

To Study the Influence of Mothers Parenting Style on the Mental Health of Adolescent Children

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ABSTRACT

The teenage years are often portrayed as stressful for both parents and teens. Research demonstrates that teens undergo several developmental adjustments including biological, developmental, emotional, and social changes on their way to becoming adults. Parenting is considered a vital factor in the psychological well-being of an adolescent. Parents can benefit from an understanding that, how they as parents or their parenting style, provides a basis for many healthy developmental outcomes during adolescence. The purpose of this research is to help clarify how parenting styles contribute to mental health among adolescents. For this purpose, 75 boys and 75 girls along with their mothers were selected. The adolescents were in the age range of 15-19 years. Mental Health Battery and Parenting Styles Dimension Questionnaire were used for the study. Results revealed that among the Three types of Parenting styles i.e., Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles, the Authoritative Parenting Style has a Positive significant relationship with the Mental Health of the Adolescents.

Keywords: Influence, Mothers Parenting Style, Mental Health

Psychologists have described many stages of human development like infancy, babyhood, childhood, adolescents, adulthood, etc. Though all the stages are important in the development of a person, adolescence is an important period of development. The term '*Adolescence*' comes from the Latin word *adolescere*, which means 'to grow or to grow to maturity (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009, p.1). It is a period of transition when the individual changes physically and psychologically from a child to an adult. "Adolescence is much more than one rung up the ladder from childhood.

The teenage years are often portrayed as stressful for both parents and teens. Research demonstrates that teens undergo several developmental adjustments including biological, developmental, emotional, and social changes on their way to becoming adults. Parenting effectively during the teen years, as in any developmental period, requires a thorough understanding of these normative developmental changes. Among the various family factors that might influence child and adolescent development, parenting styles have been recognized as important.

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Parenting is considered a vital factor in the psychological well-being of an adolescent. Parenting is defined as the constellation of attitudes a parent shows to the child, that is communicated to the child and that taken together creates an emotional climate in which parental behaviors are expressed.

Parents can benefit from an understanding that, how they as parents or their parenting style, provides a basis for many healthy developmental outcomes during adolescence. Understanding the different parenting styles and their impact on the parent-teen relationship may help parents and their teens navigate adolescence more smoothly.

The purpose of this research is to help clarify how parenting styles may be contributing to mental health among adolescents. Although much research has already been conducted in this area, it is felt that more specific information such as examining domains of mental health and how they may be affected by different parenting styles, would help to broaden the knowledge of parenting and mental health among adolescents.

Parenting Styles

1. Authoritarian parenting style: This type of parenting style is characterized by high behavior control (demandingness) and low parental responsiveness (warmth).
2. Authoritative parenting style: This style of parenting is sometimes referred to as "democratic" and involves a child-centric approach in which parents hold high expectations for their children.
3. Permissive parenting style: Permissive parents, sometimes referred to as indulgent parents, have very few demands to make of their children. These parents rarely discipline their children because they have relatively low expectations of maturity and self-control.

Mental Health

The World Health Organization (2001) defined mental health as —a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and can make a contribution to her or his community.

In the present study, Mental Health can be operationally defined as a state of mental and emotional well-being of the students which makes them capable of facing the challenges of life and satisfactorily adjust with themselves and the society with maximum effectiveness and positively contribute to the society. The various dimensions of mental health are as follows:

1. Emotional stability: it refers to experiencing subjective stability feelings which have a positive or negative value for the individual.
2. Overall adjustment: it refers to an individual achieving an overall harmonious balance between the demands of various aspects of the environment, such as home, health, social, emotional, and school on the one hand and cognition on the other.
3. Autonomy: it refers to a stage of independence and self-determination in thinking.
4. Security –Insecurity: it refers to a high or low sense of safety, confidence, freedom from fear, apprehension or anxiety particularly concerning fulfilling the persons present or future needs.
5. Self-Concept: it refers to the total of the person's attitudes and knowledge towards himself and evaluation of his achievements.
6. Intelligence: it refers to the general mental ability which helps the person in thinking rationally, and in behaving purposefully in his environment.

