

Assessment of Family Environment of Middle Adulthood Respondents

Kiranpreet Kaur¹, Sushma Kaushik²

¹PG Student, Department of Human Development and Family Studies
kiranpreetkaurkaur22[at]gmail.com

²Professor, Department of Extension Education and Communication Management
sushma.kaushik9[at]gmail.com

Abstract: Present study was conducted to assess family environment of middle adulthood respondents in Hisar district of Haryana State. Sample comprised of 100 rural and urban respondents from middle adulthood age category. Family Environment scale by Bhatia and Chadha (2002) comprising 8 dimensions on family was administered. The study revealed that rural respondents had higher scores for cohesion, acceptance & caring whereas urban respondents had higher scores for expressiveness and active recreational orientation. Results indicated significant difference among rural and urban respondents with respect to cohesion, expressiveness, active recreational orientation and acceptance & caring. However, no difference was found in the family environment of rural and urban respondents regarding conflict, independence, organization and control.

Keywords: Family Environment, Cohesion, Expressiveness, Acceptance, Independence, Active recreational orientation, Organization, Control

1. Introduction

Middle Adulthood is the period between 40 to 60 years of age. During this period middle age people start decreasing their physical abilities while their responsibilities increase. This stage is also known as sandwich stage because at this stage three generations are together (i.e. parents, children and grandparents) and parents create a balance between all family members. They play a role as a bridge between children and grandparents. According to Lachman (2004), Middle adulthood involves balancing work and relationship responsibilities in the midst of the physical and psychological changes associated with aging.

The family environment is one of the most important factors affecting an individual's whole life. The family interactions and interpersonal relationships are seen between parents, parent and child, siblings, and any other relative or person living in the household. Talukdar and Goswami (2013) concluded that psychological well-being and family environment is interrelated for positive life of family members. Bagi and Kumar (2014) on the contrary reported that correlation between cohesion and expressiveness, cohesion and conflict, acceptance and caring was found positively significant but subjective wellbeing was not significantly correlated with any of the factor of family environment. Study concluded that family environment does not necessarily hint subjective wellbeing of adolescent. Barthwal and Mohi-Ud-Din (2016) concluded that adults living in extended families enjoyed a high congenial sibling relationship as compared to adults living in nuclear families. Adults living in extended families were not only in frequent contact with their siblings because of proximity but were also more emotionally close with them as compared to adults living in nuclear families. Therefore, present study was conducted to assess family environment of rural and urban middle adulthood respondents and to find out the

relationship of independent variables with family environment.

2. Methodology

The study was conducted on both rural and urban middle adulthood sample in Hisar district of Haryana state. Urban sample was taken from CCS Haryana Agricultural University while matching rural sample was taken from Deva Village, Hisar. 50 rural and 50 urban adults from the selected age group were drawn randomly including equal number of males and females. Thus total 50 males and 50 females were selected. Age, sex, background and family income of respondents were taken as independent variables while Family Environment constituted dependent variable which was measured with the help of Family Environment scale by Bhatia and Chadha (2002). Data were collected personally by the researcher through well-structured interview schedule.

3. Result

1) Family Environment of Respondents

Family environment of middle adulthood rural and urban respondents measured on 8 parameters has been presented in table-1. The data in table 1 indicates that though maximum rural as well as urban respondents had average level of cohesion but rural respondents had more cohesion (52.0%) than urban respondents (44.0%). Further maximum urban respondents (46.0%) had high level of expressiveness while in rural area majority of respondents (62.0%) had average level of expressiveness. The study also revealed that both rural and urban respondents had average level of conflict, acceptance and caring, independence, organization and control. However, half of urban respondents (50.0%) had high recreation orientation, while 60.0 percent rural respondents had average active recreational orientation.

