

## Impact of family size and gender on personality of school going children among low income group families

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■ **ABSTRACT** : This study was aimed at investigating the patterns of personality formation of children as affected by family size, age and gender. Sample of 100 school going children from low income group families were selected purposively from the school of Lucknow city in U.P. They were tested individually for personality development with the help of CPQ personality scale of S.D. Kapoor and other aspects were studied with the help of a pre-structured interview schedule. The significant value of mean score depicted that some of personality factors were affected by family size and rest of them were not affected. And the significant value of t-test showed that a difference was found in personality among boys and girls of large size families. It is suggested that parental collaboration, is necessary to improve children personality.

■ **KEY WORDS** : CPQ personality scale, Variables, Personality formation

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Personality is the individual's relatively distinct and consistent manner of perceiving, thinking, feeling, and behaving. There are a variety of socio-economic factors which determine the personality of the child. A family's socio-economic status is based on family income, parental education level, parental occupation, and social status in the community (such as contacts within the community, group associations, and the community's perception of the family). Prior empirical literature provides evidence of a negative correlation between family size and children's outcomes, such as earnings and educational attainment (Hanushek, 1992; Bjorklund *et al.*, 2004).

The size of a family has a significant effect on the interrelationships among its members and can play a major role in the formation of a child's personality. Family size is a significant factor in child development, but must be considered as only one part of a larger picture. Other factors, such as the parents' personality traits, and the gender and spacing of the children, contribute significantly to the formation of a child's personality (Robert and Robert, 2002). Children of large families have a greater opportunity to learn cooperation at an early age than children of smaller families as they must learn to get

along with siblings. They also take on more responsibility, both for themselves and often for younger brothers and sisters. In addition, children in large families must cope with the emotional crises of sibling rivalry, from which they may learn important lessons that will aid them later in life. This factor, however, may also be a disadvantage; either the older child who was "dethroned" from a privileged position or the younger child who is in the eldest child's shadow may suffer feelings of inferiority. Children in large families tend to adopt specific roles in order to attain a measure of uniqueness and thus gain parental attention. Children in small families receive a greater amount of individual attention and tend to be comfortable around adults at an early age. They may also be overprotected, however, which can result in dependence, lack of initiative, and fear of risk, and the increased parental attention may also take the form of excessive scrutiny and pressure to live up to other people's expectations. Researchers have found that only children are often loners and have the lowest need for affiliation. They tend to have high IQs and are successful academically. However, only children have also been found to have more psychological problems than children from larger families. Becker and Lewis (1973) suggest that

| Low score description  | Factors | High score description  |
|--|---------|---|
| Reserved, detached critical cool (sizothymia)  | A       | Outgoing, warm hearted, easy going Participating (cyclothymia)    |
| Less intelligent, concrete-thinking (lower scholastic mental capacity)                       | B       | More intelligent, abstract- thinking bright(higher ego strength ) |
| Affected by feeling, emotionality less stable, easily upset, changeable (lower ego strength) | C       | Emotionally stable faces reality, clam (higher ego strength)      |
| Phlegmatic, deliberate, inactive, stodgy (phlegmatic temperament)                            | D       | Excitable, impatient, demanding, overactive (excitability)        |
| Tough-minded, self-reliant, realistic, no- nonsense (Harria)                                 | I       | Tender-minded dependent over-protective, sensitive (Permsia)      |

greater family size negatively affect children's outcomes through resource dilution. On the other hand, a positive relationship between family size and children's outcomes is also plausible if having children stabilize relationships, make maternal employment less likely, 2. or there are positive spill over effects among siblings. 3. These negative and positive effects of family size may be relatively stronger or weaker as family size increases, and therefore there are reasons to suspect that the relationship between family size and children's outcomes is non-linear and perhaps even non-monotonic.

## ■ RESEARCH METHODS

The universe of the present study was comprised of school going children. The study was conducted in the year 2010-11. The school was selected purposively from Lucknow city as a universe. Simple random sampling technique was employed for the selection of the sample. A total of 100 respondents were selected for the study. At final stage, children were interviewed. The data were collected with the help of interviewing schedule in a face to face situation with the respondents. The interviewing schedule consisted of structured and unstructured question. They were tested individually for personality development with the help of CPQ personality scale of Kapoor (1979) and other aspects were studied with the help of a pre-structured interview schedule. For the purpose of present study, socio-economic indicators like age, education, occupation, income, family type and family

size were selected. In order to bring the data into comparable form, mean and standard deviation of various categories of data were calculated. Similarly t-test technique was applied to ascertain the relationship across gender. In the study five factors of personality were measured (Table A). The meanings of these five factors of personality are given below.

