



**To study the influence of family environment on social competence in  
children**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Present study was conducted to know the influence of family environment on social competence of an children is of great importance. Family environment affects the social competence during a more crucial period in life, i.e. adolescence. Adolescence is often considered as a period of “storm & stress”. Any negligence of the individual at this stage leads to serious problems in later life which is bad not only for the individual but also for all those who come in contact with him and for the society in which they live. Study was carried out on 100 children’s (50 boys and 50 girls) from Meerut city. The results show gender differences in perception of the family environment and social competence which proves that in Indian culture especially that of small cities .the parents still give differential treatment to their sons and daughters and the society has certain gender biases still prevailing.*

**Key Words-** family environment, social competence.

**I. Introduction**

Child is born and lives his life in an environment physical, social and emotional. It is a member-active or inactive, of many groups and plays a complicated role in all of them. He is a member of a family, of a neighborhood, of a school, of a religious group and of a nation and he lives his life as a member of all of them simultaneously. Thus, family is the most important socializing agent that influences the child life. It is within the family, the basic unit of society, that a child learns the fundamentals of social interactions and acquires the behavior patters and basic personality structure. “The family has a special role in a child’s life” was pointed out by Dutta (1981).It is universally accepted that family plays a very significant role in the all round development of a child. Parent-child interaction and parents’ way to deal with their children, develop certain attitudes among the children towards their home environment. The word “**environment**” is a more comprehensive one. It includes with in itself the word environment’. The human elements around the child is called environment’. It embraces the social, physical and emotional activities of the family. All these combined together constitute the “**Family environment**”.

The family which consists of parents-father and mother and siblings, i.e. brothers and sisters, involves interaction amount itself. The totality of these interactions is the base of the family. The child lives in a family environment after his birth and establishes family relationships. The child is always in interaction with his parents and other family members. Through, these interactions, the child becomes able to identify himself and the position that he occupies with reference to others. Authorization parenting style leads to ininfluenceive social interaction and ininfluenceiveness in children’s due to punitiveness, restrictiveness and control as its main characteristics. Democratic parents encourage independence, are warm and nurturing, they control with explanation and allow children’s to express their views which intern leads to social competence and responsibility in children’s. Laissez- faire (Permissive) parents are characterized by lack of involvement, non-punitive and impose few demands and children have a lot of freedom and this leads to immature, poor self-restraint,

poor leadership. Rejecting-neglecting parents are characterized by rejecting or neglectful of child-rearing responsibilities leading to antisocial, immature, psychological problems. The social competency of the individual develops as a result of these styles. Social competence is the sum total of all psychophysical system of an individual. It includes social interactions, values, systems, beliefs, temperament, and process of adjustment. All these segments of social competence are influenced by the family. Social competence is an important ingredient of modern civilization, and is the essential attribute of the members of a progressive onwards moving society. The cultural purity and social diversity of India provide enough opportunities to Indian children for the acquisition of high order social competence, through rich and varied interpersonal relations.

**Social competence** means the attaining of maturity in social relationship. It is the “process of learning to conform to group standards, mores, traditions and becoming imbued with a sense of oneness, intercommunication and cooperation.”(Freeman and Showel, 1953).

**Adolescence** is a crucial period in one’s life. Every human being has to pay through this period and this stage brings its immense problems along with it. Adolescence is the time when the individual is confronted with various families, schools, social and personal problems. However, adolescence is not a problem period but a stage in human development which has certain but natural problems. In other words, the children years are, pre-eminently, a period of social development and adjustment. During the preceding years of childhood there have been, to be sure, a beginning of socialization and some acquisition of fundamental social skills.

Present study was to observe the influence of family environment on social competence among children. I have tried to examine the relationship between the family environment and personality traits in children.

**Objectives:-**

1. To study the family environment (dimension) of children boys and girls.
2. To study the social competence (dimension) of children boys and girls.
3. To study the relationship between various dement ions of family environment and social competence in context of children.

**Limitations:-**

1. After obtaining the list of intermediate colleges of Meerut City only four schools were selected for data collection.
2. The study was limited on class 8th students only.
3. Due to the shortage of time, sample size was small; the present study was limited to 50 boys and 50 girls only.

**Review of Literature:-**

The review of literature helps the researcher to investigate a specific field of his interest in respect of researchers that have been conducted in India as well as abroad. It provides insight as well as direction in indicating, identifying the research problem, in selection a sample, in selection appropriate methodology and the statistical techniques. Hence, review of related literature is an important prerequisite to the actual planning and then the execution of any research work. History related to family environment & social competence.

