

Gender based comparison of self regulation of adolescents across socio-economic group

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation is conducted to examine gender disparity in self regulation capacity of adolescents (in reference to emotional maturity) across three socio-economic groups (upper, middle and lower socio-economic group). Sample was selected through stratified random sampling techniques. The selected sample for study was 450 adolescent (225 boys and 225 girls) between the age group of 13 to 19 years belonging to three socio-economic groups (upper, middle and lower socio-economic group) from Prayag Raj city of Uttar Pradesh. Kuppuswamy's socioeconomic scale (1961) which is revised by Kumar and Tiwari (2014) was used for assessing the socio-economic status of the adolescents. To access self regulation of adolescents in reference to emotional maturity across socio-economic groups, questionnaire was developed by researcher. Finding revealed that a significant gender difference in self regulation capacity of adolescents was found in all socio-economic groups, where adolescent boys have been found with significantly better self regulation abilities in comparison to their girl's counterparts.

Key Words : Adolescents, Self regulation, Emotional maturity, Socio-economic groups

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is highly emotionally charged time of life. The developmental challenges are daunting, the vulnerability from insecurity is higher, the demands of growth are many, the conflicts over independence are so frustrating and the experience of growing older is so exciting. Adolescence is also regard as a period of heightened stress. It is one of the toughest phases of life. It is in between season of spring and summer of life. Psychologists have regarded it as a period of heightened emotionality. Physical and hormonal changes bring emotional fluctuation and uncertainty.

Adolescence may be considered as emotionally trying period. It is a time of both opportunities and risks. It is a period, when the behavior highly derived and influenced by the emotions. Teenagers are on the threshold of love life, work and participation into adult

society. Yet, adolescence is also a time, when some young people engage in behavior that closes off their options and limits their possibilities that provoke risks, challenges and difficulties which may yield the risk of psychosomatic problem, such as anxiety, tension, frustration; sometimes depression and suicide.

It is also the phase of decision making that may open up or close off the future opportunity and it can only be tackled by regulating the emotions in mature way. Young people's emotional well being is increasingly recognized as being important not only in own right, but; because emotions at this stage play a significant role in learning, cognitive, social skill and maturation of adolescence. It plays key role in attaining intimacy, positive self concept, emotional stability and social understanding as well as it is very helpful in healthy adult hood development. Thus, self regulation is an important deterrent for controlling the emotions and achieving

emotional maturity in adolescence stage. *Self - Regulation* is defined as individual ability controlling impulses, one's behavior, emotions and thought and react socially acceptable way. It measures in terms of adaptability, impulse control, deferring gratification and mental flexibility.

Objectives:

- To access self regulation level of adolescent boys and girls in reference to emotional maturity across three socio-economic group (upper, middle and lower socio-economic group)
- To compare self regulation capacity between adolescent boys and girls across three socio-economic groups.

METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the above objective, Exploratory Research Design has been followed in the present study and cross Sectional survey method has been applied for collecting the data. Being an educational hub, Prayag Raj city was purposively selected for the study. The total selected samples were 450 adolescents, comprising of 150 adolescents, including 75 boys and 75 girls each, from three socio economic group *i.e.* lower, middle and upper socio economic groups, within the age group of 13-18 years, who were studying in between 7-12 standard. For fulfilling the purpose of study, six higher secondary schools were selected from selected respondents. Socio-economic status was accessed by Kuppuswamy's socio-economic scale (1961) which is revised by Kumar and Tiwari (2014) and a self made questionnaire on emotional maturity is used for comparing self regulation of adolescents across three socio-economic groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result shows the frequency and percentage distribution of self regulation level of the respondents. The scores have been divided into five categories, *i.e.* High, Good, Average, Low and Poor as per range of score given in the scale and total No. of responses in each category has been considered to find the distribution of respondents falling under various categories of self regulation (in reference to emotional maturity)

Table 1 and Fig. 1 and 2 furnish information in reference to self regulation of adolescents belonging to the upper socio-economic status, which is very important

determent of emotional maturity of adolescents. Table depicts that 32 per cent adolescent boys and equal percentage of adolescent girls were found with high self regulation in them and 30 per cent adolescent boys and 24 per cent adolescent had good self regulation levels. 12 per cent of adolescent boys and equal percentage of girls were assessed with an average self regulation in them and 16 per cent of adolescent boys and 20 per cent of adolescent girls had low self regulation levels. Rest, 8 per cent adolescent boys and 12 per cent adolescent girls were found with poor self regulation in them.

