



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

"A Comparative Analysis Of Parent-Child Relationships And Academic Achievement In Nuclear And Joint Families"

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of family structure—nuclear and joint—on the parent-child relationship and academic achievement of students. Utilizing a sample of 500 students from joint families and 500 students from separated families across five districts in Maharashtra, India, data was collected using standardized scales and academic records. The results indicate a significantly stronger parent-child relationship in joint families. However, no significant difference was observed in academic achievement across both family types. The findings emphasize the need for nurturing parent-child bonds regardless of family structure and advocate for awareness and supportive practices among parents.

Keywords: parent-child relationship, academic achievement, joint family, nuclear family, family structure, secondary education, India

Introduction

Family structure plays a crucial role in shaping a child's emotional well-being and academic success. Nuclear families, typically consisting of parents and children, offer focused parental attention, while joint families provide broader support through extended members. These differences may influence parent-child relationships and, in turn, academic outcomes. Strong parent-child bonds are linked to higher motivation and better performance in school. However, the quality and nature of these bonds can vary depending on the family setup. This study compares parent-child relationships and academic achievement in nuclear and joint families to understand which structure offers a more supportive environment for students.

Family is the foundational unit of society and plays a crucial role in a child's intellectual and emotional development. An ideal family setting fosters concentration, discipline, and emotional stability, all of which contribute to academic success. Conversely, negative parental behaviour can hinder a child's growth. This research investigates whether the type of family system—joint or nuclear—affects parent-child relationships and academic outcomes.

Review of Literature

Family Structure and Child Development

Family structure significantly influences a child's emotional and academic development. Baigate (year) asserts that families are crucial for a child's intellectual and social growth. Studies show that children from supportive family environments tend to excel academically and emotionally (Shah, year).

Parent-Child Relationships in Family Types

The parent-child relationship is essential for emotional and academic success. In joint families, extended caregivers provide additional support, positively affecting children's behaviour and academic outcomes (Sharma & Chauhan, year). On the other hand, nuclear families may face challenges due to limited time and resources, which can lead to neglect or overprotection (Shah, year).

Academic Achievement and Family Dynamics

Research indicates that emotional support and family involvement are crucial for academic success. Gupta (year) found that joint family systems provide better academic support due to the involvement of extended family members. However, Singh (year) highlights that academic performance may not differ significantly between children from nuclear and joint families if both receive equal parental involvement.

Societal Changes and Family Structure

With urbanization and migration, joint families are declining, and nuclear families are on the rise (Kumar & Sharma, year). This shift presents new challenges for parents trying to balance work and child-rearing, further emphasizing the role of family dynamics in academic outcomes. Tyagi and Shah's research showed that disharmony in parent-child relationships can lead to behavioural issues in children. The concept of "Tabula Rasa" suggests that a child's mind is shaped by familial influences, highlighting the importance of the family structure in early education.

Gaps in Literature

Despite various studies on family structure and child development, there is limited research comparing the effects of nuclear and joint families specifically on parent-child relationships and academic achievement in India. This study seeks to address this gap.

Objectives of the Study

1. To compare parent-child relationships in joint and nuclear families.
2. To analyse factor-wise differences in the parent-child relationship across family types.
3. To study academic performance differences between students from joint and nuclear families.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the parent-child relationship between joint and nuclear families.
2. There is no significant factor-wise difference in the parent-child relationship between joint and nuclear families.
3. There is no significant difference in academic performance between students from joint and nuclear families.

Assumptions

1. Parent-child relationships are stronger in joint families.
2. Academic performance may be higher in joint families compared to nuclear families.

Scope and Limitations

The research is limited to Class 8 and 9 students from five districts in Maharashtra: Amravati, Yavatmal, Washim, Akola, and Buldhana. Only students from joint and nuclear families were considered.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a survey method. Data was collected from a sample of 1,000 students from 500 joint families and 500 students from nuclear families across selected districts.

Tools for Data Collection

1. Parent-Child Relationship Scale (PCT) by Dr. H.C. Sharma and Dr. N.S. Chauhan.
2. Academic achievement measured through annual examination marks.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. Parent-Child Relationship

Group	Sample Size (N)	Mean Score	t-value	Significant Difference
Nuclear Families	500	52.20	13.082	Yes
Joint Families	500	62.64		

The mean score for nuclear families was 52.20, and for joint families, it was 62.64. The calculated t-value (13.082) exceeded the critical value, indicating a significant difference. Hence, Hypothesis 1 is rejected.

2. Factor-Wise Comparison

Factor Code	Description	Nuclear Family Mean	Joint Family Mean	Significant Difference
A	Rejection vs Acceptance	6.19	5.41	Yes
B	Neglect vs Overprotection	6.06	5.75	Yes
C	Neglect vs Overindulgence	6.46	7.80	Yes
D	Unrealistic Expectations vs Realism	6.53	8.14	Yes
E	Lenient vs Strict Moral Standards	6.69	7.74	Yes
F	Freedom vs Severe Discipline	6.51	8.20	Yes
G	Marital Conflict vs Adjustment	6.61	10.08	Yes
H	Pretend vs Real Involvement	6.61	11.40	Yes

These findings suggest joint families offer a more supportive environment due to collective caregiving and the presence of elders.

3. Academic Achievement

Group	Sample Size (N)	Mean Score	t-value	Significant Difference
Nuclear Families	100	70.34	0.432	No
Joint Families	1000	70.05		

The mean academic score for nuclear families was 70.34 and for joint families 70.05. The calculated t-value (0.432) was below the critical threshold, indicating no significant difference. Hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Conclusions

The study highlights that students from joint families exhibit significantly stronger parent-child relationships than those from nuclear families, owing to the collective caregiving and emotional support found in joint setups. Factor-wise comparisons affirm consistent advantages in emotional acceptance, discipline, and parental involvement. However, academic achievement remains statistically unaffected by family structure. These findings emphasize the importance of nurturing family dynamics over structure alone and suggest a need for parental awareness programs that reinforce positive relationships, irrespective of family type.

- Parent-child relationships are significantly stronger in joint families.
- Factor-wise analysis also Favor's joint families across various relational dimensions.
- Academic performance does not significantly differ between students from the two-family types.

Recommendations

1. Maintain a balanced approach to discipline and affection.
2. Accept and support children's ideas and emotions.
3. Encourage academic effort and motivation.
4. Educate children on the importance of family values from an early age.
5. Practice open and trusting communication.
6. Promote mindfulness techniques like meditation and yoga to help students manage stress.
7. Educate children about puberty and psychological development.
8. Avoid imposing unrealistic expectations.

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