

# Social Maturity of Tribal Adolescents in Relation to Their Family Climate

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. In designing the study, both the authors worked together. Author KS worked for designing interview schedule, literature searches, data collection, statistical analysis and preparation of draft manuscript. Author PS guided the whole research and made corrections in the final manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** The present study was undertaken to find out the relationship between social maturity of the tribal adolescents and their perceptions on their family climate.

**Study Design:** Ex-post factor research design was used for the study.

**Methodology:** A total sample of 120 adolescents out of which 60 boys and 60 girls in the age range of 13-19 years were selected through purposive random sampling method. The study was conducted in Adilabad District of Telangana State. Social maturity of the respondents was assessed by using Rao's Social Maturity Scale. Perceptions of the tribal adolescents on their family climate were assessed by using Family climate Scale by Dr Beena Shah (2001). The data was analysed using Pearson correlation coefficient.

**Results:** The results revealed that, attributes like Freedom, Indulgence, Partiality, Warmth, Trust, Expectations showed significant and positive correlation with social maturity.

*Keywords: Social maturity; family climate; tribal adolescents; Rao; Beena Shah; Adilabad District.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of swift growth, adaptation, learning. This is a dynamic maturational period in which young lives can hinge rapidly—in both positive and negative directions. Adolescence is a period of search for identity and also struggle for independence. Adolescents develop socially and emotionally during this time. Abilities and skills acquired by adolescents in this period continues for the rest of his/her life. Thus, it is a very crucial period for holistic development of an individual.

Social maturity is the process of development of appropriate attitudes for personal, interpersonal and social adequacies of an individual which are vital for functioning effectively in the society. The word "Social Maturity" itself defined as 'Living in community and adjusting to its conditions.' Social maturity refers to attaining maturity in social relationship to establish good relations with family, friends, neighbours and all other persons living in our society. Socio-emotional maturity depends up on the factors like adolescent's family, peer group, school, neighbourhood and society [1].

Social maturity helps adolescents to make judgements, take thoughtful decisions and take appropriate action when faced with problems and critical situations. Socially matured adolescent participates and cooperates in activities without conflicting with others. He/she is capable of taking responsibility for his/her own actions and of making and keeping a many friend.

Family is the most significant and primary unit of society having a strong influence upon the social and emotional development of an individual. It provides affection, safety and security and central for promoting the maturity of an adolescent and determines his future adjustment as an adult. The more loving and accepting parents provide healthy environment for their child to channelize his energy in proper direction and exercise his potential fully to become a productive member of the society. Family climate usually refers to the environment, both physical and emotional, and the state of the family whether it is good, bad, dysfunctional etc. [2]. Parental acceptance plays a major role in determining the attitude and behaviour of the child and that child will be well socialized, being cooperative, friendly, loyal and exhibits emotionally stable behaviours [3]. Family reinforces adult values, promotes success and supports emotional security. So, a greater

degree of family interaction especially with the adolescent is developmentally beneficial [4].

Positive relationships with parents are characterized by low conflict, high levels of support, and open communication [5]. Adolescents who experience high levels of conflict with and/or low levels of support from their parents are more likely to engage in risk behaviours, such as early drug use [6] or drinking and smoking [7] and are more likely to struggle with depressive symptoms [8].

Majority of the studies were conducted on rural and urban adolescents when compared to tribal adolescents and study on familial factors that are contributing to social maturity were not given much focus. Therefore, it is very much appropriate and necessary to conduct a research study on familial attributes contributing to social maturity of tribal adolescents in Adilabad district. Motivated by the above considerations and by the importance of social maturity of tribal adolescents and their associated familial factors, the investigator has taken the present study.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Based on the nature of the research problem and objectives of the present study, Ex-post facto research design was used. 120 tribal adolescents (60 boys and 60 girls) who were in the age range of 13-19 years were purposively selected. Interview schedule was designed by for the study which includes general profile of the tribal adolescents. Rao's social maturity scale developed by Dr Nalini Rao [9] was used to find out the social maturity of the respondents. The scale has three major components and 90 items under nine dimensions-Personal Adequacy by Work Orientation, Self-Direction, Ability to take Stress, Interpersonal Adequacy by communicable, Enlightened Trust, Cooperation and Social Adequacy by social Commitment, social Tolerance and Openness to change. The response options available for the items are: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for positive items and 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 for negative items respectively. The scores of a respondent on 3 sub-scales of the social maturity scale collectively gives the Composite Social Maturity Score.

