

## Emotional maturity among children residing in orphanages: An Intervention study

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**Abstract:** Influence of an intervention program on emotional maturity among children residing in orphanages was carried out at Urban Bangalore district. The main objectives of the study was to assess the impact of an intervention program on emotional maturity of children residing in orphanages. Self structured questionnaire was developed and administered on a sample of 80 children which consisted of 40 boys and 40 girls, between the age group of 9-12 years. A module of an intervention program consisting of 24 sessions was developed by the researcher and executed for the experimental group of respondents for a period of 3 months separately for boys and girls in the selected orphanages. The statistical analysis was carried out by applying percentage, standard deviation, mean, chi square and paired 't' test. The findings revealed that, majority of boys and girls were non-orphans (presence of parents but living in orphanages) and were second borns category. Further, the results showed in post-test the overall mean score percentage found to be higher as compared to pre-test mean score which is significant at 5% level which showed the influence of an intervention program. In all the dimensions of emotional maturity the 't' values found to be statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) among both boys and girls. During the post-test both boys and girls showed a higher score on the level of emotional maturity as compared to pre-test scores, the obtained chi-square value (98.62) found to be highly significant.

**Key Words:** Emotional Maturity, Dimensions, Orphanage, Children.

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Children are the wealth and future of a nation, it is imperative to seek ways and means to make this development rich and healthy, so that one have a mature adult, drawing upon their potential to build a strong and wealthy nation. In order to achieve this, one must lay the foundations in the early years. Parents, teachers, care takers and other adults play a vital role, in providing an atmosphere conducive to the well-being and healthy development of children. The child learns and masters skills, develops attitudes and beliefs and becomes a social member of his group. Parents, care takers and teachers can help only when they are equipped with information and knowledge about the needs and requirements of children.

One should try to find out whether the prolonged stay in the orphanage affect the outcome of children in terms of emotional maturity. Emotional maturity is one's ability to understand and manage their emotions. It enables one to create the life as they desire. A life filled with happiness and fulfillment. Emotionally mature will define success in their own terms, not society's and they strive to achieve it.

Children may enter residential care after being separated from their families due to various reasons and certain natural disasters. In emergencies such as these, parents may also place their children in an orphanage so their immediate needs food, shelter, or medical care are met. One has to help the children in their maturity of emotions to behave in most socially accepted manner without inhibiting the emotions. It involves internal control of emotions rather than external control.

### 2. DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL MATURITY:

**The ability to deal constructively with reality/ situations:** To deal with reality in a constructive manner, one must face truth, the facts, rather than deny them. Running from problems or hoping they do not exist does not make them go away. Regardless of how unpleasant they may be at times, facing the facts is the first step to dealing with any situation. When children have difficulty facing reality, they resort to all sorts of unhealthy ways to deal with the unpleasant feelings and pain. There are healthy and constructive ways to cope that lead to greater emotional maturity and growth. It may not be the easiest path to take, but it leads to healing, lasting comfort and hope.

**The capacity to adapt to change:** Change is not always easy. It can turn our world upside down at times and cause a great deal of stress. Whether the change is minor, like having to change our plans for the day, or more significant, such as moving to a new home, changing jobs, getting married or divorced, adapting to change is to make necessary

adjustments. Sometimes the most important adjustment is in our attitude. Change can annoy us as it disrupts our routine and expectations, but we can choose to accept it and allow ourselves time to get comfortable with change.

**A relative freedom from symptoms that are produced by tensions and anxieties:** The symptoms produced from tensions and anxieties can include physical distress (headaches, stomach problems, rapid heart rate) and emotional distress (worry, restlessness, panic). Anxiety is a major mental health problem affecting millions of people every day. It negatively affects all levels of people's lives, their mental and physical health, relationships. To live free of its destructive symptoms and consequences is to cope with life stress in a healthy manner, learn to relax, release worries and develop inner peace.

