



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Home Science

IMPACT OF FAMILY ENVIRONMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH OF COLLEGE GOING BOYS OF NALANDA DISTRICT

KEY WORDS: Mental Health, Family Environment, College going boys

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ABSTRACT

In this era of digitalization, the importance of family has started disappearing although it is the first school of child where he/ she learns to speak, learn to walk, learn to interact within and outside the family. The child's overall development is based on the environment he/ she receives in the family. The parent child interaction influences their cognitive and critical thinking ability influencing their mental health. This study has been conducted in Nalanda District of Bihar with the aim to find the impact of family environment on mental health of college going boys. A total sample of 200 boys were selected from different colleges of Nalanda District namely Nalanda College, Allama Iqbal College, Kisan College and SPM College through stratified random sampling method. The tools used in the study were Mental Health Inventory by Jagdish and Srivastava (1985) which was used to measure mental health of boys and family climate scale by Beena Shah (2005) was used to measure family environment. The data collected were subjected to different statistical measures viz percentage, mean and chi-square test. The results revealed that there was significant relationship between mental health of boys and the family environment they received. The study also gave certain suggestions which includes proper communication with their child, providing healthy food avoid junk food, regular exercise and healthy sleep pattern.

INTRODUCTION

The environment within the family that influences physical, emotional, social, psychological and personality development of its members is termed as family environment. It determines the quality of relationships among its members, their communication pattern, understanding among each other, values and overall family climate. This family environment affects behaviour, cognitive, emotional and social development of children of all ages especially those who are in adolescence years. This is the time when children enter college and their mental health, academic achievement, coping abilities and interpersonal relationship is affected by the environment they get at home.

According to Darling and Steinberg (1993) "family environment is the emotional climate created by parenting behaviors and family interactions, which significantly influences children's developmental outcomes."

The importance of family environment has been discussed by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) where family is considered as the primary microsystem in which individuals experience direct interactions which plays a crucial role in shaping their mental health, personality and social competence throughout life.

The human race generally focusses more on keeping their body healthy and ignore the state of their mind. Taking care of the mind along with the body is important for a person. Mental health is a "state of psychological, emotional and social wellbeing of an individual" (Purohit, 2022). It is the ability to work according to his /her potential that help in welfare of family, community and nation at large. Mental health is important at every stage of life from childhood to adulthood (Babu and Vinnarasi, 2019).

Family environment plays a vital role in determining mental health of college going students. "A healthy family environment is important in maintaining good mental health of college students" (Kaur et al., 2015). Students belonging to family having freedom of speech where they can freely express themselves get love and support from family members which help to have good mental health. On the contrary a family that lacks communication are prone to disputes and exploit it members which leads to loss of self - respect, anxiety and depression. Tewari and Pawar (2024) has

found in their study that students reared in a conducive home environment has good mental health as compared to students receiving unfavourable home environment. Positive family cohesion, parental support, effective communication, and emotional warmth are associated with lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression and with higher levels of life satisfaction and academic adjustment. Conversely, family conflict, poor communication, excessive control, neglect, or economic hardship may contribute to psychological distress and poor mental health.

Therefore, family environment can be understood as the multidimensional context created by family relationships, parenting styles, emotional support, communication patterns, values, organization, and socioeconomic conditions that collectively influence an individual's mental, emotional, social, and academic development. Keeping above facts in mind this study was conducted with following objectives

1. To study mental health of college going boys.
2. To study family environment of college going boys.
3. To study impact of family environment on mental health of college going boys.

HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant impact of family environment on mental health of college going boys.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The above study is important because family is the only environment where learning first begins after the child is born. The child learns to communicate, interact with others in the family itself. Family environment affects behaviour of children especially of those who are in their adolescence years. Certain factors like parenting style, lack of communication among parents or between parents and children, frequent conflicts within the family affects mental well-being of adolescents. A family that is supportive, interactive with its members and encourages its children in academic works prevent them from any kind of stress. In case of adolescent boys who are college going it is the utmost responsibility of parents to provide emotional support so that they can meet academic, social and personal challenges. This study can help parents, teachers and college management to design counselling sessions, mental health awareness programme that will help in improving mental health of students. This

study also helps the colleges to understand the importance of family environment for academic excellence of students, help in early identifications of boys having poor mental health and prevent from becoming adverse.

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was conducted in Nalanda district of Bihar where a total sample of 200 boys (50 from each college) namely Kisan College, Allama Iqbal College, Nalanda College and SPM College were selected through stratified random sampling method. The tools used in the study include:

1. Mental Health Inventory developed by Jagdish and Srivastava (1983) was used to measure mental Health. The inventory measures mental health of individual on six dimensions namely positive self-evaluation, perception of reality, integration of personality, autonomy, group-oriented attitude and environmental mastery. Mental health Inventory comprises of 56 statements.
2. Family Climate Sale developed by Dr. Beena Shah (2005) was used to assess the family environment of the respondents. This scale consists of 90 statements distributed across ten dimensions each comprising of positive and negative items capturing a unique aspect of family environment. This scale uses a three-point response system for scoring each statement.

