

Role of Family type and Gender on Student's Motivation

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Abstract

Motivation provides purpose in every stage of life. The present study sought to examine the role of Family types and Gender on motivation of adolescents. The sample consisted of 301 subjects pursuing undergraduate courses from different colleges of Odisha. Results revealed that girls were better in achievement and affiliation motivation and boys had higher power motivation. Comparison of mean scores illustrated that subjects belonged to nuclear family had better achievement motivation and those who belonged to joint families had better power and affiliation motivation. Results were analysed and interpreted on the basis of adolescents' desire for privacy, freedom, stereotypical beliefs regarding gender, gender discrimination, women's need for higher education, economic as well as social independence.

Keywords: Adolescents, motivation, family type, gender

Every period in the life-span of an individual involves transition from one stage to another. However, in adolescence phase, a child enters the adult world for the very first time, assuming adult roles and responsibilities. This age is quite sensitive and very crucial. Adolescents go through various physical, cognitive, social and emotional developments that help them to achieve maturity. At the same time, the teenagers encounter massive constraints, higher demands and expectations from various environmental agents. This is a stage of life where the belief system is being strengthened (Erikson, 1968). Their perception of the world operates the self-system by providing information regarding past experiences, thoughts, behaviour and environment. Then the self-system shapes the conceptions of adolescents' potentials. These realizations become the motivational guide that goes with the behaviour.

Motivation can be defined as internal processes that stimulate, guide and maintain behaviour. In the word of Atkinson (1964), "the term motivation refers to the arousal of tendency to act, to produce one or more effects". Psychologist David McClelland (1985), proposed a need theory which is a motivational model to explain how need for achievement, power and affiliation influence the behaviours of people. Need for achievement refers to the desire to excel and to achieve set of standards. People having a need for affiliation prefer to spend time creating and maintaining social relationships, enjoy being a part of different groups and have the desire to feel loved and accepted. The need for power or dominance is the motive to influence the thoughts and activities of a number of other people (McClelland, 1985; Stahl, 1980). Those who have need for power, they enjoy work and place a high value on discipline. These needs can be influenced by several factors like gender in adolescents' lives and their overall functioning. Anitha and Jebaseelan (2018) studied gender differences in overall achievement motivation and pointed out that girls are highly motivated than boys in academics. In another study, Maheswari and Aruna (2016) also

explored that female respondents had higher achievement motivation than their male counterparts.

Family plays an important role in every stage of our lives by providing support and teaching various things of life. Whether it is nuclear or joint family both have different advantages and disadvantages at the same time. Nuclear family consists of a married couple and their children, but joint family is the extension of nuclear family including grandparents, uncle-aunt and cousins. These family types also influence the achievement, power and affiliation motivation of adolescents in different ways.

The present study is an attempt to yield further knowledge in the area of gender difference, family types, achievement motivation, power motivation and affiliation motivation among adolescents. This will help us to find out the root causes of the problems relating to motivational drives and if required, accordingly intensive intervention strategies through counselling can be organised and implemented to strengthen motivational force among them. Apart from this, the study will add on to the limited amount of researches on the theme of motivation of adolescents. It will provide information to parents, teachers as well as psychologists in guiding the teenagers.

Objective

1. To find out the role of family type on motivation factor of undergraduate college students.
2. To study the role of gender on motivation factor of undergraduate college students.

Sample

The present study included adolescents aged 17-19 years studying in different undergraduate colleges of Odisha. The subjects were selected randomly from their respective colleges. The sample consisted of 301 college

students (155 Boys and 146 girls). In the sample 158 belonged to Nuclear family and 143 were from Joint family.

Tools

1. What Motivates you? (Steers & Braunstein, 1976)

This questionnaire consisted of 15 items rated on a 5- point (1 to 5) scale from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly agree'. The subjects assigned a number (From 1 to 5) to show their agreement with the item. This questionnaire ascertains a person's three dominant needs such as Achievement, Power and Affiliation. The higher the number, the higher is the subject's agreement with the statement in the item. The highest score in these three dimensions indicate the persons dominant need pattern.

