

A study of emotional stability and maturity among children in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present study was undertaken with the specific objectives viz., (i) to find out the emotional stability and maturity of both ICDS and Non-ICDS children, (ii) to compare the emotional stability and maturity both ICDS and Non-ICDS children and (iii) to explore the factors affecting emotional stability and maturity of selected children. The data were collected from two randomly selected blocks (Bhawarna and Sulah) of Kangra district. A total sample of 150(100 ICDS and 50 non-ICDS) pre-schoolers in the age group of 2-6 years was randomly selected. Two standardized scales namely Emotional Stability Scale of Children (Gupta and Singh 2001) and Emotional Maturity Scale (Singh and Bhargava, 2001) were employed to assess the emotional skills. The collected data were tabulated, processed and analysed by employing statistical techniques like t test, f test, regression analysis and coefficient of variance. The results of the study indicated that the non-ICDS children were found significantly better than that of ICDS in the areas of emotional stability and emotional maturity. Occupation of father contributed significantly to the emotional stability, whereas age of the children and type of occupation of the parents showed positive relationship with emotional maturity.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Emotional stability, Maturity, Children, ICDS

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Emotional development is a never ending process of attaining mind's capabilities and their expressions as one grows in life period. It provides the capabilities and skills that one needs to function and survive in the society as well as the world. It is common to feel angry, sad, happy or frightened at different times. Problems occur when emotions are expressed inappropriately or at the wrong times. To improve our emotional skills, we have to increase our self-awareness so as to make ourselves emotionally matured and stable and guard ourself from self-created unwanted frustrations and problems in day to day life.

The emotional states of toddlers and pre-schoolers are much more complex. They depend on their emerging capacities to interpret their own personal experience and understand what others are doing and thinking. As they build on foundations that are established earlier, they mature and acquire a better understanding of a range of emotions. They also become more capable of managing their feelings, which

is one of the most challenging tasks of early childhood.

Emotional skills are the vital component of personality development and career advancement of a child. In view of this, to promote children's emotional skills Govt. of India started Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in 1975 in the country. ICDS helps the children to lay the foundation for overall development. Aanganwadi centre is the main platform for delivering of these services. It contributes to the universalization of primary education, by providing to the child the necessary preparation for primary schooling and offering substitute care to the younger siblings, thus freeing the older ones—especially girls to attend school.

Many studies have been conducted in the country to identify the crucial pointers affecting emotional stability and maturity of children in the ICDS operational areas and none of these have touched Himachal Pradesh. With this background, the present study, has been planned with the following objectives:

- To find out the emotional stability and maturity of both ICDS and non-ICDS children.
- To compare the emotional stability and maturity of both ICDS and non-ICDS children.
- To explore the factors affecting emotional stability and maturity of selected children.

Stifter and Fox (1986) examined pre-schoolers and adults ability to identify and labeled the emotions of happiness, sadness and anger. Results revealed that children aged three to five years were able to accurately identify and label emotions of happy, sad and anger. Younger children were equally accurate in identifying three emotions.

Einsberg *et al.* (1993) studied the relations of emotionality (intensity and negative emotion) and regulation to pre-schoolers social skills and sociometric status. Childrens' constructive coping and attentional control were positively related to boys social skills and peer status whereas negative effect was negatively related. Low emotional intensity was associated with boys' positive social functioning whereas avoidant coping was positively related to girls' rated social skills.

Einsberg *et al.* (1999) observed that parental responses contributed towards better social and emotional development. Parents and caregivers can enhance social skills through child care practices and their positive behaviour towards children.

Keithland and Campbell (2000) reported that family was most important influencing factor for social and emotional development of child.

Lutz *et al.* (2002) conducted the age and gender analysis. Results indicated that boys showed higher levels of overactive behaviour than girls and that younger pre-school children evidenced more underactive and inattentive behaviour than older preschool children.

Muris *et al.* (2004) examined childrens' perception and interpretation of anxiety related physical symptoms in a sample of 4 to 12 years old primary school children. Results showed that physical symptoms were associated with a broad range of emotions. Hands trembling, heart beating fast and difficulties with breathing were only symptoms that were more frequently linked to fear than to other emotion.

Widen and Rusell (2010) investigated children freely labelled the emotion implied by faces and separately stories for six basic level emotions (happiness, anger, fear, surprise, disgust and contempt) and three social emotions (embarrassment, shame and compassion). Results showed that younger children assimilated social emotions into basic level emotion categories (sadness and anger); older children differentiated them.

