

Emotional Maturity Among Adolescents: Examining Influence of Family Type and Gender Differences.

Shiwangi Prabhat* and Dr. Sangeeta Rani**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Home Science, RBBM College, BRABU, Muzaffarpur, Bihar.

** Professor, Department of Home Science, BRABU, Muzaffarpur, Bihar.

Abstract

Emotional maturity plays an important role during adolescence where an individual learns to regulate emotions, cope with stress and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships. It is highly influenced by the family structure. In nuclear families, individual often receive individualized attention but have limited access to extended family interaction. such difference in family structure impacts emotional regulation, support systems and adjustment patterns. The present study examined the gender difference in emotional maturity across six dimensions: self-knowledge, self-control, social adjustment, self-confidence, acceptance of reality, social adjustment and consistency. t-test was used to compare boys and girls. The finding revealed no significant difference in overall emotional maturity across gender. However, a significant difference was observed in the self-control dimension where boys were found to score significantly higher than girls.

Keyword: *Emotional Maturity, Adolescent Girls, Adolescent Boys,*

Introduction

Adolescence is a crucial developmental period marked by rapid physical, cognitive, emotional and social changes. They experience heightened emotional intensity and are required to develop effective mechanism for understanding, regulating and expressing emotions. The successful management of these emotions contribute to the development of emotional maturity. Emotional maturity is the ability of an individual to understand, regulate and express emotions appropriately in different situations and social settings. According to Walter *et.al.* (1976) emotional maturity is a process in which the personality is continuously striving for greater sense of emotional health, both intra-psychically and intra personality. During adolescence, emotional maturity plays a vital role in personality development, decision making, interpersonal relationship and psychological well-being. Research indicates that emotionally mature adolescents demonstrate better interpersonal relationships, higher psychological well-being and greater resilience in facing life challenges (Jose & Swamy, 2022). Family environment is one of the most influential factors affecting emotional maturity. It serves as the primary social institution for fostering emotional growth and personality development among adolescents. It provides emotional

security, social support, guidance and opportunities for learning appropriate emotional responses.

In India, two predominant family structures are observed: the nuclear family and the joint family. A nuclear family primarily comprise of husband, wife and their children living together. Joint family consists of husband, wife, their children, grandparents or extended family members. Rawat & Singh (2017) in a study on 320 adolescents reported that adolescents from joint family were significantly more emotionally mature than their counterparts from nuclear families. Gender is another important variable associated with emotional maturity. Socialization process often encourages girls and boys to develop different pattern of emotional regulation and expression. Girls are generally encouraged to express their emotions openly whereas boys are often taught to display emotional restraint and independence. According to a study by Johns *et.al.*, (2016) male adolescents were shown to be more emotionally mature, socially maladjusted, and personally disintegrating than female adolescents. There was a strong positive correlation between emotional immaturity and loneliness, and there was also a significant correlation between emotional immaturity and life satisfaction. The present study will therefore help in studying the impact of gender and family type on emotional maturity. It will further help educators, parents, policy makers to gain a deep insight of the topic.

Objective

- 1) To compare emotional maturity of boys and girls belonging to nuclear and joint family
- 2) To compare emotional maturity of adolescents belonging to nuclear and joint family.

Methodology

The overall sample size for the present study was 240 in which 120 respondents belonged to nuclear and joint family type respectively. Further they were classified into 60 boys and 60 girls. The respondents were selected using simple random sampling without replacement method from private co-ed schools of Muzaffarpur Bihar.

Tools

For data collection standardized tool having high reliability and validity was selected. Emotional maturity Scale by Dr. Tara Sabhapati was used to assess Emotional Maturity of the respondents. It is a self- reporting Four-Point Scale consisting of six components i.e. self-knowledge, self-confidence, acceptance of reality, self-control, social adjustment and consistency. The scale consists of 44 items in which 22 items each are positive and negative respectively. For positive items options such as **Always, Sometimes, Rarely and Never** are scored as **4, 3, 2, and 1** respectively whereas in case of negative items the scoring procedure is reversed.

Result and Discussion

1) Objective 1: To compare emotional maturity of boys and girls belonging to nuclear and joint family

Perusal of table 1 indicates Significant difference in self-control domain of emotional maturity which was found to be less than 0.05 level of significance (t -value=1.99, $p < 0.05$). This denotes that there was a significant difference in self-control of boys and girls reared under nuclear family. Whereas the significance level in case of self-knowledge, self-confidence, acceptance of reality, social adjustment and consistency domains of emotional maturity of adolescents living in nuclear family was greater than 0.05 which means there was no significant difference in the results of boys and girls. On the contrary to this, result was bit different for the adolescents hailing from joint families. There was significant difference in overall emotional maturity. The significance level of overall emotional maturity was observed to be less than 0.05 level of significance (t -value=3.70, $p < 0.00$).

