

Impact of Mindful Parenting on the Psycho-Social Development of Adolescents in Indian Setting: An Overview Study

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Abstract:

A parenting style is a pattern of behaviors, attitudes, and approaches that a parent uses when interacting with and raising their child. The study of parenting styles is based on the idea that parents differ in their patterns of parenting and that these patterns can have a significant impact on their children's development and well-being. Parenting styles are distinct from specific parenting practices, since they represent broader patterns of practices and attitudes that create an emotional climate for the child. Parenting styles also encompass the ways in which parents respond to and make demands on their children. The present study mainly focused on an overview to study the impact of parenting styles on the psycho-social development of adolescents in Indian setting. The researchers have found that parenting styles (authoritative and authoritarian) are closely related to various qualities of parent-adolescent relationships (i.e., cohesion and conflict). These two parenting styles capture an important element of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Demanding appears to be less critical to girls' than to boys' well-being and authoritative parenting predicts psycho-social outcomes and problem behaviors for adolescents. This study develops an insight view and can also be helpful in developing interventions that are aimed at fostering resilience in adolescents by encouraging families to adopt parenting strategies that are supportive and warm.

Keywords: Psychosocial, Adolescence, Parenting, Authoritative, Authoritarian

Introduction

Parenting is a dynamic concept and as a constellation of parents' attitudes and behaviors toward children and an emotional climate in which the parents' behaviors are expressed (Darling and Steinberg, 1993). It is an important concept of developmental psychology as it plays a vital role in the development of a child. Parents, or a primary care-giver, are the first experience of socialization for any individual. The importance of this initial and overarching experiences of an individual with the parents have time and again been highlighted by several researches (Weiten, 2012; Williams, 2012; Haun, Rekers and Tomasello, 2014; Sherwin-White, 2017). Most previous researches on the association between parenting styles and parent-adolescent conflict and cohesion focused on one or the other (Smetana, 1995; Nelson et al., 2011; Sorkhabi and Middaugh, 2014). Traditionally, parents expect their children to respect and obey authority, as well as comply with their cultural beliefs and values. This style of parenting can result in higher academic achievements and lower behavioral and psychological problems. But now-a-days,

parenting practices are bound to have evolved with changing demands over a period of time. The traditionally authoritarian style of parenting, involving an unquestioned obedience is now almost obsolete, instead being substituted by a preference for a sense of parental control. Consequently, evolutions in the parenting styles, especially among urban educated parents, have led to an orientation towards a sense of connectedness, autonomy as well as control, with parenting practices becoming more permissive, child-centered, and responsive; and therefore, seeming to fit in more with Baumrind's authoritative parenting style, as compared to a traditional authoritarian approach (Baumrind, 1966).

Challenges to Parenting the Adolescent in Changing Scenario

Adolescence as a phase is characterized by rapid development including, both physical and psychological changes. It is a crucial stage of development, not only for the adolescent but also for the parents, bringing with it a set of apprehensions and worries. It is not uncommon to hear parental concerns regarding the approaching teenage years, being associated with changing expectations and relationships. In fact, a majority of parents have been found to consider adolescence as being the most difficult stage for childbearing. As adolescence serves as a transitional period between childhood and adulthood, achieving a sense of autonomy has been identified as one of the salient characteristics of this phase of development. It has also been recognized as a period of transition from dependence on adult direction and protection to self-direction and self-determination.

A central challenge for parenting adolescents is the need to continually adapt caregiving practices to adolescents' changing motivations and capabilities. In broad terms, beginning with puberty, adolescents are motivated to experiment with and expand their capacity to make autonomous decisions. Adolescents tend to adopt an exploratory approach, with the major objective of attaining. As Erickson described in his developmental theory, the primary psychosocial task of adolescence is the formation of an "identity". Adolescents' changing motivational and inhibitory systems shape the task of parenting during this developmental period. Parents must balance protective concerns about the adolescent's safety with support for the adolescent's developing capacity for autonomous decision-making. Supporting autonomy requires the parent to distinguish between aspects of the adolescent's life where continued rules, guidance and supervision are necessary and areas where the adolescent can be trusted to make independent decisions.

Parent- Adolescent Relationship

The parent-child relationship and the family environment act as primary sources of protection and development (Masten & Palmer, 2019). Intimate relationship with either the parent who is warm, has appropriately high expectations, monitors child's activities, and a safe and ordered home environment promotes resilience in children and provides emotional and material resources for the growing adolescent. When parenting is perceived as positive, adolescents are less likely to indulge in delinquent and risky behaviours (Ungar, 2004; Coley, Morris and Hernandez, 2004; Hoeve et al., 2009), and have greater well-being (Pearson & Wilkinson, 2013). Negative perception of parent-adolescent relationship is associated with problem behaviours like drug use (Farell and White, 1998), parent-adolescent conflict, and risk for depression (Chai, Kwok and Gu, 2018). Most young people and their families have some ups and downs during these years, but things usually improve by late adolescence as children become more mature and family relationships tend to stay strong right through.

Mindful Parenting and Adolescent's Psycho-Social Adjustment

There is some evidence that mindful parenting, a parenting approach that involves the practice of bringing mindful awareness to the parent-child relationship, is associated with several positive psychosocial outcomes in adolescents. According to Neff and McGehee (2010), self-compassion is an adaptive way of relating to the self or a state of mind that involves not only higher levels of self-kindness, mindfulness, and common humanity but also lower levels of self-judgement, isolation, and over-identification. Gilbert (2005) also views self-compassion as a healthy intrapersonal relationship. According to this author, self-compassion is associated with the activation of a caregiving mentality in self-to-self relating, particularly in times of suffering and failure, that is linked with the soothing and affiliative system of affect regulation (Gilbert, 2009).

Both self-compassion and mindfulness skills are inner psychological resources that were shown to have a protective effect on adolescents' adjustment. For instance, studies with adolescents have shown that self-compassion is associated with greater life satisfaction and less perceived stress, lower levels of depression, anxiety symptoms and higher levels of well-being (Pepping et al. 2016).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Parental behavior is one of the most influential factor in terms of the development of externalizing and internalizing behavior of adolescents. According to the teachings of Buddha, mindfulness, being ubiquitous in nature, can be useful everywhere. As a fundamental parenting practice, mindfulness in the context of parenting and parent training has been suggested as a significant force toward improving the effectiveness of parenting interventions. Such an approach not only could improve the quality of the parental-adolescent relationship but can also influence parental self-efficacy.

Agreed household responsibilities give children and teenagers the sense that they're making an important contribution to family life. These could be things like chores, shopping or helping older or younger members of the family. It helps to give your child some say in which responsibilities they take on. Agreed-on rules, limits and consequences give teenagers a sense of security, structure and predictability. They help your child know what standards apply in your family, and what will happen if they push the boundaries. When your child is involved in making your family rules, they're more likely to see them as fair and stick to them. Negotiating rules with your child can also help you to reduce and manage conflict with your child. Given the pressure felt by most parents to "get parenting right," along with the parents' concern about their level of confidence in their parenting, adopting a mindfulness-based approach could be extremely beneficial.

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