Table 1 : Distribution of self regulation levels of adolescents in upper socio-economic group

Sr. No.	Categories	Boys (N=75)		Girls (N=75)	
		F	P	F	P
1.	High	24	32	24	32
2.	Good	24	32	18	24
3.	Average	9	12	9	12
4.	Low	12	16	15	20
5.	Poor	6	8	9	12

F= Frequency
P= Percentage

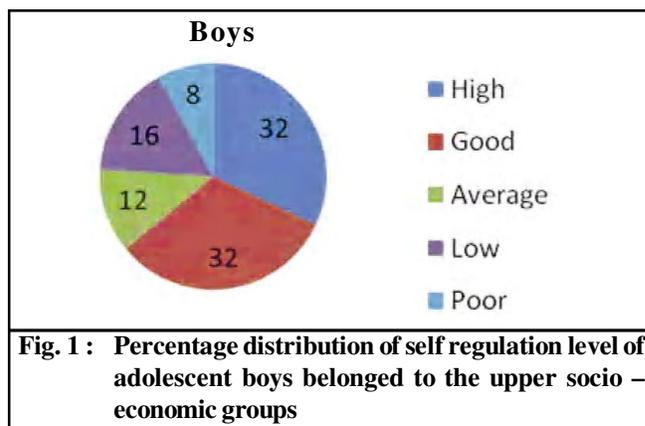


Fig. 1 : Percentage distribution of self regulation level of adolescent boys belonged to the upper socio – economic groups

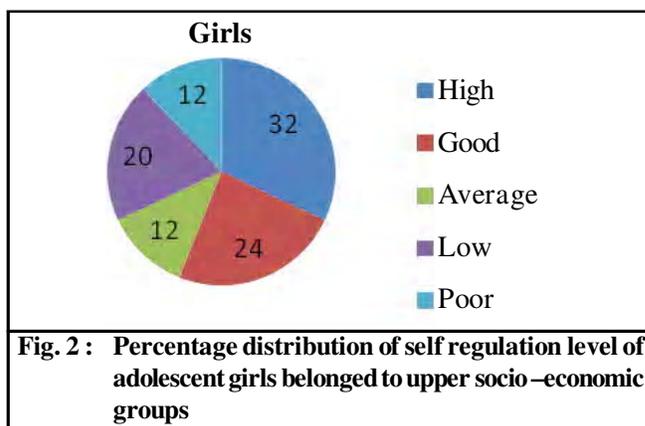


Fig. 2 : Percentage distribution of self regulation level of adolescent girls belonged to upper socio – economic groups

Findings also revealed that mostly adolescents (boys and girls both), who belonged to upper socio-economic group were observed with high and good self regulation capacities. It means these adolescents (boys and girls) of upper socio-economic group were capable of controlling their emotional impulse and they have adaptability to handle emotional situations positively. They could wait in order to achieve desired emotional state rather than respond rashly and they were also very flexible to adjust with emotional fluctuation and its intensity. It could be attributed to parental nurturance and support. In high socio-economic group, children are often treated with love, warmth and respect. They also get open environment to discuss all aspects of life and good conduct that may prevent them from negative and impulsive behavior and in turns, very helpful in cultivating pro -social activity and skills to manage their emotion accordingly and achieve harmony in all situation. Davis (2012) also reported that high socio-economic group reported a significantly high score in emotional adaptability. Blair and Diamond (2008) also supported that child from higher socio economic status display better executive functions like ability to actively direct, control and regulate thought and behavior.

Table 2 and Fig. 3 and 4 illustrate that distribution of self regulation level of adolescents belonged to the middle socio economic group Table represents that 32 per cent of adolescent boys and 28 per cent of adolescent girls were found with high self regulation capacity in them. 32 per cent boys and 24 per cent girls were found with good self regulation capacities in them. 8 per cent adolescent boys and 12 per cent girls had average self regulation level. 16 per cent boys and 20 per cent girls were observed with low self regulation in them. Rest 16 per cent adolescent boys and equal percentage of adolescent girls had poor regulation levels.

Table 2 : Distribution of self regulation levels of adolescents in the middle socio-economic group

Sr. No	Categories	Boys (N=75)		Girls (N=75)	
		F	P	F	P
1.	High	24	32	21	28
2.	Good	24	32	18	24
3.	Average	6	8	9	12
4.	Low	12	16	15	20
5.	Poor	9	12	12	16

F= Frequency
P= Percentage

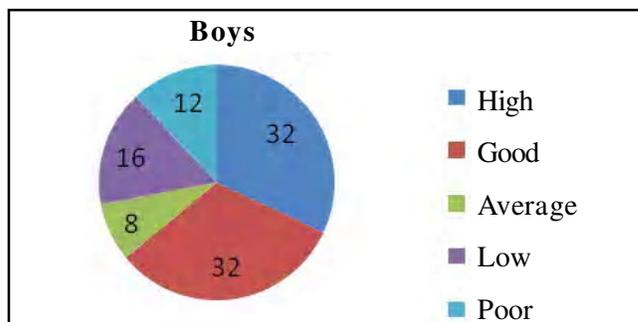


Fig. 3 : Percentage distribution of self regulation levels of adolescent boys belonged to the middle socio – economic group

