

# Socio-Demographic Variables and Temperament among High School Students

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**Abstract:** *Temperament refers to the reaction of the person toward emotional situation. The temperament of the person can reveal about personality of the person because it is related to the consistency or mental imbalance and measured as one of the important factors of personality. Temperament contribute to the character of individual and the direction of increasing knowledge and intelligence. In the present study, temperament of high school students was studied. These dimensions are: sociability, ascendance, secretive, reflective, impulsive, placid, accepting, responsible, vigorous, cooperative, persistence, warmth, aggressive, tolerance and tough minded and total scores for temperament. The overall sample consisted of 80 students from schools of Jaipur city comprising of an equal number of boys (40) and girls(40). Dimensions of Temperament scale (DTS) prepared by Dr. N. K. Chadha. The data was analysed by using statistical techniques viz. Mean, S.D and t test. The results showed that girls were found to have better temperament in comparison to boys. The significant difference was found in the dimensions of temperament among the boys and girls.*

**Keywords:** Temperament, Personality, Sociability, Cooperative, Warmth, Aggressive, Tolerance, Tough Minded

## 1. Introduction

Temperament is typically defined as an individual's manner of responding to the environment and is widely conceptualized as biologically based. It is primary building block of personality (Moore *et al.* 2005). It is an individual's innate style of responding to the environment in both behavioural and emotional ways (Griggs *et al.*,2009). According to Rothbart and Rueda (2005), "It refers to individual differences in behaving, feeling and thinking which are relatively stable across time and situation and which reflect relatively enduring biological makeup of the organism, influenced over the time by heredity, maturation and experience." It is an individual's innate style of responding to the environment in both behavioural and emotional ways (Griggset. *al* , 2009).

**Temperament** is an individual's characteristic level of emotional excitability or intensity and is typically recognized within the first few weeks after birth. It is often assumed to be an early indication of personality, though personality combines temperament with experiences to shape life-long traits.

The teachers should create a environment in the class to increase the understanding of the role of temperament that can allow the child's temperament to work with the demands and features of the classroom rather than setting the classroom in opposition to the child's temperament (Kristal, 2005).

### Temperament of adolescent

Adolescents undergo multiple changes in themselves and their social environment amid biological maturation, cognitive development, evolving sexuality, school transitions, and changes in social relationships (Denham, Wyatt, Bassett, Echeverria, & Knox, 2009). Adolescents' temperamental characteristics can be assumed to play a role

in how they adjust to these changes (Sanson, Hemphill, & Smart, 2004).

Stressful events affect the development of temperament during adolescence. Adolescents who have experienced stressful events are more frustrated at the age of 16 than at the age of 11. This not only applies to very serious events, but also to an accumulation of milder events that nearly everyone experiences, for example moving house. Adolescents who do not experience stress become less frustrated the older they get. After stressful events, adolescents also have a greater chance of developing psychological disorders such as depression or behavioural problems.

Stressful events are known risk factors for the development of psychological disorders. The latter occur more often right from the start of adolescence. This rise, combined with the biological, psychological and social changes that mark adolescence, leads to the question whether adolescence can be regarded as a sensitive period with regard to the influence of stress.

### Effect of gender on temperament

There are differences in the meaning between the terms "sex" and "gender". The most common conceptualization is the use of the term "sex" for the biological aspects (hormones, chromosomes, genitals) of being male or female, and "gender" for the social or cultural aspects. Regarding the developmental process, children develop ideas on gender identification from about 1 1/2 to 3 years of age (Santrock, 2007), some findings imply that many children understand gender labels by their second birthday and even before children can walk or talk, they have in place perceptual categories that distinguish "male" from "female".

According to the World Health Organization, early childhood is the most intensive time of brain development in a person's life. In the first three years of life, a child's brain is most sensitive to external factors -- including family

environment. A child whose family does not provide an enriching and stimulating environment -- whose parents don't interact and speak to him and don't nurture a healthy attachment -- may become developmentally behind. WHO warns that a child with a stressful family environment may go on to experience learning disabilities and has a higher risk of coming down with a stress-related illness.

Temperamental characteristics may also be perceived or experienced differently for boys or girls, and thus the role of temperament in psychopathology may differ across gender (Else-Quest, Hyde, Goldsmith, & Van Hulle, 2006).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the connection between child temperament and internalizing and externalizing behaviors. The literature suggests that child behavior can be influenced by many factors. It looks at how parenting style interacts with temperament to influence emotional and behavioral outcomes. This study focuses on gender as one influential factor of a child's development and behavior. It examines aspects of child temperament and development that school psychologists may consider when conducting assessments and using the decision-making model for child outcomes.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

- To study the temperament in High School Students.
- To assess the dimensions of temperament of students with respect to gender.

