

# A Study on Social Maturity of Higher Secondary School Students in Relation to Some Demographic Variables

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## Abstract

The present study investigates the level of social maturation among higher secondary school students in relation to selected demographic variables within the Udaipur subdivision of Tripura. Employing the descriptive survey method, a sample of 100 students was purposively selected to represent four demographic factors: gender, type of family, number of siblings, and mother's occupation. The objective was to assess whether these variables significantly influence the development of social maturity during adolescence. Standardized tools were administered to collect data, and appropriate statistical techniques were applied for analysis. The findings revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in social maturity scores across the categories of gender, family type, number of sibling, and mother's occupation. These results suggest that social maturation among adolescents in this region may be shaped more by broader social, emotional, or environmental influences than by the selected demographic variables. The study offers insights for educators and policymakers aiming to support holistic adolescent development, regardless of family background, gender, number of sibling and mother's occupation.

**Keywords:** Social Maturity, Demographic Variables

## INTRODUCTION

Social maturity is a multidimensional construct that refers to an individual's ability to behave in a socially responsible and adaptive manner within the norms of society. It encompasses emotional regulation, interpersonal competence, social responsibility, and decision-making skills that allow a person to function effectively in personal, academic, and professional contexts (Mangal, 2007). Social maturity is particularly crucial during adolescence - a transitional phase characterized by the formation of identity, values, and interpersonal relationships (Chauhan, 2002). Over the years, researchers have attempted to identify the predictors and correlates of social maturity. Among the key areas of focus are demographic variables, which are believed to shape an individual's social behavior from early childhood to adolescence. For example, gender has often been explored as a significant factor. Studies by Rani and Kaur (2016) and Sharma (2012) have shown that girls tend to exhibit higher levels of social maturity than boys, possibly due to gender-specific socialization practices that emphasize empathy and cooperation in females. Similarly, family structure - whether joint or nuclear - has been studied in relation to social development. Yadav and Yadav (2014) observed that children from joint families often

demonstrate greater social maturity, likely due to their regular interaction with extended family members which enhances their communication, responsibility, and adjustment skills. In contrast, Kaur and Kaur (2011) found no significant difference, suggesting that the influence of family structure may be diminishing in contemporary society where external environments such as school and media play a dominant role. The number of siblings is another demographic variable that has drawn attention. It is assumed that having more siblings provides more opportunities for social interaction, negotiation, and conflict resolution. Rani and Kaur (2016) noted that children with multiple siblings showed higher social maturity scores compared to only children. However, this view is contested by Sharma (2012), who found negligible differences, arguing that quality of interaction may be more important than quantity. Parental occupation, especially the mother's employment status, has also been linked with social development. Singh and Kaur (2013) reported that children of working mothers tend to develop independence and responsibility early, thus showing higher levels of social maturity. Conversely, Kaur and Kaur (2011) argued that maternal employment may also lead to reduced supervision, which can negatively affect social learning. These conflicting results indicate that the impact of maternal occupation may depend on contextual factors such as parenting style, time management, and quality of mother-child interaction. Despite the growing literature, the findings across studies remain inconclusive and sometimes contradictory. Some researchers report strong associations between demographic factors and social maturity, while others find no significant differences (Sharma, 2012; Kaur & Kaur, 2011; Yadav & Yadav, 2014). These inconsistencies underline the need for further empirical investigation, particularly in diverse socio-cultural contexts where family roles and gender norms are rapidly evolving due to modernization and digitalization. In this context, the present study aims to assess the level of social maturity among adolescents in relation to selected demographic variables - gender, family structure, number of siblings, and mother's occupation - using inferential statistical techniques. The objective is to determine whether these variables significantly influence social maturity, and thereby to contribute to the existing body of knowledge that can inform both educational practice and family policy.

