

Comparison of adolescent-parent relationship among boys & girls in rural & urban Settings

Shaheeda Shaban¹ (MSc), Dr. Hummera Azim¹ (PhD)

1. Institute of Home Science, university of Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, India.

Corresponding author: Shaheeda Shaban: Institute of Home Science, university of Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, India,

email: Shahida.shaban@yahoo.com

Mob no: +919149522767

Abstract:

Introduction: Much of the empirical research on parent-adolescent relationship is designed to provide a better understanding of processes that foster continuity of parental influences and that minimize the disruption of these influences. The present study advances this goal by delineating descriptive detail about alterations in key aspects of parent-child relationships across adolescence. A series of meta-analyses summarizes changes in parent-child conflict rate and affect as a function of adolescent age and pubertal maturation.

Method: The study was based on primary data collected directly from the sample and the secondary data was also considered. The study covered boys and girls in the age group of 12-18 years from rural and urban areas of Kashmir region. The sample for the study comprised of 600 adolescents out of which 300 were males and 300 females. Moreover, the sample was further divided as per location i.e., a sample of 300 adolescent girls and boys was collected from rural areas of Kashmir and remaining 300 from urban areas respectively. To gather information on a sample of 300 male & 300 female respondents, Parent Child Relationship Scale developed by Nalini Rao (1989) was used.

Results: The results reveal that there is no significant mean difference between boys and girls on overall parent-child relationship, also no significant mean difference was found between rural and urban adolescents on overall parent-child relationship.

Conclusion: It is concluded that majority of the adolescents (both male and female, rural & urban) share a smooth relationship with both the parents, contrary to the old view according to which as adolescents mature, they detach themselves from parents and move into the world of autonomy apart from parents. In the majority of families parent-adolescent conflict is moderate rather than severe and that every day negotiations and minor disputes are normal, serving the positive development function of promoting independence and identity.

Keywords: Relationship, Adolescent, Gender, Conservative society.

Introduction:

The most important property of humankind is the capacity to form and maintain relationships. These relationships are absolutely necessary for any of us to survive, learn, work, love and procreate [1-2]. There are many types of human relationships but the most loved and most hurting are those relationships with family, friends and loved ones. Within this inner circle of close relationships, we are attached to each other with “emotional glue” – secured with love. Of the many different relationships people form over the course of the life span, the relationship between parent and child is among the most important [3-5]. These relationships lay the foundation of successful pathways which in turn provide a positive foundation for lifelong learning, integration of social, effective, cognitive and emotional processes [6-7].

Adolescence as a term has been taken from a Latin word name, “adolescere” that suggests growing up. Adolescence could also be deemed as the transition between one's childhood and adulthood that entails the changes which are cognitive, physical, and psychological. Adolescence is primarily deemed to start with puberty phase that infuses sexuality. In adolescence brain growth occurs dramatically and it becomes very much sensitive to environment and contextual experiences [8]. Biological, cognitive, and neurological changes take place during adolescence rapidly [9], these changes in turn have a significant impact on parent adolescent relationship [10-11]. Among the other changes that can influence parent-adolescent relationships are puberty, expanded logical reasoning, increased idealistic thought, & violated expectations, changes in schooling, peers, friendships, dating & movement towards independence [12,11]. During adolescence, parent-child relationships are thought to become more equal, interdependent, and reciprocal [13]. As a term, adolescence is also said to be the conflict period that consists of emotional turmoil, parental conflict or one with other members of family, adult society

alienation, disregarding adult values and reckless behavior [13, 14]. Adolescents tend to take more risks, like to get encouraged and rewarded and try to seek novel things and ideas[15]. Several investigations have shown that conflict between parents & adolescents, especially between mothers & sons, is the most stressful during the apex of pubertal growth [16]. Also, early maturing adolescents experience more conflict with their parents than adolescents who mature early or on time[10]. Tinkew et al (2006)[17] said to have a father with style of parenting a bit authoritarian would leverage engaging risk in substance abuse and delinquent activities amidst all adolescents. Father Child relationship's positive influence on risky behaviors is seen to be more for male as compared to females. On contrary, Shaban and Mattoo (2012)[18] said parents fail to differ in their levels of protection nature for both male and female children. Peculiar attention has been given to the track of conflict during adolescence, considering both assumptions that parent-child conflict is more common during adolescence than during childhood and beliefs that effective management of conflict promotes a smooth transition to adult roles and responsibilities [19].

