

Convincing role of Family Structure in Governing Sexual Behaviors of College Girl Students: A Meta Psychological Approach

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Abstracts: Attitudes, an aspect of personality, are formed and changed in accordance with the characteristics of the societies, groups and cultures. Social attitudes are characterized by consistency in response to social objects. It determines the response of the individuals towards different social, national and international problems. The emerging sexuality that accompanies adolescence poses fundamental challenges for young people. These include adjusting to the altered appearance and functioning of a sexually maturing body, learning to deal with sexual desires, confronting sexual attitudes and values, experimenting with sexual behaviors, and integrating these feelings, attitudes, and experiences into a developing sense of self. Adolescents' responses to these challenges are profoundly influenced by the social and cultural context in which they live. Modern youngsters live in an era of sex revolution. Since last three decades there has been a paradigm shift in the sexual behavior and responses of the college girls. They have acquired more open attitudes towards the sex related issues. In the present study, the restrictive and permissive attitudes of college girls towards sexual behaviour have been envisaged in five different Girls colleges in Patna. The residential area, size of the family and income level and peers has been formed as independent variables. With the objective of investigating into the effects of family income level on attitudes towards permissive and restrictive sexual behavior the standardized Sex behavior Attitude inventory (Yashwir, 1977) and one self-made questionnaire seeking personal information were applied to a sample of 200 subjects of proposed five different Girls colleges of Patna. Following this rationale, the scores in different criteria were calculated separately. Means and S.Ds of the attitude area were calculated for both groups and their sub groups. After this, t-test was applied to know the significance of the difference between mean scores of the group and sub-groups. The value at $P < 0.01$ were considered significant. It was observed that nuclear family (NF) subjects displayed significantly higher attitudes towards permissive sexual behaviour and significantly lowers attitudes scores towards restrictive sexual behavior than the joint family (JF) subjects in both the married and unmarried groups. The findings of the present study is expected to bring to light the attitude constellation of unmarried girls students, by and large socially and sexually disadvantaged section of the Indian society, along with that of married girl students and is expected to offer valuable guidelines for facilitating social changes by altering the attitudes of these sections, wherever required through a judiciously planned psychological program of re-education.

Keywords: College girls, Attitudes, Permissive, Restrictive, Sexual behavior, joint family, Nuclear family, Psychological analysis.

I. INTRODUCTION

Research in female sexuality is fractionated. Significant contributions in specific areas, such as assessment, treatment, or understanding sexual phenomena have not necessarily led to offshoot contributions in related areas. Mirroring the field of human sexuality, the study of women's sexuality has lacked an overarching conceptual basis with which to compare, evaluate, and guide ongoing research; hence, to significantly advance sexual science, it has been suggested that we must develop comprehensive theories and constructs that describe, explain, and predict sexual phenomena [1].

Sex differences in psychology are differences in the mental functions and behaviors of the sexes, and are due to a complex interplay of biological, developmental, and cultural factors. Differences have been found in a variety of fields such as mental health, cognitive abilities, personality, emotion, sexuality [2-3] and tendency towards aggression. Such variation may be innate or learned and is often very difficult to distinguish. Since behavior is a result of interactions between nature and nurture researchers are interested in investigating how biology and environment interact to produce such differences [4-6], although this is often not possible [5]. A number of factors combine to influence the development of sex differences, including genetics and epigenetic [7] differences in brain structure and function [8] hormones [9] and socialization [3-5].

Social psychologists reserve the term '**Attitude**' to refer to our relatively enduring evaluation of something, where the something is called the attitude object. The attitude object might be a person, a product, or a social group [10-11]. Our attitudes are made up of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. The importance of an attitude is assessed by how quickly it comes to mind. It is known as attitude strength [12-14]. Some of our attitudes are strong attitudes, in the sense that we find them important, hold them with confidence, do not change them very much, and use them frequently to guide our actions. These strong attitudes may guide our actions completely out of our awareness [15]. The term *attitude* refers to our relatively enduring evaluation of an attitude object. Our attitudes are inherited and also learned through direct and indirect experiences with the attitude objects. Some attitudes are more likely to be based on beliefs, some are more likely to be based on feelings, and some are more likely to be based on behaviors. Strong attitudes are important in the sense that we hold them with confidence, we do not change them very much, and we use them frequently to guide our actions. Although there is a general consistency between attitudes and behavior, the relationship is stronger in some situations than in others, for some measurements than for others, and for some people than for others. Attitudes are acquired components of the personality. They are formed and modified in response to different environmental influences. Environment refers to everything external to the person, with which he/she is in some relation. In recent years psychologists, sociologists and home scientists are paying increased attention to the environment and its impact on behaviour. The family influences personality either directly or indirectly. Directly, the family influences personality development by moulding and communication. Indirectly the influence comes from identification, unconscious irritations of attitudes, behaviour patterns and the mirror image of self. The Socio-economic condition of the family, the personality characteristics of parents and family members, the number of family member and the nature of strangulation received by family members due to residential variation of the family determine to a great extent the nature of personality, attitude and adjustment of the child.

