

# A Comparative Study of Parent Involvement between Single Family Parents and Joint Family Parents of Children with Special Needs

Dr. Sunil Kumar Agrahari<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Virendra Singh Ruhela<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, <sup>2</sup>Principal/Course Coordinator/Assistant Professor;  
Disha – A Resource Centre for the Disabled, Jaipur, Rajasthan

Corresponding Author: Dr. Sunil Kumar Agrahari

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to compare parental involvement of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs. Participants in this study were chosen using a purposive sampling technique. The sample comprised 50 parents of special needs children from Jaipur, Rajasthan, of which 25 were from single families (25 mothers and 25 fathers) and 25 were from joint families (25 mothers and 25 fathers). Parent Involvement Scale developed by Dr. Rita Chopra & Dr. Surabala Sahoo was used. The findings demonstrated a substantial difference between parent involvement of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs. However, joint family parents of children with special needs have a higher level of parental participation than single family parents of children with special needs. When we compare several areas of parental involvement, we find that joint family parents had better school, home, and parent-teacher relationships than nuclear family parents. The reason for this outcome could be that joint family parents provide greater safety, time, direction, family member support, social support, economic assistance, and emotional support than

single family parents, according to the discussion following the study.

**Keywords:** Children with special needs, family, parent involvement, single and joint family parent.

## INTRODUCTION

### Children with special needs

Children with special needs may be born with a syndrome, a terminal illness, profound cognitive impairment or severe mental problems. Other children may have special needs including learning disabilities, food allergies, developmental delays or struggle with panic attacks. These children are recognized as having mental, emotional, physical or social needs which, following a diagnosis may require therapeutic intervention or special care by qualified specialists (Foreman, 2009). The designation "children with special needs" is for children whose challenges may be more severe than those of the typical child, and possibly last a lifetime. These children will need special support and surplus services. They will have different goals, and will need extra guidance and support to meet academic, social, emotional, and sometimes medical milestones. Persons with special needs may require lifelong guidance and support when dealing with everyday issues such as housing, employment, social

participation and finances. The term special needs are a ubiquitous phrase that can refer to a wide range of children's diagnoses and/or disabilities. Hence the term "children with special needs" (CWSN) refers to children who may have more severe challenges than the typical child, and possibly throughout life. They are children who have a disability or combination of disabilities that makes learning or other activities difficult. Children with special needs include those who: Have an intellectual disability that causes them to develop more slowly than other children. Speech and language impairments, such as problems expressing yourself or understanding others. Physical disabilities, such as vision problems, cerebral palsy, or other conditions. Learning disabilities, which distort the messages from their senses. Emotional disabilities, such as antisocial or other behavioural problems. Children with special needs may have developmental delays, medical conditions, mental conditions, and/or congenital conditions.

### **Family**

Family is an intimate domestic group made up of people related to each other by blood ties, sexual relations or legal relations. It is the smallest and most fundamental social unit, as well as the most essential primary group in any civilization. A family is a domestic group of people, or several domestic groups, usually related by comparable legal relationships, including birth or marriage, or adoption. There are many variations in the basic family structure. Nuclear family consists of husband and wife and their children, while extended family includes grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Other family patterns include polygamous (usually patriarchal) and single-parent families. A family is a relatively permanent group of two or more people who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption and who live under the same roof (The United States Census Bureau, 2007). Family as a social

system based on marriage which includes recognition of parental rights and duties, common residence for husband, wife and children, mutual economic obligations between husband and wife (Stephen, 1999). Family is a social group defined by shared residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of who maintain a socially sanctioned sexual relationship, and one or more children of a sexually cohabiting couple, either their own or adopted (Murdock, 1949 quoted in Steel, Kidd, & Brown, 2012). Throughout history, families have been at the centre of human society; A key indicator of the well-being of a society is the health of its families. For this reason, as stated in Article 16(3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State." Family is the basic social unit for the expression of love between man and woman and for the creation and upbringing of children. The family restrains men's wild impulses toward the responsibilities of fatherhood, enables young women to develop as mothers, and instils morality in children. Moral qualities, empathy and good human relationships are learned in the family.

