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REVIEW OF RESEARCH



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MENTAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENT BOYS -INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL ACCEPTANCE, KEYWORDS: Children, Adolescents, Mental Health, **AVOIDANCE AND CONCENTRATION**

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ABSTRACT:

ealthy parent child relationships contribute significantly to positive mental health status of children. Parents play a vital role in their children's mental health by being role models themselves and creating opportunities for their children to develop autonomy, self concept and emotional stability. The important stage in the lifespan is adolescence in which the need for parental acceptance and approval play a significant role in personality development. Adolescent boys who develop positive mental health skills are better in problem solving, adapt well to the situations and cope effectively with the stresses of life. Hence a survey was conducted in the present study to assess the parents' acceptance, avoidance and concentration on mental health of adolescent boys. Sixty adolescent boys in the age range of 16-18 years were selected at random from two educational institutions of Bangalore city.

The data was elicited by using two standardized tools-"Mental Health Battery" by Arun Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta and "Family Relationship Inventory" by Dr. (Smt.) G.P. Sherry and Dr. Jagdish Chandra Sinha. The results revealed highly significant association between fathers' acceptance and mental health of adolescent boys. Further parental avoidance was also found to have significant influence on mental health of adolescent boys. However no significant association was observed in parental concentration and mental health of adolescent boys.

Boys, Parents.

INTRODUCTION

Parent-child relationships are one of the most fundamental aspects of life. Parent-child relationships change considerably throughout the life span. In the early years, parents nurture, support and guide their children's development. As children move through adolescence, the unique parent-child relationship evolves, generally becoming more egalitarian in nature as adolescents seek independence. Adolescence is a period of challenge which requires adjustment to the changes in the self, the family, and in the peer group. In the present society, adolescents experience the changes in the family as well. These changes influence the development of adolescents to a significant level. The role of the parents is largely associated with the congenial development of personality that helps the adolescents to face the challenges of socialization process. Parents and other adults play major roles in modeling and promoting healthy behavior and helping young people to face the challenges of life. Adolescence is the period that sets the behaviors, habits and often the life-style practices healthy or unhealthy for adulthood. The need for acceptance, approval, and belongingness is important during these years. Adolescents who feel isolated or rejected by their parents are more likely to engage in risky behaviors in order to fit in with a group (Santrock 2007).

Hence parents have a large role in contributing to the emotional, spiritual, physical and

mental health of an adolescent, as well as a responsibility to provide direction, guidance and firmness, proper boundaries, in family life with appropriate and reasonable limits for youth. Mental health is an integral part of overall health and well being and reflects the equilibrium between the individual and the environment. WHO has proposed mental health as "a state of well being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope up with normal stress of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community".

Good mental health comprises of a balance between mind, body and spirit. Some of the mental health components are: self concept, emotional stability, security-in security, coping with stress, problem solving, autonomy, over all adjustment and intelligence. Family relationships can greatly influence adolescents' mental health and well being. Positive family relationships during adolescence increase the likelihood of the self-image, higher self-esteem and quality of life and decrease the risk of later psychological distress. Adolescents who have good relationships with their parents seem to less incline to use drugs, progressed better at school, more self-reliant and experience fewer psychological and social problems than peers with poorer quality relationships (Papalia 2005). Hence an effort has been made in the present study to know the influence of parents on the Mental Health status of adolescent boys.

Aim:

To study the influence of parent's acceptance, avoidance and concentration on mental health of adolescent boys

Objectives:

- 1. To know the family relationship pattern of adolescent boys
- 2. To study the dimensions of Mental Health among adolescent boys
- 3. To study the influence of parents' acceptance, concentration and avoidance level on the Mental Health of adolescent boys.

