
EMOTIONAL MATURITY AMONG ADOLESCENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NUCLEAR AND JOINT FAMILIES

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Abstract

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood. It is accompanied with issues like independence, self identity and emotional charges. Adolescent behaviors get influenced by emotions. Adolescent faces different and unfamiliar situation which require their appropriate response. Emotions have to be dealt effectively and if adolescents are not able to respond appropriately it results into problems of several kinds. Emotional maturity is the need of the hour for adolescents. Emotional maturity is the ability of self control which results from proper emotional development. Emotional maturity implies controlling your emotions rather than letting your emotions get over you. Family structure also plays a very important role on the adolescents. So present study is designed to examine the parenting style among adolescents of Nuclear and joint families. The objectives of the study were (i) to study the emotional maturity among male and female adolescents (II) to study emotional maturity among adolescents from nuclear and joint families (iii) to study the interactional effect of family structure and gender on emotional maturity of adolescents. For this purpose Emotional maturity scale by Singh and Bhargava (1984) was used. The sample consisted of 120 adolescents where equal numbers of subjects were from nuclear and joint families. Moreover the gender was also equally taken from both nuclear and joint families. The data was analyzed with the help of ANOVA and T-test. Significant differences between the comparison groups were observed on the measure of emotional maturity. The results have been discussed in the light of operational definition of the variables.

Keywords: Emotional Maturity, Adolescents, Nuclear family, Joint Family.

Introduction

Adolescence is viewed as beginning with the outset of puberty, a rapid spurt in physical growth accompanied by sexual maturation, and as ending when individuals assume responsibilities with individuals assume responsibilities associated with adult life –marriage, entry into workforce and soon. (Rice, 1992) Adolescence can be a time of both disorientation and discovery. The transitional period can bring up issues of independence and self-identity. Increased self-understanding, identity exploration and emotional changes are the hallmarks of adolescent development. Adolescents seek to know who they are, what they one going to be. Overtime adolescents self understanding becomes more differentiated. (Harter, 2006)

Emotions in Adolescence

Emotions can be defined as a feeling that occurs when a person is in a state or on interaction that is important to the individual, especially to his or her well being. (Compos, Frankel & Camras, 2004). Emotions are a state of being stirred or aroused in some way. In adolescence the behavior gets influenced by their emotions. The recent researches on the adolescents point out that the earlier notion of “storm and stress” is actually the natural outcome of youth learning to cope with new and unfamiliar situations. (Larson & Ham, 1993) Apart from academics, physical, mental and emotional demands these is a social relationship demand like Face book, Twitter etc. In order to cope up with these challenges a vast range of emotions emerge, and they may experience fluctuating emotions throughout the day or even weeks together. Teens must therefore learn to respond to new and unfamiliar situations with confidence and ease. The ability to cope up with increased stress is influenced by many factors like genetic factors such as temperament and certain environmental factors like family and community. Learning to manage emotions requires that teens learn to distinguish how and when emotions are functional from ways in which they can turn your world upside down, mislead and have dysfunctional consequences (Larson, Clore & Wood,1999)

Gender Differences in Emotional Development

The relationship between emotional development and gender is complex and some studies show difference in male and female emotional styles are due to gender norms and socialization process. As compared to male , female are more aware of their emotions and are more empathetic . Women tend to nurture themselves and others and form alliances with a larger social group. As compared to female male are more confident, adaptable and optimistic. Male uses internal and cognitively driven mechanisms for managing emotions.

Emotional Maturity is a personality trait, the result of emotional development and the display of emotion appropriate to ones chronological age. It usually reflects increased emotion adjustment and emotional stability and the attainment of emotional self regulation. According to Menninger (1999), emotional maturity includes the ability to deal constructively with reality. Emotional maturity can be understood in terms of ability of self control which is turn is a result of thinking and learning. Chamberlsin (1960) Said that an ‘emotionally matured person is one whose emotional life is well under control. Emotional maturity implies controlling your emotions rather than telling your emotions get the better of you. Emotional maturity of a person depicts ones capacity to manage and to check ones emotions to evaluate others’ emotional state and to persuade their judgment and actions. According to Chuang (2009) emotional maturity is a rather a learning process that take place in a person while he is under parents supervision, from infant state of helpless but total egocentricity to ideal adult state of sensible conformity coupled with emotional creativity. Thus Emotional Maturity is a measure of one’s capacity to create a positive mental attitude. It is a process of impulse control through the agency of self.

