

THE INFLUENCE OF URBANIZATION AND PEERS ON THE SEXUAL BEHAVIORS OF COLLEGE GIRL STUDENTS: A META ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACTS

Adolescence is a tumultuous and challenging time period in life. 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. Family, neighborhood, society, institution and school etc. constitute external environment. Family directly influences personality development by molding and communication, since the girls from their birth are subjected to hindrances and pressure from the parents and society. 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 and peers has been formed as independent variables. With the objective of investigating into the impact of residential area, 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 attitudes towards permissive sexual behaviour were higher in the subjects of urban nuclear family in contrast to rural joint family. The findings of the present study highlight a significant correlation amongst the attitudes of sexual behavior of adolescent girls, the residential area, and peers

Keywords: College girls, Attitudes, Permissive, Restrictive, Sexual behavior, Residential area, Peers.

INTRODUCTION

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 (Albarracín *et al.*, 2005; Wood, 2000). 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** (Fazio, 1990; Fazio, 1995; Krosnick & Petty, 1995). 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 (Ferguson *et al.*, 2005). 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 (Downing *et al.*, 1992; Tesser *et al.*, 1995). 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 is in some relation.

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 (Symons, 1979; Geary, 2009) 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 (Lippa, 2009; Halpem, 2011 and Sterling, 2012), although this is often not possible (Halpem, 2011). A number of factors combine to influence the development of sex differences, including genetics and epigenetics (Richardson, 2013) differences in brain structure and function (Becker *et al.*, 2007) hormones (Helmuth, 1994) and socialization (Geary, 2009; Lippa, 2009 and Halpem, 2011).

In recent year psychologists, sociologists and home scientists are paying increased attentions 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. 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 (Glasman & Albarracín, 2006). 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 (Ajzen, 1991; LaPiere, 1936).

The aim of present study is to analyze the attitudes of different college girls towards sexual behavior and its correlation with the residential area and the peers.

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY:

With the aim of studying the difference in attitudes of various college girls towards sex behavior differing in family size, residential area, income level, the following hypotheses were formulated. The present investigation proceeded to test the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis

The married and unmarried groups from urban areas shall be significantly higher in permissive attitudes towards sex behaviour than the married and unmarried groups from rural areas.

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.

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

Instruments used for measuring attitudes towards superstition:

For measuring attitudes towards sexual behavior a "Sex behavior Attitude Inventory" constructed by Singh (1977) 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 residential area and peers surrounding them.

The criteria for the 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. These sample covered subjects from both urban and rural areas in both 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' response 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.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Out of 100 married college girl students there were 70 subjects from the rural areas (MR) and 30 subjects from the urban areas (MU). Out of 100 unmarried college girl students (UM) there were 40 subjects from the rural areas (UMR) and 60 subjects from the urban areas (UMU). The distribution of APSB (Attitude towards permissive sexual behavior) score of MR, MU, UMR and UMU subjects have been presented in text table -1 and 2, while distribution of ARSB (Attitudes towards Restrictive Sexual Behaviour) score of MR, MU, UMR and UMU subjects have been presented in text table 3 and 4. The mean APSB scores of these groups /subgroups with S.Ds and 't' ratios have been presented in text table 5 while the mean ARSB scores of the same groups/ sub groups with S.Ds and 't' ratios have been presented in text table -6.

TABLE-1

Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Permissive Sexual Behavior (APSB) scores of MR and MU groups.

Distribution of APSB scores of married rural students (MR)		Distribution of APSB scores of married urban students (MU)	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
37-38	02	37-38	02
35-36	02	35-36	02
33-34	04	33-34	04
31-32	07	31-32	07
29-30	10	29-30	06
27-28	23	27-28	05
25-26	15	25-26	02
23-24	07	23-24	02
N=	70	N=	30
Mean=	27.928572	Mean=	30.43
S.D.=	2.88628	S.D.=	3.6049348

TABLE-2

Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Permissive Sexual Behavior (APSB) scores of UMR and UMU groups.

Distribution of APSB scores of unmarried rural students (UMR)		Distribution of APSB scores of unmarried urban students (UMU)	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
37-38	02	37-38	05
35-36	04	35-36	08
33-34	05	33-34	13
31-32	07	31-32	14
29-30	12	29-30	13
27-28	03	27-28	04
25-26	04	25-26	02
23-24	03	23-24	01
N=	40	N=	60
Mean=	30.35	Mean=	31.93
S.D.=	3.6575264	S.D.=	3.1642096

TABLE-3

Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Restrictive Sexual Behavior (ARSB) scores of MR and MU groups.

Distribution of ARSB scores of married rural students (MR)		Distribution of ARSB scores of married urban students (MU)	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
37-38	05	37-38	01
35-36	08	35-36	03
33-34	19	33-34	03
31-32	21	31-32	08
29-30	13	29-30	09
27-28	02	27-28	03
25-26	01	25-26	02
23-24	01	23-24	01
N=	70	N=	30
Mean=	32.242857	Mean=	30.63
S.D.=	2.7499908	S.D.=	3.1276544

TABLE-4

Showing distribution of Attitudes towards Restrictive Sexual Behavior (ARSB) scores of UMR and UMU groups.

