

A Study of Security-Insecurity Feelings among Adolescents in Relation to Sex, Family System and Ordinal Position.

***Shruti Raina and **Dr. Kiran Sumbali Bhan**

**Research Scholar, Post-Graduate Department of Education,
University of Jammu, PO Box 180004, Jammu & Kashmir, India*

***Prof. Post-Graduate Department of Education,
University of Jammu, PO Box 180004, Jammu & Kashmir, India
raina.shruti2@gmail.com

Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the significant differences in the Security -Insecurity scores of adolescent boys and girls belonging to nuclear and joint families and different ordinal positions. 240 students (120 boys and 120 girls) were selected randomly from 11 private schools of Jammu city. The technique of sampling employed was stratified random sampling. The sample was stratified into two strata on the basis of sex; two strata on the basis of family systems and further into three strata on the characteristic of different ordinal positions. The instrument employed for the collection of data was Maslow's Security-Insecurity Inventory in Indian situations (Hindi Version). Three way ANOVA ($2 \times 2 \times 3$) factorial design was used to see the effect of the main factors: sex, family systems and ordinal position and also their interactional effect on the criterion score. t-ratio technique was also applied to the main factor Ordinal Position with three levels in order to find out the significant differences in the mean security insecurity scores of adolescents belonging to different ordinal positions. Findings revealed that girls showed more insecure feelings than the boys; adolescents of nuclear families were more insecure than those of joint families; the first born adolescents showed more insecurity in comparison to last born; the middle born adolescents showed more insecurity than the last born.

Keywords: security, insecurity, sex, family system, ordinal position

Introduction

Security –Insecurity are two factors which to a great extent determine the personality of adolescents. Security is a state of mind in which one is willing to accept the consequences of one's behaviours. All the aspects of an individual's behaviour in all areas of his life can be interpreted in terms of security (Blatz, 1967). Modern psychologists have shown that the most important factor for an adolescent's healthy development is love and affection and sense of security which is further dependent on the attitude of parents towards their children (Bossard & Boll, 1954). The insecurity state of a person is an emotional problem, a state of being in disturbance due to the feeling of tension, strain and conflict together with other consequences of tension, e.g. nervousness. An insecure person perceives the world as a threatening jungle and most human beings as dangerous and selfish, feels rejected and isolated, anxious and hostile, is generally pessimistic and unhappy, shows signs of tension and conflict, tends to turn inward, is troubled by guilt feelings, tends to be neurotic and selfish (Maslow, 1942). Thus emotional security prepares the ground for mental health and creative activities of the individuals by which they make adjustments to their environment (Shankar, 1958). On the other hand, the adolescents who have a sense of insecurity in them are quiet, recessive, withdrawn, nervous and prone to anxiety. Such adolescents are generally of normal intelligence, well behaved, amenable and conscious, not giving much trouble to their parents, but they are internally perturbed and are quiet, dreadful of what might happen to them and so are full of anxiety. Emotional insecurity is not an inborn trait but the product of environmental influences and is susceptible to change. Children's security-insecurity therefore will likely show some continuity into late adolescence. Patterns of continuity have been found in security of attachment (Thompson & Limber, 1990) and self confident and self efficacious children (Bandura, 1997). Parents' behaviours experienced during early adolescence affects later young adults' feelings of security (Weinfield, Sroufe, & Egeland, 2000). An unavailable parent may leave children and early adolescents without the needed support in moments of threat and danger. Therefore the children and early adolescents appraise their parents' emotional availability or lack of availability in terms of the way that it affects their security. An unsupportive parenting plays a major role in developing the feelings of insecurity among adolescents (Dewies, Harold, Goeke, Morey, & Cummings, 2002). Parental under control or over control diminishes children's sense of security by either increasing feelings of lack of protection or feelings of actual physical or emotional danger in the presence of harsh punishment (Dewies et al., 2002). Children's perception of their place in the family constellation also influences how they feel about themselves and how they interact with others (Kottman & Johnson, 1993 in Nims, 1998). Although many genetic and environmental factors contribute to differences between siblings, some differences in behaviour of siblings have been attributed to the effects of birth order (Claxton, 1994), an individual's rank by age among siblings. The place of the individual within the family, the

first social structure encountered, has been suggested as a contributing factor in shaping human personalities (Gould, 1997). Socialisation differences experienced by individuals due to their ordinal position of birth may result in overt personality and behaviour differences (Claxton, 1994). Children who perceive themselves as the non favoured child may experience feelings of inferiority, anger, depression and incompetence. The favoured child may benefit from the greater security and adoration, but may be troubled by sibling jealousy, greater obligations to parents (Carson et al., 1992), or guilt and empathy depending on the sibling relationship. The present study was undertaken to ascertain the factors influencing the security-Insecurity feelings among adolescents. The concept of security-insecurity is the subject of widespread interest and intensive study keeping in view the complexities of present day society and expanding horizons of scientific investigations.

