

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MENTAL HEALTH AND FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AMONG SENIOR
SECONDARY STUDENTS: A STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to examine the relationship between mental health and family environment. Sample for the study consisted of 121 senior secondary students. Mental Health Battery by Arun Kumar Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta and Family Environment Inventory developed by K.S. Misra were used as tools for the study. Product moment coefficient of correlation were calculated for the analysis of the data. The finding of the study revealed that mental health of male senior secondary students is more than that of female senior secondary students; male and female senior secondary students differ from one another on humanistic thrust, empathy, friction, democratic orientation, spirit, insecurity, formality, apathy, tension, competition and hostility dimensions of family environment ; male and female senior secondary students do not differ from one another on warmth, hindrance, control, cohesiveness, compulsion, acculturation, conformity, reward and neglect dimensions of family environment; mental health of male senior secondary students is positively related to warmth, humanistic thrust, empathy, cohesiveness, democratic orientation, spirit, acculturation, competition and reward dimensions of family environment while it is negatively related to tension and hostility dimensions of family environment ; mental health of male senior secondary students is not related to hindrance, control, friction, compulsion, insecurity, formality, apathy, conformity and neglect dimensions of family environment; mental health of female senior secondary students is positively related to democratic orientation, spirit and competition dimensions of family environment; mental health of female senior secondary students is not related to warmth, humanistic thrust , hindrance, control, empathy, cohesiveness, friction, compulsion, insecurity, formality, apathy, acculturation, conformity, hostility, reward and neglect dimensions of family environment.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Family Environment, Senior Secondary Students.*

INTRODUCTION:

Mental health is an integral and important part of health. It refers to our cognitive, behavioural and emotional wellbeing. Mental health is defined in many ways. In fact, there is no globally accepted description of what constitutes mental health. Mental health can affect daily life, including physical health and relationships. According to the American Psychiatric Association (1994), mental health refers

to mental disorder patterns of behavioural or psychological symptoms that impact multiple life areas and / or create distress for the person experiencing these symptoms. So a good mental health definition includes how people think, how they feel and what they do. World health organization (2004) suggests that nearly half the world's population are affected by mental illness with an impact on their self - esteem, relationship and ability to function in everyday life. An individual emotional health can also impact physical health and poor mental health can lead to various problems. Bhatia (1982) considers mental health as the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily living. The 1999 surgeon General's Report on Mental Health defined mental health as "successful performance of mental function resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationship with other people, and the ability to change and to cope with adversity." So the Psychological factor depends on the whole body and particularly on one organ, the brain, the seat of individual consciousness and four basic seamlessly interconnected sets of function i.e. sense, thought, emotion and impulse. In a mentally healthy person, the four functions i.e. sense, thought, emotion and impulse are in balance, mediating and interacting with more complex functions like memory, imagination, thoughts and emotions. Senior secondary students are adolescents and have undulated mood, they face emotional agitation, stress and strain. During adolescence, well being decreases and psychological problem increases. Adolescence is a transitional phase in human development during which individual undergo pervasive biological, psychological and emotional changes (Steinberg, 2005; Yurgelun-Todd, 2007). The family interactions play an important role in the development of adolescents and the healthy functioning of these interactions enhances mental health of the adolescents. Researchers have proved that both overall family system functioning and parental behaviours are positively related to adolescents well being (Grotevant, 1998; Karavasilis et al.,2003; Muris et al., 2004; Wolfradt et al., (2002). Bandhana and Sharma (2010) reported that boys and girls higher secondary students differ from one another on mental health. Studies have revealed that there were no significant difference in mental health of rural and urban students (Bartwal, 2014). Family environment contribute positively to cognitive well being of the children. Numerous studies reveals that youngsters growing up in families with a happy, harmonious parental marriage experience fewer problems and a higher well being than those from marital distressed families (Spruijitt and De Goede 1997). Anand(1989) reveals that mental health of secondary students is positively related to occupational status of parents. The nature of the family environment (e.g., level of cohesion, degree of conflict and organization) is strongly associated with adolescent mental health (Siddique and D'Arcy, 1984). Studies on mental health and family environment proves that mental health is significantly related to family environment (Choudhary 2013; Barmola 2013). In this study an attempt has been made to explore the relationship between mental health and family environment among senior secondary school students.

OBJECTIVES:

The present study has been conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To compare mental health among male and female senior secondary school students.
2. To compare family environment among male and female senior secondary school students.*
3. To study the relationship between mental health and family environment among male senior secondary school students.*

4. To study the relationship between mental health and family environment among female senior secondary school students.*
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*These objectives were achieved with reference of 20 dimensions of family environment i.e. warmth, Humanistic thrust, Hindrance, Control, Empathy, Cohesiveness, Friction, Democratic orientation, Compulsion, Spirit, Insecurity, Formality, Apathy, Tension, Acculturation, Conformity, Competition, Hostility, Reward, Neglect.