Distribution of ARSB scores of unmarried rural students (UMR)		Distribution of ARSB scores of unmarried urban students (UMU)	
Class interval	't'	Class interval	't'
37-38	02	37-38	01
35-36	02	35-36	02
33-34	08	33-34	05
31-32	07	31-32	12
29-30	11	29-30	10
27-28	07	27-28	15
25-26	02	25-26	09
23-24	01	23-24	06
N=	40	N=	60
Mean=	30.8	Mean=	28.8
S.D.=	2.9171904	S.D.=	2.796226

TABLE-5

Showing mean, S.Ds and 't' ratio of APSB Scores of MR, MU, UMR and UMU groups

Groups	Means	S.Ds	N	Dt	't' ratio	Level of significance
Married rural (MR) students	27.928572	2.88628	70	98	3.3707034	0.01
Married urban (MU) students	30.43	3.6049348	30			
Unmarried rural (UMR) students	30.35	3.6575264	40	98	3.2391066	0.01
Unmarried urban (UMU) students	31.93	3.1642096	60			

TABLE-6

Showing mean, S.Ds and 't' ratio of ARSB Scores of MR, MU, UMR and UMU groups

Groups	Means	S.Ds	N	Dt	't' ratio	Level of significance
Married rural (MR) students	32.242857	2.7499908	70	98	2.4428574	0.05
Married urban (MU) students	30.63	3.1276544	30			
Unmarried rural (UMR) students	30.8	2.9171904	40	98	3.2391066	0.01
Unmarried urban (UMU) students	28.8	3.1796226	60			

The mean APSB score of rural and urban subjects in married groups were 27.928572 and 30.43 respectively, while that of rural and urban subjects in unmarried groups were 30.35 and 31.93 respectively (Table-5). The mean ARSB score of rural and urban subjects in married groups were 30.8 and 28.8 respectively, (Table 6). The obtained 't' ratios for APSB mean scores between MR and MU & UMR and UMU groups were 3.3707034 and 2.2362487 respectively, While the scores of ARSB mean score between MR and MU and UMR & UMU groups were 2.4428574 and 3.2391066 respectively. All the four 't' ratios obtained were significant at 0.05 or 0.01 level. Urban subjects have displayed significantly higher scores towards permissive sexual behavior and significantly lower attitudes scores towards restrictive sexual behavior than the rural subjects in both the married and unmarried groups. Thus the sub- hypothesis that the married and unmarried groups from urban areas shall be significantly higher in permissive attitudes towards sexual behavior than the married and unmarried groups from rural areas stands verified.

The present study highlights that residential area affects the sexual behavior in college going girls. Urbanization has been found significantly influencing attitudes towards permissive sexual behavior positively while negatively influencing the restrictive sexual behavior. However, residence in rural areas plays a significant role in positively influencing the attitudes towards restrictive sexual behavior and negatively influencing the attitudes towards permissive sexual behavior. It clearly appears that the wave of sex revolution has greatly influenced the urban girls. They have shown their great adaptabilities towards modern sex ethics. My findings support the earlier finding of Light(1970) who reported urban girls more in favour of pre martial sex than rural girls and lower than those in acceptance of conventional ethical standards.

Peers are presumed to exert a major social influence on adolescent sexual behavior. Peer effects may operate at several levels. Same-sex peers are a major source of information about sex (Davis & Harris, 1982). Same-sex friends may influence the perceived acceptability of sexual behavior, and sexually experienced friends may serve as role models. Finally, romantic partners provide opportunities for sexual experimentation and may also exert pressure for sex (Wyatt & Riederle, 1994). Once statistical controls were applied, peer effects were small and occurred only between friends with similar sexual experience. Thus, effects of peer behavior may be limited; beliefs about friends' sexual behavior appear more influential than friends' actual behavior (Cvetkovich & Grote, 1980).

Neighborhoods can be a source of models for and information about sexual behavior. Adolescents are frequently exposed to sexual material on television, in movies, and in magazines. Most sexual behavior on television takes places between unmarried adults and ignores the potential negative consequences of sexual intercourse; music videos often combine sex and violence (Huston *et al.*, 1998). However, the effect of media exposure on adolescents' sexual attitudes and behavior has not been sufficiently studied.

CONCLUSION

Studies of adolescent sexual behavior have moved beyond identifying individual predictors of sexual activity to testing multivariate models that incorporate biological, psychological, and social factors (e.g., Crockett *et al.*, 1996; Udry & Billy, 1987). The residential area and the peers play a significant role in moulding and shaping the attitudes of college going girls towards sexual behavior. There is an ongoing need for longitudinal research that tracks changes in attitudes, behaviours, and subjective experience over time. This is especially critical for building a picture of how sexual self-concept develops and how sexuality becomes integrated into the young person's identity and construction of relationships.

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