

CONSTRUCTION OF A FAMILY ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDE SCALE FOR ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

The family environment is shaped by various social norms and conditions that influence adolescents' development. The present study aimed to develop a standardized instrument to measure family environmental attitudes among adolescent students in West Bengal. A quantitative research approach was adopted, and the Family Environmental Attitude Scale was constructed based on four dimensions: Independent Environment, Stressful Environment, Responsible Environment, and Controlled Environment. The sample consisted of 154 late-adolescent students (aged 17-19 years). The tool initially included 40 items, which were subjected to item analysis using the top 27% and bottom 27% group method. The significance of item discrimination was tested using the t-test at 0.05 and 0.01 levels. Based on the results, 33 items were retained and 7 items were rejected. The developed scale was found to be suitable for assessing family environmental attitudes among adolescents.

KEYWORDS: *Adolescents, Attitude Scale, Dimensions, Family Environment, Items Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

The family is the basic educational institution of society. Generally, family can be seen as a group of people who have biological, emotional or legal ties to each other. A family is a child's first experience of relationships generally occurs within the family. It is a small intimate group of basic setting within which most children come in contact with society where they learn how to behave within a society and outside world. Family is the fundamental group of society which provides the natural environment for the growth and wellbeing of all its members, particularly children. Children's physical and emotional status as well as their social and cognitive development greatly depend on how their family operate. The rising incidences of behavioural problems among adolescents demonstrates that some families are unable to cope with the increasing stresses they are experiencing. Nurturing enables a child to do well at school and later in his career. Parents have a key role to play in the process-(The Hindu Sep 15,2008). Family forms: the many ways of being a family are, Motherhood, fatherhood, blended, adaptive, two parents, grandparents as parents, incarcerated, cultural and ethnic diversity, singlehood, co-parenting, single parent, biracial, multi-ethnic, same sex, teen parents, foster, military, relatives as primary nuclear, extended, childless etc. Climate: A prevailing condition or set of attitudes in human affairs.

Family Environment usually refers to the climate and atmosphere, where human being grows naturally. Synonyms of family environment such as- home environment, familial support, home life, family life, family stability, family living, atmosphere of family, home condition, family climate, living space, personal space, home setting, living conditions, family atmosphere, home atmosphere, family characteristics, family culture (Knapp,1933). Family as a primary institution has survived through ages but has changed drastically over the years in its structure, functions and characteristics, especially in India. This change in Indian family set up

can be attribute to two economic factors or cultural factors. Psychologists have consistently proved that the proper development of the child is impossible without a good family climate or home environment. It is the family which provides most of the early environmental influence upon the personality which remains throughout life. It is the greatest socializing agency in all contemporary cultures. Family as a social unit is an important determinant for shaping one's mental capacities along with physical and social structure. The family climate is influenced by a number of factors like the nature of family's constellation, number of family members, marital relationship, parental employment and income, sibling relationship and socio-economic and religious background of the family. The family climate processes a certain consistency by which there is an impact of the same basic values, individuals, material objects etc. on the family members. Parental influence may not be felt in a specific situation, but the attitudes and ideas repressed day after day inevitably leave their mark.

REVIEW STUDIES

Barylnik (2003) studied "Psychopathology, psychosocial characteristics, and family environment in juvenile delinquents". The objective of this study was to analyze the records of juvenile delinquents with regard to family psychopathology, familial violence and alcohol abuse, organic brain dysfunctions, and psychiatric disorders.

Boyd et. al (2004). The Family Environment Scale: Reliability and Normative Data for an Adolescent Sample. This article presents normative and reliability data for the Family Environment Scale from a large, combined sample of adolescents. Means and standard deviations were generally found to be in line with those reported in the scale's manual; however, estimates of internal consistency for most subscales could be considered inadequate for research purposes.

Uwaifo (2008) investigated the effects of family structure and parenthood on the academic performance of Nigerian University students. The results also indicated significant differences in academic performance of male and female students compared on two types of family structures.

Adam et. al (2010) studied "Comparison of Family Environmental Scale (FES) Subscales Between Malaysian Setting with The Original Dimension Of FES". The finding indicated that element of Cohesion, Conflict and Organization has a good indicator of a good family relationship.

Mishra and Bamba (2012) investigated the impact of family environment on academic achievement of a child. The early beginning of knowledge originates within the family. Family very greatly in structure and functioning, variation exists also in school and in children understood how children's experience within the family contribute to their educational outcome.

