

## Impact Analysis: Family Structure on Social and Emotional Maturity of Adolescents

Ritu Singh<sup>1</sup>, Kusha Pant and Laitonjam Valentina

*Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Home Science, G.B.P.U. A. and T, Pantnagar 263 145, Distt. U.S. Nagar, Uttarakhand, India*  
*<sup>1</sup>Mobile: 09412120734, <sup>1</sup>E-mail: ritu.singh07@gmail.com*

**KEYWORDS** Social Adjustment. Personality. Nuclear Family. Maturity. Emotional Progression. Joint Family

**ABSTRACT** The present study has been designed and formulated to find out if type of family has any significant impact on social and emotional maturity of senior school adolescents of Pantnagar and to derive relationship between social and emotional maturity. 277 adolescents studying in class XI were taken randomly for the study. Self-designed socio-demographic questionnaire was used to study the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents of the present study. Social maturity and Emotional maturity of the respondents were assessed through Rao's Social Maturity Scale and Emotional Maturity Scale, respectively. Results revealed that respondents from joint family were more personally, interpersonally and socially adequate and thus, socially mature than those from nuclear family. Similarly, they were significantly higher on emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration and independence component of emotional maturity than those from nuclear family. Social maturity and emotional maturity was found to be significantly positively correlated across type of family.

### INTRODUCTION

Every child is unique in itself and has its own pace of growth and development. As the child grows up, his emotions and social functioning changes and continues till adolescence. Adolescence is that critical period of human development during which rapid biological, psychological and social changes take place. This period marks the end of childhood and sets the foundation for maturity. Adolescence is defined as the period of transition between childhood to adulthood that involves biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes. During this period, parents expect more self-regulation and initiative at the very time that their early teenagers are beginning to experiment with all kinds of risky behaviors (Barber 2002).

Maturity is one of the vital aspects of everyone's life. Maturity as defined by Finley (1996) is "the capacity of mind to endure an ability of an individual to respond to uncertainty, circumstances or environment in an appropriate manner". The chief index of emotional maturity is ability to bear tension. This view point lays stress on self control and not on self fulfillment. While adolescence is the time of growth, change and opportunity, transitioning into adulthood can bring moments of insecurity, helplessness, frustration, uselessness and isolation. The effect of household income, socio-economic circumstances, the

provision of a role model and parent-child relationships and interactions intercept the maturation of emotional self of young adults (Linda 2009). Morler (2002) stated that while emotional intelligence can be learned, emotional maturity is a choice.

Emotional maturity and social maturity, both are vital for attaining success and happiness in life. Social maturity is a term commonly used in two ways like with reference to the behavior that conforms to the standards and expectations of the adults and secondly, with reference to the behavior that is appropriate to the age of the individual under observation. Botcheva et al. (2002) stated that the adolescents reported decline in the optimism, relative stability of depression and problem behavior because of the improvement in the social maturity. The psychosocial context of adolescents is markedly different to that of children and adults. Relationships with peers, family and society go through distinct changes during this time. Adolescents begin to assert more autonomous control over their decisions, emotions and actions, and start to disengage from parental control. At the same time, the school context involves an intense socialisation process during which adolescents become increasingly aware of the perspectives of classmates, teachers and other societal influences (Berzonsky and Adams 2003). It can be assumed that while emotional maturity enables adolescents to

make better decisions for life, good social adjustments determine to large extent, what he will be socially throughout the adult years. In other words, it can be said that at the end of the adolescent period, the adolescent is expected to be socially and emotionally mature.

Today, adolescents are exposed to vast, unlimited and uncensored information along with increased pressure due to high competitiveness, expectation from family and peers as they belong to an era of technological revolution. A mass media explosion occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and revolutionized the way people gain information about their world (Bushman and Anderson 2001). Such technological evolution and globalisation has presented new challenges to adolescents such as 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. Consequently, they are finding it difficult to adjust themselves, and sometimes even succumb to the environmental pressure. This is quite evident from the increase in number of criminal, suicidal, drug abuse and rape cases where adolescents are involved. Evidence suggests that one of the most potent ways to teach aggression to young viewers is to couch the behaviour in a moral context. Notably, on television and film, nearly 40% of the violent acts are perpetrated by the "good" characters (Strasburger and Wilson 2002). In addition, disintegration of families negatively influences adolescent development as reported by Ruiz and Silverstein (2007) which state that close and supportive relationship between grandparents and grandchildren are an important factor of children's emotional wellbeing and psychological benefits.

