

## Effect of Type of Family and Gender on Attitude towards Old People among College Students

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### ABSTRACT

The primary aim of the present research was to find out the effect of type of family and gender on attitude towards older people among college students. Further, the study was conducted to find out the effect of type of family (nuclear family and joint family) and gender (male and female) of college students on attitude towards old people and also to find out the interaction effect of type of family versus Gender attitudes towards older people. For this purpose, Kogan's Attitude Toward Old People scale was used to collect the data, and the F ratio and 2x2 factorial research design were used to analyse the data. A total sample comprising 120 various college students from Kolhapur was selected by using the stratified sampling method. The results indicate that there was a significant effect of type of family. There was also a significant effect of the type of family and gender of college students on their attitude towards older people.

**Keywords:** *Attitude Towards Old People, Type of Family, Gender, College Students*

Society's attitude toward older people "Never lose sight of the fact that old age needs so little but needs that little so much," says Margaret Willour. Besides, society needs to keep in mind that respect and attention towards elderly people are the golden rules of our universe: the way you treat others is the way you will be treated in the future.

The previous generation sacrificed the greatest part of their lives to take care of their families. They worked hard not only to earn their living but also to educate their youngsters and financially support their elderly relatives. The status of the elderly in any society very much depends upon how the public views them and is disposed towards them. By public, we mean men and women of all age groups from rural and urban localities. Studies suggest that urbanization, industrialization, and education influence social attitudes towards the elderly (Chang, 1984; Tobin, 1987; Harris & Fielder, 1987; Kimmel, 1988). In the Indian context, the status of the elderly may primarily depend upon the evaluative perceptions of their family members and secondarily on others (Ramamurti & Yamuna, 1984; Yamuna et al., 1986; Reddy, 1990). Thus, the contemporary social status of the elderly depends on how people think and perceive the elderly.

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Indian culture and tradition have always honoured the elderly and given them a respectable place in society. Sociologists and psychologists believe that the position the elderly enjoyed due to the joint family system and the common landholdings of the family. But the breakdown of the joint family system due to urbanization, migration, and partition of common holdings has depleted the economic power and taken away the respect that the elderly enjoyed, accrued to them by virtue of landholdings and joint family. India is passing through the process of urbanization, modernization, and migration. The joint families in the rural areas are fast disappearing. Hence, it would be natural to expect that, because of these changes, the status of the elderly would have gone down. What does the public think about the status of the elderly now? (Dasgupta, Bishnupriya, and Mitra, 2007) Data from rural and urban areas have shown that 80 percent of the respondents believed that, compared to the past, there has been a reduction in the status of the elderly at present. More older people than younger people believed this to be so. Older adults (often defined as 60 years of age and older) in India make significant contributions to society in many ways.

**Family and Social Support:** Grandparents often play a vital role in childcare, allowing parents to work and contribute to the economy. They provide emotional support and stability for younger generations (Kumar, S., 2014). Elders are repositories of knowledge about family history, traditions, and cultural practices. They can pass these down to younger generations, ensuring their preservation. Many older adults offer valuable advice and guidance to younger family members, helping them navigate life decisions and challenges (Hellier, 2014).

**Economic Contributions:** Many older adults continue working past retirement age, contributing their skills and experience to the workforce. They can fill crucial roles requiring specialized knowledge or act as mentors for younger colleagues. Some seniors start their own businesses, becoming entrepreneurs and generating income. Grandparents often provide financial support to their children and grandchildren, helping with education, healthcare, or starting businesses (Sanyal, K., 2012).

**Community Involvement:** Many older adults volunteer their time and skills to various causes, such as social work, education initiatives, or environmental protection. Experienced elders can take on leadership positions in community organizations, providing valuable guidance and promoting positive change (Kundu, A. & Murthy, R. V., 2003).

**Knowledge and Skills:** Elders often possess traditional knowledge and skills in areas like handicraft, agriculture, or medicine. They can pass these skills on to younger generations, ensuring their survival. Older adults can share their knowledge and experiences with younger people through informal settings like storytelling and discussions. But below are some researches shows mixed type of opinions about old age peoples (Kumar, A., 2013).

