

Stress and Strain in a Parent-Adolescent Relationship

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Abstract

As part of developing a parenting skills training programme in view of strengthening the parent-adolescent relationship, 60 couples were selected on a random basis from a Bangalore city based school during one of their Parent-Teacher Association meetings. The 60 couples were interviewed separately, 5 hypothetical situations which were reported by parents as the difficult situations to manage adolescents were given to them for their report on managing in their own ways. The results showed that about 31% to 42% of parents used unhealthy ways of handling such situations and mothers were found to be significantly using healthier ways of managing such situations than fathers.

Parenting: an Introduction

Historically and across the globe, parents have had to cope with limited resources for sustenance, external threats to survival, poor child life expectancy, use of children as cheap labour, and wars which reduced economic resources and frequently disrupted or permanently broke families. Issues of current concern in parenting range widely both in the wider culture and within individual families. An overview of parenting literature identifies certain themes of persisting concern which include parenting and poverty, work life balance, children in public care, parental v/s peer influences, parenting in minority and migrant families, parenting and mental health, parental support across the social spectrum, and research into parenting. Despite significant changes in the societies, the motivation to have children remains strong. This is because raising children serves many purposes like perpetuating the society, enduring support for parents as they grow older, sustaining wealth, or providing new stimulation to and an

extension of the life of parents. In addition to these, many find meaning for their own existence through having and bringing up children (Hoghughi 2004).

The contemporary approach to parenting research can be traced to the studies on heredity v/s environment on the individual's growth and development to the different research designs used in the field. Owing to the influence of these factors, the efforts to understand the role of parents in socialization are constrained severely by this traditional behavior genetic model. The efforts to disentangle heredity and measures of environment influences have become difficult as the genetic and environmental factors are correlated (Collins 2000). The research by Dumn and Plomin (2000) report that the parents' genotypes as well as children's genotypes contribute to the contrasting patterns in parenting. The lines of research in parenting, though it adopts the behavior genetic model augment it with direct measures of potential environmental effects. Another line of research is to distinguish children with different genetic pre dispositions on a characteristic to see whether they respond differently to different environmental conditions. The third line of research is to examine the effect of parental practices after controlling for any initial dispositional characteristics of children. Evidence of these comes from the research designs like longitudinal studies in which the child characteristics are controlled statistically. Interventions studies have resulted in marked changes in parenting experiences by assigning different treatment programmes designed to improve parenting with resulting changes in child behavior (Collins 2000). The research in the field of parenting thus covers areas concerning the parenting behavior, family environment, parent child relationship and other specific interventions.

The current renewed interest in parenting education stems from many sources such as the changes in the structure of the family, the lack of stability in family units, both parents working outside, lots of research on parenting, parents' realization of child rearing issues, difficulties in protecting children from AIDS, violence, war etc. (Carter 2004). The society's interests in bettering the lives of children, has also contributed to the parent education movement. Today's parents are deluged with information from multiple sources about what they should and should not do with their children. The number of parenting magazines, books, and newsletters has increased steadily in recent years the electronic media offer new sources of information such as videos, talk shows, interviews and internet sites (Simpson 2004).

Christian Views on Parenting

Religious parents do anything to preserve the integrity of the proper path. Not only do all the major religions lay down stringent rules about decent behavior towards others, including children, but there is also a good deal of dissent and divergence within communities. The parents are more likely to have harmonious family relationships, lower conflict, responsible fathering and mothering (Dollahite 2004). The major anxieties shared by all religious parents are; monitoring and control of child's sexuality, ambiguous moral attitudes about boy girl relationship, acceptance of the technology of contraception, exposure of teenager to drug abuse, contemporary music which may mock religious beliefs, and lapses in strict religious observances (Hoghughi 2004). These anxieties may indicate a genuine generation gap between elders who place a lot of importance on the preservation of a religious culture, believe themselves to be in the right and who seek to protect young people from the corrupting influence of the wider society. Young people on the other hand themselves might see their religious heritage as one amongst many possible paths which they could take, or as something to be practised only to the degree that it does not constrain their other choices adversely.