Family environment irrespective of the type of family at such plays an important role in the well being of an adolescent. Over the years, researchers have highlighted the impact of family environment in the development of children. Researches show that both overall family system functioning and parental behaviours are positively related to adolescent well-being (Miyamoto et al. 2001; Muris et al. 2004; Wolfradt et al. 2002). Also, Kaur and Kalaramna (2004) in their study of interrelationship between home environment, social intelligence and socio-economic status among males and females revealed that

socio-economic status has got significant impact on social intelligence. Home environment also showed positive impact on social intelligence.

Thus, it can be stated that family environment is an important criteria for all round development of adolescents. However, the impact of type of family on the social and emotional development of adolescents is still not fully revealed. Therefore, in the light of the above reflections, the present study was planned with the following objectives.

### Objective

1. To assess the influence of family structure/type on the social and emotional maturity of an adolescent.
2. To compare social and emotional maturity of an adolescent across family structure/type.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample

The research study was carried out exclusively in Pantnagar University in the year 2009. The respondents for the study were the adolescents studying in class XI of the various schools situated in Pantnagar. Out of the total eight schools situated in Pantnagar, only three schools could be purposively included in the study since these schools provided education up to intermediate level. All the adolescents studying in class XI of the selected three schools were taken up as respondents for the present study, that is, 87 senior school adolescents (42 boys and 45 girls) from Campus School, 116 senior school adolescents from GGIC and 74 senior school adolescents from PIC, making a total of two hundred and seventy-seven (277) respondents for the present study. The study was conducted in the year 2010.

### Tools

Self-designed socio-demographic questionnaire was used to study the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Social maturity of the respondents was assessed using Rao's Social Maturity Scale developed by Nalini Rao. This 90 items scale measures social maturity under 3 dimensions, that is, Personal adequacy,

Inter-personal adequacy and Social adequacy. Emotional maturity of the respondents was assessed through Emotional Maturity Scale by Y. Singh and M. Bhargava. It is a standardized scale. This scale consists of 48 questions under the five categories, that is, Emotional Stability, Emotional Progression, Social Adjustment, Personality Integration and Independence. The response options available for the Social maturity items are: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for positive items and 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 for negative items respectively. The scores of a respondent on 3 sub-scales of the social maturity scale collectively give his / her Composite Social Maturity Score. Emotional Maturity Scale is a self-reporting Five Point Scale. The response options are Very Much, Much, Undecided, Probably and Never and scores assigned are 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The scores of a respondent on 5 sub-scales of the emotional maturity scale collectively give his / her Composite Emotional Maturity Score.

