



APPROVAL MOTIVE AND PERCEIVED FAMILY ENVIRONMENT VIS-À-VIS CAREER AND FAMILY VALUES – A STUDY ON FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS AT KOLKATA

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the present investigation is to study the approval motive, perceived family environment and career-family values as expressed by female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata. A group of 100 female college students (50 from nuclear & 50 from joint families) between the ages 20 to 25 years were selected as sample following the random sampling technique. A General Information Schedule, Approval Motive Questionnaire, Perceived Family Environment Questionnaire and Career-family Values Questionnaire were used as tools. Findings revealed that approval motive, perceived family environment and family values were higher among female college students belonging to joint families than that of nuclear families. In case of career values, female college students belonging to nuclear families scored significantly higher than that of the students belonging to joint families. Furthermore, a significant positive correlation was observed between approval motive and family values & perceived family environment and family values as well as a significant negative correlation was observed between approval motive and career values and also perceived family environment and career values of female college students residing at Kolkata city.

Key words: Approval motive, family environment, career & family values.

INTRODUCTION

The family is the basic unit of society and the oldest social institution of all (De Frain & Asay, 2007). Eliot and Gray (2000) stated that all family setups bear a strong relationship that influences the life patterns of their members. Because children's lives are centred initially within their families, the family environment becomes the primary agent of socialization. Family is regarded as one of the most significant socialization institutions for the child, and therefore this is essential to evaluate and to understand the value system of young people, so that values are not oriented only towards the egoistic aims set by parents but the understanding the significance of the role of a family in upbringing of children. Youngblade et al., (2007) have reported that negative relationships and interactions between parents and adolescents may result in conflict and there is probability that adolescents are likely to engage in risk behaviours during adolescence and later life. Assessment of family environment is usually performed based on dimensions such as cohesion, hierarchy, support, and conflict (Björnberg & Nicholson, 2007; Teodoro et al., 2009). Interactions among family

members are termed as transactions and can be positive or negative. Healthy family environment results in positive transactions; while negative environment leads to negative transactions. The family environment involves the circumstances and social climate conditions within families. Among the family characteristics that are relevant to the study of psychological dimensions, those related to the family environment or climate are highlighted, i.e. the individual's perception of the quality of relationships within the family (Teodoro, Allgayer, & Land, 2009). Assessment of family environment is usually performed based on dimensions such as cohesion, hierarchy, support, and conflict (Björnberg & Nicholson, 2007; Teodoro et al., 2009). Family support is an important protection factor for adolescents (Orcasita & Uribe, 2010). In this regard, studies have described the different representations of adolescents based on the perception they have of the way they relate at home (Scarpati, Pertuz & Silva, 2014). Poor family environment in terms of parental hostility, rejection and inconsistencies can all contribute to psychological problems viz., anxiety, stress, neuroticism, depression and many others (Sharma, Verma & Malhotra, 2008). The family environments can differ in many ways, for example, on the basis of socio-economic level and parenting practices (Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman, 2013). In recent decades, there has been accumulation of evidence suggesting the association between dysfunctional family relationships and adjustment problems in childhood and adolescence (Chedid, Romo, & Chagnard, 2009). Buehler and Gerard (2013) described the importance of family as a key socialization context for children as they move through early adolescence. Within this complex socialization context there are potential family risk factors that may create adjustment problems for adolescents.

UNESCO in Thailand (1992) divides the family setup into five categories in which joint and nuclear are the important family setups in Indian social perspective. In India it is common to find the "Joint family" in existence. Such families consist of a patriarch (or head of the family) his wife and their married offspring with their families all living in one house sharing vital functions together. Nuclear Family is the family setup which consists of two generations. 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.

Approval motivation is defined as the desire to produce positive perceptions in others and the incentive to acquire the approval of others as well as the desire to avoid disapproval (Martin, 1984; Shulman & Silverman, 1974). Dependence on the approval of others should make it difficult to assert one's independence, and so the approval-motivated person should be susceptible to social influence, compliant, and conforming. Normative social influence is a type of social influence leading to conformity. The power of normative social influence stems from the human identity as a social being, with a need for companionship and association (Aronson et. al., 2013). Normative social influence involves a change in behaviour that is deemed necessary in order to fit in with a particular group (Reiss, 2012). The need for a positive relationship with the people around leads us to conformity (DeWall et. al., 2011). 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. Research also highlights the influence of appraisals by significant others (Cole et al., 2001), as well as reflected appraisals (i.e., perceptions of approval from others), on children's self-concept (Harter, 1998; Harter et al., 1998). Specifically, consistent with research indicating that females place more investment in relationships as a source of self-definition and psychological well-being (Cross & Madson, 1997) and have more social-evaluative concerns (La Greca & Lopez, 1998) than do males. Moreover, children whose goal is to avoid disapproval may place others' needs over their own in an effort to please others. This self-

neglect may lead to emotional distress (Fritz & Helgeson, 1998). Lalwani, Shavitt, and Johnson (2006) reported that impression management was higher among collectivists than individualists.

