

Assessment of parent adolescent relationship of single parent families of Jammu city



HRM

KEYWORDS : Adolescents, Parents, Single Parents and Parent-Adolescent Relationship

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ABSTRACT

The present study highlights the parent adolescent relationship in single parent families of Jammu city, comprised of 80 adolescents in the age group of 12-16 years and their single parent (either mother or father). The sample was selected randomly through multistage sampling. The Parental Relationship Questionnaire (PRQ) designed by Kamphaus and Reynolds (2006) was administered for gathering the required data. The findings reveal that most parents shared average to significantly above average attachment, average to significantly below average communication, discipline practices, average to significantly above average involvement, average parenting confidence, average to significantly above average satisfaction with school and average to upper extreme relational frustration in reference to their adolescent children. It was also found that the parent adolescent relationship in most cases was moderate in nature with no major conflicts or frustration. Use of statistical procedures point that single fathers and single mothers had similar patterns of attachment, communication, discipline practices, parental confidence, satisfaction with school and relational frustration. The only dimension to vary according to the sex of the parent was involvement, with mothers surpassing the fathers. Further, this dimension along with communication also varied significantly according to the sex of the adolescents. The sample parents were more communicative as well as involved with their adolescents sons than their daughters.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a time of many transitions for both teens and their families. This is the time when adolescents requires care and attention of both parents. The absence of one parent may change the adolescents perception about the other parent. The loss of father has less impact on the relationship that adolescents have with their mother (Aquilino, 1994). Also, those with divorced parents have limited effect on adolescents' perception of support from their mother. Studies indicate positive impact of single parent families on mother adolescent relationship. Adolescents have a close and satisfying relationship with their single parent (Demo, 1992). Girls are found to have a more positive relationship with their mother and are more responsible than boys.

The family structure has an impact on mother adolescent relationship in single parent families. In nuclear families, adolescents have more autonomy and take most of the decisions, where as in joint families there are elderly persons or grand parents who take most of the decisions (Dornbusch et al, 1985). Parental discord is negatively related with adolescents self esteem (Demo and Acock, 1988), behavioral problems (Hetherington, 1989) and poor emotional wellbeing (Owusu, 1995). Promoting open and ongoing communication within families about the organization and re-organization of family life is important, particularly as the needs of adolescents change. Giving adolescents a role in decisions about practical aspects of family life is especially empowering for some adolescents - but importantly, not for all. Adolescent's also tend to show sensitivity to the conflicts and distress of their parents.

The present research was undertaken with the view to assess the relationship shared by single parents with their adolescent children in terms of their Attachment, Communication, Discipline Practices, Involvement, Parenting Confidence, Satisfaction with School and Relational Frustration. Also the relationship was assessed in context of the sex of the parent as well as sex of the adolescent.

METHODOLOGY

SAMPLE DISCRPTION

a) Sample and Sample size

The sample for the study comprised of 80 adolescents and their single parent (either mother or father). The selected adolescents were in the age group of 12-16 years, out of which 40 were boys and 40 were girls.

d) Sampling technique

The entire sample was selected randomly through multistage sampling. In the First stage, one zone of Jammu out of the four East, West, North and South was selected by lottery method. In the 2nd stage a list of private schools located in one zone namely Jammu city was obtained from Jammu & Kashmir State Board of School Education. There were a total of 37 schools in Jammu city. Each of the school was visited personally and the principal or the primary administrator was contacted. They were required to provide a list of the numbers of children who matched the sampling criteria. A few school authorities refused to divulge the information and hence had to be left out. Finally, a list of school having at least 10 single parent adolescents was redrawn. In this stage, the number of schools was reduced to 16. From these 16 schools, 08 were selected by lottery method. An interaction with the teachers was carried out to recheck the criteria of the selected adolescents. Snowball sampling technique was also used for the identification of the sample. Then finally interaction was carried out with the adolescents. They were explained the objectives behind data collection and were ensured complete confidentiality and secrecy of the data. Any confusion or fears in the minds of the adolescents and their parents were layed off before data collection.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION:

The tool used for data collection was parenting relationship questionnaire (PRQ) instrument designed by Kamphaus and Reynolds (2006) was used with the sample parents. It is designed to capture a parent's perspective of the parent child relationship. It assesses traditional parent-child dimensions such as attachment and also provides information on parenting style, parenting confidence, stress and satisfaction with the child's school. The questionnaire can be used in clinical, pediatric, counseling, school, and other settings where there is a need to understand the nature of the parent- child relationship. It can be completed in approximately 10 to 15 minutes and can be administered to mothers and fathers (or care givers) of children aged 2 to 18 years.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data was analyzed using statistical techniques. Differences in the variables were tested by using chi square. The data was presented in the form of tables, figures and graphs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study along with their discussion are pre-

sented as follows:

