

Impact of Family Climate on Mental Health of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Parents often adopt specific child-rearing practices in their families. The role of parents and the family is crucial in children's growth, development, progress, and adjustment throughout their lives. From birth to adolescence, children are typically raised by their parents and family members. The family provides a sense of shelter and security for every child in the world, and climate of every family exerts a profound influence on its members. The concept of "Family" is multifaceted, encompassing factors such as culture, traditions, ideals, and values. Adolescents and family climate are closely interconnected. The family climate, or the overall emotional and social environment within a family, can have a significant impact on adolescents' behavior, development, and well-being. Adolescents who experience a good family climate tend to have better mental health and academic achievement outcomes. The growth and development of each family member depend on the structure of their family. Family circumstances are significant in determining children's learning abilities worldwide. The adoption of different family styles leads to varying academic performance at different stages of a child's life. Academic achievement is often linked to factors such as socio-economic status, family adjustment, health conditions, educational standards, and parenting style. The family climate has a significant impact on the child's overall personality and educational achievements. This study focuses on the impact of family climate on the mental health of adolescents.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Adolescents, Family climate, Mental Health

INTRODUCTION:

Family Climate: The term "Family" has its roots in the Latin word "famulus," which means a servant. A family is a long-lasting association of parents and children, whose primary responsibility is to socialize their offspring and fulfill their needs. The concept of family climate typically pertains to both the physical and emotional environment within the family and the state of the family as a whole. The family climate has a profound and long-lasting impact on an individual's life, as it is where one acquires intimate experiences. As each member of a family develops, the relationships between them also evolve over time. The family is essentially a system, and any changes in family membership or relationships are bound to affect the dynamics of the entire family. In today's complex world, understanding the unique parent-child relationship is crucial. Effective parenting is becoming increasingly important as the nature of the family continues to change. Both parents play a significant role in their children's development. The family in which a child grows up plays a vital role in their life. A supportive family climate can provide adolescents with a sense of safety, security, and stability, which can help them cope with the stresses of adolescence. The family climate can significantly affect adolescents' mental health, a crucial stage of life characterized by significant physical, emotional, and social changes. Adolescents, who receive emotional and practical support from their parents, tend to have better mental health outcomes. The family climate has significant impact on mental health of adolescents. Positive family dynamics, such as parental support, communication, conflict resolution skills, and family cohesion, are associated with better mental health outcomes in adolescents. Conversely, negative family dynamics, such as high levels of conflict and a lack of support, can lead to adverse mental health outcomes. There are many studies which reveal that positive family climate helps in the academic achievement, cognitive development and social adjustment of children. Rajappa, K., Gallagher, M., Miranda, J. (2010) identified three subtypes of perceived family conflict in India: parent-child conflict, marital conflict, and extended family conflict. The results revealed that all three subtypes were associated with increased child psychopathology and family dysfunction. Krishnakumar, P., Geeta, M. G. (2015). found that positive family relationships and parental warmth were associated with lower

levels of depression, anxiety, and conduct problems among adolescents in India. Shrivastava, S., Shrivastava, P., Ramasamy, J. (2018) that positive family environment was significantly associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression among adolescents. Y.S. Park (2006) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between family factors and adolescent delinquency in Korea. The findings of the study revealed that family factors, such as parental monitoring, parental attachment, and family conflict, were significantly associated with adolescent delinquency. Specifically, low levels of parental monitoring and attachment, and high levels of family conflict, were associated with higher levels of delinquency among Korean adolescents. These findings highlight the importance of promoting positive family environments in promoting positive mental health outcomes in adolescents. Parents and caregivers can support adolescents' mental health by providing emotional and practical support, fostering positive communication and conflict resolution skills, promoting family cohesion, and addressing unique challenges that may arise in different family structures.

Mental Health: Mental health refers to the overall state of a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It involves the ability to cope with the normal stresses of life, to work productively, and to make meaningful contributions to one's community. Good mental health allows individuals to maintain healthy relationships, handle difficult situations, and adapt to changes in life. "Mental health is a term which is defined as the state of an individual with high emotional stability, well adjustment in the society, adequate perception of reality, self-concept, integrated personality and environmental competencies"(Bhargava and Raina, 2011). World Health Organization's (WHO) (2013) recognizes that mental health is not just an individual concern, but also a community concern, and that mental health plays a vital role in overall well-being and quality of life. It states that mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his/her own abilities and potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, works productively and fruitfully and makes a positive contribution to his/her community. In this way, good mental health is not just the absence of mental illness, but rather a state of positive mental and emotional functioning, including resilience, self-awareness, and a sense of purpose and meaning in life.