Objectives of the Study

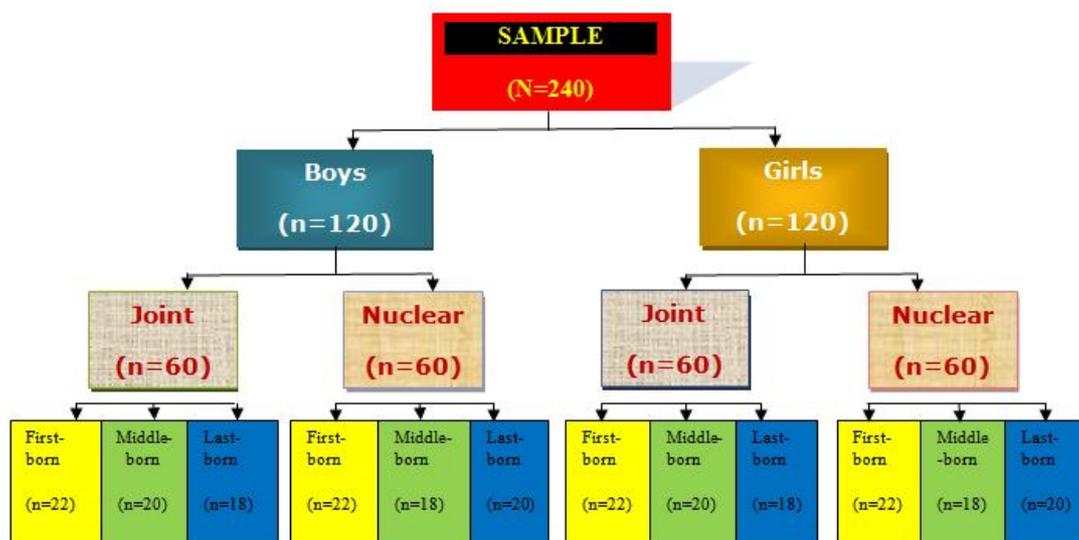
- The following are the objectives of the study:
- To study the main effect of ‘sex’ on the Security- Insecurity feelings, taken as criterion.
- To study the main effect of ‘family system’ on Security-Insecurity feelings, taken as criterion.
- To study the main effect of ‘ordinal position’ on the Security- Insecurity feelings, taken as criterion.
- To study the interactional effect of ‘sex and family system’ on the Security- Insecurity feelings, taken as criterion.
- To study the interactional effect of ‘family system and ordinal position’ on the Security- Insecurity feelings, taken as criterion.
- To study the interactional effect of ‘sex and ordinal position’ on the Security- Insecurity feelings, taken as criterion.
- To study the triple interactional effect of ‘sex, family system and ordinal position’ on the Security- Insecurity feelings, taken as criterion.

Methodology

The sample of the present study was drawn from 11 private schools of Jammu city randomly. The technique of sampling employed was stratified random sampling. The stratification factors used are sex, family system and ordinal position. The sample of 240 students was stratified into two strata on the characteristic of sex. For this, 120 boys and 120 girls were selected randomly. Further the sample was stratified into two strata on the characteristic of family systems (60 boys and 60 girls each from joint and nuclear families were selected randomly). This sample of boys and girls belonging to joint and nuclear families was further stratified into three strata on the basis of different ordinal positions. For this 20 first born, 18 middle born and 22 last born boys

belonging to joint families and 22 first born, 18 middle born and 20 last born boys belonging to nuclear families were selected randomly. Similarly 22 first born, 20 middle born and 18 last born girls of joint families and 22 first born, 18 middle born and 20 last born girls of nuclear families were selected randomly. The instrument employed for the collection of the data was Maslow's Security-Insecurity Inventory in Indian situations which is adapted in Hindi version by Prof. A.Ansari (A.M.U, Aligarh).It contains 75 items in order to know the security-insecurity feelings of the students. Each item has three alternative responses: Yes, No (?).The respondent is required to choose one of the alternatives which is more true for him. The high the score earned on this inventory, the more are the insecurity feelings and low score denotes high security feelings among students. The statistical techniques applied in the present investigation were:

- Homogeneity of variance: Bartlett's test of homogeneity of variance was applied to test that randomised groups are homogeneous (Koul, 2000).
- Analysis of variance: The three way ANOVA (2x2x3) factorial design (Verma & Sharma, 1990) was applied to see the effect of the main factors: sex, family system, ordinal position and also the interactional effect of these three on the criterion score i.e. Security-Insecurity feelings.
- t-ratio technique: t-ratio technique was also applied to the factors with more than two levels and also whenever F-ratio came significant. It was applied to the main factor: 'Ordinal Position' (First-born, middle-born, last-born) with three levels in order to find out the significant differences in the mean security-insecurity scores of adolescents belonging to different ordinal positions.



DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Results and Discussion

Results

Table1. Showing summary of three- way ANOVA for (2×2×3) factorial design for security-insecurity scores, as criterion

SOURCES OF VARIANCE	F-ratio	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
Sex (A)	23.96	Significant at.01 level
Family System(B)	4.23	Significant at.05 level
Ordinal Position(C)	3.82	Significant at.05 level
Sex × Family system (A×B)	1.07	Not significant
Family system × Ordinal position (B×C)	0.67	Not significant
Ordinalposition×Sex (C×A)	0.37	Not significant
Triple interaction	1.65	Not significant
Sex×Familiystem×Ordinal postion (A×B×C)		

Discussion

F-ratio value for the first factor 'sex' has come significant at.01 level which means that there is found a significant difference in the security-insecurity feelings among boys and girls. In this study, mean security- insecurity score of girls has come greater (23.55) than that of boys (17.66). It means that the adolescent girls show more insecurity feelings than the adolescent boys.

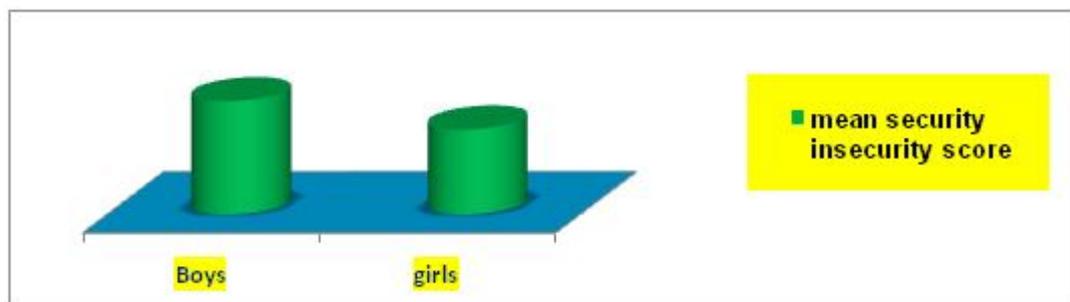


Fig.1. Showing Mean security-insecurity scores of adolescent boys and girls

It may be due to the reason that usually the parents indulge in the discrimination policy towards their female child. Girls' success in any field is underestimated and that they are not given encouragement and recognition to achieve success in a particular field. Parents overprotect their daughters and this makes them dependent for the whole life. As result girls develop the feelings of insecurity.

F-ratio for another main factor 'family system' has come significant at.05 levels. This means that there is found a significant difference in the security-insecurity feelings among adolescents belonging to joint and nuclear families.

In this study the mean security-insecurity score of adolescents belonging to nuclear families has come greater (21.7) than that of the adolescents belonging to joint families (19.10). This means that adolescents belonging to nuclear families feel more insecure than those belonging to joint families.

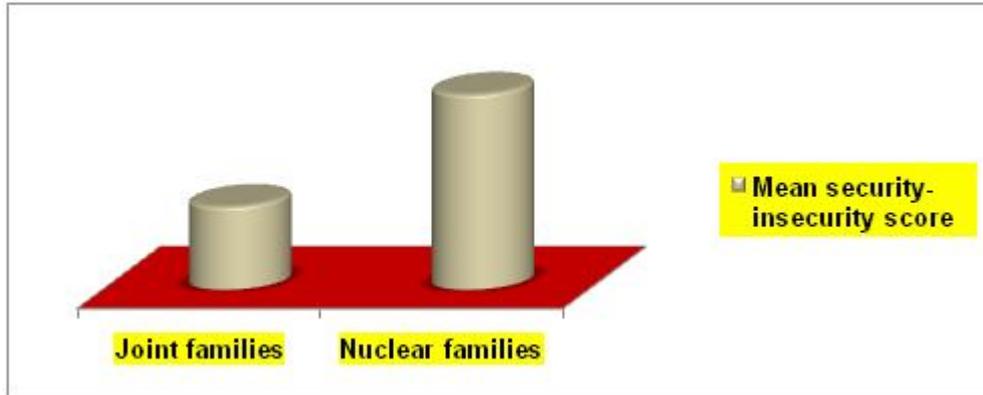


Fig.2. Showing Mean security-insecurity scores of adolescents belonging to joint and nuclear families

This may be due to the reason that adolescents belonging to joint families are provided more love, affection and care by the elders in the family in comparison to the adolescents belonging to nuclear families. In such families, the working parents leave their children at the mercy of their servants and are not able to devote much time towards them which results into the development of insecurity among the kids of such families.

