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Problems, Values and Adjustment among adolescents in Context with their Family Climate

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



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Abstract

The present study was conducted on 162 adolescents (Boys =81; Girls = 81) to examine the differential influence of family climate on personal problems, personal values and patterns of adjustment respectively. It was hypothesized that adolescents belonging to favourable and unfavourable family climate would differ significantly from one another in terms of personal problems, personal values and patterns of adjustment. The adolescent respondents were administered FPI, YPI, PVQ, Bell's Adjustment Inventory and PDS to seek the data which were treated using t-test. It was found that adolescents of unfavourable family climate experience more personal problem, manifest poor adjustment and hold poor growth of personal values. Thus, personal problems, growth of personal values and patterns of adjustment all are function of family climate.

Key Words

Problems, Values, Adjustment, Climate.

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical period of development marked by significant physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes. During this stage, young individuals begin to develop a sense of identity, values, and beliefs, which influence their decision-making and relationships. As adolescents navigate these transitions, the family environment plays a pivotal role in shaping their values, behavior, and emotional well-being. The family climate—comprising the overall emotional tone, communication patterns, parenting styles, and the level of support or conflict in the family has profound implications for how adolescents perceive and internalize personal values. In particular, the values related to morality, social relationships, career aspirations, and self-concept are deeply influenced by the dynamics within the family.

Personal values refer to the guiding principles and standards that individuals develop over time, reflecting their understanding of what is important, right, or desirable. These values are often learned during childhood and adolescence, through both direct and indirect interactions with caregivers, peers, media, and educational institutions. In adolescence, however, these values may become subject to change as adolescents experience greater independence, encounter new ideas, and strive to form their own unique identity. This period is also a

time of heightened self-awareness, as adolescents begin to challenge previously held beliefs and experiment with new behaviors and roles.

One of the key factors influencing the development of personal values during adolescence is the family climate. The family provides the first and most influential social context in which adolescents learn about themselves and the world around them. Parenting styles, such as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful, contribute significantly to the development of personal values. For example, authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and clear expectations, has been linked to the development of well-adjusted and value-driven adolescents. In contrast, authoritarian parenting, which is marked by high control and low warmth, may lead to adolescents who either internalize rigid values or struggle to form their own sense of morality and autonomy.

In addition to parenting styles, the broader emotional climate of the family—such as the level of warmth, communication, conflict, and support—also shapes how adolescents develop their personal values. Families that provide a supportive, nurturing environment with open channels of communication tend to foster positive value development, encouraging adolescents to adopt prosocial values such as empathy, respect, and responsibility. Conversely, adolescents growing up in families marked by high levels of conflict, instability, or neglect may struggle with forming coherent value systems and may be more likely to exhibit maladaptive behaviors, such as aggression or substance abuse.

The concept of value adjustment also becomes particularly relevant in the context of family climate. Adolescents may experience conflict between their evolving personal values and the expectations or values upheld by their family. This conflict can lead to an adjustment process where adolescents negotiate between the values they inherit from their family and those they develop through their experiences with peers, school, and society. For example, an adolescent raised in a family with strict religious values may encounter a peer group with more liberal or secular views, leading to a process of value renegotiation and adaptation. These adjustments can be challenging and may sometimes result in emotional distress, confusion, or rebellion, especially if the adolescent feels that their family's values are in direct opposition to their own developing sense of identity.

Moreover, the degree of familial support during this process plays a crucial role in how adolescents cope with value conflict and adjustment. Adolescents who feel supported by their families during this period of identity exploration are more likely to experience healthy value development and adjustment. In contrast, those who feel rejected, misunderstood, or pressured to conform to parental expectations may struggle with internalizing coherent values and may exhibit emotional or behavioral problems.

In conclusion, the development and adjustment of personal values during adolescence are deeply influenced by the family climate. As adolescents seek to establish their identity and navigate complex social and moral landscapes, the family provides the initial framework for value formation and adjustment. Understanding the role of family climate in shaping these processes is essential for promoting healthy adolescent development and fostering positive value systems that contribute to the overall well-being of young individuals. By fostering supportive, communicative, and nurturing family environments, parents can play a key role in guiding their children through the challenges of adolescence and ensuring the development of positive, resilient personal values.