### Hypotheses

Ho1 Temperament of students will be different among the boys and girls.

Ho2 Boys and girls will have different temperament level.

## 3. Methodology

### Sample size

A sample of 80 students (40 males and 40 females) was taken from the school falling under the age group of 12-16 years through simple random sampling method.

### Locale of study

Sample was collected from the school of Jaipur city.

### Procedure

Prior permission from the Principals of the selected school was sought out in order to carry out the study. Rapport was established with the subjects. They were briefed about the study and confidentiality of the results. Taking into consideration their convenience, days were fixed up for administration of tools. On the scheduled days, the selected subjects were administered.

### Instruments

Dimensions of Temperament Scale developed by Chadha and Chandna (1984) is simply a measure the way one behaves. Temperament is one of the most important dimensions of personality. The scale consists of 152 items measuring the following 15 dimensions viz. sociability, ascendance, secretiveness, reflectiveness, impulsivity, placidness, acceptance, responsibility, vigorousness,

cooperativeness, persistence, warmth, aggressiveness, tolerance, and tough mindedness. The medium of the scale is English and it is a self-administering tool.

### Statistical Analysis

Means and standard deviation were used to process various variables of the study, t-test was used for testing the significance of difference in the mean scores of temperament of subjects.

## 4. Results and Discussion

**Table 1:** Temperament scores of adolescent boys and girls

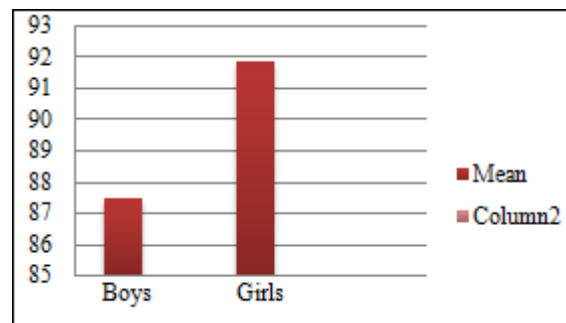
Group	N	Mean	SD	t value
Boys	40	87.5	9.38	2.29*
Girls	40	91.9	7.72	

\*significant at .05 level

The results clearly depict that girls have more temperament in comparison to boys. The reason might be that the girls are supposed to be more obedient and soft in nature but they also have temperament which was reflected in the result. Furthermore, girls have more temperament in comparison to adolescent boys with the mean value of 87.5 and 91.9 respectively.

Else-Quest et al. (2006) meta-analytic study about gender differences, displayed some "moderating factors" in the relationship between temperament and gender, such as source of temperament assessment, typical or at-risk child samples, socioeconomic and cultural context, and the age of the child. Each moderating factor can either increase or decrease the gender differences in temperament.

Heinonen et al. (2005) results showed that boys had higher levels of Negative Emotionality and lower levels of LDL cholesterol than the girls and also examined the impact of childhood perceived temperament and the mother's child-rearing attitudes on dispositional optimism - pessimism in adulthood, using the same instrument in Finland. They found that mothers rated their sons as more Negatively Emotional than their daughters at 6 to 9 years, but in children aged three to six years old, mother's assessment revealed no significant gender differences in the dimension of Negative Emotionality.