**The capacity to find more satisfaction in giving than receiving:** Children who give of themselves, their time, attention, help, finances, or what they are able are generally more fulfilled and happy than those who do not. Children who are primarily takers are more likely to use others for their own personal gain and are often considered selfish, stingy, and/or greedy. Like the old scrooge, they end up miserable. Givers, on the other hand, want to contribute and make a positive difference in this world. It is healthy to give cheerfully and willingly as it contributes to our sense of purpose and helps us connect with others and our society.

**The capacity to relate to other people in a consistent manner with mutual satisfaction and helpfulness:** Like always said, life is all about relationships. Relate to others every single day whether it is a relative, co-worker, neighbour, or stranger; our lives are intertwined with others. Love and respect are two key factors to relating successfully to others. Unlike dysfunctional relationships, healthy relationships are stable and provide deep satisfaction and joy.

**The capacity to sublimate; to direct one's instinctive hostile energy into creative and constructive outlets:** If one were to release all their frustrations and anger on the world, they would have a hostile existence. Instead, they can take that energy and direct it into something good and productive. It has long been said that sports is a great outlet of extra energy. Anything that is positive, constructive and creative can redirect our energies and put them to good use.

**The capacity to love:** Love is the greatest power in the world. As humans, everyone are born with the capacity to love. Happy and loving relationships are the most effective ways to communicate love that will improve relationships and help a child to grow in the power and capacity to love.

Prolonged stay in an orphanage the child may experience trauma in terms of losing one's birth family and it can lead to traumatic condition to the child's life. Scientists have opined that trauma does indeed change a person's brain neurochemistry. These changes can cause a host of difficulties for the child. They include: difficulty with emotions, being easily overwhelmed, hyper-vigilance, overwhelming anxiety, disassociation, volatility, hyperactivity, impaired cognition and reasoning skills, depression, sense of hopelessness. Children might have suffered abuse of some kind means the abuse could take the form of emotionally damaging words, physical hitting and beating, being tied into beds, and sexual abuse by either caregivers or by other children. Children might have also suffered from extreme neglect, this may result in extreme malnourishment, extremely low muscle tone, and extremely delayed development. Neglect from having even the most basic of needs met can cause physical problems.

In the light of the above discussion an attempt was made to assess the level of emotional maturity of children and a module of an intervention program was developed and executed for the children in selected orphanages to enhance their emotional maturity.

### 3. OBJECTIVES:

- To study the level of emotional maturity among boys and girls.
- To study the emotional maturity of children with respect to seven dimensions viz. ability to deal, adapt to change, freedom from symptoms of tensions, satisfaction in giving, relate to others, capacity to sublimate and capacity to love.
- To develop a module of an intervention program to enhance the emotional maturity of children.
- *To study the influence of intervention program;*
  - a) On the overall mean score of children on emotional maturity.
  - b) Among boys in the seven dimensions of emotional maturity.
  - c) Among girls in the seven dimensions of emotional maturity.
  - d) Among children on the overall score in the seven dimensions of emotional maturity.

### 4. HYPOTHESIS:

- The developed module of an intervention program will have a significant influence on the level of emotional maturity of children.

- There is a significant difference in emotional maturity among boys and girls with respect to seven dimensions viz. ability to deal, adapt to change, freedom from symptoms of tensions, satisfaction in giving, relate to others, capacity to sublimate and capacity to love.
- *There exist an influence of an intervention program;*
  - a) On the overall mean score of children on emotional maturity.
  - b) Among boys in the seven dimensions of emotional maturity.
  - c) Among girls in the seven dimensions of emotional maturity.
  - d) On the overall mean score of children in the seven dimensions of emotional maturity.

**Selection of sample and sampling technique:**

- Purposive random sampling technique was adopted. The sample were drawn from the two orphanages catering to boys and girls separately at Urban Bangalore District.
- A total number of 80 children between the age group of 9-12 years of which 40 boys and 40 girls residing in orphanages were selected for the experimental group.

**Tool:**

A questionnaire was developed by the investigator to know the demographic details and to assess the emotional maturity of children with respect to seven dimensions; ability to deal, adapt to change, freedom from symptoms of tensions, satisfaction in giving, relate to others, capacity to sublimate and capacity to love, which consisted of 69 statements with 4 point rating scale.

