Innovations

Trail to Adulthood: Status of Youth Grounded on Markers of Adulthood

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Abstract

Adulthood is considered as one of the longest life courses; major transition is taking place in one's life during the entry of this life course. There are markers or milestones one must achieve to enter into adulthood. Many researchers have reported that young people of modern society take much longer time to enter into adulthood and durability of the transition period is unusually longer than normal transition (Arnett, 2000; Cote, 2000; Robbins &Willner, 2001). The term "Emerging Adulthood" is a culturally constructed life course that has been introduced by Arnett (Arnett, 1994). The paper is trying to find out the Perceived adulthood status, Status of achieved markers and the Importance given by the young people to the markers using the Markers of Adulthood scale introduced by Arnett. The study has been conducted among young people aged between 18 and 25 in Kerala, India. The study results show that heterogeneity exists in this age group is related with their adulthood perception and most of the markers are not yet achieved by the majority of the participants. They give importance to their individuality as well as their civic responsibility and parental care.

Key Words: *Markers of Adulthood, Emerging Adulthood, Young people, Perceived Adulthood Status*

Introduction

The path to adulthood becomes complicated and changing by its nature and most of the people are taking different paths in this transition which is requiring longer time than the previous generations (Arnett, 2014). As individuals progress through early part of their lives towards adulthood, a number of experiences they go through, actions they take, skills and knowledge they gather in formal and informal circles are considered as preparation for the autonomous existence in the adulthood (Petrogiannes, 2011). This paper mainly focuses on the achievement of the markers of adulthood by youth age between 18 and 25 and their perceived importance of those Markers.

According to (Arnett, 2000) the age between 18 to 25, sometimes to 29 is a distinct period demographically, subjectively and in terms of identity explorations and call it as "Emerging Adulthood". The broad goal of the research is to achieve the understanding of development in this period of life with the outcome of improvingthe lives of young people.

Life changes may not themselves constitute stages of development in the same sense that stages were defined for the various period of early life. It is obvious in various cultures that there is a great variability in the way of such changes (Setterson& Mayor, 1997).

The transitory period to adulthood is made-up of various socio-demographically and culturally defined events. They have been labelled as 'structural components' such as age at school leaving, age at marriage

or becoming a parent, getting a job, conditions of labour market entrance, education and training facilities, availability of affordable housing, laws which define rights and responsibilities, welfare provision for the individual and 'subjective components' such as independence from family, sexuality, partnership, parenthood, life style and citizenship. These structural components and subjective components interact with each other and the costs impact the whole person (EGRIS, 2001).

When we analyse the developmental nature of transition to adulthood of young people it should be kept in mind that within the cultural sphere, two issues have been raised in the relevant psycho-sociological literature. On one hand, globalization points to continuous movement towards convergence and homogeneity across countries in many areas of social and economic life, as opposed to uniqueness and heterogeneity (Brown & Lauder, 1996). On the other hand, within countries regional distinctiveness is still clearly evident.

One of the demographic natures found in the developed countries in recent years is the phenomenon of 'individualization', with emphasis placed on individual level. Research says this arises because society is moving away from 'standardized' scripts towards greater individualization (Shanahan,2000).

The literature regarding the markers of adulthood shows various results and possibilities. Analysing the importance of the dimensions of emerging adulthood a Greek study found that taking responsibility for yourself (Self-focus), planning for the future and deciding on your own beliefs and values (Identity Exploration) were the three items with the highest mean values. Separating from parents, providing for yourself without the help of others (self- focus) and being not sure whether you have reached free adulthood (feeling in between) were the three items with the lowest mean values (Galanki&Sideridis, 2018). Three criteria found in many countries and cultures to be the most important markers of reaching adult status are accepting responsibility for oneself, making independent decisions and being financially independent (Arnett, 2007). Research also shows that Youth who consider more important criteria related to family and obligations to others and norm compliance compared to those who don't are less depressed (Bayram &Bilgel, 2008). There are research findings contradictory to it like (Scales et al., 2015) mention majority of the young adults are moral individualists without a larger vision of ethical obligations to others or to causes.

