

Interplay of gender on emotional maturity and relationship of emotional maturity with the adjustment of adolescents residing in orphanages, single parent families and intact families

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present investigation aimed at assessing and comparing the emotional maturity of adolescents from orphanages, single parent families and intact families across gender. Also, the relationship between emotional maturity and adjustment was explored. A sample of 100 adolescents from orphanages and 200 adolescents from government schools (100 from single parent families and 100 from intact families) has been selected through random sampling technique. Emotional Maturity Scale and Bell's Adjustment Inventory were administered in the present study. Analysis of data revealed that girls belonging to intact families were significantly more emotionally progressed and socially adjusted. In overall emotional maturity also, girls were more emotionally mature when compared with boys. Also, the total emotional maturity of boys from orphanages and intact families was found to be positively correlated with their adjustment. Whereas, adolescents living with single parent families reported negative correlation. Interestingly, the independency of all the adolescent boys irrespective of their family type was found to be negatively correlated with their adjustment. Overall emotional maturity of girls belonging to orphanages was significantly and positively correlated with the adjustment. Furthermore, integrated personality of girls from orphanages and independence of girls belonging to single parent families also found significantly and positively correlated with the adjustment.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Emotional stability, Intact families, Orphans, Single parent families, Social adjustment

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The word adolescence derives from the Latin word 'adolescere' which means to grow or to grow to maturity. Adolescence is a period when the behaviour is highly influenced by the emotions. Emotions

are great motivating forces throughout the span of human life and affect one's aspirations, actions and thoughts. Emotional maturity can be understood in terms of ability of self control which in turn is a result of thinking and

learning (Pastey and Aminbhavi, 2006). Emotional maturity has different stages and completes in adulthood. It is considered as an essential step in achieving the success and happiness along with the achievement of economical, mental, physical and social maturity. Emotional maturity is the outcome of interaction between many factors like home environment, school environment, society, culture and to a great extent on the programmes watched on television (Dutta *et al.*, 2015). Adjustment and emotions both plays a very impressive and important role in a human's life.

Adjustment is an important part of life and children should be stimulated to do their best. Every individual have physical and psychological needs which constantly or intermittently need to be satisfied. The process by which an individual overcome obstacles to satisfy these needs is termed as the adjustment process. It is a process by which living organisms satisfy their needs and circumstances. Lazarus (2001), defined adjustment as a ways of managing and consists of coping with various demands and process of life. Although adjustment is the characteristics, integration of every aspect of the individual, some aspects are weightier than other. The aspect of adjustment that predominates is always the social aspect. The home provides the child with experiences which to a considerable extent determines the course of adjustment of an individual. Adjustment plays a very important role in development of the person in particular fields (Jain and Pasrija, 2014).

An emotionally mature child has the capacity to make effective adjustment with himself, members of his family, and his peers in the school, society and culture. But maturity means not merely the capacity for such attitude and functioning but also the ability to enjoy them fully. Therefore, an emotionally mature child is not one who necessarily has resolved all conditions that aroused anxiety and hostility but it is continuously in process of seeing himself in clearer perspective, continual involved in a struggle to gain healthy integration of feeling, thinking and action (Nehra, 2014).

Those families, where adolescents living with both the parents are known as intact families. When living with either mother or father is single parent family. However, when children are living without parents are considered as orphans.

At the end of the adolescence, it is a general belief that the adolescents should reach emotional maturity, that is, they must be ready to face the world alone without

their parents, caretakers and teachers. As emotional maturity plays a vital role in transforming young adolescents into an ideal citizen of our country. It is very noteworthy to conclude that emotionally matured person can make better adjustment with himself as well as with others. He accepts the reality and doesn't grumble for petty things (Dutta *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, the study of these parameters among adolescents is of utmost important. Moreover, it is a general belief that gender difference exists in almost all developmental aspects of human being such as physical, social, emotional, cognitive etc.

Objectives :

The researcher has framed the following objectives for the present investigation:

- To examine the gender differences on emotional maturity of adolescents from orphanages, single parent families and intact families.
- To study the relationship between emotional maturity and adjustment of boys and girls from orphanages, single parent families and intact families.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

Location of the study :

Study was undertaken in four cities (Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Patiala and Hoshiarpur) of Punjab state. The sample was drawn from orphanages and government schools of selected cities.

