Available online at www.ijpab.com

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.18782/2320-7051.6993

ISSN: 2320 – 7051

Int. J. Pure App. Biosci. **6 (5):** 502-509 (2018)

International Journal of Pure & Applied Bioscience

Research Article

OPEN ACCESS

A Study on Peer Relations Among Medical, Engineering and Agriculture Graduating Emerging Adults

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Received: 2.07.2018 | Revised: 29.07.2018 | Accepted: 9.08.2018

ABSTRACT

A study on peer relations among medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults was carried out in Dharwad, Hubli and Ranibennur cities, Karnataka state. The sample for the study comprised of 659 graduating emerging adults among them 198 respondents from medical stream, 164 respondents from engineering stream and 297 respondents from agriculture streams were selected. General information schedule was used to collect background information and index of peer relations by Hudson was used to assess peer relations among graduating emerging adults. Socioeconomic status scale by Aggarwal et al. was used to collect socio economic background of the family. Results revealed that there was significant association between subject stream and peer relations. Male graduating emerging adults had higher clinically significant peer relations problem than female graduating emerging adults. Higher per cent of the graduating emerging adults whose parents were illiterate had clinically significant peer relationship problems.

Key words: *Emerging adults, Peer relations, Social intelligence, Subject stream.*

INTRODUCTION

Emerging adulthood is a state of cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioural transformation and establishment. This group is of particular interest because of the great changes and exploration that occur for individuals within this age group. It is a phase of the life span between late adolescence and early adulthood[1]. Arnett[2] provides a useful outline of the important qualities of this newly recognized developmental stage of emerging adulthood, which extends from age18 to 25 years of age. Emerging adulthood is a phase of identity exploration and self-focus, as well as of possibilities in terms of career and relationships[4,8,14]. However, this bridging time is also characterized by instability and change and is often experienced as the age of feeling in-between, which is distinctive from the traditional adult status attainment of three decades ago[3,4,9].

The social environment during adolescence consists of relationships with both family and peers[7].

Cite this article: Nayak, V.S. and Yadav, V.S., A Study on Peer Relations Among Medical, Engineering and Agriculture Graduating Emerging Adults, *Int. J. Pure App. Biosci.* **6(5):** 502-509 (2018). doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.18782/2320-7051.6993

These two social systems continue to evolve during emerging adulthood. Over the course of adolescence, youth become increasingly independent from parents and continue to evolve in relationship with peers[10]. Although peer influence is said to peak during early/middle adolescence[15] emerging adults spend the majority of their time with others of their own age. In addition to peer groups, close dyadic relationships with peers also increase during the transition from childhood to adolescence. Peer relationships can function as emotional and cognitive resources, providing intimacy, security and trust, helps in the development of autonomy and identity and function as forerunners of subsequent relationships. They involve a broad range of people who surround person's everyday lives from early childhood until old age.

In addition, individual also seek and maintain a number of dyadic relationships with peers, like close friend, an acquaintance, a flat mate, a colleague, a fellow-student, or a neighbour. This is reflected in findings indicating that adolescents spend an increasing amount of time with peer groups and they become highly, and more than people of other ages, concerned with obtaining social acceptance in peer groups[7]. According to developmental theory, the establishment and development of relationships with peers serves as an important function in different aspects of psychosocial adjustment[6,16,17]. Peer relationships include both positive and negative features. Positive features of friendships include trust, communication, and a willingness to help, while negative features include characteristics such as disloyalty and rejection. These features create conflict-ridden relationships that can negatively influence individual's trajectory[13]. Hence, this study made an attempt to know the peer relations among graduating emerging adults with the following objectives.

Objectives of the study:

1. To assess the level of peer relations of graduating emerging adults.
2. To assess influence of gender on peer relations of graduating emerging adults.
3. To know association and relationship between parents education and peer relations of graduating emerging adults.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The target population of the study was medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults studying in Dharwad, Hubli and Ranibennur cities. There was one each agriculture college, medical and engineering college in Dharwad city. There was one medical college and two engineering colleges in Hubli city. There was one agriculture college and one engineering college in Ranibennur Taluk. SDM Medical College Dharwad, Karnataka Institute of Medical sciences, Hubli, SDM College of Engineering and Technology Dharwad, Sri Taralabalu Jagadguru Institute of Technology, Ranibennur, College of agriculture Dharwad and college of agriculture Hanumanamatti, were selected purposively. The respondents who were present in the class and given all the information in the questionnaire were selected as sample. The sample for the study comprised of 659 graduating emerging adults among them 82 male and 116 female respondents from medical stream, 89 male and 75 female respondents from engineering stream and 130 male and 167 female respondents were from agriculture streams. The emerging adults peer relations was assessed by using index of peer relations by Dr. Hudson. The socio economic status scale by Aggarwal *et al*. was used to assess socio economic status of the family.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table1. Distribution of medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults on personal characteristics