Emotional stability is one of the seventh important indicators of mental health. It simply means being grown up so that one may be able to personally manage his /her desires and feelings and may be better able to cope up the adverse life situation in a most benefitting and socially approved manner. The most outstanding mark of emotional maturity is ability to bear tension. The emotionally mature is not one who necessarily has resolved all conditions that aroused anxiety and hospitability but it is continuously in process of seeing himself/herself in clearer perspective continually involved in a struggle to gain healthy integration of feeling and thinking action. A mature person views life experience as learning experiences and when they are positive, he enjoys and revels in life. When they are positive, he enjoys and revels in life. When they are negative, he accepts personal responsibility and is confident and can learn

from them to improve his life. When things do not go well he looks for an opportunity to succeed. The immature person only curses his fate or luck.

According to Murray (1997) symptoms of Emotional Immaturity involves volatile emotions such as explosive behavior, temper tantrum, oversensitivity and fluctuation of moods. Another symptom of emotional Immaturity is over dependency Egocentricity and stimulation Hunger. Such people have superficial values and their loyalty to relationship is only as long as it is useful. They are self centered. They have no regard for others and only slight regard for themselves. They demand constant attention, make unreasonable demands and do not take responsibility for his own mistakes.

George Bielay (2011) pointed out that emotionally mature person is able to give and receive love and affection is able to deal with reality. Emotionally mature individuals learn from experience and deal with frustration, accepts constructive criticism, is optimistic and self confident. Kevin Fitz Maurice (1989, 1990) describes 6 levels of emotional maturity. Level one is the level of Basic Emotional Responsibility. At this level a person realize that he/she can no longer view their emotional states as the responsibility of external forces such as people, place, things, forces and fate.

The second level is the level of Emotional Honesty. This is the stage at which person is willing to know his/her own feelings. This is a necessary step to understand self. It is related solely to the person's conscious and unconscious fears of dealing directly with the critical voices he hear inside. The person in honest with oneself about how he really feels. The people learn to locate others with whom they can safely share their real feelings and their real selves. Level three is the level of Emotional openers. At this level a person is willing to share their feelings in an appropriate manner and at a appropriate time. Persons at this level experience and learn the value of ventilating feelings and also the dangers invoked in hiding feelings from self and others. Level four is the Emotional Assertiveness. The person at this level enters a new era of positive self expression. The primary goal here is to be able to ask for and to receive the nurturing that one needs and wants first from self and then from others. As a secondary goal, persons should learn how to express any feeling appropriately in any situation, without aggressive overtones.

This person makes time for their feelings—they prize and respect them. Level five is the level of emotional understanding. Persons on this level understand the actual cause and effect process of emotional responsibility and irresponsibility. They realize that it is not possible to have so called good self-concept without a complimentary bad self-concept.

Knowing that though we may hide one half in unconsciousness it is still active in us; they begin to regularly leap beyond the pitfalls of self-concepts, self-images and self-constructs. This knowledge of the unity of opposites is applied to new situations daily. Self-knowledge is used to free the self from self-concepts on this level rather than to form them and imprison the self in them. The main work here is a total shift from identifying with any self-concepts to identifying only with the true self.

Level six is the level of Emotional Detachment. At this level the person lives without the burden and share of self-concepts, self-images, self-constructs and all group-concepts and thing concepts. True detachment from all self-concepts has occurred. This person remains unaffected for the Blame Game and even experiences unconditional love for their enemies. Emotions play an important role in every person live, especially for adolescence. Adolescence is a period which is most demanding, where an adolescent has to deal with various anxieties, conflicts, confusions stress and so on. To deal all this emotional maturity is the requirement. Emotional maturity is also important for maintaining positive mental attitudes, better adjustment and social relationships. Emotional maturity also shapes personality, attitudes, behavior of adolescents into accepting responsibilities, decision making, team work, developing healthy relationships and enhancing self worth.