Sample selection :

Selection of sample from orphanages:

Out of 20 cities of Punjab, four cities (Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Patiala and Hoshiarpur) in which there is at least one orphanage were randomly selected. From the prepared list of orphanages, the required numbers of orphanages were randomly selected. From the selected orphanages, 100 school going adolescents in the age group of 14-16 years were randomly picked. An effort was made to distribute the sample equally across both the genders. Selected orphanages were: Nishkam Sewa Ashram (Ludhiana), Pingla Ghar (Jalandhar), SDKS Balniketan (Patiala), Rajendra Dev Orphanage (Patiala) and Koshish NGO (Hoshiarpur).

Selection of sample from government schools:

Required numbers of schools from Ludhiana, Jalandhar,

Patiala and Hoshiarpur were randomly selected. Thereafter, the class teachers were approached to identify the adolescents belonging to the age group of 14-16 years and staying in intact families and in single parent families. An equal number of sample across both the genders (Boys=50 and Girls=50) was selected under both single parent families and intact families from the selected government schools till the desired number of 100 adolescents in each category was completed. Thus, the total sample under the study comprised of 300 school going adolescents ($n_1=100$ from orphanages and 200 from government schools *i.e.* $n_2=100$ from single parent families and $n_3=100$ from intact families) in the age group of 14-16 years. Selected government schools were: Government Senior Secondary School, P.A.U. (Ludhiana), New Senior Secondary School, Sarabha Nagar (Ludhiana), Government Senior Secondary School, Gobind Nagar (Ludhiana), Government Senior Secondary School, Master Tara Singh Nagar (Jalandhar), Government Model Senior Secondary School (Patiala), S.D. Senior Secondary School, Gaushala Bazar (Hoshiarpur).

Tool for data collection :

The emotional maturity of selected adolescents was assessed by administering standardized scale *i.e.* Emotional Maturity Scale, developed by Singh and Bhargava (2012). The scale included 48 items under the five major categories: Emotional stability: Emotional progression Social adjustment, Personality integration and Independence.

Procedure of data collection :

The researcher approached the Principal or Head of the selected government schools and orphanages through a letter of request which clarified the purpose of the study. After the granted permission, respondents were approached directly at schools and orphanages itself. Firstly, the purpose of study was made clear to them and then they were requested to give honest responses. Groups of 10 students were taken at a time and questionnaires were given to each student every time. Then, they were asked to fill it under the supervision of the researcher. All the mandatory instructions about how to fill questionnaires were given to them before distributing questionnaires. Then, they were assured that their identity would not be revealed and information

provided by them would be kept confidential and would be used only for research purpose.

Analysis of the data :

Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, means, standard deviation, co-efficient of correlation and one way ANOVA was used to draw meaningful inferences.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data presented in the Table 1 shows the gender wise per cent distribution of adolescents across different levels of emotional maturity. On the emotional stability dimension, half of the boys (50.00%) from orphanages and single parent families as well, were found to be more in numbers as compared to girls (48.00% and 42.00%) at emotionally immature level of emotional stability. Interestingly, among intact families no gender difference was observed. Both the boys and girls shared equal percentage (50.00%) and found emotionally immature. However, boys from both the single parent families (30.00%) and intact families (26.00%) were extremely emotionally mature than their counterparts. In contrast, more number of girls (34.00%) than boys (24.00%) from orphanages found extremely emotionally mature. It could be concluded that boys were found to be more who showed immaturity among orphanages and single parent families.

In emotional progression, more girls from single parent families (50.00%) and intact families (46.00%) were observed to be emotionally immature. But orphaned boys (50.00%) were proportionally more at the above mentioned level. On the other hand, more girls from orphanages (30.00%) and intact families (30.00%) reported extreme level of emotional maturity in the emotional progression dimension. While, among single parent families, more boys (30.00%) than girls (24.00%) were found at extreme level. These findings suggested that more girls from single parent and intact families were found emotionally immature than that of boys. In contrast to this, among intact families, more boys were emotionally immature.

On social adjustment dimension of emotional maturity, boys were comparatively more than girls who showed emotional immaturity in orphanages (54.00%) and single parent families (46.00%). But among intact families adolescents' reverse picture was observed.

There, girls were more (46.00%) who reported immaturity on above said dimension. Moreover, at moderate level of emotional maturity, boys from single parent (26.00%) and intact families (32.00%) were clustered more than those from girls. Whereas, among orphans 48 per cent of girls had moderate level of maturity than boys (30.00%). It could be divulged from the data that in social adjustment, more boys from orphanages and single parent families were found immature. While, in intact families, more girls were immature.