A father who loves his son will whip him often. If the son is disciplined, he will be of some use. A man who gives good guidance to his son can take pride. A man who spoils his son will have to bandage his wounds. An untamed horse is going to be stubborn and an undisciplined son is no different. If you pamper your child and play with him, he will be a disappointment and a source of grief. Don't give him freedom when he is young and don't overlook his mistakes. Beat him while he is still a child and make him respect your authority. So discipline your child and give him work to do (Sir 30:1-10). The basics of biblical parenting involve more than simply raising a child. Parents are directly responsible to God for more than providing food, shelter, and protection. Proverbs 22:6 emphasizes the significance of biblical parenting: "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." As parents turn to the Bible for instruction they are able to open up channels in their children's lives so that God's grace can flow in. Christian parents face the difficult task of raising children in a world of "correctness." Regarding instructing the child, in the Old Testament, Moses reminds the Israelites of their responsibility to their children and grandchildren. "Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them"

(Deut 4:9-10). The Bible says that disciplining should be done by using a rod of correction. "The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother" (Prov 29:15) Consistent, loving correction helps children learn biblical truths like self-discipline.

Enquiries in the culture of American 'conservative Protestantism' show that religious values are important predictors of child rearing attitudes and practices in a number of ways (Wilcox 1997). The parental position of responsibility in the church and frequent family discussions involving religion and Christian conduct function as a protective factor against drug use.

Adolescents

Adolescence is a 'normal developmental crisis.' The physiological changes going on in the adolescent body, including significant brain growth and hormonal changes, in themselves present a developmental challenge. Add in the changes in the social environment—the sudden importance of peers, the increased demands for attention and organization at school, the expectation of increased independence (especially in our society), along with contradictory expectations of continued dependency—and the makings of a crisis. But it's a good crisis, a necessary crisis, one that must be respected by parents and offers wonder and enjoyment as well as taxing one's patience and understanding. It's a developmental crisis for parents, too, by the way—especially with the first child. Neither you nor your child has been here before, and neither one of you quite knows what to do with the other. That's typical. Anxiety-provoking, but typical (Moffat 2004).

Adolescents in India

In contemporary India while adolescence is a comparatively new term, the word youth is better known and has been used at the levels of policy formulation and programming (Singh 2003). However, even the ancient text of Dharamashastra recognized the crucial nature of adolescence and prescribed specific codes of conduct for the phase. These codes are deeply rooted in the Indian psyche and continue to influence cultural practices towards adolescents in a powerful manner (Verma and Saraswathi 2002). The family universally is acknowledged as an institution of socialization; however, it plays a major role in the life of an Indian. Despite the fast pace of social change, it continues to have a direct bearing on adolescents' development, since most young people stay in family until adulthood or even later in the case of joint family set-up. Most Indian families observe sacred ritualistic ceremonies

at various stages of life cycle. These are markers of progressive attainment of competencies both in social and behavioral aspects of life. The onset of puberty is acknowledged by the family and new code of conduct is prescribed both for boys and girls. Several studies have indicated that parents rarely provide the desired support to growing adolescents regarding biological and physiological changes as also the meaning attached to these (Abraham 2003).

Adolescents -include both boys and girls but in Indian context these two have very different experiences during growing years including adolescence. The cultural differences are vast with regard to their conduct are based on traditional adult roles stereotypes. Growing as a female in India carries with it the connotation of inferior status, and lesser privileges as compared to a male child. It cuts across all social classes of the society and through entire lifespan. For a girl, the onset of puberty implies more restrictions on her movement, fewer interactions with boys and men, and more active participation in household chores. Boys begin to exercise greater freedom to move about, expected to seek educational and vocational pursuits as a priority and to take adult roles (UNFPA 2003).