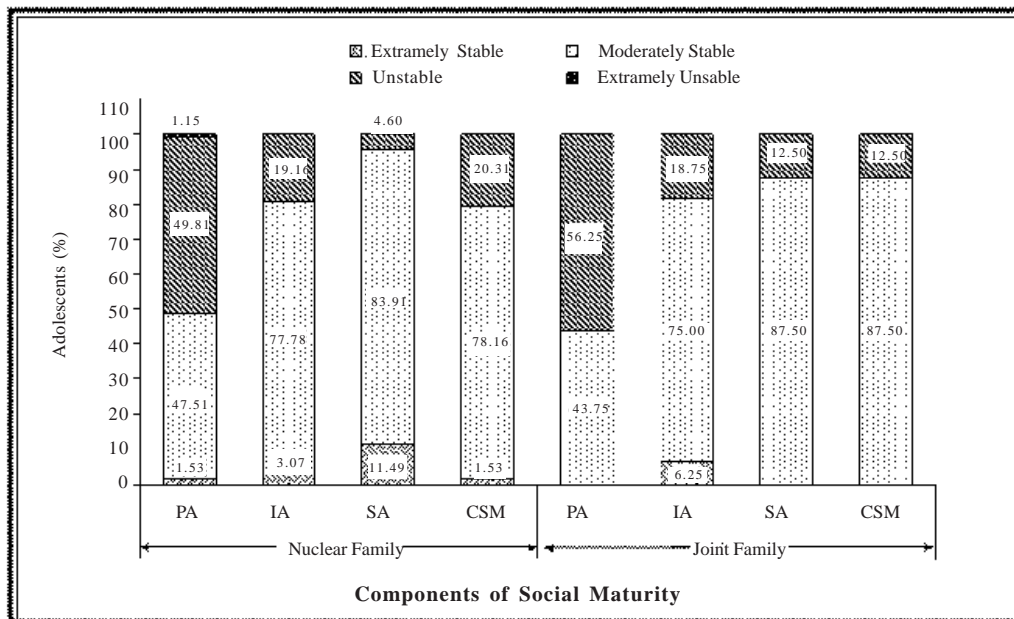
**Procedure and Data Analysis**

The respondents were approached in group of 4 to 5 in the school itself during their free

period. 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 exclusively for the purpose of research work. English version of both the scales was used with Campus School students as this school is an English medium school where as Hindi version of the scales was provided to students from PIC and GGIC because both these schools are Hindi medium schools. Each sampled student was given questionnaires individually and was asked to fill the questionnaires there and then only under strict supervision of the investigator. The respondents were asked to fill the questionnaires within the given time and then the investigator collected the questionnaires from the students immediately. Statistical analysis was done by using Arithmetic mean, Standard deviation, Z-test and Correlation coefficient.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The frequency and percentage distribution of adolescents on social maturity across family type is presented in Figure 1. It was unfortunate to find that 49.81% and 56.25% of adolescents



**Fig. 1. Percentage distribution of senior school adolescents of Pantnagar on social maturity across family type**

from nuclear family and joint family respectively were unstable on personal adequacy component of social maturity. However, 47.51% and 43.75%, respectively were recognized to be moderately stable also. Only 1.53% of respondents from nuclear family were observed to be extremely stable and at the same time 1.15% as extremely unstable.

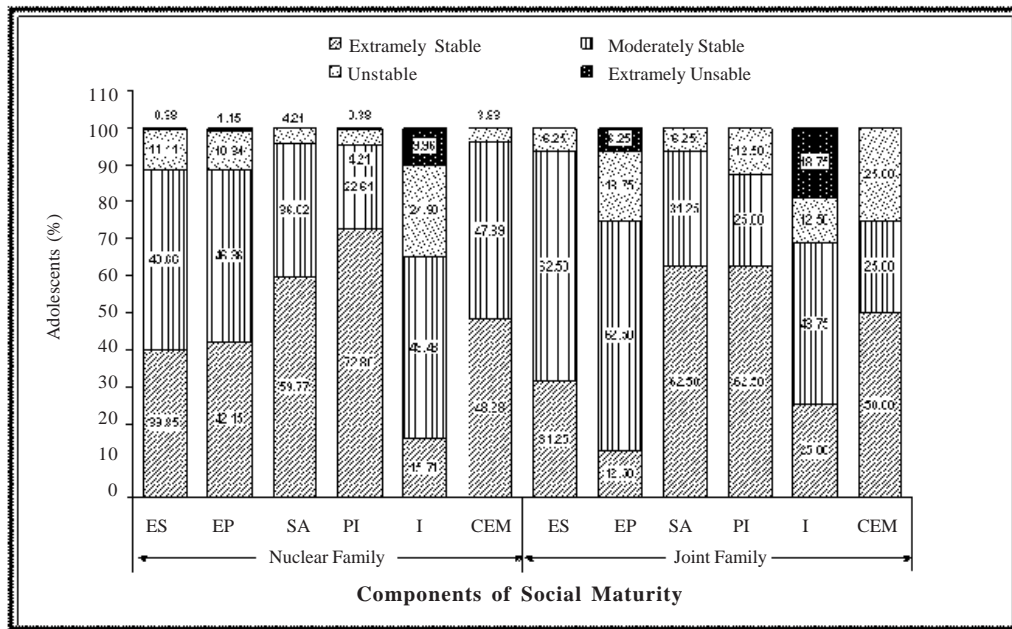
The picture under interpersonal adequacy component of social maturity is quite different. Majority of the respondents from both nuclear (77.78%) and joint (75.00%) family were found to fall within moderately stable level of social maturity. 19.16% and 18.75% respondents from nuclear and joint family, respectively were also seen to be unstable. Only 3.07% and 6.25% of respondents from these two families respectively were extremely stable. To our excitement, none from these two family types were found to be extremely unstable on this component.

