
Emotional Maturity Among Children Living In Orphanages

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Abstract

Children are the future citizens of a country. They not only constitute a large group but also vulnerable or special risk groups of our community (Krishan Lal, 2014). Emotion grows in interaction with expanding awareness of one's own emotional experience, with one's ability to empathize and with the capacity to understand causes of emotions and their behavioral consequences. Children also start learning about how and why people act and they grow in their ability to infer what is going on for them emotionally. Family is one of the main socializing institutions of the society. Within the family, the child appropriates the social norms and values and becomes capable of having relations with the other members of the society (Naqshbandi, 2012). Children who have lost their parents are most vulnerable, because they do not have the emotional and physical maturity to address their psychological trauma associated with parental loss. In the society, orphan children can be considered

to be at more risk than average children (Subbarao and Coury, 2004). The objective of the study was to assess and compare the different dimensions of emotional maturity and also to study the level of emotional maturity among children living in orphanages. A questionnaire was developed by the investigator to study the demographic characteristics and the different dimensions of emotional maturity. The sample comprised of 300 children out of which 120 were boys and 180 were girls, between the age range of 6-12 years. The statistical analysis was carried out by applying percentages, mean, standard deviation, chi square and 't' test. The findings of the study revealed that, majority of boys and girls showed low level of emotional maturity however, gender was not associated with the level of emotional maturity. Majority of boys showed higher mean score compared to girls. Further the study revealed that, there is a significant difference between boys and girls in the

dimensions of ability to deal, adapt to change, satisfaction in giving, relate to others and capacity to love. Whereas there is no significant difference found between boys and girls in the dimensions of freedom from symptoms of tensions and capacity to sublimate aspects of emotional maturity.

Key words: Emotional maturity, orphanage, dimensions, children.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional development is a complex task that begins in infancy and continues throughout adulthood. The first emotions that can be recognized in babies include joy, anger, sadness and fear. Later, as children begin to develop a sense of self, more complex emotions like shyness, surprise, elation, embarrassment, shame, guilt, pride and empathy emerge. Primary school children are still learning to identify emotions, to understand why they happen and how to manage them appropriately. As children develop, the things that provoke their emotional responses change, as do the strategies they use to manage them.

Emotion grows in interaction with expanding awareness of one's own emotional experience, with one's ability to empathize and with the capacity to understand causes of emotions and their behavioural consequences. Furthermore, as children learn about how and why people act

as they do, they grow in their ability to infer what is going on for themselves emotionally.

Emotional maturity refers to one's ability to understand and manage their emotions. It enables one to create the life as they desire. A life filled with happiness and fulfillment. They define success in their own terms, not society's and they strive to achieve it. Emotional maturity is observed through the thoughts and behaviors. When one is faced with a difficult situation the level of emotional maturity is one of the biggest factors in determining their ability to cope. It is to have a specific control over one's emotions.

An emotionally mature person has experienced the spectrum of emotions, understands the consequences of each and knows the benefits of being in control of them. Most importantly, an emotionally mature person knows what kinds of things sets of different emotions in them and they know how to identify each emotion, clearly. They don't fall into a panic situation but helps them to try how they should react and manage themselves accordingly. One of the things that stand in most people's way from reaching emotional maturity is learning how to deal with stress.

According to Singh (1999), emotional maturity is not only the effect determinant of personality patterns but it also helps to control the growth of an adolescent's development. A person who is able to keep his emotions under control, which is able to rock delay and to suffer

without self-pity, might still be emotionally stunted and childish.

Orphans are the special group of children who are generally deprived and prone to develop psychiatric disorders even reared in well run institution (Rahman et.al., 2012). A child who is below 18 years of age and who has lost one or both parents may be defined as an orphan (George, 2011). However, orphans are also classified as maternal, paternal and social orphans. Maternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost their mother and paternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost their father. Social orphans are children who are living without parents because of abandonment or because their parents gave them up as a result of poverty, alcoholism or imprisonment, etc (Dillon, 2008).

Orphanage is a public institution for the care and protection of children without parents. Most of them belong to socially disadvantaged group. Due to the absence of parental care and affection these children fulfill their needs and spend most of their time with their peers. It makes them feel comfortable along with their peers. However, it takes lot of time for them to believe and adjust to the surroundings.