It is important that adolescents develop healthy relationships with their parents since these entire relationships act as template that are carried forward over time to influence the construction of new relationships. There is ample research to prove that relationships between adolescents and their parents which are characterized by warmth, supportiveness and openness and only few conflicts are positively related to well being of adolescents. These children do much better in their life [20-21]. On the other hand adolescents having more intense conflicts with their parents tend to have problems like lower levels of self esteem, adjustment in school and well being. [22]. Consequently, much of the empirical research on parent-adolescent relationship is designed to provide a better understanding of processes that foster continuity of parental influences and that minimize the disruption of these influences. The present study advances this goal by delineating descriptive detail about alterations in key aspects of parent-child relationships across adolescence. A series of meta-analyses summarizes changes in parent-child conflict rate and affect as a function of adolescent age and pubertal maturation.

Rationale/ Justification: The expectations of adolescents and their parents often seem violated as adolescents change dramatically during the course of puberty. Many parents see their child ranging from a compliant being into someone who is non-compliant, oppositional and resistant to parental standards. Parents often clamp down and put more pressure on the adolescent to conform to parental standards. Many parents often deal with the young adolescents as if they expect him or her to become a mature being within the next 10 to 15 minutes. But the transition from childhood to adulthood is a long journey with many hills and valleys. A common belief is that there is a huge gulf that separates parents and adolescents in the form of a so called generation gap, that is, during adolescence the values and attitudes of adolescents become increasingly distanced from those of their parents. For the most part, the generation gap is a stereotype. That said, the fact remains that early adolescence is a time when parent-adolescent conflict escalates beyond parent-child conflict. This increase may be due to a number of factors involving the maturation of the adolescent and the maturation of parents. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to compare the relationship of adolescent boys & girls with their parents in rural & urban settings.

Objectives of the study

1. To compare the relationship of Kashmiri adolescent boys and girls with their parents.
2. To compare the relationship of rural and urban adolescents of Kashmir with their parents.

Methodology:

Sample:

The study was based on primary data collected directly from the sample and the secondary data was also considered. The study covered boys and girls in the age group of 12-18 years from rural and urban areas of Kashmir region. The sample for the study comprised of 600 adolescents, out of which 300 were males and 300 females. Moreover, the sample was further divided as per location i.e., a sample of 300 adolescent girls and boys was collected from rural areas of Kashmir and remaining 300 from urban areas respectively.

In order to select the sample for the present study the investigator visited various educational zones of four districts of Kashmir valley viz, Anantnag, Srinagar, Baramulla and Budgam. Assumptions of regional differences in parenting practices and behavior patterns of adolescents convinced the investigator to collect the sample from north, south & central Kashmir as well, hence, the districts. Purposive random sampling was used to select the sample for the present study.

Breakup of the sample

		Boys	Girls	Total
Adolescence	Rural	150	150	300
	Urban	150	150	300
	Total	300	300	600

TOOL:In the present study, Parent Child Relationship Scale (PCRS) devised by Nalini Rao (1989) [23] was administered on children to study the relationships of children with their parents. The tool contains 100 items. The items of the scale are grouped into 10 fairly universal dimensions of children's experience of family interaction with the two parent factor. The dimensions are: Protecting, Symbolic Punishment, Rejecting, object Punishment, Demanding, Indifferent, Symbolic Reward, Loving, Object Reward and Neglecting. Items of the scale are arranged in the same order as the dimensions and they rotate in a cycle through the scale. Each respondent score the tool for both father and mother separately. Items are common for both the parents except for three items, which are different, in the father and mother forms due to the nature of variation in the paternal and maternal relationship with children.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED:Statistics is the heart of research, so various statistical methods are extensively used in educational research. They provide an indispensable tool for collecting, organizing, analyzing & interpreting data expressed in numerical terms. To draw any conclusion from the gathered data (scores on PCR scale), data obtained was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively with the help of various statistical tools like Mean, Standard Deviation and t- test.