PROCEDURE:

Sixty adolescent boys in the age range of 16-18 years were selected randomly from two academic institutions of Bangalore city for the present study. The data was collected through survey method by using two standardized tools. The tool used to assess the dimensions of Mental Health was "Mental Health Battery" by Arun Singh and Alpana Sen Gupta. This tool consisted of 130 items, which covered the six indices of mental health- Emotional Stability, Overall Adjustment, Autonomy, Security-Insecurity, Self-Concept and Intelligence. To measure the family relationship the tool "Family Relationship Inventory" developed by Dr. (Smt.) G.P. Sherry and Dr. Jagdish Chandra Sinha was used. This tool consisted of 150 items classified into three patterns of mother and father separately under three dimensions of parent child relationship- acceptance, concentration and avoidance. In acceptance the parents consider the child as a full-fledged member of the family who needs a certain degree of independence and who has the capacity to assume responsibility. Concentration refers to attitudes of parents who devote a disproportionate amount of their time and energy to the direction and control of their children. They over protect them through restrictions upon their efforts to explore the environment. They place heavy demands upon their capacities and to achieve ambitious goals. Avoidance characterizes the disposition of parents who either neglect or reject the child. They withdraw when the child approaches them for affection and love. They spend as little time as possible with the child. They openly abuse the child. In short, they manifest no positive interest in child or his activities. The collected data was analyzed by using percentage, standard deviation and Chi Square Test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Background information of the respondents: Majority of the boys were of 17 years old. Majority (67%) of their family income was more than Rs 25,000/- per month. With regard to education of parents, it was found that about 58% of the fathers and 55% of the mothers were graduates. Many of the fathers were employed in

government sector and the mothers were home makers. Majority of the respondents belonged to small families where the number of family members was below five.

Level of	Boys												
Family			Moth	er		Father							
Relationship	Accept	ance	Concen	Concentration Avoida			Accep	tance	Concentration		Avoidance		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Low	12	20	6	10	12	20	11	18	13	22	8	13	
Medium	40	67	39	65	38	63	37	62	39	65	42	70	
High	8	13	15	25	10	17	12	20	8	13	10	17	
Total	60	100	60	100	60	100	60	100	60	100	60	100	

Table 1: Family relationship pattern among adolescent boys

Table-1 reveals that majority of the mothers indicated medium level of acceptance (67%), concentration (65%) and avoidance (63%). Similar trend was observed with regard to fathers' acceptance (62%) concentration (65%) and avoidance (70%). n and only a few of them expressed clear dissatisfaction.

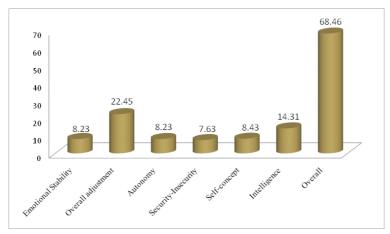


Fig 1: Mean Scores of respondents in various indices of Mental Health

A cursory glance at the Figure 1 reveals that the adolescent boys scored high in overall adjustment (mean score=22.45) and intelligence (mean score=14.31) when compared to other dimensions of mental health. The mean scores were found to be equal in emotional stability, autonomy and self concept. However they scored the minimum in the dimension security-Insecurity (mean score =7.63).

Level Level of acceptance Total of Low Medium High Mental Health **% %** No. No. No. No. Excellent 3 13 2 Good 1 11 19 2 3 14 24 Average 9 15 24 40 3 5 36 60 Poor 0 0 2 3 2 3 0 0 Total 20 40 100 12 67 8 13 60 Significance of 9.1348 ^{NS} Chi-square

Table 2: Influence of mothers' acceptance on Mental Health of adolescent boys

NS - Not significant

It was observed that 40% of the boys indicated average scores on mental health when the mothers'

acceptance level was medium (Table- 2). Similar trend was observed when the mother's acceptance level was low also. Brinda (2013) also reported that adolescents whose mothers were viewed as accepting had a better mental health status. But when the mother's acceptance level was high, only 5% of the boys indicated excellent mental health. However it was evident that the acceptance level of mothers did not indicate the statistical significance (Chi square value=9.1348 NS).