Besides age old gender distinctions, there are many variations in the current images of adolescent's in India. The variations arise from factors such as urban, rural and tribal residence, ethnicity and socio economic levels of the family. Lifestyle of urban adolescents from upper SES is quite different from that of middleclass and lower-class adolescents. Former have access to private, good quality education and are influenced by western ways of life style through travel and exposure; their preferences for music, clothes and interaction with opposite sex are very close to the western counter parts. On the surface there does not appear to be any gender discrimination in the families of these adolescents but covertly they do exist. Pursuing educational endeavours is encouraged both in upper and middle urban class. Urban Adolescents from lower class have to struggle for survival and grow in impoverished, disadvantaged environment making them vulnerable to several risks. Malnutrition, risk of poor health, becoming victims of antisocial activities, brewing and sale of illicit liquor, sex exploitation, prostitution and drug peddling were reported threats for adolescents from slums in a multi indicator survey (Khosla 2003).

The picture of rural adolescents is different; the disparity between boys and girls is even greater among them. Less emphasis on formal education makes boys and girls participate in adult activities at

home and outside at an early age. The boys are expected to join men in work to earn their living, may it be on a farm or a factory or a traditional craft at home. The routine of a pre-adolescent/adolescent rural girl is demanding-cleaning the house, cooking, washing, fetching water, bathing younger siblings. Rural girls rarely pursue education beyond primary school level. Early marriage as a trend is common even now, both for boys and girls in rural India. Socio economic conditions play a major role in brain activities of children.

The traditionalism and familialism are evident in various facets of family life, both in rural and urban settings (Bhende 1994, Pathak 1994). Parental involvement and control is high. Emotional interdependence among family members, respect for elders and family solidarity are characteristics of an Indian family. It has implications for social responsibilities of caring for old parents, protecting sisters and providing support to other dependents as a traditional duty, valued within the culture, and these values are emulated by growing male adolescents. Adolescent girls are groomed to become good wives and mothers having sacrifice, tolerance and dependences as an integral part of their disposition. There is also a general acceptance of double standards for males and females in matters related to premarital sex and selection of marriage partners, with considerably more freedom for males (Uplaonkar 1995).

The ambiguity of values that adolescents observe in the adult world, the absence of powerful role models, increasing gaps between aspirations and possible achievements, not surprisingly, lead to alienation and identity diffusion (Singh & Singh 1996). Parents themselves appear ill prepared to cope with social change, having grown up in hierarchically structured and interlinked social and caste groups that provided stability (Singhal & Misra 1994). The conflict between parents' desire to help their adolescent children cope with the changing demands of their own rootedness in tradition expresses itself in the cold feet syndrome when things go wrong. Parents who apparently seem modern, but if their child breaches established social codes, intergenerational conflicts related to marriage, career choice, or separate living arrangements result in the tendency to fall back on tradition (Saraswathi & Pai 2003)

There are currently about 200 million adolescents in the 10-19 year age group, constituting 22 % of the total population (UNFPA 2003). There are about 300 million adolescents between the ages of 10 and 24, accounting for approximately 30 percent of the population. The census data show a declining ratio of females to

males in the total population in the last 5 decades, with a decrease from 946 females per 1000 males in 1951 to 933 in 2001 (Register General & Census Commissioner, India 2002, Verma 2002)

Parenting Adolescents

Individuals experience their life-cycle and cope with various life tasks in the context of the life-cycle of their families. An important area is generational and intra familial relationships in family life, parental roles and associated parenting practices, their contribution for good citizenship and good behaviour in children and adolescents. The parents have their role in socializing their children across lifespan. Across the lifespan , parents need to have not only concerns for their children's developmental needs as they grow up, but also their own parenting tasks at different stages of family cycle (Herbert 2004).

Preparing teens for the adult world requires providing them with responsibilities, allowing them to make their own decisions, and even letting them fail- all under the parent's supervision. In adolescence, parents allow their teens to walk on their own, but are never too far away to catch them if they start to fall or to help redirect them if they unknowingly approach hazards in their way. Yet they must walk on their own if they are ever to master self sufficiency (Moffat 2004).

Parenting as a skill is being considered not in the recent past. But a lot of emphasis on training parents on parenting skills is from the recent past. The most obvious, long term contribution from research to the social context of parenting has been through numerous books and manuals offering advice to new parents. These exemplify the ways that guidance made available to parents tends to mingle research messages with a strong dash of personal experience, theory, and sometimes, pure prejudice (Hardyment 1995).

