

Socio-emotional Development of Rural Pre-adolescents (9-12 Years)

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ABSTRACT The study 'Socio-Emotional Development of Rural Pre-Adolescents (9-12 years)' was conducted on 200 rural pre-adolescents of two villages of Ludhiana district. There were no significant differences in the mean scores of emotional stability of males and females. However, significant differences were found in the mean scores of social maturity among males and females. Significant differences were found in the emotional stability scores during age 10.5-12.5 in case of females. Among males, non-significant difference was found in the mean scores of emotional stability by age. In relation to ages, females' scores of social maturity were not significantly different. However, for males, significant difference in mean scores was observed for ages 10.5-12.5 years. Emotional stability and social maturity of both males and females was found to be significantly correlated with the positive and negative dimensions of parent-child relationships. Home environment was another factor found to be correlated with females' emotional stability.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions represent a phase of total dynamic pattern of human personality. Emotion, according to Crow and Crow (1964) is an affective experience that is accompanied by generalized inner adjustment, of physiological and mental stirred up states and expresses itself in overt behaviour. Development of emotional maturity enable people to exercise their talents and to engage in affective relationships with other people, free them from debilitating effects of anxiety and it is very important for the quality of life.

Social development is an orderly process in each child and it means acquisition of ability to behave in accordance with social expectation (Hurlock, 1978). Although a human being is inherently social, he does not come into the world equipped with the necessary traits and techniques for social living. He has to learn to be social and this learning is one of the most difficult things that he has to master.

The two above mentioned areas of development (i.e. social and emotional) are closely related; together they influence a person's entire scope of feelings, behaviour and relationships. Almost every aspect of preadolescents social life is conditioned by the emotional reactions. During these active years, emotional development and social maturity are the significant personality moulders. The present investigation is an attempt to find out sex and age differentials in socio-emotional development of rural preadolescents (9-12 years) and secondly how socio-emotional development in preadolescents is related to other ecological factors like socio-economic status, home environment, parent-child relationship and school environment.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sampling: The study sample for the present study was drawn purposively from villages of Ludhiana district. Only those villages were included in the list which had atleast a middle school. Two villages from the list were selected randomly and these were Pamal and Pamali. The study was conducted on 200 rural preadolescents (9-12 years) drawn randomly with equal distribution over four yearly age groups (n = 50) i.e. 8.5 to 9.5 years; 9.5 to 10.5 years, 10.5 to 11.5 years and 11.5 to 12.5 years with equal number over the two sexes (n = 25) at each age level.

Research Tools: Socio-emotional development was measured using Rao's Social Maturity Scale (1986) and Gupta and Singh's Emotional Stability Test (1985). Socio-economic status of the families was ascertained using Kulshreshtha's Scale (SES, Form B) (1981). Multi-dimensional parenting scale by Chauhan and Khokhar (1985) was used to measure parenting behaviour. Home Inventory by Mohite (1989) and Social - Emotional School Climate

Inventory (1994) measured home environment and school environment, respectively.

The collected data was analysed using t-test which was used to find the significance of statistical differences in the means of emotional stability scores and social maturity scores across the sexes and age levels. Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation was computed to measure the degree of linear relationship between two variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Emotional Stability

a) Developmental Changes: The females' mean emotional stability scores at 8.5-9.5 years were 7.52, which increased in the subsequent years, i.e. 9.5-10.5 and 10.5-11.5 years. It appears that the level of emotional stability decreases, though slightly. However, during the age 11.5-12.5 years, the mean scores decreased showing that upon reaching 12 years of age, females become emotionally stable. Significant differences were found in the scores of emotional stability during ages 10.5-11.5 and 11.5-12.5 years in case of females. The age 11.5-12.5 years also coincides with the period of significant physiological changes leading to the attainment

of puberty around the age of 12 years and onwards. Thus, making them emotionally stable much more than what they were at 9 years of age.

In case of males, the emotional stability scores decreased with increase in age, indicating that as they advance in age, they become emotionally more stable.

b) Sex Differences: Results revealed that females were emotionally more stable than their male counterparts at all age levels. However, there were no significant differences in the overall mean scores of emotional stability of rural preadolescent males and females. It could possibly be due to the fact that parents emphasize intellectual and physical development of boys while better social and emotional development is preferred for girls. Similar findings have been reported by Block (1984).

Social Maturity

a) Developmental Changes: The mean social maturity scores increased with increase in age in both males and females. This increase was relatively gradual in females than in males where mean scores increased significantly ($p < 0.5$) between 10.5-12.5 years of age.

b) Sex Differences: It was observed that

Table 1: Mean (\pm s.d.) emotional stability scores of rural pre-adolescents by sex and age

Age (Years)	n	Males		Females		Significance of sex differences	
		Mean**	(\pm S.D.)	Mean**	(\pm S.D.)	t-value	Level of significance
8.5- 9.5	25	9.480	(\pm 2.756)	7.520	(\pm 3.513)	2.195	*
9.5-10.5	25	9.160	(\pm 2.304)	8.520	(\pm 3.380)	0.782	N.S.
10.5-11.5	25	8.880	(\pm 2.698)	8.720	(\pm 2.606)	0.213	N.S.
11.5-12.5	25	8.040	(\pm 3.470)	6.840	(\pm 3.484)	1.200	N.S.
8.5-12.5	(100.00)	8.890	(\pm 2.846)	7.900	(\pm 3.307)	1.134	N.S.

