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ASSERTIVENESS AMONG MUSLIM ADOLESCENT
GIRLS AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH PARENTING STYLE



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Short Profile

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ABSTRACT:

The present study was conducted with an aim to study the assertiveness among Muslim adolescent girls in relation to selected demographic variables. The study also aimed to find the association between assertiveness and the parenting style adopted by the mothers of the selected girls. For the present study, 1500 Muslim girls studying in Muslim minority Arts and Science Colleges and

Muslim Minority Engineering Colleges in Chennai Metropolitan Area, Tamil Nadu were selected. The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (Rathus, 1973) was used to assess the assertiveness of the selected Muslim adolescent girls and the Parenting Style Questionnaire based on Robinson et al. (1995) was used to assess the parenting style adopted by mothers of the selected Muslim adolescent girls. The data obtained was subjected to statistical interpretation using SPSS (version 17). It was found that father's qualification, higher education of the girls in the college level and the family income level had a significant effect on assertiveness. A significant association was found between parenting style and assertiveness.

KEYWORDS

Assertiveness, Parenting Style, Muslim Women.

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INTRODUCTION :

India being a diverse country in terms of ethnicity, religion and culture, has Muslims as its largest minority group. Muslim women form a significant part of Islamic society in India. However Muslim women are far more backward than the other women in India. Except Muslims, all the rest of the major religions have literacy rates higher than the national average. Muslims have a total literacy rate of 59.1 per cent, below the national average of 64.8 per cent, amongst which the male literacy rate (67.6 per cent) is below the national average of 75.3 per cent and the female literacy rate (only 50.1) is below the national average of 53.7 per cent. (Census of India, 2011). At the all India level Muslim women are three times behind their Hindu sisters. The attainment of higher education among Muslim girls is a rare phenomenon even in the urban areas. In this respect, they are far behind the majority community as well as the other minorities (Siddiqui, 2012)¹.

Muslim adolescent girls need to realise and enjoy their full human rights and start a process of reform within the community and empowerment through affirmative action programmes for their greater access to educational, economic and political institutions and opportunities (Munjial & Kaushik, 2103)². One important social skill needed by these young girls to overcome these challenges is assertiveness. Assertiveness is defined as the practice of behavior which enables individuals to act in their best interest or stand up for themselves without undue anxiety, or to express their rights without denying the rights of others (Alberti and Emmons, 1970)³. Assertiveness is a social skill that can greatly help a woman to achieve self empowerment. Growing up in a comforting home and experiencing a stable and secure relationship with one's parents is an important prerequisite for assertiveness. Parenting styles are a set of relatively stable behaviors through which parents interact with their child in relatively specific situations (Brand et al., 2009)⁴. The three major dimensions of parenting styles are authoritarian, democratic and permissive.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The present investigation was undertaken with an aim to study the assertiveness among Muslim adolescent girls and its association with parenting style.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study were

- ▲ To study the assertiveness among Muslim adolescent girls with respect to selected socio-demographic variables.
- ▲ To study the association between assertiveness and the parenting style adopted by the mothers of the selected girls.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of area: The selected location for the study was Chennai, the capital city of a southern state of India, namely Tamil Nadu. The area for conducting the present investigation was the Muslim minority

arts and science colleges and engineering colleges in Metropolitan Area of Chennai.

Selection of the sample: A total of 1500 girls in the age group of 17– 19 years were chosen for the study using multistage systematic random sampling technique. For studying the parenting style all the mothers of the selected Muslim girls were chosen.

Selection of tool: The Rathus Assertiveness Schedule by Rathus (1973) was used to assess the assertiveness level of the selected Muslim adolescent girls. The Parenting Style Questionnaire Based on Robinson et al. (1995) was used to assess the parenting style adopted by mothers of the selected Muslim adolescent girls.

Conducting the study: Prior permission was obtained from the concerned institutions to carry out the study. Having the ethical consideration in mind, written consent was obtained from the respondents of the study. Each tool was administered in accordance with the instructions laid down in their respective manuals. ANOVA, 't' test, and Chi Square were computed to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Assertiveness among the Muslim girls based on the demographic variables

Table 1 displays the result of 't' test calculated to compare the assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls based on their mother tongue.