Results:

Protecting dimension

Results show that there is a significant difference between boys and girls on protecting (father-form) and t-value (2.342) which exceeds the tabulation value and is significant at 0.05 level (Table 1). It was also observed that there is no significant difference between boys and girls on Mother-protecting dimension and overall-protecting dimension of parent-child relationship (Table 1). Comparison between rural and urban school students on protecting dimension of parent-child relationship is given in table 4. The results indicates that there is significant mean difference between rural and urban school students on father-protecting, mother-protecting and overall-protecting dimension of parent-child relationship and the t-values (3.334), (4.141) and (4.510) which exceeds the tabulation value and is significant at 0.01 level.

Symbolic Punishment dimension of Parent-Child Relationship

The results of the table observed that there is no significant difference between boys and girls on father- symbolic punishment dimension, Mother-symbolic punishment dimension and overall-protecting dimension of parent-child relationship (Table 2).There appears insignificant mean difference between rural and urban school students on father-symbolic punishment and overall-symbolic punishment dimension of parent-child relationship (Table 5). The figures of the table 5 indicates that there is a significant mean difference between rural and urban school students on mother-symbolic punishment dimension of parent-child relationship and the t-value (2.236) which exceeds that tabulation value and is significant at 0.05 level. The mean favors rural school students showing that the rural adolescents were high on mother-symbolic punishment as compared to urban adolescents.

Loving dimension

With respect to loving dimension, no significant difference between boys and girls on father-loving, Mother- loving and overall- loving dimension of parent-child relationship was observed (Table 3). Mean comparison between rural and urban school students on loving dimension of parent-child relationship indicates that there is significant mean difference between rural and urban school students on father- loving, mother-loving and overall-loving dimension of parent-child relationship and the t-values (2.518), (3.708) and (3.612) which exceeds the tabulation value and is significant at 0.01 levels(Table 6). It is further observed that mean favors rural school students, which implies that rural adolescents scored better on father-loving, mother-loving and overall-loving dimension as compared to their urban counterparts.

Table 1: Mean comparison between boys and girls on protecting dimension of Parent-Child Relationship

Dimension	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Protecting (Father-form)	Boys	300	39.21	6.120	2.342
	Girls	300	40.32	5.398	
Protecting (Mother-form)	Boys	300	41.66	5.470	0.290
	Girls	300	41.79	5.507	
	Boys	300	80.87	9.774	

Table 2: Mean comparison between boys and girls on Symbolic Punishment dimension of Parent-Child Relationship

Dimension	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Symbolic Punishment (Father-form)	Boys	300	35.51	6.506	0.909
	Girls	300	35.03	6.430	

Symbolic Punishment (Mother-form)	Boys	300	34.45	6.599	1.465
	Girls	300	35.26	6.831	
Symbolic Punishment (Overall score)	Boys	300	69.96	11.577	0.343
	Girls	300	70.29	11.535	

Table 3: Mean comparison between boys and girls on loving dimension of Parent-Child Relationship

Dimension	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Loving (Father-form)	Boys	300	39.08	7.216	1.640
	Girls	300	39.98	6.245	
Loving (Mother-form)	Boys	300	40.80	6.006	0.264
	Girls	300	40.67	6.041	
Loving (Overall score)	Boys	300	79.88	11.333	0.868
	Girls	300	80.65	10.481	

Table 4: Mean comparison between rural and urban on protecting dimension of Parent-Child Relationship

Dimension	Dichotomy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Protecting (Father-form)	Rural	300	40.55	6.029	3.334
	Urban	300	38.98	5.443	
Protecting (Mother-form)	Rural	300	42.64	5.509	4.141
	Urban	300	40.81	5.314	
Protecting (Overall score)	Rural	300	83.18	9.272	4.510
	Urban	300	79.79	9.158	

Table 5: Mean comparison between rural and urban on symbolic punishment dimension of Parent-Child Relationship

Dimension	Dichotomy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Symbolic Punishment (Father-form)	Rural	300	35.57	6.378	1.149
	Urban	300	34.97	6.552	
Symbolic Punishment (Mother-form)	Rural	300	35.47	6.363	2.236
	Urban	300	34.24	7.021	
Symbolic Punishment (Overall score)	Rural	300	71.04	10.609	1.945
	Urban	300	69.21	12.365	

Table6: Mean comparison between rural and urban on loving dimension of Parent-Child Relationship