**Single Family** – A single family or nuclear family is a small group consisting of husband, wife and children, natural or adopted. It is more or less an autonomous unit which is not under the control of adults or elders in the family. It consists of only two generations. The nuclear family is the most common type of family in all modern societies. In fact, the nuclear family is both the result and cause of the disintegration of the joint family. The individual nuclear family is a universal social phenomenon. It can be defined as a small group composed of husband, wife and children that constitute a unit separate from the rest of the community. The nuclear family is characteristic of all modern industrial societies in which a high degree of

structural and functional specialization exists. A nuclear family consists of a man and woman living together who maintain a socially accepted sexual relationship and have at least one child. The traditional nuclear family is a nuclear family in which the wife works for free in the household and the husband works outside the home for income. According to Popenoe this makes him the primary provider and final authority. According to Lowie it does not matter whether the marital relationship is permanent or temporary; whether polygamous or polygamous, one fact transcends all others that everywhere the husband, wife and immature children constitute a unit distinct from the rest of the community. T.B. Bottomore (1962) says that the reason for the universality of the nuclear family can be traced to the important functions it performs. The nuclear family has been performing sexual, economic, reproductive and educational functions. The indispensability of these and some other functions has contributed to its universality. A major factor in maintaining the nuclear family is economic cooperation based on the division of labour between the sexes. The structure of a nuclear family is not the same everywhere.

**Joint Family** - A joint family is made up of three generations who live under the same roof, share the same kitchen, and share the same pocketbook or economic expenditure. It is a family made up of three nuclear families that live together. Joint family is a group of people who generally live under the same roof, eat food cooked on the same stove, share property, participate in common family worship, and interact with each other in some form or the other. (Irawati Karve, 1953). Joint family, a family in which members of a unilateral descent group (a group in which descent through either the female or male line is prioritized) live together in one farmstead with their spouses and offspring under the control of one of the members. The joint family is an extension of the nuclear family (parents and dependent

children), and it usually occurs when offspring of one sex marry and bring their spouses to live with them instead of leaving their parents' house. For example, a patriarchal joint family may include an old man and his wife, his sons and unmarried daughters, his sons' wives and children, etc. For a middle generation person, belonging to a joint family means linking his marital family with his family of origin (the family in which he was born). The joint family differs from the extended family only in that members of the latter reside in different compounds. Members of a joint family share all of the activities of food collection, trade, food preparation, and child rearing, and the social organization is sometimes so cohesive that the discrete nuclear families are barely visible in the daily chores, with youngsters calling all adult women as "mother."

### **Parent Involvement**

Parental involvement has been considered the most important factor influencing childhood and adulthood. Any enrichment program must involve active parent-child interactions to maximize the abilities of all children. The role of parents in raising their children is quite important in terms of their devotion in terms of time, money and other considerations. Parent involvement in schools includes discussions after school, helping with homework assignments, getting involved in extra-curricular activities, keeping up with academic progress, imparting values to parents, attending parent meetings, may include participating in school activities and volunteering in the classroom (Gonzalez, et al, 2005).

Parental involvement has been defined and quantified in a variety of ways, including activities parents participate in at home and school, as well as parents' favourable feelings toward their child's education, school, and teacher (Epstein, 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Kohl, Lengua, & McMahan, 2000). Several recent studies have highlighted the distinction between the

activities that parents engage in and the attitude that parents have toward education. Several studies have found that increased activity frequency is associated with higher levels of child misbehavior in the classroom (Izzo, Weissberg, Kaspro, & Fendrich, 1999), whereas positive attitudes toward education and school are associated with increased academic performance (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, Cox, & Bradley, 2003). Izzo et al. (1999) specifically noted that increased parental school activities, such as increasing the frequency of parent-teacher contacts, were associated with decreased achievement, since greater contacts may have happened to assist the teacher in managing the child's current behaviour problems. The importance of parental attitudes towards education and school is less known, despite the fact that attitudes are considered an important aspect of the relationship between parents and school (Eccles & Harold, 1994). Parents convey educational approaches to their children during non-school time, and these approaches are reflected in the child's classroom behaviour as well as in the teacher's interactions with the child and parent (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom, 1993).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Shana L. Pribesh, Jane Smith Carson, Mikaela J. Dufur, Yuanyuan Yue & Kathy Morgan (2020).** The results suggest that changes in parental involvement are only evident for families that experience both transition and single parenting, and that these differences in parental involvement affect educational outcomes.

