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## A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BAL/BALIKA ASHRAM AND PARENT HOME ADOLESCENTS ON OVERALL EMOTIONAL **MATURITY**

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#### ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out to compare bal/balika ashram and parent home adolescent students on overall Emotional Maturity. A sample of 360 (90 male and 90 female from bal/balika ashram and 90 male and 90 female from parent home adolescent students) were selected randomly for the present study. The result of the study reveals that overall emotional maturity is not affected significantly by the interaction of gender and inhabitance of adolescent students. In other words the effect of gender on overall emotional maturity is the same for both the levels of inhabitance and vice versa.

**KEYWORDS:** Bal/Balika Ashram, Parent Home, Adolescents, Emotional Maturity

#### Introduction

Children are the most precious asset of any country. It is the right of each and every child to get full opportunities for his all around development. Every child should have a happy childhood with protection and dignity and grow without any discrimination. A child gets all opportunities in a parental home to develop physically, mentally and culturally and fulfill his economic, social, religious and educational needs. He participates in the social, religious and other activities of the family resulting in the cultivation of various qualities like cooperation, good will, sacrifice etc. The interaction and emotional relationship between child and parents shapes his expectancies and responses in the subsequent social relationships. In addition to this, the beliefs, values and attitudes of the societies are filtered through the parents and transmitted to the child in a highly personalized selective fashion. The education, attitude, socio-economic status, personality and gender of the parent influence his presentation of cultural values. When the child grows into adolescence and moves from family world to the peer world, he carries with him the culture of the family into which he has been inducted. His attitude towards his future life is to a great extent conditioned by family culture in which he was nurtured throughout his prolonged childhood.

Some of the children unfortunately lose their parents during their early years and face the problems of their guardianship, care and upbringing. In addition to this, children born out of wedlock and branded as illegitimate children are abandoned by the unwed mother, denied parental love and wholesome family environment. They start and continue life with a great social disadvantage. Being deprived of parental care and familial protection, all such children are kept in destitute homes or bal/balika ashrams and suffer from environmental deficiencies in many ways. They lack immediate surroundings, locality and neighbourhood. They also lack the love and affection to be given by the parents and other privileges like income, assets and pocket money. They are deprived of social climate within the destitute home or bal/balika ashram, where they spend most of the impressionable years of their life, leading to unhealthy mental, moral and social growth.

Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child (1924) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948 highlighted the importance of the child and maintained that motherhood and childhood were entitled to special care and assistance and that children, whether born in or out of the wedlock should enjoy the same special protection. It was further elaborated that the child must be fed, nourished and protected against every form of exploitation and must be given the requisite means for its normal development so as to enable it to devote itself to the services of its fellow beings.

The Indian Council for Child Welfare established in 1952 is the single largest agency engaged in promoting development services for the child. SOS (Save Our Souls) children villages of India provides support to orphaned and abandoned children by providing them with a close alternative to natural family, a permanent home, education and a strong foundation for an independent and secure family. In 1974, the Government of India adopted the National Policy Resolution for children which spelt out the various measures to be taken and the priorities assigned to the children's programmes. The resolution further explained that children who are socially handicapped, who become delinquent or had been forced to take to begging or are otherwise in distress, should be provided facilities for education, training and rehabilitation so that they could become useful citizens in the years to come. The year 1979 was celebrated as the 'International Year of the Child'. Several problems that confront children mostly in developing countries suddenly acquired international attention and attracted global interests.

The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) was proposed in 2006 and implemented in 2009. It is based on the cardinal principle of 'protection of child rights' and 'best interests of the child'. It aims to create a protective environment for children by improving regulatory frameworks, strengthening structures and

professional capacities at national, state and district levels so as to cover all child protection issues and provide child friendly services at all levels.

**Destitute Homes Bal/Balika Ashram** Destitute homes are the institutions established by the government or voluntary agencies as the habitation for the children i.e. orphan, single-parent and two-parent whose guardians/parents are not in a position to afford for their care and development. They are given shelter, food, clothing and education by the institution. Steps for the rehabilitation are also taken by these institutions. These homes are also called bal/balika ashrams.