Back when our parents were born, parenting skills were learned from the extended family. If parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles didn't live in the same house, they usually lived within a few miles. They were always available to impart their considerable wisdom to the younger generation on the subjects of pregnancy, childbirth, and raising children. Now, we have become such a transient society; it is rare that the extended family is even in the same state! Since the late 20th and early 21st centuries, parents have had to learn creative ways to raise their children. We surf the Internet, read books, take classes, talk to our parents on the

telephone, and make friends with parents who have “been there and done that.” We then filter these things through our own morality, sensibilities, and personalities to make them work for our own families (OSDW 2008).

Parenting is a hard job and there is no handbook to help parents do it. Children are all different. They can often present challenges that require parenting skills to help overcome. Every parent should know the basic parenting skills. They should have a good understanding of them and how to implement them. This will help when parenting becomes a little tough. Some parenting skills we are born with and others are learned. Sometimes a parent may not even have a skill until they are forced into it through parenting. No matter what type of skill base we have, one thing is certain. Once we become a parent we will learn a wide range of skills that will help us raise our child (OSDW 2008).

Parents’ behavior towards their children has been adequately explained by Baumrind (1968) in terms of their authoritative, authoritarian, neglecting and permissive styles. The effects of such styles on teenagers also reported towards the negative side except in authoritative styles. The literatures report that during adolescence the interaction of parents and their adolescents become less frequent than in earlier life periods (Larson & Richards 1991), the expressions of positive emotions and feelings of closeness become less and expression of negative emotions between them become more frequent (Kuczynski 2002). Some of the parental activities that are reported for a positive outcome in teenagers’ life are; high quality parent child communication (Bersamin et al 2008, Ramos et al 2006), parents’ own behaviors towards building a relationship with one’s adolescent, parents’ availability and accessibility (Knoester 2006), involvement (Yeung 2001), expression of warmth and closeness (Kiselica et al 2007), and mostly parental supervision, monitoring, and the more time spent with the teenager (Knoester 1994, Rupp and Rosenthal 2006). Research also throws light on the other side of parenting that contribute to ineffective outcome in teenagers such as harsh discipline and lack of nurturance (Warr 2005), lack of time spent with teenagers, lack of understanding about their physical, emotional and social developments, bringing office work at home, lack of skills in managing teenagers’ concerns (Thomas 2009), lack of healthy couple relationship among parents and unhealthy family environment (Repetti 2006).

Rationale and Methodology

Teenagers are developing human beings experiencing one of the

most exciting times of their lives, but a time that is also perhaps one of the most difficult. It's the time when teenagers question their parents, seek more freedom, develop concern for their appearance and interest in the opinions of their peers, and it's the time when they want more responsibility and they develop their own ways of thinking. Though the parent's job is not to stifle these normal and desirable behaviors and thought processes, but rather to help the emerging adult to harness, channel, and polish them, sometimes it becomes difficult for some and impossible for some other. These difficulties, in fact do not help develop a positive adolescent- parent relationship. Evidences and hands on experience show that teenage is a time of confusion created by parents also. It's the time when parents tell them "You are grown up as an adult" and the same parents punish them for their mistakes. This struggle makes the relationship worse in due course of time. Every parent does not possess all skills and knowledge of handling every issue of the teenagers' developments. Some parents do possess but use it ineffectively while others do not possess specific skills. However the intention of parents remains genuine. In this context, it becomes relevant to understand the different ways in which parents use their existing skills and knowledge in helping their adolescents grow effective individuals. This study is an effort to assess the different parenting practices as a step in developing a comprehensive skills training programme for the parents of adolescents.

Parenting has recently become a very popular topic due to the necessity of clarifying the process of bringing up a child and specially adolescents, at home by parents as opposed to formal education of the child at a school. Parents need to impart the general wisdom of life as parents themselves understand it to the teenager. Parents are considerate and anxious for the welfare of their children. Parents are exhausted on all sides by child care experts, psychologists, women's magazines, new papers, radio, and television about child nurturing in order to make their child a strong, healthy and stable minded adult (Vijayalatha 2008).