Procedure

The test was administered on 301 adolescents in the age range of 17-19 years. Subjects were randomly selected from different undergraduate colleges of Odisha. They were personally contacted for the study and adequate amount of rapport was established before the administration of the test. They were explained about the purpose of the study and all their queries were answered. Their written informed consent was taken before administering the tests. They completed a questionnaire i.e. "What motivates you?". For each subject, the filled in questionnaire was compiled for the convenience of scoring and subsequent analysis.

Results

The data obtained were analyzed statistically using SPSS. The Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' test were computed to compare the two groups in terms of significance of mean differences.

Table 1

Mean, SDs and t values of Achievement, Power and Affiliation motivation of boys and girls

Variables	Boys		Girls		t Value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Achievement	16.25	5.16	18.20	5.33	3.22***
Power	17.36	4.64	16.01	4.18	2.66**
Affiliation	15.74	4.26	17.90	4.59	4.22***

df=299, ***p<.001, **p<.01

Table 1 showed that girls were better in achievement ($t=3.22$, $df=299$, $p<.001$) and Affiliation ($t=4.22$, $df=299$, $p<.001$) motivation than boys. On the other hand, boys were better in Power ($t=2.66$, $df=299$, $p<.01$) motivation than girls.

Figure 1 showing the Mean scores of Achievement, Power and Affiliation motivation in Boys and Girls