#### **Emotional Maturity**

The concept of emotional maturity has been of focal concern for psychologists. Some of the researchers have outlined various criteria and categories for classifying people as emotionally mature where as other researchers have referred to symptoms, characteristics, abilities and levels of emotional maturity. Hence, the manner in which the concept of emotional maturity has been delineated varied from researcher to researcher. Cole (1954) said, "The chief index of emotional maturity is the ability to bear tension". This view lays stress upon 'self-control' and not on 'self fulfillment'. Dosanjh (1956) commented, "Emotional maturity means a balanced personality. It means ability to govern disturbing emotions, show steadiness and endurance under pressure and to be tolerant and free from neurotic tendencies". According to Crow and Crow (1962), "The emotionally mature or stable individual regardless of his age, is the one who has the ability to overcome tension to disregard certain emotion stimulators that affect the young and view himself objectively, as he evaluates his assets and liabilities and strive towards an improved integration of his thought, his emotional attitude and his overt behaviour. Jersild (1963) stated, "Emotional maturity means the degree to which person has realized his potential for richness of living and has developed his capacity to enjoy things, to relate himself to others, to love and to laugh, his capacity for whole hearted sorrow, when an occasion arises and his capacity to show fear when there is occasion to be frightened, without feeling a need to use a false mask of courage, such as must be assumed by persons afraid to admit that they are afraid". According to Smitson (1974), "Emotional maturity is a process in which the personality is continually striving for greater sense of emotional health, both intra-psychically and intra personally". Good (1981) has stated that emotional maturity refers to emotional patterns of an adult who has progressed through the inferior emotional stages characteristic of infancy, childhood and adolescence and is not fit to deal successfully with reality and in adult love relationship without under emotional strain. In the view of Murray (2003), there is no correlation between chronological age, intellectual age, social age or emotional age. Just because someone is 'grown-up' by chronological age does not mean they are 'grown-up' emotionally. Chronological maturity and intellectual maturity combined with emotional immaturity are not common and are potentially dangerous. A person whose body and mind is adult, but whose emotional development is that of a child can wreck havoc in the life of him and of others.

Mostly, 'emotional balance' and 'emotional maturity' is taken as synonymous terms. But actually, they are not. Emotional balance emphasizes the value of learning to cope with both pleasant and unpleasant emotions. One can attain emotional maturity without having attained emotional balance although the vice versa is not true. An emotionally balanced person will necessarily be emotionally mature person. Emotional balance is a quality of an adult and not a child. Thus, emotional maturity is a relative term. It is directly related to age and stage of development of the individual. Emotional maturity and emotional control are also different. The former is positive, whereas latter is negative. Most of the individual control their emotions in many situations but it does not mean that all of them are emotionally mature. In fact, some of them may not express their emotions for fear of consequences. Emotional control means checking of emotions or inhibiting them from expressions whereas emotional maturity means behaving in most socially accepted manner without inhibiting the emotions. It involves internal control of emotions rather than external control. An emotionally matured person is the one who can give expression to his emotions at the right time and in a proper manner.

Hollingworth (1928) mentioned some characteristics of emotionally mature persons as following: (i) He is capable of responding in gradation or degree of emotional responses. He does not respond in all of none fashion, but keeps within bounds; (ii) He is also able to delay his responses as controlled with the impulsiveness of young child; (iii) Handling of self pity, instead of showing unrestrained self pity, he tries to feel for him. In the opinion of Murray (2004), an emotional mature person has the following characteristics: (i) The ability to give and receive alone; (ii) The ability to face reality and deal with it; (iii) Just as interested in giving as receiving; (iv) The capacity to relate positively to life experiences; (v) The ability to learn more experience; (vi) The ability to accept frustration; (vii) The ability to handle hostility constructively and; (viii) Relative freedom from tension symptoms.

#### **Factors of Emotional Maturity**

Singh and Bhargava (2006) broadly classified emotional maturity as under:

- (i) **Emotional Stability:** It refers to the characteristics of a person which do not allow him to react excessively or given to swings in mood or marked changes in any emotive situation. The emotionally stable person is able to do what is required of him in any given situation. Contrary to it, emotional instability is a tendency to quick changing and unreliable responses and is a factor representing syndrome of irritability, stubbornness, temper tantrums, lack of capacity to dispose of problems and seek help for one's day to day problems.
- (ii) **Emotional Progression:** It is the characteristic of a person that refers to a feeling of adequate advancement and growing vitality of emotions in relation to the environment to ensure a positive thinking imbued with righteousness and contentment, whereas emotional regression is also a broad group of factors representing such syndromes as feeling of inferiority, restlessness, hostility, aggressiveness and self-centeredness.