Parenting these days has been better described as a stressful activity. There are no stress-free ages or stages in raising children. Some might be a little less challenging but they all have their ups and downs. These demands encompass all of the little hassles parents experience every day, from the moment they try to get children up for school to the moment they finally get them to bed, at night. What makes daily hassles so dangerous is that they are too often considered trivial. Simply because they do occur every day, we disregard just how serious they can be to our overall wellbeing.

Over time, these hassles of modern parenting add up, building in pressure, until we have an explosion of anger and frustration. In the aftermath, our family members stare at us in bewilderment or retaliate in defense (Huxely 2008).

Parenting teenagers is a lot tougher than it was a couple of generations ago. When teenagers today say that life is a lot different for them than it was for their parents, one thinks they're probably right. Monumental changes in life styles and social behaviors have occurred in a relatively short time. This means for parents that, they not only have to deal with the normal problems and crises of adolescent development, but they also face a complex set of expectations that make parenting even more difficult. For example, they are expected to be loving and accepting but not overly possessive; involved but not over involved; firm but not authoritarian; supportive but not overprotective (Davitz 2003)

As part of this effort, 60 couples were selected on a random basis from Bangalore city based school during one of their Parent Teachers Association meetings. The 60 couples were interviewed separately. 5 hypothetical situations which were reported by parents as the difficult situations to manage adolescents were given to them for their report of managing such situation in their own ways. The results were analyzed using content analysis method, cross tabulation and chi square test.

Results and Discussion

The mean age of mothers was 41 years and fathers 46 years. Majority (51.7%) belonged to Hindu religion and 43.3% belonged to Christianity. All parents were living together with their children in Bangalore city. Most of the parents (91.7%) lived in nuclear families. 93.3% of them reported to have cordial relationship with their spouse. A big chunk (76.7%) of the families had monthly income less than Rs.30000. only 8.5% of mothers and 3.3% of fathers had education less than 10th standard.

Case Situation 1

13 year-old boy is disobedient to his parents. He shouts at his parents for things that are not fulfilled. Parents want him to obey each and everything what they think is good for him.

Parental Responses to Case Situation 1

The analysis of the responses given on this situation, 40% of both parents reported that they would handle the situation by showing

their understanding to the teenager and freedom would be given. While 16.7% of fathers think this as not a problem situation 15% of mothers say that parents should help teen understand their mistake and be supportive. 15% of the fathers are of the opinion that the teenager should be punished and parents should be strict where as only 3.4% of mothers opined the same. In the analysis of the healthy and unhealthy practices by parents on this particular situation, while 33.3% of mothers reported to be using unhealthy practices, 48.3% of fathers reported to use unhealthy practices such as, shouting, controlling, punishing, and not doing anything on this situation.

Case Situation 2

14 year-old girl is spending most of her time with her friends after school. Parents are busy with their work in office. The girl is demanding for more time with friends and night over stay at her friends. Parents are not able to handle this situation. Question also was there if they would allow if it was a boy.

Parental Responses to Case Situation 2

41.7% of mothers and 30% of fathers reported that parents should spend more time with the teen and give freedom with responsibility. While 16.7% fathers and 10% of mothers expressed the need for helping the girl to understand what is good, 23.3% of fathers and 18.3% of mothers reported that the girl should be fully restricted. Making the girl only to study, not knowing what to do, were some other responses of unhealthy ways of handling such situations. 8.3% fathers are found to consider this as situation which need not be dealt with. 30% of fathers and 15% of mothers opined that boys should be given more freedom. This implies that the gender discrimination practiced in India in the past as reported by Krishnan (2002), Bector and Katyal (1998), still holds a remarkable position in the parents' mind and practices though majority of them reported other way.

The detailed analyses of their responses reveal that there is a difference between mothers and fathers on the practice of healthy solutions to this situation. 40% of mothers and 43.3% of fathers use unhealthy ways to handle such a situation.

Case Situation 3

The parents of a 14 year-old boy are worried about the score he gets. Though he manages to score about 75%, parents are expecting a score above 90%. Parents spend a lot of time to make him study.