Table 1: Family Environment of Respondents

Sr. No	Sub- Scales	Scores	Rural (50) F (%)	Urban (50) F (%)
1	Cohesion			
	High	61 & above	12(24.0)	8(16.0)
	Average	46 to 60	31(62.0)	22(44.0)
	Low	45 & below	7(14.0)	20(40.0)
2	Expressiveness			
	High	40 & above	7(14.0)	23(46.0)
	Average	28 to 39	31(62.0)	20(40.0)
	Low	27 & below	12(24.0)	7(14.0)
3	Conflict			
	Low	52 & above	10(20.0)	10(20.0)
	Average	38 to 51	25(50.0)	31(62.0)
	High	37 & below	15(30.0)	9(18.0)
4	Acceptance and Caring			
	High	55 & above	8(16.0)	12(24.0)
	Average	41 to 54	32(64.0)	28(56.0)
	Low	40 & below	10(20.0)	10(20.0)
5	Active Recreational Orientation			
	High	34 & above	11(22.0)	25(50.0)
	Average	26 to 33	30(60.0)	13(26.0)
	Low	25 & below	9(18.0)	12(24.0)
6	Independence			
	High	41 & above	8(16.0)	12(24.0)
	Average	31 to 40	32 (64.0)	35(70.0)
	Low	30 & below	10(20.0)	3(6.0)
7	Organization			
	High	10 & above	9(18.0)	11(22.0)
	Average	7 to 9	28(56.0)	26(52.0)
	Low	6 and below	13(26.0)	13(26.0)
8	Control			
	High	18 & above	13(26.0)	7(14.0)
	Average	14 to 17	25(50.0)	23(46.0)
	Low	13 & below	12(24.0)	20(40.0)

2) Mean family environment scores of rural and urban respondents

Table 2 highlights mean family environment score of rural and urban respondents. It can be seen from table that rural respondents had higher scores for cohesion (55.2%) and acceptance & caring (45.34%) while urban respondents scored higher with respect to expressiveness (34.7%) and active recreational orientation (36.6%). The t-values also indicate significant difference among rural and urban respondents with respect to cohesion, expressiveness, active recreational orientation and acceptance & caring. However, no difference was found in the family environment of rural and urban respondents regarding conflict, independence, organization and control.

Table 2: Mean family environment scores of rural and urban respondents

Sub-Scale	Rural		Urban		t-test
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Cohesion	55.20	9.37	51.26	8.04	4.587*
Expressiveness	33.42	6.88	34.70	7.75	3.252*
Conflict	43.14	7.54	43.56	7.26	0.171
Acceptance and caring	45.34	9.72	43.88	7.89	2.047*
Active recreational orientation	31.28	5.55	36.60	6.30	2.664*
Independence	31.24	7.59	31.22	7.07	0.134
Organization	7.58	2.30	7.84	2.05	0.167
Control	14.48	4.04	14.68	3.27	0.180

*significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 3: Relationship of Independent variable with Family Environment Scores

Sub-Scale	Sex of Head of Household	Background	Family Income	Type of Family
Cohesion	0.004	-0.254*	-0.205*	0.214*
Expressiveness	0.068	0.198*	0.282*	0.263*
Conflict	0.01	0.187	0.029	0.169
Acceptance and caring	-0.124	-0.264*	-0.103	0.307*
Active recreational orientation	0.021	0.258*	0.264*	0.162
Independence	-0.063	-0.085	-0.032	0.046
Organization	-0.02	-0.078	-0.139	0.173
Control	-0.019	-0.133	-0.23	0.081

*significant at 0.05 level of significance

3) Relationship of Independent variable with Family Environment Scores

Relationship of family environment scores with independent variable has been presented in table 3. Out of eight sub-scale sex of head of household was not found associated with any of the parameter. Cohesion and acceptance & caring found negatively but significantly associated with background while expressiveness and active recreational orientation was found positively and significantly associated with background of respondents. Similarly, family income was negatively associated with cohesion but positively associated with expressiveness and active recreational orientation. As regards type of family, it was found positively and significantly associated with cohesion, expressiveness and acceptance & caring. Thus, it can be concluded from table that rural respondents having joint families had higher cohesion and acceptance & caring whereas urban respondents having higher income and joint family had higher expressiveness and active recreational orientation. Other variables were not found associated with sub-scale parameters.

4. Conclusion

The study revealed that rural area respondents had higher scores for cohesion, acceptance & caring whereas urban respondents had higher score for expressiveness and active recreational orientation. Income and background of respondents positively and significantly associated with expressiveness and active recreational orientation but both negatively associated with cohesion sub-scale and background of respondents also negatively associated with acceptance & caring. Results showed that type of family was positively associated with cohesion, expressiveness and acceptance & caring. However, no difference was found in the family environment of rural and urban respondents regarding conflict, independence, organization and control.

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