Relationship of family environment with educational anxiety of adolescents of ludiana district : A gender study

■ **Gurpreet Kaur, Asha Chawla and Deepika Vig**

■ **ABSTRACT :** The present study was aimed to investigate the gender differences in the relationship of family environment with educational anxiety of adolescents. The study was carried out in Government rural and urban schools of Ludhiana district. The total sample comprised 200 adolescents (100 rural and 100 urban) in the age group of 17-18 years. Personal information sheet, educational anxiety inventory and family environment scale were used to collect the data. The findings of the study revealed that more number of females experienced educational anxiety at average level than males. Majority of the adolescents (male and female) experienced their family environment at average level. In case of females correlation analysis between family environment and educational anxiety was found to be significant and inversely associated with educational anxiety except in one dimension *i.e.* conflict, whereas in males correlation was significant and inverse in active-recreational dimension only.

■ **KEY WORDS:** Adolescents, Educational anxiety, Family environment

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations
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Gurpreet Kaur
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Home Science, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (Punjab) India

Adolescence is viewed as a period of increased diversity of social roles, with expectation from diverse role relationships, some of which may create conflict. Adolescence is a period when rapid changes occur in the physical and psychological development of an individual. It is considered as a period of ' stress and strom'. The adolescents are in the process of deciding their goals, priorities and values. These decisions go a long way in influencing their cognitive style, which include personal opinions, experiences, ideologies, beliefs etc to make the judgement about the situation (Mc Candless, 1970).

Family is the child's world in which the personality is shaped and his character is formed and within the family the interactional factors play upon him and influence his personality to a great extent. Family is the environment where the children learns to use their faculties, understand and cope with the physical world. It is time when they don't bother with trivial things, such as the family relationship, because they know they are the kingpin of their family (Gibson and Jefferson, 2006). It is the place, where they learn how family relationships work by observing their parents, grandparents, siblings and rest of the family members deal with each other.

During past few decades family environment had been identified as being a contributing factor in child's

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educational, cognitive and affective development. According to Zhang and Carrasquillo (1995) more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning the more beneficial are the achievement effects. Thus, it is believed that when parents monitor homework, encourage participation in extracurricular activities are active in parents- teacher associations and help children to develop plan for their future, children are more likely to respond and do well in school. Family environment including parental encouragement, involvement, parental interest, behaviour, parental aspirations, parenting skills and parenting style have direct influence on the academic achievement of the adolescents. Educated parents provide conducive family environment which entails parent encouragement that proves to be catalyst in boosting and maintaining achievement motivation among the students that in turn influence their academic achievement (Tella and Tella, 2003).

Educational anxiety is mental distress with respect to imagined frustration related with academic failure or still unawareness to the possibility of such failure. Putnam (2010) describe anxiety as a complex mental state that affects different intellectual, behavioural and psychological states. Educational anxiety is particular kind of anxiety which is associated with the educational subject matter. Educational anxiety covers not only the anxiety of the test additionally, it also include the fear about different subjects and has been reported in those students who have the subjects like math, reading, science and foreign verbal communication classes (Cassady, 2010).

When educational anxiety is not properly tackled it becomes a trouble, it can contain numerous critical, acute and long lasting outcomes such as causing a student to begin hating a particular subject or a instructor, tell lies to parents, respond inadequately to school work, missing classes to engage in activities which they like most, because of this they depart from socializing and this might cause withdraw from the school (Kaplan *et al.,* 2005). Lal (2014) explained educational anxiety is also used as an umbrella term for any negative affect related with examinations: time pressure, the tiredness of having to sit multiple of examinations in a single day, having to get ready for exams whereas still finishing assignments and coursework and the interference on relations and social

activities. Students evaluate themselves on the basis of their grades, a good grade resulting in high self-esteem (Hussain *et al.,* 2008). Whether one adopts a test anxiety or examination stress, they have both linked with a negative impact on examination performance. In light of the above cited facts the present study was planned to study the gender differences in the relationship of family environment and educational anxiety of adilescents.