They show their anger when he fails to meet their expectation

Parental Responses to Case Situation 3

Both parents (23.3%) reported that they wouldn't force the teen if they were his parents. However, 35% of fathers and 31.6% of mothers consider this situation as a normal situation which requires no help. They reported better ways of handling such situations such as parents exploring teen's other abilities, reducing parents' expectations and anxieties and a suggestion for parents to undergo counseling. The analysis of their responses also showed that 66.7% of mothers and 65% of fathers reported to use healthy strategies to deal with such situation at home. The statistical tests show that the difference in practice between both parents are significant.

Case Situation 4

The parents of 15 year-old girl are worried about the new relationship she has developed with a boy. She is found to be spending a lot time in messaging the boy. On reading the messages, mother is worried that the relationship is beyond friendship

Parental Responses to Case Situation 4

41.7% of fathers reported that they would say a strict 'no' to this relationship and 25% of mothers reported that , they would understand the situation as part of growing up and try to defocus. 15% of mothers and 13.3% of fathers also reported that they would teach their teen to have many friends than having an exclusive special friend. Taking external help is suggested by more mothers. Restricting the teen on their actions has been said by 23.4% of fathers and 18.3% of mothers. However, analyzing the positive and negative ways of handling such a situation, 36.7% of fathers and 31.7% of mothers use unhealthy practices in dealing with such situations.

Case Situation 5

15 year-old boy is often visited by his friends. They spend a lot of time in watching pornographic sites. Mother has found him engaging in self stimulatory behaviours. Parents are worried

Parental Responses to Case Situation 5

95% of the parents find this as problem situation and majority of parents reported that the teen should be educated on what is 'good and bad'. More mothers spoke on getting teen engaged in other useful activities, understanding and being friendly with teen as it is part of their physical growth. Fathers talked about his availability

and sole responsibility to handle such situations, avoiding such friendships, and on fully controlling such behavior. 40% of fathers and 36.7% of mothers were seen to be using unhealthy ways of handling such a situation at home. Mothers handle such situations better than fathers is statistically significant at P value less than 0.5.

Table No. 1

Scores of mothers and fathers across different case situations

S. No	Case vignettes	Healthy practice Mother (%)	Healthy practice Father (%)	Unhealthy practice Mother (%)	Unhealthy practice Father (%)	Chi Square value
1	Case situation 1	65.0	51.7	35.0	48.3	2.2
2	Case situation 2	60.0	56.7	40.0	43.3	0.13
3	Case situation 3	66.7	65.0	33.3	35.0	*0.03
4	Case situation 4	68.3	63.3	31.7	36.7	0.33
5	Case situation 5	63.3	60.0	36.7	40.0	*0.04

Implications of the Study

Training both parents in parenting skills, and specifically getting more involvement of fathers, are implied by this research. It is evident from the study that parents need to be trained in many ways so as to

1. Foster bonds of respect and affection: such bonds tend to facilitate teaching endeavors.
2. Make firm social and moral demands (set limits). This means establishing and conveying a reasonably coherent idea of the aims and objectives that lie behind the training and supervision of young people. Children, whose parents set firm limits for them, grow up with more self esteem and confidence than those who are allowed to behave in any way they like.
3. Prepare children for life by developing family routines: most routines are useful shortcuts to living. Routine help a child master and carry out on tasks as feeding, washing, dressing, going to bed, and helping him or her to achieve more with less effort.
4. Teach children the family rules: Everyone needs some self discipline or rules of conduct in order to adjust his or her