Table 1
Comparison of Assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls based on their mother tongue

Variable	Sub Sect	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	't' value	Level of significance
Assertiveness	Tamil	817	2.57	22.48	0.78	1.740	NS
	Urdu	683	4.61	22.83	0.87		

The results of the 't' test carried out to find out the difference in the assertiveness of Muslim girls based on their mother tongue shows no significant difference as the 't' value is 1.740 which is below the table value. This result clearly indicates that mother tongue does not affect the assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls.

One way ANOVA carried out to compare the assertiveness of the selected Muslim adolescent girls based on their higher education is presented in table-2.

Table-2
Comparison of Assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls based on Higher education

Variable	Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Level of significance
Assertiveness	Between Groups	60145.36	2	30072.68	63.42	p<0.01
	Within Groups	709775.62	1497	474.13		
	Total	769920.99	1499			

Duncan’s Multiple Range Test –Assertiveness based on Higher Education

Higher education	N	Subset		
		1	2	3
Science	492	3.57		
Arts	576		2.77	
Engineering	432			12.53

From the results presented in table 2, a significant difference can be observed in the assertiveness of the girls based on the different streams of higher education they were pursuing in the college level namely, Arts, Science and Engineering (F=63.427; p<0.01). It can be inferred from the results presented in the Duncan’s table that Muslim girls doing their engineering course had the highest assertiveness scores. This is followed by the girls pursuing arts and the girls doing science course in the college have the least assertiveness scores.

This finding is in line with the summarized results of the complex study done by Peneva and Yordzhev (2014)⁵, which revealed that the students doing computer engineering are highly assertive.

One way ANOVA carried out to compare the assertiveness of the selected Muslim adolescent girls based on their family type is presented in table-3.

Table-3
Comparison of Assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls based on their family type

Variable	Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Level of significance
Assertiveness	Between Groups	1860.12	2	930.06	1.813	NS
	Within Groups	768060.86	1497	513.06		
	Total	769920.99	1499			

From the results presented in table-3, it is evident that no significant difference exists in assertiveness among the selected Muslim girls coming from different family types as the 'F' value is 1.813.

This result is supported by the findings of a study conducted by Arslantas (2013) who determined the assertiveness levels of 949 high school students in relation to certain variables and found that having health problems, success situation, failing in exams and family type had no effect on Rathus Assertiveness Inventory scores.

One way ANOVA carried out to compare the assertiveness level of the selected Muslim adolescent girls based on their father's educational qualification is presented in table-4.

Table-4
Comparison of Assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls based on their Father's Educational Qualification

Variable	Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Level of significance
Assertiveness	Between Groups	9525.93	4	2381.483	4.682	p<0.01
	Within Groups	760395.06	1495	508.625		
	Total	769920.99	1499			

Duncan’s Multiple Range Test –Assertiveness based on Father’s Qualification

Father’s Qualification	N	Subset	
		1	2
Illiterate	545	0.37	
Graduate	221	3.76	3.76
Higher Secondary	111	4.59	4.59
Primary	544		5.68
Professional	79		7.80

Significant difference is observed between the selected Muslim girls based on their father’s educational qualifications on the assertiveness level ($F=4.682$; $p<0.01$). The Duncan’s multiple range results suggests that girls whose fathers are professionals have higher assertiveness than the other groups. This is followed by the girls whose fathers have completed their primary education, then by higher secondary completed fathers and by graduate fathers in that order. Girls of fathers who were illiterate exhibited least assertiveness.

Table 5 shows the results of one way ANOVA carried out to compare the assertiveness of the Muslim girls based on their Mother’s educational qualification.

Table-5
Comparison of Assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls based on their Mother’s Educational Qualification

Variable	Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Level of significance
Assertiveness	Between Groups	2580.58	4	645.14	1.257	NS
	Within Groups	767340.40	1495	513.27		
	Total	769920.99	1499			

The results of the one way ANOVA carried out to find out the difference in the assertiveness level of Muslim girls based on their mother’s educational qualification shows no significant difference as the ‘F’ value is 1.257. This result clearly indicates that the mother’s educational status does not affect

the assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls.

This result is supported by a study conducted by Arslan, Akca & Baser (2013)³ who found no significant association between the educational status of the parents and assertiveness.