- (iii) **Social Adjustment:** It refers to a process of interaction between the needs of a person and demands of the social environment in any given situation, so that they can maintain and adapt a desired relationship with environment. Therefore, it may be described as a person's harmonious relationship with his social world. On the other hand, socially maladjusted person shows lack of social adaptability.
- (iv) **Personality Integration:** It is the process of firmly unifying the diverse elements of an individual's motives and dynamic tendencies, resulting in harmonious coactions and de-escalation of the inner conflict (English and English, 1958) in the undaunted expression of behaviour, whereas disintegrated personality includes all those symptoms, like reaction, phobias formation, rationalization, pessimism, immorality etc. Such a person suffers from inferiorities and hence reacts to environment through aggressiveness, destruction and has distorted sense of reality.
- (v) Independence: It is the capacity of a person's attitudinal tendency to be self reliant or of resistance to control by others, where he can take his decisions by his own judgment based on facts by utilizing his intellectual and creative potentialities. He would never like to show any habitual reliance upon another person in making his decisions or carrying out difficult actions, whereas a depended person shows parasitic dependence on other, is erratic and lacks 'objective interests'. People think of him an unreliable person.

Emotions are great motivating forces throughout the span of human life; affecting aspiration; actions and thoughts of an individual. An emotionally mature person is friendly towards others and is less involved in the hostilities and the outbursts of anger and rage, typical of childhood. He is more inspired by pleasure, satisfaction and contentment than ridden with worriers, anxieties and frustrations. An emotionally immature person may not have resolved all situations and factors leading to hostilities, anxieties and frustrations. He is however, perpetually seeing himself in clearer perspective. Consequently, he is continuously involved in a struggle to lead a matured, balanced and healthy emotional life. In brief, a person can be called emotionally mature if he is able to display his emotions in appropriate degree with reasonable control at the appropriate time.

#### **Need and Significance of the Study**

Every child has certain needs such as (i) the need of security and backing of two-parents; (ii) need of love and understanding; (iii) opportunities to express hostilities, antagonisms and aggressiveness so that he may learn what these feelings are like and how to deal with them effectively. Being deprived of satisfying these needs during childhood, the even developmental progress of the child, particularly the emotional and social life is severely affected. Those who are rejected by their parents and who remain in institutions rather than with their real parents are likely to experience deprivation of adequate emotional experiences (Casler, 1961; Provence, 1965; Yarrow, 1961). The kind of deprivation is one emerging out of a feeling of being unwanted, uncared and unattended.

In a home, children living with parents and a few brothers/sisters, who have affectionate understanding of each other, natural regard and good will and who are ready to share with each other duties, responsibilities, hardships and privileges, grow up in an atmosphere of security and happiness and look upon the world as a safe and joyful place to live and its people as friends and sources of gratification. Destitute home children cannot have these numerous experiences. Destituteness itself becomes an anathema to them. As a result, according to Riessman (1962), these children develop a style and learning which runs counter to the life style of other children. They grow in a culturally and educationally non-stimulating home, handicapped by environmental deprivation; the presence of a non-caring and a non-loving mother, tending for maternal deprivation. The child is unloved and rejected by the parents and suffers emotional and social deprivation.

Singh (1986) reported that general condition of the destitute children was not very satisfactory. They fall prey to health hazards on account of meager facilities for prevention, treatment and care of diseases available in destitute homes. Food provided to them does not cater to their needs. Clothes supplied to them are not of their liking. Living conditions are not congenial. Many children have to share the same bed. They are haunted by the idea of failure in life. Curricular and co-curricular programmes are not suited to their needs. They become sad by the behaviour of their teachers. They have to bear harsh treatment, strict discipline, neglect in classroom decision and boring class-work. Need of vocational guidance is extremely felt by a large majority of destitute home children. Hiwot, et al. (2011) concluded that orphan-hood is frequently accompanied with multidimensional problems including prejudice, school services, inadequate food, sexual abuse and others that can further expose children's prospects of completing school. Moreover, the death of one or both parents has a profound and lifelong impact on the psychological well being of children. Children and adolescents in particular are at increased risk for unresolved or complicated bereavement because of their developmental vulnerability and emotional dependency. Padmaj, et al. (2013) found that institutional care has an adverse impact on children leading to poor health outcomes.