About 8% of the adolescent boys indicated excellent mental health (Table-3) when the fathers' acceptance level was high. Two percent of them indicated poor mental health when the fathers' acceptance level was medium and about 37% of them indicated average level mental health. About 15% of the boys indicated average mental health when their fathers' acceptance

Level				Total					
of	Low		Medium		High]		
Mental Health	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Excellent	1	2	2	3	5	8	8	13	
Good	0	0	12	20	2	3	14	23	
Average	9	15	22	37	5	8	36	60	
Poor	1	2	1	2	0	0	2	4	
Total	11	19	37	62	12	19	60	100	
Significance of Chi-square		16.3433*							

Table 3: Influence of fathers' acceptance on Mental Health of adolescent boys

level was low. The difference in the mental health of adolescent boys based on their father's acceptance level was found to be significant at 5% level (Chi square value =16.3433*) which indicates that fathers' acceptance level significantly influences the mental health of adolescents.

Level		Total							
of Mental Health	Low		Medium		High				
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Excellent	3	2	5	4	8	7	16	13	
Good	1	1	23	19	4	3	28	23	
Average	18	15	46	39	8	7	72	61	
Poor	1	1	3	2	0	0	4	3	
Total	23	19	77	64	20	17	120	100	
Significance of Chi-square		21.8962 **							

Table 4: Influence of parents' acceptance on the Mental Health of adolescent boys

About 64% of the parents indicated medium level of acceptance and only 17% of the parents showed high level of acceptance (Table-4). In low level of acceptance, majority (15%) of the adolescent boys indicated average level of mental health. Similar trend was observed in medium level of acceptance also (39%). About 19% of the adolescent boys exhibited good mental health when the parents' acceptance level was medium. In the high level of acceptance about equal percentage (7%) of boys indicated excellent and average mental health. Further the Chi square test indicates significant association between the parents' acceptance and mental health where the Chi square value shows the significance at 1% level (Chi square value=21.8962**). The finding is in

^{*} Significant at 5% level

^{**} Significant at 1% level

support with Brinda (2013) where it was found that adolescents whose parents were accepting indicated a better mental health status.

Non significant association (Chi square value =8.0631NS) was observed with regard to mothers' concentration level and mental health of adolescent boys (Table-5) where majority 60% of the respondents indicated average level of mental health. It was also observed that a higher percentage of boys indicated average level of mental health irrespective of mothers' concentration level.

Table 5: Influence of mothers' concentration on the Mental Health of adolescent boys

Level		1	Total							
of	Lo	Low		Medium Hi		gh]			
Mental Health	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Excellent	1	2	7	11	0	0	8	13		
Good	1	2	10	16	3	5	14	23		
Average	3	5	21	35	12	20	36	60		
Poor	1	2	1	2	0	0	2	4		
Total	6	11	39	64	15	25	60	100		
Significance of Chi-square		8.0631 ^{NS}								

NS - Not significant

Table 6: Influence of fathers' concentration on the Mental Health adolescent boys

		I	Total						
Level	Low		Medium		Low				
of Mental Health	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Excellent	4	7	4	7	0	0	8	14	
Good	3	5	11	18	0	0	14	23	
Average	6	10	22	36	8	14	36	60	
Poor	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	3	
Total	13	22	39	64	8	14	60	100	
Significance of Chi-square		8.6054 ^{NS}							

NS - Not significant

Table-6 indicates that in all the three levels of fathers' concentration majority of the boys indicated average mental health scores. It is also evident that only 14% of the boys indicated excellent mental health when they were assessed irrespective of their father's concentration levels. Father it is evident that concentration level of the fathers do not influence the adolescent boys' mental health (Chi square value = 8.6054 NS).

