

A Study on the Relationship between Age of Maturation and Adjustment Pattern of Adolescent Girls in Mysore city

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ABSTRACT The relationship between the age of maturation and the adjustment pattern was analyzed in one hundred adolescent girls in the age of 15-16 yrs., selected from various colleges in Mysore City. The personal data including age of maturation, Socio Economic status were collected. The Bells adjustment student form was administered to assess the adjustment level in Home, Health, Social, Emotional and overall adjustment pattern. The data on Socio Economic status revealed that 75 % of the girls belong to the Middle class families. The results revealed that there is a significant relation between age of maturation and their adjustment pattern showing significant difference in social, emotional and overall adjustment at 11 (early) and 15 (late) years of age of maturation.

Adolescent continues to be seen as a period of developmental challenges, hence it is widely recognized that multiple factors including genetics and environment influence adolescent development which in turn affects their adjustment and behaviour. Recent studies views the multiple dimensions of the adolescents as complex with fresh insights into the process and timing of puberty. It is recognized that the second decade of life is a time of dramatic change: a period of rapid physical growth, endocrine (hormone) changes, cognitive development and increasing analytic capability, emotional growth, a time of self exploration and increasing independence, and active participation in social interaction (Litt., 1995).

It is also reported that age of onset on puberty can affect other aspects of development particularly in girls. It is seen that early onset of puberty can have an adverse effect on girls physical and emotional developments, besides their behaviour (Caspi et al., 1993). There appears to be a variation in both the onset and the tempo of puberty. Girls showed more evidence of adjustment problem with early onset of menarche (Graber et al., 1997). The puberty rather than chronological age may signal the onset of delinquency and problem behaviour among some teenagers (Keenan and Shaw 1997, Rutter et al., 1998). Researchers have speculated that for girls, the transition during puberty may bring about greater vulnerability to other environmental stress factors (Ge et al., 1995). In

the present study an attempt has been made to see the relationship between age of maturation and adjustment pattern of the adolescent girls.

METHODOLOGY

A total number of one hundred adolescent girls in the age group of 15 – 16 yrs were selected randomly from various pre university colleges in Mysore City. The general information about the family background and personal data (including age of menarche) of the girls were obtained by administering a questionnaire. The socio economic status was assessed using Socio – Economic Status Scale (SESS) by R.L. Bharadwaj. The Bells adjustment students form was used to assess the adjustment pattern of the girls. The forms covered mainly four areas of adjustment that is Home, Health, Social and Emotional adjustment and also the overall adjustment of the girls. The collected data were scored and tabulated using the manual and the scoring key of the student adjustment form mentioned earlier. The subjects were classified according to their adjustment levels in the five dimensions of Home, Health, Social, Emotional and overall adjustment. Frequency and percentages were calculated. The correlation coefficient and the Duncan's new multiple range test (DMRT) was implemented to know the significant relation and difference between the age of maturation and the adjustment pattern of the adolescent girls.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics and the Socio Economic Status of the subjects are presented in Table 1. It is seen that 80% belonged to Hindu religion followed by 15% Muslim and 5% Christian. Majority (88%) of the subjects were found to be having nuclear type of family. The family size consisted of 4 –5 members in 77% of the families. The Socio Economic Status of the families revealed that 75% belonged to middle class 21% to upper middle class followed by 4% to upper class respectively.

Effect of age of maturation of the selected girls on the adjustment area viz. Home, Health, Social, Emotional and over all are presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Socio demographic profile of the selected girls

<i>Socio demographic characteristics</i>	<i>Number / Percentage (n = 100)</i>
<i>Socio-Economic Status</i>	
Upper Class	4
Upper Middle Class	21
Middle Class	75
Upper Lower Class	-
Lower Class	-
Total	100
<i>Religion</i>	
Hindu	80
Muslim	15
Christian	5
<i>Type of Family</i>	
Nuclear	88
Extended	7
Joint	5
<i>Family Size</i>	
2 - 3	6
4 - 5	77
5 - 7	11
8 - 9	6
10 & above	-

Table 2: Age of maturation of girls vis-à-vis adjustment areas.

