

Gender Sensitivity Among Adolescents in Relation to Their Family Values and School Environment

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Abstract: Adolescence is a stage during which the formation of gender-based behavior is largely influenced by their everyday activities throughout life such as family, school, and various sources of media. The present study is intended to study the relationship of family values and school environment with gender sensitivity of adolescents. A sample of 122 adolescents from 4 government schools was selected randomly from two districts i.e. Ambala and Panchkula of Haryana. Data was gathered from these adolescents on three scales i.e. gender sensitivity, family values, and school environment. The result revealed that family values and the school environment of adolescents significantly correlated with their gender sensitivity. However, no significant difference was found in the gender sensitivity of adolescents belonging to the Ambala and Panchkula districts.

Key Words: Gender, adolescents, family, and school.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Adolescence is defined as a stage of development that replicates certain biological, cognitive, and socio-emotional changes in an individual. It is a transitional stage that promotes an individual from childhood to adolescence with some changed behavior and also produces several socio-emotional problems sometimes results in creating an impediment for them in adjusting to socially confirmed behavior and values by the society. During this stage, he or she starts forming gender-based behavior. Gender refers to socially created roles, behavior, and feelings that society deems appropriate for men and women. These roles vary from society to society and can be changed. The formation of these roles is deeply influenced by individual everyday activities throughout life such as family, school, and various sources of media. A baby is born as either male or female. They are further taught by family members, peer groups, and schools to adopt appropriate norms and behavior according to their gender. The adaption of gender-specific roles leads to gender-based discrimination. A girl is expected to play a meek and less affluent role as compared to a boy's right from their childhood. Discrimination against girls begins before her birth and flourishes in every aspect of her life. Gender sensitivity is concerned with increasing sensitivity to the implications of gender inequality and identifying the problems of gender discrimination among adolescents. In fact, as a child moves from childhood into adolescence, they are exposed to various factors that influence their behavior towards gender roles. This behavior is mostly learned within the family first. Parents play a primary role in influencing gender role development during the initial years. The traditional views regarding gender roles still believe that women are best suited for domestic tasks, such as childcare and household chores, while men should be the primary breadwinners (Halpern & Jenkins, 2015). After family, the school also plays a major role in gender socialization, by reinforcing the traditional values, attitudes, and notions of the society through various teaching-learning practices (Kuruvilla & Thasniya, 2015). These two levels of societal interaction play an important role in depicting gender sensitivity among students; hence it is necessary to relate these interactions with gender sensitivity among students. Thus, it is important to assess the gender sensitivity among secondary school students in relation to their family values, and school environment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Dhar, Jain, and Jayachandran (2018) found that when a parent holds a discriminatory attitude, his or her child is about 11 percentage points more likely to hold the same perception and mother's influence on developing children's gender attitudes is found to be more than fathers. Halpern and Jenkins (2017) found that mother and father behavior were better predictors of children's role attitude than parent's ideology and the acquisition of knowledge about gender stereotypes among children was mainly due to the mother and father's unique roles. Obiunu (2013) found that discrimination among students was due to parent's attitudes towards gender sensitivity and it was also found that teachers were very positive in their behavior towards students and do not encourage gender insensitivity. Yuden, Chuki, and Dorji (2020) concluded that teachers were not gender-sensitive in pedagogical practices and never made a conscious effort to address gender equality in the classroom. Patil (2016) concluded there is no specific bias towards the selection

of candidates for school programs, both genders are given equal status and role in performance in school, and students of both genders are encouraged and provided equal opportunities to learn and practice self-defense techniques. Gray and Leith (2004) studied the concerns of teachers on gender inequality in the classrooms. The data found that teachers emphasized their preference to address their students as individuals and not regarding gender. In brief, teachers did not wish to generalize and divide their students into two groups based on gender. The gender-based image provided by a family and school is considered an important factor to enhance or degrade gender sensitivity among students. Therefore, it is important to assess gender sensitivity among students in relation to their family values and school environment

3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The main purpose is to study gender sensitivity among adolescents in relation to their family values and school environment

4. HYPOTHESES:

- There exists no significant relationship between gender sensitivity and family values of adolescents of Haryana.
- There exists no significant relationship between gender sensitivity and school environment of adolescents of Haryana.
- There exists no significant difference in gender sensitivity of adolescents of Ambala and Panchkula.