Singh (2013) aimed at investigating the impact of family environment on academic achievement of school Science students. It is well known fact that the school performance is not an independent phenomenon coma, rather it is directly influenced by a number of factors, some of which are personal to the individual while many others are located in the environment in which learning takes place i.e., school and family.

Acharya (2015) studied "Family Environment and Psychological Well-Being Among Private College and Government College Students". This is an exploratory study that aimed to examine the differences in family environment and psychological well-being among private college and government college students of Bangalore. The findings also reveal that, in the area of psychological well-being, female students had higher Satisfaction, Efficiency, Mental Health and Interpersonal Relations than male students.

Benner et. al (2016) studied "Parental Involvement and Adolescents' Educational Success: The Roles of Prior Achievement and Socioeconomic Status". In this study the findings suggest that academic interventions and supports could be carefully targeted to better support the educational success of all young people.

Escario & Sanagustin (2017) studied “The influence of the family, the school, and the group on the environmental attitudes of European students”. The results allow us to emphasize the importance of the social context of the adolescent, and the need to take this into account as a channel that amplifies the influence of specific environmental education strategies.

Rivers, A.S., & Sanford, K. (2018) studied “Family Environment Scale”. In this study the researcher discuss about the Family Environment Scale (FES) is a self-report measure of family social climate. The FES can also be used to obtain retrospective reports of past family environments. The FES is administered and scored using pencil and paper.

Adams, E. L. (2021) studied “The effect of a middle grades STEM initiative on students’ cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes”. This study is an evaluation of a STEM initiative in one school district with five participating middle schools. I used two quasi-experimental methods including instrumental variables and inverse propensity score weights to test the effect of the initiative on students’ cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes.

Zhao, L., & Zhao, W. (2022) studied “Impacts of family environment on adolescents' academic achievement: The role of peer interaction quality and educational expectation gap”. The current study uses a two-wave longitudinal survey to explores the influence mechanism of the family environment on adolescents’ academic achievement.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study area has been considered to be unique and different from earlier reviewed research. After studying and analysing the above-mentioned studies, the researcher found a research gap and identify the title as “**Construction of a Family Environmental Attitude Scale for Adolescent Students in West Bengal**”.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To develop and standardize a Family Environmental Attitude Scale for adolescent students in West Bengal.
2. To examine the pattern of Family Environmental Attitude among adolescent students in West Bengal.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How can a Family Environmental Attitude Scale be developed and standardized for adolescent students in West Bengal?
2. What is the pattern of Family Environmental Attitude among adolescent students in West Bengal?

DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

1. The study is confined to the development and standardization of a Family Environmental Attitude Scale for adolescent students only.
2. The sample is limited to 154 Higher Secondary (Class XI) students selected from Uttar Dinajpur districts of West Bengal.
3. The study considers only four dimensions of Family Environmental Attitude, namely Independent, Stressful, Responsible, and Controlled Environment.
4. The analysis is restricted to item analysis and descriptive interpretation of responses without considering comparative variables such as gender, locality, or stream.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method: In this present study, the researcher descriptive survey technique method and quantitative approach have been used for the study. “Survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population (Creswell, 2012).

Population: The population of the study was composed of all Higher Secondary School (11th grade) students of in West Bengal, India, during the session 2024- 2025 academic year.

Sample and Sampling: A sample is a part of the selected population. In the present study, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique (lottery method) for selecting districts in West Bengal as well as for choosing Higher Secondary schools within the selected district. Finally, a sample of 154 school students was selected from Uttar Dinajpur district of the targeted population.

Table 1: Sample Profile Distribution of Various Categorical Variables

Independent Variables		N		Percentage
Gender	Male	94	154	61.04
	Female	60		38.96
Locality	Rural	94	154	61.04
	Urban	60		38.96
Stream of Study	Arts	102	154	66.23
	Science	52		33.77
		Total= 154		

