ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Interpersonal Competence Skills, Self-Esteem, and Well-Being Among College Students: a Brief Communication

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Background	Interpersonal competence skill, the way we perceive and grasp the behaviors of others, as well as modify our behavior to the circumstances at hand, contributes to various aspects of a student's life. More importantly, it is perceived to increase the sense of self-worth of the individual as well as overall happiness and subjective well-being.
Methods	A descriptive research design was adopted, wherein 80 students from five different boarding centers in Bengaluru, India, were drawn through a random sampling technique. Apart from the sociodemographic details, structured scales like self-esteem scale, interpersonal competence scale, and well-being scale were used to collect the data.
Results	The majority (45%) of the students (undergraduate/postgraduate) were in the age group of 23 years and above. A majority (77.2%) of respondents' annual family income was less than â 11000. Overall, 52.5% of them belonged to nuclear families and 68% of the respondent's family's occupation was agriculture. Aggression was found to be high among joint family students ($F=$ 3.409, $P <0.05$), the academic domain was found to be better among extended family students ($F= 3.282$, $P <0.05$), and overall interpersonal competence skills were found to be greater ($F= 6.099$, $P <0.05$) among joint family students. Self-esteem was found better among undergraduate students when compared with postgraduate students.
Conclusions	Findings have indicated that psychosocial intervention at educational institutions has to be initiated by counselors, social workers, and other mental health professionals.
Keywords	College students, Interpersonal competence skills, Self-esteem, Well-being.
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INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal skill is a necessity in all walks of life. Students with high interpersonal skills are not only favorable but also successful in both their professional and personal lives. Students must adjust to the classroom environment while they are pursuing education. Their academic strides, efficiency, and adaptability are all influenced by their interactions with their peers and teachers (Ladd *et al.,* 2014). There are two primary elements to interpersonal competence skills. The first is our ability to perceive and comprehend others' behaviors, and the second is our ability to adapt our behavior to the circumstances (McConnell, 2004).

Interpersonal competence is defined as a rational and process-oriented skill in which an individual influences another person through communication. Interacting context without suffering a loss of social reinforcement and the ability to interact with others in a way that is both appropriate and effective part of Interpersonal skills (Segrin and Taylor, 2007). These skills are that one required to communicate effectively with another person

or a group of people (Rajesh and Chandrashekaran, 2014). This includes various aspects such as interpersonal problem solving, interpersonal communication, managing resistance negotiation, and resolving conflicts (Friend and Cook, 1992).

Sullivan (Sullivan, 1953) noted the significance of peer relationships in maintaining one's self-worth during the adolescent years. In the presence of self-focusing stimuli, an individual's self has an influence on their executive function. According to Gunor and Kaba (Kübra and Güngör, 2021), self-esteem has an effect on an individual's attachment style in early adulthood, and it refers to an individual's sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person values, or likes him or herself (Padhy *et al.,* 2011).

Self-esteem can relate to a broad assessment of the self's worth or value as a whole or assessments of individual components of the self (Cameron and Granger, 2019). It is rooted in interpersonal experience, serving as a lens through which the individual sees their interpersonal relationships and as a motivator for interpersonal behavior (Swann, 1983; Baumeister *et al.,* 2003).

On the contrary, interpersonal relationships may also contribute to a significant level of happiness and subjective well-being (Diener and Seligman, 2002). Complimenting studies show happiness, life satisfaction, the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect as components of well-being (Diener and Ryan, 2009; Kong *et al.,* 2013).

Well-being as established by Ryff and Singer (Ryff and Singer, 1996), is critical for successfully engaging in meaningful relationships, managing one's environment, and attaining one's full potential throughout one's life, making it a key aspect. Due to the wide range of characteristics in the literature on well-being research, the study is mostly based on the researchers' analysis of variables. Biosocial variables, personality variables, and social support variables are three components of subjective well-being that are researched in some studies (Cha, 2003; Diener *et al.,* 2009). Therefore, this paper intends to describe interpersonal competency, well-being, and social support of the rural poor students staying in hostels of Bengaluru for higher education.