## ■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 and Fig. 1 and 2 reveal that highly significant differences were found with regard to factor 'A' (affectothymia (easy going) vs. sizothymia (cool critical)). The mean score of small family boys (5.22) tend towards average score describing of their personality as sometime warm-hearted (cyclothymiacs) and sometime reserved, critical cool (sizothymia) and mean score recorded by large family boys (3.9) tend towards low score that is below 5, describing of their personality as detached reserved. The mean score scored by the small family girls (3.6) children tend towards low score *i.e.* below 5, describing their personality as reserved detected critical and cool and the large family girls scored (6.27) tend towards high score *i.e.* above 5, describing of their personality as warm-hearted, outgoing, easygoing and participating. No significant difference was found in regard to factor 'B' (less-intelligence vs. more intelligence). The mean score of the small family boys (5.22) tend towards average score describing of their personality as sometime emotional instable and sometime having higher ego strength and mature. And large family boys

| Personality factors | Low income group children |                       |       |                       |       |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
|                     | Value                     | Family size >5 (n=20) |       | Family size <5 (n=80) |       |
|                     |                           | Boys                  | Girls | Boys                  | Girls |
| A                   | Mean                      | 5.22                  | 3.6   | 3.9                   | 6.275 |
|                     | S.D                       | 2.43                  | 1.50  | 1.67                  | 3.04  |
| B                   | Mean                      | 4.22                  | 2.4   | 2.41                  | 2.225 |
|                     | S.D                       | 1.85                  | 0.80  | 0.81                  | 0.70  |
| C                   | Mean                      | 5.66                  | 7.3   | 5.12                  | 5.85  |
|                     | S.D                       | 2.69                  | 3.63  | 2.37                  | 2.80  |
| D                   | Mean                      | 5.77                  | 6.4   | 3.80                  | 5.1   |
|                     | S.D                       | 2.75                  | 3.11  | 1.61                  | 2.36  |
| I                   | Mean                      | 5.33                  | 5.1   | 7.34                  | 5.52  |
|                     | S.D                       | 2.49                  | 2.36  | 3.66                  | 2.61  |

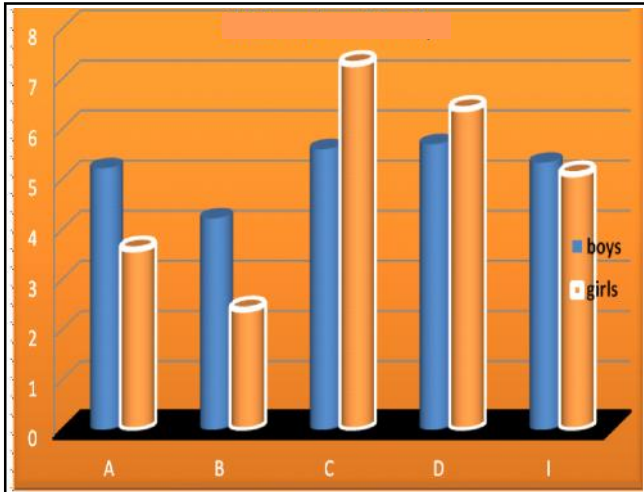


Fig. 1 : Children of small family

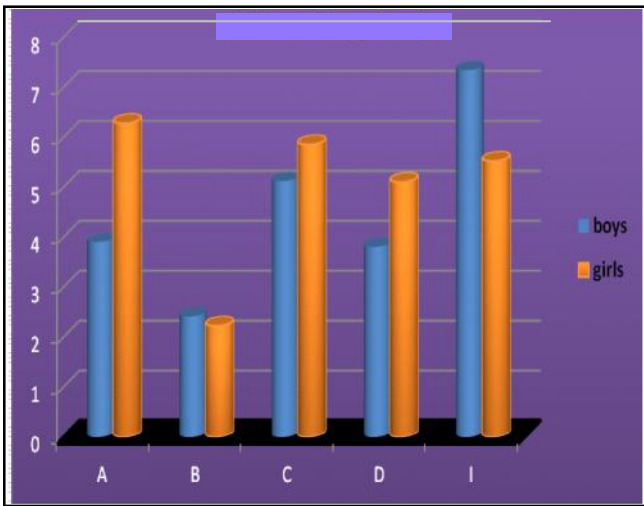


Fig. 2 : Children of large family

mean scored (2.41) towards low score describing their personality low intelligence and power measure and crystallized. And the mean score of small family girls (2.4) and

large family girls (2.5) were towards low score indicating the personality being emotional instable.

No significant difference was found with regard to factor 'C' (higher ego strength vs. lower ego strength.) the mean score of small family boys and large family boys (5.66 and 5.12) were towards average scores indicating the personality being sometimes emotionally stable, faces reality and sometimes of normal and girls have mean scored (7.3) towards high score indicating the personality being calm, higher ego strength and girls of large family have mean scored (5.85) towards average score indicating the personality being sometimes changeable and sometime calm.

Significant difference was found with regard to factor 'D' (inactive stodgy vs. overactive) the girls of small family have scored (6.4) towards high score indicating the personality being over active and unrestrained, and girls of large family have mean scored (5.1) towards average score indicating the personality sometime inactive stodgy and sometime overactive. And the boys of small family have mean scored (5.77) towards average score of personality and the boys of large family (3.80) were towards low score indicating the personality being inactive. And the highly significant difference was found with regard to factor 'I' (self-reliant, realistic vs. depending overprotected) highly significant difference was found with small family boys and large family boys. The mean score of small family boys (5.33) towards average score and boys of large family mean scored (7.34) tend towards high score *i.e.* above 6, describing both of their personality as sensitive, tender minded, dependent, overprotected. The mean score by girls of both small size and large size family (5.1 and 5.52) tend towards average score of personality being sometime self-reliant, realistic and sometime being depending overprotected.