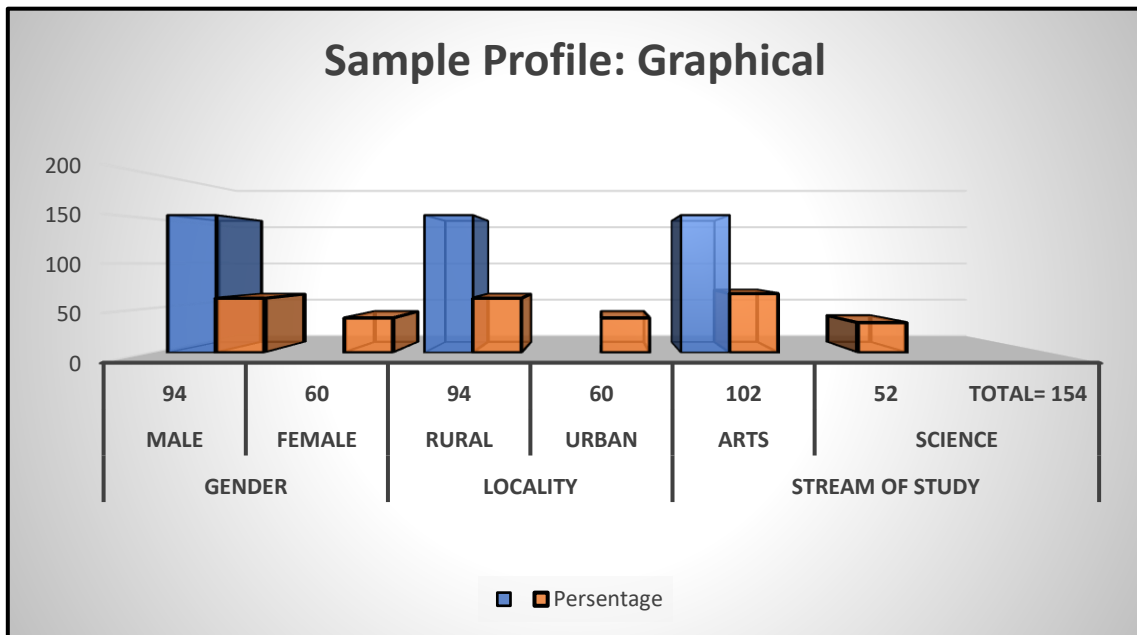


Figure 1: Histogram of Various Categorical Variables

DATA ANALYSIS

Researchers have analyzed data according to the research objectives-

Research Objective - 1

Selection of Dimension:

- **Independent Environment:** Independence, in the context of the FES, refers to the extent to which family members are encouraged to have their own individuality, make their own decisions, and develop a sense of autonomy. High independence suggests that family members are encouraged to be self-reliant and make their own choices, while low independence may indicate a more controlling or dependent family dynamic.
- **Stressful Environment:** family stress can happen when there are more stressors in family members' lives than they can handle. Family stress can be caused by many stressful events that build on each other or a single high-stress circumstance. These may occur either inside or outside the family.

- **Responsible Environment:** Responsible family environment means awareness of family members to obligations or responsibilities in the family aspects. With the responsibilities in the family, family members will become responsible in the broader environment. Even responsible family involves setting positive examples, establishing clear expectations and boundaries, fostering communication and mutual respect, and promoting personal responsibility and accountability.
- **Controlled Environment:** controlled family environment is an enclosed area with specific parameters regulated, including temperature, pressure, light, and segregation. Controlled family environment focus on feelings, voice, expression, and behaviour etc.

Description of the Tool:

This 40-item close-ended tool is designed to assess the Family Environmental Attitude of adolescent students in West Bengal across four major dimensions: Independent Environment, Stressful Environment, Responsible Environment, and Controlled Environment. Family Environmental Attitude refers to the collection of beliefs, feelings, behavioural intentions, and opinions about the family context in which an individual grows and develops naturally. Dimension-wise, the items are distributed as follows:

Table 2: Dimension Wise Items of Family Environment

Dimension	Item No.
Independent Environment	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (N=10)
Stressful Environment	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 (N=10)
Responsible Environment	21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 (N=10)
Controlled Environment	31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 (N=10)

Item Selection:

For the preliminary form, 40 items were selected from available standardized tests and further developed for the Family Environmental Attitude Scale to measure the attitudes of adolescent students. A review of related literature also helped in gaining conceptual understanding for the composition and selection of the items, along with consultation with an expert. Each item consists of five alternative responses. Some items were framed positively, while others were framed negatively.

Directions: This booklet contains a number of items representing common situations related to your family lifestyle. Each item has five response alternatives: ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Uncertain’, ‘Disagree’, and ‘Strongly Disagree’. Please read each item carefully and put a tick (✓) mark against the one alternative that you consider most appropriate for you. Do not consult your classmates while answering the items. Answer confidently; your responses will be kept confidential.