METHODS

Study details

A descriptive research design was adopted for the study, wherein 80 students from five different charitable boys' hostels in Bengaluru rural (40 undergraduate and 40 postgraduate) were included. The participants those who met inclusion and exclusion criteria were drawn through a simple random sampling technique. Allocation concealment was used, and the researcher has generated the random sequence using the lottery method.

Measures: apart from the sociodemographic details, a structured questionnaire for psychosocial problems and the following standardized tools like, the Self-Esteem Scale by Rosenberg (Rosenberg, 2015), Interpersonal Competence scale by Cairns *et al.* (Cairns *et al.,* 1995), and PGI General Well Being Scale by Verma *et al.* (Verma *et al.,* 1983), were used to collect the data. Various studies have validated the use of these scales in India and other Asian countries (Xie, 1999; Soohinda *et al.,* 2019; Chouhan and Singh, 2021).

Data analysis

The data were analyzed with the help of statistical software Epi Info 7.2.4. (Public domain software package) 18. Descriptive statistics, one-way analysis of variance, and Pearson's correlation were used to find differences and relationships, respectively, among dependent and independent variables.

Eligibility criteria

Male students studying postgraduation and undergraduation courses and staying at hostels in Bengaluru were included. The students hailing from rural and lower economic statuses were included in the study. Students who have undergone any psychiatric treatment earlier were excluded from the study.

Ethical concern

The questionnaires were circulated along with the informed consent of the respondents after availing permission from the authorities of the charitable hostels. The purpose and the outcome of the study were explained to the respondents and those who were willing to participate in the study were included in study. The anonymity of the respondents and the strict confidentiality about all information collected was maintained, and the information was used only for the research purpose. In case any respondent needed individual intervention, adequate psychosocial support was provided or a suitable referral was made.

RESULTS

Socio demographics

Majority (45%) of the students (undergraduate/ postgraduate) were in the age group of 23 years and above and (97.5%) were unmarried. A majority (77.2%) of respondents' annual family income was below â 11 000. Majority (91.3%) of them belonged to the backward and general cast. A majority (98.8%) of respondents belonged to Hinduism, and more than half (52.5%) of them belonged to nuclear families. A majority (67.7%) of the respondents' family's occupation was agriculture. More than one-third (38.8%) of the respondents were staying in hostels for about 3 years and above.

Table 1 shows the mean differences in interpersonal competence skills. Aggression domain was found to be high among joint family students (mean= 16, SD= 0.3.6) when compared with nuclear (mean= 14.1, SD= 2.8) and extended (mean= 15.1, SD= 1.5) family students. The one-way analysis of variance was also found to be significant (F= 3.409, P <0.05). Academic domain was found to be better among extended family students (mean= 11.1, SD= 0.1.3) when compared with nuclear (mean= 9.3, SD= 2.2) and joint (mean= 10.3, SD= 1.8) family students. The one-way analysis of variance was also found to be significant (F= 3.282, P <0.05).

Table 2 shows the mean differences in self-esteem and well-being skills. Self-esteem was found to be better among nuclear (mean= 11.5, SD= 3.5) and joint (mean= 11.1, SD= 2.7) family students when compared with extended (mean= 10.3, SD= 3.6) family students. Well-being was found nearly the same among nuclear (mean= 25.1, SD= 3.8), joint (mean= 25.2, SD= 2.8), and extended (mean= 24.1, SD= 2.8) family students. However, the one-way analysis of variance was not found to be significant.

Table 3 shows that the annual family income is positively correlated with age (r= 0.314, P <0.01), and no correlation was found among self-esteem, interpersonal competence, and well-being variables.

Table 1: Mean differences on interpersonal competence skills among students from different types of families:

Interpersonal competence skills	Type of families	N	Mean	SD	F value	P value
Aggression	Nuclear	42	14.1667	2.8959		
	Joint	32	16.0938	3.3731	3.409	0.038*
	Extended	6	15.1667	3.656		
Academic	Nuclear	42	9.381	2.2627		
	Joint	32	10.375	1.8965	3.282	0.043*
	Extended	6	11.1667	1.3292		
Popularity	Nuclear	42	7.7381	2.0489	1.268	0.287 NS
	Extended	6	7.6667	1.8619		
Affiliation	Nuclear	42	19.4524	3.4796		
	Joint	32	19.5	4.8193	0.08	0.924 NS
	Extended	6	20.1667	4.3551		
Olympian	Nuclear	42	13.5476	3.6035		
	Joint	32	14.9688	3.4124	1.84	0.166 NS
	Extended	6	15.3333	2.582		
Introvert	Nuclear	42	10.1429	3.1435		
	Joint	32	11.3125	3.0842	1.845	0.165 NS
	Extended	6	12	2.4495		
Overall Interpersonal competence skills	Nuclear	42	74.4286	8.2111		
	Joint	32	80.6875	8.4221	6.099	0.003**
	Extended	6	81.5	6.253		