### **Justification of the Study**

In an era marked by rapid social transformation, understanding how adolescents develop social maturity is more important than ever. Social maturity, broadly defined as the ability to engage in responsible interpersonal behavior, is foundational for emotional wellbeing, academic success, and long-term civic engagement (Goldstein, 1995). Adolescents today are influenced not only by traditional family structures but also by changing gender roles, evolving parenting models, and increased exposure to media and digital environments - all of which call for a re-evaluation of the classical demographic determinants of social development. Numerous studies have examined the relationship between demographic variables and social maturity, yet findings remain inconsistent or context-specific. For example, Steinberg and Silk (2002) highlighted that while gender-based socialization patterns are evident in early childhood, their influence on adolescent social behavior is diminishing due to shifting societal norms. In contrast, Joshi and MacLean (2009) found that gender still plays a significant role in shaping social attitudes and emotional control during adolescence, especially in traditional cultural settings. With regard to family structure, Hetherington and Clingempeel (1992) argued that children from extended or joint families often benefit from richer social learning environments. However, Amato and Keith (1991), in their meta-analysis, found minimal differences in social outcomes between children

of nuclear and joint families, suggesting that quality of parenting may outweigh structure. The number of siblings is another variable that has produced mixed results. While Downey and Condron (2004) reported that only children may sometimes lag in social skill development due to lack of sibling interaction, Falbo and Polit (1986) demonstrated that only children can also develop high levels of maturity due to greater parental attention and adult modeling. The mother's occupation - a factor gaining increasing attention - has also been studied in relation to adolescent development. Parcel and Menaghan (1994) suggested that maternal employment may foster responsibility and self-reliance in children. However, Bianchi (2000) noted that time constraints faced by working mothers may reduce the quality of direct interaction, which could impact social-emotional learning. These contradictions and cultural variations suggest that the influence of demographic variables on social maturity is far from uniform and must be studied within specific cultural and temporal contexts. In India, where the family continues to be a strong socio-cultural unit, and where gender roles and parental occupations are evolving rapidly, it becomes critical to reassess how these variables interact with adolescent social development. Thus, this study is justified on the grounds that it fills a research gap by investigating the influence of gender, family structure, number of siblings, and mother's occupation on social maturity, using empirical inferential methods in the Indian context. It not only contributes to the existing body of literature but also provides evidence-based insights that can inform educational programs, parental guidance strategies, and policy-level interventions aimed at fostering socially competent youth.

### Objectives of the study

1. To study the level of Social Maturity of secondary school students at Udaipur sub-division of Gomati district.
2. To compare the Social Maturity of secondary school students at Udaipur sub-division on the basis of gender.
3. To compare the Social Maturity of secondary school students at Udaipur sub-division on the basis of type of family.
4. To compare the Social Maturity of secondary school students at Udaipur sub-division on the basis of sibling.
5. To compare the Social Maturity of secondary school students at Udaipur sub-division on the basis of mother's occupation.

### Hypotheses of the study

**H01:** There is no significant difference in Social Maturity between male and female secondary school students at Udaipur sub-division.

**H02:** There is no significant difference between the students belonging to joint and nuclear families in regard to their Social Maturity.

**H03:** There is no significant difference between the students with siblings and with no siblings in regard to their Social Maturity.

**H04:** There is no significant difference between the students belonging to working and non-working mothers in regard to their Social Maturity.

### Variables of the study

	Gender	Male students
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<b>Independent Variables</b>		Female students
	Type of family	Joint families
		Nuclear families
	Sibling	With siblings
		With no siblings
	Mother's occupation	Working mothers
		Non-working mothers
<b>Dependent Variables</b>	Social Maturity	

## Methodology

According to the nature of research structure, descriptive survey method was used.

## Sample and Sampling

The students of secondary schools were selected as sample. For selection of sample 4 schools from Udaipur sub-division were selected by randomly. After selecting schools, 100 samples were chosen on the basis of four different aspects (gender, type of family, sibling and mother's occupation) by stratify random sampling process to fulfill the objectives of the study.

## Tools used

Social Maturity Scale (SMS-RN) by Nalini Rao was used.