Coding & Scoring:

Table 3: Coding of Categorical Variables

Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Arts	Science
1	2	1	2	1	2

Table 4: Coding of Variables and Scoring of Positive & Negative Items

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

Item analysis:

The questionnaire was administered to 154 adolescent students (both boys and girls) for the purpose of item analysis. A t-test was computed for each item by forming two extreme groups, namely the top 27% and the bottom 27% of the respondents based on their total scores. Out of the 40 items, 33 items were retained and 7

items were rejected based on the levels of significance. From the t-table, the researcher found that the critical value of t with 82 degrees of freedom (df) is 1.98 at the 5% level of significance and 2.63 at the 1% level of significance.

Table 5: Confidence Level & Critical Value as per Samples & df

Total Sample (N)	84	(U+L= 84)
Degrees of Freedom(df)	82	(df- 2)
Confidence Level	0.05	0.01
Critical Values (C.V.)	1.98	2.63

Table 6: Items Retained & Rejected respect to t-test

Items No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
t- test	5.82	6.01	6.32	4.05	0.81	5.19	0.92	1.68	3.02	4.73	5.32	7.66
Items ✓	1	2	3	4	6	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Items ✗	5	7	8	31	35	36	39					

13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
5.63	4.87	5.76	9.58	8.86	4.33	8.29	6.03	7.15	6.09	3.17	4.87	3.50	8.14
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29

27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
7.07	3.35	6.40	6.54	1.44	4.08	4.49	4.74	1.46	2.58	3.22	2.71	1.93	3.01
30	32	33	34	37	38	40							

Standardization of the Test:

In this phase of standardization, several essential procedures were undertaken to ensure the reliability, validity and uniform administration of the final form of the test. The details are discussed below-

1. Reliability:

In the present study Cronbach’s Alpha method was applied to check the reliability and internal consistency interpretation. For this procedure, 154 Higher Secondary adolescent students were used as samples and the internal consistency of 33 items was determined. Cronbach’s Alpha formula and reliability result are shown below-

Table. 7: Reliability of the FES

Method	Total item(k)	Variance of total score (s^2x)	Sum of item variance ($\sum s^2y$)	Reliability of FES (α)	Interpretation
Cronbach’s Alpha	33	225.70	42.51	0.84	Internal Consistency is Good

2. Validity:

The researcher was estimated three types of validity of this inventory.

- a) **Face Validity:** To check the face validity the researcher applied the tool to a group of Adolescents (100) and made the same change by observation in this research tool. After that, the researcher finalized it for final data collection.
- b) **Intrinsic Validity:** The degree to which a test majors what it measures may be called its intrinsic validity. This definition may also be stated in terms of how well the obtained course the test's true score components. This validity is indicated by the square root of its reliability as shown in the following equation/formula.

$$rt = \sqrt{rtt}$$

Intrinsic validity measures the independent ability of the test scores by showing how well-obtained courses agree with their true values. The r_{tt} means the Reliability coefficient of the test. Where r_t is the correlation between the obtained score and the true score. The validity for the test (Family Environment) thus determined has been given in the Table:

Table 8: *Validity from the Index of Reliability of the Test Scores*

Method	Test	r_{tt}	$r_t = \sqrt{r_{tt}}$
Intrinsic Validity	Family Environment	0.84	0.92

Research Objective - 2:

This objective has been discussed in two parts. In the first part, the analysis has been presented category-wise, and in the second part, it has been discussed based on percentage distribution.

Table 9: *Descriptive Statistics of Family Environmental Attitude*

Category	Total Male	Total Female	Total Rural	Total Urban	Total Arts	Total Science
Mean	123.43	125.48	126.56	120.57	123.97	124.73
SE	1.48	1.99	1.43	1.99	1.52	1.90
Median	123.00	126.00	126.00	119.00	124.50	125.50
Mode	118.00	126.00	126.00	119.00	126.00	140.00
SD	14.34	15.40	13.87	15.43	15.31	13.69
SV	205.52	237.14	192.51	237.94	234.52	187.30
Kurtosis	-0.30	2.54	-0.03	1.37	0.99	-0.01
Skewness	-0.07	-1.04	-0.29	-0.62	-0.57	-0.20
Range	67.00	79.00	67.00	77.00	83.00	63.00
Minimum	90.00	74.00	90.00	74.00	74.00	90.00
Maximum	157.00	153.00	157.00	151.00	157.00	153.00
Count	94.00	60.00	94.00	60.00	102.00	52.00

The analysis indicates that female students (Mean = 125.48) perform slightly better than male students (Mean = 123.43), although their scores show greater variability. In terms of locality, rural students (Mean = 126.56) outperform urban students (Mean = 120.57) and demonstrate more consistency. Regarding academic streams, Science students (Mean = 124.73) have a marginally higher average than Arts students (Mean = 123.97), but the difference is minimal, suggesting nearly similar performance levels.

