

A Review on Behavioural Problems Among Adolescents

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Abstract

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage which is characterized by significant physical, emotional, and cognitive changes. This is a transitional period ranging from (10-19) years of age. This period is marked by the quest for identity, autonomy, and the development of personal values and social relationships. According to O'Brien (2003), problem behaviour is an act of a person who either forms significant risk to the health and/or safety to oneself or others; or who “exerts momentous negative impact on his/her own quality of life or the quality of life of others”. Adolescents with behaviour problems are at risk for numerous problems in the academic, social and daily functioning by Loeber & Farrington, 1999. According to Achenbach & Rescorla (2001), internalizing and externalizing problems are two empirically derived dimensional constructs that have been used frequently to operationalize adolescent behavioural problems. Various studies have done on behavioral problems of adolescents and its related factors. The present paper is on the review of behavioural problems among adolescents.

Keywords- Adolescents, Behavioural problems, Period

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage which is characterized by significant physical, emotional, and cognitive changes. This transitional period, typically ranging from ages 10 to 19, is marked by the quest for identity, autonomy, and the development of personal values and social relationships.¹ Adolescence defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the second decade of life (10–19 years of age) is a time when significant physical, psychological, and social changes occur.² According to O'Brien (2003), problem behaviour is an act of a person who either forms significant risk to the health and/or safety to oneself or others; or who “exerts momentous negative impact on his/her own quality of life or the quality of life of others”.³

Adolescents with behaviour problems are at risk for numerous problems in the academic, social and daily functioning (Loeber & Farrington, 1999).³ Internalizing and externalizing problems are two empirically derived dimensional constructs that have been used frequently to operationalize adolescent behavioural problems (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001). Internalizing behavioural problem is defined as consisting of anxious and affective symptoms (like worry, sadness, hopelessness, physical symptoms, etc.) (Dekovic, Buist, & Reitz, 2004). Externalizing behavioural problem is defined as consisting of aggressive and delinquent behaviours (like fighting, vandalism, stealing, lying, and other rule breaking behaviours) (Achenbach et al., 2002).⁴

Summary of Studies on Adolescents’ Behavioural Problems

Sl. No.	Authors & Years	Main Findings
1.	Rescorla et al., (2007)	The findings reveal the children’s problems were equivalent in multiple ways across large diverse societies. However, strong effect sizes were observed comparing with to age and gender which implying the importance of taking multicultural differences in parents’ reports for problems of children.
2.	Pathak et al., (2011)	A huge number of the adolescents were having emotional and behavioural problems by the influence of family.
3.	Bhola et al., (2016)	Adolescents of 10.1% had total difficulty levels in the abnormal range. Conduct problems (13%), hyperactivity (12.6%) and peer problems (9.4%) were found and identified the factors for total difficulty levels.
4.	Chanu (2019)	Significant was found between the level of self-esteem and behavioural problems among the orphans and non-orphans with lower level of self-esteem for orphans also the orphan boys scored higher than the orphan girls. Lastly, significant difference on behavioural problems among the two groups was also found.
5.	Lyngdoh et al., (2019)	The study found the relationship between aggressive behaviour and substance use.
6.	Harikrishna n and Saiko, (2021)	School going adolescents had a little more than a tenth of emotional and behavioural problems and also found a significant relationship in SDQ total score by regression analysis with the type of schools, settings and socio-economic status.
7.	Mahanta et al., (2021)	Emotional and behavioural problems was found to be 3.8% and also socio-demographic variables strongly affects both the emotional and behavioural problems.
8.	Das et al., (2021)	A higher proportion of adolescents belonged to the abnormal range and showed male adolescents with higher rate of abnormal scores over all the subdomains except the emotional and hyperactivity subdomains.
9.	Chowi et al., (2023)	Emotional problems and peer relationship problems are more prevalent among girls whereas hyperactivity and conduct problems are more prevalent among boys.
10.	Zhao et al., (2024)	School bullying is significantly associated with psychological problems among primary and secondary school students also found greater severity of bullying is linked to a higher likelihood of psychological distress.
11.	Maheo, et al., (2024)	The study found no significant difference in youth problems across gender and socio-economic status. However, a significant difference was observed with respect to academic achievement.
12.	Shija et al., (2025)	Adolescents showed emotional-behavioural problems similar to global levels. These were not related to residence, family type, or parental education. However, gender differences were observed- girls had more

		emotional and prosocial behaviour with fewer conduct problems while boys showed the opposite pattern.
13.	Das (2025)	Adolescents' emotional behaviour generally improves with age, despite experiencing heightened emotional intensity due to biological changes, social expectations, family stress and academic pressures. Although emotions during this stage are often intense and less regulated, they become more stable over time. Additionally, adolescents undergo important social changes, including forming relationships with the opposite sex and developing greater social understanding, particularly during secondary education.

Conclusion:

The above studies showed the need to do more research in depth. Therefore, the studies largely support to promote the intervention programs for the prevention and management of behavioural problems and also mental health policies and programs for the betterment of the adolescents.

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