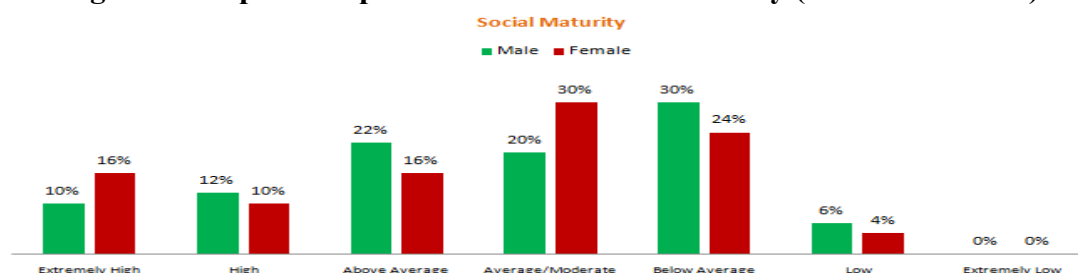
## Analysis and Interpretation of Data

### Objective 1

**Table 1 Social Maturity of male and female learners.**

SL. NO.	Range of Z - Score	Level of Social Maturity	Male		Female	
			No's	Percentage	No's	Percentage
01	+2.01 and above	Extremely High	5	10%	8	16%
02	+1.26 to + 2.00	High	6	12%	5	10%
03	+0.51 to +1.25	Above Average	11	22%	8	16%
04	-0.50 to +0.50	Average/Moderate	10	20%	15	30%
05	-0.50 to -1.25	Below Average	15	30%	12	24%
06	-1.25 to -2.00	Low	3	6%	2	4%
07	-2.01 and below	Extremely Low	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Total</b>			<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 1 Graphical representation of Social Maturity (male and female)**

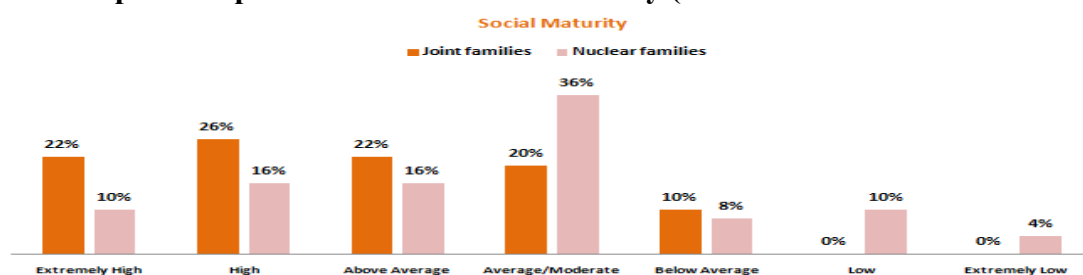


**Interpretation:** - From table no. 1 and figure no. 1, it can be observed that when an attempt is made to measure the level of social maturity among students based on gender using a seven-point scale, male and female students exhibit different scores across various levels of the scale. For instance, at the extremely High level, girls show higher scores, whereas at the high and above average levels of social maturity, boys are ahead of girls. At the other levels as well, boys and girls show varied positions. However, it is clear that no student, either male or female, falls under the extremely low category. It means, there is no student who entirely lacks social maturity. It is important to note that those scoring higher on the upper end of the scale reflect a positive aspect, while those scoring high under the below average, low, and extremely low levels are lagging behind others in terms of social maturity.

**Table 2 Social Maturity of joint and nuclear families.**

SL. NO.	Range of Z Score	Level of Social Maturity	Joint families		Nuclear families	
			No's	Percentage	No's	Percentage
01	+2.01 and above	Extremely High	11	22%	5	10%
02	+1.26 to + 2.00	High	13	26%	8	16%
03	+0.51 to +1.25	Above Average	11	22%	8	16%
04	-0.50 to +0.50	Average/Moderate	10	20%	18	36%
05	-0.50 to -1.25	Below Average	5	10%	4	8%
06	-1.25 to -2.00	Low	0	0%	5	10%
07	-2.01 and below	Extremely Low	0	0%	2	4%
Total			50	100%	50	100%

