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## **Psychosocial competence among adolescents: Difference in demographic variables**

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**Abstract**--Psychosocial competence is considered as a combination of three dimensions of effective coping i.e. self-attitude, positive self-world attitude and realistic active coping style. In the present study psychosocial competence of 300 adolescents viz. type of family , working status of mother , number of siblings and locale was studied through the psychosocial competence scale developed by the researcher having three dimensions i.e. self-efficacy, interpersonal trust and active coping. The collected data was analysed by calculating t ratio and p value and the results indicates that working status of mother, type of family and locale effected the psychosocial competence of the adolescents whereas there exists no significant difference in the psychosocial competence of adolescents having siblings or no siblings.

**Keywords**---Psychosocial competence, adolescents, type of family, siblings, working status of mother, locale.

The concept of competence as a component of effective functioning has recently received a lot of attention by social gerontologists (Tyler, Gatz & Gease, 2018; George, 1980; Tobin & Lieberman, 1976; Chiriboga & Cutler, 1980). Competence is not similar to knowledge and skills rather it is more that as it includes personal attributes and characteristics, abilities, work habits etc. (Gangani et al., 2006; Le Deist and Winterton, 2005; Russ-Eft, 1995). Psychosocial means pertaining to the influence of social factors on an individual's mind or behaviour, and to the interrelation of behavioural and social factors (Oxford English Dictionary, 2012). Psychosocial competence is a combination of the intrapsychic and interpsychic skills. From the functional point of view intrapsychic skills are related to the psychological skills whereas interpsychic skills are related to the

social competence. Psychological skills are the skills which represent the attitude of one towards oneself, personal strengths and weaknesses, self-awareness, abilities and potentialities of one whereas social competence is required for development of interpersonal relationship, interactions and social bonding (Goldfinch, Wronski, 2006; Meconium, 2008). Psychosocial competence implies the potentialities of an individual to meet concerned demands of surrounded environment by drawing on and deploying psychosocial resources in specific circumstances (Singh, Singh & Poonam, 2016). Psychosocial competence plays a pivotal role in the physical, mental and social well-being of an individual.

Development of psychosocial competence can make an important contribution to the health of the person, especially when it is related to behaviour like inability to deal stress effectively and pressures in life (Bardhan, 2016). Adolescence as transition period faces many physical changes as well as mental stress. Sometimes they are unable to handle such pressure that they deviate from their path (Gondal, 1999). Adolescents face a lot of psychophysical and social problems and challenges. One of the main challenges is the identity formation. During this stage of the growth, they begin asking questions about who they are and how they differ from their parents (Brown 2000). Adolescents want experimentation in their life as they are very curious in nature. There are number of reasons which compel the adolescents to get deviated from their focus in life, such as family conflicts, loneliness, relationships, tension, partying, stress, family environment, type of family and parents working status etc. Family environment plays a vital role in the growth and development and personality grooming of the child. Family is the habitat where the youngsters learn to develop their potentialities through maximum use their mental faculties and develop the skills to cope up with the exterior world. It is the place, where they learn about family values, relationships and their working through their observation, experience of parents and dealing of the other relations with them.

Structure of the family and type of family also influence the mental and physical growth of the adolescents. In Indian context earlier raising a child was not a difficult task as in the joint family system there are many caretakers of the child apart from mother and each and every member of the family contribute in the upbringing of the children in the family. Social changes in the society paved the way for new cultural patterns and a new system which replaced the joint family system is the nuclear family system (Kochukrishna, Geetha & Prasanth, 2016). The nuclear family is a universal social phenomenon. Nuclear family is a small group of people composed of husband, wife and their children which constitutes a distinct unit in the society (Duncan Mitchell, 1994 & Shuani, 2020).

In a nuclear family, the actions, activities and words of an adolescent were taken in to due consideration as compare to joint family as the parents life revolves around their children and they leave no stone unturned to fulfil the wishes and desires of their children. It is a general opinion that the joint family promote and maintain better psycho-social adjustment skills among the generations (Kochukrishna, Geetha & Prasanth, 2016). In big families elder kids assist their parents in bringing up of their younger brothers and sisters which helps to develop responsibility, kindness, tolerance, sympathy, ability to consider other people's needs, respectful attitude to others (Gunjan Bhatia, 2012). According to

