

## Impact of Emotional Maturity on Stress and Self Confidence of Adolescents

**Geeta S. Pastey and Vijayalaxmi A. Aminbhavi**  
Karnatak University, Dharwad.

As emotions do play central role in the life of an individual, one is expected to have higher emotional maturity in order to lead a effective life. It is also true that our behavior is constantly influenced by the emotional maturity level that we possess. Especially, the adolescents who are observed to be highly emotional in their dealings need to be studied. In view of this, an attempt is made in present study to find out the impact of emotional maturity of adolescents on their stress and self confidence. Sample of the study consists of 105 adolescents studying in XI and XII class at Dharwad city Karnataka State, India. The scales such as emotional maturity (Singh and Bhargav, 1994), Self Confidence Inventory (Rekha Agnihotri, 1987) and Students' Stress Scale (Deo, 1997) were administered on the selected sample. Along with responses to the above scales, some personal data information were also collected from the sample. The obtained responses were scored and converted to standard (T) scores, further subjected to 't' and 'F' tests. The findings revealed that the adolescents with high emotional maturity have significantly high stress ( $t=10.44$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and self-confidence ( $t=-2.92$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) when compared to those with low emotional maturity. Adolescents with more number of siblings have shown significantly higher level of self-confidence ( $t = 2.96$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) than their counter parts. It is also found that educational level of father has significantly influenced stress of their adolescent children ( $F= 5.303$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Adolescent boys tend to have significantly higher stress than girls ( $t=1.72$ ) and girls tend to have significantly high self confidence ( $t=1.83$ ).

Since many years, the perceived dispute about the relationship between cognitive aspects and emotions, one can arrive at a conclusion based on theory and practice that cognitive components have upper hand in managing and directing emotions. Further, in turn emotions do influence several aspects of one's behavior. Emotions are great motivating forces throughout the span of human life; affecting aspirations, actions and thoughts of an individual. Adolescents is a period when the behavior getting influenced highly by the emotions. Emotional maturity can be understood in terms of ability of self control which in turn is a result of thinking and learning. According to Chamberlain (1960), an emotionally matured person is one whose emotional life is well under control. In a study by Hiremani, et al, (1994) it is indicated that destitute girls were emotionally

unstable due to sociocultural deprivation and parental deprivation. In study by Praveen Kumar Jha (2002), it was found that self-confidence and emotional maturity were positively associated with vigilant style of decision making in case of executives. Alka Mankad (1999) observed that personality of emotionally matured and unmatured adolescents differ significantly. A study by Lipton et. al (1975) revealed that emotional maturity was a major factor especially as a predictor of success in essay tests among medical students.

Adolescence is the bridge between childhood and adulthood. It is a time of rapid development of growing to sexual maturity, discovering one's real self, defining personal values and finding one's vocational and social direction. Adolescence is a time when psychiatric conditions such as depression and other mood disorders become

apparent, leading to a risk of suicide. Eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, are particularly common in adolescents.

Madhuri Patil (2003) reports that adolescence is accompanied by some stress, related to school, family and peers, and this stress can at times be difficult to manage. It is also a time when certain kinds of developmental problems might arise, especially problems that have to do with self-perceptions, feelings about who we are, and negative emotions in general. Teenagers who have significant emotional stress, their self-esteem is lowered straining personal relationships. Child psychologists are of the opinion that not all stress is bad, the good kind motivates one to get things done and solve problems or take on challenges. When stress lingers, makes child avoid things, or makes normal functioning difficult, then it is a problem. In a popular article Anjali (2005) reports that conflicts in family, unbalanced nutrition, less of exercise, separated father and mother, extreme protection and punishment, lack of proper sexual education and hormonal changes are responsible for the stress.

Stress is defined as the state of psychological upset or disequilibrium in the human beings caused by frustration, conflicts and other internal as well as external strains and pressures (Mangal, 1984). Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1974) gave considerable evidence to show that a relationship exists between life stress, and physical illness. Vinokur and Selzer *et. al* (1975) have found life stress to be related to the occurrence of depression, anxiety and tension. Michelle *et. al* (2005) stated that stress has a significant relationship with permissive personal attitudes such as use of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana and with perceived permissive parental attitudes regarding alcohol use.