Researches show that there is a high positive correlation between emotional maturity and overall adjustment. (Chauhan and Bhatnagar (2003) assessed Emotional Maturity and Emotional Quotient among adolescent of both the gender. The results revealed that post-adolescents post adolescents possessed a higher degree of emotional quotient than their counter parts and that female had higher degree of emotional quotient than their male counterparts. It has also been noticed that home environment also has a effect on emotional maturity of adolescent male and females Jadhve (2010) reported that there is a positive and significant relationship between home environment and emotional maturity among the boys and girls. Krishnamurty (2011) found that female students proved high are their Emotional Maturity than their male counterparts. The results also indicated that the adolescents of joint family system were more emotionally matured as compared to those who live in nuclear family system. Nanda et.al (2005) also concluded that family has an impact on emotional maturity. Joint family system has a positive impact on emotionality and emotional stability increases with age. Recognizing that today's adolescent are tomorrow's future and if emotional stability is eroding it may affect the future of nation. Moreover family system needs to be studied so that necessary steps can be taken in time.

Operational Definition

Emotional Maturity: Emotional Maturity is the capacity to manage and to check ones emotions and to evaluate other emotional state and to persuade their judgment and actions.

Methodology

Objectives: The main objectives of the study were:

1. To study emotional maturity among male and female addescents.
2. To study emotional maturity among adolescents from nuclear and joint families.
3. To study interactional effect of family structure and gender on emotional maturity of the adolescents.

Hypotheses

On the basis of the objectives of the study the following hypotheses were formulate:

1. There would be a significant difference on the measure of emotional maturity among male and female adolescents.
2. There would be a significant difference on the measure of emotional maturity among adolescents from nuclear and joint families.
3. There would be a significant interactional effect of family structure and gender on the emotional maturity among adolescents.

Variables

Family structure: Nuclear and Joint Family
Gender : Male and Female Adolescents

Dependent Variables

Emotional Maturity

Sample

Total Sample of the study was 120. The sample consisted of students studying in class 8th, 9th, and 10th, aged between 13 - 15 years studying in different public schools in Delhi. The sample was selected through purposive sampling technique. The study is a 2x2 factorial

design, where equal numbers of male and female subjects were taken from nuclear and joint families.

Tools and Procedure

Emotional Maturity was measured through emotional Maturity scale by Singh and Bhargava (1984). The scale has five components viz, instability, emotional regression, social maladjustment and personality disintegration and lack of independence. The scale consists of 10 items in each component except for the component ie lack of independence which has 8 items. The responses are scored according to weightage of 5 to 1 (very much to never). Higher the score on the scale, lesser is the degree of emotional maturity and vice-versa.

Scoring: The Emotional Maturity scale was scored according to the items that are so stated that if the answer is in a positive way a score of 5 is given for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. Therefore, higher the score on the scale, greater the degree of emotional immaturity and vice-versa.

Reliability: The product moment and between two testing is .75 Validity: Correlation with other measure is .64

The collected data was scored with the help of the standard scoring scheme of the scale. The scores were entered in the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). It was analyzed using t-test and ANOVA.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Showing the results of t-test as applied to the scores of **emotional Maturity** between male and female adolescents.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T value	df	Sig.
Male	60	93.61	13.48	10.72	118	.001
Female	60	127.33	20.66			

Table 1 shows that on the measure of emotional maturity, the mean value for the male and female adolescents were 93.61 and 127.33 respectively. The standard deviation from the mean value for males was 13.48 and for females were 20.66. The t value obtained was 10.72 which is significant at .001 level. It means that there is a significant difference between male and female adolescents. Male adolescents have higher emotional maturity than female adolescents. The mean value for female adolescents is higher than mean value for male an adolescent which implies that males have higher emotional maturity. This could be attributed to the fact that female adolescents because of their pubertal age go through many extreme physical changes that in addition to the other stressors like social pressures, academics etc. contribute to their emotional turmoil leading to emotional instability. Female adolescents thus, become anxious, irritable, frustrated easily and vulnerable to psychological problems. In addition more control is imposed on girls over most aspects of their lives in comparison to boys. This lack of independence contributes adversely to their social competence. While in comparison boys are more socially, adjusted and independent. These findings of the study are also supported by other research studies. Arya (1984) found that boys more mature. Subbarayan and Visvanathan (2011) also found significant difference in emotional maturity between male and female students. It was reported that boys have higher emotional maturity than girls. Dureja et.al (2012) in their study of emotional maturity differentials among college students found that male students have higher emotional maturity than female students. Sharma (2012) in their study reported that the gender emotional maturity among boys can be attributed to the factors that boys can easily face the hard and stress situations whereas girls become anxious and frustrated easily. They further reported that in three sub areas of