Shek (1997), "family factors play an important role in influencing the psychosocial adjustment, particularly the positive mental health, of Chinese adolescents." Involvement of both the parents is required for the smooth running of the family affairs. Parental involvement includes the behaviour of parents (both in home and school settings), supposed to support the development of their children's social/emotional and psychosocial skills and facilitate for the achievement of educational and occupational goals (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010; Goleman, 1998). Importance of parents as support systems for children's social and emotional learning, understood as a process through which children gain and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and abilities that will help them understand and manage emotions, set goals, embrace empathy for others, and make responsible decisions (Taylor et al., 2017; Redding, 2014). Majority of the successful and well-adjusted adolescents belong to the families where parental attitudes are favourable and there exist a healthy and favourable relationship between parents and children (Aeri & Jain, 2010).

In the present study contribution of both type of families have taken into consideration in the development of psychosocial competencies of the adolescents. Whatsoever is the type of family it is mother whose contribution towards the development of the child cannot be denied. It is the affection, love, care and instructions of the mother that nurture the life of children and also influence the knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities and behaviour of the adolescents (Kumari & Madhavi, 2018).

From all the members of the family, mothers are closest to the children. So their role is the most important one in children's all round development. Many researches has been conducted which examined the role and contribution of mother towards the growth development of adolescents and these researches have edge over the researchers conducted for the contributions of father. In the viewpoints of Henry & Peterson, 1995; Lemer & Knapp, 1975; Paulson & Sputa, 1996, "Family members rated mothers as more involved than fathers in parenting activities such as support, proximity, and regulation. This finding has been supported in the literature regardless of ethnicity, age of child, and family structure." Due to the emergence of the family-style of working parents, relationship of parents and children has faced both positive and negative impacts (Nair, 2018). Working mothers has to spend a lot of time outside the home (depending upon the nature of job) which can directly or indirectly influence the mother child relationship, however the financial assistance provide by her can contribute towards the better living standards. Moreover the number of children in the family can also be considered as a factor of concern in the psychosocial development of the adolescent. Single child has its own type of personality configurations and the children having siblings possessed with certain behaviour qualities as compare to a single child. Every individual is quite different from the other but siblings their behaviour, attitudes, habits and imaginations influences a lot to the personality of each other. The area where the family is living i.e. in highly advanced urban area or rural area it also have impact upon the value system and cultural patterns of the family. So the locale of the family can influence the psychosocial competencies of the adolescents.

In the present study the researcher has made an attempt to study the psychosocial competence of adolescents in relation to the type of family, working status of mother number of siblings in the family and locale.

### **Objectives of the study**

- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to working and non-working status of mothers.
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents belonging to nuclear and joint family.
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents respect to siblings (with or without siblings).
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to locale.

### **Hypotheses**

- There exists no significant difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to working status of mothers.
- There exists no significant difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to type of family.
- There exists no significant difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to locale.
- There exists no significant difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents of with respect to number of siblings.

### **Research Methodology**

Descriptive research has been employed to collect the data and a sample of 300 adolescents of (Class 9, 10,+1,+2 ) studying in Shri Guru Harkrishan Public School, Lovedale Public School , Khalsa College Public School and Khalsa College International School (all affiliated to CBSE) of Amritsar district has been selected by random purposive sampling technique. Psychosocial competence scale developed by the investigator was used to collect the data. The scale has been developed under three dimensions i.e. Self-Efficacy, Interpersonal Trust and Active Coping using five point likert scale (always, usually, often, sometimes, never). Reliability of the scale through test- retest method is measured as .809.For the analysis and interpretation of the raw scores, mean, t ratio and p value was calculated.

### **Interpretation and Discussion of Data**

Table-1.1 showing hypothesis wise t ratio and results of psychosocial competence of adolescents

Factor	Working	Non-working mothers	Joint Family	Nuclear Family	With sibling	without Siblings	Rural	Urban
Mean	189.49	199.04	199.17	189.68	195.49	192.22	190.86	197.73

Scores								
Standard deviation	18.33	21.32	22.08	17.08	20.67	19.68	18.89	21.12
T Ratio	4.1528		4.1978		1.394		2.9702	
P value	0.000021		0.000018		0.8020		0.0016	
Results	Significant at .05 level of significance		Significant at .05 level of significance		Not significant at .05 level of significance		Significant at .05 level of significance	

Table 1.1 revealed that mean scores and standard deviation of adolescents of working and non-working mothers is 189.49,199.04 and 18.33 &21.32 respectively. Calculated t value is 4.1528 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance, so the hypothesis stands not accepted it means significant difference exists in the psychosocial competence of adolescents of working and non-working mothers.

