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Anxiety in young adults and role of family environment

Abstract : The family environment contributes to anxiety in young adults. These days, the prevalence of anxiety in college students is very common. Anxiety disorder can lead to poor performance, social interaction, and feelings of being ashamed and alone. Research has shown that if left untreated, children with anxiety disorder will perform poorly in school and miss out on social interactions. Family environment is an important factor that varies across different sociocultural contexts and is therefore important to study in the Indian context.

Keywords: anxiety, young adults, environment, family, factors.

1. Introduction

Childhood anxiety affects approximately 1 in 4 children, sometimes between the ages of 13 and 18. Anxiety is a natural response to stress and danger; however, when it becomes excessive, it can interfere with daily life, work, and relationships. Anxiety disorders are a group of mental health conditions that involve excessive and persistent worry, fear, or anxiety. The most common anxiety disorders include generalised anxiety disorder (GAD), panic disorder, social anxiety disorder, and specific phobias. These disorders can be debilitating and affect a person's ability to function in daily life. The

family environment is one of the important constructs. According to Lowrance (1984), the family environment is the sole socially recognised relationship for child-bearing, and it serves as the primary agency for child rearing, socialisation, and introducing the child to society's culture, thereby shaping our culture's fundamental structure and forming the child's personality, physical, and mental health. According to Oliver & Paull (1995), teenagers who have positive family relationships and social connections are less prone to experiencing anxiety disorders or may not have them at all. In conclusion, a supportive and caring family environment that fosters open communication, positive reinforcement, routines, and healthy lifestyle habits can effectively alleviate anxiety. Despite extensive research in these areas, the Indian domain still lacks much due to the cultural differences in family environments. Therefore, studies have focused on how the family environment influences anxiety in young adults.

2. Literature Review

Lowrance (1984), 'It is the only socially recognized relationship for the child, bearing, and the most important agency for child rearing, socialization, and introducing the child to the culture of the society, thereby shaping the fundamental structure of our culture and forming the child's personality, physical, and mental health.

Newman and Newman (1981) "Family environment is the first and, in many ways, the most important context for the development of a child's personality" Adjustment within the family entails identifying with and accepting business transactions.

S.N Sharma. K Bhat, J, Sengupta (1980) found that there was close similarity between symptoms presented by child and the symptom manifested by the parents as they were suffering from anxiety neurosis or physical illness.

Oliver and Paull, (1995) had mentioned that a positive family environment and relation lead to decreased or absence of anxiety disorders among adolescents based on a U.S study.

Rapee and Mcleod, Wood, Weisz, (1997) Parenting style plays a key role in developing anxiety in children and young people.

Malhotra D. (2005) conducted a study on the role of family environment The results revealed that families give rise to anxiety are high on conflicts and low on organizations, they are disorganized family and noisy homes.

Malhotra D. (2005) has found that parenting behavior has long been a cause of possible anxiety disorder.

Goede (2009) theories based on sociobiological neo psychoanalytic and cognitive branches of psychology declare that if autonomy is not given during early and middle adolescence it leads to decreased cohesion and more conflicts there by resulting in stress and anxiety disorder problems

Collins (2019) Human existence and experiences are built on the foundation of family relationships. It is a never-ending source of survival that contributes to the formation of the fundamental character of its members as well as the cultivation of their overall development. It is the primary source of the society's acquired values and norms.

Gerull and Rapee (2022), observing the parental way of response to anxious situations also direct the response of the children anxiously as per the experimental and prospective longitudinal research study.

However, there is a scarcity of research or studies examining family environment characteristics and their correlation with young adults' anxiety. Further investigation and analysis are necessary to evaluate the various factors within the family environment that contribute to anxiety in young adults. According to the aforementioned thoughts and studies, there is evidence to suggest a correlation between the familial environment and anxiety levels in young adults.

3. Research Methodology

We assessed college students of both sexes using Sinha's comprehensive anxiety test (SCAT) and the Family Environment Scale (FES) in a cross-sectional study.