It is apparent that 58.60 per cent of the graduating emerging adults in medical stream were female while 41.40 per cent were male. In engineering stream, 54.30 per cent of the respondents were male and 45.70 per cent were female. Among agriculture stream, 56.20 per cent were female and 43.8 per cent were male graduating emerging adults.

With regard to class, among medical stream, 26.80 per cent of the students were in second year, 23.50 per cent equally were in first and third year and 22.60 per cent were in final year. In engineering stream, 29.40 per cent of the students were in final year, 28.00 per cent in third year and 21.30 per cent equally were in first and second year. With respect to agriculture stream, 27.60 per cent of the students were in second year, followed by 27.30 per cent in final, 24.60 third, 20.50 per cent were in first year.

Table2. Distribution of medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adult's on parental characteristics.

With respect to education of father, among medical stream, 38.40 per cent had professional qualification, followed by 27.80 per cent were graduates. 20.20 per cent were post graduates, 8.60 per cent were 10^{th} passed but less graduation, 3 percent of them were illiterates, 1 per cent equally were less than primary and 1 per cent primary passed but less than class 10. In case of engineering stream, 31.10 per cent were 10^{th} passed but less than graduation, followed by 29.30 per cent were graduates, 14 per cent had professional qualification, 10.40 per cent were post graduates, 7.30 per cent were illiterate, 6.10 per cent of them were primary passed but less than class 10 and 1.80 per cent had attended school for one year or less than primary. Among agriculture stream, 32.20 per cent were 10^{th} passed but less than graduation, followed by 26.90 per cent were graduates, 18.20 per cent were illiterates, 9.10 per cent were post graduates, 7.40 per cent were primary passed but less than 10 class, 3.40 per cent had professional qualification and 2.70 per cent had attended school for one year or less than primary.

With respect to education of mother, in case of medical stream, 28.80 per cent were graduates, followed by 26.80 per cent were 10^{th} passed but less than graduation, 18.20 per cent post graduation, 14.60 per cent had professional qualification, 6.10 per cent of the mothers were passed primary but less than 10 class, 4.50 per cent were illiterates and 1 per cent had attended school for one year or less than primary. Among engineering stream, 48.80 per cent were 10^{th} passed but less than graduation, followed by 20.70 per cent were graduates, 12.80 per cent passed primary but less than class10, 9.80 per cent were illiterates, 5.50 per cent of them were post graduates and 1.20 per cent equally for less than primary and with professional qualification. Among agriculture stream, 48.10 per cent of mothers were 10^{th} passed but less than graduation, followed by 16.10 per cent were illiterates, 13.80 percent were passed primary but less than 10, 36 per cent of them were graduates, 4.40 per cent had attended school for one year or less than primary, 4 per cent of them were post graduates and 1.3 per cent had professional qualification.

Table 3 shows the association between gender and peer relationship among medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults. With regard to peer relationship, among medical stream, 52.40 per cent and 47.60 per cent of male were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problem and absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category, respectively. Correspondingly, around 71 per cent and 29 per cent of female graduating emerging adults were in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and presence of significant problems category. The chi square value of (10.81) was significant at 0.01 level of probability.

Among engineering stream, 64 per cent of the male graduating emerging adults had clinically significant problems and 36 per cent of them did not have clinically significant peer relationship problems. 77.30 per cent of female students did not have clinically significant peer relationship problem and 22.70 per cent of them had clinically significant problems. The chi square value of (28.14) was significant at 0.01 level of probability.

As far as agriculture stream is considered, 55.40 per cent and 78.40 per cent of male and female did not have clinically significant peer relationship problems.

