



A Comparative Study of the Mental Health of Teenagers from Joint and Single-Parent Families in Ahmedabad City

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Abstract:

In Ahmedabad, this study compares the mental health of teenagers from joint and single-parent households. With the increasing prevalence of single-parent households due to divorce, separation or other factors, understanding their impact on teenagers' mental health is crucial. Using purposive sampling, 122 teens between the ages of 13 and 18 were chosen, 61 of whom came from single-parent households and 61 from joint families. Emotional, behavioral, and social well-being were measured using a standardized mental health assessment method. The study compares the mental health of teenagers in single-parent and joint families while taking into account a number of factors, including family dynamics, parental engagement, society perceptions, and economic status.

It looks into how these factors affect teens' emotional growth and psychological health in both single-parent and joint households. The results highlight the need for targeted mental health interventions and the part that family relationships play in determining the wellbeing of teenagers. Policymakers, educators, and mental health practitioners can learn a lot from this research, which emphasizes the value of comprehensive support networks in reducing mental health issues in various family settings.

Keywords: *Teenagers, Mental Health, Ahmedabad City, Single-Parent and Joint Family.*

Introduction:

How teens develop emotionally, socially, and psychologically is greatly influenced by their families. Adolescence is a vital growth stage characterised by rapid changes in the physical, emotional, and cognitive domains as well as heightened sensitivity to familial relations. Regardless of whether a household is single-parent or joint, it can significantly affect a teen's mental health in these circumstances.

Background of the Study:

Teens undergo significant physical, emotional, and social changes throughout this time, making their mental health a key global concern. Teens' family systems have a big impact on their mental health. In India, traditional joint families are gradually giving way to nuclear families, and the number of single-parent households has grown due to divorce, separation, or the death of a spouse. These trends are evident in Ahmedabad, one of India's rapidly growing cities, making it an ideal location for studying teenagers' mental health in different family contexts.

Definition of Mental Health:

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as the ability to achieve one's full potential, manage stress, work productively, and contribute to the community. Teens' mental health encompasses academic accomplishment, peer interactions, self-esteem, emotional regulation, and coping skills. Early intervention is critical because anxiety, depression, and behavioral disorders are common during puberty.

Overview of Single Parent and Joint Families:

Single-parent families are typically made up of just one parent caring for the children, and they frequently face unique challenges such as limited financial resources, a lack of emotional support, and increased responsibilities.

A joint family is an extended family in which many generations reside in the same house or under one roof. It typically consists of grandparents, parents, children, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Members of a combined family share obligations, finances, and domestic chores, frequently adhering to traditional beliefs and rituals. This system is widely used in many cultures, particularly in south Asia, where it provides financial security, emotional support, and social stability.

A teen's mental health is, nevertheless, greatly impacted by the dynamics of both kinds of families, each of which has unique benefits and drawbacks.

Importance of Mental Health in Teenagers:

Adolescents face social challenges, academic pressure, and identity searches. Teens must have good mental health in order to cope with these transitions and achieve long-term success in both their personal and professional lives. Supportive family conditions are critical since poor mental health can lead to dangerous behaviors, strained relationships, and poor academic performance.

Relevance of the Study to Ahmedabad City:

This study is highly relevant to Ahmedabad City since it depicts shifting family dynamics in a fast-urbanizing environment. While joint families have historically been widespread, the rise of nuclear and single-parent homes as a result of economic and societal changes may have an impact on teenagers' mental health. Given Ahmedabad's competitive academic culture and rising awareness of mental health issues, knowing how family structure effects emotional well-being is critical. The study's findings could assist educators, legislators, and mental health experts in developing targeted support systems to promote better settings for teenagers in both joint and single-parent households.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To compare the mean score of the level of Mental Health Battery of single parent and joint family children of Ahmedabad city with respect to gender.
2. To compare the mean score of Mental Health Battery of single parent and joint family children of Ahmedabad city with respect to family type.

Research Design:

This study adopts a **descriptive research design using a survey method**. The survey method allows for the collection of detailed information on the mental health of teenagers and factors influencing it across single-parent and joint family structures.

Study Population:

Teenagers aged 13–19 years from single parent and joint family in Ahmedabad city.

Sampling Technique: Purposive sampling.

Sample: Total 122 teenagers have filled the questionnaire and from their given answer we can evaluate and find out about the Mental Health status for such children.

Data Collection Tool:

Mental Health Battery tool standardized by Manoj Shastry.