Aldrich *et al.* (2011) explored relationship between perspective taking emotion understanding and childrens' narrative abilities. Children emotion understanding was assessed through a standardized test of comprehension and

their ability to convey jealousy theme of story. Older children eight year old higher than younger children on emotion comprehension and understanding the stories complex emotional theme including the ability to identify a rival.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

For this initially a list of Aanganwadis and private schools was obtained from the concerned blocks. Aanganwadis and schools were randomly selected to constitute a sample of preschool children (100 ICDS and 50 non-ICDS) in the age group of 2-6 years. The dependent variables in the present study were the emotional stability and emotional maturity and the independent variables were age, gender, caste of respondent and educational and occupation status of parents, type of area and family, ordinal position and family income. Two standardized scales were used to collect data on children's emotional skills namely

-Emotional stability scale for Children (ES), Gupta and Singh (1971). Emotional stability of preschool children was assessed with the help of Gupta and Singh two point scale.

-Emotional maturity scale (EMS), Singh and Bhargava (1971). Emotional maturity of preschool children was determined by employing self reporting five point scale.

Then the data were analyzed statistically. The following tests were used for the present study:

Regression analysis :

Regression analysis was carried out to ascertain the effect of independent variables (age, sex, caste, parent's education and occupation, family type and monthly income) on the dependent variables (emotional stability and emotional maturity) of the respondents by employing linear regression equation of the following type:

$$Y = b_0 + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + \dots + b_n x_n$$

where, Y is the score value of emotional skills of respondents measured through scale.

x_1 is the value of independent variables.

b_0 is the intercept and

b_1 is the regression co-efficient,

The significance of each regression co-efficient was tested by using f- test as follows:

$$f_{(n-k)df} = b_i / S.E(b_i)$$

t test :

It was used to estimate the statistical difference in the mean value of emotional skills of preschoolers.

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{S \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}}$$

where,

$$s_{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2} = \sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{n_2}}$$

Co-efficient of variance (C.V.) :

It was used to compare the variability of emotional maturity between male and female respondents.

$$C.V.(%) = \frac{S.D.}{Mean} \times 100$$

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Emotional stability is that state of mind of an individual which enables him/her to understand the surroundings environment, have appropriate feelings about common experiences of others and act in a rational manner.

Emotional stability scores :

The emotional stability scores of the respondents were computed by employing the emotional stability technique. The emotional stability scores obtained have been calibrated to percentile values so as to make them comparable for all the situations viz., ICDS and non-ICDS, otherwise actual

score values cannot be compared due to varied sample sizes. Table 1 which represents the emotional stability per cent score values, revealed that male children in all the three situations (ICDS, non-ICDS and overall) had low per cent score values than that of female children, indicating thereby that the male children had comparatively more control on their emotions or high emotional stability as compared to female children. While comparing the results of two study areas viz., ICDS and non-ICDS, the per cent score values relating to male and female children of non-ICDS area have been found lower than that of ICDS area, implying thereby that children of former are better in terms of emotional stability than the later.

Areas	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total
ICDS	35.35	37.77	36.44
Non-ICDS	34.92	36.01	35.55
Overall	35.23	37.08	35.99

Emotional maturity :

Emotional maturity is reflected through various environmental traits like emotional stability, emotional

Areas	Male			Female		
	Mean (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)	Mean (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)
Emotional stability	22.72	4.94	21.78	26.04	9.89	38.01
Emotional progression	22.92	7.77	33.93	23.93	7.77	32.50
Social adjustment	19.00	6.36	33.48	21.71	12.72	58.59
Personality integration	19.65	2.82	14.39	20.97	12.02	57.31
Independence	16.81	1.41	8.41	16.68	9.19	55.10
Overall	20.22	4.66	23.04	21.86	10.31	47.16

Areas	Male			Female		
	Mean (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V.(%)	Mean (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V.(%)
Emotional stability	29.80	4.94	16.60	26.41	1.41	5.35
Emotional progression	26.57	1.41	5.32	26.44	12.72	48.13
Social adjustment	24.47	8.48	34.67	23.34	4.94	21.20
Personality integration	24.04	6.36	26.46	22.37	1.41	6.32
Independence	19.23	6.36	33.08	19.03	6.36	33.43
Overall	24.82	5.51	22.21	23.51	5.37	22.85

Areas	ICDS			Non-ICDS		
	Mean (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)	Mean (%)	S.D. (%)	C.V. (%)
Emotional stability	24.22	4.94	20.43	27.86	1.41	5.07
Emotional progression	23.38	7.77	33.26	26.43	6.36	24.07
Social adjustment	20.22	3.53	17.48	23.72	3.53	14.90
Personality integration	20.25	2.82	13.96	22.90	10.60	46.31
Independence	16.76	1.41	8.43	19.13	5.65	29.56
Overall	104.8	4.10	3.91	120.04	5.51	4.59

progression, social adjustment, personality integration and independence, besides genetic traits. Variation in emotional maturity parameters have been examined by estimating the co-efficient of variations. The results for the selected male and female children of ICDS and non-ICDS study area have been displayed in Table 2-4.

