

## Family Environment in relation to Emotional Autonomy among Adolescents of Rural Area of Jammu City

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**Abstract:** One important feature of adolescents is autonomous learning skills that will help them manage their own lives and make positive, healthy choices. Autonomy is a crucial developmental task of adolescence, mainly because it is closely linked to individualization and identity formation. Families that are perceived as cohesive have high sense of security and emerge as a source of support for individuals. Results states the significant negative correlation of moral religious emphasis with parent perceives as people ( $r = -.154$ ), and control ( $r = -.218$ ) positive relationship with independence ( $r = .175$ ). Deidealization have a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation ( $r = -.157$ ) and positive significant relationships with cohesion ( $r = .203$ ), expressiveness ( $r = .168$ ), independence ( $r = .165$ ), achievement orientation ( $r = .151$ ), active recreational orientation ( $r = .220$ ). Non dependency has a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation ( $r = -.193$ ) and organization ( $r = -.140$ ). Similarly, individuation dimension of emotional autonomy has a significant relationship with conflict ( $r = -.144$ ) in male adolescents. Among female adolescents, parent perceives as people correlates with cohesion ( $r = .264$ ), expressiveness ( $r = .141$ ), achievement orientation ( $r = .330$ ), organization ( $r = .176$ ). De-idealization dimension of emotional autonomy correlates positively with independence ( $r = .151$ ), moral religious emphasis ( $r = .147$ ), control ( $r = .182$ ). Non dependency dimension of emotional autonomy have a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation ( $r = -.170$ ), moral religious emphasis ( $r = -.209$ ). Expressiveness ( $r = .172$ ), conflict ( $r = .183$ ), independence ( $r = .140$ ) are significantly positively related with non dependency and achievement orientation ( $r = .187$ ) and conflict ( $r = -.247$ ) with individuation in female adolescents.

**Keywords:** Emotional autonomy, Family environment, Adolescents, Rural areas, Coefficients.

### INTRODUCTION

Frank *et al.* (1990) suggested that deidealization of parents is related to the feeling of insecurity among adolescents. Another theorist believed that detachment can sometimes results in self-reliance and on the other hand can be a factor for loss of valuable connections to others, which might results in lack of a consolidated identity, low self-esteem, and behavioral problems Ryan & Lynch (1989). It might results in delinquent behavior among adolescents (Lamborn & Steinberg, 1993) and feelings of insecurity because dependency on parents can be source of stressful experiences. Hence, the greater autonomy and self initiation are important for the healthy development of adolescents (Cicchetti & Cohen, 1995). The term emotional autonomy is coined by Sternberg and Silverberg in 1986. It is described as “an affective disengagement of adolescents from his or her parents to bring in various developmental changes”. Also called as

“the ability to have a significant control over one’s life, to be able to make decisions and to relinquish the dependencies on others” (Tung & Dhillon, 2006). Psychoanalytic perspective states that the urges that derived from oedipal complex outsource the hormonal changes in adolescent that is the cause of anxiety which in turn leads to noncompliance behavior. These occurrences results in the alienation of adolescents and they starts detaching them from family (BIos, 1979; Erikson, 1950). Further elaboration on the course suggests that the dishonest nature of parent (deidealization) and psychic emancipation ends in unhealthy relationships between parents and children. This give way to increasing the inner turmoil and results in hormonal imbalances. From the above context it has propounded that the inner conflicts and childhood traumas remain the reasons for the imbalanced psychosocial adjustment. On the contrary the unpredictable casting of events and occurrences made the individuals attuned to emotional disturbances.