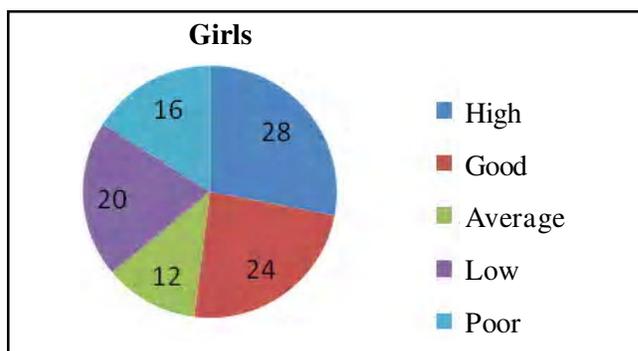


Fig. 4 : Percentage distribution of self regulation levels of adolescent girls belonged to the middle socio – economic group

It is clear from the findings that similar to high income group, majority of the adolescents (boys and girls) of middle socio-economic group were also observed with either high or good level of self regulation in them. It means, similarly upper socio-economic group, adolescents of middle socio-economic group were also good in adaptability and also capable to manage and control to their impulses as well as emotional fluctuation. It could be because of good interpersonal relationship with their parents, who provide them proper guidance and support to deal with emotional situations and regulate their emotions accordingly. Dubois *et al.* (2002) also said that positive interpersonal relationships promote favorable adjustment in adolescents. According to Grolnick *et al.* (2009), when parents support autonomy, children are more likely to be intrinsically motivated and have better ability to take control of their own behavior and learning.

Table 3. and Fig. 5 and 6 represent distribution of adolescents in reference to their self regulation of those, who belonged to lower socio economic group. Highest percentage of boys (28 %) were found with average

and highest percentage of girls (28%) were found with poor self regulation capacities in them. 24 per cent boys and equal percentage of girls were observed with high self regulation levels. 24 per cent boys and equal percentage of girls had good self regulation levels. 16 per cent boys were low and 12 per cent girls were average in their self regulation levels. Rest, 8 per cent boys and 12 per cent girls had poor self regulation levels.

Table 3 : Distribution of self regulation levels of adolescents in the middle socio-economic group

Sr. No.	Capacity	Boys (N=75)		Girls (N=75)	
		F	P	F	P
1.	High	18	24	18	24
2.	Good	18	24	18	24
3.	Average	21	28	9	12
4.	Low	12	16	21	28
5.	Poor	6	8	9	12

F= Frequency
P= Percentage

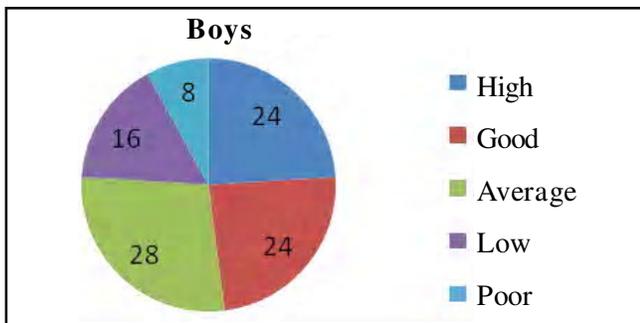


Fig. 5 : Percentage distribution of self regulation levels of adolescent boys belonged to the lower socio-economic group

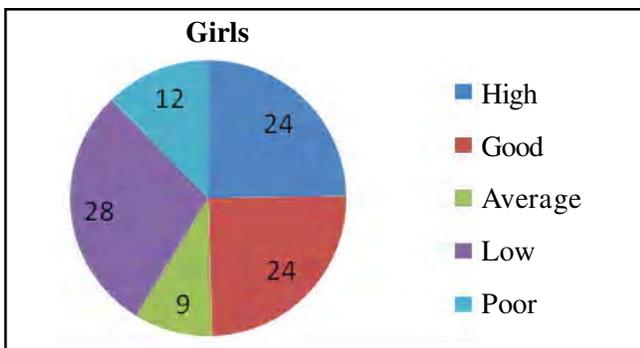


Fig. 6 : Percentage distribution of self regulation levels of adolescent girls belonged to the lower socio-economic group