Correspondingly, 44.60 per cent and 21.60 per cent of male and female had clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. The chi square value of 17.9 was found to be significant 0.01 level of probability. Significant association was found between gender and peer relationship in all subject streams. These findings seem to support again the gender-role socialization between males and females, where males tend to be more "inward-bound" and females tend to be "outward bound". Males are oriented toward mastery and exploration of the world while females are oriented toward interpersonal relationships. Evolutionary theory would likewise propose that boys are predisposed to pursue competition and dominance in groups while girls are predisposed to engage in intimate relationships characterized by caring and nurturance. Female relational orientation style is characterized by stronger interpersonal engagement than that of male. Specifically, girls tend to care more about dyadic friendships, to more strongly adopt connection-oriented goals in peer contexts, and to feel more empathy for others, whereas boys focus more on agentic goals, including their own dominance in the peer group. Women devote a good deal of time and intensity of involvement to friends. In contrast, male are higher on rough-and-tumble play and overt aggression, more involved in sports and other competitive activities, care more about dominance in the peer group, but also seem to experience more peer victimization, especially physical aggression. Boy's large group orientation and competitive play might enhance their development of group relationships, but boys' play styles may interfere with the development of close relationships and could confer risk for behaviour problems[12]. Brendgen *et al.*[5] who observed more positive and fewer negative friendship features among Canadian adolescent girls than boys, using both self - reports (FQS) and observer ratings (which were substantially correlated with each other). Boys self – disclosed primarily to their best friend, whereas girls self - disclosed rather evenly across their friend network. Khan and manzoor[11] revealed that male undergraduates scored high on self-esteem and on peer relations problems as compared to female university students.

Table4. Association between father's education and peer relationship among medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults

In medical stream, among the illiterate fathers and fathers who had education equals to or less than 10th class, 50 per cent equally were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. It was observed that 52.90 per cent of students whose fathers education was above 10 but lesser than graduation were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category and 47.10 per cent were in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. On the other hand for those fathers who had educational qualification of graduation and above, 70.90 per cent were in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 29.10 per cent were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. While for graduate, 57.50 per cent and 42.50 per cent were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category, respectively. For fathers, who had professional qualification, 60.50 per cent were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 39.5 per cent were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. The chi square and correlation analysis revealed no significant association and relationship between father's education and peer relationship.

With respect to engineering stream, 66.70 per cent of the students with illiterate fathers were observed in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 33.30 per cent of them were in absence of

clinically significant peer relationship problems. For fathers who had passed class 10, 53.8 per cent and 46.2 per cent of them were in absence of clinically significant problems and presence of clinically significant problems, respectively. For those whose fathers' education was above class 10 but lesser than graduation, 60.80 per cent and 39.20 per cent of them were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. For fathers who were graduates, fifty per cent equally were observed in absence and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. For fathers who had completed post graduation, 52.90 per cent and 47.10 per cent of them were in absence and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems. For fathers who had professional qualification, 65.20 per cent were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 34.80 per cent of were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems. The chi square value of 4.45 was not significant. Similarly the correlation (-0.149) was not significant.

With regard to agriculture stream, among the students of illiterate fathers, 53.70 per cent were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 46.30 per cent of them were observed in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems. For those fathers who had passed class 10, 63.30 per cent and 36.70 per cent of them were observed in absence and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. It was observed that 68.80 per cent of students whose father's education was above class 10 but lesser than graduation were in absence of clinically significant problems and 31.20 per cent of them were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. Correspondingly, for those students whose fathers who had educational qualification of graduation, 75 per cent of them were in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 25 per cent were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. While for graduate, 74.10 per cent and 25.90 per cent of them were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and presence of clinically significant problems peer relationship category, respectively. For fathers, who had professional qualification, 90 per cent of them were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 10 per cent were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. The chi square value of 9.92 was not significant. There was a negative significant correlation observed between father's education and peer relationship among agriculture graduating emerging adults (-0.148).

Table5. Association between mother's education and peer relationship among medical, engineering and agriculture graduating emerging adults

In case of medical stream, among the illiterate mothers, 55.60 per cent and 44.60 per cent of them were in absence and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. For mothers who had passed class 10, 71.40 per cent did not have clinically significant problems and 28.60 per cent of them had clinically significant problems. For above class 10 but less than graduation category of mother's education, 49.10 per cent and 50.90 per cent were in absence and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. While for graduate and above, 66.70 per cent did not have clinically significant peer relationship problems and 33.30 per cent had clinically significant peer relationship problems. For post graduation category, 66.60 per cent and 33.40 per cent were in absence and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. For mothers, who had professional qualification, 62.10 per cent did not have clinically significant peer relationship problems and 37.90 per cent had clinically significant peer relationship problems. The chi square value

5.20 showed no significant association. Similarly correlation was also not significant.

