

# **Maturity In Emotions And Behavioral Issues Among Postgraduate Students: A Correlational Study**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the relationship between maturity in emotions and behavioral issues among postgraduate students. Maturity in emotions scale; (MES) (five-point Likert scale) & Students Behavior Checklist (SBC) which has retrieved and used to assess the postgraduate students' behavior. The researcher had sample of 200 postgraduate students selected

from public/private sector universities of District, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. The results of the study revealed significant positive relationship between maturity in emotions and behavioral issues among postgraduate students. Personalized gender differences among students also affected covert or overt behavioral issues. Females (M=146.13) were more emotionally insecure than males (M=143.03) whereas males had (M=18.42) more overt behavioral issues than girls (M=16.60). The study also guided the stakeholders, counselors and psychologists more about the relationship existed between maturity in emotions and behavioral issues and how these affected the postgraduate students in different ways.

**Keywords:** Maturity, Emotions, Behavior Issues, Patterned, Covert Behavior, Overt Behavior, Internalized issues, Externalized Issues, Explicit Behavior, Irregularity, streamline

### **Introduction**

Maturity in emotions becomes key factor of personality trait which is managed throughout lifelong processes like growth, development, ethics, professionalism, aptitude, behavior, imitation, gesture, survival etc. In viewpoint of science and technology, personality is systematic scientific process consisting of characteristics such as, adding happiness, deleting bad memories, replacing & adopting good/bad, adapting new ecosystem, social adjustments, fixing compromises, stress & anger management, mindfulness, maintaining good lifestyle, upkeeping norms. Maturity of emotions is the tendency that helps to deal with the individual's differences and allied sentiments. Such level of the maturity also determines one's ability to cope situations in hand either these are simple or complex (Jobson, 2021).

What an emotional growth is? As and when, a person gets emotionally stable, has actually learnt the management in accordance to its environment. If any situation is critically examined before responding, that can have better understanding and applicability of the subject matter, to exhibit consistency (Tayebi, 2020).

It is supposed that if someone has ability to endure stress/tension then, most vulnerable symptom is his/her maturity of emotions, how he

reacts the situation without going in distress or trauma (Rawat & Smriti, 2019).

In view of Jersild et al., (2019), the people who are mature enough in their emotions, they do recognize their potential to live a good life without showing any hassle, regrets or frustration. They do enjoy little moments and share happiness all around them, this not only bringing prosperity in life but also, developing habit of being happy without a surprise or reward. Letting other happy is also a big trial, how you make things comfortable and compatible for them, its lauds care, affection, love and laughter both for oneself and others.

According to Glick (2019) every expression, for every occasion is different in its own way, so the emotions are. Mood swings may not be fake as, we got to notice them carefully, they are highly patterned for teens. 'Feel Good' hormones such as, Dopamine, Serotonin, Endorphins, and Oxytocin which are controlled by brain through chemicals and on releasing, they give pleasure, feel, happiness, goodness. This also affect movement, memory, and focus to a body. How these hormones can be boosted among postgraduate students to void the behavioral issues? Changing the lifestyle, wake up time/sleep time, diet, exercise, yoga, positivity, mindfulness, pilates and meditation. That's how postgraduate students' emotions may become powerful and intense enabling them feel good more frequently, quickly and randomly.

To be independent from childhood to an adult, a wide spread over a period of time in respect of emotions, social, physical and psychological has been seen (Gulati et al., 2020). When it comes to emotional maturity, it seems long way to go that best fit in till the end of life? The survival for the fittest is not about unbecoming behavior, emotions either they are physical and psychological.

Tayebi et al, (2021) stated that issues arising due to emotions is one of the leading problems of behavioral disorders. Strong correlation existed between emotions and behavior. Situated learning enabled awareness and alerts towards its pragmatic solutions. Kumar et al., (2013)

observed that most of the psychological disorders found in childhood and adulthood are 31% anxiety, 14.3% emotional, 19.1% behavioral.

According to Khan (2023) when we say as, maturity of emotions, stability of behavior, mindfulness of social interaction, are interchangeable terms, but, when it comes to disruption of any of these, harm / alert is witnessed.

