

# Problems of youth: A study of gender differences of college students

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## Abstract-

The purpose of the study was to examine gender differences, if any, in problems faced by youth in adolescence with the help of Youth Problem Inventory (YPI) designed by Mithilesh Verma. Youth Problem Inventory explores various bottlenecks experienced by youth under four main areas namely family problems, college problems, social problems and personal problems. 40 participants, 20 males and 20 females, were included in the study and complete the questionnaire. Results were calculated with the help of manual given. The results indicated that no significant gender differences lie in family problems, college problems, social problems or personal problems of college students.

**Keywords:** Gender differences, Youth Problem Inventory, college students, social problems, college problems.

## Introduction –

According to Samuel Ullman “Youth is not only a time of life, it is also a state of mind and a matter of will...” The future of any nation depends on the quality of its youth. They are treasures of human resources of nation having a lot of talent hidden in them. Adolescence is one of the important periods of life. It is characterized by innumerable and unique Problems. They pass through physiological and psychological changes with their attendant Problems. It includes both experimentation with outer world and adjustment with biological and psychosocial changes. Abraham (1974) observed that group adjustment, socio personal adjustment were found to be factors responsible for explaining total variance in the case of under achievers. The biological changes further lead to physiological, sexual and psychosocial changes. Physiological changes include change in height, weight, and change in appearance. Sexual changes include production of sex hormone which triggers sexual desire, arousal and urge in adolescents. Psychosocial changes include formation of new identity, self-concept, and self-regulation; need to find a place in society, and expectations (Mabey, Sorensen, 1995). The difficulties include emotional problem (Dryfoos J., 1990). Up to 15 percent of individuals under the age of 18 years of age experience emotional problems (Firdous, A. Var, Mohd. Altaf Paul, Pradeep Kumar, Showkat A. Shah, 2011). In some cases they face some Problems in school and show decreased interest,

negative attitude, and drop in performance and discipline problems (Rice KG, Myer AL., 1994). Questions arise that who will find time to solve their problems. Family and society are too busy to spend time and energy for them. The teachers of government managed or aided schools/colleges are deeply absorbed with their organizational problems and academic activities. Students with adequate personality adjustment performed better academically (Berger and Sutker, 1956). Family, which plays an important role in the personality development of adolescents, is undergoing structural, emotional and interactional transformations. It contributes to the growth and development of the society in particular and nation at large. Education, on the other hand, develops the full personality of an individual by making him intelligent, learned, bold, courageous and strong in good character (Stromswold and Wren, 1948). Carson (1927) observed that on entering the college the freshman faces a number of new adjustment problems for which he is usually unprepared. So, there should be a right way to develop proper adjustment in the college school students to tie over all the maladies that are existing in college (Hafiz Mudasir, Shazia Majeed, 2014).

Adolescence is the most important as well as challenging period of growing up. It includes both experimentation with the outer world and adjustment with biological and psychosocial changes. Most of the people see this change as a biological process but it is much more social and psychological as well. The multi-dimensional nature of the concept involves a gradual transformation of a child into a new person as an adult. However, required changes in a young person during adolescence differ with culture. Adolescence is defined as the period of life between 10 and 19 years of age. And traditionally adolescence (From Latin "Adolescere" means "to grow into maturity") is viewed as beginning with onset of puberty, when sexual maturity or the ability to reproduce is attained. Adolescent period starts with puberty which is surrounded by first menstruation in girls and ejaculation in boys which signals the biological change. The biological changes further lead to physiological, sexual and psychosocial changes. Physiological changes include change in height, weight, and change in appearance. Sexual changes include production of sex hormone which triggers sexual desire, arousal and urge in adolescents. The adolescent develops close relationships and moves from being part of a family group to being part of a peer group and to stand alone as an adult. Psychosocial changes include formation of new identity, self concept, and self regulation; need to find a place in society, and expectations. Self concept is a basic theoretical construct which is closely related to the psychosocial adjustment in adolescents. All these changes vary between individuals and may lead to different behavioral problems if not handled appropriately. The problems of adolescents are quite serious as compared to those of children. They are confused and anxious regarding the biological, psychological and social challenges they have confronted. The difficulties include emotional problems, up to 15 percent of individuals under the age of 18 years of age experience emotional problems like sudden mood changes, irritability, irresponsible behaviors, depression etc. serious enough to justify special treatment. Some other problems include familial problems like starting arguments, breaking rules or withdrawing from family; delinquency like missing school, stealing, and acts of vandalism. Substance abuse was seen as a major problem, approximately one of

every four young adolescents (12 to 17 years old) report having used illicit drugs. In some cases they face some problems in school and show decreased interest, negative attitude, and drop in performance and discipline problems. Difficulties experienced by adolescents vary with age, sex and culture. Adolescence problems have a great impact on self esteem as it is the period during which a new identity is formed. It plays an important role in ones psychosocial development. One-third to one-half of adolescents struggle with low self esteem, especially in early phase of adolescence.

