



“Role Of Gender and Family in Emotional Abuse Among Adults”

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Abstract

The main objective of the research was a study moderating roles of gender, types of family and residence in emotional abuse among adults pursuing higher education. For the present study total sample (N=100) comprising male (n=50) and female (n=50) adults randomly selected from Indore (M.P.) with age range from 25 to 35 years and up to postgraduate qualification. Subject's mean age was 28.5 years. Data were collected through one standardized psychological test: (1) Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) by Jacobson and Gottman (1998) and Demographic Data Sheet individually from male and female adults.

Data were coded, entered and analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency distribution, Mean, S.D. and t-ratio were calculated to measure the mean difference between the two groups of respondents with respect to their types of gender and age. Correlation coefficient was also computed among the variables.

Results revealed the fact that there is a significant difference between the gender, type of family and residence of respondents towards their emotional abuse. Overall, emotional abuse was significantly higher among females as compared to males. The discrepancies of results obtained have been discussed in detail by giving probable reasons.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study:

Emotional abuse often called as psychological abuse, is a form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another person to a behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder. It is often associated with situations of power imbalance in abusive relationships, and may include bullying, gas lighting, and abuse in the workplace. It also may be perpetrated by persons conducting torture, other violence, acute or prolonged human rights abuse, particularly without legal redress such as detention without trial, false accusations, false convictions, and extreme defamation such as where perpetrated by state and media.

1.2. Emotional Abuse:

1.2.1. Abuse:

Abuse is defined as a non ending pattern of behaviors to preserve power and control over an intimate partner, child, adolescent, teen, adult, or elderly individual. These are actions that physically hurt, encourage fear, stop a partner from doing what they wish, or force them to act in ways that they do not want. Abuse includes the use of physical and sexual violence, threats and intimidation, emotional abuse, and financial loss. Many of these forms of abuse can be concurrent (National Domestic Violence Hotline, 2017). The predictor variable, childhood abuse, was measured by the PPMS (Briere & Runtz, 1988).

1.2.2. Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse can be defined as the persistent repetitive patterns of verbal and non-verbal behaviors that harm or are intended to harm the child (Keashty & Harvey, 2005). Emotional abuse mostly exists in conjunction with other forms of maltreatment. For instance, a vast number of children who were abused



sexually, neglected physically were also identified to have experienced other forms of abuse (Tricker & Pocock, 2003).

1.2.3. Causes of Emotional Abuse:

It is difficult to determine the extent to which socio-demographic variables increase risk for emotional abuse and neglect in families (Cawson, 2000). However, a trend was identified by Sedlak (1997) suggesting an increased risk for psychological abuse for children from lower income families, children whose race was described as 'other' and older children.

Certain parental personality factors are also believed to increase the risk of emotional abuse. These include emotional disturbances, aggression, hostility, and lower self-esteem, social anxiety, less engagement in social activities, dysthymia symptoms, lower verbal reasoning and more illness. (Lennik, O. & Cohen, L. 1995). Emotional abuse has been associated with parents' own histories of maltreatment and experience of less than optimal relationships with care.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Emotional abuse is related to many negative psychosocial consequences. Research study concluded, confirmed and validates the relationship between emotional abuse and depression in adults (**Gross & Keller, 1992**), **suicidal tendency, anxiety (Bifulco, Moran, Baines, Bunn, & Stanford, 2002)**, dissociation, consumption of alcohol and drugs among the college students (**Jelley, 2003**).

Research indicates that childhood maltreatment, particularly physical and emotional abuse, is highly prevalent in China (**Cui & Liu, 2020; Ip et al., 2016**) because some forms of physical (i.e., physical punishment) and emotional (i.e., scolding and terrorizing) abuse are considered normal parenting practices in Chinese societies. Depression and problematic behaviors among Chinese adolescents induced by physical and emotional abuse have attracted research interest (**Cui & Liu, 2020**).

Moreover, few studies have focused on long-standing effects of emotional abuse, psychologists have verified sequel including severe depression (**Yamamoto et al., 1999**) and **personality disorders (Johnson, Smailes, Cohen, Brown, & Bernstein, 2000)**. Study conducted by **Reyome (2010)** found emotional abuse to be linked to loneliness and social isolation to a larger extent than any other maltreatment subtype.