Review of Literature

Schwartz, S. H.¹⁰ (2011) discussed how family influences the formation of values in adolescence. Schwartz's work highlights how parents act as primary socializing agents, shaping adolescents' moral and ethical values. The literature suggests that authoritative parenting is associated with the development of more balanced and socially responsible values, while authoritarian and permissive parenting styles lead to struggles

in value formation. Dearing, E., & Taylor, B. A.⁶ (2007) examined the role of family climate in adolescent mental health and overall well-being. It posits that a supportive and nurturing family climate fosters emotional security, which helps adolescents develop a positive self-concept and adaptive personal values. Conversely, negative family climates, including high conflict or emotional neglect, are linked to emotional distress and maladaptive behaviors. Eisenberg, N., & Lennon, R.⁷ (1983) addressed how parental practices, including modeling and disciplinary approaches, influence the moral development of adolescents. It underscores that parents who model empathetic behavior and foster open, reflective communication help adolescents internalize prosocial values like empathy, fairness, and respect. Arnett, J. J.¹ (2007) emphasized how value conflicts between parents and adolescents arise during adolescence as part of the process of identity formation. These conflicts are often tied to adolescents' desire for autonomy and the exploration of new values that may differ from those of their families. Arnett suggests that how families manage these conflicts plays a crucial role in the development of both personal values and a coherent identity. Baumrind, D.² (1991) has profound implications for understanding adolescent value development. The study argues that adolescents raised in authoritative households (where there is warmth and structure) are more likely to develop internalized, positive values, including respect for authority, responsibility, and morality. In contrast, authoritarian and permissive parenting leads to either rebellion or lack of clear values. Chao, R. K.⁵ (2001) explored how family climate and value transmission vary across cultures, highlighting the importance of familial expectations, cultural norms, and socialization practices in shaping adolescent values. Chao discusses how family climate in collectivist cultures, where family cohesion and respect for authority are emphasized, can impact the moral development of adolescents differently than in individualist cultures. Conger, R. D., & Elder, G. H.⁴ (1994) reviewed examines the connection between family functioning (e.g., emotional support, conflict resolution) and adolescents' emotional adjustment. It suggests that poor family functioning, such as financial stress or high parental conflict, can negatively impact adolescents' values, leading to issues like delinquency or difficulty in establishing stable personal values. Brown, B. B.³ (2004) discussed how peer groups influence the value adjustment process during adolescence, sometimes in conflict with family values. He explains that while family is the primary source of early values, peers become more influential in shaping values such as social conformity, identity, and moral reasoning during the adolescent years. Lamborn, S. D., Mounts, N. S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. M.⁹ (1991) found that parental support and involvement are critical in adolescents' ability to internalize values. The authors argue that when parents show warmth and express confidence in their adolescents' decisions, the adolescents are more likely to develop values that are adaptive and socially responsible. This support aids in navigating the challenges of value conflict and adjustment during adolescence. Walker, L. J., & Taylor, P.⁴ (1991) highlighted the critical role of family climate in shaping adolescents' moral development. Families that encourage moral reasoning and offer consistent guidance tend to foster adolescents who can make principled decisions. The literature underscores that family members, particularly parents, serve as role models for adolescents in the development of ethical behavior and moral judgment. Koepke, S., & Denissen, J. J. A.⁸ (2012) explored the importance of open communication between parents and adolescents in the transmission and adjustment of values. They suggest that adolescents who have strong communication with their parents tend to have more stable personal values, as they are better able to discuss, challenge, and negotiate the values they have internalized from their family environment.

These reviews provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which family climate impacts the development, adjustment, and internalization of personal values during adolescence. They underscore the significance of parenting styles, communication, and emotional support in shaping the moral and ethical foundations of young people.

Objective

The study intends to compare adolescents belonging to favourable and unfavourable family climate groups in terms of personal problems, personal values and patterns of adjustment.