Today's young adults' civic engagement is comparatively less and they consider individualistic and extrinsic values such as money and fame more important than connecting with others and contributing to community (Zorotovich, 2014). Life course in industrialized societies have become increasingly characterized by individualization, meaning that institutional constraints and supports have become less powerful and important. People are often left to their own resources in making their way from one part of the life course to the next (Cote, 2000; Heinz, 2002). At the same time (Taylor et al, 2012) found that relational and contribution goals such as being a good parent, having a job that contributes to the society were young adults most important goals, far more important than self-gain goals such as fame or making a lot of money. Successful young adulthood in this era presents a mix of traditional and new moral issues, dilemmas and decisions with which young adults must grapple as part of solidifying their authentic personal and social identities.

Most young people spent the period from their late teens to their mid-20's not settling into long term adult roles and are ambivalent about taking on adult roles and responsibilities, but trying out diverse knowledge and gradually making their way towards enduring choices of future. It may not be a complete denial or rejection of adult roles. They are wise to identify the opportunities they can try before completely taking over the adult role and responsibilities. Besides adulthoodis oftenwitnessed as dull and stagnant by young people (Arnett, 2007).

The achievement of markers of adulthood also depends on the cultural variation in the ways in which society manages these adult life changes, both in terms of social organization like marriage or in the ways in which work is allocated through educational system (Butterworth & Harris, 1994).

Arnett (1994, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2007; Arnett & Galambos, 2003) based on wide-ranging psychological, sociological and anthropological review, has projected the period of life from the late teens through the mid to late twenties with a focus on ages 18-25 or 29, can be considered as a 'distinct period',

called "Emerging adulthood". Leaving the dependence of childhood and adolescence, and not yet entered the permanent tasks that are regulating adulthood, emerging adults regularly discover a diversity of probable life orders in love, work and worldviews (Arnett, 2000). People may vary during emerging adult in the extent to which they consider important to achieve certain criteria in order to become an adult (Piumatti&Rabaglietti, 2015).

Emerging adulthood is constructed in cultural terms. It occurs only in societies that allow to delay the entry into adult roles and tasks. Hence, it would be most probably seen in societies that are highly modernized, industrialized and technologically developed where high levels of education are necessary for achieving prestigious jobs. Though, such progressive educational training can lead topostponement of traditional markers like marriage and parenthood. Overall due to social, institutional, cultural and economic factors, not only various social and demographic results are created, but also the criteria/ markers approved by young people to characterise themselves as an adult (Petrogiannis, 2011).

Measurement and Participants

The measurement used in the study is 41 items Markers of Adulthood scale developed by Jeffrey Arnett (Arnett, 2001)

The first 20 items measuring the achievement of markers include financially independent from parents, Living in parents' household, Finished with education, Married, Have at least one child, Have settled into a long term career, Avoid becoming drunk, Avoid illegal drugs, Use contraception if sexually active, Committed to a long- term love relationship, Make independent decisions, Have become capable of supporting a family financially, Have become capable of caring for children, Accept responsibility for your action, Employed full time, Avoid drunk driving, Have a relationship with parents as an equal adult, Have learned always to control your emotions, Have become less self-oriented than high school and capable of supporting parents financially.

The latter part of the scale assesses the perception of young people regarding what markers or mile stones are important in achieving adulthood and whether the participants attained these adulthood characteristics. A solitary item measures whether a respondent sensed he or she had gotten adulthood (yes, no, somewhat) was recorded so that higher scores represented fuller attainment of adulthood. There were 20 items measuring importance (4 = very important, 1 = not important) and 20 items measuring achievement of same items (either dichotomous, yes or no; or ordinal, from 1 = very true, 3 = not true).

The study has been conducted in Kerala, a southern state of India. As a part of diverse country Kerala upholds its own language, socio-economic and cultural system. Kerala has been able to achieve fairly high levels of social development similar to some parts of the industrialized west (Balakrishnan, 2015). Young people age between 18 and 25 who are Keralites participated in this particular study. This cross-sectional study has taken data from three hundred and ninety participants from different parts of Kerala.