**Bansal, S.B., Dixit, Sanjay, Shivram, Geeta, Pandey, Dhruvendra & Saroshe, Satish (2014).** The results found that the overall health status of members of nuclear families was worse than that of members of joint families. Awareness about health care facilities is higher among nuclear families.

**Sharma, Prarthana Prakash & Panchmatia, Dhvani (2013).** The results of the study are that children from joint

families will have better emotional and social coping than children from nuclear families.

**Jayachandran, S. (2008)** while researching the results found that students from joint families are more adjusted than students from nuclear families. It was also found that family environment and family adjustment play a very important role in the academic achievement of students.

## **Objectives of the study**

1. The main objective of this study was to compare the different dimensions of parent involvement of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs.
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## **Hypotheses of the study**

**H1:** There will be significant difference among the parent involvement of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs.

**H2:** There will be significant difference between single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs on different dimensions of parent involvement viz. school, home & parent-teacher associations.

## **MATERIALS & METHODS**

### **Variables**

**Independent Variable** - Single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs

**Dependent Variable** - Parent involvement (School, Home & Parent-Teacher Associations)

### **Controls Variable -**

1. The same order of testing was followed for all parents.

- All parents of children with special needs (CWSN).

### Sample

Purposive sampling technique was used to identify subjects for this research project. The sample included 50 parents of special needs children from Jaipur, Rajasthan, with 25 parents from single family's parents (25 mothers and 25 fathers) and 25 parents from joint families' parents (25 mothers and 25 fathers).

### Tool Used

The Parent Involvement Scale created by Dr. Rita Chopra and Dr. Surabala Sahoo was used for the present research. The scale has 34 items and each item has three options, in which each item or statement should be scored 3 for frequently, 2 for occasionally and 1 for never. Parental Involvement provides three different dimensions of parental involvement. These are schools, homes and parent-teacher associations.

### PROCEDURE

The Parent Involvement Scale was administered individually to a selected

sample of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs. Before testing, subjects were informed about the purpose of the research during a conversation and proper rapport was established, so as to increase the likelihood of genuine responses. After completion the questionnaires were collected and scored by their author as per the guidelines given in the respective manual. Scoring of the data obtained for each test was done with the help of scoring keys and manuals available for the test used in the present study.

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

"t" test was used to determine the significance of mean difference.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The result and discussion of present study are presented table wise.

**Hypothesis – 1:** There will be significant difference among the parent involvement of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs.

Table No. – 1

Groups	Subject (N)	Mean	SD	SED	t-value	Significant level
Single Family Parents	50	75.20	11.47	1.91	8.99	0.01
Joint Family Parents	50	92.38	6.86			
N = 100				df = 98		