To Study the Influence of Mothers Parenting Style on the Mental Health of Adolescent Children

Positive mental health can be described as a dynamic state of well-being in which an individual comprehends his or her potential. There is an underlying belief in the dignity and worth of self and others. The individual can even cope well with the normal stresses of life, and also can work productively, and can contribute to the community.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dwairy M. (2004) Parenting styles and mental health of Palestinian-Arab adolescents in Israel. The relationship between three parenting styles (authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative) and the mental health of Arab adolescents were tested. There was no significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and the mental health measures. A significant positive relationship exists between the authoritative parenting style and the mental health of children. Among boys, the permissive parenting style was associated with negative attitudes towards parents, lower self-esteem and increased identity, anxiety, phobia, depressive, and conduct disorders.

Sharma, Sharma and Yadava (2011), planned a study to examine the relationship between parenting styles and depression among adolescents. The findings have revealed that there is a significant correlation between Authoritarian Parenting Style and depression, and permissive Parenting style has a significant negative correlation with depression. A significant gender difference was also found with depression. The two extreme groups (high vs. low) have shown insignificant differences in their depression levels.

Gupta and Mehtani (2015), conducted a study on parenting style and psychological well-being among adolescents. The findings of the study demonstrated that an authoritative parenting style produces several positive developmental outcomes in adolescents.

Kumara, Roy, Thakur and Sultana (2012) carried out a study and found that mental health status and adjustments related problems of students. In which the result shows that boys were better emotionally stable rather than girls.

Problem

To study the influence of mothers parenting style on the mental health of adolescent children.

Hypothesis

1. There is a significant relationship between the Authoritative style of parenting and the mental health of adolescents.
2. There is no significant relationship between the Authoritarian style of parenting and the mental health of adolescents.
3. There is no significant relationship between the permissive style of parenting and the mental health of adolescents.
4. There is no significant difference between girls and boys on mental health.

Sample

The sample of the study comprises of 150 mothers and 150 adolescents of these mothers, making it a total sample of N=300. Out of 150 Adolescents, 75 are girls and 75 are boys. The age range of the adolescents was between 15- 19 years of age. Purposive sampling method is used to collect the sample for the study. The age range of the mothers of these adolescents was between 40-55 years. The socio-economic status of the sample ranges from middle to upper class.

To Study the Influence of Mothers Parenting Style on the Mental Health of Adolescent Children

Tools used

- TOOL 1: Parenting Styles Dimensions Questionnaire: PSDQ (Robinson et al., 1996, 2001):** Description of the tool: - parenting Styles dimensions questionnaire (PSDQ) contains 32 items forming three components of parenting: authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. The authoritative parenting pattern consists of 15 items. Authoritarian parenting contains 12 items. The permissive parenting pattern includes 5 items. The answering pattern is designed on a 5 point scale range. Starting from 1= never, 2= once in a while, 3= about half of the time, 4= very often, 5= always.
- TOOL 2: - Mental Health Battery (Arun Kumar Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta, 2008):** Description of the scale: mental health battery intends to assess the status of mental health of persons in the age range of 13 to 22 years. The scale consists of 130 statements which have been divided into 6 parts. Each part has its response options such as (yes, no), (a,b)right, wrong) and (a,b,c,d).

Procedure

Various schools and colleges in the city of Hyderabad were approached and students studying in 10th, Intermediate 1st and 2nd-year students were identified. After identifying the sample and taking the consent from mothers and adolescents the appropriate scales were administered to them. 150 adolescents studying in 10th, Intermediate 1st year and 2nd year were given Mental Health questionnaires, and mothers of these adolescents were given Parenting Styles Dimension Questionnaire. Considerable time was given, and the instructions were clearly explained.

Results

Table 1: Showing Co-efficient of Correlation (Pearson's Method) between Parenting styles of mothers and Mental Health of adolescents.

