolescents of Imphal districts across type of family

Areas of guidance needs	Nuclear family(n_1=490)		Joint family(n_2=161)		Z calculated
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Physical	10.53	5.89	10.14	5.42	0.79
Social	20.19	9.42	21.14	9.35	1.11
Psychological	20.92	9.42	21.84	9.67	1.06
Educational	19.03	11.47	20.09	11.58	1.01
Vocational	8.89	5.38	8.88	5.37	0.04

Table 3: Chi-square value of independence between family type and guidance needs of senior secondary school adolescents of Imphal districts

Variable	Areas of guidance needs				
	Physical	Social	Psychological	Educational	Vocational
Type of family	0.50	0.33	2.08	0.004	0.04

and small number of siblings coupled with parents' participation enhanced student's performance.

Insignificant difference in the guidance needs across family type can be attributed to the fact that tremendous growth in technology and change in perception of life have overridden the influence of disintegration of family. In the wake of the enormous changes taking place due to such technological revolution, parents, elders and grandparents are finding it difficult to cope and adapt to the varying degrees of changes taking place in all walks of life. At such, the traditional method of seeking guidance from elders of the family becomes a vain effort as they themselves are finding it difficult to adapt to the changes. Consequently, professional guidance is the only means through which adolescents' need can be tackled to mitigate their problems and help them in becoming competent adults.

CONCLUSION

The personality of an adolescent is moulded by various factors among which family is the most important. With the passage of time, there have been substantial changes in the family structure which has led to considerable changes in adolescent development. Due to the increasing rate of changes taking place in our society as a result to globalisation, it will be inadequate if guidance of adolescents is confined only to parents and elders. Professional guidance is the need of the hour to deal with the increasing problems of adolescents due to globalisation. Parental guidance along with healthy school environment when acted synergistically with professional guidance will have a profound positive impact on adolescent development and will enable them to become healthy and competent young adults.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Comparison of adolescents from rural and urban families can be conducted.
- The influence of contextual factors such as family environment, peer relationships etc on guidance needs of adolescents can be studied.
- Guidance needs of adolescents with special needs pose an interesting research inquiry.

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