Career values are thought to be important considerations in career decision-making and development theory, yet there is little research linking how career values might operate within the theoretical frameworks of career development theory. People seek to meet basic human needs through involvement in work and want to accomplish through involvement in work by utilizing the construct of career, or work, values (Super, 1995). Career values are shared interpretations of what people want and expect from work (Nord, Brief, Atieh, & Doherty, 1990). These values are important in helping to understand the meaning of work and why people work. Values have been found to influence career and other life roles decisions considerably (Ravlin et. al., 1987; Judge et. al., 1992; Knoop, 1994). Extrinsic values appear to be more important than intrinsic values in the career choice of Asian Americans. When used in this manner in a study on the family influences on career development of South Asians, the results indicated an unexpected relationship between values and career choice for the sample (Sandhu, 2011). Whiston and Keller (2004) found in their review that for adolescents, higher occupational expectations are associated with family environments that are supportive and where parents have high expectations for the adolescents. A young adult's choice or indecision can be alternatively conceptualized as the outcome of a larger set of transactions between the person and the family. They also believe that these transactions collectively represent either a successful or unsuccessful transformation in family functioning. They theorize that career indecision is indicative of inadequate parent-child separation and the family's failure to achieve an appropriate structural change (McCubbin et al. 2007). Career values are thought to be important considerations in career decision-making and career growth. Career values relate to and influence many other aspects of career development including interests, attitudes, goals, beliefs, ethics, standards, and decision-making criteria (Dose, 1997). Sandhu (2011) found that conflict with father was indicative of the link between parents' career expectations and the young adult's career choice.

Family values are the moral and ethical principles and beliefs traditionally taught or reinforced within a family which are held to promote the sound functioning of the family, give great importance to the traditional roles of members within a family and tendency to prioritize what is beneficial for family over other facets of life. Family values, that is, the reliance of family members on a set of norms of reciprocity within the couple and between parents and children, are likely to influence the need and desire to resort to the market or to society and the welfare state for insurance. Family values and family ties are important institutions which, among others, affect various economic decisions. Human capital investment, as well as many other labour market and credit market choices - such as type of job, wages and career opportunities, home ownership and financial wealth - are taken within the family and strongly depend on family values. Stronger family values appear to be systematically related to existing differences in household outcomes vis-à-vis labour market participation, total hours worked, home production, as well as less preferences for welfare assistance and social insurance (Bertrand and Schoar, 2006; Algan and Cahuc, 2007; Fernández and Fogli, 2006; Burda et al., 2008; Alesina and Giuliano, 2010). Transmission of values from one generation to another involves young people's voluntary acceptance of values as important for them. Voluntary accepted and internalized values allow a self-regulated action of young people. Transmission of family values should be seen as a two-way process: child's perception of parent's values, and, secondly, acceptance, or rejection of values (Knafo & Schwartz, 2009). Further it can be said that culture is a powerful context that shapes societal and familial values. Families do not exist in isolation and family dynamics are

often best interpreted in the context of their societal and cultural background. Unlike the western society, which puts impetus on “individualism”, the Indian society is “collectivistic” in that it promotes interdependence and co-operation, with the family forming the focal point of this social structure. One important dimension of Asian and particularly Indian culture that affects family functioning is collectivism (Avasthi, 2010, 2011; Desai, 2007).

Considering the above, the present investigation had the following aims and objectives on the basis of certain selected variables- perceived family environment and approval motive as independent variables&career values as well as family values as dependent variables:

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the approval motive as expressed by female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata.
- To study the family environment as perceived by female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata.
- To study the career and family values as perceived by female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata.

HYPOTHESES:

Hypothesis I: Female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of their approval motive under the categories of a) Normative Behaviour, b) Social Conformity, c) Positive Self-presentation, d) Defensiveness, e) Dependency, f) Social Responsiveness and g) Social Approval.

Hypothesis II: Female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of their perceived family environment under the categories of a) cohesion, b) personal achievement and c) family organization.

Hypothesis III: Female college students belonging to both nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of their career and family values.

Hypothesis IV: The independent variables of the study would correlate significantly with each other as well as with dependent variables for female college students at Kolkata.