**Procedure:**

Two orphanages catering separately to boys and girls between the age group of 9-12 years at Urban Bangalore district was identified and an official permission was taken by the administrators of the orphanages to conduct the program explaining its significance. The developed questionnaire was first administered to 80 experimental groups of respondents to study the level of emotional maturity among children (pre test). A module of an intervention program was developed to enhance the emotional maturity among children.

The researcher conducted an intervention program for a period of 3 months, twice a week and each session consisted of two hours duration focusing on various life skills i.e. emotional balance, positive thinking, coping with anger and verbal abuse, coping with fear, coping with failure, coping with depression, stress and management of stress etc to improve their emotional maturity. After the completion of the program leaving a gap of one month the same tool was administered to the children (post test). The dully filled questionnaire was collected and subjected to statistical analysis to study the impact of an intervention.

**5. DISCUSSION AND RESULT:**

The data was tabulated and statistically analyzed by applying percentage, Chi square, Mean, Standard Deviation and ‘Paired ‘t’ test.

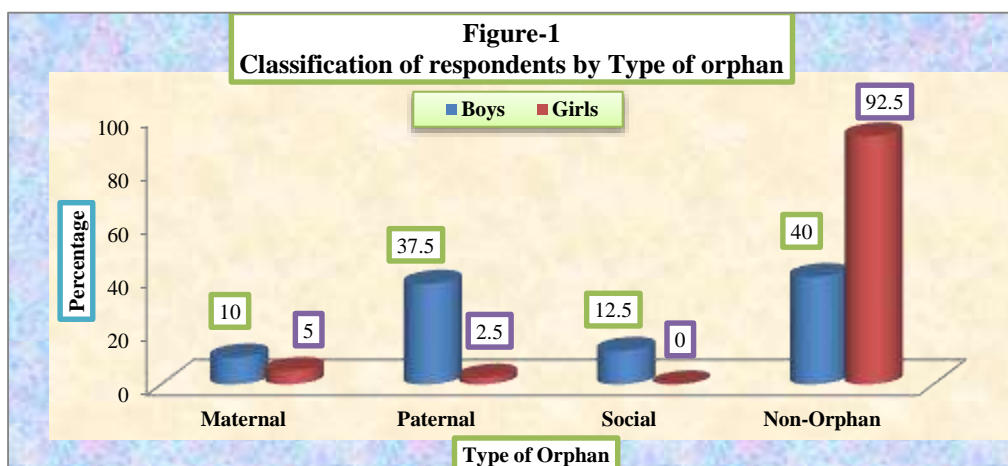


Figure-1 indicates the classification of respondents by type of orphan.

In the study children living in orphanages have been classified into 4 categories. Maternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost their mother and paternal orphan is referred to a child who has lost their father, social orphans are children who are living without parents because of abandonment or their parents gave them up as a result of poverty,

alcoholism or imprisonment, etc., non - orphans are referred to a child who is having both the parents but due to poverty parents have left their children in the orphanages.

As shown in Figure-1, a higher percentage of boys (40%) belonged to non-orphan category followed by 37.50 percent of them were paternal orphans, 12.50 percent of them belonged to social orphan category and only 10 percent of them were maternal orphans.

With regard to girls 92.50 percent of them were non-orphans, 5 percent of them belong to maternal orphan category, 2.50 percent of them were paternal orphans and none of them belonged to social orphan category.

Figure-2 represents the data regarding the ordinal position of the respondents. A higher percentage of boys and girls (36.20%) were second born, whereas 33.80 per cent of them were 1st born, 17.50 percent of them were 3rd born and 12.50 percent of them were 4th born.