F-ratio value for 'ordinal position' is found significant at .05 level which means that there is found a significant difference in the security-insecurity feelings among first-born, middle born and last born adolescents. This may be due to the reason that in families where there are more than two children, parents are not able to give proper and equal attention to all of them. As a result the neglected and isolated adolescent becomes insecure.

F-ratio value against the interactional effect of 'sex' and 'family system' is found insignificant which shows that the boys and girls belonging to joint and nuclear families seem to show alike security-insecurity feelings.

F-ratio value against the interactional effect of 'family system' and ordinal position' is found insignificant. This shows that adolescents of joint and nuclear families with different ordinal positions seem to show alike security-insecurity feelings.

F-ratio value against the interactional effect of 'ordinal position' and 'sex' is found insignificant. This shows that boys and girls with different ordinal positions seem to be alike in their security-insecurity feelings.

F-ratio value against the triple interactional effect of 'sex', 'family system' and 'ordinal position' is found insignificant. It can therefore be inferred that there is found no significant interactional effect of sex, family system and

ordinal position on the security-insecurity feelings when their cumulative effect is seen.

t-ratio and its application to the security-insecurity scores of adolescents belonging to different ordinal positions.

In order to study the significance of mean differences in the security-insecurity scores of adolescents with different ordinal positions viz. first born, middle born and last born, t-ratio was applied to the mean values of this factor.

Table2. Showing the t-ratio values of the mean security-insecurity scores of adolescents belonging to different ordinal positions

S.No.	Ordinal position	t-ratio
1.	First-Born	0.29
	Middle-Born	
2.	Middle-Born	2.53*
	Last-Born	
3.	First-Born	2.24*
	Last-Born	

*significant at.05 level

Discussion

There is found a significant difference in the mean security-insecurity scores of first born and last born adolescents as t-ratio value has come significant at.05 level of confidence. The first born adolescents show more insecurity feelings in comparison to last born adolescents.

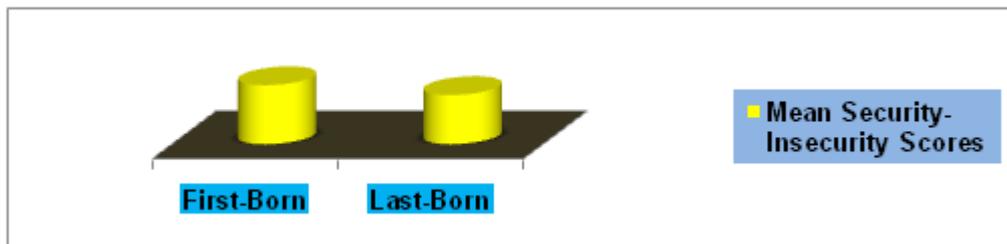


Fig.3. Showing Mean security-insecurity scores of first born and last born adolescents

There is found significant difference in the mean security-insecurity scores of middle born and last born adolescents as t-ratio value has come significant at.05 level of confidence. The middle born adolescents show more insecurity feelings than the last born adolescents.

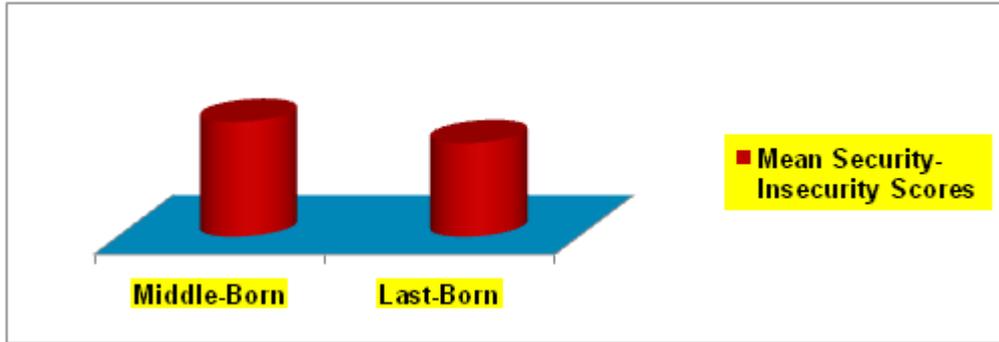


Fig.4. Showing Mean security-insecurity scores of middle born and last born adolescents

Conclusion

When selected variables examined in relation to security-insecurity feelings of adolescents, it was analysed that:

- The girls were found more insecure than the boys.
- The adolescents of nuclear families were found more insecure than the adolescents belonging to joint families.
- The first born adolescents showed more insecurity feelings than the last born adolescents.
- The middle born adolescents were found more insecure than the last born adolescents.