Background profile of Adolescents and Parents

Age of Sample Adolescents

Table 1

Age of Sample Adolescents

Age (in years)	Males		Females		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
12-13	15	37.5	18	45	33	41.2
14-15	16	40	16	40	32	40
16-17	9	22.5	6	15	15	18.7
Total	40	100	40	100	80	100

Mean age of Male Adolescent= 14.05 ± 1.48

Mean age of Female Adolescent=13.93 ± 1.32

t-value=-.397, insignificant

Table no. 1 reveals that sample adolescents were aged between 12-17 years. Most of them were in the age group of 12 - 13 and 14 - 15 (41.2 % and 40 %) years respectively. The mean age of adolescents males and females was 14.05 ± 1.48, and 13.93 ± 1.32 respectively. Computation of t- value indicates that there was no significant difference in the age of sample boys and girls.

Age of Sample Parents

Table 2

Age of Sample Parents

Age (in years)	Mothers		Fathers		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Up to 40	13	26	6	20	19	23.7
40+ - 44	21	42	10	33.3	31	38.7
44+ - 48	13	26	7	23.3	20	25
48+ - 52	3	6	7	23.3	10	12.5
Total	50	100	30	100	80	100

Mean age of Mothers= 42.88 ± 2.90

Mean age of Fathers =44.20 ±3.42

t-value=-1.83, insignificant

Table no. 2 reveals that most of the sample parents were in the age group of 40+ - 44 years (38.7%). The mean age of the single mothers and fathers was 42.88 ± 2.90 and 44.20 ±3.42 years respectively. Computation of t-value indicates that there were no significant differences in the age of the sample mothers and fathers.

PARENT ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIP

The parent adolescent relationship was assessed on seven dimensions namely attachment, communication, discipline practices, involvement, parental confidence, satisfaction with school, and relational frustration. The results obtained are discussed as follows.

Attachment between Parents and Adolescents

Table 3

Attachment between Parents and Adolescents

Levels	MOTH-ERS		FATHERS		BOYS PARENTS		GIRLS PARENTS		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower extreme	6	12	2	6.66	2	5	6	15	8	10
Significantly below average	3	6	7	23.33	2	5	8	20	10	12.5
Average	25	5	16	53.33	22	55	19	47.5	41	51.25
Significantly above average	14	28	3	10	11	27.5	6	15	17	21.25
Upper extreme	2	4	2	6.66	3	7.5	1	2.5	4	5
Total	50	100	30	100	40	100	40	100	80	100

χ^2 for Attachment across sex of the parents = 6.04, df=4, table value=9.49

χ^2 for Attachment across sex of adolescents = 8.26,df=4, table value=9.49

Table no. 3 shows that the majority of the sample parents 51.25% (50% mothers and 53.33% fathers) had average level of

attachment which means there was average closeness between the parents and their adolescents. Another 21.25% of the parents had significantly above average attachment indicating that some parents perceived that they were highly attached with their children. Calculation of χ^2 reveals insignificant difference in attachment pattern of fathers and mothers, however closer analysis reveals that though most fathers and mothers scored average but more mothers than fathers had significantly above average attachment.

Analysis of Attachment according to the sex of the adolescents reveals that most parents of girls and boys (47.5% and 55% respectively) scored average. Though computation of chi-square indicates that irrespective of sex of the adolescents most parents tend to have average attachment but closer analysis reveals that more parents of boys tend to have significantly above average attachment, whereas more parents of girls tend to share significantly below average attachment.

Communication between Parents and Adolescents

Table 4

Communication between Parents and Adolescents

Levels	MOTH-ERS		FATHERS		BOYS PAR-ENTS		GIRLS PAR-ENTS		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower extreme	5	10	-	-	-	-	5	12.5	5	6.25
Significantly below average	10	20	9	30	6	15	13	32.5	19	32.25
Average	27	54	17	56.66	26	65	18	45	39	55
Significantly above average	8	16	4	13.33	8	20	4	10	12	15
Upper extreme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	50	100	30	100	40	100	40	100	80	100

χ^2 for Communication across sex of the parents =4.49, df=3, table value=7.81

χ^2 for Communication across sex of adolescents =10.52*,df=3, table value=7.81

* Significant at 5% level of significance

Table no. 4 indicates that most, 55% of the sample parents (54% mothers and 56.66% fathers) scored average in communication with their adolescents. Communication is considered as an important aspect of parent child relationship and refers to the quality of information exchanged between the parents and adolescents. Another 32.25% parents (20% mothers and 30% fathers) scored significantly below average in this area while none of the parents scored in upper extreme category, indicating that these parents faced some problems in exchanging information with their adolescents. The calculation of χ^2 value shows insignificant difference in the communication pattern of fathers and mothers.