Goldfarb (1943, 1949) reported that institutionalized children continue to show social deficiencies in the form of heightened aggression, impulsivity and antisocial behaviour. Casler (1961) suggested that "the physical, intellectual and emotional defects were often observed in individuals deprived of 'mothering' during early infancy". Murlidharan (1961) found that parent-deprived children manifest more problems than the non-deprived ones. Hetherington (1966) found that the boys whose fathers were absent because of divorce, desertion or death were more emotionally dependent on their peers than the other boys. Walters and Stinnett (1971) concluded that parental acceptance, warmth and support were positively related to favourable emotional, social and intellectual development of the children. On the other hand, extreme strictness without acceptance, warmth and love tended to be negatively related to the child's positive self concept, emotional and social development. Kumar and Mehta (1983) showed that the socially deprived children tends to be aggressive, socially withdrawn, depressive and emotionally unstable. Hiremani et al. (1994), Chaudhary and

Bajaj (1995) and Chaudhary and Uppal (1996) reported that institutional children were emotionally insecure, immature and unstable. Kaur (2003) found that there exist a positive relationship between home environment and emotional maturity. Zeanah, et al. (2005), Ford, et al. (2007) and Erol, et al. (2010) found that children in institutional care have greater emotional problems. Palacios, et al. (2013) revealed that the institutionalised children have more social problems than other children.

A cursory look at the number of studies conducted reveals that this area has attracted the attention of researchers. The researches have made clear that institutionalised children are considered as highly deprived class of society. Deprivation of parental care, love, affection, warmth, security, acceptance and discipline during childhood disrupts their normal socio-emotional development. These children are aggressive, impulsive, emotionally unstable, socially withdrawn, depressive, insecure and immature. Hence, it becomes necessary to study whether institutionalised children who are devoid of family life with the emotional warmth adjust to the demands of the environment/society around them. Further, the variables like emotional maturity also play an important part in the development of a child. Therefore it was thought worthwhile to undertake the present problem for investigation.

#### **Studies Related to Emotional Maturity**

Jasbir (2000) studied emotional maturity in relation to environmental factors and found that there exists a significant relationship between emotional maturity and school; home and psychological variables. Kaur (2000) also found significant relationship between emotional maturity, school, home and psychological environment. Further, girls were found to be emotionally more mature than boys.

Kour (2001) found no significant difference between males and females on emotional maturity. The differences in the personality disintegration dimension of emotional maturity among males and females may be due to the fact that males become anxious very soon. Their feeling of insecurity, lack of ability to adjust makes them emotionally immature. They may get annoyed easily by things and people, showing marked dissatisfaction. They get frustrated easily as compared to females, whereas females face the society and strenuous situations rather than running away from it. They have the capacity to withstand delay in satisfaction of needs, ability to tolerate a reasonable amount of frustration, belief in long term planning and are capable of delaying or revising their expectations in terms of demands of the situations. This makes females emotionally mature than males.

Ramokgopa (2001) observed that emotional development includes issues such as attachment, trust, love, security, affection, the concept of self, feelings of autonomy, acting out behaviour and various other emotional feelings

Cahajic, et al. (2003) conducted a study on institutional care of orphans in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They revealed that the children's developmental and emotional needs are not met in institutional care and these institutions limit the children's potential. Further, such children may not adjust to the changes in their

lives, to the extent that they deny the reality of their loss of family life and their emotional needs fail to be met.

Gakhar (2003) conducted a study on emotional maturity of students at secondary stage and reported significant difference in the emotional maturity of boys and girls.

Kaur (2003) found that there exists a positive relationship between home environment and emotional maturity.

Nyambedha, et al. (2003) reported that orphans were more likely to experience problems that could compromise their socio-emotional development as compared to children still living with their parents.

Upadhyay (2003) and Vikrant and Upadhyay (2004) found that boys are emotionally more stable than girls. Similar results were found by Sheema (2005) who reported that female students are emotionally less stable as compared to male students.