Overall, the data shows moderate variability across all groups, with most distributions being negatively skewed, indicating that higher scores are more common. Hence, gender and locality show noticeable differences, while stream-wise differences are minimal.

Table 10: *Dimensionally Items Wise Percentage*

SL. No.	Statements	A	B	C	D	E	Items
	Independent Environment						
1.	It feels suffocating to stay at home.	5.2	5.2	13	26.6	49.4	✓
2.	We go to Family trip together.	31.2	32.5	16.2	11.7	7.8	✓
3.	At home, we all sit together to have fun chats and talks.	53.2	30.5	7.1	3.2	5.2	✓
4.	My family members do not interact with each other.	4.5	5.8	8.4	14.9	66.5	✓
5.	Interfering among seniors is strictly forbidden at home.	16.9	24	18.2	19.5	20.8	✗
6.	I feel more tranquil at home than any other place.	53.2	23.4	11	6.5	5.2	✓

7.	I can't do anything without telling my parents.	27.9	29.9	24	12.3	27.9	*
8.	I can take any decisions of my life very easily.	11.7	27.3	22.7	26.6	11	✓
9.	My family interferes in everything in my life.	14.9	20.8	22.1	28.6	13	*
10.	My opinion has no importance on any family issues.	7.1	9.1	13.6	39	30.5	✓
Stressful Environment							
11.	My family is a good family to other families.	44.8	38.3	10.4	3.9	1.9	✓
12.	Even if the cooking at home is not good, nobody gets annoyed.	33.1	33.1	12.3	11	9.7	✓
13.	I was forced to act against my will.	9.7	7.1	18.2	35.1	29.2	✓
14.	Even if I don't meet my parents' expectations, I am good to them.	34.4	35.7	17.5	3.9	7.8	✓
15.	If I fail in any task, I am compared with other children.	16.2	24.7	14.9	24	19.5	✓
16.	I feel like a burden to my family.	10.4	17.5	14.9	24	32.5	✓
17.	My family consoles me if I am sad for any reason.	40.3	32.5	13.6	6.5	6.5	✓
18.	we don't have a very good relationship with our close relatives.	7.1	9.7	15.6	32.5	34.4	✓
19.	My family members are always busy at finding each other's iniquitous.	5.8	13.6	14.3	27.3	38.3	✓
20.	My family members interact with members from other families.	41.6	44.8	5.8	3.9	3.2	✓
Responsible Environment							
21.	I don't get any care from family during illness.	1.9	4.5	6.5	23.4	63	✓
22.	I am encouraged to do creative work at my leisure time.	29.2	43.5	18.8	3.9	3.9	✓
23.	My parents keep track of what I did do throughout the day.	27.9	40.9	18.2	4.5	7.8	✓
24.	Nobody cares if I am late to return to home from my classes.	4.5	7.8	16.9	29.9	40.3	✓
25.	Everybody is extra importance about studies on during exam period at home.	40.3	40.3	9.7	7.1	1.9	✓
26.	Everyone in the family stands by each other's at bad times.	63	29.9	4.5	1.3	0.6	✓
27.	We make decisions together about any issue as a family.	42.9	37.7	12.3	3.9	2.6	✓
28.	I get support in every situation from my family.	48.1	33	7.8	3.9	5.8	✓
29.	Nobody is bothered about my future in the family.	2.6	2.6	10.4	29.2	54.5	✓
30.	I take responsibility of the family during absence of my parents at home.	42.9	40.9	9.1	4.5	1.9	✓
Controlled Environment							
31.	If I play games on mobile phone, rebuke me at home.	26	35.7	21.4	8.4	7.8	*
32.	Can't discuss personal and confidential matter with any family members.	13.6	22.1	22.7	24.7	16.2	✓
33.	If I do anything wrong, family members rule me.	43.5	48.1	3.9	3.2	0.6	✓
34.	They are called to study early in the morning.	30.5	31.2	22.1	7.8	7.8	✓
35.	I get anything more than needed	11.7	24	26	22.1	15.6	*
36.	I don't have the permission to eat eating outside food (fast food).	6.5	12.3	26.6	35.7	18.2	*