In case of adolescents belonging to joint family and nuclear family significant difference exists as the t ratio is 4.1978 which are significant at 0.05 level of significance. From the data it is shown that mean scores of adolescents belonging to joint family is 199.17 and of nuclear family is 189.68 and standard deviation is 22.08 and 17.08 respectively. It means adolescents belonging to joint family have higher level of psychosocial competence as compare to the adolescents belonging to nuclear families. Furthermore there exists no significant difference in the psychosocial competence of the adolescents having siblings and having no siblings as the calculated mean scores and standard deviation is 195.49 &192.22 and 20.67 &19.62 respectively so resulted t ratio is 1.394 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. In case of locale the results revealed that significant difference exists in the psychosocial competence of the adolescents belonging to rural and urban areas. t ratio is 2.907 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance.

## Discussion

Results revealed that significant difference exists in the psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to the working status of the mothers. In the viewpoints of Colemann, 1988,"Employment of the mother may also weaken the social capital in the parent-child relationship, with children being less likely to identify with parental goals and values." Undoubtedly working status of the mother creates additional financial help to the family and those finances can be used in better upbringing of the child (Bianchi, 2000 and Heckman, 2000). Lack of time and physical exertion of the mother due to professional life and its pressure working mothers might suffer from role conflict and most likely to have pressure of reconciling the professional as well as personal and family life.(Jacobs and Gerson, 2004; Stone, 2007).

However some studies had revealed that full-time employment of mother during adolescence is not harmful specially in case of psychological and physical wellbeing and educational achievement of the adolescents .Probable explanation towards this point might be that one cannot judge the ability to nourish and monitor her child just on this basis that she is spending more time outside the

house. Fact is this may have both positive as well as negative effects. Furthermore, several factors are supposed to have a much influence on wellbeing and behaviour of the adolescent such as pressure and effect of peers, family, neighbourhood, siblings, school and community etc. Undoubtedly mother is the core of the family but other elements like parental involvement, parenting style, quality of the mother–child relationship, role and involvement also played an important role in the upbringing of the child (Silvia Mendolia, 2014)

The results of the present study depicts that the significant difference occurs in the psychosocial competence of adolescents belonging to joint and nuclear family. Reason being that in joint families there are grandparents and other blood relations who can help the adolescents to cope up with the stress and strain of this particular age and moreover there are chances of having cousins of same age who can help them to channelize their emotions in a right way. The grandparents mostly taught manners and values to the children. According to Akhtar P., Malik J.A., Begeer S.,2017,” It is concluded that in the course of psychosocial development, the emotional closeness of children to grandparents serves as safeguard against negative family conditions.” In families where both the parents work, grandparents nourish the children, share their experiences and build a strong foundation for ethical and moral development and also help in developing self-efficacy and interpersonal trust. Moreover adolescents shares a special kind of emotional attachment with their grandparents (particularly in Indian society) and they can discuss their problems with them and can also sought coping strategies to solve their problems.

The results revealed that no significant difference exists whether the adolescents are having a sibling or not having a sibling. According to the viewpoints of Amato & Anthony, 2014; Hetherington, 2003; Wallerstein et al., 2013, “Family transitions can result in changes in social support from family members, which can modify spousal, parent-child and intra-sibling interaction.” Number of siblings is considered as significant contributing for affecting the psychosocial competence of adolescents; adolescents having two siblings have significantly low overall psychosocial competence (Aminabahvi and Bhatt, 2015).

## **Conclusion**

From the above discussion it can be concluded that the significant difference exists in the psychosocial competence of adolescents belonging to joint family and nuclear family as the family values and characteristics plays an important role in the development of the child. Furthermore working status of the mother also considered as significant factor towards the development of psychosocial competence of the adolescents moreover the nature of the work of the mother as every kind of job has its own characteristics, conditions and attributes and these factors may or may not contributes towards the psychosocial competence of the children. Number of children in the family does not have any contribution towards the development of psychosocial competence of the adolescents. Locale, where the family is residing the value pattern of that particular region also contributes towards the psychosocial competence of the children. So in the present study demographic variables except numbers of siblings in the family

suggests some sort of contribution towards the development of psychosocial competence of adolescents

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