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It can be said that the family environments of individual have a significant role to play in the emotional autonomy which results in various behavioral, cognitive and affective aspects (Noom *et al.*, 1999). The behavioral aspect indicates the feeling of self-reliance and self competence. Cognitive domain makes them understand that they are in the control of their lives and the affective domain refers to emotional detachment from parents and there is development of balanced emotional bonds with parents (Parra & Oliva, 2009). Family environment has a great influence on the psychological health of adolescents. Having a Favorable family environment provides a balanced and positive emotional state and also contributes to the well being of adolescents. The Indian perspective considered family as a foundation for social organizations and an intact system of attachment and strong family ties. The cohesive atmosphere among families provides a great sense of security and also acts as a source of support for individuals. The personal growth dimension of family environment is indicative of the extent to which family members are assertive and self sufficient and make their own decisions and the extent to which activities are cast in to an achievement oriented and competitive framework.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the relationship of cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, moral religious emphasis, organization and control with idealization domain of emotional autonomy among male and female adolescents.
2. To study the relationship of cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, moral religious emphasis, organization and control with non dependency domain of emotional autonomy among male and female adolescents.
3. To assess the relationship of cohesion, expressiveness, conflict independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, moral religious emphasis, organization and control with parents as people domain of emotional autonomy among male and female adolescents.
4. To study the relationship of cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, moral religious emphasis, organization and control with individuation domain of emotional autonomy among male and female adolescents.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample

A total number of 400 participants were collected for the study. There are 200 males and 200 females in the sample. The age group which was taken is between 14-19 years. There are equal number of males and females in the sample. The sample is collected from various schools and colleges of tehsil bhadarwah of district dodra of Jammu and Kashmir. Participants are in the age group of 10 to 19. The sampling technique employed was incidental. The permission was taken from the administration before applying the test. They were asked about the confidentiality of data. They were instructed how to mark their responses. In case of any difficulty, they were asked to make clear their queries. The test is performed in groups and the group of 10 to 20 is taken for the data collection.

### Measures

The following measures were used for the purpose of the study:

#### Emotional Autonomy Scale (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986)

This scale can be used to evaluate affective and cognitive aspect of autonomy. It is comprised of 20 items which is used to evaluate parental deidealization, perceives parents as people, non dependency on parents and individuation. The affective component is comprised of non dependency on parents and individuation from parents. Perceives parents as people and parental deidealization are the cognitive aspect of emotional autonomy. The respondents have to respond on the four point scale. The response vary from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The cronbach alpha for the scale ranges from 0.66 to 0.81. The higher score the greater is the emotional autonomy.

#### Family Environment Scale (FES) (Moos and Moos, 1986)

This scale can be used to measure the social and environmental characteristics of families (Moos and Moos, 1986). It is a 90 item scale which measures factors like cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, active recreational orientation, moral-religious emphasis, organization and control. There are three dimensions of family environment scale i.e. relationship dimension, personal growth and systematic maintenance. The relationship dimensions include cohesion, expressiveness, conflict which indicates the degree of commitment, liability to express their feelings and conflict among family members. The relationship dimension exhibit the assertiveness, self efficacious nature, degree of commitment towards their school or work environment, interest in other streams of life like in political, social, intellectual and cultural activities, belief in ethical and religious. Similarly, the structure in organizing various activities in the family and

proper procedures to maintain the equilibrium are the framework of family which mark a degree of favorable environment. The subject has to respond to the categories of yes and no.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Co-relational Analysis

The co-relation analysis is carried out to find out the relationship of each domain of family environment i.e. cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, achievement orientation, intellectual cultural orientation, moral religious emphasis, active recreational orientation, organization and control with deidealization, non dependency, parents as people and individuation domains of emotional autonomy among males and females respectively. The observations from the tables show the inter-correlation between the subscales of family environment and sub scales of emotional autonomy in males and females separately.

**Table 1 shows** a significant negative correlation of moral religious emphasis with parent perceives as people of emotional autonomy ( $r = -.154$ ), and control ( $r = -.218$ ) positive relationship of independence ( $r = .175$ ). Similarly the other component of emotional autonomy i.e. deidealization show significant relationships with some of the dimensions of family environment. There is a significant negative correlation of deidealization with intellectual cultural orientation ( $r = -.157$ ) and positive significant relationships with cohesion ( $r = .203$ ), expressiveness ( $r = .168$ ), independence ( $r = .165$ ), achievement orientation ( $r = .151$ ), active recreational orientation ( $r = .220$ ). Another dimension of emotional autonomy i.e. non dependency has a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation ( $r = -.193$ ) and organization ( $r = -.140$ ). Similarly, individuation dimension of emotional autonomy has a significant relationship with conflict ( $r = -.144$ ). As evident from correlation coefficients, it can be stated that some of the components of family environment are showing significant negative and positive relationship with emotional autonomy. Independence in the family environment has shown a significant positive correlation with emotional autonomy.