NS, not significant. *P value less than equal to 0.05. **P value less than 0.001. ***P value less than equal to 0.001.

Table 2: Mean differences on self-esteem and well-being among students from different types of families:

	Type of families	N	Mean	SD	F value	P value
Self-esteem	Nuclear	42	11.5	3.5078		
	Joint	32	11.0625	2.7933	0.416	0.661 NS
	Extended	6	10.3333	3.6148		
Well-being	Nuclear	42	25.1905	3.865		
	Joint	32	25.2188	2.8368	0.255	0.776 NS
	Extended	6	24.1667	2.8577		

NS, not significant. *P value less than equal to 0.05. **P value less than 0.001. ***P value less than equal to 0.001.

Table 3: Correlation between sociodemographic, self-esteem, interpersonal competence, and well-being variables:

	Age (years)	Annual family income (Rs.)	Number of siblings	Self-esteem	Interpersonal competence	Well-being
Age (years)	1					
Annual family income (Rs.)	0.314**	1				
Number of siblings	−0.024	−0.087	1			
Self-esteem	−0.163	0.034	−0.19	1		
Interpersonal competence	−0.134	−0.112	−0.037	−0.131	1	
Well-being	−0.103	0.014	−0.134	0.22	−0.185	1

Rs, Rupees (Indian currency). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two tailed).

DISCUSSION

The research aimed to observe interpersonal competence, self-esteem, and well-being among students from different family types. The results indicate that the overall interpersonal competence skills were found to be higher among students from extended and joint families compared with those from nuclear families. Joint and extended families are traditionally collectivistic in character, encouraging dynamic interactions and coexistence, with the family serving as the social structure's central focus (Avasthi, 2010).

Aggression domain was found to be high among joint family students owing to below poverty line status and the lack of facilities; students would tend to develop aggression on society through their approaches. The study by Kristensen *et al.* (Kristensen *et al.*, 2004), showed that distraction coping and aggressive coping were positively related to substance use.

Academic domain was found to be better among extended family students when compared with nuclear and joint family students, as most often modern extended family members live apart, and especially, they would live in urban areas where they will have higher education facilities.

Overall interpersonal competence skills were found to be almost equal among extended and joint family students when compared with nuclear family students, as extended and joint family students had enough guidance, support, and models from their families along with the opportunity to learn social and interpersonal skills in the company of their family.

Although not significant, higher levels of self-esteem were observed in students from nuclear families and higher levels of well-being among those of joint families. There has been very little research on student self-esteem and family dynamics, and the findings of this study contradict those of prior studies, which found higher levels of self-esteem among members of joint and nuclear families. This could be owing to the effect of recent societal and economic shifts that encourage more individualized upbringing and autonomy (Budescu and Silverman, 2016; Gebre and

Taylor, 2017; Shetty *et al.*, 2020). Results from studies on well-being conclude that individuals from joint families experience higher levels of well-being and happiness (Chung, 2014). This reflects that family members are an important aspect of a person's growth. The familial support system has an impact on an individual's total well-being in addition to social influence and connection (Turner *et al.*, 2014; Grevenstein *et al.*, 2019).

The present study has many limitations such as the sample of the study being small, consisting of only undergraduate/postgraduate male charitable hostels from Bengaluru, and did not study female students due to a lack of availability of sample. Hence, this study cannot be generalized across boarding students.

CONCLUSION

Interpersonal competence is becoming increasingly important for students to excel in all aspects of life. It also contributes to the individual's subjective feeling of well-being by increasing their sense of self. It becomes clear that to ensure the well-being and better progress of the student in all walks of their life, suitable psychosocial interventions are suggested in educational institutions.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
There are no conflicts of interest.

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