Mental Health in the Family Environment:

Family environment can have a significant impact on the mental health of adolescents. Positive family relationships, communication, and support can act as protective factors, while negative family factors such as conflict and stress can contribute to the development of mental health problems in adolescents. It is important for families to prioritize open communication, support, and positive relationships to promote the mental health and well-being of their adolescent children. The environment of home built child's health. Positive family relationships and communication can act as protective factors against the development of mental health problems in adolescents. Lippold, M.A., Glatz, T., Fosco, G.M., & Feinberg, M.E. (2015) examined the associations between parental warmth, autonomy granting, and adolescent well-being in a Chinese context. The findings showed that both parental warmth and autonomy granting were positively associated with adolescent resilience, which in turn was associated with lower levels of depressive symptoms and externalizing behaviors. Specifically, parental warmth was found to be a stronger predictor of resilience, whereas autonomy granting was a stronger predictor of depressive symptoms and externalizing behaviors. Most of the problems of disturbed children originate in their early years. Some of the unnecessary aspects of child's upbringing from the mental point of views are overprotection, indifference, unfair comparison and excessive permissiveness, unrealistic level of aspiration, perfectionism and ignorance. Hence, family factors, such as communication patterns, family cohesion, and parental support, can impact the development of mental health problems in adolescents.

Significance of the Study:

Mental health is perceived as a positive source contributing to asset development individually, socially, and economically (WHO, 2004). Family climate is the most important institution for the existence and continuance of human life and the development of personality of children on various dimensions. Mental health problems are a major concern among adolescents and can have long-term effects on their well-being. By identifying family factors that contribute to mental health problems, researchers can inform interventions that prevent the development of these problems. When adolescents experience mental health problems, their families are often involved in their treatment. Understanding the role of family environment on mental health can help educators

and researchers to design teaching strategies that may be contributing to address the adolescent's mental health problems. The family is an important source of support for adolescents, and positive family relationships can promote their overall well-being. By examining the role of family environment on mental health, researchers can identify factors that promote positive family relationships and inform interventions that strengthen family relationships. The well-being of adolescents is a social and educational concern, therefore, the investigators of the present study, look for the findings from research on family environment and mental health to inform policies that promote positive family relationships and prevent mental health problems among adolescents.

Research Pattern:

The present study aims to examine the impact of family climate on mental health of adolescents.

Research Design:

Descriptive Research was employed to carry out this piece of research work.

Sample:

A sample comprising of total 90 students from 2 government schools of Bhiwani district was taken under this study. The sample participants were XII grade student between age group 16 to 19 years from streams of Arts, Commerce and Science.

Sampling Technique:

Simple random sampling method was used for the present study.

Research Tools:

Family Environment Scale by Bhatia and Chadha (1993)

Mental Health Battery (MHB) by Singh and Gupta (2008)

Procedure:

For data collection the students of Bhiwani district were approached personally in their school set up after getting permission from the competent authority. Relevant instructions related to inventories and proformas were given to the subjects and data was collected accordingly.

Statistical Techniques: Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. The t-ratio was used to analyze statistical significance of difference between different groups in relation with male and female students. ANOVA was used to find out significant difference where more than two groups involved. Pearson Coefficient of co-relations was employed to find the relationship between study variables.

Objective 1: To study the significance of difference in male and female school students with request to their family climate

H1: There is no significant difference between male and female students with respect to their family climate

Table 1: Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of Male and Female students on Family Climate

Dimensions of Family Climate	Male Students N= 45		Female Students N=45		Df	t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Cohesion	52.37	6.19	53.34	5.10	88	0.81
Expressiveness	30.60	4.31	30.92	3.99		0.36
Conflict	42.04	5.65	41.65	5.30		0.34

Acceptance& Caring	42.97	4.69	42.24	4.97	0.73
Independence	29.62	4.44	30.07	4.61	0.5
Active Recreational Orientation	27.29	3.86	27.56	3.83	0.33
Organization	7.58	1.82	7.20	1.84	1.02
Control	15.12	3.09	15.28	2.98	0.25

It is clear from the table no. 1 that there exists no significant difference between male and female students with respect to their family climate. In order to compare the family climate with its dimensions among male and female school students the data were subjected to t-test. The Table -1 presents means, S.D"s and t-values of male and female school students with respect to their family climate. Table also depicts that none of the t-value is found significant at any level. This states that null hypothesis, "There exist no significant difference between male and female students with respect to family climate" is retained. It may be due to reason that Gender is not significantly affected by Cohesion, Expressiveness, Conflict, Acceptance and Caring, Independence, Active Recreational Orientation and Organization.

Objective 2: To study the significant difference in male and female school students with respect to their mental health

H2: There is no significant difference between male and female students with respect to their mental health.