Analysis

The study has focused on the youth age between 18 and 25 and their achievement of markers of adulthood. For the statistical analysis of the data SPSS IBM 19 has been used.

The Table 1 shows the assessment of the perception of the young people regarding the importance of the Markers. The 20 markers were listed in the assessment tool given the choices Very important=4, Quite important=3, Slightly important=2 and Not at all important=1. The item which gets highest mean can be considered important markers for individual age between 18 and 25. Apparently based on the data received young people consider 'Accept responsibility for one's own action (Mean= 3.843, S. D= .451), Avoid drunk driving (Mean= 3.833. S. D= .532), Make independent decisions (Mean= 3.759. S. D= 567), Avoid illegal drugs (Mean= 3.731, S. D= .729), Capable of supporting parents financially' (Mean= 3.70, S. D= .604) top the list of important markers followed by financial independence (Mean= 3.679. S. D= .682), Learn always to have good control over your emotions (Mean= 3.666, S. D= 584), Become capable of supporting family financially (Mean= 3.438, S. D= .823), Finished with education (Mean= 3.60, S. D= .829), Establish relationship with parents as an equal adult (Mean= 3. 589, S.D.= .714), Avoid becoming drunk

(Mean= 3.482, S. D= .894), Be employed full time (Mean= 3.438, S. D= .823), Settled into a long-term career (Mean= 3.338, S. D= .928), Become capable of caring children (Mean= 3.253, S. D= .975), Become less self-oriented (Mean= 3.13, S. D= .918). The least important markers reported by respondents were 'Use contraception if sexually active to avoid unwanted pregnancy (Mean= 2.997, S. D= 1.205), No longer live in parents' household (Mean= 2.625, S. D= 1.035), Married (Mean= 2.125, S. D= 1.030), Have at least one child (Mean= 2.125, S. D= 1.139) and committed to long term love relationship (Mean= 2.115, S. D= 1.144)'.

The Table 2 represents the solitary item measures whether a respondent sensed he or she had gotten adulthood (yes, no, somewhat) was recoded, 30.3 percent of the participants responded that they feel like they have reached adulthood, 6.2 percent replied they have not yet felt like they reach adulthood and the majority of 63.6 percent responded that sometimes they felt like they have reached adulthood but sometimes they do feel like adults and sometimes they don't feel like one.

The Table 3 shows the achievement status of markers. Among them the first item financial independence could be considered as a major marker in the path of adulthood and the descriptive analysis shows that only 13.1 percent of the participants are financially independent, 20.5 percent are partially independent and the 66.4 percent of the majority were completely depending on their parents financially. Besides 90.8 percent of them residing in their parent's home and only 9.2 percent moved out of their parents' home. Completing education considered as one of the markers and only 19.2 percent of the respondents fall under that category and the rest of the 80.8 percent are still continuing their studies. Getting married comes under a traditional marker of adulthood and 94.4 percent were unmarried. The same trend was followed in the case of parenthood as only 2.1 percent of them had child/ children. Usage of illegal drugs and alcohols reportedly less among respondents. Only 2.8 percent reported using illegal drugs and in the case of alcohol usage 6.8 percent reported that they used to get drunk often. Contraception is being used by 14.9, 8.9 percent use it sometimes, 9.7 percent are never used by the respondents who are sexually active. 67.2 responded that the question is not applicable for them. For independent decision making, 40 percent of the respondents felt that they are able to do it in their daily life while 52.8 percent responded that somewhat they take independent decisions and for the 7.2 percent they still have to achieve the goal of independent decision making. Ability to Support a family financially, as it is a crucial marker and huge responsibility only 11.3 percent could answer that the statement is very true for them, 21.5 percent partially could support while the majority 67.2 percent admit that they are incapable right now to fulfil that adulthood marker. Along with marriage and parenthood another one of the traditional markers is the ability to take care of children.