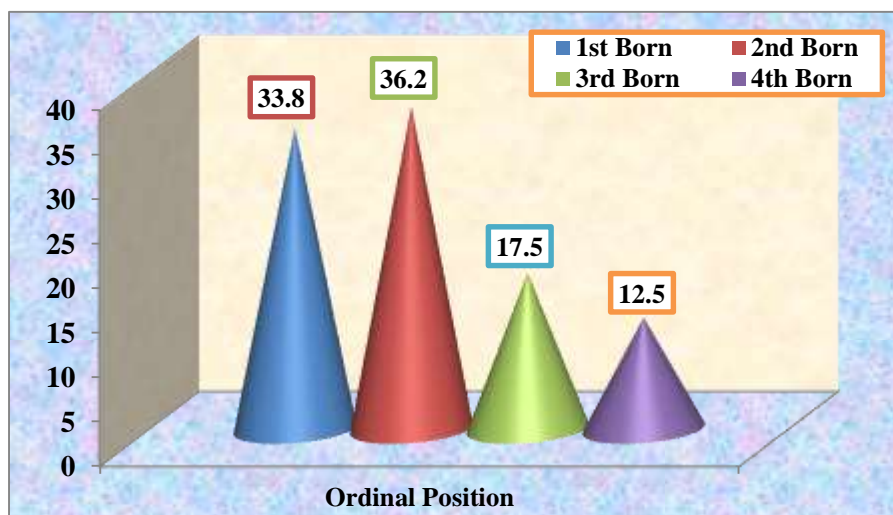


Figure-2 represents the data regarding the ordinal position of the respondents

Table 1 indicates the classification of respondents on the level of emotional maturity during pre and post test.

**Table – 1**  
**Classification of respondents on pre and post-test on the level of emotional maturity**

Gender	Emotional Maturity	Classification of Respondents				$\chi^2$ Value
		Pre-test		Post-test		
		N	%	N	%	
Boys (n=40)	Low	18	45.00	00	0.00	<b>42.95*</b>
	Moderate	22	55.00	16	40.00	
	High	00	0.00	24	60.00	
Girls (n=40)	Low	05	12.50	00	0.00	<b>62.50*</b>
	Moderate	35	87.50	05	12.50	
	High	00	0.00	35	87.50	
Combined (n=80)	Low	23	28.80	00	0.00	<b>98.62*</b>
	Moderate	57	71.20	21	26.20	
	High	00	0.00	59	73.70	

\* Significant at 5% level,  $\chi^2 (0.05, 2df) = 5.991$

It was hypothesized that there will be an improvement in the level of emotional maturity of the experimental group of respondents after participation in an intervention program. As noticed in table 1, in pre-test, majority of boys (55.00%) had moderate level of emotional maturity, 45.00 percent of them had low level of maturity. Whereas, in post-test majority of boys (60.00%) had high level of emotional maturity and 40 percent of them had moderate level with no respondent left at the low level. There is an association between different levels of emotional maturity and performance from pre to post test among respondents. The obtained chi-square value of 42.95 was found to be significant beyond 5 percent level.

Among girls, in pre-test a higher percentage of them (87.50%) had moderate level of emotional maturity and only 12.50 percent of them had low level. Whereas, during post-test, 87.50 percent of them had high level of maturity

and 12.50 percent of them had moderate level with no respondent left at the low level. The chi-square value is found to 62.50 and is significant beyond 5 percent level.

Combined results show that as compared to pre-test, after the intervention program majority of respondents (73.70%) had high level of emotional maturity and 26.20 percent of them had moderate level. The chi-square value was significant for association between pre – post test performance and different levels of emotional maturity for both boys and girls. The obtained chi-square value is 98.62 which is significant beyond 5 percent level thereby accepting the hypothesis set for the study.

Table -2 shows the pre and post test scores of boys and girls on overall perception of emotional maturity. It was hypothesized that there exist an influence of an intervention program on the overall mean score of respondents on emotional maturity.