Colleges going adolescent girls live in a different social, psychological, economical and physical environment. This variation of environment is sufficient to induce in them variation in attitudes toward different social problems.

Because attitude strength is determined by cognitive accessibility, it is possible to make attitudes stronger by increasing the accessibility of the attitude. This can be done directly by having people think about, express, or discuss their attitudes with others. After people think about their attitudes, talk about them, or just say them out loud, the attitudes they have expressed become stronger [16-17]. Because attitudes are linked to the self-concept, they also become stronger when they are activated along with the self-concept. When we are looking into a mirror or sitting in front of a TV camera, our attitudes are activated and we are then more likely to act on them [18].

Social psychologists (as well as advertisers, marketers, and politicians) are particularly interested in the behavioral aspect of attitudes. Because it is normal that the ABCs of our attitudes are at least somewhat consistent, our behavior tends to follow from our affect and cognition. The principle of attitude consistency (that for any given attitude object, the ABCs of affect, behavior, and cognition are normally in line with each other) thus predicts that our attitudes (for instance, as measured via a self-report measure) are likely to guide behavior. Supporting this idea, meta-analyses have found that there is a significant and substantial positive correlation among the different components of attitudes, and that attitudes expressed on self-report measures do predict behavior [19]. Behaviors are more likely to be consistent with attitudes when the social situation in which the behavior occurs is similar to the situation in which the attitude is expressed [20-21].

The aim of present study is to analyze the attitudes of different college girls towards sexual behavior primarily based on the family texture, peers and some socio-biological impact.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

With the aim of studying the difference in attitudes of various college girls towards sexual behavior differing in the structure of the family, the following hypothesis was formulated.

A. Hypothesis

The married and unmarried groups from nuclear families shall be significantly higher in permissive attitudes towards sex behaviour than the married and unmarried groups from joint families.

B. Sampling:

Five Girls Colleges *viz.* Arvind Mahila College, Patna, Ganga Devi Mahila College, Patna J D Women's College, Patna, Magadh Mahila College Patna and Patna Women's College, Patna were selected as test zones. Proper permission was procured from the competent authority of each of the target institutions for investigating the girl students based upon their personal statement in questionnaire inventory. The subjects fall in the age range of 18-26 years.

C. Data collection:

No of test college— 5

Target group — 9

Students of class- B.A./B.SC./B.Com/B.Ed. (Regular and self financing courses); M.A./M.Sc./M.Com/M.Ed. (Regular and self financing courses).

Total number of samples — 200

D. Instruments used for measuring attitudes towards superstition:

For measuring attitudes towards sexual behavior a standard "Sex behavior Attitude Inventory" constructed by Singh [22] and a self-made questionnaire seeking personal information, supplied to nearly 200 college girl students of proposed five different Girls' colleges of Patna. Out of these approximately 100 were married and 100 girls were unmarried girls subjects from the different back ground *viz.* residential area, size of the family, income level and peers surrounding them.

E. Criteria for inclusion of the Subjects:

The criteria for the inclusion of the female students in the samples were as follows:

1. Married and unmarried female subjects came in equal number from each college.
2. The sample covered subjects from different income levels –higher, middle and lower income level –both in married and unmarried groups.
3. The subjects came from degree classes of constituent colleges.
4. The subjects fell in the age range of 18-26 years.

First of all rapport was established with the subject. After this self made questionnaires and Inventory were distributed among subjects. On the basis of the personal information on the inventory subjects were easily detected as 'married' and 'unmarried' groups. After this equating number of married and unmarried students on random basis they were further asked to fill the inventory scale consisted of 40 statements. After completion of the session inventories were collected from the subjects and they were thanked for their co operation.