Dasgupta, Bishnupriya and Mitra (2009) concluded that most of the youths had a ‘negative attitude’ towards older adults (more so the females and the younger group). However, young adults who were staying with older adults on a permanent or occasional basis had a ‘positive attitude’ towards older adults. Youths perceived that older adults ‘willingly’ involved themselves in ‘household activities’, were involved in ‘family decision making’ only ‘sometimes’ and ‘conflicts’ also happened in the family because of them sometimes.

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### ***Significance of the Study:***

After this study, student thought will be more focused on the older people. The parents have no time to spare for the children, and even when at home, they are glued to the Idiot box in preference to spending some time with their kids. These kids grow violent without any knowledge or emotional value of any siblings or other relatives. Wherever the older people are, they take care of the kids, provide them with the input of their experience, knowledge, and emotional value of family, and groom the children. as a good, obedient, and bright child and a law-abiding future citizen. There is an intangible string of emotional attachment among them. When they are happy in the family, they are happy outside and spread happiness to others as well.

### ***Aim of the Study:***

“To study the Effect of Type of family and Gender on Attitude towards old people among College Students”

### ***Objectives of the study:***

- To study the effect of the type of family (nuclear family and joint family) of college students on their attitude towards old people.
- To study the effect of gender (male and female) on the attitude of college students towards old people.
- To find out the interaction effect of type of family and gender on attitude towards old people.

### ***Hypotheses:***

- There is no significant effect of the type of family (nuclear family or joint family) of college students on their attitude towards old people.
- There is no significant effect of gender (male and female) among college students on their attitude towards old people.
- There is no significant interaction effect of type of family and gender on attitude towards old people.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### ***Sample:***

A sample comprising 120 male and female (60) and their status as nuclear family and joint family (60) college students was stratified and selected from various colleges in Kolhapur. The sample of 120 having male and female and nuclear family and joint family ratio 1:1 is taken for this study. Their age range was 20 to 25 years.

### ***Inclusion Criteria:***

Age group between 20 and 25 years old, both male and female college students who enrolled in a college at the time of the study, living in either a nuclear family or a joint family, and present study carried out in colleges located in Kolhapur.

### ***Exclusion Criteria:***

Students with certain medical conditions that could impact the results, existing health conditions that might influence the study, and students with any learning disabilities that might affect participation are excluded.

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### **Psychological Tool:**

The Attitude towards Older People scale was originally developed by Nathan Kogan (1961). It has 34 items and a 5-point scale system for self-reported inventory that assesses attitudes towards older people. 20 items were adapted for this study by the researcher. The attitude towards old people provides an overall summary measure of attitude towards old people. Spearman–Brown reliability coefficients range from 0.66 to 0.83, and inter scale item correlations range from 0.46 to 0.52.

### **Procedure:**

In this study, the data were collected from college students who took part in the sampling group and who had been learning at colleges throughout the 2022–23 academic year. In the application process, it was observed that the responding times of the participants were between 11 and 25 minutes. Before the statistical analyses had been made, the views of the college students were transformed into scores. Then, the arithmetic mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) and the standard deviation (SD) of the scores of the students related to their attitude towards old people were calculated. The F ratio was used to find out the effect of gender and type of family on attitude towards old people among college students.

### **Research Design**

2x2 Factorial research design was used for present study. There were two factors with their two levels each A (Nuclear family and joint family) and B (male and female students).

### **Variables:**

- Independent Variable: A. - Type of family (Nuclear family and joint family)  
B. - Gender (male and female students)
- Dependent variable: Attitude towards old people

### **Statistical tools:**

Appropriate statistical techniques such as means, standard deviation, and F test were used for the analysis of collected data.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

*Table No. 1 Showing the means & SD obtained by the four classified groups of Attitude towards old people*

	I	II	II	IV
	A <sub>1</sub> B <sub>1</sub>	A <sub>1</sub> B <sub>2</sub>	A <sub>2</sub> B <sub>1</sub>	A <sub>2</sub> B <sub>2</sub>
Mean	40.27	49.80	45.93	46.83
SD	7.29	6.55	5.82	4.99
Sample	30	30	30	30

A<sub>1</sub> = Nuclear family, A<sub>2</sub> = Joint family, B<sub>1</sub> = Male & B<sub>2</sub> = Female