However, analysis of communication according to sex of adolescents reveals significant difference, with more parents having lower communication with their daughters than their sons. More parents of daughter scored in the lower extreme and significantly below average category than parents of sons. On the other hand, more parents of sons had average to significantly above average communication.

Discipline Practices of the Parents

Table 5

Discipline Practices of the Parents

Levels	MOTH-ERS		FATHERS		BOYS PARENTS		GIRLS PARENTS		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower extreme	-	-	1	3.33	1	2.5	-	-	1	1.25
Significantly below average	7	14	5	16.66	3	7.5	9	22.5	12	15
Average	36	72	21	70	31	77.5	26	65	57	71.25
Significantly above average	7	14	3	10	5	12.5	5	12.5	10	12.5

Upper extreme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	50	100	30	100	40	100	40	100	80	100

χ^2 for Discipline practices across sex of the parents =1.96, df=3, table value=7.81

χ^2 for Discipline practices across sex of adolescents =4.429, df=3, table value=7.81

Table no. 5 depicts the level of discipline practiced by parents which reflects a general sense of the parent in the establishment of rules. Majority of the sample parents, 71.25% (72%mothers and 70% fathers) scored average in this aspect and another 15% scored significantly below average. Computation of chi-square reveals insignificant difference in the discipline practices of sample fathers and mothers. This indicates that irrespective of the sex of the parents, most of them used average discipline pattern with their adolescents.

Analysis of discipline practices according to the sex of adolescents reveals that the pattern of discipline remained same irrespective of the sex of the adolescents. Irrespective of sons (77.5%) or daughters (65%) most parents had average discipline practices. The parents were neither too lenient nor too strict with their adolescents.

Involvement of Parents with their Adolescents

Table 6

Involvement of the Parents with their Adolescents

Levels	MOTH-ERS		FATHERS		BOYS PAR-ENTS		GIRLS PAR-ENTS		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower extreme	5	10	-	-	-	-	5	12.5	5	6.25
Significantly below average	2	4	5	16.66	2	5	5	12.5	7	8.75
Average	25	50	18	60	25	62.5	18	45	43	53.75
Significantly above average	11	22	7	23.33	8	20	10	52	18	22.5
Upper extreme	7	14	-	-	5	12.5	2	5	7	8.75
Total	50	100	30	100	40	100	40	100	80	100

χ^2 for Involvement across sex of adolescents =9.79*, df=4, table value=9.49

*Significant at 5% level of significance

Computation of χ^2 indicates significant differences in the level of involvement both according to the sex of the parents as well as the sex of the adolescents (Table no. 6). Majority of the sample parents 53.75% (50% mothers and 60% fathers) on the whole scored average in the level of involvement, which means there was only average participation of parents and adolescents in a variety of activities. Another 22.5% (22% mothers and 23.3% fathers) scored significantly above average in involvement. More sample mothers had lesser involvement than the fathers.

Analysis of involvement according to the sex of adolescents reveals that parents of boys showed more involvement than the parents of girls

Parenting Confidence

Table No. 7

Parenting Confidence

Levels	MOTH-ERS		FATHERS		BOYS PAR-ENTS		GIRLS PAR-ENTS		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower extreme	5	10	3	10	3	7.5	5	12.5	8	10
Significantly below average	8	16	8	26.66	7	17.5	9	22.5	16	20
Average	31	62	16	53.33	27	67.5	20	50	47	58.75
Significantly above average	6	12	3	10	3	7.5	6	15	9	11.25
Upper extreme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	50	100	30	100	40	100	40	100	80	100

χ^2 for Parenting confidence across sex of the parents =1.34, df=3, table value=7.81

χ^2 for Parenting confidence across sex of the adolescents =2.89, df=3, table value=7.81

Table no. 7 depicts the level of parenting confidence, meaning parent's feeling of comfort, control and confidence when making parenting decisions. Most of the sample parents, 58.75 % (62%mothers and 53.33% fathers) had average parental confidence, though 11.25% (12% mothers and 10% fathers) scored significantly above average but at the same time 20% had significantly below average parental confidence. Analysis of parenting confidence according to the sex of adolescents indicates that 67.5% parents of boys and 50% parents of girls had average parenting confidence. Statistically there was insignificant difference in the parental confidence according to the sex of the parents and adolescents.