HYPOTHESES:

To achieve the above mentioned objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

- 1- There is no significant difference in the mental health among male and female senior secondary school students.
- 2- There is no significant difference in the family environment among male and female senior secondary school students.*
- 3- There is no significant relationship between mental health and family environment among male senior secondary school students.*
- 4- There is no significant relationship between mental health and family environment among female senior secondary school students. *

METHODOLOGY:

Descriptive method of research has been employed in the present study. Sample for the study consists of 121 senior secondary school students (58 male and 63 female) of Colonelganj Intermediate College and Arya Kanya Intermediate College, Allahabad. Mental Health Battery developed by A.K. Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta and Family Environment Inventory developed by K.S. Misra were used as tools for the study. t-ratio and product moment co-efficient of correlation have been calculated for the analysis of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

TABLE NO. 1

Mean, S.D. and t-ratio showing difference in mental health among male and female senior secondary school students.

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio
Mental Health	Male	58	81.40	9.55	1.93*
	Female	63	77.92	10.10	

* Significant at .05 level

*These hypotheses will be tested with reference to each of the 20 dimensions of family environment.

Observation of table 1 shows that the mean mental health score of male senior secondary students is 81.40 and S.D. is 9.55, while mean mental health score of female senior secondary students

is 77.92 and S.D. is 10.10. t-ratio is found to be 1.93, which is significant at .05 level. Therefore, null hypothesis that 'There is no significant difference in the mental health among male and female senior secondary school students.' can be rejected. It means that mental health of male senior secondary students is better than that of female senior secondary students. This may be due to the reason that girls are pressurised by their family in adolescent stage and they have fear to take new risk. Male students are mostly physically fit and Physical health affects mental health, they always try new think and take risk and are mostly not pressurised by their family. Similarly Gupta and Kumar (2010) found that senior secondary male students were better than female students.

TABLE NO. 2

Mean, S.D. and t-ratio showing difference in family environment among male and female senior secondary school students.

S.No.	Dimensions of F.E.I	Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio
1	Warmth	Male	58	15.64	4.38	1.27
		Female	63	14.48	5.43	
2	Humanistic thrust	Male	58	13.91	3.81	5.19**
		Female	63	10.33	3.81	
3	Hindrance	Male	58	6.12	3.21	0.21
		Female	63	6.24	2.85	
4	Control	Male	58	8.20	3.78	0.23
		Female	63	8.38	4.86	
5	Empathy	Male	58	16.14	4.56	2.82**
		Female	63	13.43	5.88	
6	Cohesiveness	Male	58	15.69	3.90	0.84
		Female	63	15.00	4.98	
7	Friction	Male	58	4.36	3.45	2.21*
		Female	63	6.24	5.67	
8	Democratic orientation	Male	58	14.97	5.16	2.55**
		Female	63	12.62	4.8	
9	Compulsion	Male	58	9.84	3.75	0.39
		Female	63	10.14	4.5	
10	Spirit	Male	58	17.07	4.2	3.25**
		Female	63	14.05	5.91	
11	Insecurity	Male	58	5.29	3.87	1.66*
		Female	63	6.57	4.56	
12	Formality	Male	58	14.48	3.66	4.26**
		Female	63	10.86	5.25	
13	Apathy	Male	58	5.71	4.44	2.48**
		Female	63	7.67	4.08	
14	Tension	Male	58	3.38	3.3	2.49**
		Female	63	5.10	4.23	
15	Acculturation	Male	58	15.95	5.37	1.42
		Female	63	14.67	4.47	
16	Conformity	Male	58	12.34	4.2	1.19

		Female	63	11.38	4.59	
17	Competition	Male	58	16.22	5.07	2.38**
		Female	63	14.10	4.59	
18	Hostility	Male	58	4.83	2.28	1.84*
		Female	63	6.10	4.89	
19	Reward	Male	58	13.47	5.10	1.03
		Female	63	12.38	6.45	
20	Neglect	Male	58	5.60	4.2	1.30
		Female	63	7.48	10.62	