**Table –2**  
**Pre and post-test overall mean scores of respondents on emotional maturity**

**N=80**

Sample (n)	Aspects	Emotional Maturity Scores				Paired 't' Test
		Mean	SD	Mean (%)	SD (%)	
Boys (n=40)	Pre-test	114.63	24.70	55.40	12.00	<b>11.50*</b>
	Post-test	168.43	11.80	81.40	5.70	
	Enhancement	53.80	29.50	26.00	14.30	
Girls (n=40)	Pre-test	129.20	14.40	62.40	7.00	<b>16.98*</b>
	Post-test	178.75	10.70	86.40	5.20	
	Enhancement	49.60	18.50	23.90	8.90	
Combined (n=80)	Pre-test	121.91	21.10	58.90	10.20	<b>19.11*</b>
	Post-test	173.59	12.40	83.90	6.00	
	Enhancement	51.68	24.30	25.00	11.70	

\* Significant at 5% level, **t (0.05,39df) = 1.96, Maximum Score =198**

The results showed that, among boys the mean score percentage was found to be higher in post-test (81.40%) as compared to pre-test mean score percentage (55.40). The mean value of enhancement was 26.00. The obtained 't' value was found to be significant beyond 5 percent level (t=11.50\*, p<0.05).

The mean score percentage of girls during pre-test was 62.40 and during post-test the mean score was increased to 86.40. There was enhancement in mean score by 23.90. The 't' value was found to be 16.98 and was significant beyond 5 percent level. Even here, the individual difference in both the groups is reduced during post test. The initial score of girls is more than that of boys and the enhancement after an intervention is more for boys.

Combined results shows an increase in overall mean score percentage in post-test to 83.90 as compared to pre-test mean score 58.90. The gain is similar for both boys and girls as the raise is 25.00 and the 't' value found to be 19.11 which is significant beyond 5 percent level. The enhancement in score is more for boys and the individual differences in score is remarkably reduced during post test as indicated by the standard deviation. The results showed the impact of educational program on the overall score of emotional maturity of boys and girls by accepting the hypothesis set for the study.

The scores on different dimensions of emotional maturity classified for the study with regard to pre and post test for boys and girls are given in table 3 and 4.

**Table –3**  
**Dimension wise mean pre and post-test scores on emotional maturity among boys**

**N = 40**

Dimensions	Respondents (%)						Paired 't' Test
	Pre-test		Post-test		Enhancement		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Ability to deal	55.70	14.8	82.50	7.5	26.80	17.5	9.69*
Adapt to exchange	55.70	14.1	79.90	8.2	24.20	14.7	10.41*
Freedom from symptoms of tensions	55.10	15.6	80.10	6.1	25.10	17.2	9.23*
Satisfaction in giving	53.50	15.7	81.70	8.8	28.10	18.5	9.61*
Relate to others	55.30	11.2	81.10	7.4	25.80	14.7	11.10*

To sublimate	55.20	15.1	81.70	10.2	26.50	20.2	8.29*
Capacity to love	55.20	19.0	83.30	10.9	28.10	20.9	8.50*

\* Significant at 5% level,  $t(0.05,39df) = 1.96$

**Table – 4**  
**Dimension wise mean pre and post-test scores on emotional maturity among girls**

N = 40

Dimensions	Respondents (%)						Paired 't' Test
	Pre-test		Post-test		Enhancement		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Ability to deal	63.20	11.8	85.20	7.4	22.00	14.6	9.53*
Adapt to change	62.10	10.1	88.30	7.0	26.10	12.7	13.00*
Freedom from symptoms of tensions	59.70	8.9	82.90	6.9	23.30	13.0	11.34*
Satisfaction in giving	64.20	11.9	88.10	7.4	24.00	13.9	10.92*
Relate to others	60.90	10.0	86.30	7.1	25.30	11.6	13.79*
To sublimate	62.50	12.7	87.50	7.2	25.00	15.1	10.47*
Capacity to love	65.40	11.4	89.30	8.9	23.90	15.4	9.82*

\* Significant at 5% level,  $t(0.05,39df) = 1.96$

Table 3 shows the effect of an intervention program on different dimensions of emotional maturity among boys. In all the seven dimensions of emotional maturity i.e., ability to deal, adapt to change, freedom from symptoms of tensions, satisfaction in giving, relate to others, capacity to sublimate and capacity to love, the mean score percentage is increased in post-test after an intervention program as compared to the pre test score. The 't' values on all the dimensions showed the statistically significant increase beyond 5 percent level ( $p < 0.05$ ).