- needs and desires to those of others. Children need the affection and approval of people around; being self centered and egoistical will alienate others and lose this approval.
5. Choose rules carefully: rules and limits are most effective when they are relatively uncomplicated, fair, understandable, and applied justly and consistently so that they can anticipate what will happen if they transgress them.
 6. Be consistent: when teaching a child to distinguish between right and wrong, or between appropriate and inappropriate social actions, it is important to be consistent. It is confusing if he or she is punished for a behavior one day and gets away with it on another.
 7. Be persistent: Parents often stand out against rebellious, non compliant behavior for some time, only to give in eventually. The child soon learns that the meaning of parents' word is ambiguous and that if he or she uses coercive strategies, the parent will give way. The intermittent reinforcement of defiant behavior will entrench it very strongly.
 8. Give explanations/ reasons: Children are more likely to internalize standards if those standards are justified in terms of their intrinsic value and when given reasons that indicate their meaning, rather than in terms of the punishment that follows from their violation.
 9. Tell children what they should do, not only what they should not do: Explain clearly to children what is required of them. Emphasize the positive, not only the negative. By attending to positive actions, parents make them more likely to occur.
 10. Give responsibility: Giving young people responsibility provides them with the opportunity to practice and to be responsible. It is an element of health psychological growth.
 11. Listen carefully to what the child says: children's communications are often in code. Parents need to be empathetic hearing, not just listening, to what their children are saying, but also to the hidden messages (Hoghughi 2004)

The training can also focus on the role of parents on developing life skills in adolescents. The following are some of the activities parents can do to enhance each life skills of teenagers. Parents should be able to assign some of the activities enlisted below.

Decision Making Skill:

- Deciding the menu to be prepared every day/ special occasions/ festivals/ birthdays
- Choosing the dress to be worn/ purchased
- Looking after the household chores in the absence of elders at home
- Planning the holiday activities.

Problem Solving Skill

- Actively involving the adolescents when the financial or personal constraints occur
- Assisting in sharing the responsibilities when too many guests arrive
- When the scarcity occurs in storage of water, vegetables, and fuel, helping the family members to solve the problem

Creative Thinking Skill

- Interior decoration/ arrangement of the articles in the house as a routine as well as during functions
- Re usage of disposable articles
- Daily rangoli for pooja
- Personal make ups/ hobbies

Critical thinking skill

- Interacting / communicating with other family members based on the prevailing family issues
- Understanding the behavior dynamics of parents and siblings and adjusting with them
- Understanding the cause and effect of family conflicts
- Coming out with suggestion to control extra expenditure or to prevent wastage

Communication Skill

- Developing and maintaining verbal communication with family members visitors, relatives, neighbors, friends, guests, and others
- Reading newspapers/ story books and sharing the same with family members
- Writing to the relatives far off
- Telling stories to younger siblings

Interpersonal Relationship Skills

- Going for picnics, visiting relatives, attending ceremonies
- Working together during family function
- Sharing and communicating the feelings with each other
- Sharing household chores with siblings and elders at home

Self-awareness Skills

- Encouraging introspection
- Rewarding and punishing for their positive/ negative behavior
- Parents' timely guidance and counseling
- Participation in family gatherings with responsibilities

Empathy Skills

- Looking after the sick family members
- Helping the elderly family members
- Nurturing the pets
- Actively involving in gardening activities

Skills of Coping with Emotions

- Facing sorrowful event as well as happy events I the family
- Appreciation of the activities of other family members
- Identifying and following some of the reputed family members as role models
- Tolerating the limitations of other family members and accommodating with them

Skills of Coping with Stress

- Learns to adopt the effective stress coping styles of significant family member
- Philosophical explanations for life events/ crisis/ stress as learnt from epics
- Division of labour at home
- Life review by elders at home

The parental training which is evolved after this study is likely to require ten sessions- each session for 45 minutes to one hour focusing on topics such as general views on adolescence, parental competencies, child rearing practices, disciplining patterns, enhancing parental relationships, role of parents in developing teenagers' life skills, healthy study habits and developing positive adolescent qualities, giving contact details of support available for handling adolescent issues and handling issues of sexuality, and dating.

Simultaneously efforts should be made by the professionals to help the adolescents to face problems in life using different life skills

such as communication skills, problem solving skills, decision making skills, interpersonal relationship, empathy and self awareness, coping with emotions and coping with stress. Adolescents should be given 2-3 days of training in life skills as applied to family and peer group situation.

Conclusion

Current study highlights that mothers use more healthier ways of parenting in the above said specific situations. The current results throw light on the need for mental health approach on to parents in dealing with the difficult situations in parent adolescent relationship. By the above said methods, parents and adolescents can be adequately prepared to understand and accept themselves and adjust with each other amicably.

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