Table 6 shows the results one way ANOVA carried out to compare the assertiveness of the Muslim girls based on their family income.

Table-6
Comparison of Assertiveness of the selected Muslim girls based on their Family Income

Variable	Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Assertiveness	Between Groups	18653.94	2	9326.97	18.585	p<0.01
	Within Groups	751267.04	1497	501.84		
	Total	769920.99	1499			

Duncan's Multiple Range Test –Assertiveness based on Family Income

Family Income	N	Subset		
		1	2	3
Rs.10001-20000	451	1.46		
<Rs. 10000	733		4.57	
>Rs.20000	316			8.10

Significant difference is observed in the assertiveness between the selected Muslim girls based on their family income (F=18.585; p<0.01). From the Duncan's multiple range results, it is found that girls whose monthly family income is more than Rs. 20000 have higher assertiveness than the other groups. This is followed by the girls whose monthly family income is less than Rs.10, 000. Girls coming from families whose monthly income is between Rs. 10,001 and Rs. 20,000 exhibited least assertiveness. From this it can be concluded that girls belonging to the higher and lower income group are more assertive than the girls from middle income group.

This result is supported by a study conducted by Ibrahim (2011)⁶ who investigated the factors

affecting assertiveness among student nurses and found positive relations regarding family income and students' assertiveness

B. Association between Assertiveness and Parenting Style

The result of the Chi-square test computed to find the association between assertiveness and different kinds of parenting style namely authoritarian, democratic and permissive on the of the selected Muslim adolescent girls is presented in table 7.

Table-7
Association between Assertiveness and Parenting Style

Assertiveness category	PARENTING STYLES								χ ² value
	Democratic		Authoritarian		Permissive		Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Very Non-Assertive	225	17.6	11	9.6	7	6.4	243	16.2	60.598 p<0.01
Situationally Non-Assertive	391	30.6	33	28.9	19	17.4	443	29.5	
Somewhat Assertive	426	33.4	34	29.8	39	35.8	499	33.3	
Assertive	173	13.5	28	24.6	24	22.0	225	15.0	
Probably Aggressive	62	4.9	8	7.0	20	18.3	90	6.0	

From the results presented in table 7, it is evident that there is a significant association between assertiveness and parenting style among the selected Muslim girls ($\chi^2=60.598$; $p<0.01$). The table shows that authoritarian parenting style fosters assertiveness as it was found that a maximum of 24.6% of the selected Muslim girls who were brought up by authoritarian style of parenting were assertive. The table also reveals that more number of girls (35.8%) brought up by the permissive style of parenting were somewhat assertive. It can also be noted that girls of mothers who adopted the democratic style of parenting were very non assertive and situationally non assertive represented by 17.6% and 30.6% respectively.

This result is supported by findings of a study conducted by Maddahi et al., (2011) who aimed to investigate the different parenting styles in female first grade high school students in Tehran and found significant association between "little control and too much love" and assertiveness.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present investigation shows that assertiveness of the girls is significantly different based on their father's qualification. It was noted that girls of fathers who are illiterates exhibited least assertiveness and girls of professional fathers scored highest on assertiveness scores. Results reveal that girls studying in engineering colleges had the highest assertiveness scores and the girls doing science course in the college are least assertive. Further when assertiveness was analyzed based on the family income it was found that girls from higher and lower income group were more assertive when compared to the girls from middle income group. No significant difference was observed in the assertiveness of the selected Muslim adolescent girls based on mother tongue, family type, and mother's qualification.

The results of the present investigation also showed a significant association between parenting style and assertiveness. It was noted that assertiveness scores is highest among girls brought up by the permissive style of parenting and assertiveness is lowest among girls who are reared by democratic style of parenting.

Muslims account for 13.4 percent of the total population in India. However Muslim women are far more backward than the other women in India. Hence there is an urgent need to empower Muslim women and this can be attained through a social skill called "Assertiveness" which will allow them to stand up for their rights which in turn will give them more self confidence and boost their self esteem. Since social skill development like assertiveness can play a major role in helping girls in combating with the multiple challenges they face, the schools and colleges can impart such training programmes as a part of the curriculum. Schools and colleges can also arrange for counseling on parenting techniques for parents as the study shows a significant association between parenting practices and assertiveness.

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