In case of girls also compared to the pre-test, the mean score percentage was increased in post-test after an intervention program. The 't' values in all the dimensions showed the statistically significant increase beyond 5 percent level ( $p < 0.05$ ) as shown in Table 4.

The hypothesis stated that the educational program increases the scores on various dimensions of emotional maturity was accepted. An increase in scores on all the dimensions assessed on emotional maturity was noticed from 22 to 28 per cent, due to the effect of educational program on the experimental group of respondents.

The pre and post test scores of the respondents on the various dimensions of emotional maturity has been described in Table 5. It was hypothesized that there exist an influence of an intervention program among respondents in the nine dimensions of emotional maturity.

**Table – 5**  
**Dimension wise mean pre and post-test scores on emotional maturity among respondents.**

N = 80

Dimensions	Respondents (%)						Paired 't' Test
	Pre test		Post test		Enhancement		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Ability to deal	59.40	13.8	83.80	7.6	24.40	16.2	13.47*
Adapt to change	58.90	12.5	84.10	8.7	25.20	13.6	16.57*
Freedom from symptoms of tensions	57.40	12.9	81.50	6.7	24.20	15.2	14.24*
Satisfaction in giving	58.90	14.8	84.90	8.7	26.00	16.3	14.27*
Relate to others	58.10	10.8	83.70	7.7	25.60	13.1	17.48*
To sublimate	58.90	13.5	84.60	9.3	25.70	16.9	13.60*
Capacity to love	60.30	15.9	86.30	10.4	26.00	18.0	12.92*

\* Significant at 5% level,  $t(0.05,79df) = 1.96$

A cursory glance at the table shows that in all the dimensions of emotional maturity the 't' test found to be statistically significant beyond 5 % level there by accepting the hypothesis postulated for the study.

In the first dimension of ability to deal with, the mean score has increased from 59.40 to 83.80 from pre to post test with an enhancement score of 24.40. The 't' test value was 13.47 and significant beyond 5 percent level. In the case of adapt to change dimension, the score has increased from 58.90 to 84.10 from pre to post test. The enhancement was 25.20. The calculated 't' ratio was found to be 16.57 and was significant beyond 5 percent level. In the dimension of

freedom from symptoms of tension, the score increased from 57.40 to 81.50 from pre to post test. The enhancement was 24.20. The 't' value of 14.24 was found to be significant beyond 5 percent level.

In the area of satisfaction in giving the respondents mean score was found to be 84.90 during post-test when compared to pre-test score of 58.90. The enhancement was 26.00. The obtained 't' value of 14.27 was found to be significant beyond 5 percent level. In the relate to others domain of emotional maturity, the score has increased from 58.10 to 83.70 from pre to post test. The enhancement was 25.60. The 't' value was found to be 17.48 and was significant at 5 percent level. In case of capacity to sublimate dimension the respondents mean score was found to be 84.60 during post-test when compared to pre-test score of 58.90. The enhancement was 25.70. The obtained 't' value of 13.60 was found to be significant beyond 5 percent level. In the area of capacity to love the respondents mean score was found to be 86.30 during post-test when compared to pre-test score of 60.30. The enhancement was 26.00. The obtained 't' value of 12.92 was found to be significant beyond 5 percent level.

The findings of the study are in line with the study conducted by Richter et al., (2004) stated that school plays a vital role for better chance of providing learners with an opportunity to acquire life orientation skills. The school curriculum should therefore be directly relevant to children's lives by embedding life skills in the curriculum, household management, as well as focusing on health care.

## 6. CONCLUSION:

The findings revealed that, in post-test the overall mean score percentage of respondents found to be higher as compared to pre-test mean score and also in all the dimensions of emotional maturity enhancement in mean score was found in both boys and girls which showed the influence of an educational program. During the post-test both boys and girls showed a higher score on the level of emotional maturity as compared to pre-test scores. This shows an improvement in the level of emotional maturity among respondents.

Children exposing to an intervention program and participation in various activities which enhanced their emotional state of mind. Teaching various life skills which enabled them to understand their mind through participating in various activities, children get to know how to react towards negative emotions and helped them to balance their emotions, leading to positive attitude towards their life.

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