Educational implications

According to the findings of the study, sex had a significant role to play as far as security-insecurity among boys and girls are concerned. Girls were found more insecure. Home environment plays a crucial role in developing the personality of the child. Sufficient attention should be paid by the parents towards all aspects of child's life especially the girls'. Congenial environment should be provided by the parents for their desirable, sufficient and positive growth and parents should not indulge in discrimination policy. They shouldn't over protect their daughters and their success in any field should not be underestimated. The teachers should also try to save the girls from developing the feelings of insecurity. They are supposed to identify such girls who feel shy, remain submissive and do not participate in the co curricular activities and academic competitions because of their fear of failing. Teachers and counsellors should bring these adolescent girls forward and encourage them to express their feelings and emotions in a friendly type of atmosphere. Under-achiever girl students, slow learners and ugly looking girls should not be humiliated and rebuked. They should be encouraged and provided special counselling. In the present study, the adolescents belonging to nuclear families were found to have more insecurity than the adolescents of joint families. In

nuclear families, most of the parents are working and are not able to pay proper attention and time to their wards. The kids of these families are left at the mercy of the servants or housekeepers. So in these families whenever possible, the parents should try to spend more quality time with their wards. Certain provisions can also be made for the wards to visit their grandparents regularly. All their social and emotional needs should be catered to so that security feelings could be developed among them. Since in the present study, the first born adolescents were found more insecure in comparison to the last born and similarly middle born adolescents were found more insecure in comparison to last born, so it is necessary that parents carefully play their part to make the first born and middle born adolescents feel as secure as the last born adolescents in the family. They should be more attentive and should have more love, respect, care and affection towards such adolescents. They shouldn't assign a lot of responsibility on their shoulders and should help them to solve effectively their day to day problems in different areas of life.

References

- [1] Bandura, A., 1997, "Self efficacy: The Exercise of Control." NewYork:W.H.Freeman and Company.
- [2] Bossard, J.H.S., andBoll, E.S., 1954, "Security in Large Family." *Child Development*.26, pp.71-78.
- [3] Carson, D.K., Swanson, D.M., Cooney, M.H., andGillum, B.J., 1992, "Stress and Coping as Predictors of Young Children's Development and Psychosocial Adjustment." *Child Study Journal*, 24, pp.273-296.
- [4] Claxton, V.G., 1994, "Sibling Relationships in Cross-cultural Perspective." *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, 56, pp.7-20.
- [5] Davies, P.T., Harold, G.T., GoekeMorey, M.c., andCummings, E.M., 2002, "Child Emotional Security and Interpersonal Conflict." *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 67, pp.1-113. U.s.Blackwell Pub.
- [6] Davies, P.T., Forman, E.M., Rasi, J.A., andStevens, K.I., 2002, "Assessing Children's Emotional Security in the Interparental Relationship:The Security in the Interparental Subsystem Scales." *Child Development*, 73, pp.544-562.
- [7] Gould, S.J., 1997, "Dolly's Fashion and Louis's Passion." *Natural History*, 106, pp. 18-24.
- [8] Koul, Lokesh., 2000, "Methodology of Educational Research."Vikas Publishing House Pvt.Ltd.
- [9] Maslow, A.H., 1942, "The Dynamics of Psychological Security-Insecurity." *Character and Personality*, 10, pp.331-344.
- [10] Nims, D.R., 1998, "Searching for Self: A Theoretical Model for Applying Family Systems to Adolescents Group work." *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*, 23, pp.133-144.

- [11] Shankar, Uday., 1958, "A Study of Problem Children." Atma Ram and Sons publishers.
- [12] Thompson, R.A., and Limber, S.P., 1990, "Social Anxiety in Infancy : Stranger and Separation Reactions." In H. Leitenberg (Ed.), Handbook of Social and Evaluation Anxiety: NewYork: Plenum.
- [13] Verma, L.K., andSharma, N.R., 1990, "Advanced Statistics in Educational Psychology."Narendra Publishing House, Jammu.
- [14] Weinfield, N.S., Sroufe, L.A., and Egeland, B., 2000, "Attachment from Infancy to Early Adulthood in a High Risk Sample: Continuity, Discountinuity and their Correlates." Child Development, 71, pp.695-702.