

Parent-Child Relationship and Emotional Competence in Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The present study on “The Parent-child relationship and emotional competence of adolescents” is conducted to understand how emotional competency of adolescents is affected by the bond they share with their parents. Data was collected with the help of random sampling method from adolescents studying in school over Delhi and NCR. Over 115 students became a part of this dissertation but this was only possible after consent from their parents. These students belong to the age group of thirteen to sixteen years. The hypotheses formed were solely aimed at understanding the relation between parent child relationship and emotional competence, what effect parent child relationship has on the emotional competence of adolescents. Effect of father child relationship and mother child relationship was also calculated. Parent child relationship Scale (PCRS) by Dr. Nalini Rao and Emotional Competence Scale by Dr. R. Bhardwaj and Dr. H. Mishra were used. Drawn results are calculated using statistical methods like correlation and linear regression. The results indicated a significant relationship between parent child bond and the emotional competencies of children. There is also a significant effect of mother child and father child relationship over the emotional competencies of adolescents.

Keywords: Parent-Child Relationship, Emotional Competence

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

The interaction between the parents and their children are of utmost importance because this is one's first contact with any other person. Different interactions have their own characteristics that vary from person to person and even from family to family. It is these characteristics that have a crucial role to play in the quality of interpersonal behavior that we develop later.

EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

Emotion can be described as “feeling” that can be characterized by factors like arousal due to a physical stimulus, awareness of inner feelings and, behavior that tells about our feelings to the outside world. The sympathetic nervous system creates an arousal whenever the body experiences any emotion. The biological perspectives could be the increases in heart rate, mouth becoming dry, the pupils dilate, breathe getting more rapid, etc. There can be variations between facial expressions and emotional responses.

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EMOTIONS AND ADOLESCENTS

Adolescents undergo major gains in regard to self-regulation as they enter school, strategies for emotional regulation turn to being more flexible, sophisticated and varied. The development of a mental level for emotional self-communication is helpful for children as it helps them to reflect upon their own emotions and to manage them. The school-aged children, during this phase, deal with challenges in regulation of negative emotions that are prompted by their developing self-worth and the growing knowledge of the wide world. During these years, the common fears that the children go through include low grades in academics, possibility of personal harm, facing rejection by classmates, threats to parental health, and media events.

To support the study below are some findings:

- Variamparmpil, T., & Srivastava, N. (2014) aimed to study self-esteem in adolescents. According to them, the environments in which children are brought up and the types of relationships they maintain with their parents influences their worth to a personal level and in turn affect the way they adapt the society. This research aims in studying adolescents' self-esteem and their relationship with their parents. 30 adolescents were chosen as the sample and the parent child relationship tool by Dr. Nalini and the self-esteem scale by Rosenberg were used. According to the hypothesis, parent child relationship and child's self-esteem will have a positive relationship. Correlation design and t-testing were used and the result matched the hypothesis though there was difference between the positive relationship between parent child relationship and child's self-esteem and the father's and mother's relationship with the child.
- Valentina, L., & Gulati, J.K. (2014) studied the perception of adolescents they hold for their parents. This study focuses on studying the perception of relationship adolescents' share with their parents and the impact on emotional autonomy. Two hundred adolescent were chosen as the sample that consisted of hundred boys and hundred girls belonging to the age group of 16-18 years. These children were students at government schools in Ludhiana, Punjab. PCRS by Dr. Nalini Rao and the Emotional Autonomy Scale developed by Silverberg and Steinberg were used. As per the results, boys who were highly autonomous saw their fathers as neglecting, less loving and rejecting than their mothers. Whereas girls who were highly autonomous considered their fathers as demanding. These girls considered their mothers as less rewarding symbolically and objectively and less loving. The positive parenting aspects such as symbolic reward, loving, object reward and protecting was linked with less emotional autonomy among adolescents.
- Suthar, M. H.Y. (2014) conducted a research on adolescents belonging from nuclear and joint families. This research has been done to study the impact of emotional competence of adolescents from joint and nuclear families belonging from rural and urban areas. Emotional Competence scale was used to administer on eighty adolescents belonging from Vadodra district. The Emotional Competence Scale by Dr. Sharma HC and Dr. Bhardwaj RL (2007). Data was analyzed by t-test method. After the calculation of the results, difference in emotional competencies among adolescents belonging from nuclear and joint families was found however no significant difference was found between boys and girls. There is also no significant difference in emotional competence of adolescents belonging from urban and rural areas. Adolescents belonging from joint families have better emotional competence

Parent-Child Relationship and Emotional Competence in Adolescents

as compared to adolescents belonging from nuclear families. Also, girls are found to have better emotional competence as compared to boys.