Self confidence is considered as one of the motivators and regulators of behavior in a individuals every day life (Bandura, 1986). Self confidence is a positive attitude of oneself towards one's self concept. In general terms, "self confidence refers to an individual's perceived ability to act effectively in a situation to overcome obstacles and to get things go all right" (Basavanna 1975). Many researchers like Goswami (1980) Agnihotri (1987) and Kaur (1993) have observed positive relationship between self confidence and adjustment. A study by Manju Mehta and Teginder

Kaur (1996) found that self confident girls (rural, urban and total sample) were found to be more adjusted in total and in all areas like emotional, social, educational, home and health.

The above reviewed literature indicates the dearth of information about impact of emotional maturity on particularly stress and self confidence among adolescents. Hence the present study is an attempt in this direction. The present study has two fold objectives: To study the effect of emotional maturity on the stress and self-confidence of adolescents. To examine the influence of some personal factors like sex, number of siblings, order of birth, parental education and income on stress and self confidence of adolescents.

### **Hypotheses**

Ha<sub>1</sub>: Adolescents with higher emotional maturity will have significantly lower stress

Ha<sub>2</sub>: Adolescents with higher emotional maturity will have significantly higher self confidence

Ha<sub>3</sub>: The personal factors such as sex, number of siblings, order of birth, parental education and family income will have differential significant influence on stress and self confidence of adolescents

Ha<sub>3.1</sub>: Adolescent girls have significantly higher stress and self confidence than boys

Ha<sub>3.2</sub>: The adolescents with more number of siblings will have significantly higher stress and less self confidence

Ha<sub>3.3</sub>: First born adolescents will have significantly higher stress where as the middle born will have higher self confidence than their counter parts

Ha<sub>3.4</sub>: Adolescent with parents who are illiterate, completed SSLC and completed degree differ significantly among themselves in their stress and self confidence

Ha<sub>3.5</sub>: Adolescents with high family income will have low stress and high self confidence

### **Method**

#### **Sample**

The quota sample of study consists of 105 adolescent students studying in XI and XII class of K.E. Board's Pre University Arts and Commerce College situated at Dharwad city, Karnataka State. The age range of the sample happens to be 16-18 years.

### Tools

**Emotional Maturity Scale:** For measuring emotional maturity of adolescents, a scale developed by Singh and Bhargav (1984) was used. The scale has five components viz., instability, emotional regression, social maladjustment, personality disintegration and lack independence. The scale consists of 10 items in each component except for the component i.e. lack of independence which has 8 items. The responses are scored according to weight age of 5 to 1 (very much to never). Higher the score on the scale, lesser is the degree of emotional maturity and vice versa.

**Students Stress Scale:** A Students' Stress Scale developed by Deo (1997) which consists of 60 items related to stress creating situations is used in the study. Each item has a,b,c and d alternatives and are scored as 0, 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Higher the total score, higher the stress.

**Agnihotri's Self Confidence Inventory (ASCI):** This is developed by Rekha Agnihotri (1987). This consists of 50 items with two response alternatives viz., 'Yes' or 'No'. Abbreviated name ASCI has been used so that the respondent may not decipher the real purpose of the test and fake good. For each item, a score of one is assigned for a response indicative of lack self confidence. Hence, lower the score, higher would be the level self confidence and vice versa.

### Procedure

The above mentioned three scales were administered on the selected sample of adolescents. Some personal information were also collected with bio-data sheet prepared for the same purpose. The obtained responses were scored and further transformed to standard (T) scores. These standard scores were further subjected to 't' and 'F' tests in order to test the stated hypotheses. To see the impact of emotional maturity on stress and self confidence the entire group was divided into two sub groups showing low and high emotional maturity. To carry out the analysis for these two groups, almost equal size of sample is retained by excluding extra responses in both the groups. Further, wherever the larger sample was possible, an attempt is made to include that in the study.

### Results and Discussion

An observation of Table – 1 reveals that the adolescents with high and low emotional maturity differ significantly from each other in their stress

experience ( $t=10.44$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and in their self confidence ( $t=-2.92$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) also. In other words, the adolescents with high emotional maturity have shown significantly higher stress and higher self-confidence than those with lower emotional maturity. This further indicates that Ha1 is to be rejected and Ha2 is to be accepted.

Adolescents with high emotional maturity showing significantly high stress may be attributed to the fact that naturally the emotionally matured people are highly sensitive and more concerned to the happenings of the world and get themselves involved in each and every aspects of life which in turn makes them to feel more stressful. Similarly adolescents with high emotional maturity have better ability of managing, directing and controlling themselves in each and every action thus results in their high self confidence.