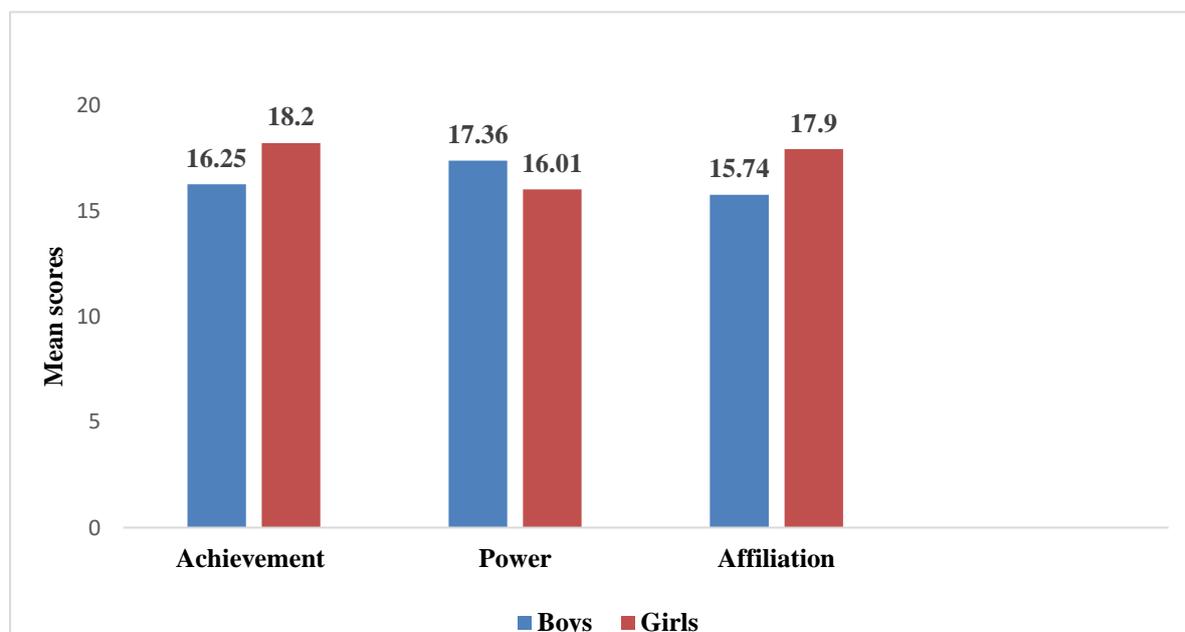


Table 2

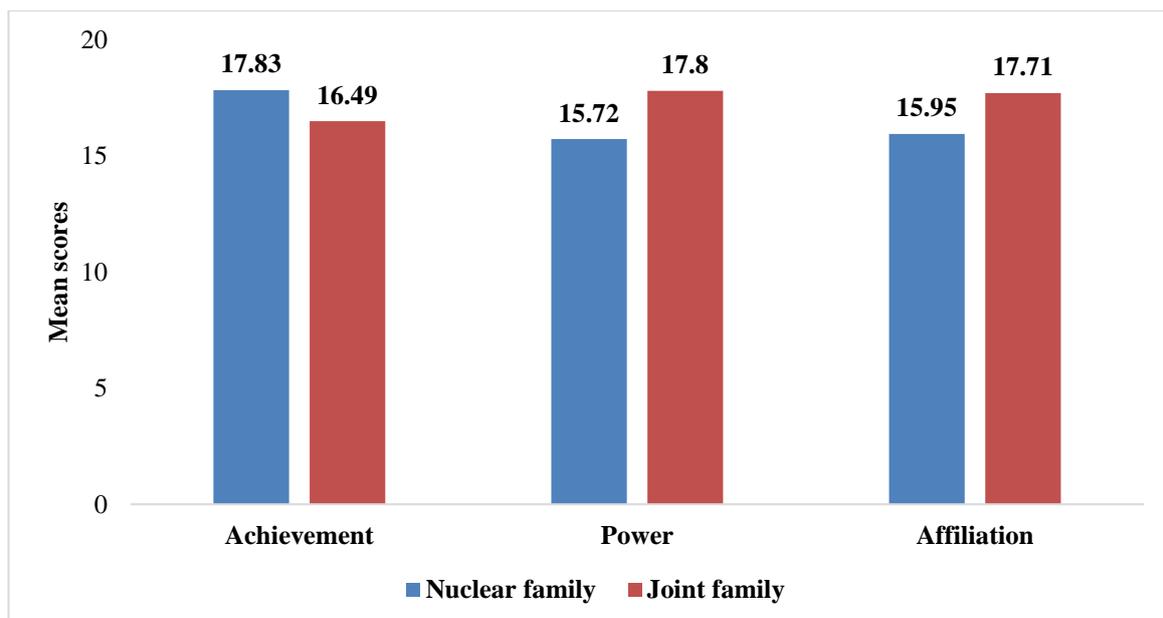
Mean, SDs and t values of Achievement, Power and Affiliation motivation of boys and girls

Variables	Nuclear family		Joint family		t values
	M	SD	M	SD	
Achievement	17.83	5.40	16.49	5.17	4.143***
Power	15.72	4.26	17.80	4.45	3.403**
Affiliation	15.95	4.72	17.71	4.17	2.190*

df=299, ***p<.001, **p<.01, p<.05

Result Table 2 revealed that subjects in nuclear family had better Achievement ($t=4.14$, $df=299$, $p<.001$) motivation than the subjects of joint family. However, subjects of joint family had better Power ($t=3.40$, $df=299$, $p<.001$) and Affiliation ($t=2.190$, $df=299$, $p<.01$) motivation than the subjects of nuclear family.

Figure 2 showing the Mean scores of Achievement, Power and Affiliation motivation in Nuclear family and Joint family



Discussion

The primary purpose of the present study was to study the influence of gender and family type on motivation of college students. The results indicated that girls had higher achievement motivation than boys. In our patriarchal society, most of the girls got less respect and concern compared to boys in every aspects of life. They were also undermined and undervalued in every aspects of daily life. Because of these treatments, they always have the desire to prove themselves in front of others. In order to remunerate the discrepancy, they strive to succeed in every sphere including academics. Girls today have the desire to be independent and do not want to become the burden on their husband as well as family. In India, women empowerment, gender equality, “Beti bachao, Beti padho Yojana”, all are given much more priorities aiming at the emancipation of females. The government is also supporting them by providing utmost facilities and reservations in jobs to girls. For financial safety, security and higher status, they desire to excel. Mass media is also playing a strong role by illustrating actual strength of girls, by showing the strong character of girls in movies like Queen, Piku, Neerja, English Vinglish etc. It is making girls realise their true potentials that they can also do whatever they want to do in their lives and also they can live their lives to the fullest. Now-a-days parents are also realising the education, independence and overall development of girls and hence encourage their daughters for higher studies and jobs. For such reasons, the achievement motivation of girls may be higher than the boys. The result of this study was in tuned with the findings of Maheswari and Aruna (2016) and Anithaa and Jebaseelan (2018). Some contrasting findings were also marked by Nagarathanamma & Rao (2007), they found no significant difference between boys and girls with regard to achievement motivation level.