The data collected was subjected to different statistical measures viz mean, percentage standard deviation and chi square (χ^2) results were drawn.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Distribution of college going boys as per demographic variables (N=200)

Birth Order	N	%
First	59	29.5
Second	63	31.5
Third	58	29
Fourth	20	10
Number of siblings		
One	9	4.5
Two	56	28
More than two	135	67.5
Father Education		
Illiterate	0	0
Primary	26	13
Middle	13	6.5
High School	28	14
Intermediate	55	27.5
Graduation	74	37
Above graduation	4	2
Father Occupation		
Unemployed	6	3
Elementary occupation	18	9
Plant and Machine Operators	3	1.5
Trade workers	11	5.5
Agriculture and Fishery workers	67	33.5
Shop and Market, Sale workers	60	30
Clerks	6	3
Technicians	11	5.5
Professionals	18	9
Family Income		
≤ 9226	35	17.5
9232-27648	85	42.5
27654-46089	55	27.5
46095-68961	12	6
68697-92185	7	3.5
92191-184,370	6	3
Type of Family		
Joint	110	55
Nuclear	90	45

Family Size		
Small (upto 5)	96	48
Large (above 5)	104	52
Religion		
Hindu	166	83
Muslim	34	17

The above table indicates that maximum (31.5%) of respondents belonged to second birth order, about 67.5% had more than two siblings. It also shows that maximum participants' father were graduates, involved in agriculture, had family income was Rs 9232- Rs 27648, belonged to joint family with family members more than 5 and were Hindus.

Table 2 Measure of Mental Health for boys

Mental Health Level	Boys	
	N	%
Low	25	12.5
Moderate	154	77
High	21	10.5
Total	200	100

The above table indicates that maximum boys (77%) had moderate Mental Health followed by 12.5% had low Mental Health and only 10.5% had high mental health level.

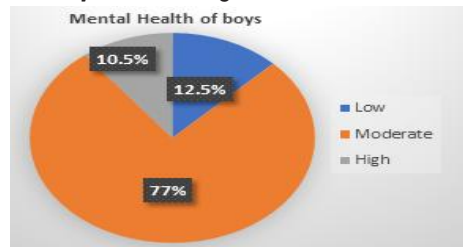


Fig1. Graph showing Mental Health of college going boys

Table 3: Measure of Family Environment for boys

Family Environment Level	Boys	
	N	%
Unfavourable	70	35
Neutral	86	43
Favourable	44	22
Total	200	100

The above table indicates that maximum (43%) of respondents got neutral family environment followed by 35% respondents received unfavourable family environment and only 22% respondents received favourable family environment.

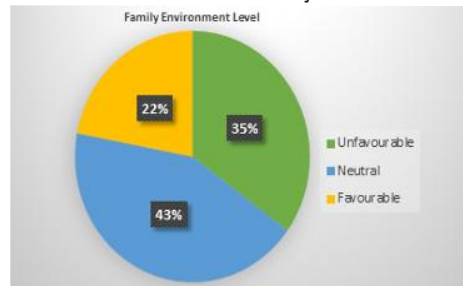


Fig2 Graph showing family environment level of boys

Table 4 Showing relationship between Mental Health of boys and their family environment

Family Environment Level	Mental Health of Boys						Total		χ^2	p
	Low		Moderate		High					
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Unfavourable	7	26.9	56	36.4	7	35	70	35	23	0.00
Neutral	18	69.2	68	44.2	0	0	86	43		
Favourable	1	3.8	30	19.5	13	65	44	22		
Total	26	100	154	100	20	100	200	100		

*Stands for significance at $p < 0.05$ level of significance
 The above table shows the relationship of mental health of boys with their family environment. It is clear from the table

that maximum boys (65%) having high mental health have favourable environment and only 35% receives unfavourable family environment. It is also found from table that p value is 0.000 which is significant i.e. there is significant relationship between mental state of boys and their family environment which means that if family environment is favourable mental health is good and vice-versa. Thus, hypothesis is rejected. This study is supported by Salihovic et al. (2021) who also found that family environment plays a significant role on the mental health of all population groups. Singh and Devi (2018) also revealed in their study that correlation between mental health and family climate of boys is 0.57 which is significant. Thus, this indicates a positive relationship between family environment of boys and their mental well-being.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that family environment is directly associated with mental health of boys. A positive, cooperative and understanding family environment when provided to boys encourage them to communicate their problems (personal and academic) with their parents helps to relief from stress, build their self-confidence thus, ensures good mental health.

Delimitations of the study

The present study was delimited to the following:

- The present study was restricted to 17-18 years of college students.
- The investigator has confined the study to colleges only.
- The study was delimited with respect to location.
- The study was delimited with respect to sample size.
- The study was delimited to demographic variables like gender, age, father's education, father's occupation, family type, birth order, family size and family monthly income.

Suggestions

Parents act as pillars on which their children future is built as they are the primary support system for overall development of their child which includes physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth. A strong and supportive parent-child relationship is important in encouraging positive mental health among college students. Parents serve as role models and their behavior, guidance, and concern significantly shape the personality and coping abilities of young individuals. A supportive family environment encourages college students to cope with stress which help them to meet academic challenges and thus put positive impact on their mental well-being. Effective communication between parents and their child will encourage them to get involved in physical activities, minimize screen timings, engage in healthy eating habits and proper sleeping timing all of these activities will ensure good mental health among students.

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