

A STUDY ON PARENT AND PEER INFLUENCE ON ADOLESCENTS' MENTAL HEALTH FOR FUTURE ACADEMIC ASPIRATIONS

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Abstract

Adolescence (from Latin *adolescere*, meaning 'to grow up') is a transitional stage of physical and psychological development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood (age of majority). **Rajaswat (2002)** studied self-concept, morality and adjustment of school going adolescents. Self-concept of rural girls and urban girls was highly significant. The rural girls were having clear vision of self in all dimensions as compared to urban girls. This study is about finding the level of parental and peer influence in adolescence mental health for their future academic aspirations. Parents and peers have direct impact on adolescence decisions and mental health so their influence plays a vital role in adolescent's development. The study reveals the impact of parent and peers influence in adolescents. The researcher has adapted quota sampling method to draw the samples for the current study. The researcher targeted first 10 adolescent students entering the school gate from 08:30am to 09:00am and collected the data during their leisure time. Hence sample sizes of 100 respondents were included for the study through quota sampling technique. The current study focuses on the adolescents in schools. Hence the universe of the study is school going adolescents. Less than half (42%) of the respondents were studying 11th standard, 24% were studying 9th standard, 23% were studying 8th standard and 11% are studying 10th standard because the questionnaires are distributed to the students above 8th standard. More than 1/4th (30%) of the respondent's age were 16 years, 21% belong to 15 years of age, 20% belong to 13 years of age, 17% belong to 14 years of age and 12% belong to 17 years of age because the researcher targeted the students aged between 13-19 years of age. Adolescents should be directed by their parents to have positive impact on their decisions. Parents should concentrate on their children in moral behavior and academics.

Key Words: Parents, Adolescences, Peer Influence, Mental Health, Academic, Behaviour

Introduction

Adolescence (from Latin *adolescere*, meaning 'to grow up') is a transitional stage of physical and psychological development that generally occurs during the period from puberty to legal adulthood (age of majority). Adolescence is usually associated with the teenage years, but its physical, psychological or cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later. For example, puberty now typically begins during preadolescence, particularly in females. Physical growth (particularly in males), and cognitive development can extend into the early twenties. Thus, age provides only a rough marker of adolescence, and scholars have found it difficult to agree upon a precise definition of adolescence.

A thorough understanding of adolescence in society depends on information from various perspectives, including psychology, biology, history, sociology, education, and anthropology.

Within all of these perspectives, adolescence is viewed as a transitional period between childhood and adulthood, whose cultural purpose is the preparation of children for adult roles. It is a period of multiple transitions involving education, training, employment and unemployment, as well as transitions from one living circumstance to another.

The end of adolescence and the beginning of adulthood varies by country. Furthermore, even within a single nation state or culture there can be different ages at which an individual is considered mature enough for society to entrust them with certain privileges and responsibilities. Such privileges and responsibilities include driving a vehicle, having legal sexual relations, serving in the armed forces or on a jury, purchasing and drinking alcohol, voting, entering into contracts, finishing certain levels of education, marriage, and accountability for upholding the law. Adolescence is usually accompanied by an increased independence allowed by the parents or legal guardians, including less supervision as compared to preadolescence.

In studying adolescent development, adolescence can be defined biologically, as the physical transition marked by the onset of puberty and the termination of physical growth; cognitively, as changes in the ability to think abstractly and multi-dimensionally; or socially, as a period of preparation for adult roles. Major pubertal and biological changes include changes to the sex organs, height, weight, and muscle mass, as well as major changes in brain structure and organization. Cognitive advances encompass both increments in knowledge and in the ability to think abstractly and to reason more effectively. The study of adolescent development often involves interdisciplinary collaborations. For example, researchers in neuroscience or bio-behavioral health might focus on pubertal changes in brain structure and its effects on cognition or social relations. Sociologists interested in adolescence might focus on the acquisition of social roles (e.g., worker or romantic partner) and how this varies across cultures or social conditions. Developmental psychologists might focus on changes in relations with parents and peers as a function of school structure and pubertal status. Some scientists have questioned the universality of adolescence as a developmental phase, arguing that traits often considered typical of adolescents are not in fact inherent to the teenage years.