**Dauvan and Adelson (1966)**, they found that the most successful children experience seemed to occur in families in which interest, involvement and intensity of interaction are at moderate levels families in which teenagers are able to express their own view points freely,

even if those view points conflicts with their parents, and in which they can actively participate in family decision making.

**Dutta (1981)**, who has shown that the family has a special role in a child's life. The impact of the family on the child's competency is of great importance.

**Elder (1980)**, suggest that teenagers most positive about parents who encouraged them to participate in discussion and consult them about decision but reserve the right to make the final decision, as well as about parents who try to give their children equal say in decision. Teenagers give their lowest ratings to parents who are autocratic in making family decisions.

**Faizunisa and Parameswaran (1965)**, found that maternal behavior like indulgence, over protectiveness and dominance tend to be associated with higher frequency of problems.

**Fenter et. al. (1990)**, examined specific aspects of student's home environment and the relationship of those home environments characteristics to the manifestation of student behavior problem in school. According to data analysis, all variables of home environment were significant in determining whether or not a student would exhibit behavior problem in school.

**Gonzalez et. al. (2000)**, focused the relationship between perceived family environment and family structure, and general self-efficacy. Results showed the family structure was a significant predictor of general self-efficacy, with participants from intact families tending to have higher general self-efficacies than participants from non-intact families.

**Ladd et. al. (1988)**, studied the difference between young adult perceptions of family environment, family values, sexual behavior, sexual attitudes and attitude toward divorce by gender and family type. Results indicate that students from all three family types consider family values to be very important. In conclusion, it appears that gender is more discriminating than family type on how family social environment is perceived. The experience of living in a particular family type does influence student's attitudes divorce, but no judgement can be made about future divorce behavior.

**Lamb et. al. (1988)**, presented social competence of Swedish pre-schoolers and found that the high socio-economic status, high quality home care and early temperament facilitated personality maturity.

**Lindsey et. al. (1992)**, determined consistency in teachers' judgments' of social competence. Preferences for high versus low inference criteria. This study showed there was a significant influence for the ambiguity factor, with teachers' preferences for higher inference criteria increasing significantly when they were evaluating ambiguous classroom social behavior.

**Sun. et. al. (1988)**, examined the associations between family relationships and social competence during late adolescence. The family relationship measures included closeness to father, closeness to mother, low parental intrusiveness, and contentment at home. The social competence measures included social self-esteem/social competence, masculinity, femininity, shyness, satisfaction and importance of opposite sex relationships and satisfaction and importance of same sex relationships and satisfaction and importance of same sex relationships. The results supported the notable gender differences in family relationships and social competence over time. Taken together, these results, suggest that makes and females have different experiences in separating from the family. For males, after leaving home, family ties gradually diminish, for females, there was positive correlation between family relationships and social competence during both time periods.

## II. Methodology & Research Design

Keeping in view the objectives of the present study, the researcher has organized the procedure of the study under the following heads:-

- a) **Methods of the study:** - I have used descriptive method for this study.
- b) **Main variables of the study:** - In the present study I have chosen independent variable (Family environment of children boys & girls), controlled variable (Age 11-13 years of the children) and dependent variable (Social competence).
- c) **Selection of sample:** - The sample was selected on random basis & the sample drawn for the study was the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class students of Meerut city. For this study I have taken 100 children (boys & girls) of 11-13 years of vii & viii grade. In this study for data collection I have taken 2 standardized questionnaires (Family environment scale & social competence scale). After the data collection was completed the scores were tabulated respondent wise & were arranged in the tabular form & computed for statistical analysis, interpretation & discussion. After this I have used appropriate mean, standard deviation, student t-test & correlation coefficient for analyzing the data.

## III. Result & Discussions

Focusing upon the above information the results was interpreted in the following section:

**Table-1 Showing mean, S.D and 't'- value of favorable and unfavorable family environment.**

<b>Favourable Family Environment</b>					
<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>t-value</b>
1	Boys	50	69.88	8.392	1.154 (NS)
2	Girls	50	67.8	9.592	
<b>Unfavourable Family Environment</b>					
3	Boys	50	51.64	14.613	3.003(*)
4	Girls	50	60.08	13.468	

In relation to favorable family environment and children (boys) scored higher mean values than girls. The obtained 't' value is 1.154. This value is not significant even at 0.05 level. It means that boys have no difference in there favorable family environment.