■ RESEARCH METHODS
Locale of the study:
The study was conducted in the Government schools of Ludhiana district of Punjab. Two rural and two urban schools were randomly selected by using simple random sampling procedure.

Selection of the sample:
The total sample comprised of 200 adolescents (100 males and 100 females) in the age group of 17-18 years, equally distributed over rural and urban areas (100 rural and 100 urban).The list of students was procured from the Principals of the respective schools. Adolescents fulfilling the age criteria (17-18 years) were selected from the rural and urban schools.

Collection of data:
The Principals of the selected schools were personally approached by the researcher to get approval for the conduct of the study. The objectives and relevance of study was discussed with them. The selected rural and urban adolescents were approached in their schools only. They were asked to provide honest responses and were assured that their identification would be kept confidential and information provided by them would be used exclusively for the purpose of research work only. The questionnaires were given to each subject in the class and were asked to fill there only. Adolescents were given personal information sheet and further given the educational anxiety inventory to assess the educational anxiety of adolescents and thereafter family environment scale was given to them to assess their family environment.

Research instruments:
Following research instruments were used for

collecting information from the adolescents:

Personal information sheet:

A personal information sheet was prepared to record the data relating to demographic profile of adolescents such as age, birth order, number of siblings, family type, family size, family income, education and occupation of parents.

Educational anxiety inventory:

Educational anxiety inventory developed by Sood and Anand (2012) was used to assess the level of educational anxiety present in adolescents across various levels *i.e.* low, extremely low, average, high and extremely high. The scale consisted of 42 items. The scale was translated into Punjabi language so that adolescents could easily understand the statement. As no respondent was found in the category of extremely low and extremely high educational anxiety, therefore, only three categories were considered for further data analysis *i.e.* high, average and low.

Family environment scale:

Family environment scale developed by Bhatia and Chadha (2002), was used to study the respondents' perception of family functioning. It contain 69 items

(positive as well as negative) which are categorized under the following three dimensions *i.e.* relationship, personal growth and system maintenance.

Statistical analysis:

Suitable statistical tests were used to analyze the data. Data was analyzed using mean, frequencies, percentage, standard deviation, t-test and correlation.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 explains gender differences in mean scores of the adolescents across different levels of educational anxiety. Gender differences were found to be significant at average and low level of educational anxiety. Results revealed that female adolescents (167.45±12.88) perceived more educational anxiety than male adolescents (165.75±9.74). Mean value showed that female adolescents (132.09±12.77) had shown more average educational anxiety whereas males showed significantly more educational anxiety at low level. The overall picture of the table depicts that majority of adolescents irrespective of their gender reported high level of educational anxiety. To sport the results Bhansali and Trivedi (2017) also reported that females on the whole had more incidences and intensity of academic anxiety in comparison to males.

Table 1 : Gender differences in mean scores (± S.D.) of the adolescents across various levels of educational anxiety				(n=200)
Level of educational anxiety	Male n₁=100 Mean ± S.D.	Female n₂=100 Mean ± S.D.	t -value	Overall n=200 Mean ± S.D.
High	165.75±9.74	167.45±12.88	0.47	166.60±11.30
Average	125.67±11.52	132.09±12.77	2.74**	128.82±12.52
Low	89.80±13.66	76.44±14.88	3.36**	82.87±15.69
Overall	124.72±28.01	124.14±34.77	0.13	124.43±31.49

** indicate significance of value at P=0.01

Table 2:Gender differences in mean scores (±S.D.) across various dimensions of family environment				
Dimensions of family environment	Male n₁=100 Mean ± S.D.	Female n₂=100 Mean ± S.D.	t- value	Overall n=200 Mean ± S.D.
Cohesion	52.07±4.70	53.02±4.22	1.50^NS	52.55±4.48
Expressiveness	32.33±3.80	32.32±3.91	0.02^NS	32.33±3.85
Conflict	42.67±4.67	43.83±3.90	1.91^NS	43.25±4.33
Acceptance and caring	44.83±3.58	45.10±2.96	0.58^NS	44.97±3.28
Active-recreational orientation	30.23±4.06	31.03±4.08	1.39^NS	30.63±4.08
Independence	31.29±4.18	33.42±5.28	3.16**	32.36±4.87
Organization	8.19±1.30	8.69±0.99	3.06**	8.44±1.18
Control	15.25±2.49	16.45±2.21	3.60**	15.85±2.42

