

Family Environment, Mental Health and Academic Performance of Adolescents



Sociology

KEYWORDS : Family environment, Mental Health, Academic Performance, Students

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ABSTRACT

There could be various aspects of students' life which matter for them in academic performance. Family environment and mental health are analyzed with reference to academic performance in the present study to know the relationship between family environment and mental health, family environment and academic performance, and mental health and academic performance. A sample of 300 high school students has been taken for the study. Family Environment and Mental Health Scale have been administered to collect the data. For analyzing the data Chi-square test has been used in the study. Findings shows that there is found significant relationship between family environment and mental health, and mental health and academic performance. In another finding no significant relationship is found between family environment and academic performance. So it can be said that family environment can have significant relationship with mental health but not with academic performance. On the other hand both mental health and academic performance can have significant relationship.

In most of the societies about a century ago, the family was the most valued system in almost all spheres of life and human living. Family is the only institution which provides the security and support without any rewards in return. The effectiveness of family functioning in conditioning the children's personality and social development has an outstanding importance (Roelfse and Middleton, 1985). The family interactions play an important role in the development of an individual. These interactions and interpersonal relationships are seen between parents, parent and child, siblings, and any other relative or person living in the household. The healthy functioning of these interaction patterns enhances mental health of the individual. Children need a happy and stable family environment and a conducive social network for their overall growth and development. Yet, happy families are not happy all the time. Disagreements and conflicts are a necessary part of living closely together. Both love and hate are to be expected in the intensity of family life and peers interactions, but it is the way negative emotions are handled that makes a difference to family life and social interactions (Parke and Buriel, 1998). Parenting has long been recognized as making an important contribution to the development of competencies and problem behaviour among children and adolescents. However, recently researchers have begun to develop attention to understanding variations in parenting in different cultures and how it is related to psychosocial outcomes in children and adolescents (Murry, et al. 2001). Recent studies investigating parenting in different cultures have pointed to several important patterns regarding linkages between parenting strategies and psychosocial outcomes (Barber, et al. 2003).

Effective parent involvement should match the needs of the school and community (Barrera and Warner, 2006), but more importantly of their children (Brooks, 2000). As children's needs may vary, so will the parent involvement, accordingly. Buttery and Anderson (1999) described a number of levels of involvement which can help students achieve success. Some parents are needed to stand in the crowd and display good sportsmanship during the game, while others may raise funds to help operate clubs' or organizations' activities. Still others may take more of a representative role through membership in the school board. The needs of students can vary throughout the school year and can make involvement a tricky continuum along which parents can be found at various points. As important as parent involvement is, at the high school level research shows it tends to drop (Simon, 2001) and parents are less likely to participate (Bloomstran, 2002). Some parents say they are uninvolved because they were never asked or that they may embarrass their child by being at school (Rahman, 2001).

Mental health is perceived as a positive source contributing to asset development individually, socially, and economically (WHO, 2004). The World Health Organization conceptualized mental health separate from mental ill-health and defined the concept as: a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of

life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community. On the other hand better mental health outcomes in adolescents are characterized by greater adaptation in family, society, and school environment, improved quality of life (Hoagwood, et al. 1996; USDHHS, 1999). If man is not allowed to be a lion, he becomes a fox. This proverb fits in the present situation. In India, the malady is common among teenage boys, girls and youth. As life exists today, the students in Orissa are worst sufferers of sociocultural, political, economic and environmental degradation. 65 percent of the schools going children have been reported to be suffering from emotional problems of one type or another. Thus, the neglect of mental health results in serious consequences and the students passing the college cannot cope with the demands of life and future career (Nanda, 2012).

Literature on academic achievement is extensive and some findings have shown that females usually score higher on average than males on test of verbal abilities and that male score higher on average than female on tests of mathematics ability spatial abilities and on tests of stereotypically male vocational information and aptitude. On the other hand, girls have been found by several studies to be more motivated and higher achievers than boys. It has been assumed that both at the school level and at the college level, girls have registered higher achievement scores than boys have done. Several explanations have been given to this phenomenon. A study has shown that some personality traits influence the quality of effort expended with academic and personal/social activities and a measure of critical thinking (Bauer, et al. 2003). Jamuar (1974) stated that efficient learning depends not only on good teaching methods but also satisfactory learning procedures. Tiwari and Bansal (1994) mentioned that a child with high academic achievement is likely to be well-treated as well behaved and independent and low achievers as incapable and deprived of employment, which may lead this to maladjustment to life. Schools should provide opportunities for regular physical and mental training like yoga which is a relaxation technique which will facilitate the enhancement of study habits, self-concept and academic performance (Erickson, 1981). The current study is designed to know the relationships among family environment, mental health and academic performance of adolescents.