Table 2: Significance of difference between the Mean Scores of Male and Female Students on Mental health

Dimensions of Mental Health	Male Students N= 45		Female Students N= 45		Df	t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Emotional Stability	10.21	2.19	9.96	2.11	88	0.58
Adjustment	27.13	4.09	27.86	3.42		0.93
Autonomy	10.70	1.69	11.29	1.47		1.90
Security -insecurity	8.78	2.14	10.06	2.17		2.90*

Self-concept	9.35	1.96	9.67	2.07	0.78
Intelligence	19.13	3.88	19.20	3.71	0.08

Df=88, * Significant at1%

The Table -2 presents means, S.Ds and t-values of male and female school students with respect to their Mental Health. In order to compare the Mental Health with its dimensions among male and female school students the data were subjected to t-test. It is clear from the table that t-value (2.90) for the mean scores of Mental Health between male and female students having dimension Security-Insecurity is found significant at 0.01 level. Thus null hypothesis, "There exists no significant difference between male and female students with respect to Mental Health" is rejected. As shown in table -2 mean scores of female students (10.06) is higher than male students (8.78). It shows that female have good mental health than male students. Table-2 further reveals that t-values between the mean scores of mental health of school students with respect to its dimensions i.e. Emotional Stability, Adjustment, Autonomy, Self-concept and Intelligence is not found significant. It may be due to reason that Gender may not be significantly affected by Emotional Stability, Adjustment, Autonomy and self-concept.

Objective 3: To study the Significant Difference between Arts, Science and Commerce Stream with respect to Mental Health.

H3: There is no significant difference in Arts, Science and Commerce Stream Students with respect to their Mental Health

Table3: Comparison of Mean of Scores of three Streams of Mental health

Stream	N	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Science	30	16.03	1.89	.015	>.05
Arts	30	16.23	1.85		
Commerce	30	16.98	2.17		
Total	90	16.41	2.314		

It represents the extent of significance in regard to mental health among the XII grade students. It is clear from the results that no significant difference was found between the three streams of students on mental health ($F = 0.015$, $p > .05$). The mean scores of the three streams i.e Science, Arts and Commerce were found to be $M=16.03$, $M=16.23$ and $M=16.98$ respectively on mental health.

Objective 4: To study the significant difference between Arts, Science and Commerce stream with respect to Family Climate of Students.

H4: There is no significant difference in Arts, Science and Commerce stream students with respect to Family Climate.

Table 4: Comparison of Mean of scores of three Streams of students in Family Climate

Stream	N	Mean	S.D.	F	P
Science	30	16.99	1.990	.013	>.05
Arts	30	16.99	2.695		

Commerce	30	17.04	2.331		
Total	90	17.006	2.417		

It represents the extent of significance with respect to family climate of among the XII grade students. It is clear from the results that students have not shown any significant difference between three streams in relation to their family climate i.e., ($F = 0.013$, $p > .05$). The mean scores of the three streams i.e., Science, Arts and Commerce were found to be $M=16.99$, $M=16.99$ and $M=17.04$ respectively on family climate.

Conclusion:

The main purpose of studying the impact of family climate on mental health of adolescents was to have better understanding of the role of family environment in promoting the mental health and development of adolescents for better academic achievement and social adjustment. The good family environment is necessary to develop a healthy attitude in adolescents towards their intellectual, physical, psychological, emotional and social development. The good mental health of students paves the way to realize their realization of higher education goals and the smooth progress of modernization construction and progressive development of society. Good family climate, educated home climate and socio-economic enriched family climate play a very important role on the academic achievement and mental health of the students.

There is no significant difference in Arts, Science and Commerce stream students with respect to their Mental Health and Family Climate. Further, the study indicates that there is a significant difference in Mental Health between XII grade boy and girl Students in Bhiwani district.

Educational Implications:

- ❖ The results of the present study may be helpful to the educational administrators for providing such an environment which is conducive to good mental health and academic success of students.
- ❖ The schools/college may engage parents by organizing programmes such as regular parent-teacher meets, community oriented projects etc. in order to have fruitful discussion with them on the importance of family climate in improving academic and co-curricular performance of students.
- ❖ The schools may invite parents as stake holders in policy making and curriculum designing and implementing outreach activities to develop a relationship of mutual trust between parents and their children.
- ❖ The schools should develop community supportive strategies and take initiative measures to invite parents who are negligent on issues of family climate and mental health of their children.
- ❖ As nature of family climate, type of school management and medium of instruction are seen as most significant causative factors in influencing the mental health and academic achievement of adolescents, home practices are to be made more conducive in helping the adolescents to acquire good mental health and academic performance.

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