Respondents followed the same trend they exhibited for the previous questions. Only few admitted that they are capable to take care of the responsibility of a child/ child (9.7 percent), 19.7 percent responded that they are somewhat capable to perform the particular role while the majority 70.5 percent answered that the statement 'Capable of taking care of children' is not true for them. A full-time employment could be the base for all kind of independence and role taking in the daily life. Among the respondents, 15.6 percent are full time employed and the rest 84.4 are still unemployed. For the statement of Avoid drunk driving, 96.2 percent responded very true, 1.5 percent said Somewhat True and the other 2.3 percent responded Not True. 47.9 percent of the respondents believe that they have an adult-to-adult relationship with parents, 39.7 responded that is somewhat true in their case and 12.3 not yet established such kind of relationship with their parents. Controlling one's own emotion has been Very True for 38.2 percent of the respondents and 53.1 percent answered it was Somewhat true for them and 8.7 percent responded the statement is Not True for them. Putting others before oneself and being less self-oriented listed as one of the criteria of reaching adulthood. Among the options Very true, somewhat true and not true received 33.1 percent, 44.1 percent and 22.8 percent respectively. The last statement was about the ability to support their parents financially, 13.6 percent reported that they are capable of supporting their parents, 26.7 said they are Somewhat capable of doing that and 59.7 percent are not capable of supporting their parents financially right now.

Table 1: *Perceived Importance of Markers of Adulthood by Youth aged between 18 and 25*

Item	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Financial Independence	3.679	.682
No longer live in parents' household	2.625	1.035
Finished with education	3.60	.829
Married	2.125	1.03
Have at least one child	2.125	1.139
Settled into a long-term career	3.338	.928
Avoid becoming drunk	3.482	.894
Avoid illegal drugs	3.731	.729
Use of contraception if sexually active	2.997	1.205
Committed to long term love relationship	2.115	1.145
Make independent decisions	3.759	.567
Capable of supporting family financially	3.438	.824
Capable of caring children	3.254	.975
Accept responsibility for your action	3.843	.451
Employed full time	3.438	.824
Avoid drunk driving	3.833	.532
Establish relationship with parents as an equal adult	3.589	.714
Learn always to have good control over your emotions	3.666	.584
Became less oriented than high school	3.131	.918
Capable of supporting parents financially	3.7	.604

(Source: Primary data, 2022)

Table 2; *The Perceived Adulthood Status by Young people age between 18 and 25*

Do you feel like you have reached adulthood	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	118	30.3
No	24	6.2
In some ways yes. In some ways no	248	63.6

(Source: Primary data, 2022)

Table 3: *Status of Achievement of Markers of Adulthood by Young People Age between 18 and 25*

Variable	N	Percent	Variable	N	Percent
Financial independence from parents			Have settled into a long-term career		
Very true	51	13.1	Very true	23	5.9
Somewhat true	80	20.5	Somewhat true	76	19.5
Not true	259	66.4	Not true	291	74.6
Living in parents' household			Finished with education		
Yes	354	90.8	Yes	75	19.2
No	36	9.2	No	315	80.8
Married			Have at least one child		

Yes	22	5.6	Yes	8	2.1
No	368	94.4	No	382	97.9
Avoid becoming drunk			Avoid illegal drugs		
Very true	325	83.3	Very true	368	94.4
Somewhat true	40	10.3	Somewhat true	11	2.8
Not true	25	6.4	Not true	11	2.8
Use contraception if sexually active			Committed to a long- term relationship		
Very true	58	14.9	Very true	85	21.8
Somewhat true	32	8.2	Somewhat true	30	7.7
Not true	38	9.7	Not true	275	70.5
Not applicable	262	67.2			
Make independent decisions			Capable of supporting family		
Very true	156	40	Very true	44	11.3
Somewhat true	206	52.8	Somewhat true	84	21.5
Not true	28	7.2	Not true	262	67.2
Capable of caring for children			Accept responsibility for action		
Very true	38	9.7	Very true	250	64.1
Somewhat true	77	19.7	Somewhat true	126	32.3
Not true	275	70.5	Not true	14	3.6
Full time employment			Avoid drunk driving		
Yes	61	15.6	Very true	375	96.2
No	329	84.4	Somewhat true	6	1.5
			Not true	9	2.3
Have a relationship with parents as an equal adult			Learned always to control emotions		
Very true	187	47.9	Very true	149	38.2
Somewhat true	155	39.7	Somewhat true	207	53.1
Not true	48	12.3	Not true	34	8.7
Less self- oriented than high school			Capable of supporting parents financially		
Very true	129	33.1	Very true	53	13.6
Somewhat true	172	44.1	Somewhat true	104	26.7
Not true	89	22.8	Not true	233	59.7