According to **Follingstad, Coyne, & Gambone (2005)** Verbal assault, control, dominance, ridicule, isolation, or the use of intimate knowledge for degradation can be included in emotional abuse. There is a significant positive relationship between emotional and physical abuse in batterer people (**Gondolf, Heckert, & Kimmel, 2002**), and it is discovered that subsequent

physical spousal abuse is predicted with the presence of verbal abuse earlier in the relation (**Schumacher & Leonard, 2005**).

3. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

A research study about the most common forms of emotional abuse (e.g., physical, sexual, emotional, and controlling) and their effects is an ongoing necessity to maintain a societal obligation and responsibility. As a primary focus, this study examined the relationship role of emotional abuse among adults.

The result of this study on emotional abuse among adults providing scientific information. The research on this field therefore, is demonstrating the experiences of emotional abuse as the major component of many adults who have mental and behavioral problems i.e. poor academic performance, depression, anxiety, alcoholism, substance abuse, delinquency, delayed development, deviant, sexual abuse, domestic violence and criminal violence, just to mention but a few.

4. METHODOLOGY

There are usually eight kinds of strategies to try to any survey research study. These are: Objectives, Hypothesis, Operational Definition, Sample and Sampling, Inclusion and Exclusion, Variables, Research Design, Analytical Tool Description, Procedure, Statistical Analysis. The use of each in the present study are explained below:

4.1. Objectives:

The following objectives are formulated by the investigator for the proposed study:

1. To assess the emotional abuse between types of gender (male and female) respondents.
2. To assess the emotional abuse between types of family (nuclear and joint) respondents.
3. To assess the emotional abuse between types of residence (rural and urban) respondents.

4.2. HYPOTHESES:

Based upon the review literature, the following null hypotheses are formulated to empirically validate the above objectives:

H0:1. There will be no significant difference in emotional abuse between types of gender (male and female) respondents.

H0:2. There will be no significant difference in emotional abuse between types of family (nuclear and joint) respondents.

H0:3. There will be no significant difference in emotional abuse between types of residence (rural and urban) respondents.

4.3. Operational Definitions:

4.3.1. Emotional Abuse:



Emotional abuse essentially involves a failure on the part of a parent or caregiver in the provision of basic psychological and emotional necessities which includes affection, love, family support and encouragement which in turn is detrimental to the child's development (Ward, 2014).

One definition of emotional abuse is: "any act including confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilization, or any other treatment which may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth." For the purpose of the present study, emotional abuse means the total score obtained by male and female university students on Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) was developed by Jacobson and Gottman (1998).

4.3.2. Adults:

Adult means a student who is enrolled in an academic program of study in a college or university of higher education leading to post graduate and doctoral programs.

4.4. Sample:

To conduct this study, the investigator selected a representative sample of a total 100 higher education students from District Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The sample was selected according to the proportionately (government, and private) colleges/ universities based on simple random sampling technique. While selecting the sample care was taken that an equal number of male and female students/adults were selected.

4.5. Inclusion or Exclusion:

4.5.1. Inclusion:

1. Only male and female adults were included in the study.
2. Only participants in the age group of 21-35 years were included.
3. Only students residing in Bhopal area were included
4. Those who gave consent and were willing to participate were included.
5. Only total 100 (male 50 and female 50) adults were included in the study

4.5.2. Exclusion:

1. Those who are above 35 years were excluded
2. Those who do not give consent and willing to participate were excluded

4.6. Variables of the Study:

4.6.1. Independent Variables: Male and Female adults.

4.6.2. Dependent Variables: Emotional Abuse.

4.6.3. Research Design:

In this research study, a quantitative survey research design in which one self-report questionnaire was used

to evaluate the significant difference between emotional abuse and adults. The participants (male and female) were approached by adapting simple random sampling techniques from the residents of Bhopal (M.P.) and total participants were N=100. The variables of emotional abuse and demographic variables were described from the computer outputs.

4.7. Tools/Tests for Data Collection:

To test the hypothesis, two tests were used to collect data on variables included in the present study. The two tests were used in this study: (1) Socio-Demographic Data-Sheet and (2) Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) was designed by Jacobson and Gottman (1998). One Socio-Demographic Data-Sheet was prepared by the present researcher for data collection. It has two parts. A description of each of these two parts and two tests are given below:

Part-1: This has the background or personal information named as "Socio-Demographic Data-Sheet" which was developed by the present researcher and includes variables such as: gender, age, types of family and residential pattern of respondents were obtained by the Socio-Demographic Data-Sheet.