Hypotheses

- (1) Respondents of favourable family climate group will excel over respondents of unfavourable family climate group of adolescents in terms of their family problem, school college problem, social problem, personal problem and overall problem.
- (2) Respondents of favourable family climate group will excel over respondents of unfavourable family climate group of adolescents in terms of their religious value, aesthetic value, family prestige value, social value, democratic value, economic value, knowledge value, power value and health value.
- (3) Respondents of favourable family climate group will differ significantly from unfavourable family climate in terms of their patterns of adjustment.

Method of Study

Sample Used

The sample comprised of 162 adolescents equally divided to boys and girls as well as favourable / unfavourable family climate groups. They were selected from among +2 school of urban Patna using incidental-cum-purposeive sampling technique. Other than the conditions of edeavour they were matched so far as as practicable.

Tools Used

- (1) A PDS was used to seek the necessary information about the adolescent boys and adolescents girls.
- (2) Family Climate Scale by Veena Shah was used to measure family climate or family relationship or family environment of the adolescent respondents.
- (3) YPI by Mithilesh Verma was used to measure differential problems of adolescent boys and adolescents girls.
- (4) PVQ by GP Sherry and R.P. Verma was used to measure differential personal values of the adolescent respondents.
- (5) Hindi Adaptation of Bell’s Adjustment Inventory by Mohsin and Shamshad was used to measure patterns of adjustment of the respondents.

Results and Interpretation

Table 01: t-table showing differential effect of favorable and unfavorable family climate on personal problems amongst adolescents

Dimension of personal problems	Family Climate				t-value (df=160)	P
	Favorable (N=81)		Unfavorable (N=81)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Family	33.12	5.57	41.54	5.68	9.57	< .01
School/College	21.45	5.63	28.62	5.75	8.06	< .01
Social	4.80	2.80	8.90	2.78	9.12	< .01
Emotional/Personal	24.22	5.47	31.75	6.02	8.27	< .01
Overall	82.19	9.61	109.63	9.70	18.05	< .01

It is clear from the result table 01 that family climate is the significant contributor to dimensions of personal problems. Adolescents belonging to favorable family climate over adolescents of unfavorable family climate in terms of smaller means in each of family ($Mean_F = 33.12$; $U=41.54$), school/college ($Mean_F = 21.45$; $(Mean_U = 28.62)$), social ($(Mean_U = 4.80$; $U=8.90$), emotional ($(Mean_U = 24.22$; $U=31.75)$) including overall ($Mean = 82.19$; $_F (Mean_U = 109.63)$ problems respectively. The significance of difference between the

means was found in each of dimensions of problems namely family ($t=9.57$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), school/college ($t=8.06$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), social ($t=9.12$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), emotional or personal ($t=8.27$; $df=160$; $P<.01$) and overall ($t=18.05$; $df=160$; $P<.01$) respectively. Adolescents belonging to unfavorable family group face a lot of problems relating to the areas such as family, school/college, social, emotional including overall problem. Adolescents from unfavorable family climates experience higher levels of problems—including family, school/college, social, emotional, personal, and overall issues—because a negative home environment often lacks emotional support, open communication, and stability. Such climates may involve conflict, neglect, or authoritarian parenting, which hinder healthy psychological development. As a result, adolescents struggle with trust, self-esteem, and coping skills, making them more vulnerable to academic difficulties, peer conflicts, emotional distress, and poor decision-making in other areas of life.

Table 02: t-table showing the differential effect of family climate on the growth and development of personal value system/religious, aesthetic, family prestige, hedonistic, social, democratic, economic, knowledge, power and health values

Personal values	Family Climate				t-values (df=160)	P
	Favorable (N=81)		Unfavorable (N=81)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Religious	18.69	4.50	13.70	4.42	7.23	< .01
Aesthetic	18.82	4.46	13.58	4.60	7.38	< .01
Family prestige	17.92	4.64	12.84	4.53	7.06	< .01
Social	17.79	4.39	12.79	4.67	7.04	< .01
Democratic	17.85	4.58	12.92	4.55	6.85	< .01
Economic	18.73	4.49	13.95	4.68	6.73	< .01
Knowledge	17.82	4.70	12.98	4.77	6.54	< .01
Power	18.43	4.60	13.68	4.82	7.09	< .01
Health	17.90	4.59	12.90	4.09	7.25	< .01