(Source: Primary data, 2022)

Discussion

Answer to the question, 'which markers Kerala youth age between 18 and 25 give more importance is right here in the data'. Those markers are 'accept responsibility for one's own action; avoid drunk driving; making independent decision; avoid illegal drugs and capable of supporting parents financially'. This finding shows that young people are trying to be moral individuals by observing their moral obligations, civic responsibilities and taking responsibility for themselves. Finding of this study is similar to the Greek study (Galanki and Sideridis, 2018). Youth give much importance to civic responsibilities and taking care of their parents. This proves that Indian family traditions and cultural practices are still valued by them. The least important markers reported by respondents were 'Use contraception if sexually active; No longer live in parents' household; Married; Have at least one child and committed to long term love relationship. Getting married and having a child come under traditional marker and we could see that even though Indian and Kerala society traditionally gives importance to those markers, participants are not agreeing with it and they give least importance to romantic commitment to become an adult. It is interesting to see that young people like to place the marital, sexual and parental role in the least important category of adulthood achievement. Young people now a days like to take decision on these milestones by their own choice not by following standard of family, society and tradition and may like to make it separate from the criteria of reaching adulthood.

The perceived adulthood status of young people age between 18 and 25 depict that they vary in their perception. 63.3 percent admit that they sometimes feel like adults but sometimes they don't, 30.5 percent were sure that they reached adulthood and 6.2 admitted that they don't feel like they are adults or they reached adulthood. Perhaps we might have to admit that this is the most heterogeneous period of the life course (Arnett, 2007). We have seen that Arnett has proposed the term "Emerging adulthood" to introduce a new life course in the life span (Arnett, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001,2007). The label emerging is applied to those who do not think themselves as so fully adult and those who in the same range who consider themselves as adult known as young adults (Blinn-Pike et al., 2008). In that sense we may have to conclude that 69.5 percent of the participants fall under the label of 'Emerging Adults' while the other 30.5 fall under young adults. It shows that age ranges sometimes can't be a satisfying criterion (Scales et al., 2015).

Financial independence considered as a major milestone towards the path of adulthood (Arnett, 2007) as it gives a strong basement to build up a person's life independently. In the study it is revealed that only 13.1 percent of the respondents financially independent from their parents. In Indian culture the protracted reliance on the family of origin well-thought-out as normal and the long-term postponement of personal independence is almost a normal phenomenon. Families or parents take the financial responsibilities of the Youth during and even after their higher education. As we see in the result 66.4 percent of the respondents fully depend on their parents financially while 20.5 percent partially depend. This shows that the cultural practices in a social system impact the nature of development of individuals in different stages of their life (Hogan & Astone, 1986; Furstenberg &Kmec, 2000). The same goes in the case of accommodation. Staying at parents' home is seen as normal in Kerala, Indian culture unless the situation like educational, employment purposes or marriage demands otherwise.

The result shows that 80.8 percent of the respondents are still continuing their study and only 19.2 percentage have completed their education. This inclination could be culturally constructed. As mentioned earlier the study conducted in the state of Kerala, India. As a state in a diverse country Kerala has its own regional distinctiveness in all its social spheres including education, health and employment. Kerala has been contributing to the workforces where high educational qualification and skills are needed, both inside and outside of India. Such advanced educational training tends to prolong the years of higher education and thus postpone marriage and parenthood (Petrogiannis, 2011). The results prove the same as 94.4 percent of the respondents are unmarried and only 2.1 percent were into parenthood.