METHOD

SAMPLE

A group of 100 female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families (50 each) residing in Kolkata city was randomly selected. Participants belonging to 20 to 25 years are considered for the present study. All are under graduates and their monthly family income ranges from Rs. 25,000/- to 50,000/-.

TOOLS USED

- 1) **General Information Schedule:** Incorporating name, address, contact number, age, educational qualification, type of family structures and number of family members were included.
- 2) **Approval Motive Questionnaire:** The Approval Motive Questionnaire was designed by Tripathi and Tripathi (1980). The scale contains 72 items with three alternatives (Yes, No and Undecided). The test-retest reliability was found .82, and .92 were establish by split-half method. It intends to measure the seven major aspects of approval motive, viz. normative behaviour, social conformity, positive self-presentation, defensiveness, dependency, social responsiveness and social conformity.

3) **Perceived Family Environment Questionnaire:** It consist of 60 statements answerable in a five point scale viz., Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD); where high score indicates good family environment and vice-versa. There are three domains viz. cohesion, personal achievement and family organization. The odd-even split-half reliability is .84. The Cronbach Alpha is found to be .78.

4) **Career-family Values Questionnaire:** This scale is developed by Dr. S. Tanwar and Dr. K. Singh (1988). It consists of 40 items divided into two sections viz., career values and family values. The split-half reliability between two halves of the scale for career and family values are 0.86 and 0.84 respectively.

ADMINISTRATION, SCORING AND STATISTICAL TREATMENT

General Information Schedule, Approval Motive Questionnaire, Perceived Family Environment Questionnaire and Career-family Values Questionnaire were administered to the selected group of subjects by giving proper instructions. Data were collected and properly scrutinized. Scoring was done with the help of the standard scoring key. Tabulation was done for each group and each test separately. Mean, S. D. and Pearson 'r' and Student t- test were applied.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The present study intends to find out the nature of approval motive, perceived family environment and career-family values differences as perceived by under graduate female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families living in Kolkata city.

Table-1: Findings from Descriptive Statistics

Variable		Factors	Family Structure	N	Mean	S. D.
Independent	Approval Motive (A.M)	Normative Behaviour	Nuclear	50	6.66	0.79
			Joint	50	8.66	0.63
		Social Conformity	Nuclear	50	7.84	0.86
			Joint	50	9.00	0.61
		Positive Self-presentation	Nuclear	50	7.46	0.76
			Joint	50	8.36	0.59
		Defensiveness	Nuclear	50	7.30	0.68
			Joint	50	8.30	0.84
		Dependency	Nuclear	50	6.08	1.05
			Joint	50	7.30	0.84
		Social Responsiveness	Nuclear	50	4.70	0.79
			Joint	50	6.62	0.63
		Social Approval	Nuclear	50	15.14	1.38
			Joint	50	17.54	1.07
		Total Score	Nuclear	50	55.18	3.41
			Joint	50	65.78	3.91
	Perceived Family Environment (P.F.E)	Cohesion	Nuclear	50	67.98	5.72
			Joint	50	82.06	7.76
		Personal Achievement	Nuclear	50	66.38	5.96
			Joint	50	79.74	7.97
		Family Organization	Nuclear	50	62.20	7.49
			Joint	50	77.66	8.09
		Total Score	Nuclear	50	197.04	19.43
			Joint	50	239.46	23.73

Dependent	Career Values (C.V.)	Nuclear	50	74.20	7.47
		Joint	50	67.80	4.65
	Family Values (F.V.)	Nuclear	50	54.32	6.53
		Joint	50	85.22	4.42

Score range of A.M.: 20 to 100;

Score range of P.F.E.: 60 to 300;

Score range of C.V. & F.V.: 0 to 72

Table-1 represents mean & standard deviation values of independent and dependent variables on both types of family structures, that is, nuclear and joint families. In order to find out significant differences, z- test has been conducted and the results are given below.

Table-2: Student t-test values & results of female college students for testing the significance of mean difference between nuclear and joint families according to these Independent & Dependent variables

Variables	Factors	t-test	Sig.(2-tailed) [p-value]	Results	Remarks
Approval Motive (A.M.)	Normative Behaviour	13.94	.000	p value<alpha value (p<.01)	Statistically significant, H _a is accepted
	Social Conformity	7.76	.000		
	Positive Self-presentation	6.57	.000		
	Defensiveness	6.56	.000		
	Dependency	6.43	.000		
	Social Responsiveness	13.40	.000		
	Social Approval	9.68	.000		
	Total A. M. Score	14.43	.000		
Perceived Family Environment (P.F.E)	Cohesion	10.32	.000	p value<alpha value (p<.01)	Statistically significant, H _a is accepted
	Personal Achievement	9.49	.000		
	Family Organization	9.91	.000		
	Total P. F.E. Score	9.78	.000		
Career Values		5.14	.000	p value<alpha value (p<.01)	Statistically significant, H _a is accepted
Family Values		27.69	.000		