It is clear from the result table 02 that family climate is a significant contributor to the growth and development of personal values. It was found that means of adolescents belonging to favorable family climate (Mean) were higher than the means of adolescents of unfavorable family climate (Mean_u) group in each of personal value namely religious (Mean_F=18.69; U=13.70), aesthetic (Mean_F=18.82; Mean_u=13.58), family prestige (X_F=17.92; Mean_u=12.84), social (Mean_F=17.79; Mean_u=12.79), democratic (Mean_F=17.85; Mean_u=12.92), economic (Mean_v=18.73; Mean_u=13.95), knowledge (Mean_F=17.82; U=12.98), power (Mean_u=18.43; U=13.68) and health (Mean_F=17.90; U=12.90) values respectively. The significance of difference between the means were found significant in each of value namely religious ($t=7.23$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), aesthetic ($t=7.38$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), family prestige ($t=7.06$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), social ($t=7.04$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), democratic ($t=6.85$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), economic ($t=6.73$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), knowledge ($t=6.54$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), power ($t=7.09$; $df=160$; $P<.01$) and health ($t=7.25$; $df=160$; $P<.01$) values respectively. Adolescents from unfavorable family climates often manifest poor growth and development of personal values—such as religious, aesthetic, family prestige, social, democratic, economic, knowledge, power, and health values because their environment lacks emotional warmth, moral guidance, and value-based nurturing. Inconsistent parenting, conflict, neglect, or lack of role models in such families hinder value internalization. Without supportive communication, structure, and encouragement, adolescents may struggle to form clear ethical beliefs, pursue goals, or develop respect for societal norms and responsibilities.

Table 03: t-table showing the differential effect of family climate on the patterns of adjustment amongst adolescents

Dimensions of adjustment	Family climate				t-values (df=160)	P
	Favorable (N=81)		Unfavorable (N=81)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Home	10.20	4.73	15.93	4.21	8.07	< .01
Health	10.09	4.80	15.24	4.72	6.73	< .01
Social	9.92	4.69	15.26	4.84	7.12	< .01
Emotional or Personal	9.69	4.92	14.98	4.63	7.05	< .01
Overall	38.90	8.58	60.34	8.93	15.65	< .01

It is clear from the results that adolescents patterns of adjustment is the function of family climate. It is clear from the results that adolescent of favorable family climate ($Mean_v$) excelled over the adolescents of unfavorable family climate ($Mean_u$) in each of dimension of adjustment namely home ($Mean_f=10.20$; $U=15.03$), health ($Mean_f=10.09$; $Mean_u=15.24$), social ($Mean_v=9.92$; $Mean_u=15.26$), emotional ($Mean_v=9.69$; $Mean_u=14.98$) and overall ($Mean_v=38.90$; $Mean_u=60.34$) respectively. The significance of difference between the means of adolescents of favorable and unfavorable family climate groups were found significant in each of dimensions of adjustment namely home ($t=8.07$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), health ($t=6.73$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), social ($t=7.12$; $df=160$; $P<.01$), emotion ($t=7.05$; $df=160$; $P<.01$) and overall ($t=15.65$; $df=160$; $P<.01$) adjustment respectively. Adolescents from unfavorable family climates manifest poor adjustment across all dimensions home, health, social, emotional/personal, and overall—because such environments often lack emotional security, consistent support, and healthy communication. Constant exposure to conflict, neglect, criticism, or authoritarian control impairs their coping abilities, self-esteem, and emotional regulation. Without a stable and nurturing foundation, adolescents find it difficult to trust others, manage stress, or adapt to challenges in school, relationships, or health, leading to widespread maladjustment.

Conclusions

- (1) Favourable family climate is likely to minimize personal problems among adolescents.
- (2) Favourable family climate is conducive to the growth of personal values system among adolescents.
- (3) Pattern of adjustment among adolescents are function of family climate.

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