Table 2 and Fig. 3 and 4 reveals that no significant difference was found among boys and girls of small size family and highly significant difference was found among boys and girls of large families in personality factor 'A' (sizothymia versus affectothymia). The girls being more reserved, detached and critical than boys. In factor 'B' (low intelligence

Table 2 : Personality differences among small family and large family children across gender

| Personality factors | Value | Family size >5 (n=20) |              | t-value | Family size <5 (n=80) |             |              | t-value |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|---------|
|                     |       | Boys (n=9)            | Girls (n=11) |         | Value                 | Boys (n=41) | Girls (n=39) |         |
| A                   | Mean  | 5.22                  | 3.6          | 1.76NS  | Mean                  | 3.9         | 6.27         | 4.47**  |
|                     | S.D   | 2.43                  | 1.5          |         | S.D                   | 1.67        | 3.04         |         |
| B                   | Mean  | 4.22                  | 2.4          | 1.82NS  | Mean                  | 2.41        | 2.22         | 1.35NS  |
|                     | S.D   | 1.85                  | 0.8          |         | S.D                   | 0.81        | 0.70         |         |
| C                   | Mean  | 5.66                  | 7.3          | 1.41NS  | Mean                  | 5.12        | 5.85         | 1.28NS  |
|                     | S.D   | 2.69                  | 3.63         |         | S.D                   | 2.37        | 2.80         |         |
| D                   | Mean  | 5.77                  | 6.4          | 0.48NS  | Mean                  | 3.80        | 5.1          | 2.95*   |
|                     | S.D   | 2.75                  | 3.11         |         | S.D                   | 1.61        | 2.36         |         |
| I                   | Mean  | 5.33                  | 5.1          | 0.21NS  | Mean                  | 7.34        | 5.52         | 2.6*    |
|                     | S.D   | 2.49                  | 2.36         |         | S.D                   | 3.66        | 2.61         |         |

versus high intelligence) and personality factor 'C' (emotional instability or ego weakness versus higher ego strength). No significant difference was found among boys and girls of both small and large size families.

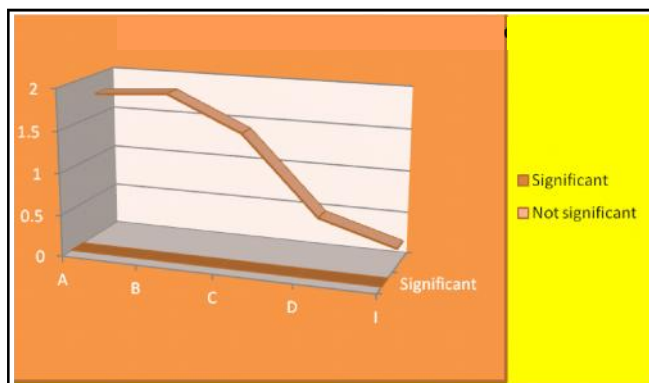


Fig. 3 : t-value of small family children across gender

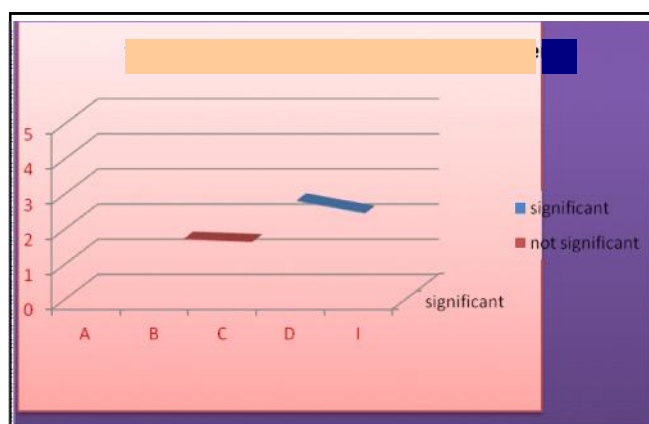


Fig. 4 : t-value of large family children across gender

In personality factor 'D' (inactive stodgy versus overactive) not significance difference was found among boys and girls of small families, whereas a significant difference was found among boy and girls of large families , the girls being more excitable, impatient, demanding and overactive than boys.

No significant difference was found among boys and girls of small size family and a significant difference was found among boys and girls of large families in personality factor 'I' (harria versus premsia), the boys being more tough-minded than girls.

**Conclusion:**

The study concludes that a significant difference was found in personality factor 'A' and 'I' among small and large size family children. The children of small family were more reserved, detached and critical in comparison to large family children. No significant difference was found in personality factor 'B' and 'C' and a significant difference was found in factor 'D'. The children of small families are more excitable, impatient, demanding and overactive, than large size families children. Highly significant difference was found in personality factor 'A' and 'I' of large families boys and girls, and a significant difference was found in personality factor 'D' of small size families boy and girls. No significant relationship was found between boys and girls of small size families.

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