Satisfaction with School

Table 8

Satisfaction with School

Levels	MOTH-ERS		FATHERS		BOYS PAR-ENTS		GIRLS PAR-ENTS		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower extreme	-	-	1	3.33	1	2.5	-	-	1	1.25
Significantly below average	7	14	1	3.33	2	5	6	15	8	10
Average	33	66	22	73.33	29	72.5	26	65	55	68.75
Significantly above average	10	20	6	20	8	20	8	20	16	20
Upper extreme	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	50	100	30	100	40	100	40	100	80	100

χ^2 for Satisfaction with school across sex of the parents =3.99, df=3, table value=7.81

χ^2 for Satisfaction with school across sex of the adolescents =3.16, df=3, table value=7.81

Table no. 8 shows most of the sample parents, 68.75% (66%mothers and 73.33% fathers) had average satisfaction with the school of their adolescents. Most parents felt that the school was doing a good job of meeting the child's educational and emotional needs. Another 20% had significantly above average satisfaction with the school.

Analysis of the level of satisfaction with school according to the sex of adolescents reveals similar pattern as here also most fathers and mothers had average satisfaction. Again calculation of χ^2 indicates insignificant differences in the satisfaction with the school according to the sex of the adolescents. Parents of sons and daughters tend to usually have moderate satisfaction with school related aspects of their children.

Relational Frustration of the Parents

Table 9

Relational Frustration of the Parents

Level	MOTH-ERS		FATHERS		BOYS PAR-ENTS		GIRLS PAR-ENTS		TOTAL	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Lower extreme	-	-	1	3.33	1	2.5	-	-	1	1.25
Significantly below average	3	6	-	-	2	5	1	2.5	3	3.75
Average	18	36	14	46.66	15	37.5	17	42.5	32	40
Significantly above average	8	16	5	16.66	7	17.5	6	15	13	16.25
Upper extreme	21	42	10	33.33	15	37.5	16	40	31	38.75
Total	50	100	30	100	40	100	40	100	80	100

χ^2 for Relational Frustration across sex of the parents =4.356, df=4, table value=9.49

χ^2 for Relational Frustration across sex of the adolescents =1.21, df=4, table value=9.49

Relational frustration refers to the parent's level of stress or distress in relating to and controlling the behavior and affect of the child, along with the tendency to over react and become frus-

trated in common parenting situation (Table no. 9). Most of the sample parents, 40% (36%mothers and 46.66% fathers) had average relational frustration. Another 38.75 %

(42% mothers and 33.33% fathers) scored in the upper extreme level of this indicator. This indicates that many parents were stressed in controlling their adolescents.

Analysis of relational frustration according to the sex of adolescents indicates that here also most parents of boys as well as girls had average to upper extreme level of relational frustration. Calculated χ^2 values indicate insignificant difference in the relational frustration according to the sex of both parents as well as adolescents.

Overall analysis of the parent adolescent relationship reveals that most parents shared average to significantly above average attachment, average to significantly below average communication and discipline practices, average to significantly above average involvement, average parenting confidence, average to significantly above average satisfaction with school and average to upper extreme relational frustration.

This all points that usually the parent adolescent relationship even in single parent families was moderate in nature with no major conflicts or frustration. Use of statistical procedures

point that single fathers and mothers had similar patterns of attachment, communication, discipline practices, parental confidence, satisfaction with school and relational frustration. The only dimension to vary according to the sex of the parent was involvement, with mothers surpassing the fathers. Further, this dimension along with communication also varied significantly according to the sex of the adolescents. The sample single parents were more communicative as well as involved with their adolescents sons than their daughters.

CONCLUSION

Analysis of the parent adolescent relationship in single parent families reveals that most parents shared average to significantly above average attachment, average to significantly below average communication, discipline practices, average to significantly above average involvement, average parenting confidence, average to significantly above average satisfaction with school and average to upper extreme relational frustration. The parent adolescent relationship in most cases was moderate in nature with no major conflicts or frustration. It has been noted in a study conducted by Gill et al (2003) which also indicated that according to the sex of the parents, girls perceive their mothers more positively in terms of acceptance because of the lack of discipline enforced and experience more feelings of cohesion among the family members as compared to boys.

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