A perusal of Table – 2 shows that adolescent boys and girls do not differ significantly in their stress ( $t=1.72$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) and self confidence ( $t=1.83$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ), thus  $H_{a_{3,1}}$  is rejected. However it can be observed that adolescent boys tend to have significantly higher stress than adolescent girls. In case of self confidence, girls tend to have higher self confidence than boys.

An inspection of Table-3 reveals that adolescents with less number of siblings do not differ significantly in their stress experience ( $t=0.80$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) where as differ significantly in their self confidence ( $t=2.96$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) compared to those with more number of siblings. Thus  $H_{a_{3,2}}$  is partially accepted. In other words, the adolescents with more number of siblings have shown significantly higher self confidence than those with less siblings. In the families with more number of children parents may not pay more attention and provide protection for their children. Naturally the children have to develop on their own. In the process of this type of development they experience reality in a better manner due to challenges and risks, thus it contributes to their higher level of self confidence.

A perusal of Table-4 shows that the order of birth of adolescents has not influenced their stress ( $f=1.058$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) and self confidence ( $F=1.389$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) significantly. Thus  $H_{a_{3,3}}$  is rejected.

An observation of Table-5 shows that adolescents with differential educational level of their fathers have shown significant difference among themselves in their stress ( $F=5.303$ ;

**Table-1 : Mean, SD and t- Value of Stress and Self Confidence Scores of Adolescents with Low and High Emotional Maturity (EM)**

Variables	Sub-group	N	Mean	SD	't' values
Stress	Low EM	33	83.34	13.28	10.44***
	High EM	32	89.63	18.91	
Self Confidence	Low EM	33	121.00	32.00	-2.92**
	High EM	32	110.00	32.55	

\*\* p< 0.01; \*\*\* p< 0.001;

**Table-2 : Mean, SD and t- Values for Stress and Self Confidence Scores of Adolescent Girls and Boys**

Variables	Groups	N	Means	SDs	't' values
Stress	Boys	58	82.88	15.17	1.72
	Girls	41	82.02	15.15	
Self Confidence	Boys	58	114.54	48.52	1.83
	Girls	41	110.02	51.86	

**Table-3 : Mean, SD and t-Value for Stress and Self Confidence Scores of Adolescents with Less and More Number of Siblings**

Variables	Groups	N	Means	SDs	't' values
Stress	Less siblings (0-2)	60	83.00	16.25	0.80
	More siblings 3 & above	30	82.53	14.09	
Self Confidence	Less siblings (0-2)	60	116.92	54.47	2.96**
	More siblings 3 & above	36	110.86	41.97	

\*\* p<0.01 Highly Significant

**Table-4 : Shows Means, SDs and 't' Values for Stress and Self Confidence Scores of Adolescents with Varying Income Level Families**

Variables	Groups	N	Means	SDs	't' values
Stress	Below Rs.5000 (per month)	51	84.18	17.50	1.55
	above Rs.5000 (Per month)	33	83.27	17.10	
Self Confidence	Below Rs. 5000 (per month)	50	112.1	44.2	-0.92
	above Rs.5000 (Per month)	33	116.9	36.81	

$p < 0.01$ ) where as the difference is not significant in other comparisons, More specifically, it can be stated that the three groups of adolescents fathers' education is nil, educated upto SSLC and to degree level differ significantly from one another in their stress. This may be attributed to the fact that educational level of father plays significant role in determining the socio-economic status of the family and this in turn affects the stress level also. Thus  $H_{3,4}$  is partially accepted.

An observation of Table-6 reveals that the adolescents with varying degrees of family income level do not differ significantly in their stress ( $t=1.553$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) and self confidence ( $t=-0.921$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Thus  $H_{3.5}$  is rejected.

### Conclusion

The analyzed and interpreted findings of the study have led to the following conclusions. Adolescents with high emotional maturity have significantly higher stress and self confidence than those with lower emotional maturity. Sex of the adolescents has not influenced their stress and self confidence. Having more number of siblings has influenced positively the self confidence of adolescents when compared to those having less number of siblings. Whereas number of siblings has not influenced significantly their stress. Order of birth of adolescents has no significant impact on their stress and self confidence. Varying educational level of adolescents' fathers has significantly influenced the stress experience of their adolescent children. Whereas the educational level of parents has not influenced the self confidence of their adolescent children. Income of family has no significant impact on the stress and self confidence of adolescents.

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**Geeta S. Pастey**, PhD, Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Karnatak University, Dharwad.

**Vijayalaxmi A. Aminbhavi**, PhD, Department of Psychology, Karnatak University, Dharwad.