Family Climate Scale developed by Dr. Beena Shah [10] was used to find out the family climate of the respondents. The test comprises 90 statements out of which 48 statements are

negative and 42 statements are positive. An individual has to answer selecting one option out of the three options given with each statement i.e. "Always", "Sometimes" and "Never".

The sub-dimensions of Family climate scale include Restrictiveness Vs. Freedom, Indulgence Vs. Avoidance, Partiality Vs. Fairness, Attention Vs. Negligence, Acceptance Vs. Rejection, Warmth Vs. Cold Relations, Trust Vs. Distrust, Dominance Vs. Submissiveness, Expectation Vs. Hopelessness, Open Communication Vs. Controlled Communication.

Statistical analysis was done by using Pearson correlation coefficient.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to study the relationship between various attributes of family climate with social maturity of tribal adolescents can be understood by looking at the below Table 1. Pearson correlation coefficient was used for statistical analysis.

The above table depicts that, perceptions of tribal adolescents on positive family climate had significantly and positively correlated with social maturity at 0.01 level of significance. It means higher the positive/favourable family climate, better the social maturity of the tribal adolescent. This might be due to the reason that, a warm and supportive family climate which allows freedom helps the child to develop to his maximum limits and excel outside their home, to learn positive behaviours like empathy, communication skills, to take decisions which directs their life and thus helps to develop proper interpersonal relations. The results of the present study are in line with the results of a study conducted by [11] who found that social maturity of adolescents would be higher when they perceive their home environment and parents as loving, demanding, nurturing and democratic and lower when family environment was perceived as controlling, punishing and depriving. Similar results were found in a study conducted by [12] in which they found that, more than ninety percent of tribal adolescents reported that their parents take care of them well in terms of love and affection. Most of socially matured and well-adjusted children belong to those families where parental attitudes are favourable and a wholesome bond existed between parents and children [13].

Freedom in the family had significantly and positively correlated with social maturity of the

tribal adolescents at 0.05 level of significance. Tribal Adolescents from families with more freedom had better social maturity in terms of forming healthy and friendly social relationships, more will be positive attitude towards work with others, good social communication skills and better interpersonal relationships with others among the adolescents. There existed a significant negative relationship between Social maturity and Parental Control [11].

Indulgence in the family had significantly and positively correlated with social maturity of the tribal adolescent at 0.01 level of significance. It indicates that higher the adolescent's involvement in the with his family, better will be his/her social maturity. This might be due to the reason that, when the family is interested in the problems of the child and provides support in the academics and extracurricular activities, it boosts the self-confidence of the adolescent which eventually increases his/her participation in the social activities, in their capacity to experience pleasure in works, initiation to act independently and take control over one's actions. It also helps adolescents to works jointly with others which improves their interactions with individuals whose views vary from theirs. Thus, adolescents belonging to families in which parents indulge them in decision-making process, seeks their cooperation and invites their suggestions in family matters tend to develop more sociable behaviours. Similar results were found in the study conducted by [11] who found a significant negative relationship between social maturity and isolation i.e., adolescents who are isolated exhibited low levels of social maturity. In a study conducted by [14] observed that parental support decreases the antisocial behaviour of adolescents and enhances socially acceptable behavior (social maturity).