An emotionally mature child can adjust to the environment better than the immature child. He is more inspired by pleasure satisfaction and contentment than ridden with worriers, anxieties and frustrations. An emotionally mature child may not have resolved all situations and factors leading negative emotions. He is however, perpetually seeing himself in

clearer perspective. Consequently, he is continuously involved in a struggle to lead a matured, balanced and healthy emotional life.

Children and adolescents are facing difficulties in life. These difficulties are giving rise to many psycho-somatic problems such as anxiety, tensions, frustrations and emotional upsets in day to day life. As emotions do play central role in the life of an individual, one is expected to have higher emotional maturity in order to lead an effective life. It is also true that our behavior is constantly influenced by the emotional maturity level that we possess. In the light of above discussion an attempt has been made to study the level of emotional maturity among children residing in orphanages.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives:

1. To study the emotional maturity among children living in orphanages.
2. To compare the emotional maturity between boys and girls residing in orphanages.
3. To study the significant difference in emotional maturity among boys and girls with regard to seven dimensions viz., ability to deal, adapt to change, freedom from symptoms of tensions, satisfaction in giving, relate to others, capacity to sublimate and capacity to love.

Hypothesis:

1. Children living in orphanages will have low level of emotional maturity.

2. There exists a significant difference between boys and girls on emotional maturity.
3. There exist a significant difference in emotional maturity between boys and girls in the seven dimensions classified for the study.

sixty nine statements with regard to seven dimensions of emotional maturity viz., ability to deal, adapt to change, freedom from symptoms of tensions, satisfaction in giving, relate to others, capacity to sublimate and capacity to love with both positive and negative items having 4 point rating scale.

Selection of sample and sampling technique:

- Random sampling technique was adopted. The samples were drawn from the 14 orphanages at Urban Bangalore District.
- A total number of 300 children (120 boys and 180 girls) between the age group of 6-12 years residing in orphanages constituted the sample.

Tool:

A questionnaire was developed by the investigator for the purpose of studying development of emotional maturity in the seven dimensions among children.

The questionnaire consisted of Part A and Part B. The Part -A consisted of basic data with regard to age, gender, ordinal position and type of orphan. Part -B contains

Procedure:

Survey of Orphanages was carried out at Urban Bangalore district. After identifying the orphanages, the aim and purpose of the study was explained to the administrators of the orphanages and an official permission was taken to collect the data from the children. Rapport was built with the respondents and then the questionnaire was administered to them with a request to answer. The dully filled questionnaire was collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from the respondents was tabulated and statistically analyzed by applying percentage, mean, standard deviation and chi square. The Table-1 shows the classification of respondents by age group.

TABLE – 1
Classification of respondents by Age group

Category	Respondents						χ ² Value
	Boys		Girls		Combined		
	N	%	N	%		%	
06 years –09years	34	28.30	36	20.00	70	23.30	3.57 ^{NS}
10years – 11years	41	34.20	60	33.30	101	33.70	
12 years	45	37.50	84	46.70	129	43.00	
Total	120	100.0	180	100.0	300	100.0	

NS: Non-significant, χ² (0.05, 2df) = 5.991, χ² (0.05, 3df) = 7.815

It is inferred in Table -1 that, majority of boys (37.50%) were from the age group of 12 years followed by 34.20 percent of them were from between the age group of 10-11 years and 28.30 percent of them were from between the age group of 6-9 years.

Majority of girls (46.70%) were from the age group of 12 years followed by 33.30 percent of the respondents were from

between 10-11 years of age group and 20.00 percent of them were from the age group of 6-9 years.

Combined result showed that majority of boy and girl respondents (43%) were from the age group of 6-9 years. However, the age group did not have any significant association with gender among children. The chi-square value found to be 3.57.

The classification of respondents by type of orphan is shown in Table – 2.

