



AN ANALYSIS OF PARENTAL BEHAVIORS BY ADOLESCENTS

Bino Thomas* and R Parthasarathy**

Abstract

As part of developing a parenting skill development programme, 60 couples were interviewed. The parents were selected randomly from a school in Bangalore city. Their 60 adolescents were interviewed using Parent Bonding Instrument (brief current) (Klimidis 1992) to understand what they perceive about their parents' parental behaviors. The results show a trend that mothers being more controlling and fathers giving more freedom. The study throws light on the needs of having similar studies done with larger samples which will help in working for strengthening parent adolescent bond.

Key words: Parenting, teenagers, parental behaviors.

Introduction

The relationship between adolescents and their parents are discussed in different platforms in connection with the betterment of adolescent parent relationship. As a social role, parents, in their dyadic relationship with their children, perform behaviors

* Dept. of Social work, Christ University, Bangalore.

* Dept. of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, Bangalore.

associated with the parental role and children reciprocate to those behaviors. Parenting on another angle, can be understood by closely looking at the reciprocal relationship parents encounter with their children. Parents get their fulfillment in their parenting role only through these exchanges they receive from their children. So a lot depends on the children also for parenting to be meaningful, effective and pleasurable. Every couple when they see their children as the fulfillment of their heart's desire in their changing family life cycles, finds new meaning in their life because of the presence of and behaviors with children. Literatures talk largely about the behaviors of parents towards children. Its time to find out whether these behaviors are clearly interpreted by their children especially teenagers as they are not simply passive respondents to parenting practices and actively shape their parents' behavior towards themselves leading parent child dealings become transactional (Ambert 2004).

The parental roles and responsibilities are characterized by bonding, disciplining, educating the child, taking care of the general wellbeing and protection, and being sensitive. While most individuals view these characteristics as important components of parenting, the relative weighting in terms of importance and frequency varies developmentally. That is, what a parent does in terms of parenting an infant differs from parenting children at other child developmental points in time. This theory is not only useful in understanding and working with parents, but also for exploring parental similarities and differences (e.g., cultural) as well as child development outcomes (e.g., social development) (Barbara 2005).

Studies reveal that the adolescents perceived parents to be less supportive against what parents considered themselves to be (Gaylord 2003), more permissive and authoritarian than parents viewed themselves as more authoritative (Smetana 1994). Droppleman and Schaefer (1963) stated that the same sex parent is more controlling than the opposite sex parent. The boys reported that mothers used to allow more autonomy than fathers and the girls reported that fathers gave more autonomy than mothers. Mothers are reported as more loving and affectionate and as less ignoring and neglecting and fathers were scored as less caring and possibly more controlling (Klimids 1992).

There is a timeless argument between parents and their adolescents on the ability and the level of understanding each other. In that context of arguments, its worthwhile to examine whether the parental behaviors are interpreted correctly by the teenagers from their feedback about their parents in the context when studies say that there is decline in the parent adolescent relationship during adolescence (McGue et al 2005). The paper is intended to explain what adolescents think about the parenting practices of their parents. 60 teenagers whose parents were selected for a parenting

skills development program from a school were administered Parent Bonding Instrument -Brief Current-(Klimidis 1992) and interviews focused on what they find in the parent adolescent relationship. This scale assessed the perception of the adolescents about their parents in view of the last three months. The scale has four sub items such as care, rejection, control and autonomy. There are 8 items for father and another same 8 items for mothers. A total of the items score show the result of each person scores in each items.

Results and discussions

The results showed that the adolescents in the study consisted of female (51.7%) and male (48.3%) belonging to 14 years (35%), 12 years (26.7%) and 15 years (20%) of age, who studied at 9th (35%), 8th (23.3%), 7th (21.7%) and 10th (18.3%) standard. All of them stayed with both parents in Bangalore city. Majority (55%) belonged to Hindu religion followed by Christianity.

The analysis throws light on certain areas where parents can improve by being conscious about their parental behaviors towards the adolescents. When enquired about what they expect from their parents, the adolescents reported that (38.3%) they do not expect anything from their parents. Whereas adolescents also expected parent to help in their studies(31.7%), appreciate teenagers for the good things they do (26.7%), allow freedom (16.7%) and avoid forcing them to get things done (6.7%). Adolescents also have reported that they would want to be trusted (3.3%) appreciated (5%), to be treated as a friend (1.7%) and not to be shouted at (3.3%). Adolescents are also aware about what their parents expect from them in terms of studying well (71.7%), and good behavior (11.7%). This result shows concerns that majority of parents expects only good studies from their adolescents.

Table No. 1 scores of Parent Bonding

S. No	ITEMS	Father (N=60)		Mother (N=60)	
		Mean	Std deviation	Mean	Std deviation
1.	Care	2.8	1.1	3.1	1
2.	Rejection	1.1	.96	.91	.89
3.	Control	1.9	1.2	2	1.1
4.	Autonomy	2.3	.95	2.2	.84

The table (No.1) describes the scores of Parent Bonding Instrument (PBI-BC)IEF. Mothers use more care (mean score of 3.1 with standard deviation of 1) than fathers (2.8) In terms of the rejection dimension, mothers have scored a mean of

.91 where as fathers have scored 1.1. Mothers use more control (mean score of 2) than fathers (mean score of 1.9). When it comes to autonomy aspect, fathers scored (mean score of 2.3 with standard deviation of .95) more than mothers (means score of 2.2 with standard deviation of .84)

The results emphasize on certain issues at this level that there are some unhealthy parental behaviors or lack of healthy parental behaviors towards adolescents. In Indian society it is observed that most of the parents would like their children study well at any cost. The current study also doesn't say anything different. However, though less in number, there are teenagers who likes to be trusted, respected, appreciated, treated as friend, and not punished. This shows healthy patterns of expectations from teenagers. Its very well understood from the statements of Ambert (2004) that children are not simply passive respondents to parenting practices. The current paper also reveal a trend that mothers seem to be controlling and care giving while fathers give more autonomy to their teenagers. The current study restates the findings of Droppleman and Schaefer in 1963 that there is difference between the care and rejection of both fathers and mothers, as mothers being more caring and less rejecting. The findings go against the report of Sirohi and Chouhan, mat fathers are more controlling than mothers.

Conclusion

This study helps the mental health professionals, family practitioners as well as parenting experts to look into the details of what teenagers perceive about their parents while working with parents and adolescents. Further study and analysis is required to make on larger samples to clarify these findings and draw conclusions. For making an effective bond between these two generations, it requires responsible, genuine efforts from both sides and understanding the above explained perspective help in engaging them more meaningfully and effectively.

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