Findings revealed that in lower socio-economic group, highest percentage of adolescent boys were average and highest percentage of adolescent girls were low in their self regulation levels, findings also revealed that more than half sample of adolescents (boys and girls) of lower socio-economic group were come under the range of average to poor level of self regulation, which means majority of adolescents of lower socio-economic group have low adaptability to manage their emotion and felt difficulty in dealing with emotional fluctuations and outbursts. They were anxiety prone and instable. The result could be attributed to their constraints especially financial, which generally lead to emotional instability at this age as all of their desires and requirements cannot be met due to availability of very limited resources to them. A prolonged deprivation of resources sometimes leads to various emotional problems and emotional instability in adolescents. Kalff *et al.* (2001) also supported that adolescents from lower socio-economic status families are more prone to problematic behaviour, anxiety and depressive moods, when compared to adolescent from high SES level families. According to Anl and Karstl (2008), individual from low SES families are more prone to depression and anxiety. Molnar *et al.* (2008) also said that lower level of socio-economic status is associated with higher level of aggression.

Table 4 shows that gender differences in self regulation of adolescents (in reference to emotional maturity) across socio-economic group. Result indicates that adolescent boys scored higher in self regulation capacity that their girls counter parts (in all socio-economic groups). In the higher socio-economic group the mean score of the boys was 36.13 and girls scored 34.05. In the middle socio-economic group boys had 35.587 mean score where as girls scored 32.8. In the lower socio-economic group, the mean score of boys was 34 where as girls mean score was 32. Further comparison between the genders in self regulation skill through test of significance showed that the “t”-calculated was higher than “t”- tabulated in the entire socio-economic group reflecting significant difference between the two genders in self regulation capacities. In the upper socio-economic groups, the “t”- calculated was 2.0689. In middle socio-economic group it was 2.9474 and in the lower socio-economic group the “t”-calculated was 2.1084 which is higher than “t”-tabulated (1.98) in all the socio-economic groups. Therefore, it is clear from the results that there are significant gender differences in self regulation in all

Table 4: Comparison of self regulation (in reference to emotional maturity) between adolescent boys and girls across three socio-economic groups

Socio-economic groups (SEG)	Boys		Girls		t-score	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t cal	t tab
Upper SEG	36.13	5.21	34.05	7.39	2.0689*	
Middle SEG	35.59	5.916	32.8	5.66	2.9474*	1.98
Lower SEG	34	5.284	32	6.29	2.1084*	

*significant = $p < 0.05$ level

the socio-economic groups, where boys have been found with significantly better self regulation abilities in comparison to their girl's counterparts.

Adolescent boys were found better in their self regulation skills than girls, it could be attributed to fact that girls due to their pubertal age go through lots of physical and hormonal changes and they are also faced other stressor like social pressure, academic as well as tend to be protected. These factors are responsible for arising emotional turmoil that leads them towards emotional instability. Because of these reasons, adolescent girls became anxious, irritable, frustrated easily as compare to boys and vulnerable to psychological problem. Gender differences found in the above result may also because perceptions on emotional skills are biased by gender stereotypes norms and sex roles in the society. In Indian society, females are supposed to be humble, soft, dependent, protected and get less autonomy and freedom of expression than man, whereas male are supposed to be assertive, independent and get more freedom, that's help them to be self confident, optimistic and adaptable and able to handle stress better than women.

The result bears resemblance to the study of Sati and Gir (2015) who reported that adolescent boys had better intrapersonal and interpersonal management skills as compared to adolescent girls. This may be because generally girls are found to be more anxious and prevalence of depressive symptoms (Bond *et al.*, 2005) and males are better at regulating emotions and are skillful at controlling impulse and tolerating stress. Sanchez *et al.* (2008). Sharma (2012) was also supported that the genders emotional maturity among boys can be attributed to the factors that can easily face the hard and stress situations where as girls become anxious and frustrated easily. Ahmed *et al.* (2009) also reported that there is a significant difference between men and women on some subscales of emotional intelligence *i.e.* Assertiveness, Independence, Stress tolerance and impulse control, in which men show more assertiveness, self recognition about himself show more independence and management

according to the situations than the women. According to Bachchan *et al.* (2016) Adolescent boys were found to more responsible than girls and better able to make intelligent decision using a healthy balance of emotions and reasons.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the finding a significant gender (adolescent boys and adolescent girls) difference was found in self regulation capacities in the all three socio-economic groups (upper, middle and lower socio-economic groups) and study also reported that adolescents boys were better in self regulation level than the adolescents girls. It is also inferred that adolescents (boys and girls) belonged to upper socio-economic group and middle socio-economic groups were better in self regulation level than lower socio-economic group. So results of study clearly indicate that socio-economic status and gender both are prominent factor that affected self regulation capacity of adolescents.

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