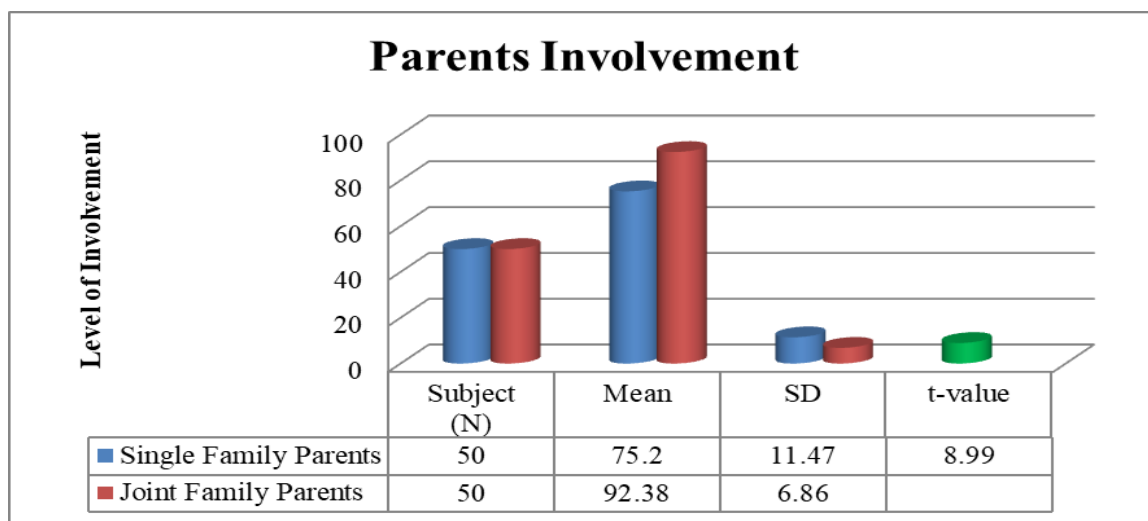


Figure No. - 1

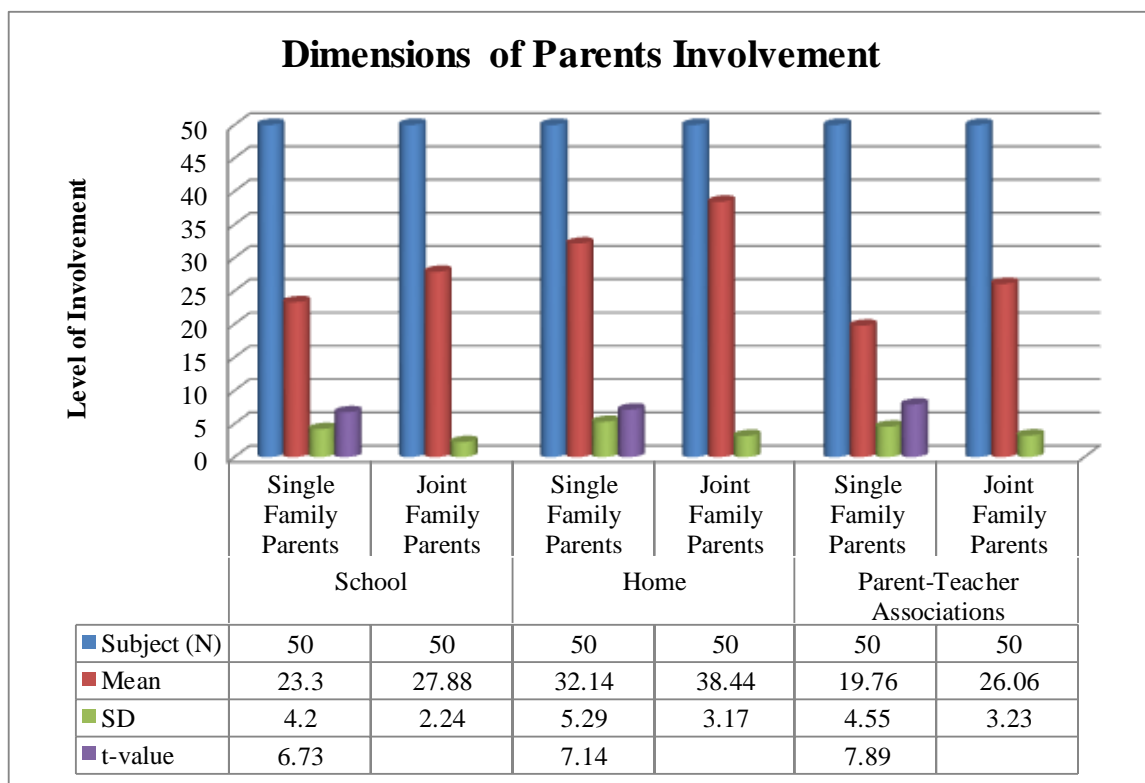
**The table number & figure number – 1** reveals that the mean value of single family parents of children with special needs parent involvement is 75.20 and SD value is 11.47, whereas mean value of joint family parents of children with special needs parent involvement is 92.38 and SD value is 6.86. The t-value between the mean of single family parents and joint family parents is 8.99, which shows significant difference at 0.01 levels. That means there is significant difference between the parent involvement of single family parents and joint family

parents. But the joint family parents have better level of parent involvement than single family parents. Our result supporting the findings of **Sharma, Prarthana & Panchmatia, Dhvani (2013) and Jayachandran, S. (2008)**.