**Figure 2 Graphical representation of Social Maturity (Joint families and Nuclear families)**



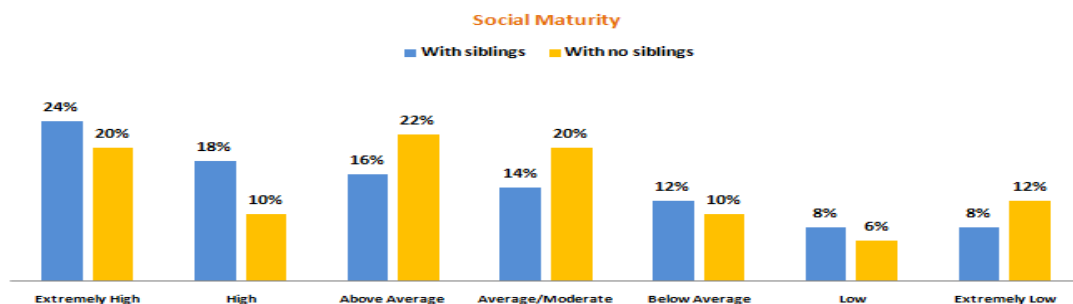
**Interpretation:** - When data regarding the level of social maturity was collected based on family structure, as presented in Table 2 and figure 2, it clearly reveals that students from joint families scored significantly higher than those from nuclear families in the categories of extremely high, high, and above average level of social maturity. In contrast, at the average level of social maturity, students from nuclear families showed a higher concentration. On the other hand, in the lower categories - below average, low, and extremely low, students from joint families do not hold any significant presence. This undoubtedly reflects a positive aspect for students belonging to joint families.

**Table 3 Social Maturity of learners with siblings and with no siblings.**

SL. NO.	Range of z-Score	Level of Social Maturity	With siblings		With no siblings	
			No's	Percentage	No's	Percentage
01	+2.01 and above	Extremely High	12	24%	10	20%

02	+1.26 to + 2.00	High	9	18%	5	10%
03	+0.51 to +1.25	Above Average	8	16%	11	22%
04	-0.50 to +0.50	Average/Moderate	7	14%	10	20%
05	-0.50 to -1.25	Below Average	6	12%	5	10%
06	-1.25 to -2.00	Low	4	8%	3	6%
07	-2.01 and below	Extremely Low	4	8%	6	12%
Total			50	100%	50	100%

**Figure 3 Graphical representation of Social Maturity (with siblings and with no siblings)**

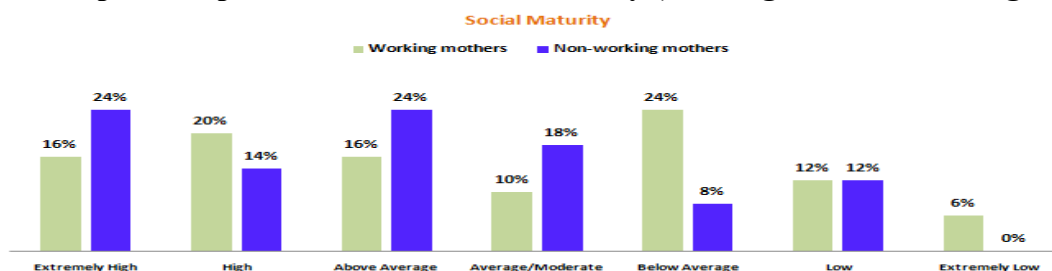


**Interpretation:** - From table number 3 and figure number 3, we can observe that when the presence of siblings is considered as a determining factor in measuring students' level of social maturity, the data indicates that students who have siblings score comparatively higher in the extremely high and high levels of social maturity than those who do not have siblings. On the other hand, in the above average and average level of social maturity, students without siblings tend to score higher. This pattern of fluctuations in scores continues across the subsequent levels as well, which is quite significant.

**Table 4 Social Maturity of learners with working and non-working mothers.**

SL. NO.	Range of z-Score	Level of Social Maturity	Working mothers		Non-working mothers	
			No's	Percentage	No's	Percentage
01	+2.01 and above	Extremely High	8	16%	12	24%
02	+1.26 to + 2.00	High	10	20%	7	14%
03	+0.51 to +1.25	Above Average	8	16%	12	24%
04	-0.50 to +0.50	Average/Moderate	5	10%	9	18%
05	-0.50 to -1.25	Below Average	12	24%	4	8%
06	-1.25 to -2.00	Low	6	12%	6	12%
07	-2.01 and below	Extremely Low	3	6%	0	0%
Total			50	100%	50	100%

**Figure 4 Graphical representation of Social Maturity (working and non-working mothers)**



**Interpretation:** - From table number 4 and figure number 4, we can observe that when the mother's engagement in work outside the household is considered as a determining factor in measuring students' level of social maturity, the data reveals that students whose mothers do not go out to work for earning tend to score higher in the extremely high, above average, and average levels of social maturity compared to those whose mothers are engaged in income-generating work outside the home. However, an opposite trend is observed in the high level of social maturity, where students of working mothers show higher scores. Additionally, in the lower levels of the seven-point scale - below average, low, and extremely low, students whose mothers go out for work tend to score comparatively higher, indicating a lower level of social maturity compared to others. As mentioned earlier, scoring higher in these lower levels suggests lagging behind in terms of social maturity.