On personality integration dimension no difference across gender was found at emotionally immature level among orphans and adolescents living with single parents. Whereas, more girls (50.00%) than boys (48.00%) from intact families were found immature in the said dimension. Among adolescents from both orphanages and single parent families, more proportion of girls (36.00% and 30.00%) were found to be extremely mature as compared to boys (30.00% and 26.00%). On contrary to this, among intact families more boys (34.00%) than

girls (26.00%) were extremely emotionally mature. It could be summarized that at immaturity level gender difference was observed only among intact families, where girls were comparatively more.

Independence dimension of emotional maturity shows that no difference across gender was observed at emotionally immature level among single parent and intact families. Though, among orphans difference was found. Girls were more (46.00%) as compared to boys (42.00%) at emotionally immature level. Whereas, more boys from orphanages and single parent families (36.00% and 30.00%) reported extreme level of emotional maturity than girls. Intact families did not report any gender difference at extreme level of emotional maturity, where the percentage of boys and girls were 24 per cent. Therefore, it could be concluded that at level of emotional immaturity, gender difference was observed among orphans only. Girls were leading the boys.

Emotional maturity in totality presented that among the three categories, more proportion of boys living in orphanages (52.00%), single parent families (50.00%)

Table 1 : Gender wise per cent distribution of the adolescents across different dimensions of emotional maturity (n=300)

Dimensions of emotional maturity	Levels	Adolescents											
		Orphanages n ₁ =100				Single parent families n ₂ =100				Intact families n ₃ =100			
		Boys (n _{1a} =50)		Girls (n _{1b} =50)		Boys (n _{2a} =50)		Girls (n _{2b} =50)		Boys (n _{3a} =50)		Girls (n _{3b} =50)	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Emotional stability	EEM	12	24.00	17	34.00	15	30.00	13	26.00	13	26.00	12	24.00
	MEM	13	26.00	9	18.00	10	20.00	16	32.00	12	24.00	13	26.00
	EI	25	50.00	24	48.00	25	50.00	21	42.00	25	50.00	25	50.00
Emotional progression	EEM	10	20.00	15	30.00	15	30.00	12	24.00	14	28.00	15	30.00
	MEM	15	30.00	12	24.00	13	26.00	13	26.00	14	28.00	12	24.00
	EI	25	50.00	23	46.00	22	44.00	25	50.00	22	44.00	23	46.00
Social adjustment	EEM	8	16.00	12	24.00	14	28.00	18	36.00	12	24.00	12	24.00
	MEM	15	30.00	24	48.00	13	26.00	12	24.00	16	32.00	15	30.00
	EI	27	54.00	14	28.00	23	46.00	20	40.00	22	44.00	23	46.00
Personality integration	EEM	15	30.00	18	36.00	13	26.00	15	30.00	17	34.00	13	26.00
	MEM	15	30.00	12	24.00	14	28.00	12	24.00	9	18.00	12	24.00
	EI	20	40.00	20	40.00	23	46.00	23	46.00	24	48.00	25	50.00
Independence	EEM	18	36.00	12	24.00	15	30.00	12	24.00	12	24.00	12	24.00
	MEM	11	22.00	15	30.00	10	20.00	13	26.00	14	28.00	14	28.00
	EI	21	42.00	23	46.00	25	50.00	25	50.00	24	48.00	24	48.00
Total	EEM	21	42.00	14	28.00	14	28.00	13	26.00	12	24.00	12	24.00
	MEM	3	6.00	11	22.00	11	22.00	14	28.00	13	26.00	14	28.00
	EI	26	52.00	25	50.00	25	50.00	23	46.00	25	50.00	24	48.00

Note: EEM represents extremely emotionally mature
MEM represents moderately emotionally mature
EI represents emotionally immature

and intact families (50.00%) showed emotional immaturity. Similarly, orphaned boys (42.00%) and those from single parent families (28.00%) were also found more in numbers at extreme level of emotional maturity. However, among intact families both boys and girls shared equal percentage (24.00%). So, it could be stated that more boys than girls were emotionally immature in orphanages, single parent families and intact families.