TABLE – 2
Classification of respondents by Type of orphan

N=300

Type of orphan	Respondents						χ^2 Value
	Boys		Girls		Combined		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Maternal	12	10.00	12	6.70	24	8.00	57.45*
Paternal	37	30.80	25	13.90	62	20.70	
Social	43	35.80	22	12.20	65	21.70	
Non - orphan	28	23.40	121	67.20	149	49.60	
Total	120	100.0	180	100.0	300	100.0	

* Significant at 5% Level, $\chi^2 (0.05, 2df) = 5.991$, $\chi^2 (0.05, 3df) = 7.815$

Table-2 reveals the data regarding the type of orphan among respondents. In the study children living in orphanages have been classified into 4 categories. Maternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost their mother and paternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost their father. Social orphans are children who are living without parents because of abandonment or because

their parents gave them up as a result of poverty, alcoholism or imprisonment, etc. Non - orphans are referred to a child who is having both the parents. Due to low socio-economic conditions in the family both the parents have left their children in the orphanages.

It is inferred that, majority of boys (35.80%) were social orphans, 30.80 percent

of them were paternal orphans, 23.40 percent of them were non orphans (presence of both parents) and only 10.00 percent of them were maternal orphans.

With regard to girls majority of them (67.20%) were non orphans (presence of both parents) living in orphanages. 13.90 percent of them were paternal orphans, 12.20 percent of them were social orphans and only 6.70 percent of them were maternal orphans.

Combined results showed that 49.60 percent of boy and girl respondents were non orphans i.e. having both the parents, but staying in orphanages since they were from low socio-economic background, parents could not able to fulfill the basic needs of children. Almost equal percentages of them were social and paternal orphans (21.70% and 20.70%) and only 8 percent of them were maternal orphans. The chi-square value found to be 57.45 with significant at 5% level.

The respondents based on the level of emotional maturity is shown in Table- 3.

TABLE – 3
Classification of Respondent based on Emotional maturity Level

Emotional maturity Level	Category	Respondents						χ^2 Value
		Boys		Girls		Combined		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Low	0-117 Score (≤ 56.86 %)	93	77.50	144	80.00	237	79.00	0.27 NS
Moderate	118-135 Score (56.87-65.23 %)	27	22.50	36	20.00	63	21.00	
High	136-207 Score (> 65.24 %)	00	0.00	00	0.00	00	0.00	
Total		120	100.0	180	100.0	300	100.0	

NS: Non-significant,

$\chi^2 (0.05, 1df) = 3.841$

Table 3 shows the level of emotional maturity among respondents. The emotional maturity has been categorized into three levels. The score between 0-117 has been categorized as low emotional maturity, 118-135 score represents moderate level of maturity and the score between 136-207 is referred as high level of emotional maturity. The results revealed that majority of boys

(77.50%) had low level of emotional maturity and 22.50 percent of them had moderate level of emotional maturity. A higher percentage of girls (80.00%) had low level of emotional maturity and 20 percent of them were moderately matured.

The combined results showed that 79.00 percent of children residing in

orphanages had low level of emotional maturity there by accepting the hypothesis set for the study. Twenty one percent of them were moderately matured and none of

them had high level of emotional maturity. The test showed non significant results ($\chi^2=0.27$).

TABLE -4
A Comparison of Mean Scores of Boys and Girls on Emotional maturity

N=300

Respondents	Sample (n)	Statements	Max. Score	Emotional maturity Scores				't' Test
				Mean	SD	Mean (%)	SD (%)	
Boys	120	69	207	110.29	10.67	53.30	5.20	1.99*
Girls	180	69	207	107.36	14.88	51.90	7.20	
Combined	300	69	207	108.52	13.42	52.40	6.50	

* Significant at 5% Level,

t (0.05, 298df) = 1.96

Table- 4 revealed the 't' value being 1.99 which is significant at 5% level. It indicated that the mean scores of emotional maturity of boys and girls showed a significant difference there by accepting the hypothesis postulated for the study. It is noticed that

boys had a higher mean score (Mean = 53.30%) as compared to girls (Mean = 51.90%). It signifies that, gender plays a vital role in the emotional maturity of children residing in the institutional care.