Variables of the study:**Independent variable:**

- Gender
- Types of Family

Dependent variable:

- Mental Health

Hypothesis:

H01. There is no significant difference in the Mental Health Battery mean scores between children from single-parent and joint families in Ahmedabad city, based on gender.

H01.1 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys from single parent and joint families of Ahmedabad city.

H01.2 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of girls from single parent and joint families of Ahmedabad city.

H01.3 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys from single parent and girls from joint families of Ahmedabad city.

H01.4 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of girls from single parent and boys from joint families of Ahmedabad city.

H01.5 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys and girls from single parent of Ahmedabad city.

H01.6 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys and girls from joint families of Ahmedabad city.

H02. There is no significant difference in the Mental Health Battery mean scores between children from single-parent and joint families in Ahmedabad city, based on family type.

H02.1 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys and girls from single parent and joint families of Ahmedabad city.

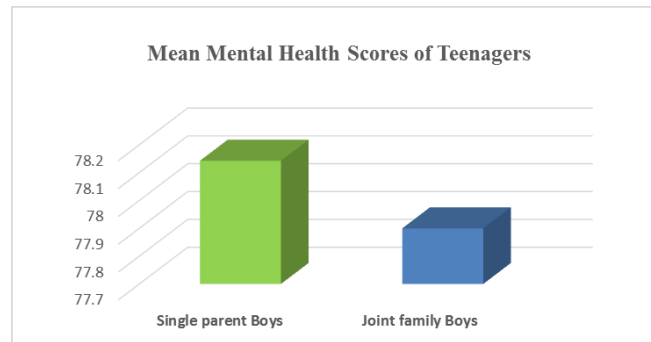
Data analysis and Findings:

H01. There is no significant difference in the Mental Health Battery mean scores between children from single-parent and joint families in Ahmedabad city, based on gender.

H01.1 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys from single parent and joint families of Ahmedabad city.

TABLE 1: Analysis of Mean Scores of Mental Health of Boys from Single-Parent and Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

Variables	N	Mean	SD2	Mean Diff.	SED	C.R.	Remark
Single parent Boys	35	78.14286	224.5378	0.242857	2.07641	0.11696	Not Significant
Joint family Boys	30	77.9	112.0241				

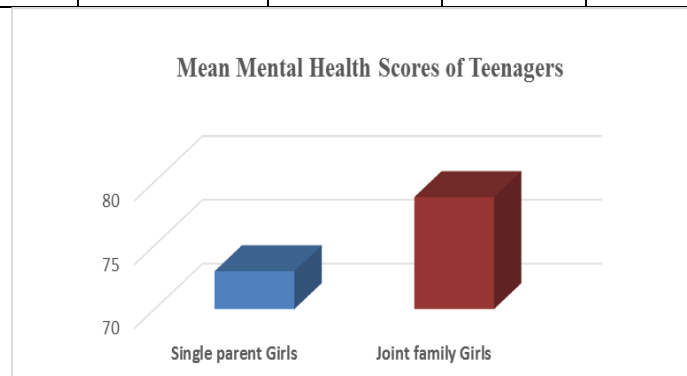


GRAPH 1: Mean Scores of Mental Health of Boys from Single Parent and Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

H01.2 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of girls from single parent and joint families of Ahmedabad city.

TABLE 2: Analysis of Mean Scores of Mental Health of girls from Single Parent and Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

Variables	N	Mean	SD2	Mean Diff.	SED	C.R.	Remark
Single parent Girls	26	72.96153846	84.5184615	5.812655	1.653487	3.515391	Significant
Joint family Girls	31	78.77419355	124.118462				

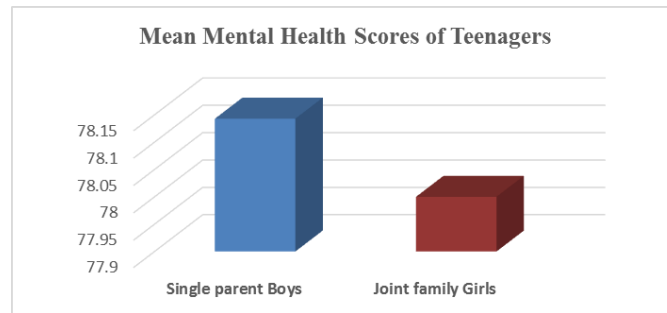


GRAPH 2: Mean Scores of Mental Health of Girls from Single Parent and Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

H01.3 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys from single parent and girls from joint families of Ahmedabad city.