Data in Table 2 illustrate differences in mean scores of boys and girls with respect to their emotional maturity. Results indicated that among intact families, girls were significantly more emotionally progressed (t -value=2.00, $p<0.05$) and socially adjusted (t -value=2.56, $p<0.01$). Gender based differences was also found in the emotional maturity when taken in totality. In overall emotional maturity, girls were more emotionally mature (t -value=1.97, $p<0.05$) when compared with boys. This finding is also supported by Bhanwer (2012) who revealed that adolescent boys were less emotionally mature than girls. Adolescent boys had more regressive tendencies than adolescent girls. They also showed lower levels of social adjustment than adolescent girls.

Furthermore, in intact families, emotional stability,

personality integration and independence dimensions depicted statistically non-significant differences across gender. However, trend of mean scores reported girls to be less emotionally stable than boys. Whereas, boys were found to be with less integrated personality and also were less independent as compared to girls. It is also evident from the data that gender differences do not operate at the dimensions of emotional maturity among adolescents from single parent families and orphanages. It might be because of the altered relationships at home/orphanage and altered parental role. Family plays an important role in the development of emotional maturity among adolescents, so, disintegration or splitting of family and lack of parental support might affect emotional maturity of both boys and girls in a similar way.

Though results were statistically non-significant among adolescents from orphanages and single parent families, but from the arrangement of mean scores it can deduced that orphaned boys were less emotionally stable, emotionally progressed; socially less adjusted and also had less integrated personality as compared to their counterparts. However, girls had less independence than boys. Hence, in totality, boys were emotionally less

Table 2 : Gender wise mean scores of the adolescents across different dimensions of emotional maturity (n=300)

Dimensions of emotional maturity	Adolescents								
	Orphanages (n ₁ =100)			Single parent families (n ₂ =100)			Intact families (n ₃ =100)		
	Boys (n _{1a} =50)	Girls (n _{1b} =50)	t value	Boys (n _{2a} =50)	Girls (n _{2b} =50)	t value	Boys (n _{3a} =50)	Girls (n _{3b} =50)	t value
	Mean ± (SD)	Mean ± (SD)		Mean ± (SD)	Mean ± (SD)		Mean ± (SD)	Mean ± (SD)	
Emotional stability	19.48 (1.04)	19.38 (5.91)	0.08	21.38 (5.80)	19.78 (6.15)	1.34	20.38 (5.20)	21.16 (4.99)	0.77
Emotional progression	22.02 (8.65)	20.96 (8.05)	0.63	19.40 (6.67)	19.16 (8.39)	0.16	19.64 (4.74)	17.28 (4.85)	2.00**
Social adjustment	22.90 (5.32)	21.16 (5.14)	1.66	20.78 (5.49)	19.42 (5.70)	1.22	18.64 (4.94)	17.06 (4.43)	2.56***
Personality integration	17.32 (5.94)	17.18 (5.53)	0.12	19.04 (6.03)	18.24 (6.14)	0.66	19.64 (5.26)	17.98 (6.41)	1.42
Independence	20.36 (6.33)	21.58 (5.69)	1.01	18.26 (5.75)	17.88 (6.76)	0.30	18.70 (5.43)	17.16 (5.23)	1.44
Total	102.08 (22.45)	100.26 (18.70)	0.44	98.86 (24.12)	94.48 (27.90)	0.84	97.00 (16.56)	90.64 (15.60)	1.97**

Note: ** and *** indicate significance of values at $P<0.05$ and <0.01 , respectively

Higher the score, lower the emotional maturity

Table 3 : Correlation between emotional maturity and adjustment of adolescent boys

Dimensions of emotional maturity	Boys' adjustment		
	Orphanages	Single parent families	Intact families
Emotional stability	0.08 ^{NS}	-0.09 ^{NS}	0.02 ^{NS}
Emotional progression	0.01 ^{NS}	-0.09 ^{NS}	0.14 ^{NS}
Social adjustment	0.00 ^{NS}	0.05 ^{NS}	0.11 ^{NS}
Personality integration	0.06 ^{NS}	-0.16 ^{NS}	0.09 ^{NS}
Independence	-0.12 ^{NS}	-0.03 ^{NS}	-0.18 ^{NS}
Total	0.01 ^{NS}	-0.11 ^{NS}	0.16 ^{NS}

Note: NS=Non-significant

mature than that of girls. Similarly, in case of single parent families, boys were found to be emotionally less mature in all the dimensions of emotional maturity.