Dimension	Dichotomy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value
Loving (Father-form)	Rural	300	40.22	7.361	2.518
	Urban	300	38.84	6.028	
Loving (Mother-form)	Rural	300	41.64	6.178	3.708
	Urban	300	39.83	5.725	
Loving (Overall score)	Rural	300	81.86	11.003	3.612
	Urban	300	78.67	10.604	

Discussion:

The results reveal that fathers show a significant difference between boys and girls on protecting dimension of the scale. This may be attributed to the fact that girls are considered a delicate gender & fathers are more attached to their daughters as compared to sons so, they feel more protective towards their female children compared to the male counterparts. The great majority of parents have positive and nurturing relationships with their children [24]. In fact, findings from research show that parents and their adolescent children generally have close emotional ties [25]. These findings run counter to anecdotal portrayals of parents as clueless and unconnected, especially when it comes to relating to their adolescent children. Reported data from the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)[26], which has a very large, nationally representative sample, provide a window into parent-child relationships by children's specific ages. Child Trends drew on these data to look at three markers of these relationships for parents living with children between the ages of 6 and 17: parent-child closeness, the degree to which parents share ideas and talk about things that really matter with their children, and parents' acquaintance with their children's friends. The analysis show that although some declines are seen in these areas as children get older, high parental involvement and positive parent-child interactions endure throughout childhood into the teenage years for most adolescents. Also it was found that there is no significant difference between boys and girls on father-loving, Mother-loving and overall-loving dimension of parent-child relationship. This might be due to the fact that nowadays both the parents indulge themselves in child rearing & try to spend quality time with their children, treating both the children at par with each other.

There is a significant difference in parent-adolescent relationship among rural & urban adolescents as far as protective dimension is concerned. The reason for this might be that rural adolescents are less likely to fall into peer pressure as they spend most of the time with their parents compared to the adolescents living in cities where parents are mostly working and they get to spend less time with their children, so urban adolescents are more likely to feel rejected & they move away finding solace in the company of their friends feeling less secure in the company of their parents. Radziszewska et al[27] conducted a study regarding parenting styles and several demographic factors, such as gender and ethnicity. In this study involving 3,993 ninth-grade students, the researchers found a significant relation between gender and parenting styles, such that boys were more likely than girls to have more permissive parents. In addition, they found significant ethnic differences among parenting styles. National Survey of Children's Health (2003)[25] found that most parents reported close bonds with their children, communicated with their children about important topics, and were acquainted with most of their children's friends. These findings are apparent even among parents of adolescent children (ages 12-17), who are often presumed to feel distant from their children. Data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth also showed positive parent-child relationships for a smaller sample of adolescent respondents. Given the importance of positive communication and relationships for parents and for children of all ages, these findings are reassuring. The findings also suggest that a minority of parents could use help in strengthening their relationships with their children.

Our results also reveal that there is a significant difference in rural & urban parents when it comes to loving their children. This might be due to the fact that urban adolescents are more likely to be victims of drug abuse & other social crimes, so parents of urban adolescents keep close watch on their children enforcing strict discipline in homes which makes the children feel less warmth & affection in behavior of the parents. Zhang & Fuligni (2006)[28] found the similar findings within a research on city and village teens, evaluated their principles regarding parental command and personal independence, along with facets of their parental relations. City teens specified a better inclination towards disagreeing freely with their parents, a better concentration of clash towards their parents, reduced degrees of unity towards their parents, along with a reduced occurrence of consultations with their fathers. City boys were different from every additional teen with regards to various facets of their familial relations, recounting the initial anticipations for independence, the lowermost stages of intimacy towards their mothers, along with the minimum recurrent consultations with their fathers.

CONCLUSION:

It is concluded that majority of the adolescents (both male and female, rural & urban) share a smooth relationship with both the parents, contrary to the old view according to which as adolescents mature, they detach themselves from parents and move into the world of autonomy apart from parents. Although some autonomy is inevitable yet for most of the adolescents parents serve as important attachment figures, resources and support systems. In the majority of families parent-adolescent conflict is moderate rather than severe and that every day negotiations and minor disputes are normal, serving the positive development function of promoting independence and identity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Smooth relationship of adolescents with parents is very important. Some suggestions which may be helpful for improving relationship between adolescents and parents are as follows:

- i. Counselling services should be provided to both parents and teachers so that the transition is smooth from childhood to adolescents.
- ii. Parents should spend quality time with their children.

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