Table 2 represents the emotional maturity of ICDS children which revealed that male children were comparatively more matured in emotional stability followed by personality integration and independence variables, whereas reverse was found true in female children for emotional progression.

In case of social adjustment again male children were found more matured than females. Overall, analysis of all the parameters indicated that male children had more emotional maturity as compared to female children. Present investigation is supported by the findings of Lutz *et al.* (2002).

The results pertaining to non-ICDS study area have been displayed in Table 3. A close examination of the table indicated that female children were more matured in emotional stability, social adjustment and in personality integration whereas male children were more matured in emotional progression and independence variables. Overall as is evident from the table, it may be concluded that mean

and standard deviation values for both male and female respondents did not differ on emotional maturity.

The overall analysis of combined male and female children was carried out for ICDS and non-ICDS children, the results of which have been presented in Table 4. It may be visualized from the table that in ICDS study area children were matured in independence and personality integration variables whereas in non-ICDS study area children were matured in emotional stability, social adjustment and in emotional progression variables. Results showed that children of ICDS study area were more stable in emotional maturity than non-ICDS study area.

t-value showing the areas of emotional stability and emotional maturity :

Table 5 shows that there is a significant difference

Table 5 : Comparison of emotional and linguistic skills of ICDS and non-ICDS respondents

Areas	Mean values		t value	Standard error
	ICDS	Non-ICDS		
Emotional stability	8.13	9.16	2.7949*	.368
Emotional maturity	104.83	120.36	3.9160*	3.96

* Indicate significance of value at P=0.05

Table 6 : Relationship of ecological variables with emotional stability of respondents

Sr.No.	Factors	Constant	Regression co-efficient	r2
1.	Age	6.63	0.1490	0.022
2.	Gender	8.67	-0.0309	0.001
3.	Caste	8.99	-0.090	0.0083
4.	Rural/urban	8.03	0.0700	0.0049
5.	Family type	8.61	-0.0228	0.0005
6.	Ordinal position	8.74	-0.0374	0.0014
7.	Education of father	8.09	0.0640	0.0041
8.	Occupation of father	7.26	0.1983*	0.0393
9.	Education of mother	7.65	0.1505	0.0226
10.	Occupation of mother	8.04	0.0833	0.0069
11.	Income	8.09	0.1051	0.110

* Indicate significance of value at P=0.05

Table 7 : Relationship of ecological variables with emotional maturity of respondents

Sr.No.	Factors	Constant	Regression co-efficient	r2
1.	Age	34.6	.5552*	.3083
2.	Gender	102.3	0.1069	0.0114
3.	Caste	121.0	-0.1731*	0.0300
4.	Rural/urban	112.8	-0.0412	0.0017
5.	Family type	107.5	0.0356	0.0013
6.	Ordinal position	121.6	-0.1473	0.0217
7.	Education of father	107.0	0.0449	0.0020
8.	Occupation of father	95.9	0.2080*	0.0433
9.	Education of mother	103.2	0.1135	0.0129
10.	Occupation of mother	95.7	0.2510*	0.0630
11.	Income	105.6	.1090	.0119

* Indicate significance of value at P=0.05

between ICDS and non-ICDS children in the areas of emotional stability (2.79) and emotional maturity (3.91). But significant difference was more higher in non-ICDS children in comparison to ICDS children.

Relationship between emotional stability and emotional maturity with ecological variables :

The information on this aspect was generated through the study of co-efficient of correlations of emotional stability and emotional maturity with the probable factors that can influence them; such as, age, gender, caste, residential area, ordinal position, education of father and mother, occupation of parents', family type and income.

A reference to Table 6 and 7 demonstrates that emotional stability had a positive association with occupation of father. This is indicative of the fact that if the occupation of father is productive and sustainable, emotional stability of the children would have a tendency to be healthy, meaning thereby, that children could face tensions and deficiencies in their life fairly and boldly.

As is clear from Table 7, regarding emotional maturity that age had a positive relationship with emotional maturity. This shows that with age one's emotional maturity increases/improves. This could be explained on the basis of simple reason of human personality that at younger age, if some mishaps or unfortunate happenings take place in a family; the children get emotional shocks quickly as compared to adults. Likewise, emotional maturity was influenced negatively by caste; yet positively affected by occupation of father and mother. Many reasons can be given in favour of these observations such as with lower caste children emotional maturity is more and *vice versa* for a negative relationship between emotional maturity and caste whereas growth of better mental health occurs through better nutrition, thereby providing better emotional maturity due to productive and profitable occupation of both father and mother. Results of the present study are also supported by Keithland and Campbell (2000) who revealed that family

background was most influencing factor for emotional development of child.

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