The table shows the average (mean) score and standard deviation (SD) for four groups classified by attitude towards old people. The higher the mean score, the more positive the attitude towards older people. For instance, group II (A<sub>1</sub>B<sub>2</sub>) has the most positive attitude, with a mean score of 49.80. Group IV (A<sub>2</sub>B<sub>2</sub>) has the most positive attitude overall (mean score of 46.83). They are classified as females (B<sub>2</sub>) from joint families (A<sub>2</sub>). There seems to be a trend toward more positive attitudes towards elderly people in joint families (A<sub>2</sub>) compared to nuclear families (A<sub>1</sub>). This could be because extended families provide more opportunities for interaction between generations. Men (B<sub>1</sub>) have slightly higher mean

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scores than women (B2) in both family structures. However, the standard deviation is larger for men in both cases, indicating their attitudes are more spread out.

Statistical calculations of the attitude towards old people denote that in all four groups, the distribution of scores was approximately normal. However, it appears that all subjects in the four groups had values based on attitudes towards old people. But it is not possible to draw meaningful conclusions only based on means and standard deviation values. So, the data were treated using a two-way ANOVA. A summary of the two-way ANOVA is presented in Table 2.

**Table No. 2 showing the summary of two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for Attitude towards old people**

Source of variance	Sum of Square	df	Mean Sum of Square	F-Ratio
A (Type of family)	816.41	1	816.41	21.08**
B (Gender)	54.67	1	54.67	1.41
A×B	559.01	1	559.01	14.44**
Within Sum of Square	4491.68	116	38.72	
Total	5921.78	119		

\* Significant level 0.05 and \*\* Significant level 0.01

Table No. 2 summarizes a two-way ANOVA for attitude towards older people and shows that factor A refers to the effect of family type (nuclear or joint) on attitude towards older people. The F-ratio (21.08) is significant at the 0.01 level, which means there is a statistically significant difference in attitude based on family type. A presents two levels of factor A (type of family): nuclear family and joint family. It was assumed that the type of family had a significant effect on attitudes towards older people. So, the first hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) is rejected. From the examination of the mean values, it is clear that joint family college students' attitudes towards old people are more positive than those of nuclear family and college students.

The second factor B refers to the effect of gender (male or female) on attitudes towards older people. The F-ratio (1.41) is not significant, which means there is not a statistically significant difference in attitude based on gender. The second hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) is accepted. AXB refers to the interaction effect between family type and gender. An interaction effect means that the effect of one factor (gender) depends on the level of another factor (family type) and vice versa. The F-ratio (14.44) is significant at the 0.01 level, which means there is a statistically significant interaction effect. The table suggests that family type and the interaction between family type and gender both play a role in shaping attitudes towards older people.

## DISCUSSIONS

People from joint families tend to have more positive attitudes towards old people than people from nuclear families. This could be because extended families provide more opportunities for interaction between generations. The effect of gender on attitudes toward older people depends on family type. There might be a bigger difference in attitudes between men and women in nuclear families compared to joint families.

The significant interaction effect suggests that simply looking at the main effects of family type and gender might not tell the whole story. Gender seems to play a different role in shaping attitudes towards elderly people depending on whether someone comes from a

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nuclear or joint family. Societal norms around gender roles might be stronger in nuclear families. In such cases, men might be expected to be more independent and less likely to rely on elderly family members, leading to less positive views of them. Joint families might provide more opportunities for men to develop closer relationships with grandfathers, uncles, etc., leading to more positive attitudes.

### CONCLUSION

The type of family of college students' affects significantly their attitude towards old people. Gender of college students' does not affect significantly their attitude towards old people. An interaction between type of family and gender significantly affects attitude towards old people.

### Recommendations

Develop educational programs for college students, particularly those from nuclear families, that promote positive attitudes towards the elderly. Volunteering at senior centers, retirement homes, or fostering connections with elderly neighbors. Dispelling stereotypes about aging, discussing the importance of social connections for elderly people, and exploring the benefits of intergenerational relationships. Inviting elderly people to share their experiences and perspectives with students.

College student organizations can take the initiative to bridge the gap between younger and older generations. Organizing social events that bring together students and elderly people from the community. Starting mentoring programs where students can learn from and provide companionship to elderly people. Launching initiatives that promote awareness of elder abuse and neglect. By implementing these recommendations, we can create a more positive and supportive environment for elderly people in our communities.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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