Non-patterned behavior was a clear symptom of disruption, for instance, a student showing frequent mood swings in different episodes to his/her family members and persons around him/her, typifies internal and external behavioral problems (Devlin, 2019).

Behavior can be acquired or inherited, better terms as, internalization/externalization of issues within social context (Kovacs & Devlin, 2019). Exponential behavior is directed outward with eruption, hyper-activism and destructivism (Shan & Winslow, 2018). Withdrawal, apprehension, self-consciousness and anxiety are the internalized behavior (Eisenberg et al., 2001).

### **Rational of Research Study**

There are many reasons that why students experience behavioral issues, disorders, imbalances and immaturity in emotions? Significant factor which exacerbates apprehension, insecurity, threat, self-doubt is behavior. The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between maturity in emotional and the behavioral issues among postgraduate students. The expansion is limited for such topics, therefore, it is highly desired to research from different aspects related to maturity in emotions and its impact, on postgraduate students of university for their emotional and behavioral well-being so that mindfulness can be spread in Pakistani society.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the research study were to:

1. Explore the relationship between maturity of emotions and the behavioral issues among postgraduate students.

2. Evaluate the gender differences regarding maturity of emotions and the behavioral issues among postgraduate students.
3. Investigate the difference in family systems in terms of behavioral issues among postgraduate students.
4. Examine the difference between the numbers of siblings and behavioral issues among postgraduate students.
5. Explore how birth order impacts the relationship between maturity of emotions and the behavioral issues among postgraduate students.

### **Literature Review**

In reviewing previous literature, many studies have revealed that maturity in emotions and the behavioral issues are interlinked. Maturity in emotions has an important role on the growth and development of individuals. Lack of maturity has caused severe problems in personal and social lives of the people. Situation based learning has helped a lot to the individuals to lead a proper healthy life (Jobson, 2020).

Downey (2016) explained that if a person became mature emotionally, the degree of responses reduced and vice versa. That means, he has got control over his/her responses as per need and desire of the society and became capable enough to handle odds in life (Singh & Bhargava, 2019).

Khan et al., (2022) noticed that teen/adolescence is a prime time to get maturity in emotions, during this period, students developed the feeling of hate, wisdom, love, feel, anger, hate, care, and empathy. Thoughts of an adult empowered through keeping him/her mindful, emotionally intelligent and self-reliant.

As, Vygotsky (1978) talked about Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), If independent problem solving is there, this is actual level of development and if problem solving is through any adult guidance or peer cooperation then it comes under potential development, a clear connection between maturity of emotions and to deal them intelligently. Key construct, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) determined the level

of maturity among learners encountering behavioral issues whether they need assistance or they can move / resolve the constraints independently.

As, Khan (2023) narrated about life, an amalgamation of good/bad, happiness/sorrows, odd/even etc., if, students come across disappointment and failures, what is needed most? Intelligence or maturity, the answer is not that simple, indeed, the ratio of happenings and non-happenings depends on emotions. Off course, the quotient of dealing with the issues, essentially take it to the development of emotions.

Cameron et al., (2021) conducted research to find all sort of emotions which was needed for good relationship and comfortable life. Emotions are always a mixture of controlled/uncontrolled behaviors which are inseparable from the learning. Both, enhance and dispense knowledge by developing problem solving skills which one may experience throughout life.

What if, we say emotions are contagious? They may be strongly positive or negative, the one's emotional state may infect or affect the same group of learners, living in an educational setup. These learning ecosystems can be face-to-face, in-person, online, blended or else but emotional states are shifting from learners to teachers and teachers to learners (influencing each other) (Saul, 2015).

Chen et al., (2014) stated that educators understand the role of individualistic emotions which are played during learning and teaching. The mechanism is dynamic in its nature as, diverse responses, reactions, expectations, acceptances and experience are found to make it effective and operational.

Mowafy et al, (2019) identified basic factor required for all relationships that had strong influence over emotions either positive or negative. To control behaviors, gestures, thoughts, living a good life, past experiences had great role in it. They also affected emotions directly or indirectly in a considerate manner to control behavior in a specific social-situation based context.