On social adequacy component of social maturity as well, bulk of the respondents from

nuclear (83.91%) and joint (87.50%) family were observed to be moderately socially adequate. Remaining 12.50% of the respondents from joint family were socially inadequate whereas among rest of the respondents from nuclear family, 11.49% were recognized as extremely stable and 4.60% as unstable.

An overview of composite social maturity reveals that only 1.53% of the adolescents and that too only from nuclear family were extremely socially mature. The respondents from nuclear family (78.16%) and joint family (87.50%) were mainly moderately stable followed by 20.31% and 12.50% of respondents, respectively as unstable. None of the respondent from any of the family type was recognized to be extremely socially immature.

Figure 2 elucidates that good percent of the respondents were stable on emotional maturity component of emotional maturity. 39.85% and 31.25% of the respondents from nuclear and joint family, respectively were extremely stable and



**Fig. 2. Percentage distribution of senior school adolescents of Pantnagar on emotional maturity across family type**

Note: 1. PA indicates Personal Adequacy, IA indicates Inter-personal Adequacy, SA indicates Social Adequacy and CSM indicates Composite Social Maturity  
 2. ES indicates Emotional Stability, EP indicates Emotional Progression, SA indicates Social Adjustment, PI indicates Personality Integration, I indicates Independence and CEM indicates Composite Emotional Maturity

48.66% and 62.50%, respectively were moderately stable. However, certain percent of respondents from both family type were identified as unstable as well, 11.11% among those from nuclear family and 6.25% among those from joint family. 0.38% respondents from nuclear family were extremely unstable as well.

On the other hand, on emotional progression component of emotional maturity, incompatible distribution of respondents was seen over level of maturity across two family types. Among respondents from nuclear family, 46.36% were found moderately stable whereas among those from joint family, 62.50% were moderately stable. Similarly, it was noticed that 42.15% of those from nuclear family whereas just 12.50% of those from joint family were extremely stable. On unstable level too, 10.34% of adolescents from nuclear family and 18.75% from joint family, respectively were unstable and 1.15% and 6.25%, respectively as extremely unstable.

Respondents from both the family types were noticed to be predominantly extremely socially adjusted followed by being moderately socially adjusted viz. 59.77% and 62.50% from nuclear and joint family, respectively were extremely socially adjusted and 36.02% and 31.25%, respectively were moderately socially adjusted. Small percent of adolescents from both nuclear (4.21%) and joint family (6.25%) were observed to be unstable as well. However none was identified to be extremely unstable.

Just like on social adjustment component, respondents belonging to nuclear family and

joint family were observed to be mainly extremely stable (72.80% and 62.50%, respectively) on personality integration component as well and thereafter moderately stable (22.61% and 25.00%, respectively). Despite this, 4.21% of adolescents from nuclear family and 12.50% of adolescents from joint family were recognized as unstable and 0.38% from nuclear family as extremely unstable as well.

Analysis of respondents' level of maturity on independence component of emotional development displays that only 15.71% of those from nuclear family and 25.00% of those from joint family were extremely independent and 49.43% and 43.75%, respectively were moderately independent. To the researchers' dismay 24.90% and 12.50% of senior school adolescents of Pantnagar from nuclear family and joint family, respectively were identified to be dependent and 9.96% and 18.75%, respectively as extremely dependent.