Table 1: Mean Difference in Domains of Emotional Maturity of Adolescents belonging to Nuclear and Joint Family

Sig <0.05 (Significance Level less than 0.05 indicates a significant difference in data

	Nuclear Family							Joint Family						
	Boys		Girls		t-value	Degree of freedom	Sig level	Boys		Girls		t-value	Degree of freedom	Sig level
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D				Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D			
Self-knowledge	24.02	3.202	23.78	2.443	.449	118	.654	25.38	3.114	25.03	3.059	.621	118	.536
Self-Confidence	23.43	3.490	22.78	2.681	1.144	118	.255	25.17	3.396	23.05	3.689	3.270	118	.001
Acceptance of Reality	18.58	3.637	18.55	2.500	.058	118	.953	19.00	3.025	18.17	2.618	1.613	118	.109
Self-Control	22.00	3.268	20.75	3.601	1.991	118	.049	22.77	2.819	20.67	3.487	3.628	118	.000
Social Adjustment	24.70	3.693	24.68	3.784	.025	118	.980	25.90	3.554	24.72	3.862	1.746	118	.083
Consistency	18.45	2.734	18.05	2.354	.859	118	.392	18.55	2.213	17.53	2.159	2.548	118	.012
Total Emotional Maturity	130.68	12.780	128.60	10.521	.975	118	.332	136.78	10.625	129.17	11.885	3.701	118	.000

which means rejection of null hypothesis).

Source: Compiled and Calculated from Field Survey (Independent sample T-test)

Self-control among boys was reported to be more than girls and there was a high significant difference among both the genders (t- value = -3.62, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, difference was also observed in the self-confidence dimension of emotional maturity. It was found that boys were more confident than girls (t-value = 3.27, $p < 0.05$). This finding was in contrast to the study conducted by Hamama and Hamama-Raz, (2021), where females were reported to have higher level of self -control than boys. The possible reason for the present findings can be early maturation among girls in comparison with boys which increases vulnerability to a number of problems (Selkie, 2018) leading to eating disorder, struggle for earlier independence from their parents, and have older friends leading to earlier dating (Wang & others, 2018).

Consistency domain too showed significant difference among both the genders. The emotions of adolescent boys from joint families were more consistent as compared to those of girls. The probable reason for the observed differences in emotional consistency between adolescent boys and girls from joint families could be related to various social, psychological, and familial factors. Boys may be encouraged to maintain emotional control and consistency, while girls might be more encouraged to express their emotions openly, which could lead to greater emotional variability. Another possible reason could be maintaining relationships and interaction with other family members. Boys may have more stable emotional relationships due to their interaction patterns, while girls might experience a broader range of emotions due to different roles and expectations within the family.

Objective 2: To compare emotional maturity of adolescents belonging to nuclear and joint family.

Table 2 : Mean Difference in Domains of Emotional Maturity of Nuclear and Joint Family

Domains of Emotional Maturity	Nuclear		Joint		t- value	Degree of freedom	Sig level
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D			
Self-knowledge	23.90	2.839	25.21	3.079	3.423	238	.001
Self-Confidence	23.11	3.116	24.11	3.687	2.269	238	.024
Acceptance of Reality	18.57	3.108	18.58	2.848	0.043	238	.965
Self-Control	21.38	3.481	21.72	3.328	0.777	238	.438
Social Adjustment	24.69	3.705	25.31	3.743	1.283	238	.201
Consistency	18.25	2.548	18.04	2.236	0.673	238	.501
Total Emotional Maturity	129.64	11.703	132.98	11.859	2.192	238	.029

Sig < 0.05 (Significance Level less than 0.05 indicates a significant difference in data which means rejection of null hypothesis).

Source: Compiled and Calculated from Field Survey (**Independent Sample T-test**)

Bold values are significant

It is clear from table 2 that there is significant difference in overall emotional maturity and family type. Respondent from joint family were found to be more emotionally mature as compared to respondents who belonged to nuclear family. Joint family respondents were found to be more confident and had more knowledge regarding their self. The findings of this study is supported by a study conducted by Rawat and Singh, (2017). in which it was revealed that adolescents from joint families were more emotionally progressive, socially well adjusted, had adequate personality and were independent than those from nuclear families. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to be aware of the environment in which the adolescent is developing and to change any negative effects into good ones.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that gender differences in emotional maturity are more evident in joint families than in nuclear families. While boys and girls from nuclear families exhibit comparable levels of emotional maturity, boys from joint families demonstrated significantly higher emotional maturity particularly in self-control, self- Confidence and consistency domain. These findings indicate that family structure play an important role in shaping the emotional maturity of adolescent boys and girls.

References

Johns, N., Mathew, J.P. and Mathai, S.M. (2016). Emotional Maturity and Loneliness as Correlates of Life Satisfaction Among Adolescents. IRA-International Journal of Management & Social Sciences, Vol. 3, Issue 03, pp. 558-567, Institute of Research Advances, ISSN 2455-2267.

Jose S. A. & Swamy I. C. (2022). Emotional Maturity Among Adolescents. International Journal of Indian Psychology, 10(1), 1497-1504. DIP:18.01.153.20221001, DOI:10.25215/1001.153.

Rawat, Chanda & Singh, Ritu. (2017). A Study of Emotional Maturity of Adolescents with Respect to their Educational Settings. Journal of Social Sciences. 49. 345-351. 10.1080/09718923.2016.11893630.

Selkie E. Gender Diversity and Adolescent Well-being. JAMA Pediatr. 2018;172(11):1010–1011. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2018.2917.

Walter,D. and simston W.S (1976).Definition of emotional maturity.MH.winter.58:9-11.

Wang, K., Frison, E., Eggermont, S. and Vandenbosch, L. (2018), Active public Facebook use and adolescents' feelings of loneliness: Evidence for a curvilinear relationship. Journal of Adolescence, 67: 35-44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2018.05.008>