5. METHODOLOGY :

A descriptive survey method was used for conducting the present research study. To measure gender sensitivity, family values, and school environment of adolescents, already developed and validated scales by investigator herself on all above three variables were used. Scores obtained by students were assessed using SPSS version 16 for Product MOMENT CORRELATION AND REGRESSION ANALYSIS.

5.1 SAMPLE:

The population of the study consisted of adolescents studying in government schools of Haryana. The two districts i.e. Ambala and Panchkula were randomly selected. Multistage sampling technique was employed for selecting a total number of 122 adolescents from 4 government schools selected randomly from two districts i.e. Ambala and Panchkula. Data was gathered from these adolescents on three scales i.e. gender sensitivity, family values and school environment.

5. ANALYSIS:

- There exists no significant relationship between gender sensitivity and family values of adolescents.

Correlations

		Gender Sensitivity	Family Values
Gender Sensitivity	Pearson Correlation	1	.391**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	122	122
Family Values	Pearson Correlation	.391**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	122	122

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table reveals that the product-moment coefficient of correlation (r) between gender sensitivity and family values of adolescents studying in Haryana is .391 which predicts that there is a significant relationship between these two variables. The p-value .000 was also found to be significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the null hypothesis “There will be no significant relationship between gender sensitivity and family values of adolescents” is rejected. Therefore it is concluded there that there exists a significant positive relationship between gender sensitivity and family values of adolescents studying in Haryana. It can easily be concluded that those adolescents who have high gender sensitivity are also higher in gender-based family values as well or vice versa. It could be because the family values of these students played an important in socializing their children about equal gender roles or vice versa.

- There exists no significant relationship between gender sensitivity and school environment of adolescents.

Correlations

		Gender Sensitivity	School Environment
Gender Sensitivity	Pearson Correlation	1	.221*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.014
	N	122	122
School Environment	Pearson Correlation	.221*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	
	N	122	122

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table reveals that the product-moment coefficient of correlation (r) between gender sensitivity and school environment of adolescents studying in Haryana is .221 which predicts that there is a significant relationship between these two variables. The p-value .014 was also found to be significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis “There will be no significant relationship between gender sensitivity and school environment of adolescents” is rejected. Therefore it is further concluded there that there exists a significant positive relationship between gender sensitivity and the school environment of adolescents studying in Haryana. It can easily be concluded that those adolescents who have high gender sensitivity are also higher in gender-based school environments as well or vice versa. It could be because the teachers and other educational staff may be playing an important role in fostering the ideas, beliefs, and values about equal gender roles among their students. Another reason could be that the efforts were being made by the school administration to minimize gender-based discriminatory practices in the schools by providing equal chances to both genders in different activities organized by schools. The findings are also supported by Patil (2016), and Gray and Leith (2004) who also found that school plays the foremost role in developing gender-neutral image among their students.

- There exists no significant difference in gender sensitivity of adolescents of Ambala and Panchkula.

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Gender Sensitivity	Ambala	377	142.65	24.20	3.073	122	-.438	.664
	Panchkula	379	144.30	17.08	2.206			

Table reveals that t-ratio was found to be statistically non-significant (t=-0.438) for the difference between the gender sensitivity of adolescents of Ambala and Panchkula studying in Haryana at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated t-value was found to be less than +/-1.96 which further indicates that the adolescents belonging to Ambala and Panchkula do not differ significantly in mean scores of gender sensitivity. Hence, it can be predicted that adolescents belonging to Ambala and Panchkula were equally gendered sensitive. Therefore null hypothesis “There exists no significant difference in gender sensitivity of adolescents of Ambala and Panchkula” is accepted. Close values of the mean of both samples also support the deduction of the present research study, as not much difference is seen in the means value of adolescents of Ambala and Panchkula.

7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

Based on analysis and interpretation of data, the followings findings are derived from the research study.

- There was significant and positive relationship between gender sensitivity and family values of adolescents.
- There was significant and positive relationship between gender sensitivity and school environment of adolescents.
- There was no significant difference in gender sensitivity of adolescents of Ambala and Panchkula.

8. CONCLUSION:

The formation of gender-based roles among adolescents is deeply influenced by their everyday activities throughout life such as family, school, and various sources of media. They are taught by family members, peer groups, and schools to adopt appropriate norms and behavior according to their gender. The adaption of gender-specific roles leads to gender-based discrimination. Gender sensitivity is concerned with increasing sensitivity to the implications of gender inequality and identifying the problems of gender discrimination among adolescents. The study concluded that there exists a significant and positive correlation between gender sensitivity and family values/ school environment among adolescents studying in schools of Haryana.

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