Zeanah, et al. (2005) concluded that children in institutional care were found to have greater emotional problems. Han and Choi (2006) observed that children of institutional care feel lonely and are withdrawn emotionally.

Cluver and Gardner (2006) found that orphaned children experienced high levels of peer problems, emotional problems and overall distress as compared to other children.

Dell'aglio and Hutz (2007) revealed that institutionalized children experience multiple emotional problems and have inadequate resources to deal with them effectively, quite often resulting in childhood psychopathology. Depression is one of the psychosocial problems in institutionalized and non-institutionalized children.

Ford, et al. (2007) revealed that children in institutional care were found to have greater emotional problems. Erol, et al. (2010) also found that the children in institutional care have greater emotional problems as compared to children living in parental homes. Similar result was reported by Aguilar, et al. (2011) who revealed that emotional problems are higher in the institutionalized children.

Seggane, et al. (2007) in their study revealed that school going orphans compared to non-orphans reported more dissatisfaction with life and more psychosocial difficulties. Orphans were found to be emotionally needy, insecure, materially deprived; more likely to be exploited/abused/neglected and more of them lived in situations of poverty, big families and hardship. It was further revealed that there were no counsellors in the schools to help the children in difficulty or the teachers or the families. There was a paucity of social support services in the community.

Hunshal and Gaonkar (2008) found that children under institutional care do display poorer health and show poor adjustment levels, high emotional problems, difficulty in social interactions and many other indicators of maladjustment and poor well being.

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Lakshmi and Krishnamurthy (2011) conducted a study on emotional maturity of higher secondary school students of Coimbatore district and found significant difference between male and female students with respect to emotional maturity.

Ptacek, et al. (2011) in their study found that children who live in institutional care face emotional problems and have a feeling that they are emotionally lonely.

Rashee (2012) compared rural and urban senior secondary school students in relation to emotional maturity. It was found that there were no significant differences between rural and urban, male and female, rural male and rural female and urban male and urban female senior secondary school students on emotional maturity.

Jadab, et al. (2013) investigated the emotional maturity of secondary school students and found no significant difference in the emotional maturity level of boys and girls of secondary school level.

Kaur (2013) studied emotional maturity among senior secondary school students of Chandigarh and found no significant difference in the emotional maturity level of boys and girls of senior secondary schools of Chandigarh whereas Malliick, et al. (2014) reported significant difference between male and female higher secondary school students with respect to level of emotional maturity.

Kumar (2014) found a significant correlation between emotional maturity and family relationship.

#### Operational Definitions of the terms used

- Bal/balika Ashram: The institutions established by the government or voluntary agencies as the habitation for the children i.e. orphan, single-parent and two-parent whose guardians/parents are not in a position to afford for their care and development.
- 2 **Parental Home:** The habitat of the parents where the students stay.
- Adolescent: Children between the age of 12-18 years are called adolescents.
- **Emotional Maturity**: Emotional maturity means a balanced personality. It means ability to govern disturbing emotions, show steadiness and endurance under pressure and to be tolerant and free from neurotic tendencies

#### **Objectives of the Study**

- 1 To study the main and interactional effects of gender and inhabitance of adolescent students on overall emotional maturity and its following factors:
  - (i) Emotional Stability.
  - (ii) Emotional Progression.

- (iii) Social Adjustment.
- (iv) Personality Integration.
- (v) Independence.

#### **Hypothesis of the Study**

- 1 There will be significant main and interactional effects of gender and inhabitance of adolescent students on overall emotional maturity and its following factors:
  - (i) Emotional Stability.
  - (ii) Emotional Progression.
  - (iii) Social Adjustment.
  - (iv) Personality Integration.
  - (v) Independence.

#### Sample of the Study

A sample of 360 adolescents (90 maleand 90 female from the bal/balika ashram and 90 male and 90 female from parent home adolescents students) were selected randomly from the state of Himachal Pradesh for the present study.

#### **Tool used**

Emotional Maturity Scale by Dr. Yashvir Singh and Dr. Mahesh Bhargava (2006).

