



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Psychology

APPROVAL MOTIVE AND PERCEIVED FAMILY ENVIRONMENT VIS-À-VIS NUCLEAR AND JOINT FAMILY - A STUDY ON HOME-MAKERS AND WORKING WOMEN

KEY WORDS: Approval Motive, Perceived Family Environment, Nuclear and Joint Family

Mrs. Debashree Sinha

Part- Time Lecturer, Surendranath College, Kolkata

Swaha Bhattacharya*

Prof., Department of Applied Psychology, University of Calcutta *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Aim of the present investigation is to study the approval motive and perceived family environment as expressed by the home-makers and working women belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata. Accordingly, 120 women (60 from nuclear and 60 from joint families) were selected as sample in this investigation. A General Information Schedule, Approval Motive Scale and Perceived Family Environment Questionnaire were used as tools. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were done. The findings revealed that approval motive as expressed by working women belonging to both nuclear and joint families are very low. On the contrary, approval motive of home-makers belonging to joint families is high and those belonging to nuclear families are at moderate level. On the other hand, both home-makers and working women belonging to nuclear and joint families expressed different opinions in connection with the existing family environment. Adequate measures may be taken for healthy living considering the problems faced by both home-makers and working women.

INTRODUCTION

A family is a primary group which requires people who are intimate and have frequent face-to-face contact with one another, have norms in common and share mutually enduring and extensive influences. There are mainly two types of family systems – joint family and nuclear family systems. Eliot and Gray (2000) stated that all family setups bear a strong relationship that influences the life patterns of their members. In the nuclear family a primary and direct relationship exists between the two generations living together while the joint family setup has an indirect and secondary sort of relationship with its members. India is a country which is known for its cultural diversity and thus, joint family system is still prevalent in many parts of the country. But with the increase in urbanization, nuclear families are taking over the joint family systems. Because children's lives are centred initially within their families, the family environment becomes the primary agent of socialization. Assessment of family environment is usually performed based on dimensions such as cohesion, hierarchy, support, and conflict (Björnberg & Nicholson, 2007; Teodoro et al., 2009). Cohesion is the emotional bond that connects family members, meaning the levels of affection, friendship, and intimacy shared. Hierarchy refers to the structure of power and influence of older people on family decisions. Support is the perception of the material and emotional support received from the family in face of challenges and problems. Family environment continues to be of crucial importance throughout adolescence and young adulthood (Van Wel, 2000). Family cohesion and supportive relationships between family members are associated with adolescent psychological adaptation and lower depression (Herman et al., 2007). The strongest factor in moulding a child's personality is his relationship with his parents. If his parents love him with a generous, even flowing, non-possessive affection and if they treat him as a person who likes themselves, has both rights and responsibilities, then his chances of developing normally as well and good. But if they diverge from this, the child's development may be distorted (Cox & Cox, 1979).

Social approval is the positive evaluation of an individual or group in a social context. The social reinforcement provided has important implications for social behaviour, in that people will generally consistently act in ways to win approval and avoid criticism. Social motives are otherwise known as acquired or learned motives. Research has shown that an individual's level of approval motivation can be used to predict how he or she will react to expectations or influences of others. Smith and Flenning (1972) conducted a study that investigated the connection between subjects' need for approval and their susceptibility to subtle unintended influence of biased experimenters. They found that individuals with a high need for approval altered their behaviour in the direction of the experimenter's expectancy, while those in the

low approval motivation group did not. Past research has also found a negative correlation to exist between self-esteem and approval motivation (Larsen, Martin, Ettinger, & Nelson, 1975). Considering the above, the present investigation has been designed to study approval motive and perceived family environment as expressed by home-makers and working women belonging to nuclear and joint families respectively.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the approval motive as expressed by home-makers and working women belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata.
2. To study the family environment as perceived by home-makers and working women belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis I (a): Home-makers belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of approval motive.

Hypothesis I (b): Working women belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of approval motive.

Hypothesis II (a): Home-makers belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of perceived family environment.

Hypothesis II (b): Working women belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of perceived family environment.