It is evident from the results that the dimensions of emotional autonomy i.e. parent perceives as people, de-idealization, non dependency and individuation are positive related to some of the dimensions of family environment. Parent perceives as people shows a significant positive relationship with independence. It means that those adolescents who enjoy independence in their own decisions have better adjustment in their lives than those who do not have independence in their family environment. It is said that are emotionally weaned from their parents have better subjective health. Moreover, emotional independence from parents leads to better mental health in adolescent

boys and girls (Tung & Sandhu, 2005). Parent perceives as people is showing a significant negative relationship with moral religious emphasis. It can be said that now a day's families are more centric towards modernization. So the religious and moral values are lacking in our family system. This might be the reason that males are becoming more and more autonomous and seek independence for their decision making. De-idealization shows significant positive relationship with cohesion, expressiveness, independence, active recreational orientation. This means that the cohesive and expressive environment in the family provide us with more comfortable atmosphere in which there is freedom of speech. It can help in the better development of individuals. The de-idealization is showing a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation. The families which are much towards intellectual cultural orientation are developing negative approach towards emotional autonomy of male adolescents. The adolescents are more relied on peer groups so the intellectual capabilities of peers influence more on the autonomous development of male adolescents. The two dimensions of emotional autonomy i.e. individuation and non dependency on parents are important from the point of view of psychological adaptation in both boy and girl adolescents. The non dependency dimension of emotional autonomy is showing a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation and organization dimension of family environment. The non dependency dimension of emotional autonomy is showing a significant negative relationship with conflict dimension of family environment. The conflictual atmosphere is an unhealthy environment for the better development of male adolescents. The females are also less adjusting to the conflictual environment. The overall development gets influenced by the distorted family relations between parents. It leads to various pathological conditions among adolescents. They become more handicapped to the prevailing situations and are less adjustive to the later years of development. It might affect their adulthood livelihood. The inner as well as outer contextual ecology remains distressing for them. It is very important for the good development of individuals to have supportive family environment. One important finding in this research is that independence appears to be a positive factor in two dimensions of emotional autonomy. It can be said that it is the stage where male adolescents love to be more independent. Their autonomous behavior s affected by the independence characteristics of family environment. De-idealizing the parents (de-idealization), taking responsibility for one's own behavior (non-dependency), understanding that parents have roles outside of their parental status (parents as people), and establishing a sense of oneself as a separate individual (individuation).

**The above table 2** shows a correlation between dimensions of emotional autonomy and indices of

family environment among female adolescents. Parent perceives as people correlates with cohesion ( $r = .264$ ), expressiveness ( $r = .141$ ), achievement orientation ( $r = .330$ ), organization ( $r = .176$ ). De-idealization dimension of emotional autonomy correlates positively with independence ( $r = .151$ ), moral religious emphasis ( $r = .147$ ), control ( $r = .182$ ). Non dependency dimension of emotional autonomy have a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation ( $r = -.170$ ), moral religious emphasis ( $r = -.209$ ). The other dimensions of family environment i.e. expressiveness ( $r = .172$ ), conflict ( $r = .183$ ), independence ( $r = .140$ ) are showing significant positive relationship with non dependency domain of emotional autonomy. Similarly, achievement orientation ( $r = .187$ ) and conflict ( $r = -.247$ ) are significantly related with individuation dimension of emotional autonomy in female adolescents. Emotional autonomy has a considerable affect by the environment of family environment (Fuhrman & Holmbeck, 1995). The results of the study revealed that perceive parent as people are positively correlated with cohesion, expressiveness, achievement orientation and organization. These are the positive characteristics of family environment. The de-idealization is positively related with independence, moral religious emphasis and control. Non dependency dimension of emotional is showing a positive significant relationship with expressiveness, conflict and active recreational orientation and negative association with moral religious emphasis. Individuation has a negative relationship with achievement orientation and control in female adolescents. Purdie *et al* (2004) documented that there is a relationship between home-leaving failure and weaken autonomous behaviors among adolescents. Autonomy gets influenced by the growth of independence and family is important component of autonomous behavior can develop with family members, peers and people living outside family. Sometimes family conflicts are caused by adolescent autonomy because of their disobedient behavior by counteracting the norms which might cause changes in the relationships among family members. There are some studies which states that there is gradual increase in the behavioral autonomy throughout the stages of adolescence with mark variations in personal autonomy in the early and late years of adolescents (Dornbush *et al.*, 2001). As suggested by Tung and Dhillon (2006) that females report more cohesive environment and find higher moral religious emphasis in the family.