TABLE 3: Analysis of Mean Scores of Mental Health of boys from Single Parent and girls from Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

Variables	N	Mean	SD2	Mean Diff.	SED	C.R.	Remark
Single parent Boys	35	78.14286	237.77126	0.142857	2.198299	0.064985	Significant
Joint family Girls	26	78	139.6				



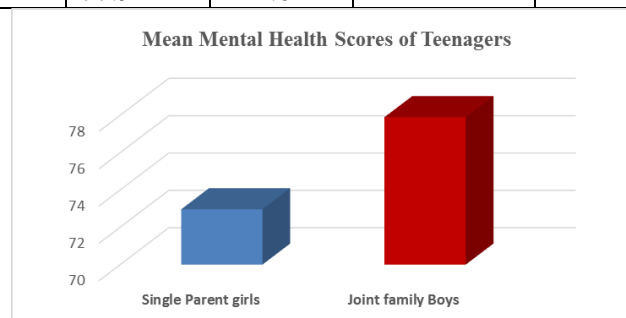
GRAPH 3: Mean Scores of Mental Health of boys from Single Parent and girls from Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

H01.4 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of girls from single parent and boys from joint families of Ahmedabad city.

TABLE 4

Analysis of Mean Scores of Mental Health of girls from Single Parent and boys from Joint Family of Ahmedabad City.

Variables	N	Mean	SD2	Mean Diff.	SED	C.R.	Remark
Single Parent girls	26	72.96154	84.51846	4.938462	1.61135	3.064798	Significant
Joint family Boys	30	77.9	112.0241				

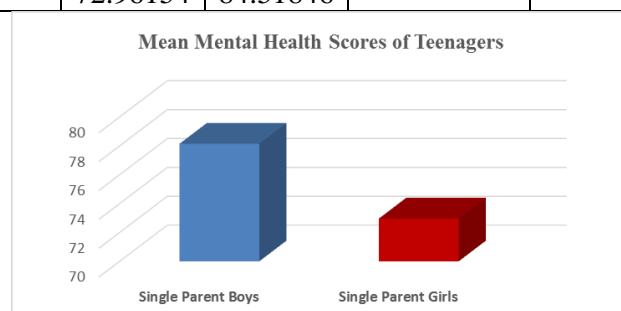


GRAPH 4: Mean Scores of Mental Health of girls from Single Parent and boys from Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

H01.5 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys and girls from single parent of Ahmedabad city.

TABLE 5 : Analysis of Mean Scores of Mental Health of boys from Single Parent and girls from Single Parent of Ahmedabad City

Variables	N	Mean	SD2	Mean Diff.	SED	C.R.	Remark
Single Parent Boys	35	78.14286	224.5378	5.181319	2.00794	2.580415	Significant
Single Parent Girls	26	72.96154	84.51846				

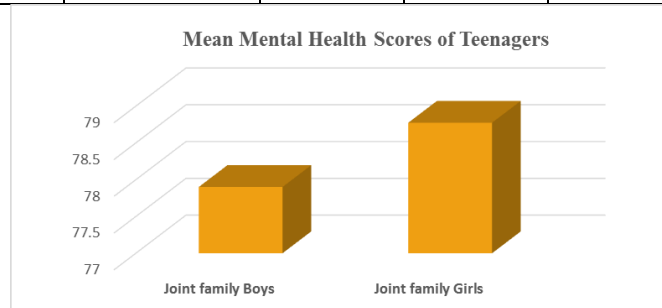


GRAPH 5: Mean Scores of Mental Health of Boys from Single Parent and girls from Single Parent of Ahmedabad City.

H01.6 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys and girls from joint families of Ahmedabad city.

TABLE 6: Analysis of Mean Scores of Mental Health of boys and girls from Joint Family of Ahmedabad City

Variables	N	Mean	SD2	Mean Diff.	SED	C.R.	Remark
Joint family Boys	30	77.9	112.0241	0.874194	1.757778	0.497329	Not significant
Joint family Girls	31	78.7741935	130.114				



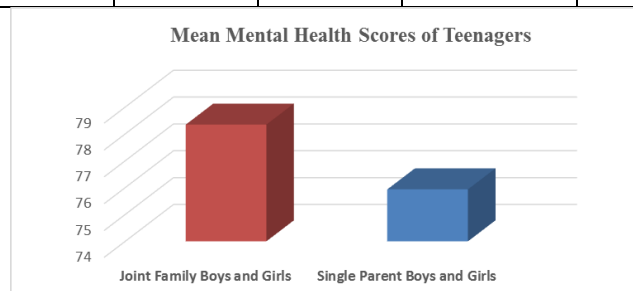
GRAPH 6: Mean Scores of Mental Health of Boys and girls from Joint Families of Ahmedabad City

H02. There is no significant difference in the Mental Health Battery mean scores between children from single-parent and joint families in Ahmedabad city, based on family type.