In relation to unfavorable family environment of the children Girls scored higher mean values than boys. The obtained 't' value is 3.003 is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean value for girls has shown higher unfavorable family environment than boys. It confirms that there is also a great gender difference in relation to family environment in adolescence. This can be explained by the fact that even though the parents do not drastically show different treatment towards boys and girls in our culture, still boys are given slight preferential treatment and the parental attitude is more favorable for them.

**Table-2 Showing mean, S.D. and 't'-value of social competence.**

			<b>Social Competence</b>		
<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>'t'-value</b>
1	Boys	50	191.22	26.614	0.841 (NS)
2	Girls	50	187.52	16.086	

In relation to social competence of children, boys scored higher mean values than girls. The obtained 't' values is 0.841. This value is not significant even at 0.05 level. It means that boys and girls have no difference in their social competence. But the higher mean value of boys shows the level of social competence is higher in boys than for girls.

**Table-3** Following table shows the relationship between favorable and unfavorable family environment on various dimensions of social competence in context of boys.

Group	N	Favourable Family Environment	S.C.	SM	SL	ST	Sco	PSA
Boys	50	t-value	0.507	0.971	0.488	1.800	0.873	0.893
		r-value	0.073	0.070	0.070	0.251	0.125	0.128
NS								
		<b>Unfavourable Family Environment</b>						
		t-value	1.410	1.189	0.444	1.597	1.083	2.082
		r-value	0.199	0.169	0.064	0.225	0.154	0.288
NS								
		<b>Favourable Freedom Vs Restrictiveness</b>						*
		t-value	1.507	1.500	1.230	0.285	1.132	1.151
		r-value	0.213	0.212	0.175	0.041	0.161	0.164
NS								
		<b>Unfavourable Freedom Vs Restrictiveness</b>						
		t-value	0.830	0.621	0.582	0.238	0.573	1.227
		r-value	0.119	-0.089	-0.084	0.034	-0.082	0.174
NS								
		<b>Favourable Indulgence Vs Avoidance</b>						
		t-value	0.119	1.882	1.726	0.170	1.642	0.688
		r-value	-0.017	-0.262	-0.242	-0.025	-0.231	-0.099
NS								
		<b>Unfavourable Indulgence Vs Avoidance</b>						
		t-value	1.637	3.176	2.070	2.024	2.687	2.331
		r-value	0.230	0.417	0.286	0.280	0.362	0.319
			NS	*	*	*	*	*
		<b>Favourable Fairness Vs Partiality</b>						
		t-value	0.016	0.437	0.236	0.120	1.029	0.659
		r-value	-0.002	0.063	0.034	-0.017	0.147	0.095
NS								
		<b>Unfavourable Fairness Vs Partiality</b>						
		t-value	2.242	0.537	0.736	0.126	0.088	3.309
		r-value	0.035	0.077	-0.106	0.018	0.013	-0.431
NS								
		<b>Favourable Attention Vs Negligence</b>						*
		t-value	1.514	1.704	0.144	0.958	1.688	2.507
		r-value	-0.213	-0.239	-0.021	-0.137	-0.237	0.340
NS								
		<b>Unfavourable Attention Vs Negligence</b>						
		t-value	0.769	1.058	0.075	0.058	0.866	1.198
		r-value	0.110	0.151	-0.011	-0.008	-0.124	0.170