## Objective 2 / Ho<sub>1</sub>

**Table 5 Comparison of Social Maturity of male and female learners.**

SL. No	Variable	Variable wings	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value	Significance
01	Gender	Male students	50	218.67	17.5	98	0.82	Degree of freedom at 0.05 level value is 1.98
02		Female students	50	221.45	16.12			Not significant at 0.05 level.

**Interpretation:** - A close view of table 5, reflects that the calculated 't' value **0.82**, which is not exceeds 't' critical values 1.98 at 0.05 level with 98 df. It is considered to be not significant at 0.05 level of significance; it means no crucial dissimilarity in the middle of two mean score at 0.05 level of significance and thus the conjectural statement (Ho<sub>1</sub>) is accepted. Both gender confirmed the same level of Social Maturity.

## Objective 3 / Ho<sub>2</sub>

**Table 6 Comparison of Social Maturity of joint and nuclear families.**

SL. No	Variable	Variable wings	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value	Significance

01	Type of family	Joint families	50	245.66	20.78	98	<b>3.91</b>	Degree of freedom at 0.05 level value is 1.98
02		Nuclear families	50	230.43	18.01			<b>Significant at 0.05 level.</b>

**Interpretation:** - It was understood from table 6 reflects that the calculated 't' value **0.53**, which is exceeds 't' critical values 1.98 at 0.05 level with 98 df. It is considered to be significant at 0.05 level of significance ( $t_{\text{calculated}} = 3.91 > t_{\text{critical}}$ ) it means a crucial dissimilarity in the middle of two mean score at 0.05 level of significance and thus the conjectural statement ( $H_{02}$ ) is rejected. Statistically both type of family structure not confirmed the same level of Social Maturity.

## Objective 4 / $H_{03}$

**Table 7 Comparison of Social Maturity of learners with siblings and with no siblings.**

SL. No	Variable	Variable wings	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value	Significance
01	Sibling	With siblings	50	228.4	16.3	98	<b>0.59</b>	Degree of freedom at 0.05 level value is 1.98
02		With no siblings	50	230.45	18.1			<b>Not significant at 0.05 level.</b>

**Interpretation:** - From the above table 7, it is observed that the calculated 't' value **0.59**, which is not exceeds 't' critical values 1.98 at 0.05 level with 98 df. It is considered to be not significant at 0.05 level of significance; it means no crucial dissimilarity in the middle of two mean score at 0.05 level of significance and thus the conjectural statement ( $H_{03}$ ) is accepted. Both single child and more than one child family structure confirmed the same level of Social Maturity.

## Objective 5 / $H_{04}$

**Table 8 Comparison of Social Maturity of learners with working and non-working mothers.**

SL. No	Variable	Variable wings	N	Mean	SD	df	't' value	Significance
01	Mother's Occupation	Working mothers	50	254.98	21.88	98	<b>1.07</b>	Degree of freedom at 0.05 level value is 1.98
02		Non-working mothers	50	250.11	23.65			<b>Not significant at 0.05 level.</b>

**Interpretation:** - The above-mention table 8 shows that the calculated 't' value **1.07**, which is not exceeds 't' critical values 1.98 at 0.05 level with 98 df. It is considered to be not significant at 0.05 level of significance; it means no crucial dissimilarity in the middle of two mean score at 0.05 level of

significance and thus the conjectural statement ( $H_{04}$ ) is accepted. In terms of statistical measures the learners with working and non-working mother shows similar level of Social Maturity.

### **Findings of the study**

#### **Gender and Social Maturity**

Earlier research has consistently found that gender does not exert a statistically significant influence on the development of social maturity in children and adolescents (Banerjee, 2015). The present findings corroborate this view, showing no meaningful difference in social maturity between males and females.

#### **Family Structure and Social Maturity**

Previous studies have reported that family structure - whether nuclear or joint - have a significant effect on a child's social maturity (Chauhan and Yadav, 2017; Kaur, 2015). The current results support this conclusion, indicating that family composition has produced meaningful differences in social development.