TABLE -5
Dimension wise Mean Scores of Boys and Girls on Emotional maturity

N=300

Dimensions of Emotional Maturity	Emotional maturity Scores (%)				't' Value
	Boys (n=120)		Girls (n=180)		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Ability to deal	44.30	9.50	41.40	8.60	2.64*
Adapt to change	52.10	11.90	48.00	10.70	3.08*
Freedom from symptoms of tensions	50.90	11.30	53.10	10.00	1.72^{NS}
Satisfaction in giving	68.10	17.70	63.00	81.50	2.55*
Relate to others	53.50	9.40	50.80	10.40	2.37*
Capacity to sublimate	57.60	24.70	60.00	20.90	0.84^{NS}
Capacity to love	44.00	10.40	47.00	12.10	2.27*

* Significant beyond 5% Level,

NS: Non-significant,

t (0.05, 298df) = 1.96

Table - 5 shows the mean percentage scores of boys and girls on different dimensions of emotional maturity.

In the dimension of ability to deal with reality the mean score of boys (44.30) is slightly higher as compared to girls (41.40). The t- test value was found to be 2.64 and statistically significant at 5% level.

A higher mean score was obtained by boys (52.10) as compared to girls (48.00) in the area of capacity to adapt to change towards emotional maturity. However, the aspect of capacity to adapt to change is significantly associated with gender among the respondents (with t- value being 3.08).

With regard to the dimension freedom from symptoms of tensions the mean score of girls (53.10) was found to be higher when compared to the score of boys (50.90). The concepts of freedom from symptom of tension are those produced from tensions and anxieties can include physical distress (headaches, stomach problems, rapid heart rate) and emotional distress (worry, restlessness, panic). To live free of its destructive symptoms and consequences is to cope with life stress in a healthy manner, learn to relax, release worries and develop inner peace. This was managed well by the girls as compared to boys. The results showed non significant association with gender among the respondents (t-value being 1.72^{NS}).

There is a significant association found between gender among respondents in the area of satisfaction in giving with t-value

being 2.55 which is statistically significant at 5% level. The mean scores of boys found to be higher (68.10) as compared to girls (63.00).

A slightly higher mean score was obtained by boys (53.50) as compared to girls mean score (50.80) in the area of relate to others. However, the dimension with respect to relate to others was significantly associated with gender among the respondents (with t-value being 2.37).

In the area of capacity to sublimate dimension the girls showed a higher mean score (60.00) as compared to the mean score of boys (57.60). On statistical analysis, this difference in scores was found to be non significant with t-value being 0.84. This dimension indicates that, one should utilize the instinctive hostile energy into creative and constructive outlets. If one were to release all their frustrations and anger on others, they would have a hostile existence. Instead, they can take that energy and direct it into something which is good and productive manner.

The statistical analysis revealed that the responses of the respondents with regard to the dimension of capacity to love showed significant association with gender t value being 2.27 which is significant at 5% level. The mean score percentage was found to be slightly higher among girls (47.00) as compared to boys (44.00) respectively.

It was hypothesized that, there exist a significant difference in emotional

maturity between boys and girls in the seven dimensions classified for the study. The test showed the significant difference between boys and girls in the dimensions of ability to deal, adapt to change, satisfaction in giving, relate to others and capacity to love by accepting the hypothesis. Whereas there is no significant difference found between boys and girls in the dimensions of freedom from symptoms of tensions and capacity to sublimate aspects of emotional maturity thereby in these two areas the hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study revealed that, majority of boys and girls belonged to the age group of 12 years. With respect to type of orphan, majority of boys were social orphans whereas majority of girls belongs to non-orphan category. Majority of boys and girls showed low level of emotional maturity. Boys showed higher mean score as compared to girls on emotional maturity. Further the study revealed that, with respect to different dimensions of emotional maturity there is a significant difference found between boys and girls in the dimensions of ability to deal, adapt to change, satisfaction in giving, relate to others and capacity to love. Whereas there is no significant difference found between boys and girls in the dimensions of freedom from symptoms of tensions and capacity to sublimate aspects of emotional maturity.

Children who have lost their parents are most vulnerable because they may have low maturity level which leads to

psychological trauma due to parental loss. Hence, an effective educational program can be implemented to overcome with negative emotions among children residing in orphanages that make them to learn and balance between their emotions which leads to healthy life and useful member of the society.

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