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the observation of results that there are significant differences on some of the dimensions of emotional autonomy and domains of family environment in males and female adolescents. The results of the correlation analysis also shows that there exist a significant positive relationship with some of the domains of family environments with emotional autonomy while some domains show significant

negative relationship with domains of emotional autonomy. These relationships reveal the consistency in the environment of family. The cohesive and expressiveness environment are better for the emotional autonomy of adolescents.

The results of the t-ratios reveal significant differences in males and females on the de-idealization dimension of emotional autonomy, with females capable of deidealizing the parents at an early age than the males. The mean scores are higher for females on emotional autonomy. Females report more cohesive environment and find higher moral religious emphasis in the family. Therefore, autonomy development during adolescence has a long term impact on the adaptation process in the post developmental years of individual.

The results of the correlation analysis reveals that the dimensions of emotional autonomy i.e. parent perceives as people, de-idealization, non dependency and individuation are positive related to some of the dimensions of family environment. Parent perceives as people shows a significant positive relationship with independence. It means that those adolescents who enjoy independence in their own decisions have better adjustment in their lives than those who do not have independence in their family environment. Parent perceives as people is showing a significant negative relationship with moral religious emphasis. De-idealization shows a significant positive relationship with cohesion, expressiveness, independence, active recreational orientation. The de-idealization is showing a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation. The non dependency dimension of emotional autonomy is showing a significant negative relationship with intellectual cultural orientation and organization dimension of family environment. The non dependency dimension of emotional autonomy is showing a significant negative relationship with conflict dimension of family environment among male adolescents.

The results of co-relational analysis for female adolescents demonstrated that perceive parent as people are positively correlated with cohesion, expressiveness, achievement orientation and organization. These are the positive characteristics of family environment. The de-idealization is positively related with independence, moral religious emphasis and control. Non dependency dimension of emotional is showing a positive significant relationship with expressiveness, conflict and active recreational orientation and negative association with moral religious emphasis. Individuation has a negative relationship with achievement orientation and control in female adolescents.

## Implications

Adolescence is a phase of transition to young adults which is characterized as stage of autonomy and independence which largely and partly got inflicted by family environment. This study has importance in taking into account the family environment in the development of emotional autonomy in adolescent males and females. It is important to understand the behavior of adolescents in relation to their family environment. It will help the counselors, policy makers, researcher to overview the emotional development of autonomy in the context of their family. Family is a good source of attaining various independent beliefs. The adolescents are the futures of any society. The present study seeks to investigate the relationship between emotional autonomy and family Environment of adolescents. Parental involvement can have a positive or negative effect on emotional autonomy of adolescents. Parents who are a source of great support provide a good support to their children. Family environment that is marked by conflict and control may adversely affect the independence of adolescents. Relationship between the family environment and emotional autonomy are not only relevant to counselors only but they are relevant to parents also. The motivational aspect of the home environment is highly correlated with the prospective development of the child. Similarly, the emotional aspect of home environment is also play a great role on child. This study has produced some important result that has implication for society as a whole. These will facilities our understanding of the family environment factors which are thought to be responsible for a healthy personality of adolescents that significantly contributes to one's success in life. There is need to understand the family environment leading to good development of adolescents. The cohesive atmosphere should need to be improvised so that child would get better understanding of the self meditating skills. The counseling sessions should be encouraged among for parents also. It is very important to educate them also so that the better methods of coping mechanisms should be encourage among adolescents. The parents should be encouraged parents to maintain a good and supportive relationship with their children's. There is needed to keep updated about their currents problems or the situations through which they are going through. Reframing of norms or some organized patterns should be encouraged in the family so that child first confront the self discipline technique from their home. Less punishive marks should be used, that will not harm them consciously. Good communication skills, such as listening more and talking less should be encourage among parents.

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