		Emotional stability	Overall adjustment	Autonomy	Security - Insecurity	Self-Concept	Intelligence	Mental Health Total	Significant level
Authoritative parenting style N=150	Pearson correlation	.009	.228**	.108	.076	.128	.050	.228**	0.01
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.909	.005	.187	.356	.120	.542	.005	
Authoritarian parenting style N=150	Pearson correlation	-.067	.021	-.023	-.106	.123	-.153	-.052	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.414	.795	.775	.195	.134	.062	.530	
Permissive parenting style N=150	Pearson correlation	.077	-.004	-.015	-.045	.115	-.084	.010	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.351	.959	.853	.582	.160	.304	.907	

** Correlation is Significant at 0.01 level.

Table -1: Looking at the table below we see that the Authoritative parenting style of the mother has a positive significant relationship with the overall adjustment dimension of Mental health ($r = .228^{**}$, $p = .005$). Further, there is a positive significant relationship between the Authoritative parenting style of the mother and the Total Mental Health of the Adolescent ($r = .228^{**}$, $p = .005$). There is no significant relationship found between Authoritarian parenting style and Mental Health and with Permissive parenting style and mental health.

To Study the Influence of Mothers Parenting Style on the Mental Health of Adolescent Children

Table-2: Shows gender differences between girls and boys on Mental Health

Dimensions of mental health	Gender	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Emotional stability	Boys	75	10.85	1.887	3.019*	148	.003*
	Girls	75	9.91	1.953			
Overall adjustment	Boys	75	26.77	3.641	2.144*	148	.034*
	Girls	75	28.01	3.439			
Autonomy	Boys	75	10.89	1.984	1.076	148	.284
	Girls	75	10.55	1.961			
Security-insecurity	Boys	75	9.1200	1.66814	2.474*	148	.014*
	Girls	75	9.8267	1.82604			
Self-concept	Boys	75	8.7600	1.59255	-1.742	148	.084
	Girls	75	9.1867	1.40167			
Intelligence	Boys	75	21.8933	2.13449	-1.721	148	.087
	Girls	75	22.5200	2.32123			
Total mental health	Boys	75	88.4533	6.14090	-1.756	148	.081
	Girls	75	90.3600	7.12369			

* Significant at 0.05 level.

Table 2 shows the Mean, SD, df, and t -ratio on the various dimensions of mental health and overall mental health. We see that there is a significant difference found for the dimensions – Emotional Stability, Overall Adjustment and Security-Insecurity with t ratios 3.019, 2.144 and 2.474 respectively among boys and girls.

DISCUSSION

The current research has aimed to see how mothers parenting style affects the mental health of adolescents. The result of the study reveals that the Authoritative parenting style of the mother has a good impact on the Mental Health of the adolescents. We see that parents respond to their adolescent's behavior in three different ways. Among them, two of them being unhealthy which are Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles and one being healthy which is Authoritative parenting style. Authoritative parenting is high on warmth, moderate on discipline, high in communication and moderate in expectations of maturity.

The adolescent stage is often quite stressful for both the parents and the teens. During these years adolescents undergo a lot of developmental adjustments including biological, cognitive, emotional and social changes on their way to becoming adults. Parenting effectively during the teen years, as in any developmental period requires a thorough understanding of these developmental changes.

Developmental psychologists believe that Authoritative Parenting is the most optimal parenting style for raising adolescents (Steinberg,2001). This type of parenting style is associated with healthy adolescent development and provides opportunities for the adolescent to become self-reliant.

We see that there is no significant relationship between the Authoritative parenting style of the mother and other dimensions of Mental Health. Based on the studies done by Jackson & Schemas (2005), the findings revealed that students who perceived their parents as Authoritative showed higher Self Esteem, low depression and better universal adjustment.

To Study the Influence of Mothers Parenting Style on the Mental Health of Adolescent Children

Based on the above scores we infer that there is no significant relationship found between Authoritarian parenting style and Permissive Parenting Style with the mental health of adolescents. As the above type of parenting style did not have any impact on the mental health of adolescents, there might be other factors that carry greater influence.

Though there is no significant difference in the total mental health of boys and girls, we see that for dimensions of Emotional Stability, Overall adjustment, and Security-Insecurity there was a significant difference. Looking at the means we can say that girls and boys had better Mental Health although there is no significant difference in overall mental health, we see that Girls are having little better mental health than boys.

CONCLUSION

Based on all the above studies we can assume that Authoritative parents encourage children to be independent but still places limits and controls on their actions. These parents are not usually as controlling, they allow their children to explore more freely, thus having them make their own decisions based upon their reasoning. Authoritative parents are so logical because of this parenting style these children generally have good mental health.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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