Table 7: Influence of parents' concentration on the Mental Health of adolescent boys

Level				Total					
of	Lo	Low		lium	Н	igh	1		
Mental Health	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Excellent	5	4	11	9	0	0	16	13	
Good	4	3	21	18	3	2	28	23	
Average	9	8	43	36	20	17	72	61	
Poor	1	1	3	2	0	0	4	3	
Total	19	16	78	65	23	19	120	100	
Significance of Chi-square		11.6558 ^{NS}							

NS - Not significant

It was found that in the all three levels of parents' concentration majority of the boys indicated average mental health (Table-7). It was also evident that only 13% of the boys indicated excellent mental health scores when the parents' concentration was at medium level. It was evident from the results that parents concentration level did not influence the adolescent boys' mental health (Chi square value=11.6558NS).

Table 8: Influence of mothers' avoidance on the Mental Health of adolescent boys

Level			Level	of Avoid		Total			
of	Low		Medium		High				
Mental Health	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Excellent	6	10	2	3	0	0	8	13	
Good	2	3	12	20	0	0	14	23	
Average	4	7	22	37	10	17	36	61	
Poor	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	3	
Total	12	20	38	63	10	16	60	100	
Significance of Chi-square		24.2334**							

** - Significant at 1% level

Table-8 reveals that mothers' avoidance level significantly influences the mental health of adolescent boys (Chi square value=24.2334**). It was observed that none of the respondents indicated excellent/good mental health when the mothers' avoidance level was high. It was also observed that when the level of mothers' avoidance was medium, some (37 %) of the respondents indicated average mental health. The findings are in corroboration with Marisol et.al (2007) where it was reported that mothers' attachment level significantly influenced the behavior of adolescents.

Table 9: Influence of fathers' avoidance on the Mental Health of adolescent boys

			To	tal						
Level	Lo	Low		lium	High					
of	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Mental Health Excellent	2	3	6	10	0	0	8	13		
			-		U					
Good	4	7	9	15	1	2	14	24		
Average	2	3	26	43	8	13	36	59		
Poor	0	0	1	2	1	2	2	4		
Total	8	13	42	70	10	17	60	100		
Significance of Chi-square		9.5387 ^{NS}								

NS - Not significant

Table-9 indicates that fathers' avoidance did not influence the mental health of boys (Chi square value =9.5387NS). The findings are in support with Marisol et.al (2007) where it was reported that fathers' attachment level did not play any direct role in the behavior of adolescents.

Level of Avoidance Total Level Low Medium High Mental Health No. % No. % No. % No. % 13 Excellent 8 7 8 6 0 0 16 28 23 21 17 1 Good 6 5 1 48 40 18 16 72 61 Average 6 5 3 Poor 0 0 2 1 4 3 Total 20 17 80 65 20 18 120 100 Significance of 24.4758** Chi-square

Table 10: Influence of parents' avoidance on the Mental Health of adolescent boys

The results indicated that the Mental Health of boys was influenced by the avoidance level of their parents (Table-10). It was observed that when the avoidance level was low, about 7 % of them indicated excellent mental health and none of them showed poor mental health. But it was clear from the results that none of the respondents indicated excellent mental health when the avoidance level was high. This indicates that the parents' avoidance level significantly influences the mental health of adolescent boys and the Chi square indicates significance at 1% level (Chi square value = 24.4758**)

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

The findings of the study indicated that majority of the boys were of 18 years old. Their family income was more than Rs 25,000/- per month. Fifty eight percent of the fathers and 55% of the mothers were graduates. Many of the fathers were employed in government sector and the mothers were home makers. Majority of the respondents belonged to small families which had less than five members.

Majority of the parents both mothers and fathers indicated medium level of acceptance, concentration and avoidance. The adolescent boys scored high in overall adjustment and intelligence and the minimum in the dimension security- Insecurity. Statistical significant results were obtained in parents' acceptance and avoidance. Non significant results were observed with regard to the mental health of adolescent boys and parents concentration level. The results thus lead to a conclusion that mental health of adolescent boys is significantly influenced by parents' acceptance and avoidance. The study highlights the need of a balanced parent and child relationship during adolescence. As adolescence is a transition from childhood to adulthood the positive family relationships contribute to significant level in helping the adolescents to develop positive mental health and navigate the problems of adolescence effectively.

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^{** -} Significant at 1% level

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