According to Beyers (2019) an early development stages of consciousness was characterized by physical controls e.g., arousal,

awareness, excitement, anger which was depicted by overt and covert behavior of an individual. Being highly motivated and energized for adopting healthy life style with appropriate emotions/action, learners do not undergo any depression, anxiety or mental trauma. The overly stressed or suppressed behavior is examined through a cross-sectional research on 576 learners where it is assessed that incidences are fine form of emotions, evident predictions and its impact for an individual or collective behavior (Crawford, 2021).

The emotional issues of age ranging between 18 to 22 years, learners belonging to the rural areas has indicated absurd level of emotional problems. As, Rawat (2021) pointed out, students belonging to this age group and areas showed significant difference towards maturity in emotions due to direct influence of their family relations.

### **Significance of the Study**

This research study helped the stakeholders, counselors, teachers to have deep knowledge of psychological well-being in respect of postgraduate students as young as 18-24 years. Emotional well-being is a phenomenon which redresses anxiety, stress, depression and related mental issues, firstly, believed to be out of settlement at such age.

Rich literature was found on therapeutic learning and clinical correlation to oust behavioral problems. Recent researches and statistics indicated that large population of mainstream postgraduate students did not learn/experience emotional maturity during their early years of learning.

This caused behavioral issues among teenagers but this research study rectified and turned the mental distortions, emotional issues into pragmatic solutions i.e. consciousness, mindfulness, awareness and patterned behavior of postgraduate students.

### **Methodology**

#### **Participants**

The total population of the research study consisted of 80 postgraduate public and private colleges/ universities, including boys and girls from all

over District Lahore, Punjab. The sample of 200 postgraduate students were selected as participants (N=200) of age ranging from 18-24 years, from various colleges / universities of District Lahore. Convenient sampling technique was used to select the participants from the total population. Moreover, postgraduate students less than 18 years, more than 24 years, physical and mentally challenged students were not included.

## **Research Instruments**

### **Demographic Questionnaire**

Questionnaire about demography was designed to keep in account the detail of demographic variables as mentioned in literature review. These variables included gender, age level, grade level, education system, family structure (joint/independent/separated/single parent), and number of siblings, they had.

### **Maturity in Emotions Scale (MES)**

Maturity in emotions scale (five-point Likert scale) was developed by the researcher which comprised of 45 items, which was self-reported as, higher the score on scale meant as, greater the degree of emotional insecurity or vice versa.

### **Students Behavior Checklist (SBC)**

Students Behavior Checklist was retrieved from <https://nesc.k12.sd.us/resources/Behavior%20Checklist.pdf> which measured eight (8) major behavioral subscales of teenagers i.e. Hyperactive(H/A), Withdrawn (W/D), Poor Attention/Concentration (Att/Con), Aggressive (Ag), Disruptive (Dis), Uncooperative (uCop), Manipulative(Man), Inappropriate Social Behavior (ISB). The Checklist headed by eight major subscales, was comprised of 53 items on 3 rating scales i.e. almost never, Occasionally, frequently.

## **Procedure**

Pilot testing was carried out for already established measuring tools i.e. Maturity in emotions scale; (MES) (five-point Likert scale) & Students Behavior Checklist (SBC) which has retrieved from



<https://nesc.k12.sd.us/resources/Behavior%20Checklist.pdf>. Afterwards, data was collected and the students (participants) were introduced regarding the aim, objective and purpose of the research study, so, the instruction were given to fill in the respective instruments(tools), individually. confidentiality and anonymity of given information was ensured. The recorded data was analyzed with the use of SPSS (Statistical Package of Social Sciences) Version 25.0 since, the Students/Participants were instructed to be honest for their responses.

## Results

**Table 1** Mean and SD of gender, age level, grade level, education system, family structure (joint/independent/separated/single parent), and number of siblings

<b>Demographic Variables</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
M=14.19, SD=1.245		
<b>Gender</b>		
Boys	102	51
Girls	98	48
<b>Education System</b>		
Public	100	50
Private	100	50
<b>Grade Level</b>		
B.Ed. (Hons.)	50	25%
Masters	50	25%
M.Phil.	50	25%
Ph.D.	50	25%
<b>Number of Siblings</b>		
Only Child	21	2.7
1-3	452	56.3
4-6	302	37.8
7-9	20	2.5

10-12	5	.7
<b>Family System</b>		
Joint	110	55%
Independent / Nuclear	85	42.5%
Separated/ Single parent	5	2.5%