<i>Area of Adjustment</i>	<i>Age at maturation (Years)</i>					<i>F. Value (Total n=100)</i>
	<i>11(n=4)</i>	<i>12(n=39)</i>	<i>13(n=31)</i>	<i>14(n=19)</i>	<i>15(n=7)</i>	
Home Mean Scores	15.25	9.82	9.94	11.26	9.86	1.002 <.411 ^{NS}
Health Mean Scores	10.50	8.10	8.71	9.47	11.29	1.106 <.359 ^{NS}
Social Mean Scores	23.00 ^b	14.46 ^a	16.26 ^a	15.16 ^a	20.43 ^b	5.082 <.001**
Emotional Mean Scores	20.50 ^b	10.62 ^a	14.74 ^{ab}	15.47 ^{ab}	19.43 ^b	5.678 <.000**
Overall (All areas combined) Mean Scores	69.25 ^c	43.13 ^a	49.65 ^{ab}	51.80 ^{ab}	61.00 ^{bc}	3.937 <.005**

** Highly significant

NS – not significant.

Mean Score bearing different superscripts **a,b,c** differ significantly (P< 0.05).

The pattern of scoring in the areas of Home and Health appear to be higher at 11 yrs showed a decrease at 12 and 13 yrs respectively. Mean scores with respect to home and health adjustments were not significantly affected by the age of maturation. Where as social and emotional adjustments were found to be highly influenced by the age of maturation. The pattern of scoring showed the mean scores to be higher at 11 yrs tend to decrease subsequently at 12 years then followed by an increase between 13 to 15 years. In both the areas the impact was highly significant at 11 and 15 yrs respectively though the mean scores at these ages did not differ significantly. When all these adjustment areas were combined (overall adjustment) a similar trend was apparent that is mean score being higher at 11 and 15 yrs significantly different from the scores at 12 yrs. The results indicate a better adjustment particularly in social and emotion at areas are achieved when the age of maturation is above 12 to 13 yrs.

Correlation co-efficient between the age of maturation and adjustment pattern of adolescent girls are shown in Table 3. Age of maturation was found to have an impact on the emotional

Table 3: Correlation coefficient between the age of maturation and adjustment pattern of adolescent girls.

<i>Adjustment Area</i>	<i>Age of maturation (11-15 yrs)</i>	
	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Home	-.014	0.888
Health	0.145	0.151
Social	0.097	0.335
Emotional	0.269	0.007**
All areas combined	0.170	0.090

** Highly Significant >0.01

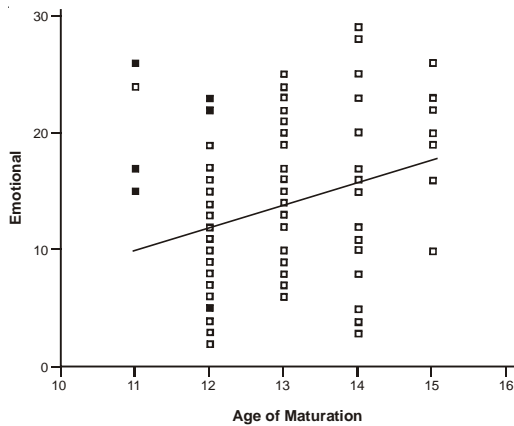


Fig. 1. Regression correlation between emotional adjustment vis a vis age of maturation

adjustment of these girls where other areas failed to attain a significance. Emotional adjustment was found to be related to age of maturation (Fig. 1). Indicating a better adjustment between 12 – 14 years of age of maturation. Both early (11 yrs) and late (15yrs) age of maturation showed a significantly poor emotional adjustment.

Adolescents are more associated with social, environmental and behaviour factor. This can be understood considering the social and cultural contexts in which young people grow and develop, including the familial and societal values, social and economic conditions and institutions that they experience (Rutter et al., 1998). It is believed that both early and late

maturing have problems in social adjustment and behaviour (Flannery et al., 1993). The study findings indicates a positive difference between the age of maturation and social, emotional and overall adjustment. Since adolescents have great vulnerability to other environmental stressors this can affect their physical development, behaviour and emotional development (Caspi et al., 1993).

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