Review of Literature

Grewal (2014) conducted a study to understand the extent of relationship between academic achievement and family climate of 767 adolescents studying in 10+1 class in Govt. / Private Senior Secondary Schools of Punjab. The results of the study showed that there was positive significant correlation between family climate and academic achievement of adolescents. The study further revealed that significant difference exists in the academic achievement of adolescents due to highly satisfactory family climate and highly dissatisfactory family climate. The findings further indicated that academic achievement of adolescents living in highly satisfactory family climate is higher as compared to their counterparts living in highly dissatisfactory family climate.

Peciulyte and Ustinaviciute (2014) 44 conducted a study to investigate the relationship between parent involvement during career decision making and student's career decision self-efficacy. The study sought to find the relationship between three parental involvement facets support, interference, lack of engagement and student's career decision self-efficacy. 205 students of 11-12 grades from Viliniusad Trakai Secondary Schools participated in the main research (mean age =17, S.D. = 0.8). The results indicated that parental support and interference

were positively related to career decisions self-efficacy while lack of engagement was negatively associated with career decisions' self-efficacy. As well as this, it was found that students, who have made their final career choice, scored higher on Career Decision Self-efficacy. There were no gender differences between parental support and interference; however it was found that boys tend to receive less parental involvement in their career decision making compared to girls.

Methodology

Need of the Study

This study is about finding the level of parental and peer influence in adolescence mental health for their future academic aspirations. Parents and peers have direct impact on adolescence decisions and mental health so their influence plays a vital role in adolescent's development. The study reveals the impact of parent and peers influence in adolescents.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the socio-economic conditions of the respondents.
2. To identify the factors influencing adolescents' mental health.
3. To find out the level of parent and peer influence among adolescents.
4. To observe the current mental health of the adolescents.
5. To find out the association/relationship/difference between personal variables and the level of parent and peer influence among the respondents.
6. To find out the association/relationship/difference between personal variables and level of mental health among respondents.

Universe of the Study

The researcher has adapted quota sampling method to draw the samples for the current study. The researcher targeted first 10 adolescent students entering the school gate from 08:30am to 09:00am and collected the data during their leisure time. Hence sample sizes of 100 respondents were included for the study through quota sampling technique. The current study focuses on the adolescents in schools. Hence the universe of the study is school going adolescents.

Sampling Procedure

Sample is the unit of study. It is the part of the target population, which is carefully selected to represent the population. It refers to the technique or procedure that the researcher would adopt in selecting items for the sample in order to carry out the study.

Since the study focuses on adolescents the researcher purposively focuses on adolescents and collected the data from the adolescents for the study of parent and peer influence in adolescence mental health for future academic aspirations. Hence 100 respondents were included for the present study. For this purpose, the researcher approached schools and got permission in YWCA Matriculation Higher Secondary School. Hence sample sizes of 100 respondents were included for the study through quota sampling technique

Research Design

A research design is the logical and systematically plans to carry out research. In this study the researcher adopted descriptive research design, as it portrays particularly the characteristics of the adolescents in YWCA Matriculation Higher Secondary School.

Tools of Data Collection

The method used to collect data is the questionnaire method. The researcher used questionnaires which consists of questions related to personal profile, parent and peer influence scale (Ronald Jay Werner-Wilson & Osnat Arbel) and Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (Warwick-Edinburgh).

Period of Data Collection

Data was collected from 100 respondents through questionnaire method. The collection of data was done from 25.09.2018 to 05.10.2018 at YWCA Matriculation Higher Secondary School.

Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data was analyzed by using SPSS, Diagrams, Tables and Cross tables were used for interpretation of the data. The researcher converted the personal variables in to simple percentage tables. The chi-square and correlation test were applied to find out the association/relationship between variables. ANOVA test was applied to find out the difference among the categories of personal variables and the selected other variables.

Respondents' relationship with others

| S.No | Relations | Poor | Moderate | Good | Very good |
|------|-------------|------|----------|------|-----------|
| 1 | Parents | 0 | 3 | 17 | 80 |
| 2 | Siblings | 6 | 17 | 30 | 38 |
| 3 | Teachers | 6 | 28 | 43 | 23 |
| 4 | Class mates | 1 | 19 | 37 | 43 |
| 5 | Friends | 0 | 4 | 23 | 73 |

The above table indicates that among the total respondents Majority (80%) having very good relationship with their parents, 17% having good relationship with their parents and 13% having moderate relationship. Less than half (38%) of the respondents having very good relationship with their siblings, 30% having good relationship, 17% having moderate relationship, 9% do not have siblings and 6% have poor relationship with their siblings. Less than half (43%) of the respondents having good relationship with their teachers, 28% having moderate relationship, 23% having very good relationship and 6% have poor relationship with their teachers. Less than half (43%) having very good relationship with their class mates, 37% having good relationship, 19% having moderate relationship and 1% having poor relationship with their class mates. Majority (73%) of the respondents having very good relationship with their friends, 23% having good relationship and 4% having moderate relationship.