**Graph 1:** Temperament scores of adolescent boys and girls

**Table 2:** Difference for Mean Scores of Temperament Traits between adolescent boys and girls (N=80)

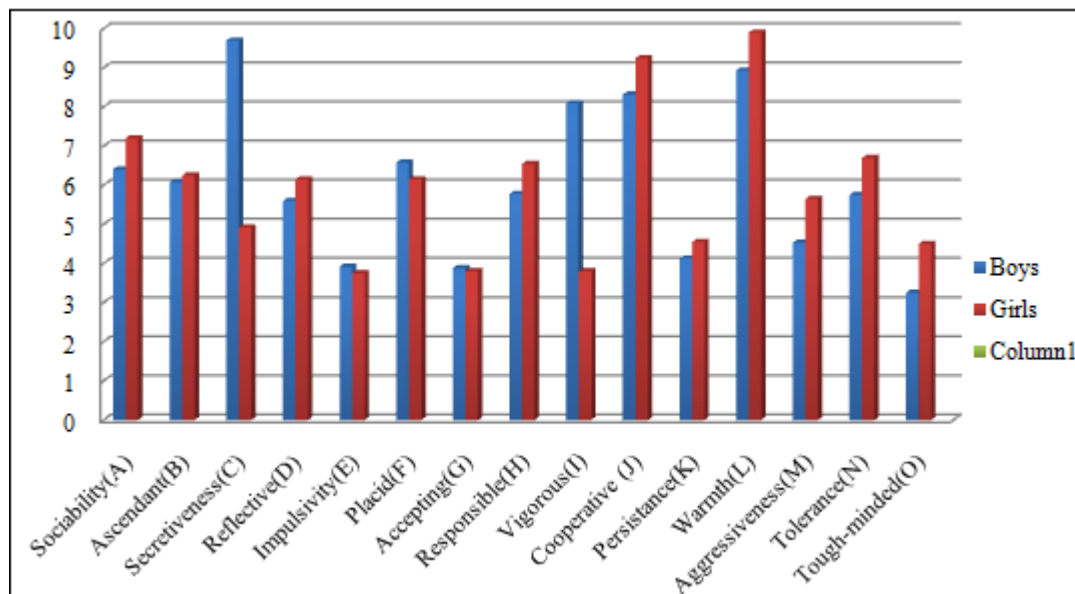
Dimension	BOYS		GIRLS		t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Sociability(A)	6.40	1.84	7.20	1.74	1.99*
Ascendant(B)	6.08	1.31	6.25	1.55	0.52
Secretiveness(C)	9.70	3.09	4.92	1.56	8.73*
Reflective(D)	5.60	1.74	6.15	1.44	1.54
Impulsivity(E)	3.92	1.33	3.75	1.24	0.59
Placid(F)	6.58	1.87	6.15	2.02	0.98
Accepting(G)	3.88	1.11	3.80	1.20	0.30
Responsible(H)	5.78	1.44	6.55	1.60	2.22*
Vigorous(I)	8.10	1.89	8.80	1.20	0.64
Cooperative (J)	8.32	1.70	9.25	2.13	2.15*
Persistence(K)	4.13	1.56	4.55	1.18	1.35
Warmth(L)	8.93	2.13	9.90	2.15	2.02*
Aggressiveness(M)	4.53	1.63	5.65	1.27	3.42*
Tolerance(N)	5.75	1.55	6.70	1.77	2.55*
Tough-minded(O)	3.25	1.43	4.50	1.32	4.06*

\*significant at .01 level

Results in Table- 2 reveal highly significant difference in the mean scores of sociability (t=1.99, p<.01), secretiveness (t=8.73, p<.01), responsible (t=2.22, p<.01), cooperativeness (t=2.15, p<.01), warmth (t=2.02, p<.01), aggressiveness (t=3.42, p<.01), tolerance (t= 2.55, p<.01), and tough mindedness (t= 4.06, p<.01).

As far as components of secretiveness, impulsiveness, placid, accepting and vigorousness are concerned, boys were found to have higher mean scores as compared to girls. While the girls were found to have higher mean scores than those of their counterparts from boys in traits like sociability, ascendant, reflective, responsible, cooperative, persistence, warmth, aggressiveness tolerance and tough minded.

The above results are also supported by other researchers. Blair et al. (2004) found that boys and girls differed significantly in social behaviors and social competence. Girls were rated as significantly more socially competent, and were found to exhibit less social behavior problems, both internalizing and externalizing behaviors, than boys. Similarly, Chen et al. (2009) indicated that boys had lower scores than girls on cooperative behavior, peer liking, perceived social integration, school attitudes, and teacher-rated competence and higher scores on antagonistic behavior and teacher-rated learning problems. Prior et al. (2001) indicated that gender differences were differences in the strength, rather than the nature, of the effects.



**Graph 2:** Difference for Mean Scores of Temperament Traits between adolescent boys and girls (N=80)

The possible justification for the present result could be given in the light of the fact that parents are not in a position to provide full time guidance, supervision and monitoring of their children. Even they find themselves unable to interact and share sufficiently with their children. This may lead to development of negative temperament traits which are further linked or connected to more of social problems and risk taking behavior in these children particularly when they reach adolescence stage. The link or relationship between negative and difficult temperament traits and social and personal problems has been endorsed by a number of research findings.

### 5. Conclusion

The findings of the present study is giving an insight about temperament traits of boys and girls which would enable counselors, school administrators, policymakers and educationists to sketch out and implement interventions for helping students to develop more of positive temperament traits . The study have vital implications for parents also. They set the stage for parents to dwell upon how could they spend qualitative time with their children to help them inculcate right kind of temperament traits during the limited time they have in hand.

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