With regard to engineering stream, 62.50 per cent of the students with illiterate mothers had clinically significant peer relationship problems and 37.5 per cent of them did not have clinically significant peer relationship problems. For mothers who had passed class 10, 60.9 per cent and 39.10 per cent of them were in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. For students whose mother's education was above class 10 but lesser than graduation, 51.20 per cent and 48.80 per cent of them were observed in absence and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. For mothers who had educational qualification of graduation and above, 67.60 per cent were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and 32.40 per cent were in presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems category. For mothers who had completed post graduation, 55.60 per cent and 44.40 per cent of them were in absence and presence of clinically significant problems, respectively. For mothers who had professional qualification, fifty per cent of them were observed in absence of clinically significant peer relationship problems and presence of clinically significant peer relationship problems, respectively. The chi square value of 4.97 was not significant. Similarly the correlation value of (-0.14) was not significant.

With respect to agriculture stream, among the students who had illiterate mothers, 53.20 per cent did not have clinically significant problems and 46.80 per cent had clinically significant problems. For those whose mothers had passed class 10, 67.30 per cent did not have clinically significant problems and 32.70 per cent had clinically significant problems. However, for mothers with education qualification above 10 but below graduation, 67.80 per cent and 32.20 per cent were in absence and presence of clinically significant problems, respectively. For students whose mothers had educational qualification of graduation and above, 88.90 per cent did not have clinically significant problems and 11.10 per cent had clinically significant problems. For mothers who had completed post graduation, 75 per cent and 25 per cent of them were in absence and presence of clinically significant problems, respectively. For mothers who had professional qualification, 75 per cent of them were observed in absence of clinically significant problems and 25 per cent of them were in presence of clinically significant problems. The chi square value of (12.3) was found to be significant at 0.01 level of probability. There was significant negative correlation observed between mothers education and peer relationship (-0.03).

Results from the Table 4 and 5 it was evident that there was no significant association between father's education and peer relationship. Father's education was negatively correlated with peer relationship in agriculture stream. There was significant association between mother's education and peer relationship in agriculture stream. Significant negative correlation exits between mother's education and peer relationship in agriculture stream. Well qualified parent's help the children to gain social skills and guide them to be proactive and positive. Parents relate to their adolescent with warmth, and attempt to shape behaviour through rational discussion and explanation of the reasons for rules. Make the children to learn to get each other's attention, to share things, to assist each other, converse in a polite way and to say nice things to peers. Provide explicit opportunities to their children to share any peer-related concerns they might have and show respect for the children's unique social needs. Make the child to foster empathy and sympathetic concern for others and create social options for children without creating pressures and provide lots of opportunities for adolescent to practice being in different kinds of social situations. These can include sports teams, theatre groups, play groups, volunteer experience or any extra-curricular activity.

Coach the adolescent on how to cope with tricky social situations and monitor adolescent social life. They used to give specific instruction on ways to make peer interactions mutually satisfying and productive in order to improve peer relationship. Not many studies have reported the relation of parent's education and peer relationship.

CONCLUSION

- There was significant association found between gender and peer relationship in all subject streams. Higher per cent of the male graduating emerging adults had clinically significant peer relations problem compared to female graduating emerging adults in all subject streams. Irrespective of subject stream and gender there is necessity to develop programmes by administrators at college and government level to bring awareness regarding consequences of peer relation problems. Correspondingly, there is need for providing opportunities to develop potentialities and skills to overcome peer relationship problems. it is important from the perspective of graduating emerging adults, to view parents as their supporters and well wishers throughout their life so sharing the experiences of emerging adults with their parents and family members is to be inculcated through schooling and mass medias.
- Around 46 per cent of the graduating emerging adults whose fathers were illiterate had clinically significant peer relationship. Around 46 per cent of the graduating emerging adults whose mothers were illiterate had clinically significant peer relationship problems. The percentage of behaviour problem among graduating emerging adults whose parents were illiterate is significantly recognisable and necessarily signalizing to parents, teachers and administrators to give importance to understand the graduating emerging adults difficulties, problems and challenges experiencing in their peer relationship. Correspondingly, take adequate measures with the help of specialist to empower graduating emerging adults to develop potentialities and skills to solve their own problems in their day to day acuities and lead normal life without peer problems.

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