Study Area and Sample

A group of 60 home-makers (30 from nuclear families and 30 from joint families) and another group of 60 working women (30 from nuclear families and 30 from joint families) were selected as sample following the stratified random sampling technique. Subjects are between the ages 25 to 30 years. All are graduates.

Tools Used

1. General Information Schedule: It consists of items like name, address, age, educational qualification and family type etc.

2. Approval Motive Scale (Tripathi and Tripathi, 1980): It consists of 72 items divided into seven areas viz., normative behaviour, social conformity, positive self-presentation, defensiveness, dependency, social responsiveness and social approval. The value of split-half reliability is .93.

3. Perceived family Environment Questionnaire: It consists of 60 statements answerable in a five point scale from strongly agree

to strongly disagree where high score indicates good family environment and vice-versa. There are three domains viz. cohesion, achievement and control. Odd-even split-half reliability is .84.

Administration, Scoring and Statistical Treatment

All the questionnaires were administered to the selected group of subjects by giving proper instruction. Data were collected and properly scrutinized. Scoring was done with the help of standard scoring key. Tabulation was done for each group and each test separately. For General Information Schedule frequency and percentages were calculated. Mean and S.D. were calculated for other tests. Comparisons were made by applying Student's t-test. Correlation was done between approval motives and perceived family environment.

RESULT AND INTERPRETATION

Data inserted in Table 1 reveals the comparative picture between the home-makers belonging to nuclear and joint families and also between the working women belonging to nuclear and joint families in terms of Approval Motive. From the data it can be said that approval motive as expressed by home-makers belonging to joint family is high and those who belong to nuclear family is at moderate level. On the other hand, approval motive as expressed by working women belonging to both nuclear and joint family is very low. Analysis of data reveals that traditional gender role and positive self-presentation are the significant reasons behind high approval motive as expressed by home-makers belonging to joint family than that of the nuclear family. It can further be said that very low approval motive as expressed by working women belonging to both nuclear and joint family are mainly due to the economic empowerment, freedom and also increase of education and aspirational level. When comparison was made between the two groups, significant difference was observed. Thus the **Hypothesis I (a)** and **Hypothesis I (b)** are accepted.

Table 1: Comparison between the home-makers belonging to nuclear and joint families and also between the working women belonging to nuclear and joint families in terms of Approval Motives.

Category	Nuclear (N=60)		Joint (N=60)		t -value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Home-makers	50.33	3.38	54.83	4.465	4.64*
Working Women	32.23	4.97	38.20	5.63	3.74*

*p<0.01

Comparison was also made in terms of perceived family environment (Data inserted in Table 2). Overall pictures revealed good family environment as expressed by the subjects are, in seriatim, home-makers belonging to Joint families, working women belonging to joint families, home-makers belonging to nuclear families and working women belonging to nuclear families. Analysis of data reveals that favourable perceived family environment is mainly due to well-communication, clear expression of personal ideas and feelings, expectations from family members and strong bond. On the other hand, comparatively less favourable perceived family environment are mainly due to stressful hurried life style, lack of support from family members, balance between work and family life and individualised manner. Comparative picture reveals significant difference between the two groups. Thus the **Hypothesis II (a)** and **II (b)** are accepted. Correlation between the Approval Motive and Perceived Family Environment is 0.71.

Table 2: Comparison between the home-makers belonging to nuclear and joint families and also between the working women belonging to nuclear and joint families in terms of Perceived Family Environment.

Category	Nuclear Family		Joint Family		Student's t -test
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Home-makers	210.30	13.69	258.27	8.275	17.63*
Working Women	198.83	12.03	245.70	12.71	12.86*

*p<0.01

Score range: 60 to 300

High score indicates favourable perceived family environment and vice-versa.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion it can be said that the approval motive and perceived family environment are better as expressed by the home-makers belonging to joint families than those belonging to nuclear families. The same is true for working women also. Adequate measures may be taken especially to improve the quality of life of working women belonging to nuclear families by dealing effectively with their daily life hassle, balance between work and family life and also support from others.

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