Self esteem is defined as a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self. Individuals with high self-esteem appear confident and are less influenced by others than individuals with low self-esteem<sup>16</sup>. Low self-esteem is significantly related to depression, suicide ideation, delinquency, aggression and antisocial behavior. It is also seen that family affluence, personality dimension of extroversion, emotional stability and openness to experience, as well as mental health and social support from family are also associated with self esteem<sup>19</sup>. It is worth mentioning that there are 315 million young people aged 10–24 years in India, representing 30 percent of the country population which highlight the importance of adolescent for future health and development of state.

### **Review of Literature:**

Srishti Singh, (2016) indicated that no significant gender differences lie in family problems, college problems, social problems or personal problems of college students. Anjana s. Chauhan and Gandhrva R. Joshi, (2014), indicated that male and female college students do not differ significantly to their youth Problems. However Educational streams affect on Youth Problems at .05 level and insignificant interaction effect found between gender and educational streams. From the obtained result it is clear that type of family significantly differ in Youth of the students. Whereas, there is no significant difference found between Problems type of residence and Youth Problems of students as well as Socio-economic status and Youth Problems of College students. Sharma, Sonia (1992) found that adolescents have to face maximum number of problems, whereas urban boys have more family problems. Sangeeta, Sharma, A. & Kumar, J. (November 2013) found that Significant difference was detected between mean scores on 'Family Problems' in adolescent girls, 'Social Problems' and Personal Problems' were significantly high in girls. And Social Problems' and 'Personal Problems' were found to be significantly higher in adolescent girls. Firdous A. Var, et al. (2011) indicated that significant difference was found between rural and urban adolescents in family, school, social and personal problems. Male and female groups differed significantly only in personal problems. Significant difference was found among all the three levels of self esteem and their personal and family problems. Overall findings suggest those rural adolescents suffer more problems than urban adolescents and thus highlight. The need of community based mental health care. Satinder Dhillon, (2015) this study indicated that male and female students have the same means on their personal problems. The mean scores of female students in case of family, socio-emotional and educational problems were more than their counterparts but this difference is statistically not significant. Thus it was concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of

youth problems of male and female students. Irshad Ali Dar and Latief Ahmad Tali, (2014) this study found that the adolescent boys and girls of Kashmir have high adjustment problems in various areas like family, school, social and on a personal front. It was found that the adolescent boys and girls of Kashmir do not differ significantly with each other in adjustment problems.

### Methodology-

The study was conducted on a normal group of sample size 40 , 20 male and 20 female. The sample comprised of undergraduate individuals aged between 17-22 yr. Following the instructions and procedure suggested by the author of the test. Tests were administered and a field copy of each test was collected. Following the same procedure the whole data is collected.

### Tools-

Youth Problem Inventory(2004)-This scale was developed by Dr. M. Verma (2004), these inventory 80 items. It is a self administering inventory for the Adolescence students of age to locate the problems in four areas – Family, School/College, Social & Personal and other sub-areas under each main area. A high score in an area indicates high problem in that particular area. Reliability of the Inventory is found to be .80, whereas validity is in the range of .68 -.70

### Results and discussions-

Statistical results were computed to examine the test findings and are depicted in the following tables and graphs. Table 1 presents range, mean and standard deviation of the four variables of YPI: family problems, college problems, social problems and personal problems. To test gender differences in youth problems, mean score of male v. female was compared graphically. Youth problem variables were also analysed with a series of t-tests of means to determine if significant differences were present.

Table 1:

Dimensions'	Gender	mean	S.D.	D.F.	T-Test
Family problems	male	47.4	12	38	<b>-1.70</b>
	female	44.7	12.2		
College problems	male	30.80	8.9	38	<b>-0.197</b>
	female	31.20	<b>9.08</b>		
Social problems	male	7.30	3	38	<b>-0.70</b>
	female	8.1	2.6		
Personal problems	male	35.37	12.7	38	<b>-0.60</b>
	female	<b>37.1</b>	11.1		

From the results it was found that there is no significant difference lie between the means .Hence no significant difference lies between males and females in context to their family problems, social problems, college problems and personal problems .

## Conclusion

The foregoing discussion has highlighted four main findings:

- 1) There exists no gender difference in family problems of college students. Having said that, it is clear from the findings that both male and female students experience similar amount of family problems. Family problems are not a function of gender difference and affect both males and females in similar manner.
- 2) There exists no gender difference in college problems of college students. While time spent at college is a fond memory and a happy experience for most, the student life is not without its rough patches. Everyone's situation is unique, but there are a few problems that almost all college students deal with at least once during their time at school.
- 3) There exists no gender difference in social problems of college students. Both males and females experience similar issues while in college, be it social adjustment linked to home and school, need to avoid maladjustment, need to make good first impression, achieving popularity, problems with friends and companions or problem of accepting or refusing an initiation.
- 4) There exists no gender difference in personal problems of college students. Adolescence is a dynamic time for both males and females both in terms of psychological and physiological changes. At the college lever personal problems of students are as significant and as frequent as in other areas of living, irrespective of their gender.

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