Note. f = Frequency; M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

Above table 1 is about demographic profile of the postgraduate students. The most sample ranges between the age group of 18 to 20 years. There were 102 boys and 98 girls. There were two categories of school system (public & private) 100 public sector colleges / universities while 100 public sector. The sample was collected from the students of the B.Ed. (Hons.), Masters, M.Phil. and Ph.D., 50 students from each level. There were 5 categories of Siblings, out of these maximum number of siblings belonged to age group 1-3 years i.e. 56% of the total strength of siblings, whereas, only one-child was 2.7% was the one-Child of the total strength of siblings. In addition, table also revealed that around 42.5% of students belonged to nuclear family system, whereas 55% of students belonged to joint family system.

The results also indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between maturity in emotions and behavioral issues domains (indicators/subscales) except Uncooperative Behavior ( $r=.055$ ,  $p>.05$ ) and Manipulative Behavior ( $r=.026$ ,  $p>.05$ ). The highest correlation score of maturity in emotions was with Poor Attention/Concentration Behavior ( $r=.216^{**}$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and Manipulative Behavior ( $r=.211^{**}$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Even, maturity in emotions scale, it was observed that higher the scores, degree of being emotionally insecure was also high and vice versa. So, the findings exposed that the postgraduate students who scored high in subscale i.e. maturity in emotions were highly insecure and faced many behavioral issues.

**Table 2**

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient between Emotional Maturity, Behavioral Problems and its subscales (N=200).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	M	SD
1.EM	1	.211**	.144**	.055	.026	.170**	.108**	.137**	.216**	144.	18.6
2.H/A		1	.616**	.518**	.592**	.639**	.671**	.653**	.614**	8.82	4.41
3.W/D			1	.419**	.437**	.532**	.515**	.504**	.510**	6.03	2.85
4.uCop				1	.417**	.445**	.446**	.460**	.397**	6.65	3.80
5.Man					1	.682**	.662**	.661**	.537**	6.95	5.48
6. Ag						1	.639**	.651**	.645**	10.2	6.18
7.ISB							1	.606**	.572**	7.27	3.85
8.Dis								1	.579**	8.93	4.93
9.Att/Con									1	6.81	3.49

Note:

Emotional Maturity (EM), Hyperactive(H/A), Withdrawn (W/D), Uncooperative (uCop), Manipulative (Man), Aggressive (Ag), Inappropriate Social Behavior (ISB), Disruptive (Dis), Poor Attention/Concentration (Att./Con.), M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation

**Table 3**

Independent sample T-test between boys and girls for Maturity in Emotions and Behavioral issues (N=200).

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, CL= Confidence Interval, LL=Lower Limit, UL=Upper Limit

M=146.13

Variables	Boys(N=102)		Girls(N=98)		t	p	95%CL		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Maturity in emotions	143.30	18.40	146.13	18.85	-2.214	.027	-5.521	.332	0.157
Covert Behavioral Issues	22.07	9.485	21.87	9.332	.304	.761	-1.109	1.515	0.021
Overt Behavioral Issues	18.42	11.208	16.60	10.692	2.344	.019	.297	3.355	0.166
Other Behavioral Issues	5.58	3.216	5.79	3.193	-.919	.359	-.655	.238	-0.065

Independent sample t-test was performed comparing the maturity in emotions, covert, overt and other behavioral issues boys and girls. The result reflected that significant difference existed ( $p < .05$ ) between maturity of emotions in boys ( $M=143.03$ ,  $SD=18.40$ ) and girls ( $M=146.13$ ,  $SD=18.85$ ). Girls scored higher in maturity of emotions than boys. In maturity of emotions scale, it was recorded, that higher the scores, greater the degree of the immaturity and vice versa. So, the findings revealed that girls are more emotionally immature than boys. In Covert Behavioral issues, there is no significant difference ( $p > .05$ ) between boys and girls. The mean scores of boys were higher ( $M=22.07$ ,  $SD=9.485$ ) than girls ( $M=21.87$ ,  $SD=9.332$ ). In Overt Behavioral Issues there is a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between boys and girls that was meant as, boys ( $M=18.42$ ,  $SD=11.208$ ) scored higher than girls ( $M=16.60$ ,  $SD=10.692$ ) in subscale i.e. Overt Behavioral Issues.