**/* Significant at .01/.05 level.

Observation of table 2 reveals that the value of t-ratio showing difference in various dimensions of family environment i.e. humanistic thrust (5.19), empathy (2.82), democratic orientation (2.55), Spirit (3.25), formality (4.26), apathy (2.48), tension (2.49) and competition (2.38) among male and female senior secondary students are significant at .01 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be inferred that male and female senior secondary students differ from one another on perception of humanistic thrust, empathy, democratic orientation, spirit, formality, apathy, tension and competition dimensions of family environment. It can also be observed from the table that as compared to female students, male students perceive more humanistic thrust, empathy, democratic orientation, spirit, formality and competition in family environment. This means that male senior secondary students perceive more parents passionate interest in child behaviour, tendency to lay aside their own way of experiencing and perceiving reality and preferring to sense and respond to the experiences and perception of children, individual with needs, desires and respect for his rights, existence of courage, vigour, enthusiasm and liveliness, conditions which demand attention to rules and conventions, absence of interest in the welfare of children, existence of uneasiness, encourage children to give better performance in various activities in family. Table 2 also point out that the value of t-ratio showing difference in various dimensions of family environment i.e. friction (2.21), insecurity (1.66) and hostility (1.84) among male and female senior secondary students are significant at .05 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be inferred that male and female senior secondary students differ from one another on friction, insecurity and hostility dimensions of family environment. It is also evident from the table that female senior secondary students perceive more insecurity, apathy and tension in family environment as compared to their male counterparts. This means that male and female senior secondary students differ from one another on parents, occurrence of difference of opinion leading to arguments and quarrelling, tendency of children to be afraid and feel unsafe, tendency to be aggressive and use punishment in family.

Table 2 also reveals that the value of t-ratio showing difference in various dimensions of family environment i.e. warmth (1.27), hindrance (0.21), control (0.23), cohesiveness (0.84), compulsion (0.39), acculturation (1.42), conformity (1.19), reward (1.03) and neglect (1.30) among male and female senior secondary students. These values are not significant at .05 level . So the corresponding null hypothesis is accepted, and it can be inferred that male and female senior secondary students do not differ from one another on warmth, hindrance, control, cohesiveness, compulsion, acculturation, conformity, reward and neglect dimensions of family environment. This means that male and female senior secondary students perceive similar parents unconditional positive regard. It combines the

elements of caring, non possessive love prizing and liking, efforts to obstruct children's activities, tendency to impose restrictions on children in order to discipline them, tendency of family members to remain friendly to each other, tendency to force children to do as they desire, demands for cultural assimilation, desires and expectations for work, use symbolic reinforces to increase probability of occurrence of behaviours, behaviour to ignore children in family. The present finding draw support from the finding of Kaur, Dhillon and Kaur(2015). They also reported no significant difference in family environment of boys and girls.

TABLE NO. 3

Values of coefficient of correlation between mental health and family environment among male senior secondary students.

S.No.	Dimensions of Family environment Inventory	R
1	Warmth	0.481*
2	Humanistic thrust	0.316**
3	Hindrance	-0.164
4	Control	0.009
5	Empathy	0.471*
6	Cohesiveness	0.348*
7	Friction	-0.206
8	Democratic orientation	0.625*
9	Compulsion	0.192
10	Spirit	0.491*
11	Insecurity	-0.064
12	Formality	0.142
13	Apathy	-0.159
14	Tension	-0.362*
15	Acculturation	0.482*
16	Conformity	-0.017
17	Competition	0.545*
18	Hostility	-0.368*
19	Reward	0.363*
20	Neglect	0.113

*/** Significant at .01/.05 level

Observation of table no. 3 reveals that the value of coefficient of correlation between mental health and various dimensions of family environment i.e. warmth (0.481), empathy (0.471), cohesiveness (0.348), democratic orientation (0.625), spirit (0.491), tension (-0.362), acculturation (0.482), competition (0.545), hostility (-0.368) and reward (0.363) are significant at .01 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis is rejected and it can be inferred that mental health is positively related to warmth, empathy, cohesiveness, and democratic orientation, spirit, acculturation, competition and reward dimensions of family environment while negatively related to hostility and tension dimensions of family environment among male senior secondary students. This means that mental health is positively related to parents, unconditional positive regard, tendency to lay aside their own way of experiences and perceiving reality of children, child as view as a unique orientation, desires and respect for his rights, existence of courage, vigour, enthusiasm, liveliness and uneasiness, for cultural assimilation, encourage children to give better performance in various activities, symbolic reinforces to

strengthen probability of occurrence of behaviour in family , while mental health is negatively related to parents, existence of uneasiness, tendency to be aggressive and use punishment in family.