Fairness in the family had significantly and positively correlated with social maturity of the tribal adolescent at 0.01 level of significance. It depicts that, higher the fair treatment of adolescent in their family, better the social maturity. This might be due to the reason that, unbiased treatment between the siblings and friends of the adolescent by the family members makes the child feel that he is equally valued and worthy. This helps him/her to actively take part in the societal activities and build proper interpersonal interactions and gain suitable perceptions in work-related skills. Thus, adolescents who belonged to families who are fair in the treatment feel themselves as composed, relaxed, and satisfied.

**Table 1. Correlation between attributes family climate and social maturity**

S. No	Variable	Social maturity
1.	Freedom	.189*
2.	Indulgence	.289**
3.	Fairness	.244**
4.	Attention	-0.78
5.	Acceptance	.035
6.	Warmth	.268**
7.	Trust	.205*
8.	Dominance	-0.24
9.	Expectation	.351**
10.	Open Communication	.141
11.	Overall Family Climate	.310**

\* Significant at ( $P < 0.05$ ); \*\*Significant at ( $P < 0.01$ )

Warmth in the family had significantly and positively correlated with social maturity of the tribal adolescent at 0.01 level of significance. It means that, higher the warmth in the family, better will be the social maturity. The reason could be that, child who receives emotional and moral support from their family will develop attitude of empathy, caring and sharing towards others, shows positive attitude towards work, have feelings of security and faith in one's efforts. The adolescent will be able to communicate and cooperate with friends, teachers and were easily adaptable to change which helps in improving their interpersonal relationships and social maturity. Thus, adolescents who are well accepted and has close and warm relations with parents tend to develop a well-balanced personality. Similar results were found in a study conducted by [11] who found a significant positive relationship between social maturity and nurturance i.e., adolescents who are better nurtured exhibited high levels of social maturity.

Trust on the adolescent in his family had significantly and positively correlated with social maturity of the tribal adolescent at 0.05 level of significance. It indicates that, higher the trust between adolescent and his family members, better the social maturity. This could be because of the reason that, when the adolescent knows that his family had trust on them, it encourages him/her to behave with honesty and develops strong moral principles which intern helps them to be internally consistent. Trust of family on adolescent helps him to direct his own life, feeling of security, faith in one's actions and ability to regard to rules and practices that are socially accepted.

Expectations in the family had significantly and positively related with social maturity of the tribal

adolescent at 0.01 level of significance. More the positive expectations of the family on adolescents, higher will be his/her social maturity. This is because, positive expectations of the family results in providing the adolescent with various opportunities to excel.

The components like Attention, Acceptance, Dominance and Open communication in the family climate did not show any significant relationship with overall social maturity.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

We can thus conclude from the above research that, the attributes of family climate like Positive expectations on the adolescent, Indulgence of him/her in the family matters, displaying of fair attitude towards him/her, giving freedom and trusting him/her had positively related with social maturity. These attitudes of family climate would help tribal adolescents in attaining social maturity.

Family is a primary and most important socializing agent in the life of any individual. If family surrounds the adolescent with an atmosphere which includes freedom, acceptance, fair treatment, warmth, and trust, the adolescent tends to become more socially competent and acquires more social skills from exposure to high quality nurturing relationships with others.

The research is useful to the personnel working with tribal adolescents and their families in planning intervention programmes regarding their development and betterment. The study helps the professionals in Guidance and Counselling services while offering their services to the tribal families. This work is beneficial to teachers who play in key role in building the future of the adolescents. Teachers play an important role in

explaining the parents about the performance, emotional and social behaviours of the tribal adolescents.

The future studies can be conducted in this area should include sophisticated representative sampling procedure and on large samples to make more generalizations. Other significant influencing variables like school environment, neighborhood, peer and community influences for the social maturity can be studied. The presented study can be tested under different geographical settings like rural, tribal and urban areas to assess the validity of the results and can be tested on different age groups such as school age and young adults. A similar study can be conducted with longer duration of intervention to see its effects and outcomes.

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### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist

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