37.	There is no restriction in going out with friends.	9.1	16.9	23.4	33.8	16.2	✓
38.	I have to get back to home before dusk irrespective of where I am.	31.8	31.8	13.6	16.2	5.8	✓
39.	Using mobile phone while studying is not permitted	21.4	25.3	16.9	26.6	9.1	✗
40.	I speak loudly at home	9.7	14.9	26	28.6	20.1	✓

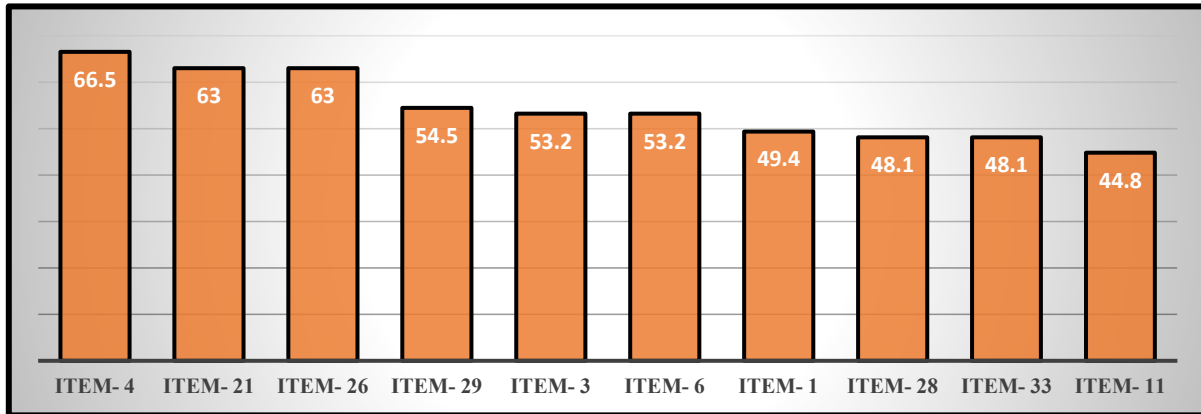


Figure 2: Histogram of the Highest Family Environmental Attitude Items

After analysing the data, the researcher found that item numbers 4, 21, 26, 29, 3, 6, 1, 28, 33, and 11 showed the highest response percentages, indicating their strong influence on Family Environmental Attitude among adolescent students.

Items with higher percentages in agreement categories reflect positive perceptions such as family support, care during illness, mutual cooperation, and emotional bonding. For example, items like 3, 6, 21, 26, and 28 indicate that most students experience a supportive, caring, and interactive family environment. Moderate responses on several items suggest that some aspects of independence and control vary among families. Items related to decision-making, restrictions, and comparison with others indicate mixed experiences among students. A few items showed higher negative responses, indicating that some students feel pressure, comparison, or lack of autonomy in certain situations. This reflects the presence of stressful and controlled elements in the family environment for a section of respondents.

Overall, the findings suggest that most adolescent students experience a responsible and supportive family environment, although elements of stress and control are also present to some extent.

CONCLUSION

The present study successfully developed and standardized a Family Environmental Attitude Scale for adolescent students in West Bengal. Through systematic item analysis, 33 out of 40 items were retained, ensuring that the tool effectively measures family environmental attitudes across the dimensions of Independent Environment, Stressful Environment, Responsible Environment, and Controlled Environment. The scale showed high reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.84 and strong validity of 0.92, confirming that it is a dependable instrument for assessment and research purposes.

The findings indicate that most adolescents experience a supportive, responsible, and emotionally connected family environment, which plays an important role in their overall development. At the same time, the presence of moderate levels of stress and control suggests that family experiences are not entirely uniform and reflect the complexity of family life. Differences observed across gender and locality imply the influence of socio-cultural factors, while the academic stream shows minimal impact on family environmental attitude.

In conclusion, family environment has a significant influence on adolescents' attitudes and development. The constructed scale is a valid, reliable, and practical tool that can be widely used in educational research, psychological assessment, and future studies to better understand and enhance adolescent well-being.

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