In the study 6.8 percent respondents admit that they used to get drunk. Study did not have the objective to find out the rate of the habits of alcohol consumption among the respondents, rather the finding

disclosesthat most of the young respondents stay away from drunk driving and getting drunk which could lead them to violate law and harmony of the society.

Usage of illegal drugsis reported by 2.8 percent of the respondents. Nationally the mean age of drug using was 35.3 years. 21-30 years age group was the second most drug abusers (33.1% of the total users) and 5 percent of the users were 20 years and below. In Kerala,adultsabove 40 years were frequently reported as drug abusers (DAMS, 2002).

The question of using of contraception helps to know how responsible young people are to avoid unplanned pregnancy. Both among married and unmarried couple unplanned pregnancy could bring serious issues if they are not prepared physically, emotionally and financially. In the Indian context pre-marital sex and parenthood out of wed lockis considered taboo though exceptions are there. So, if the person is sexually active is much important or it is a sign that the person is keen enough to take precaution in order to avoid the negative consequences. Most of the respondents answered that the question does not apply to them (67.2%) indicating that probably they are following the traditional norm by avoiding pre-marital sex, while 14.9 responded that they are regularly using contraceptives.

Romantic relationship has significant and lasting impact on an individual's development. Both boys and girls reported a positive change in the quality of life, which included feelings of happiness and reducing negative states like anger and sadness (Gala and Kapadia, 2014). The period between 18 and 25 is highly unstructured according to Arnett (Arnett, 2004) and it helps the individual explore love and romance. The development of a romantic bond and entering into a committed relationship can be cross cultural universals (Fisher et al., 2006). Indian culture is seemingly not in favour of romantic relationships, in fact it is a kind of distasteful. In this age group romantic relationship is largely exploratory. So, committing to a long-term or serious relationship can be seen very rarely during this period though there are many exceptions.

One of the major criteria of adulthood is to make independent decisions ((Fisher et al., 2006; Arnett, 2015). Values of individuality and independence can be reflected even in a community and family focused society (Nelson, 2003; Scharf et al., 2004). South Asian countries are known for limited individual freedom (Schwartz, 2009). Though India has a family-oriented culture, the score 48 in individualism index (Hofstede, 2001) shows a mixed individualistic- collectivistic nature. The study result also shows the same response. While 40 percent clearly stated that they make independent decisions in their daily life, 52.8 percent admitted that only partially they make decision for themselves and 7.2 percent said they don't make any independent decisions in their daily life. Nuclear families give more opportunity for the involvement of children in the decision-making process and in recent years India has witnessed a hike in the number of nuclear families. Besides young people have more opportunity to move out of their family to distant places for their higher education and job and these opportunities may increase the autonomy of Indian youth like developed countries.

The ability to support a family comes as a result of the fulfilment of basic criteria like financial independence, employment and ability to take care of one's own self. Majority of the respondents have not fulfilled those criteria. So, it's understandable that only 11.3 percent of the respondents could say that they are able to support a family.

We have seen that only 2.1 percent of young people age between 18- 25 have children and very few have got married. Studies show that people identify a marker as important or capable of doing it after they achieve them. Here 70.5 percent of the respondents replied they are not capable of taking care of children. Studies show that people admit their ability to fulfil the task only after the attainment of it (Sassler&Cunningham, 2008; Smock&Greenland, 2010)

The post industrialist societies give more importance to individualism rather than traditional life course events like marriage and parenthood (Bellah, 2008). One of the prime indicators of the three is accepting responsibility for oneself followed by making independent decisions and assuming financial independence. 64.1 percent of young people in the study approve this assumption and 32.3 percent somewhat able to take responsibility for their action. Only the minority 3.6 percent are differing.