**Table 4** Independent sample T-test between Joint and Nuclear Family for Emotional Maturity and Behavioral Problems (N=200).

Variables	Joint	Nuclear	T	P	95%CL		Cohen's d
	(N=110)	(N=85)			LL	UL	
	M	M					
	SD	SD					
Maturity in	144.19	145.06	-	.513	-3.469		-0.046
Emotions	19.45	17.92	.655		1.733		
Behavioral	84.0	85.61	-	.447	-5.768		-0.053
Issues	30.607	29.1	.761		.2545		

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, CL= Confidence Interval, LL=Lower Limit UL= Upper Limit,  $p > 0.05$ .

The above tables indicated that there is no significant difference between joint and nuclear family system in terms of maturity in emotions ( $M=144.19$ ,  $SD=19.45$ ) and behavioral issues ( $M=84.0$ ,  $SD= 30.607$ ).

**Table 5** Descriptive of One-Way Analysis of Variance for Number of Siblings on Behavior issues among Postgraduates Students (N=200).

Variables	N	M	SD
Poor Attention/Concentration			
Behavior Problems			
Only Child	22	105.14	30.53
1-3	451	83.37	30.06
4-6	303	85.12	29.25
7-9	21	87.19	23.77
10-12	3	106.00	27.71
Total	800	84.81	29.79

Note: N= No of Sample, M=Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

This table showed that the mean difference between age group levels of number of siblings on behavioral issues of postgraduates from public/private universities. As recorded above, the students whose number of siblings are 10-12 tend towards maximum mean for behavioral issues (M=106.00, SD=27.71). While students whose number of siblings is 1-3 have lowest behavior issues as they are too young to understand an issue.

### Discussion

The current research study was conducted to assess the relationship of maturity in emotions with the behavioral issues of postgraduate students from various public and private sector universities of District, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. This study also identified the specificity of demographic variables in alliance with main variables i.e. Maturity in Emotions and Behavior Issues. Here, the descriptive analysis also showed that the age range of most sample was 18-24 years. There were 102 boys and 98 girls, belonging majority from Nuclear Family System. Poor Attention/Concentration enhanced behavioral issues, which comprised of covert, overt and behavioral issues.

Covert Behavioral Issues were residing inside body as they affected the internal psychological system rather than external one, e.g. Poor Attention/Concentration (Att/Con), Aggressive (Ag),

Manipulative(Man), Withdrawn (W/D), Whereas, Overt Behavioral Issues were referred as externalized behaviors, a cluster form of disorganized / nonpatterned behavior, which came under the subscales like Inappropriate Social Behavior (ISB), Uncooperative (uCop), Disruptive (Dis), Hyperactive(H/A), (Kim, 2023).

This study showed that maturity of emotions showed a significant positive relationship with covert, overt and other behavioral issues of the college / university goers. It was also indicated that positive relationship exists between maturity of emotions and behavioral issues. As, immaturity in emotions was aggravated with irregular behavior patterns. According to Mathai et al., (2019) maturity of emotions and behavioral issues were always twisted together like a braid. If one, wanted to maintain the emotional maturity had to review factors that caused harm.

Kristoffersen et al., (2018) demanded critical analysis of all relationships. It also suggested that if emotions were strong, better the control over the social, moral, psychological constraints. It reshaped our behaviors, reflections, practices, thoughts and other dimension in life. Healthy emotions reinforced and brought positive energy in one's actions whereas, unhealthy emotions gave bad ambiances and negative energy, not to behave.

## **Conclusion**

The current research study demonstrated that maturity in emotions played a vital role in adults' behavioral outcomes. It highlighted the significance of emotional maturity as, a key determiner for a personality trait either it was inherited or acquired. Such findings identified that gender differences also showed significant role in maturity of emotions as, in present study, girls reflected more insecurity of emotions as, compared to boys (Cuddy, 2019).

It depicted that males were more overt for externalizing their behavioral issues than girls, being less expressive and highly insecure. Further, results had significant differences among the number of siblings over behavioral issues of the postgraduate students. Greater number of

siblings, significant behavioral issues were recorded except Only One Child Category.

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