H02.1 There is no significant difference between the mean score of the Mental Health Battery of boys and girls from single parent and joint families of Ahmedabad city.

TABLE 7: Analysis of Mean Scores of Mental Health of boys and girls from Single Parent and boys and girls from Joint Families of Ahmedabad City.

Variables	N	Mean	SD2	Mean Diff.	SED	C.R.	Remark
Joint Family Boys and Girls	61	78.34426	119.3962	2.409836	1.936826	1.244219	Not significant
Single Parent Boys and Girls	61	75.93443	169.129				



GRAPH 7: Mean Scores of Mental Health of Boys and girls from Single Parent and boys and girls from Joint families of Ahmedabad City.

Recommendations:

For Parents:

Improve Communication: In order to effectively meet the emotional and psychological needs of teenagers, parents should communicate in an open, encouraging, and nonjudgmental manner.

Quality Time: Regardless of the family structure, spending quality time with teenagers can help them develop resilience and emotional stability.

Seek Counseling: When faced with challenges, single parents should seek professional counseling to support both their mental health and that of their children.

For Schools:

Counseling professionals: To support students from a variety of family circumstances, schools should make mental health professionals, such as psychologists and counselors, easily accessible.

Awareness Programs: Hold seminars to inform educators and students on the difficulties faced by adolescents from various family backgrounds.

Inclusive Activities: To improve social skills and lessen feelings of loneliness, promote involvement in peer support programs and group activities.

For Policy Makers:

Support Programs: Put in place neighborhood initiatives that provide single-parent households with both financial and emotional assistance.

Mental Health Campaigns: Create citywide programs aimed at dispelling stigmas and increasing awareness of adolescent mental health.

Parenting seminars: Plan frequent seminars to help parents learn about stress management, dispute resolution, and adolescent behavior.

For Society:

Encourage Supportive Networks: Community organizations can provide forums for parents and teenagers to exchange stories and gain knowledge from one another.

Decrease Stigma: By encouraging acceptance and understanding, society should endeavor to lessen the stigma associated with single-parent households.

Mentorship Opportunities: Set up mentorship programs that match young people with supportive and guiding role models.

For Researchers:

Further Studies: To learn more about the long-term effects of various family systems on mental health, do longitudinal studies.

Intervention Techniques: Look for efficient ways to lessen detrimental effects on mental health in joint and single-parent households.

Cross-Cultural Analysis: Determine context-specific and universal elements influencing adolescent mental health by comparing results with research from different areas.

Conclusion:

This study emphasizes how important family structure is to the mental health of teenagers. According to the research, teens from single-parent households deal with particular difficulties like elevated emotional stress, limited financial resources, reduced parental involvement due to single-parent responsibilities and the lack of emotional and social support which can have a negative impact on their mental health. Strong social networks and encouraging parental participation, however, can greatly lessen these consequences.

Because they are more emotionally and financially stable, teens from joint households typically have better mental health. They are not impervious to mental health issues, either, which are frequently impacted by things like peer interactions, family disputes, and academic pressure. The study emphasizes the necessity of family-specific mental health awareness initiatives that prioritize professional therapy, communication, and resilience-building. Regardless of their family arrangement, educational institutions and community organizations can be crucial in giving teenagers support networks

In conclusion, the study underscores the significant role of family dynamics in shaping teenagers' mental health, while also recognizing the influence of external support systems in fostering resilience. The findings call for the implementation of comprehensive mental health interventions tailored to teenagers from single-parent families, such as counseling programs, parental support workshops, and peer-based initiatives. Additionally, policymakers and educators should prioritize creating inclusive environments that address the unique challenges faced by teenagers in diverse family settings, ensuring their holistic well-being and development.

In the end, supporting teens' mental health in both single-parent and joint households requires creating an atmosphere of comprehension, empathy, and inclusivity.

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