* Significant at 5% level; ** Higher the score, lower will be the emotional stability
N.S. - Non significant

Table 2: Mean (\pm s.d.) social maturity scores of rural pre-adolescents by sex and age

Age (Years)	n	Males		Females		Significance of sex differences	
		Mean**	(\pm S.D.)	Mean**	(\pm S.D.)	t-value	Level of significance
8.5- 9.5	25	193.720	(\pm 17.636)	205.640	(\pm 22.807)	2.068	*
9.5-10.5	25	198.920	(\pm 15.594)	207.160	(\pm 22.653)	1.498	N.S.
10.5-11.5	25	199.440	(\pm 19.904)	216.960	(\pm 14.004)	3.600	*
11.5-12.5	25	211.840	(\pm 20.503)	219.200	(\pm 20.021)	1.284	N.S.
8.5-12.5	(100.00)	200.980	(\pm 19.418)	212.640	(\pm 20.349)	2.073	*

* Significant at 5% level; N.S. - Non significant

females consistently scored higher in social maturity as compared to males at all age levels. However, sex differences were statistically significant ($p < 0.5$) at only 8.5-9.5 years and 10.5-11.5 years of age. On the whole, irrespective of age levels, the females' significantly ($p < 0.5$) excelled in social maturity as compared to males. Gilligan (1982) reported that girls are more socially and family oriented than boys.

Relationship of Emotional Stability with Socio-economic Status (Ses), Parent-child Relationship (Positive and Negative Dimension), Home Environment (He) and School Environment

Results revealed that socioeconomic status was not significantly correlated with the emotional stability of both males and females. Similar results were indicated by Uma Devi et al. (1997).

The positive dimensions of parent-child relationship (love, encouragement, acceptance, independence, dominance, progressivism) was positively correlated with emotional stability. The coefficient of correlation was found to be .526 and .644 for males and females respectively and was statistically significant at .05 level in both the cases. Cordial relationships existing between the parent and child results in high emotional stability among the latter. The negative dimension of parent-child relationship (hate, discouragement, rejection, dependence, autocratism, submission, conservatism) was found to be negatively correlated with the emotional stability (Males $r = -0.791$; Females $r = -0.764$ at 5% level of significance). This indicated that more the negative relations between the parent and the child, the low will be the emotional stability. Cummings and Davies (1994) also sug-

Table 3: Emotional stability of rural pre-adolescent males and females in relation to socio-economic status (ses) parent-child relationship (positive and negative dimensions (PCR +, PCR -), home environment (HE) and school environment (SE)

EST	n	SES	PCR +	PCR-	HE	SE
Males	100	0.048	0.526*	-0.791*	0.050	0.060
Females	100	0.148	0.644*	-0.764*	0.269*	0.079

*Significant. Critical value of r at 5% level of significance = 0.196

gested that children's exposure to negative affect has a negative impact on their ability to regulate negative emotions.

Home environment was found to be positively correlated with the emotional stability in case of females. It indicated that the level of quality of the home environment regulates the degree of emotional stability in the preadolescent.

School environment was not found to be significantly correlated with the emotional stability of rural preadolescent males and females as coefficient of correlation was low ($M = 0.060$ and $F = 0.079$) hence non significant correlation existed between school environment and emotional stability.

Relationship Of Social Stability With Socio-Economic Status (Ses), Parent-Child Relationship (Positive And Negative Dimension), Home Environment (He) And School Environment (Se) (Table 4).

Table 4: Social maturity of rural pre-adolescent males and females in relation to socio-economic status (ses) parent-child relationship (positive and negative dimensions (PCR +, PCR -), home environment (HE) and school environment (SE)

SM	n	SES	PCR +	PCR-	HE	SE
Males	100	0.066	0.367*	-0.514*	0.140	0.149
Females	100	0.058	0.536*	-0.523*	0.010	0.095

* Significant. Critical value of r at 5% level of significance = 0.196

It was found that socio-economic status, home environment and school environment had no significant correlation with social maturity in both the sexes, the value of 'r' being very low in all the cases.

Correlation coefficient between parent-child relation and social maturity was found to be positive and significant for both male and females. This indicated that as the positive dimensions of parent child relationship improved, preadolescents became socially more mature. Similar findings have been reported by Parke and Bhavnagri (1989) that development of children's social relations was facilitated by parent's involvement, responsiveness and reciprocity.

The negative dimensions of parent-child relationship were found to be negatively correlated with the social maturity. The correlation coeffi-

cient being -0.514 and -0.523 in case of males and females respectively. The result thus point out that poor/low social maturity might be the outcome of dominant negative dimension of parent child relationship. These observations support the studies reporting that rejected child is inadequate in his social relations.

CONCLUSIONS

It was found that only the dimensions of parent child relationships exerted a significant influence on the socio-emotional development. Home environment was another factor found to be associated with the socio-emotional development. Socio-economic status and school environment did not play any significant influence on the socio-emotional development of rural pre-adolescents.

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