#### **Analysis and Interpretation**

# Comparison of Effects Of Gender And Inhabitance Of Adolescent Students On Overall Emotional Maturity

To compare the effects of gender and inhabitance on overall emotional maturity of adolescent students, 2x2 analysis of variance with two levels of gender i.e. male and female and two levels of inhabitance i.e. bal/balika ashram and parental home, was used.

The mean scores of adolescent students on overall emotional maturity at various levels in 2x2 factorial design are given in Table 1

Table 1

Means (M) at Various Levels for Overall Emotional Maturity

A (Gender)	B (Inhabit	Mean	
	B <sub>1</sub> (Bal/Balika Ashram)	B <sub>2</sub> (Parental Home)	
A <sub>1</sub> (Male)	86.59	79.50	83.05
A <sub>2</sub> (Female)	92.84	84.99	88.92
Mean	89.72	82.25	

The summary of results of analysis of variance for comparing the main and interactional effects of A (gender) and B (inhabitance) on overall emotional maturity is given in Table 2 as under:

Table 2
Summary of Results of Analysis of Variance for Overall Emotional Maturity

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean S <mark>quare</mark>	F
A	3103.47	1	3103.47	21.74*
В	5025.07	1	5025.07	35.20*
AxB	13.23	-1 -1	13.23	0.09
Within	50823.10	356	142.76	
Total	58964.87	359		

<sup>\*</sup>Significant at 0.01 level of confidence

#### **Main Effects**

#### A (Gender)

It is clear from Table 2 that the calculated value of F for the main effect of A (gender) on overall emotional maturity is 21.74. This value is significant at 0.01 level of confidence for 1/356 df. Thus, the hypothesis stated as "Gender of adolescent students will have significant effect on overall emotional maturity", was accepted. This means that there exists a significant difference in overall emotional maturity of male and female adolescent students.

From Table 1, it is evident that the mean score on overall emotional maturity for the male adolescent students is equal to 83.05 whereas it is 88.92 for female adolescent students. The A (gender) mean square corresponds to a comparison between the means of male and female adolescent students. The significant mean square (3103.47) is indicative of the fact that these two means differ significantly. In other words, regardless of the levels of inhabitance, the female adolescent students have significantly higher mean score (88.92) on overall emotional maturity than male adolescent students (83.05).

From the above, it may be inferred that the male adolescent students are emotionally more mature as compared to their female counterparts.

#### **B** (Inhabitance)

Table 2 shows that the F value for the main effect of B (inhabitance) on overall emotional maturity is 35.20 which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence for 1/356 df. In the light of this, the hypothesis stated as "Inhabitance of adolescent students will have significant effect on overall emotional maturity", was retained. This means that the bal/balika ashram and parental home adolescent students differ significantly from each other on overall emotional maturity.

From Table 1, it is evident that the mean score for the bal/balika ashram adolescent students on overall emotional maturity is 89.72 and 82.25 for parental home adolescent students. The B (inhabitance) mean square corresponds to a comparison between the means of bal/balika ashram and parental home adolescent students. The significant mean square (5025.07) indicates that these two means differ significantly. It means, regardless of the levels of gender, bal/balika ashram adolescent students have significantly higher mean score (89.72) on overall emotional maturity than parental home adolescent students (82.25).

Thus, it can be interpreted that emotional maturity is significantly higher among parental home adolescent students in comparison to that of bal/balika ashram adolescent students.

#### **Interactional Effect**

#### **AxB** (Gender x Inhabitance)

Table 2 indicates that the computed value of F for the interaction effect of AxB i.e. (gender x inhabitance) on overall emotional maturity has come out to be 0.09 which is not significant at 0.05 level of confidence for df 1/356. In view of this, the hypothesis stated as "Gender and inhabitance of adolescent students will have significant interaction effect on overall emotional maturity", was rejected.

Hence, it may be interpreted that overall emotional maturity is not affected significantly by the interaction of gender and inhabitance of adolescent students. In other words the effect of gender on overall emotional maturity is the same for both the levels of inhabitance and vice versa.

#### **Discussion of Results**

The male and female adolescent students, irrespective of the levels of inhabitance, exhibit significant differences on overall emotional maturity and it's factors namely emotional progression, social adjustment and personality integration. The male adolescent students are found to be emotionally more mature and progressive. Further, they are found to be socially well adjusted and have well integrated personality as compared to female adolescent students.

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