**Hypothesis – 2:** There will be significant difference between single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs on different dimensions of parent involvement viz. school, home & parent-teacher associations.

**Table No. – 2**

Dimensions	Groups	Subject (N)	Mean	SD	SED	t-value	df	Significant level
School	Single Family Parents	50	23.30	4.20	0.68	6.73	98	0.01
	Joint Family Parents	50	27.88	2.24				
Home	Single Family Parents	50	32.14	5.29	0.88	7.14	98	0.01
	Joint Family Parents	50	38.44	3.17				
Parent-Teacher Associations	Single Family Parents	50	19.76	4.55	0.79	7.89	98	0.01
	Joint Family Parents	50	26.06	3.23				



**Figure No. - 2**

- 1. The table number & figure number – 2** reveals that the mean value of single family parents of children with special needs school dimension of parent involvement is 23.30 and SD value is 4.20, whereas mean value of joint family parents of children with special needs school dimension of parent involvement is 27.88 and SD value is 2.24. The t-value between the mean of single family parents and joint family parents is 6.73, which shows significant difference at 0.01 levels. That means there is significant difference between the school dimension of single family parents and joint family parents. But when we compare the mean value the school dimension of joint family parents is better as compared to single family parents. Our result supporting the findings of Shana L. Pribesh, Jane Smith Carson, Mikaela J. Dufur, Yuanyuan Yue & Kathy Morgan (2020).
- 2. The table number & figure number – 2** reveals that the mean value of single family parents of children with special needs home dimension of parent involvement is 32.14 and SD value is 5.29, whereas mean value of joint family parents of children with special needs home dimension of parent involvement is 38.44 and SD value is 3.17. The t-value between the mean of single family parents and joint family parents is 7.14, which shows significant difference at 0.01 levels. That means there is significant difference between the home dimension of single family parents and joint family parents. But when we compare the mean value the home dimension of joint family parents is better as compared to single family parents. Our result supporting the findings of Bansal, S.B., Dixit, Sanjay, Shivram, Geeta, Pandey, Dhruvendra & Saroshe, Satish (2014) and Sharma, Prarthana Prakash & Panchmatia, Dhvani (2013).
- 3. The table number & figure number – 2** reveals that the mean value of single

family parents of children with special needs parent-teacher associations dimension of parent involvement is 19.76 and SD value is 4.55, whereas mean value of joint family parents of children with special needs parent-teacher associations dimension of parent involvement is 26.06 and SD value is 3.23. The t-value between the mean of single family parents and joint family parents is 7.89, which shows significant difference at 0.01 levels. That means there is significant difference between the Parent-Teacher Associations dimension of single family parents and joint family parents. But when we compare the mean value the Parent-Teacher Associations of joint family parents is better as compared to single family parents. Our result supporting the findings of Jayachandran, S. (2008).

The main aim of present research was to compare the parent involvement between single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs. Results revealed that there is a significant difference between parent involvement of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs. But joint family parents of children with special needs have better level of parent involvement than single family parents of children with special needs. When we compare the different involvement area of parent involvement joint family parents have better school, home & parent-teacher associations than single family parents. The reason for this result could be joint family parents have given more safety, time, guidance, family members support, social support, economic support and emotional support as compared to single family parents revealed the discussion after the study.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings demonstrated a substantial difference between parent involvement of single family parents and joint family parents of children with special needs.

However, joint family parents of children with special needs have a higher level of parental participation than single family parents of children with special needs because joint family environments provide a more conducive atmosphere for enhanced parent involvement. The additional support, shared responsibilities, and collaborative caregiving within joint families could contribute to a more engaged and active role of parents in the lives of children with special needs.

#### **Declaration by Authors**

**Ethical Approval:** Approved

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**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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