** indicate significance of value at P=0.01   NS= Non-significant

Table 2 presents the gender differences in mean scores across different dimensions of family environment. It is clear from the table that a significant gender difference existed in the domains of independence, organization and control whereas, non-significant difference was found in cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, acceptance and caring and active recreational orientation. Mean values showed that female adolescents were scoring higher mean values than male adolescents in most of the dimensions of family environment which means female adolescents who perceived more cohesion, expressiveness, acceptance and caring, active recreational orientation, independence, organization and control in the family environment showed less educational anxiety.

The data presented in the Table 3 indicated the correlation between various dimensions of family environment and educational anxiety among both the gender groups. In case of female adolescents correlation of different dimensions of family environment was found to be significant and inversely associated with educational anxiety except in one dimension *viz.,* conflict. This correlation was found significant and positive which indicated that if conflict increases in the family then educational anxiety will also increases. Female adolescents who perceived more cohesion, expressiveness, acceptance and caring, active orientation recreational, independence, organization and control in family environment showed less educational anxiety. Whereas in male adolescents non significant correlation was found across all the dimensions of family environment except active recreational orientation which means more was the active recreational orientation in the family environment less was the educational anxiety.
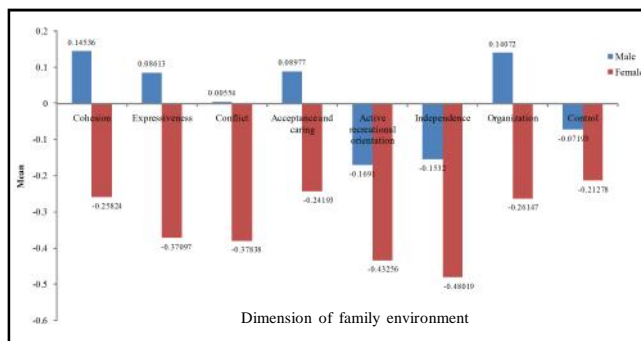

Fig. 1 : Correlation between various dimensions of family environment and educational anxiety of male and female adolescents

Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the study that females experienced more educational anxiety at average level as compared to males. Mean values showed that female adolescents had better mean scores as compared to male adolescents in most of the dimensions of family environment. Females' educational anxiety was significantly influenced by their family environment. Significant differences existed in the dimensions like independence, organization and control. Co relational analysis between family environment and educational anxiety revealed that all aspects of family functioning were negatively correlated in females. It showed that the female adolescents who perceived cohesion, expressiveness, acceptance and caring, active orientation recreational, independence, organization and control in family environment were having less educational anxiety.

Recommendations:

The home environment affects the level of educational anxiety of adolescents. It is the duty of

Table 3: Correlation between various dimensions of family environment and educational anxiety of male and female adolescents (n=200)		
Dimensions of family environment	Male n_1=100	Female n_2=100
Cohesion	0.145 NS	-0.258**
Expressiveness	0.086 NS	-0.370**
Conflict	0.005 NS	0.378**
Acceptance and caring	0.089 NS	-0.241*
Active recreational orientation	-0.169*	-0.432**
Independence	-0.153 NS	-0.480**
Organization	0.140 NS	-0.261**
Control	-0.071 NS	-0.212*

* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively   NS= Non-significant

parents to provide a pleasant environment to the adolescents specially to females so that they can openly discuss about their educational as well as emotional problems to them. Timely encouragement and motivation is very important and should be efficiently used by both teachers and parents.

Authors' affiliations:
Asha Chawla and Deepika Vig, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Home Science, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (Punjab) India (Email: chawla_ldh@yahoo.com; chawlaldh@pau.edu)

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