Part-2. Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ):

The EAQ was created by Jacobson and Gottman (1998). They distinguished four categories of emotional abuse: destruction of pets and property, sexual coercion, isolation endeavors and degradation. The EAQ was based off this original study. It has 66 items surveying emotional abuse, each appraised on a 4-point recurrence scale (Never to Very Often).

The EAQ has four subscales: isolation, degradation, sexual abuse, and property damage. Inner consistency for the subscales is .92, .94, .72, and .82, separately. The isolation subscale has 24 items, degradation subscale has 28 items, sexual abuse subscale has 7 items and property damage subscale has 7 items.

The sub scales of EAQ which is degradation and sexual coercion is chosen for the current research due to its wide extend of distinctive designs of emotional abuse and its strong psychometric values.

4.8. Procedure:

After selecting the research tools and samples according to the problem and variables, the next step was the data collection. The researcher collected data from male and female adults. The respondents were given proper instructions. After giving instruction related to the tests, a good rapport with students was established by the present researcher. The respondents were instructed to give the answer very carefully. Finally, participants were given a consent form which they signed to indicate their consent to participate in the study. Participants were assured that their responses would be treated



confidentially, their real names would not be used or disclosed and data will be used for research purposes only. In order to get full cooperation and support from respondents the purpose of the study was clearly informed to them. A comfortable room was identified to carry out the study. Proper infrastructure with adequate light and comfortable seating arrangements was identified.

4.9. Data Analysis Techniques:

Collected data was coded, entered and for testing the hypotheses, for analyzing and interpreting the data and graphical representation of data the researcher used both descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency distribution, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (i.e., paired samples *t* test, independent *t* test by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22.0 were computed. Finally, *P* values less than 0.01 and 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The tables prepared from the statistical data computer output of the SPSS are presented in this section along with the necessary interpretation. First of all the tables of demographic variables are interpreted, followed by the main psychological variables of the study.

5.1 Analysis of Demographic Variables in relation to Respondents scores on Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ):

Four Socio-Demographic Variables included in the present study to find out the significant difference and relationship between emotional abuse and mental health in male and female university student group of respondents which are presented in the following Table 5.1.1, and also in Graphs.

Table 5.1.1 Showing the Frequency distribution and Percentage of Socio-Demographic Variables of Male and Female respondents (N=100):

Socio-Demographic Variables	Groups	No. of Male Respondents	No. of Female Respondents
Age	1. Up to 19 yrs.	24 (48)	25 (50)
	2. 20-25 yrs.	17 (34)	18 (36)
	3. 26 yrs. and above	09 (18)	07 (14)
Type of Family	1.Nuclear	26 (52)	20 (40)
	2.Joint	24 (48)	30 (60)
Type of Residence	1.Rural	19 (38)	24 (48)
	2.Urban	31 (62))	26 (52)

*Figure shown in the parenthesis refers to the marginal percentage.

5.2. Comparison of Emotional Abuse between Male and Female respondents:

The requisite information of Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) was collected from 50 male and 50 female adults.

The *t*-test of two independent samples has been applied to assess the significant difference of emotional abuse of male and female respondents. The mean scores on EAQ subscale the male and female Ss, as can be seen from Table 5.2.1. Computed students' *t* statistics revealed that the gender difference with regard to mean

of EAQ sub-scales i.e. property damage, sexual coercion, isolation endeavors and degradation scores were found to be significant at .001 and .005 levels. The ratios can be seen from Table 5.2.1. Results indicate that mean scores of male and female are differing on all four emotional abuse subscales scores.

Hypothesis 1 which states that "there will be no significant difference in emotional abuse among male and female university students", hence, this hypothesis is not proved and rejected.

Table-5.2.1: Mean, S.D. and 't' ratio between Male and Female respondents computed on the basis of their Emotional Abuse Subscales Scores of Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) (N =100).