Table 3 also reveals that the value of coefficient of correlation between mental health and various dimensions of family environment i.e. hindrance (-0.164), control (0.009), friction (-0.206), compulsion (0.192), insecurity (-0.064), formality (0.142), apathy (-0.159), conformity (-0.017) and neglect (0.113) are not significant at .05 level. So the corresponding null hypothesis can accepted and it can be inferred that mental health is not related to hindrance, control, friction, compulsion, insecurity, formality, apathy, and conformity and neglect dimensions of family environment among senior secondary students. This means that mental health is not related to parents, efforts to obstruct children’s activities, tendency of imposing restrictions on children in order to discipline them, occurrence of difference of opinion leading to arguments and quarrelling, tendency to force children to as they desire, tendency of children to be afraid and feel unsafe, conditions which demand attention to rules and conventions, absence of interest in the welfare of children, to work desires and expectations, behaviour to ignore children in family. Similarly Kaur, Dhillon and Kaur(2015) reported that mental health is not related to family environment among adolescents.

TABLE NO. 4

Values of coefficient of correlation between mental health and family environment among female senior secondary students.

1	Dimensions of Family environment Inventory	R
1	Warmth	-0.005
2	Humanistic thrust	0.072
3	Hindrance	-0.165
4	Control	0.139
5	Empathy	0.206
6	Cohesiveness	-0.043
7	Friction	-0.172
8	Democratic orientation	0.249*
9	Compulsion	-0.162
10	Spirit	0.288*
11	Insecurity	-0.069
12	Formality	0.154
13	Apathy	-0.097
14	Tension	-0.287*
15	Acculturation	0.143
16	Conformity	0.108
17	Competition	0.241*
18	Hostility	-0.150
19	Reward	0.120
20	Neglect	0.059

*significant at .05 level

Observation of table no. 4 reveals that the value of coefficient of correlation between mental health and dimensions of family environment i.e. democratic orientation (0.249), spirit (0.288), tension (-0.287) and competition (0.241) are significant at .05 level, so the corresponding null hypothesis is rejected, and it can be inferred that mental health is positively related to democratic orientation, spirit,

tension and competition dimension while negatively related to tension dimension of family environment among senior secondary students. This means that mental health is positively related to parents, view of a child as a unique orientation, existence of courage, vigour, enthusiasm and liveliness, encourage children to give better performance in various activities in family while mental health is negatively related to parents, existence of uneasiness in family. The present finding draws support from the finding of Sathyabama and Eljo (2014) also reported that positive relationship between mental health and family environment among adolescent girls.

Table no 4 also point out that the value of coefficient of correlation between mental health and various dimensions of family environment i.e. warmth (-0.005), humanistic thrust (0.072), hindrance (-0.165), control (0.139), empathy (0.206), cohesiveness(-0.043), friction (-0.172), compulsion (-0.162), insecurity (-0.069), formality (0.154), apathy(-0.097), acculturation (0.143), conformity (0.108), hostility (-0.150), reward(0.120) and neglect (0.059) are not significant at .05 level, so the corresponding null hypothesis can be accepted and it can be inferred that mental health is not related to warmth, humanistic thrust, hindrance, control, empathy, cohesiveness, friction, compulsion, insecurity, formality, apathy, acculturation, conformity, hostility, reward and neglect dimensions of family environment among senior secondary students. This means that mental health is not related to parents, the unconditional positive regard, absence of interest in the welfare of children, efforts to obstruct children's activities, tendency to impose restrictions on children in order to discipline them, tendency to lay aside their own way of experiencing and perceiving reality and preferring to sense and respond to the experiences and perception of children, tendency of family members to remain friendly to one another, occurrence of differences of opinion leading to arguments and quarrelling, tendency to force children to do as they desire, tendency of children to be afraid and feel unsafe, conditions which demand attention to rules and regulations, absence of interest in the welfare of children, demands for cultural assimilation, desires and expectations for work, tendency to be aggressive and use punishment, behaviour to ignore children in family.

Thus, it can be concluded that mental health of male senior secondary students is more than that of female senior secondary students; male and female senior secondary students differ from one another on humanistic thrust, empathy, friction, democratic orientation, spirit, insecurity, formality, apathy, tension, competition and hostility dimensions of family environment; mental health of male senior secondary students is related to warmth, humanistic thrust, empathy, cohesiveness, democratic orientation, spirit, tension, acculturation, competition, hostility and reward dimensions of family environment; mental health of female senior secondary students is related to democratic orientation, spirit, tension and competition dimensions of family environment. On the basis of findings of the study it can be implied that the family interactions play an important role in the development of adolescents. These interactions and interpersonal relationships are seen between parents living in household. The healthy functioning of these interaction patterns enhances mental health of the adolescence. So parents play a key role in providing a sound mental health for their children.

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