Objectives

1. To know the relationship between family environment and mental health of adolescents.
2. To know the relationship between family environment and academic performance of adolescents.
3. To know the relationship between mental health and academic performance of adolescents.

Hypotheses

1. There would be significant relationship between family environment and mental health.
2. There would be significant relationship between family en-

vironment and academic performance.

- There would be significant relationship between mental health and academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Sample: A sample of 300 students has been selected from five different public schools of Haridwar and Dehradun districts of Uttrakhand. There are 150 male and 150 female students. The age of all students range 14-16 year.

Tools

- Family Climate Scale: Family Climate Scale constructed and standardized by Beena and Shah (1990). This scale is consists of 90 items (45 positive and 45 negative items). The overall reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.76
- Mental Health Scale: Mental Health Scale is formulated by Bhatia and Sharma (1998). It contains a total of 50 items (10 items in each dimension with some of positive and negative items). The responses were to be obtained on a five-point response format. The overall reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.84
- Academic performance: Total marks of formative assessment part two have been recorded of each student from their school.

Statistical Analysis: To find the relationship Chi-square test (χ^2) has been used in the present study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results: Findings of the study are presented in the following tables. Table No 1 is showing the relationship between family environment and mental health among students.

Table No. 1 Showing the relationship between family environment and mental health.

Perception of Family Environment	Mental Health			Total
	High	Average	Low	
Favourable	17 (21.64)	107 (101.67)	27 (27.68)	151
Neutral	05 (1.58)	03 (7.41)	03 (2.02)	011
Unfavourable	21 (19.78)	92 (92.92)	25 (25.30)	138
Total	43	202	55	300

$\chi^2 = 10.97^{**}$

**** Highly Significant at 0.01 level.**

As Table No. 1 indicates high, average and low level of mental health are compared with favourable, neutral and unfavourable state of family environment respectively. On the basis of statistical analysis, overall χ^2 value is found 10.97 which is significant at 0.01 level which is highly significant. Therefore the present hypothesis is accepted. Thus it may be inferred that parental involvement, communication, time spent, awareness and emotional support with children could be the cause of this significant relationship between mental health and family environment among students.

Table No. 2. Showing the relationship between family environment and academic performance.

Perception of Family Environment	Academic Performance			Total
	High	Average	Low	
Favourable	17 (22.15)	117 (106.71)	17 (22.15)	151
Neutral	02 (1.61)	06 (7.77)	03 (1.61)	011
Unfavourable	25 (20.24)	89 (97.52)	24 (20.24)	138
Total	44	212	44	300

$\chi^2 = 7.64\#$

#Not Significant

Table No. 2 is revealing the relationship between academic performance and family environment among students. According to this table academic performance and family environment is categorized in three levels each as per the design of the study. The overall value of chi-square is found 7.64 which is not significant. So the hypothesis is rejected. Reasons for this non-significance relationship could be, giving more importance to individual strategies (as it normally happens with adolescent stage where they give more importance to their knowledge) of studying than parents' experienced approach, having their self plan for academic achievement and having generational gap between parents and children.

Table No. 3 Showing the relationship between academic performance and mental health.

Mental Health	Academic Performance			Total
	High	Average	Low	
High	10 (6.89)	35 (33.21)	02 (6.89)	47
Average	22 (28.01)	146 (134.97)	23 (28.01)	191
Low	12 (9.09)	31 (43.81)	19 (9.09)	62
Total	44	212	44	300

$\chi^2 = 23.54^{**}$

****Highly Significant at 0.01 level.**

Table No 3 is showing the relationship between academic performance and mental health among students. The overall chi-square is found 23.54 which is significant at 0.01 level. So the present hypothesis of the relationship between academic performance and mental health is accepted. This might be due to parenting, awareness about health and more competitive world to get admission in higher education and media among students to do good in day today life as well as in academic performance to be a successful person in future.

CONCLUSION

At last it can be inferred from the study that there can be significant relationship between family environment and mental health, and academic performance and mental health while it may not be significant in terms of family environment and academic performance among adolescents.

Recommendations

- Authoritative parenting style
- Involvement of family and children
- Amiable communication between parents and children
- Awareness in society regarding importance of family and its' role in overall development and specifically in academic performance and mental health of students
- Conducive environment in school and family

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