- Cooke et al in 2019 studied the parent and child relationship along with attachment, experience of the children and emotional regulation. This meta-analytic review studied the strength of patterns of parent child attachment with emotional regulation in children and their experiences under age eighteen years. Children's negative and positive affective experiences were examined with emotional regulation and their strategies of coping. The securely attached children had high global positive affect and low global negative affect. They had improved emotional regulation ability and often used cognitive and socially supportive coping strategies. The avoidantly attached children were the ones who had low global positive affect and poor ability to regulate emotions and did not really used the coping strategies. The ambivalently attached children were the ones who experienced high global and elicited high negative affect. The findings of the research made it clearly evident that different types of attachments to parents implicate children's emotional development.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The collected sample is from school going students belonging from the Delhi and NCR region. 115 students were chosen through the method of random sampling. These students belonged to age group 13-16 years and are studying in schools located in different parts of Delhi and the nearby regions. Before collection of the data, necessary information was provided to both the subject and their parents telling them about the purpose of the study. A consent form was also made to be signed by the parents of these children that acted as a formal permission granted to the children to be a part of this study.

Two tools were used for the conduction of this study.

1. **The Parent-child Relationship Scale (PCRS)** that was constructed in 2011 by Dr. Nalini Rao was used. It comprises of 100 items that are further divided into ten categorizations. The respondent responds separately for both mother and father. This self-report five-point rating scale ranges from 'always' to 'very rarely' lying as 5,4,3,2,1 on the scale points. The scale is constructed for both boys and girls belonging to the age group of 13-16 years. The test-retest reliability of the scale ranged from .77 to .87 for both girls and boys.
2. **The Emotional Competencies** of the children were measured with the help of Emotional Competency Scale that was constructed by R. Bhardwaj and H. Mishra. The scale comprises of 30 items. The competencies are further divided into five broad categories. This five point likert scale provides five alternatives to each item. It follows a system of 1,2,3,4 and 5 ranging from the upper end to the lower end. The reliability of the test calculated through the test-retest method is .74.

Procedure

Many pediatricians and pediatric surgeons of the city were contacted and subjects were selected from their outpatient clinics so as to collect data on chronically ill children and their mothers. These children and their mothers were interrogated individually and relevant information was obtained using different instruments. Healthy children and their mothers were contacted at their homes.

RESULTS

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and Correlations for Parent-child relationship and Emotional Competency

Variable	n	M	SD
1. Parent-child Relationship	115	606.00	70.36
2. Emotional Competence	115	88.13	13.01

Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 Regression analysis Summary for Parent child relationship predicting Emotional Competence.

Variable	β	t	p	R square	adjusted
(Constant)		12.106	.000		
Parent child relationship	-.305	-3.410	.001	.085	

Table 3 Regression analysis Summary for Father child relationship predicting Emotional Competence

Variable	β	t	p	R Square
(Constant)		11.904	.000	
Father child relationship	-.296	-3.295	.001	.080

Table 4 Regression analysis Summary for Mother child relationship predicting Emotional Competence

Variable	β	t	p	R Square
(Constant)		12.686	.000	
Mother child relationship	-.288	-3.197	.002	.075

DISCUSSION

The given research studies the relationship shared between adolescents and their parents. It focuses on the role of parent child relationship and whether and how much it affects the emotional competence of adolescents. It also provides scores for studying the affect of father-child and mother-child relationship on emotional competence separately.

In this research on adolescents, correlation has been computed to study the relationship between emotional competency and the relationship between children and parents. According to the results, there is a significant correlation between emotional competence and the parent child relationship. Linear Regression method was implied to calculate the effect of parent child relationship on emotional competence of children and as per the results parent child relationship significantly effects the emotional competence of adolescents.

Conflicts with parents are considered as normal in a family setup as these conflicts are seen to affect the individualization of the adolescent. At the same time, way too many conflicts in a family are not considered as normal or healthy. They can turn out to be aversive, thereby, negatively effecting the well-being and psycho-social adjustment. Adolescents having more number of conflicts may have problems in internalizing and externalizing behaviors along with factors like poor self-esteem, increased chances of substance abuse, problems in adjusting in social environments such as schools, etc. During conflicts, when both parents and children come up with negative behaviors like irritation and maybe anger, but also come up with affection for each other or have feelings of attachment for each other, the conflicts

Parent-Child Relationship and Emotional Competence in Adolescents

in such situations might help discover novel ways of relating to each other. Therefore, higher levels of emotional variability during interactions between parents and children that include both conflicts as well as the capability of adapting effectively and reorganizing behavior with response to varying interpersonal demand related to adolescent growth.

Limitations

- The research has been conducted with a Quantitative approach. Qualitative methods can be opted, for example, interviews and observations due to the fluid and dynamic nature of emotions.
- Limited sample size and geographical area does not depict a true representation of the population.
- Lengthy questionnaire might have affected the responses collected.

Implications

- Results of this study highlight the importance of positive parent-child relationship and how it is important for the growth during adolescence.
- The study brings into notice the role of fathers and mothers separately as they affect the emotional functioning of their children.
- It also puts light onto the emotional needs of adolescence during these years of their lives.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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