Parent's Education of the Respondents

| S.No | Education | Father | Mother |
|------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Schooling | 71 | 83 |
| 2 | UG | 15 | 12 |
| 3 | PG | 4 | 1 |
| 4 | No parents | 10 | 2 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 |

The above table indicates that majority (71%) of the respondent's fathers completed schooling, 15% completed UG, 10% of the respondents' fathers passed away and 4% of the respondent's fathers completed PG. majority (83%) of the respondent's mothers did schooling, 12% did UG, 2% of the respondent's mothers passed away and 1% mothers did not study.

Findings related to Personal Profile of the Respondents

- Less than half (42%) of the respondents were studying 11th standard, 24% were studying 9th standard, 23% were studying 8th standard and 11% are studying 10th standard because the questionnaires are distributed to the students above 8th standard.
- More than 1/4th (30%) of the respondent's age were 16 years, 21% belong to 15 years of age, 20% belong to 13 years of age, 17% belong to 14 years of age and 12% belong to 17 years of age because the researcher targeted the students aged between 13-19 years of age.
- More than half 63% of the respondents were males and (37%) of the respondents were females.

Findings related to Academic Performance of the Respondents

- Majorities (77%) of the respondent's academic percentage range from 50-100 and 23% of the respondents score 35-50 percent.
- More than half (54%) of the respondent's reason for liking a subject is because it is interesting to them, 38% likes because it is easy to them and 8% likes because it is helpful to their ambition.
- Majority (78%) of the respondents wants to do UG, 20% wants to do PG and 2% do not want to do any graduation.

Findings related to the Key Variables

- Less than half of (25%) of the respondents are influenced by their parents.
- More than half of (53%) of the respondents neither influenced by their parents nor by their peers.
- Less than 3/4th of (22%) of the respondents are influenced by their peers.
- Less than half of (48%) of the respondents have moderate mental health, 27% of the respondents have low mental health and 25% of the respondents have high mental health.

Suggestions

This study is about role of parents and peers in adolescent's mental health and academic aspirations. In this study 47 percent of the respondents are influenced neither by parents nor by peers, (28%) of the respondents are influenced by parents and (25%) of the respondents are influenced by their peers.

Social Work Intervention

School social workers should give counseling and school-based intervention programs to adolescents. The intervention program should incorporate a range of programs and strategies targeted at enhancing both the physical and mental health. A review of school-based programs by the World Health Organization found that school-based interventions that adopted the Health Promoting Schools approach, and included intervention components in more than one school domain, to be most effective in achieving beneficial outcomes. Social workers should give School based intervention programs to adolescents to improve their mental health for academic aspirations. These are some intervention programs,

- Rewards and recognition programs.
- Peer support or peer mentoring programs
- Anti-bullying programs
- Cultural awareness programs

- Promotion and engagement of local community organizations, groups and clubs in the school (e.g. charity organizations, and church and sporting groups).
- Promotion and engagement of health and community services in the school (e.g. Youth, and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).
- Increase parental involvement in the school (e.g. school events and effective parent communication strategies).

Conclusion

Adolescents should be directed by their parents to have positive impact on their decisions. Parents should concentrate on their children in moral behavior and academics. Parents have a direct impact on their children's peer relationships during early adolescence by acting as consultants with regard to peer-related problems. When parental feedback is aimed at promoting young adolescents' autonomy, the impact of their feedback is likely to be positive. In contrast, parents who are overly intrusive during discussions about peer related problems may model and socialize socially unacceptable styles of interacting, making their children poor choices for friends. Questions remain as to whether parents' responses to peer-related problems are directed toward preventing, remediating, or resolving conflicts in their adolescents' peer relationships. Peers influence more in the adolescent's choices. Good relationship with parents and peers promotes positive influence on an adolescent's mental health and future academic aspirations.

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