It was also revealed from the results that girls had higher affiliation motivation than boys. Since childhood, girls are always taught that they are girls

and they need to be protected all the time, they need to be accompanied by others for their safety and security. During the socialisation process, they are reinforced for being forgiving and tolerating. They might be taught this way because of the notion that girls are expected to go to another family after marriage. Thus, it is important for them to accept and maintain interpersonal relationships of their husband's family. As they are an important unit of family organisation, they should be supportive, cooperative and are supposed to have the quality to bind the family with affinity. They have the responsibility to keep the family together. Corpus callosum, a bridge like structure which connects the right hemisphere with the left hemisphere, is slightly thicker in women compared to men. It is apparently the reason behind women being more aware of their own emotions and emotions of others. Moreover, women have better emotional control and self-regulation. These notions and teachings may make girls higher in affiliation need.

Results of the present study illustrated that boys were higher in power motivation scores in comparison to girls. We live in a purely patriarchal society where dominance and control of males are accepted almost as a norm. From the ancient time, males have been regarded as the head of the family, their decisions are accepted as ultimate decisions and this legacy has been transmitted to further generations till date. Boys are trained to become sturdy, tough, aggressive, competitive and assertive since childhood. They are always encouraged to show power, anger and hostility. Apart from this, bodily hormones also play a significant role. Testosterone hormone in boys attributes them to become competitive, aggressive, to occupy, higher hierarchical status help them to become powerful. Hence, boys may have higher power motivation in comparison to girls.

Results implied that adolescents from nuclear families had higher achievement motivation than the adolescents belong to joint families. Due to the

limited members in nuclear families, there exist peace and harmony in the family environment. It encourages the adolescents to become more focused on their activities and goal. This type of family provides a supportive atmosphere that may enhance the motivation to achieve their goals among the adolescents. Privacy and freedom are much more taken care of in nuclear families which may strengthen the adolescents' sense of independence and strive for excellence. There is a least chance of getting disturbed in such families which are generally faced by joint families due to large family members, lack of privacy and study environment, interpersonal conflicts and so forth.

It was evident from the result that subjects belonging joint families had higher affiliation motivation than those belonged to nuclear families. Joint families provide a strong social support during the time of crises. Adolescents of those families learn about the importance of different relations in their lives and how to maintain various interpersonal relations. They grasp the adjustment skills, become more understanding, supportive and develop acceptance of others with their differences. Love, affection, care, bonding as well as interdependence exists among the family members which may make the adolescents higher in their affiliation motivation. On the other hand, nuclear families focus more on independence, they don't want to compromise with their comfort and adjustment. Due to less family members the adolescents get less exposure to the realization of the importance of various interpersonal relationships and the desire to maintain them. That may cause them to be lower on affiliation motivation.

Results indicated that subjects of joint families had higher power motivation than subjects of nuclear families. Head of the family is always given more importance in joint families. They take decisions with other adult members of the home. Adolescents are regarded as children and so their views, opinions as well as decisions do not receive any priorities. Due to lack of

privacy and freedom, they become unable to do or express things they want to. As they are the junior members of the family, they have to obey all the other members but they can't exercise any power over anybody. However, in nuclear families, all members are given equal importance and opinions of every member are respected. Thus, adolescents belong to joint families have higher power motivation than those belong to nuclear families.

Findings of the present study broadened the knowledge and demonstrated the importance of type of family and gender on different types of motivation. In sum, motivation matters for the healthy development of an adolescent. It contributes to the current knowledge of adolescent's motivation research by identifying the dominant motivation. This may help the academicians, researchers and school counsellors to formulate different policies and strategies to motivate the young minds.

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