The inventory measured attitudes towards sex behavior in two dimensions-restrictive and permissive. Each dimension of attitudes consisted of 20 statements. It was a 'Yes-No type' standardized scale. Two (2) marks were awarded to 'yes' response and 1 was awarded to 'no' response. The highest score considered on restrictive and permissive dimension was 40 and the lowest score on permissive and restrictive dimensions was 20. A sum total of 'yes' or 'no' responses yielded weighted score. Based on higher weighted score on permissiveness than the restrictiveness, an individual was considered as 'permissive' and otherwise 'restrictive' in reversed case. The reliability coefficient of the inventory was established as 0.57 by split-half method and validity, as determined against 'Attitude inventory', was found 0.35.

Following this rationale, the scores in different criteria were calculated separately. Means and S.Ds of the attitude area was calculated. The t-test was applied to know the significance of the difference between mean scores of the group and sub-groups. The value at $p < 0.01$ were considered significant.

III. RESULTS

Out of 100 married colleges girl students (M), there were 45 subjects from nuclear family size (MNF), 55 subjects from the joint family size (MJF). Out of 100 unmarried college girl students (UM), there were 65 subjects from nuclear family size (UMNF) and 35 subjects from joint family size (UMJF). The distribution of attitudes towards permissive sexual behavior (APSB) scores of MNF, MJF, UMNF and UMJF groups have been presented in table-1 & 2, while distribution of attitudes towards restrictive sexual behavior (ARSB) scores of MNF, MJF, UMNF and UMJF groups have been presented in table- 3 & 4. The mean APSB scores of these groups and sub-groups with S.Ds. and 't' ratios have been presented in table-5, while the mean ARSB scores of the same groups and subgroups with S. Ds. and 't' ratios have been presented in TABLE-6.

TABLE 1: Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Permissive Sexual Behavior (APSB) scores in MNF and MJF groups.

Distribution of APSB scores of married nuclear families (MNF) groups		Distribution of APSB scores of married Joint families (MJF) groups	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
37-38	02	35-36	01
35-36	03	33-34	03
33-34	05	31-32	06
31-32	08	29-30	07
29-30	09	27-28	18
27-28	12	25-26	12
25-26	05	23-24	08
23-24	01	-	-
N=	45	N=	55
Mean=	29.94	Mean=	27.0645455
S.D.=	3.3436876	S.D.=	2.9258608

TABLE 2: Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Permissive Sexual Behavior (APSB) scores in UMNF and UMJF groups.

Distribution of APSB scores of unmarried nuclear families (UMNF) groups		Distribution of APSB scores of unmarried joint families (UMJF) groups	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
37-38	05	37-38	02
35-36	10	35-36	02
33-34	13	33-34	05
31-32	14	31-32	07
29-30	16	29-30	09
27-28	04	27-28	03
25-26	02	25-26	04
23-24	01	23-24	03
N=	65	N=	35
Mean=	31.930769	Mean=	30.128571
S.D.=	3.1474982	S.D.=	3.6962196

TABLE 3: Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Restrictive Sexual Behavior (ARSB) scores in MNF and MJF groups.

Distribution of ARSB scores of married nuclear families (MNF) groups		Distribution of ARSB scores of married Joint families (MJF) groups	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
37-38	02	37-38	04
35-36	03	35-36	08
33-34	06	33-34	16
31-32	11	31-32	18
29-30	17	29-30	05

27-28	03	27-28	02
25-26	02	25-26	01
23-24	01	23-24	01
N=	45	N=	55
Mean=	30.83	Mean=	32.878181
S.D.=	2.8905978	S.D.=	2.7992914

TABLE 4: Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Restrictive Sexual Behavior (ARSB) scores in UMNF and UMJF groups.

Distribution of ARSB scores of unmarried nuclear families (UMNF) groups		Distribution of ARSB scores of unmarried joint families (UMJF) groups	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
35-36	02	37-38	02
33-34	06	35-36	02
31-32	09	33-34	08
29-30	15	31-32	10
27-28	20	29-30	06
25-26	08	27-28	04
23-24	05	25-26	02
		23-24	01
N=	65	N=	35
Mean=	28.761539	Mean=	31.1577842
S.D.=	2.9261522	S.D.=	3.1887556

TABLE 5: Showing mean, S.Ds and 't' ratio of APSB Scores of MNF, MJF, UMNF and UMJF groups.