emotional maturity i.e. personality disintegration, social maladjustment and emotional regression, the mean scores were higher for boys but the difference in mean scores between boys and girls was not significant . Thus hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Table 2 showing the results of t-test as applied to the scores of **emotional maturity** between adolescents from nuclear and joint family

Family type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	df	sig
Nuclear	60	119.58	25.50	4.51	118	.001
Joint	60	100.92	19.35			

Table 2 shows that the mean value of adolescents from nuclear and joint families was 119.58 and 100.92 respectively. The standard deviation from the mean for adolescents from nuclear family was 25.50 and for adolescents from joint family was 19.35. The mean value of joint family system is lower than mean value of nuclear family system which shows that adolescents in joint family system have higher emotional maturity. The reason for so could be attributed to the fact that the adolescents in a joint family system have many siblings and other family members to share materials, resources etc with Adolescents in a joint family learn how to adjust very easily indifferent environment. Eventually they learn impulse control amongst a group of people. Also in times of stress they have better emotional support than those in a nuclear family system. On the other hand adolescents in a nuclear family system do not have equivalent emotional support. This is specially true for those who do not have siblings. Such adolescents are less likely to be emotionally stable and may get anxious, irritable easily. Also, adolescents in a nuclear family are used to receiving a lot of attention to their wishes and may have less impulse control in comparison to one from a joint family. Also, those from joint family system are likely to be better socially adjusted than the ones in a nuclear family system. Family is the first and most crucial socializing unit in a person's life. The kind of family, i.e. joint or nuclear really makes an impact on the child's learning, values and personality. Kumar (2013) found that boys from joint families are better socially adjusted than boys from nuclear families. Nanda et al (2005) have reported that family has an impact on emotional maturity. Joint family system has a positive impact on emotionality because maximum percentage of girls was found to be stable and no girls were found to be extremely unstable in the joint family. Laxmi and Krishnamurthy (2011) studied emotional maturity of higher secondary school students in Coimbatore District. They concluded that students who are from joint family system surpassed the students who live in nuclear family system. Thus hypothesis is accepted.

Table 3 showing the results of two-way ANOVA as applied to the scores of Emotional Maturity

Source	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	35020.833	1	35020.833	160.368	.001
Family type	10453.333	1	10453.333	47.868	.001
Gender * Family Type	136.533	1	136.533	.625	.431

Table 3 shows that main effect of gender on emotional maturity is significant with F value of 160.368 which is significant at .001 levels. The main effect of family type on emotional maturity is also significant at .001 levels with F value of 47.868. But the interaction effect of gender and family type on emotional maturity is not significant with F value of 0.625. The interaction effect of gender and family type on emotional maturity is not significant. This implies that the effect of gender and family type together on emotional maturity of the sample

could be attributed to chance or that there may be some other factors that affect emotional maturity. Thus Hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Major Findings

1. There is a significant difference between male and female adolescents on the measure of Emotional maturity. Male Adolescents have higher emotional maturity than female Adolescents.
2. There is a significant difference on the level of emotional Maturity between Adolescents from nuclear and joint families. Adolescents in joint family have higher emotional maturity than adolescents in nuclear family system.
3. The interaction effect of gender and family type on emotional maturity is not significant.

Conclusion

Thus on the basis of the results and interpretations it may be concluded that emotional maturity varies according to gender and family structure. Emotional Maturity is higher among male adolescents and among adolescents in joint family system. The interaction effect of gender and family type on emotional maturity is not significant.

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