Among the adolescents from orphanages, single parent families and intact families, in order to reveal the direction of relationship between emotional maturity and adjustment, correlation method was used. Various dimensions of emotional maturity were correlated with adjustment. Correlation between emotional maturity and adjustment patterns of boys and girls is presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3 shows that the total emotional maturity of boys from orphanages ($r=0.01$), intact families ($r=0.16$) and also, in every dimension of emotional maturity except independence, was found to be positively correlated with the adjustment. Though the relationship was not found to be significant. This indicates that adjustment increase with the increase in emotional maturity and likewise decrease with the decrease in emotional maturity.

In case of boys from single parent families, only the social adjustment was found positively correlated with their adjustment. While, emotional stability ($r = -0.09$), emotional progression ($r = -0.09$), personality integration ($r = -0.16$), independence ($r = -0.03$) and emotional maturity in totality ($r = -0.11$) was found to be negatively correlated with the adjustment. This suggested that more emotionally stable and emotionally progressed boys with more integrated personality showed less adjustment. This may be because of the presence of only one parent which made them neither fully dependent nor independent for their emotional expression. Although they had an integrated personality, which was emotionally stable and emotionally progressed but when they interacted with others did not report better adjustment. Emotional maturity strengthened only their personality but did not strengthen their adjustment.

The independence dimension of emotional maturity

was found to be negatively correlated with the adjustment pattern of adolescents from orphanages, single parent families and intact families. It means more independency leads to lesser adjustment and less independency leads to better adjustment.

Data presented in Table 4 indicates the direction of relationship between emotional maturity of girls and their adjustment. Data unveiled that under personality integration dimension ($r = 0.29$, $p<0.05$) and in overall emotional maturity ($r = 0.29$, $p<0.05$) orphaned girls depicted a significant and positive correlation with adjustment. The emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment and independence of girls also showed positive correlation with their adjustment. Though, the results in these dimensions were statistically non significant. Therefore, it could be inferred that as the girls' emotional maturity increase or decrease in each of the dimension, their adjustment also followed same trend.

Girls from intact families reported non-significant relationship with adjustment. This finding is also in agreement with the study conducted by Nehra (2014), who found no significant relationship between adjustment and emotional maturity. Moreover, emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, integrated personality, independence and total emotional maturity of girls contributed towards positive relationship with the adjustment.

Conclusion :

Proportionally, more adolescent boys from orphanages and single parent families depicted immature level of emotional stability. Irrespective of gender, equal proportion of adolescents from intact families was found with immature level of emotional stability.

Analysis of emotional maturity emphasized that more adolescent girls from single parent families, intact

Dimensions of emotional maturity	Girls' adjustment		
	Orphanages	Single parent families	Intact families
Emotional stability	0.13	0.14	0.08
Emotional progression	0.17	0.04	0.15
Social adjustment	0.13	0.11	0.02
Personality integration	0.29**	0.20	0.14
Independence	0.16	0.38***	0.15
Total	0.29**	0.20	0.13

Note : ** and *** indicate significance of values at $P<0.05$ and <0.01 , respectively

families and boys from orphanages were found emotionally immature on “emotional progression” dimension. Proportionally, more boys from orphanages, single parent families and girls from intact families were found emotionally immature on social adjustment. Irrespective of gender, majority of adolescents in single parent families and orphanages were found emotionally immature in the dimension of “personality integration”. While, girls outnumbered boys in intact families.

Irrespective of gender, nearly half of the adolescents living with single parent families and with intact families were found to be emotionally immature under the “independence” dimension. However, among orphans, girls were proportionally more. Overall, more boys irrespective of their family type were emotionally immature.

Gender wise mean scores of the adolescents across different dimensions of emotional maturity depicted that girls belonged to intact families were significantly more emotionally progressed and socially adjusted. In overall emotional maturity also, girls were more emotionally mature when compared with boys.

Though the relationship between emotional maturity and adjustment of boys was found non-significant but the total emotional maturity of boys from orphanages and intact families was found to be positively correlated with their adjustment. Whereas, adolescents living with single parent families reported negative correlation. Interestingly, the independency of all the adolescent boys irrespective of their family type was found to be negatively correlated with their adjustment.

Overall emotional maturity of girls belonging to orphanages was significantly and positively correlated

with the adjustment. Furthermore, integrated personality of girls, belonging to orphanages and independence of girls belonging to single parent families also found significantly and positively correlated with the adjustment.

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