Objectives:

The proposed research will work towards achieving the following goals:

1. To determine the correlation between anxiety and family environment in young adults
2. To ascertain the disparity in anxiety levels among male and female young people.

Hypothesis:

H01: There is no statistically significant correlation between anxiety and family environment in young people.

H02: There is no statistically significant disparity in the anxiety levels between male and female youngsters.

Variables:

This study will measure the following variables:

- various aspects of the family environment
- anxiety

Demographic Variables:

The study will measure demographic variables such as gender and family environment.

Sample Distribution Inclusion Criteria

1. The study population was young adults (age group between 18 and 21 years) who were studying in Mumbai (Maharashtra State, India).
2. We will encourage participants who can read and understand English well to take part in the study.

Exclusion criteria:

This study will not include those who drop out of school or college. This study will exclude working young adults who do not intend to attend college.

Sample:

The sampling technique used in this case is stratified random data. The sample size is 100 students.

Tools for the Study

The following tools were selected and used by the investigator in the present study:

- Family Environment Scale by Bhatia and Chadha (1993) based on the Family Environment Scale by Moos (1974).
- Anxiety scale by Sinha's comprehensive Anxiety Test (SCAT), constructed and standardized on Indian population, by A. Sinha and L.Sinha (2010)

Analysis of Data: The study utilised descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and an independent sample t-test.

4. Results and Discussion**H01: There will be no significant relationship between family environment and anxiety level among adolescents**

We computed a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to evaluate the relationship between young adults' family environment and their level of anxiety (100). There is a negative correlation between the two variables ($r = -0.246$, $n = 100$, $p = 0.014$).

Overall, there was a statistically significant, moderately negative relationship between family environment and level of anxiety. We can infer that youngsters experience less anxiety in a positive family environment. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, that asserts no significant relationship between the family environment and the level of anxiety among youngsters.

H02: There will be no significant difference in the level of anxiety among young adults concerning their gender.

We used a t-test to compare the anxiety levels of 50 males and 50 females. There is no statistically significant disparity in the results between males (mean = 32.820, standard deviation = 15.589) and girls (mean = 39.480, standard deviation = 18.276). The t-value is -1.960, and the p-value is 0.053. These findings indicate that there is no significant difference between males and females.

The study examines the correlation between the family environment and anxiety levels among young adults. The International Journal of Indian Psychology, with the electronic ISSN 2348-5396 and the print ISSN 2349-3429, explores the phenomenon of anxiety at a

profound level. Therefore, we do not reject the null hypothesis, which asserts that there is no significant difference in anxiety levels based on the gender of young adults.

5. Figures and Tables

5.1 Figures

a. Relationship between family environment and anxiety among young adults.

Correlations			
		Anxiety Score	FES
Anxiety Score	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-0.246
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.014
	N	100	100
FES	Pearson Correlation	-0.246	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.014	
	N	100	100

b. Comparison of anxiety level among different genders.

Group Statistics						
Anxiety Score	Gender	N	Mean	Median	Std Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	Male	50	32.820	31.500	15.589	2.205
	Female	50	39.480	38.500	18.276	2.585

c. Group statistics for anxiety score: t-test results.

Group Statistics				
Anxiety Score		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Equal Variances assumed	-1.960	98.000	0.053
	Equal Variances not assumed	-1.960	95.622	0.053

6. Conclusion

This research study examines the correlation between anxiety levels and the familial setting among young adults. We calculated a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to assess the relationship between the family environment and the level of anxiety among young adults. With a correlation coefficient of -0.246, the two variables

exhibit a negative association. The sample size is 100, and the p-value is 0.014. In summary, there was a statistically significant and moderately negative correlation between the family environment and the amount of anxiety. We can infer that young adults experience less anxiety in a favourable family environment. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, which asserts no substantial correlation between the family environment and the amount of anxiety among young adults. We do not reject the null hypothesis that asserts a statistically significant difference in the anxiety levels of young adults based on their gender.

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The author said that they have no conflict of interest.

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