Nevertheless, a glance of respondents' emotional maturity in total represents that 48.28% of adolescents belonging to nuclear family and 50.00% of those belonging to joint family were extremely emotionally mature and 47.89% and 25.00%, respectively were moderately emotionally mature. 3.83% and 25.00% respectively were also identified to be emotionally immature but none as extremely emotionally immature.

Significant differences were observed on all the components of social maturity across family type (Table 1). Adolescents from joint family were seen to be significantly more personally adequate

**Table 1: Mean differences in social and emotional maturity of senior school adolescents of Pantnagar across type of family**

<i>Components of maturity</i>	<i>Nuclear family (n<sub>1</sub>=261)</i>		<i>Joint family (n<sub>2</sub>=16)</i>		<i>Z calculated</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	
<i>Components of Social Maturity</i>	73.29	7.54	75.00	5.85	1.14*
Personal adequacy					
Inter-personal adequacy	80.21	4.87	85.25	7.83	1.01*
Social adequacy	80.29	5.39	85.06	6.72	2.61*
Composite social maturity	230.8	20.36	238.31	15.17	2.37*
<i>Components of Emotional Maturity</i>					
Emotional stability	20.61	5.96	23.00	4.67	1.31*
Emotional progression	22.00	6.08	26.31	8.14	1.19*
Social adjustment	17.97	5.33	20.31	4.76	1.19*
Personality integration	18.10	5.82	19.75	7.20	2.89**
Independence	16.24	4.73	18.87	5.67	1.25*
Composite emotional maturity	100.3	22.44	106.25	27.61	1.84*

\*Significant at 0.05 level \*\*Significant at 0.01 level

**Table 2: Relationship between social and emotional maturity of senior school adolescents of Pantnagar across family type**

<i>Components of emotional/ social maturity</i>	<i>Nuclear family</i>				<i>Joint family</i>			
	<i>Personal adequacy</i>	<i>Inter-personal adequacy</i>	<i>Social adequacy</i>	<i>Composite social maturity</i>	<i>Personal adequacy</i>	<i>Inter-personal adequacy</i>	<i>Social adequacy</i>	<i>Composite social maturity</i>
Emotional stability	.249**	.191**	.232**	.170**	.366**	.118*	.257*	.196*
Emotional progression	.319**	.303**	.261**	.315**	.473**	.202*	.340**	.356**
Social adjustment	.125*	.170**	.270**	.190**	.227*	.108*	.333**	.157*
Personality integration	.262**	.295**	.251**	.255**	.366**	.140*	.381**	.319**
Independence	.275**	.171**	.266**	.187**	.346**	.270**	.301**	.300**
Composite emotional maturity	.314**	.299**	.290**	.264**	.385**	.154*	.370**	.296**

\* Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

( $z=1.14$ ), inter-personally adequate ( $z=1.01$ ), socially adequate ( $z=2.61$ ) and thus, socially mature ( $z=2.37$ ) than those from nuclear family. Similar trend was observed by Johnson and Mullins (1990) also. Their study showed that social maturity is significantly higher in adolescents from joint families than those from nuclear families.

Just like social maturity, emotional maturity of the adolescents was also seen to be influenced by the type of family they come from. Table 1 clearly shows that adolescents from joint family were significantly better on emotional stability ( $z=1.31$ ), emotional progression ( $z=1.19$ ), social progression ( $z=1.19$ ), personality integration ( $z=2.89$ ) and independence ( $z=1.25$ ) component of emotional maturity and eventually on emotional maturity ( $z=1.84$ ) than those from nuclear family. The findings bear resemblance with Nanda and Chawla (2005) who reported that joint family plays significant role in the emotional maturity of adolescent girls as compared to nuclear families and with increase in age there is increase in emotional maturity.