#### **Number of Siblings and Social Maturity**

Prior research (e.g., Desai, 2013; Thomas, 2018) indicates that the number of siblings in a family does not significantly correlate with children's social maturity. The findings from the present study are consistent with this, showing no statistically meaningful differences based on sibling count.

#### **Mother's Employment and Social Maturity**

Empirical evidence suggests that maternal employment status - whether working outside the home or not - does not significantly affect the social maturity of children (Mukherjee, 2014; Verma & Sen, 2017). The present findings further reinforce this, demonstrating no notable differences in social maturity between children of working and non-working mothers.

### **Educational and Social implications**

This research offers a nuanced understanding of the socio-emotional development of higher secondary school students by exploring the relationship between various familial and demographic factors and their social maturity. The study finds that gender, number of siblings, and mother's occupation do not significantly affect the social maturity of adolescents. In contrast, family structure - specifically, whether a student belongs to a nuclear or a joint family - emerges as a statistically significant contributor to social maturity. These findings provide important educational and social implications for schools, families, and policy-makers in the field of adolescent development.

#### **Educational Contribution**

From an educational standpoint, the results challenge stereotypical assumptions that gender, sibling count, or maternal employment status inherently influences adolescent social behavior. The absence of significant differences based on these variables echoes the findings of Mehta and Patel (2016) and Verma (2018), who concluded that social maturity is less about fixed demographics and more about environmental and relational factors. The significant impact of family structure, however, provides a powerful lens through which educators can interpret student behavior and design intervention strategies. Joint family systems, with their emphasis on shared responsibilities, collective decision-making, and intergenerational living, offer students daily exposure to social interactions that promote empathy, cooperation, and discipline - core elements of social maturity (Gupta & Rani, 2019; Sharma & Yadav, 2017). Schools and educational leaders can use this understanding to: Develop school-based socio-emotional learning (SEL) programs that simulate joint family values like community living, shared

learning, and empathy. Train teachers and counselors to consider family context when addressing behavioral or emotional issues. Design peer mentoring and group interaction opportunities for students from nuclear families to compensate for limited social exposure at home.

#### Social Contribution

Socially, this study emphasizes the crucial role of family environment—not in terms of occupational roles or family size, but in the structure and quality of interactions. In an era where nuclear families are becoming more common due to urbanization and professional mobility, the findings bring to light the potential psychosocial limitations of such family systems. Adolescents in joint families benefit from a richer social ecology that nurtures cooperation, respect for elders, and emotional resilience (Kaur, 2020; Mishra & Tripathi, 2015). This insight urges society and policy-makers to: Promote community-building programs that encourage intergenerational interaction, even within nuclear family settings. Design family enrichment policies that support joint care giving models and recognize the socializing influence of grandparents and extended kin. Encourage social infrastructure (e.g., youth clubs, neighborhood networks) that can help nuclear family children gain essential social exposure. Furthermore, this research contributes to a shift in discourse - from individual-centric to relationship-centric development models - reaffirming that adolescents learn to be socially mature not from their gender or home economics, but from the quality and diversity of social roles they experience.

#### Conclusion

The present research offers meaningful insight into the evolving landscape of adolescent development by examining the factors influencing social maturity among higher secondary school students. The findings make it evidently clear that gender, number of siblings, and mother's occupational status do not significantly affect the social maturity of adolescents. These results align with earlier findings by Mehta and Patel (2016) and Verma (2018), who emphasized that individual demographic variables do not independently account for variations in adolescents' social behavior. However, what distinctly emerged from the analysis is the significant role of family structure. Students from joint families demonstrated higher levels of social maturity than those from nuclear families. This supports the research of Gupta and Rani (2019) and Sharma and Yadav (2017), who asserted that the joint family system - with its foundation in shared responsibilities, intergenerational learning, and regular social interaction - provides an enriched environment for the development of socially competent youth. In today's rapidly urbanizing and individualistic world, where nuclear families are becoming more common, this research reminds us of the psychosocial value of community, connection, and shared living. It urges educators, parents, and policymakers to integrate the relational strengths of joint family systems into educational programs, community initiatives, and parenting practices. Ultimately, the study contributes not only to the academic understanding of adolescent social maturity but also to a larger social dialogue- advocating for the nurturing of emotionally intelligent and socially responsive individuals through stronger, relationally enriched environments.

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