			NS				*	
		<b>Favourable Acceptance Vs Rejection</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	1.394	1.398	1.075	0.795	1.306	2.768
		<b>r-value</b>	0.194	0.198	0.153	0.114	0.185	0.371
			NS				*	
		<b>Unfavourable Acceptance Vs Rejection</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.077	0.501	0.849	0.069	0.294	1.414
		<b>r-value</b>	0.011	-0.072	0.122	-0.010	0.042	-0.200
			NS					
		<b>Favourable Warmth Vs Coldness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.597	2.150	1.610	0.492	2.016	2.002
		<b>r-value</b>	0.086	0.296	0.226	0.071	0.279	0.278
			NS	*	NS		*	*
		<b>Unfavourable Warmth Vs Coldness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.698	0.863	0.175	0.144	0.643	0.887
		<b>r-value</b>	0.100	0.124	-0.025	-0.021	0.092	0.127
			NS					
		<b>Favourable Trust Vs Distrust</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	1.109	0.977	0.789	0.738	1.014	0.941
		<b>r-value</b>	0.158	0.140	0.113	0.106	0.145	0.135
			NS					
		<b>Unfavourable Trust Vs Distrust</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.854	1.110	0.125	0.447	1.940	0.127
		<b>r-value</b>	0.122	0.158	0.178	0.064	0.270	-0.018
			NS					
		<b>Favourable Dominance Vs Submissiveness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	1.930	2.206	1.176	1.177	1.047	0.622
		<b>r-value</b>	-0.268	0.303	-0.167	-0.167	-0.149	-0.089
			NS	*	NS			
		<b>Unfavourable Dominance Vs Submissiveness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	1.558	2.206	0.296	1.009	2.072	1.472
		<b>r-value</b>	0.219	0.303	0.043	0.144	0.286	0.208
			NS	*	NS		*	NS
		<b>Favourable Expectation Vs Hopelessness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.507	0.506	0.621	0.721	0.089	0.409
		<b>r-value</b>	0.073	0.073	0.089	0.104	0.013	-0.059
			NS					
		<b>Unfavourable Expectation Vs Hopelessness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.321	0.973	0.146	0.860	1.891	1.029
		<b>r-value</b>	-0.046	0.139	0.021	-0.123	0.263	0.147
			NS					
		<b>Favourable open communication Vs controlled Communication</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.644	0.865	0.744	0.418	1.332	0.944
		<b>r-value</b>	0.093	-0.124	0.111	0.060	-0.189	-0.135
			NS					
		<b>Unfavourable open communication Vs controlled Communication</b>						

	<b>t-value</b>	0.513	0.384	0.440	0.110	0.135	0.187
	<b>r-value</b>	-0.074	0.055	-0.063	0.016	0.019	-0.027
<b>NS</b>							

\* Shows significant at 0.05 % level.

NS- Not significant.

### Result

Boys show significantly positive co-relationships between these areas but in the dimension unfavorable Fairness Vs Partially was found the negative correlation. The results also show the influence of family environment on social competence in context of boys. Similar results have been reported by **Dutta (1981)** who has shown that the family has a special role in a child's life. The impact of the family on the child's competency is of great importance.

**Table-4:- Following table shows the relationship between favorable and unfavorable family environment on various dimensions of social competence in context of girls.**

Group	N	Favourable Family Environment	SC	SM	SL	ST	SCo	PSA
Girls	50	<b>t-value</b>	0.495	0.899	0.905	1.372	0.503	2.987
		<b>r-value</b>	0.071	0.129	0.130	-0.194	-0.072	0.396
<b>NS</b>								*
		<b>Unfavourable Family Environment</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.304	0.570	1.467	1.023	1.280	0.785
		<b>r-value</b>	-0.044	0.082	-0.207	-0.146	0.182	-0.133
<b>NS</b>								
		<b>Favourable Freedom Vs Restrictiveness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.938	1.047	1.980	0.426	2.930	0.617
		<b>r-value</b>	0.134	0.149	-0.275	-0.061	0.390	0.089
			<b>NS</b>		*	<b>NS</b>	*	<b>NS</b>
		<b>Unfavourable Freedom Vs Restrictiveness</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.295	0.399	0.711	0.609	0.535	0.501
		<b>r-value</b>	-0.043	0.049	-0.102	0.088	-0.077	-0.072
<b>NS</b>								
		<b>Favourable Indulgence Vs Avoidance</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.027	0.508	0.224	1.104	1.708	0.980
		<b>r-value</b>	0.004	-0.073	0.032	-0.157	0.239	0.140
<b>NS</b>								
		<b>Unfavourable Indulgence Vs Avoidance</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	1.557	0.990	1.135	1.851	0.641	0.758
		<b>r-value</b>	-0.219	-0.141	-0.162	-0.258	-0.092	-0.109
			<b>NS</b>	*	*	*	*	*
		<b>Favourable Fairness Vs Partiality</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	0.521	0.028	1.637	0.246	2.440	1.042
		<b>r-value</b>	0.075	-0.004	-0.230	0.035	0.332	-0.149
<b>NS</b>							*	<b>NS</b>
		<b>Unfavourable Fairness Vs Partiality</b>						
		<b>t-value</b>	1.084	1.515	0.005	0.444	0.545	2.526
		<b>r-value</b>	0.155	0.214	-0.001	0.064	0.078	0.343
<b>NS</b>								*
		<b>Favourable Attention Vs Negligence</b>						