Emotional Abuse Sub-Scales	Male Respondents (N1=50)		Female Respondents (N2=50)		't' Value
	M1	S D1	M2	SD2	
Property Damage	18.50	5.592	23.36	3.958	5.016**
Sexual Coercion	19.90	5.881	24.68	3.473	4.949**
Isolation Endeavors	43.36	8.792	54.10	18.616	3.689**
Degradation	33.42	8.102	50.48	23.406	4.870**

** Significant at .001 levels.

5.3. Comparison of Emotional Abuse between Types of Family (Nuclear and Joint) of respondents:

The requisite information of Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) was collected from 46 nuclear and 54 joint families of respondents.



The t-test of two independent samples has been applied to assess the significant difference of emotional abuse between types of family (nuclear and joint) of respondents. The mean scores on EAQ subscale the nuclear and joint families Ss, as can be seen from Table 5.3.1. Computed students' 't' statistics revealed that the types of family difference with regard to mean of EAQ sub-scales i.e. property damage, sexual coercion, isolation endeavors and degradation scores were found to be significant at .001 and .005 levels. The 't' ratios can be seen from Table 5.3.1. Results indicate that mean

scores of nuclear and joint families. Ss are differing on all four emotional abuse subscales scores. Thus, it can be assumed that there is significant difference in emotional abuse between types of family of respondents. Therefore, null hypothesis H2 was not proved and rejected.

Hypothesis 2 which states that "there will be no significant difference in emotional abuse between types of residence (rural and urban) of respondents", hence, this hypothesis is not proved and rejected.

Table-5.3.1: Mean, S.D. and 't' ratio between Nuclear and Urban Families respondents computed on the basis of their Emotional Abuse Sub-Scales Scores of Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) (N=100).

Emotional Abuse Sub-Scales	Nuclear Family Respondents (N1=46)		Joint Family Respondents (N2=54)		't' Value
	M1	S D1	M2	SD2	
Property Damage	23.38	5.577	26.28	3.742	3.054**
Sexual Coercion	23.98	5.301	26.06	3.798	2.258
Isolation Endeavors	23.78	7.305	27.72	6.383	2.872*
Degradation	22.04	6.279	25.18	5.656	2.627*

** Significant at .001 levels.

5.4. Comparison of Emotional Abuse between Types of Residence (Rural and Urban) respondents:

The requisite information of Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) was collected from 43 nuclear and 57 joint family respondents.

The t-test of two independent samples has been applied to assess the significant difference of emotional abuse between types of family (nuclear and joint) of respondents. The mean scores on EAQ subscale the nuclear and joint families Ss, as can be seen from Table 5.4.1. Computed students' 't' statistics revealed that the types of family difference with regard to mean of EAQ sub-scales i.e. property damage, sexual coercion, isolation endeavors and degradation scores were found

to be significant at .001 and .005 levels. The 't' ratios can be seen from Table 5.3.1. Results indicate that mean scores of nuclear and joint families Ss are differing on all four emotional abuse subscales scores. Thus, it can be assumed that there is significant difference in emotional abuse between types of families of respondents of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Therefore, null hypothesis H2 was not proved and rejected.

Hypothesis 3 which states that "there will be no significant difference in emotional abuse between types of family (nuclear and joint) of respondents", hence, this hypothesis is not proved and rejected.

Table-5.4.1: Mean, S.D. and 't' ratio between Male and Female respondents computed on the basis of their Emotional Abuse Sub-Scales Scores of Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ) (N=100).

Emotional Abuse Sub-Scales	Rural Residence (N1=43)		Female Respondents (N2=57)		't' Value
	M1	S D1	M2	SD2	
Property Damage	21.50	5.689	26.60	4.784	3.068**
Sexual Coercion	24.55	5.186	22.20	6.023	2.448*
Isolation Endeavors	29.95	2.946	22.55	3.086	7.756*
Degradation	24.55	6.493	19.17	6.027	2.448*

** Significant at .001 levels.

CONCLUSIONS:

The main purpose of the present research is to study emotional abuse among adults. The study on emotional abuse was measured using the psychological tests for male and female adults of Indore, Madhya Pradesh as the study sample.

MAIN FINDINGS:

Following main findings have been drawn by the investigator:

1. There exists a significant difference between the emotional abuse and types of gender (male and female) of adults.
2. There exists a significant difference between emotional abuse and types of family (nuclear and joint) of adults.
3. There exists a significant difference between emotional abuse and types of residence (rural and urban) of adults.



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