Groups	Means	S.Ds	N	Dt	't' ratio	Level of significance
MNF students	29.94	3.3436876	45	98	3.6165418	0.01
MJF students	27.645455	2.9258608	55			
UMNF students	30.35	3.6575264	65	98	2.4462481	0.05
UMJF students	30.128571	3.6962196	35			

TABLE 6: Showing mean, S.Ds and 't' ratio of ARSB Scores of MNF, MJF, UMNF and UMJF groups

Groups	Means	S.Ds	N	Dt	't' ratio	Level of significance
MNF students	30.83	2.8905978	45	98	2.9411904	0.01
MJF students	32.518181	2.7992914	55			
UMNF students	28.761539	2.9261527	65	98	3.6866445	0.01
UMJF students	31.157142	3.1887558	35			

The mean APSB score of MNF and MJF subjects were 29.49 and 27.645465 respectively, while those of UMNF and UMJF subjects were 31.903769 and 30.128571 respectively (table-5). The mean ARSB score of MNF and, MJF subjects were 30.83 and 32.518181 respectively, while those of UMNF and UMJF subjects were 28.761539 and 331.157142 respectively (table-6). The obtained 't' ratios for APSB mean scores between MNF x MJF and UMNF x UMJF subjects were 3.6165418 and 2.4462481 respectively, while the same for ARSB scores between MNF x MJF and UMNF x UMJF were 2.9411904 and 3.6866445 respectively. All the four "t" ratios are significant either at 0.05 and 0.01 levels. Higher score in any dimension – permissive or restrictive –denotes higher attitudes towards respective dimension of the sex behavior. Nuclear family (NF) subjects displayed significantly higher attitude scores towards permissive sexual behavior and significantly lower attitude scores towards restrictive sexual behavior than joint family (JF) size subjects in both married and unmarried groups. Hence, the hypothesis that the married and unmarried groups from nuclear family shall be significantly higher in permissive attitude towards sexual behavior than the married and unmarried groups from joint families (JF) stands verified.

Attitudes towards sexual behavior have been found moulded in accordance with characteristics of nuclear and joint families. College girls from Nuclear families have displayed significantly higher attitudes towards permissive sexual behavior than those of Joint families (JF) in both married and unmarried groups than those from the Nuclear families (NF). According to Ojha and Sinha [23], in joint family, children receive restrictive parental behaviour, whereas in nuclear families they receive permissive parental behaviour. These features are imbedded by the children restrictive in

their behaviours and attitudes. It appears that due to receiving permissive parental behaviours and attitudes, and imbedding them in their own personalities, college girls from nuclear families have displayed more permissive and less restrictive attitudes towards sexual behaviours in both married and unmarried groups than college girls from joint families. Present study highlights that the girls from nuclear families get influenced by the modern sex revolution much more than the subjects from the joint families.

From the early childhood to senility, the person is confronted with the problem that relates directly or indirectly to sexuality and the sexual behavior. The way he/she tackles the problem is greatly influenced by the attitudes towards the sexuality and sexual behaviours developed early in life Breckenridge & Vincent [24] have voiced a warning about unhealthy attitude towards sex. "Whatever the child experience with sex is adolescent and adult life can be normal and fulfilling only one condition. He/she must not grow up with the feeling that sex and anything connected with it as nasty and dangerous." The way in which the person meets the sex problems that arise at different ages will determine how he evaluates himself. Unfavourable attitudes towards sexuality are often at the basis of frigidity in women and impotency in men. These not only affect the person's marital adjustments but also his self concept; an impotent male feels inadequate, as does a frigid female. Successful handling of sex problems contributes to a self acceptant attitude, which is essential to a well adjusted personality.

The finding of the present study related to married group supports the findings of several workers [25-32].

IV. CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study summarize the impact of the family texture on the attitudes towards permissive and restrictive sexual behavior in both married and unmarried college girl students. It is further implicated by a large number of socio-biological factors and the peers.

Further study is needed to explore the attitudes towards sexual behavior of college going girls and better management of the allied abnormalities and related social problems.

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