	<b>t-value</b>	0.248	0.290	2.940	0.510	0.026	0.556
	<b>r-value</b>	0.036	0.042	0.380	0.073	-0.004	0.080
		NS		*	NS		
	<b>Unfavourable Attention Vs Negligence</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.318	0.582	0.689	0.157	0.282	0.977
	<b>r-value</b>	0.046	0.084	-0.099	-0.023	0.041	0.140
		NS					
	<b>Favourable Acceptance Vs Rejection</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	1.353	1.304	0.684	0.108	3.848	0.765
	<b>r-value</b>	0.192	0.185	-0.098	-0.016	0.486	0.110
		NS				*	NS
	<b>Unfavourable Acceptance Vs Rejection</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	2.287	2.291	0.209	0.849	2.319	0.475
	<b>r-value</b>	0.313	0.314	0.030	-0.122	0.317	0.068
		*	*	NS		*	NS
	<b>Favourable Warmth Vs Coldness</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.597	2.150	1.610	0.492	2.016	2.002
	<b>r-value</b>	0.086	0.296	0.226	0.071	0.279	0.278
		NS				*	NS
	<b>Unfavourable Warmth Vs Coldness</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.155	0.104	0.129	1.089	1.122	1.233
	<b>r-value</b>	0.022	0.015	-0.019	-0.155	0.160	-0.175
		NS					
	<b>Favourable Trust Vs Distrust</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	1.564	1.091	1.378	0.617	4.073	0.662
	<b>r-value</b>	0.220	0.155	-0.195	0.089	0.507	0.095
		NS				*	NS
	<b>Unfavourable Trust Vs Distrust</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.278	0.301	1.158	1.446	1.405	1.171
	<b>r-value</b>	0.040	0.043	0.165	-0.204	0.199	-0.167
		NS					
	<b>Favourable Dominance Vs Submissiveness</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.669	0.000	1.114	0.618	1.882	0.777
	<b>r-value</b>	0.096	0.000	-0.159	-0.089	0.262	0.111
		NS					
	<b>Unfavourable Dominance Vs Submissiveness</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.185	0.206	0.091	0.226	0.863	1.548
	<b>r-value</b>	-0.027	-0.030	0.013	0.033	0.124	-0.218
		NS					
	<b>Favourable Expectation Vs Hopelessness</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.767	0.371	0.943	0.863	0.916	0.362
	<b>r-value</b>	0.110	0.053	-0.135	0.124	0.131	-0.052
		NS					
	<b>Unfavourable Expectation Vs Hopelessness</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	1.661	1.769	0.412	2.405	2.132	0.867
	<b>r-value</b>	0.233	0.247	-0.059	-0.328	0.294	0.124
		NS			*	*	NS



	<b>Favourable open communication Vs controlled Communication</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.756	1.048	2.132	0.678	0.803	0.641
	<b>r-value</b>	-0.108	-0.150	0.294	0.097	0.115	-0.092
		NS		*	NS		
	<b>Unfavourable open communication Vs controlled Communication</b>						
	<b>t-value</b>	0.470	0.272	1.499	0.984	1.641	0.331
	<b>r-value</b>	0.068	-0.039	-0.211	0.141	0.230	0.048
		NS					

\*= Significant at 0.5% level of significance, NS= Not significant

### Result

On the basis of correlation matrix of girls, we can say that if the environment of the family is good or healthy, the attitude of girls is positive towards the society. Girls have always been suppressed. In India, if the family environment is good, girls feel that the society is changing for betterment and they feel encouraged to face the society. If there is no partiality in the family between boys and girls than there is no doubt that the character of social leadership, social competition, social competence is developed in both the sexes equally. These results are also supported by the results of Dauvan and Adelson (1966), they found that the most successful children experiences seemed to occur in families in which interest, involvement and intensity of interaction are at moderate levels. Families in which teenagers are able to express their own view points freely, even if those view points conflicts with their parents and in which they can actively participate in family decision making.

Last but not least I want to find out the influence of family environment on social competence of children boys & girls & the result show gender differences in perception of the family environment & social competence which proves that in Indian culture specially that of small cities. The parents still give differential treatment to their sons & daughters and the society has certain gender basis still prevailing.

The present study will serve as a guideline to the parents in their behavior towards their children (boys and girls) so that they provide a healthy and favorable environment with in the family without any gender discrimination also that they may motivate and promote social development in their children and help them to acquire social competency which will equip them influenceively to deal with life.

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