Table 2 shows that all the variables of emotional maturity (Emotional Stability, Emotional Progression, Social Adjustment, Personality Integration, Independence and Composite Emotional Maturity) were positively and significantly correlated with all the variables of social maturity (Personal Adequacy, Inter-personal Adequacy, Social Adequacy and Composite Social Maturity) under nuclear as well as joint type family. Under nuclear family type, personal adequacy was observed significantly correlated with social adjustment (0.125\*) at 0.05 level of

significance where as under joint family type, positive and significant correlation was found between personal adequacy and social adjustment (0.227\*); inter-personal adequacy and emotional progression (0.202\*), social adjustment (0.108\*), personality integration (0.140\*) and composite emotional maturity (0.154\*); social adequacy and emotional stability (0.257\*) and composite social maturity and emotional stability (0.196\*); at 0.05 level of significance.

A glance at the findings of the present study reveals that social and emotional maturity of senior school adolescents of Pantnagar are significantly related across family type. In contrast, Subbarayan and Visvanathan (2011) reported that type of family has no significant relation with emotional maturity among college students. In contrast, Kaut and Kaur (2011) reported that children living in joint families show better behaviour and have less behavioural problems than children living in nuclear families

## CONCLUSION

From the present study, it can be concluded that adolescents from joint family were more personally adequate, inter-personally adequate, socially adequate and thus, more socially mature than those from nuclear family. Also, adolescents from joint family were significantly better on emotional stability, emotional progression, social progression, personality integration and independence component of emotional maturity and eventually on emotional maturity than those from nuclear family. Therefore, it can be stated that type of family of an adolescent plays an impor-

tant role in social and emotional development of an individual. Social and emotional maturity is reciprocal, so an effort to develop one domain would automatically lead to development in other domain.

### REFERENCES

- Barber B (Ed.) 2002. *Intrusive Parenting: How Psychological Control Affects Children and Adolescents*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Berzonsky MD, Adams GR 2003. *The Blackwell Handbook of Adolescence*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bushman B, Anderson C 2001. Media violence and the American public: Scientific facts versus media misinformation. *American Psychologist*, 56: 477-489.
- Finley J 1996. *Behavior and Development from 5 to 12*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Kaur H, Kalamna A 2004. Study of interrelationship between home environment, social intelligence and socio-economic status among males and females. *Journal of Human Ecology*, 16: 137-140.
- Kaut A, Kaur B 2011. A study of children's behaviour in relation to family environment and technological exposure at pre- primary stage. *MIER J Edu Studies: Trends and Practices*, 1: 111-129.
- Linda C 2009. *Studies in Cash and Care: Impact of Parental Employment*. United Kingdom; Ashgate Publishing.
- Miyamoto RH, Hishinuma ES, Nishimura ST, Nahulu LB, Andrade NN, Goebert DA, Carlton BS 2001. Path models linking correlates of self-esteem in a multi-ethnic adolescent sample. *Pers Individ Differ*, 31: 701-712.
- Morler EE 2002. Emotional Maturity is a Conscious Choice. From <[http://www.morler.com/emotional\\_maturity.pdf](http://www.morler.com/emotional_maturity.pdf)> (Retrieved on May 20, 2011).
- Muris P, Meesters C, Schouten E, Hoge E 2004. Effects of perceived control on the relationship between perceived parental rearing behaviors and symptoms of anxiety and depression in non clinical pre-adolescents. *J Youth Adolescence*, 33(1): 51-58.
- Nanda PK, Chawla A 2005. Impact of Age and Family Type on Emotional Maturity of Urban Adolescents. From <<http://www.iaer.net/ejournal/vol19107/6.htm>>
- Rao N 2006. *Manual for Social Maturity Scale*. Agra: National Psychological Corporation.
- Ruiz SA, Silverstein M 2007. Relationship with grandparents and the emotional well-being of late adolescents and young adult grandchildren. *J of Soc Iss*, 63: 793-808.
- Singh Y, Bhargava M 1990. *Manual for Emotional Maturity Scale*. Agra: National Psychological Corporation.
- Strasburger V, Wilson B 2002. *Children, Adolescents, and the Media*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Subbarayan K, Visvanathan G 2011. A study on emotional maturity of college students. *Recent Research in Science and Technology*, 3: 153-155.
- Wolfradt U, Hempel S, Miles JNV 2002. Perceived parenting styles, depersonalization, anxiety and coping behavior in adolescents. *Pers Individ Differ*, 34: 521-532.