Table-2 represents the t-test values for all the variables under study to test the significant mean difference between two types of family structures. From the above tables, it is seen that female college students belonging to joint families expressed very high approval motive whereas those belonging to nuclear families expressed high level of approval motives. Children in joint families are often indulged and overprotected, which encourages child's dependence on the mother and other family members. They feel greater pressure to abide by the societal rules, to gaining approval from others and are more inclined to try to get approval

through self-misrepresentation as by portraying one-self positively in the eyes of others (Taylor & Gooby, 2013). But female college students belonging to nuclear families are encouraged to function in an individualized manner, take initiative and act independently and thus less inclined to get approval from others. Comparative picture reveals significant difference in all the comparisons. Thus, Hypothesis-I which postulates, "Female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of their approval motive under the categories of a) Normative Behaviour, b) Social Conformity, c) Positive Self-presentation, d) Defensiveness, e) Dependency, f) Social Responsiveness and g) Social Approval" was accepted and it might be said that female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families will significantly differ in terms of their approval motive.

On the other hand, female college students belonging to joint families perceived their family environment as highly favourable whereas those belonging to nuclear families perceived their family environment as moderately favourable. Female college students belonging to joint family are growing with lot of love and affection, cooperation, fun, enjoyment and community axiology. Joint family system creates strong bonding among siblings and other members of the family providing a sense of security to them. Young adults who reared in joint families imbibe the qualities of sharing, caring, empathy and understanding than those belonging to nuclear families (Mullatti, 1995). Female college students brought up in nuclear families have two adult members in the family and often lack kinship and community support (Sethi, 1985). Comparative picture reveals significant difference between these two groups. Therefore, Hypothesis-II, which postulates, "Female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of their perceived family environment under the categories of a) cohesion, b) personal achievement and c) family organization" was accepted and it can be said that female college students belonging to nuclear and joint families will significantly differ in terms of their perceived family environment.

Career values as expressed by female college students belong to nuclear families is above average level whereas those who belonging to joint families express moderate level of career values. Female college students from nuclear families are encouraged to function in an individualized manner, take initiative, act independently (Bisht & Sinha, 1981) and enjoy greater scope of developing clear-cut self-identity (Sinha, 1984). They enjoy more parental attention and have more access to resources as compared to those living in joint families. On the contrary, female college students belonging to joint families are moderately career oriented because they apprehensive to maintain career-family balance. Comparative picture reveals significant difference in all the comparisons.

Female college students belonging to joint families expressed high family values whereas those belonging to nuclear families expressed moderate level of family values. Female college students living in joint family adhere to a patriarchal ideology, have more familialistic value orientations and endorse traditional gender role preferences (Mullatti, 1995 & Shangle, 1995). But female college students belonging to nuclear families expressed moderate level of family values as they often feel lonely, unattended, less cared and suffer from insecurities due to limited support persons available (Hui & Triandis, 1986; Triandis et al. 1988). Comparative picture reveals significant difference in all the comparisons. Hence, Hypothesis III, which postulates, "Female college students belonging to both nuclear and joint families at Kolkata differ significantly in terms of their career and family values" was accepted and it can be said that female college students belonging to both nuclear and joint families will significantly differ in terms of their career and family values, was accepted.

Table-3: Correlation Coefficients between Independent & Dependent Variables under study

Variables	Dependent Variables	
	Career Values	Family Values
Approval Motive	-0.39**	0.77**
Perceived Family Environment	-0.49**	0.67**

** p< .01

From table-3, it can be seen that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between approval motive and family values & perceived family environment and family values, Significant negative correlation exists between approval motive and career values & perceived family environment and career values of female college students. This means as approval motive increased female college students expressed greater family values and decreased career values. Whereas family environment as perceived by female college students becomes more favourable, their family values also increases but career values will be decreased. Therefore, Hypothesis IV, which postulates, “The independent variables of the study would correlate significantly with each other as well as with dependent variables for female college students at Kolkata” was accepted and it might be said that the independent variables of the study would correlate significantly with each other as well as with dependent variables for female college students.

CONCLUSION

The present study revealed that approval motive, perceived family environment and family values were higher among female college students belonging to joint families than nuclear families. In case of career values, female college students belonging to nuclear families scored significantly higher than students belonging to joint families. Furthermore, there existed significant positive association between approval motive and family values & perceived family environment and family values as well as a significant negative association between approval motive and career values & perceived family environment and career values of female college students residing at Kolkata.

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