Accepting responsibility for one's action was one of the items scored highest mean value in the assessment of importance of criteria of Markers.

When comes to employment, 15.6 percent of respondents replied that they are full time employed and 84.4 percent are currently unemployed. Though 15.6 percent are full time employed, the 13.1 percent of financial independence rate shows that not all of the employed participants are financially independent. The reasons can be different like they may be paid less, or due to their financial burden like paying back of educational loan or the finance may be still managed by their parents. 96.2 percent of the respondents avoid drunk driving and comply with the law which expected from an adult as his/ her civic responsibility. Legal alcohol consumption age by the state of Kerala is 23 though studies show that the age of initiation to alcohol is 18 years in the state (S et al., 2017).

The age 18-25 is an age of identity exploration. This contains establishing adult identities and capacities to bond and connect with others including ones' parents(Goldsmith, 2018). To have a relationship with parents as an equal adult, individual freedom is necessary. When it comes to the individual freedom a double standard has been seen gender wisevice in previous studies (Kurian, 1986). How much are those findings applicable in the current scenario is questionable though?

Reducing negative emotions or unwanted thoughts require surplus internal energy and effort. As aresult, it can interrupt the ability of young people to perform their tasks instantaneously or after. This is the reason controlling emotion becomes very important and it shows the composed side of an individual which helps them to perform like an adult as expected from the society or the outer world. Among the respondents, 38.2 percent replied to the statement 'ability to control one's emotion' is very true for them. With age and experience comes the ability to control emotion better and without disrupting ones' tasks in life (*Older Adults Control Emotions More Easily Than Young Adults -- ScienceDaily*, n.d.). Individuals exposed to childhood trauma and developmental stress may have difficulty to control emotions due to their reduced opportunity to develop such skills in their childhood and adolescence (Hall, n.d.).

One of the characteristics and positive part of emerging adulthood is that they get much time to understand themselves and will have a deep understanding of their personality and purpose. Emerging adulthood is also a self-focused age. Most American emerging adults move out of their parents' home at age 18 or 19 and do not marry or have their first child until at least their late twenties (Arnett, 2004). Even in countries where emerging adults remain in their parents' home through their early twenties, as in southern Europe and in Asian countries they establish a more independent lifestyle than they had as adolescents (Rosenberger, 2007). The results show that they share equally varied opinion about the statement as 33.1 percent of them say that they became less self-oriented, 44.1 percent admit it is somewhat true for them and 22.8 percent agree that the statement is not true for them. While sharing this opinion they also admit the importance of markers that taking care of parents and the financial status of family is very important. It shows that they are able to or try to manage and take care of others needs without compromising their personal interests.

Many emerging adults uphold the idea of duty towards their parents (Chopra, 2012) as a very important marker of adulthood. In Asian industrialized countries, the self-focused freedom of emerging adulthood is balanced by obligations to parents and by conservative views of sexuality. The lives of middle-class youth in India, South East Asia, and Europe have more in common with each other than they do with those of poor youth in their own countries." (Arnett, 2022)

Conclusion

The paper was trying to explain how Kerala youth age between 18 and 25 given importance to the markers of adulthood, how they perceive themselves related to their adult status and how much they have achieved those markers in their lives. Given the result, we can conclude that they give much importance to individualistic or modern criteria like emerging adults in the industrialized western countries and given least importance to traditional markers like marriage and parenthood. At the same time, they uphold the importance and value of family and parental care. The results of the perceived adulthood status of the respondents show the same age group people can belong to two different life

courses as it is most heterogeneous period of life (Arnett, 2017). Hence, we can say that emerging adulthood exist in Kerala society and these emerging adults may vary in their characteristics in the extent to which they consider important to achieve certain criteria in order to become an adult (Piumatti&Rabaglietti, 2015). The achievement status of adulthood markers portrays that young people take much time to achieve both traditional and modern criteria of adulthood than before and evidentially this time period is long enough to constitute a life course which require more attention and constant examination to get the profound understanding of future adults and their priorities.

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