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Psychological effect of parental quarrels on teenagers and their future life

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Abstract

Conflict is a normal and necessary part of family life. However, when conflict between parents is handled in destructive rather than constructive ways, it can have negative consequences both for parents and their children. In recent years, substantial gains have been made in understanding of the influence of parenting behaviors and styles on adolescent emotional and behavioral outcomes. Empirical work focusing on the associations between parenting and adolescent outcomes is important because the influence of parenting during adolescence continues to affect behaviours into adulthood.

Keywords: Effect, quarrels, future life

Introduction

A conflict exists when two people wish to carry out acts which are mutually inconsistent. They may both want to do the same thing, or they may want to do different things where the different things are mutually incompatible, such as when they both want to stay together but one wants to go to the cinema and the other to stay at home. Conflict is a normal and necessary part of family life. However, when conflict between parents is handled in destructive rather than constructive ways, it can have negative consequences both for parents and their teenage children.

Teenage children are vulnerable to the impact of conflict whether their parents are Together, apart, or in the process of separation. In families where there is a high level of conflict and animosity between parents, teenage children are at a greater risk of developing emotional, social and behavioural problems, as well as difficulties with concentration and educational achievement.

Objectives

- To study the socio-economic status of teenage girls.
- To identify the reasons and forms of quarrels among parents.
- To analyze the damage caused to the future life of teenagers due to parental quarrels.

Methodology

Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh was purposively selected for the study as investigator is well acquainted with the district. A list of different intermediate schools was prepared and five English medium co-ed schools were randomly selected out of the total schools of Faizabad district. 60 teenager girls were randomly selected from each selected schools. Total 300 teenage girls were selected from the age group 13 to 19 years. Dependent and independent variables were selected in this study such as age, caste, education, religion, father's occupation, mother's occupation, father's age, mother's age, family monthly income, family type, size of family etc. and dependent variables were selected such as parental quarrel, teenagers, positive effect, negative effect, psychological effect, social effect, emotional effect, physical effect, behaviour, conflicts, counseling, measures etc. The statistical tools used were percentage, weighted mean, rank, correlation coefficient (r) and testing of correlation coefficient with t test.

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Results

Table 1: Distribution of teenage respondents according to age group

Age group (years)	Frequency	Percent
13 to 15	15	5.0
15 to 17	135	45.0
17 to 19	150	50.0
Total	300	100.0

Age group is an important factor as a psychological effect of parental quarrels in future life. In families where there is high level of conflict and animosity between parents, children are

at a greater risk of developing emotional, social and behavioural problems, as well as difficulties with concentration and educational achievement. Frequent and intense conflict or fighting between parents also has a negative impact on children's sense of safety and security which affects their relationships with their parents and with others. Parental conflict and violence also have a negative effect on the older siblings as they may struggle to form healthy relationships with their peers and life partners due to the type of environment they have been exposed to during their teenage years.

Table 2: Distribution of teenagers according to forms of parental quarrels

Forms of parental quarrels	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank
Argument and screaming	270 (90.0)	30 (10.0)	1.90	I
Use of abusive language	180 (60.0)	120 (40.0)	1.60	V
Isolation	195 (65.0)	105 (35.0)	1.65	IV
Wild sex	45 (15.0)	255 (85.0)	1.15	VI
Limiting finances	255 (85.0)	45 (15.0)	1.85	II
Ignorance and avoidance	80 (60.0)	120 (40.0)	1.60	V
Playing the blame game	210 (70.0)	90 (30.0)	1.70	III

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage of respective values)

90.0 percent of the teenagers told that their parents quarrel in the form of arguments and screaming with mean score 1.90 and rank I, followed by 85.0 percent of the respondents who said that their parents quarrel by limiting finances with mean score 1.85 and rank II. 70.0 percent of the quarrels aroused due to playing blame game on each other with mean score 1.70 and rank III whereas, 65.0 percent of the parents went in isolation with mean score 1.65 and rank IV. Parent child conflicts can occur due to many reasons. When conflict occurs, the entire family can be thrown into emotional

turmoil. Resolving a parent and child conflict requires the participation of everyone involved. Communication is a very beneficial tool in resolving conflicts. Good quality parenting, that is parenting that provides structure, warmth, emotional support and positive reinforcement, has been found to reduce the impact of conflict. Quarrel is the normal process through which people resolve differences. When people live together under the same roof, there are bound to be disagreements and arguments as personalities clash and everyone wants to be heard.

Table 3: Distribution of teenagers according to reasons of parental quarrels

Reasons	Always	Sometimes	Never	Mean score	Rank
Poor communication	30 (10.0)	6 (2.0)	264 (88.0)	1.22	VIII
Inevitable conflict	45 (15.0)	12 (4.0)	243 (81.0)	1.34	VII
Setting limits	15 (5.0)	9 (3.0)	276 (92.0)	1.13	IX
Intense emotional distress	75 (25.0)	18 (6.0)	207 (69.0)	1.56	VI
Financial matters	135 (45.0)	21 (7.0)	144 (48.0)	1.97	V
Infidelity	45 (15.0)	12 (4.0)	243 (81.0)	1.34	VII
Different views regarding child rearing practices and values	195 (65.0)	27 (9.0)	78 (26.0)	2.39	III
Family decision making	135 (45.0)	30 (10.0)	135 (45.0)	2.00	IV
Caretaking of in-laws	45 (15.0)	12 (4.0)	243 (81.0)	1.34	VII
Difference in religious beliefs and ideology	75 (25.0)	18 (6.0)	207 (69.0)	1.56	VI
Work load	210 (70.0)	27 (9.0)	63 (21.0)	2.49	I
Habits and life style	204 (68.0)	30 (10.0)	66 (22.0)	2.46	II
Household standards and maintenance	45 (15.0)	12 (4.0)	243 (81.0)	1.34	VII
Coping with others	45 (15.0)	12 (4.0)	243 (81.0)	1.34	VII

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage of respective values)

Relationships are very delicate things to handle. The behaviour of partners in relationships varies accordingly and at the same time it affects the partner and the bond they are sharing. While talking about marriages, it is a relationship where the life partners are known to be the better half of each other. It is a beautiful relationship which is sown by love, care and patience. Like every other relationship, this has also got

its own mixture of emotions. Every individual when in a relationship has to undergo various ups and downs. Fighting is a normal part of life and there are many issues that could cause conflicts to arise within families. Causes of parental quarrels are differences in opinions, poor communication, changes in the family, sibling rivalry or discipline issues etc.

Table 4: Distribution of teenagers according to psychological effects

Psychological effects	Always	Sometimes	Never	Mean score	Rank
Misbehaviour	135 (45.0)	18 (6.0)	147 (49.0)	1.96	IV
Demanding isolation	30 (10.0)	21 (7.0)	249 (83.0)	1.27	VIII
Lack of concentration	45 (15.0)	15 (5.0)	240 (80.0)	1.35	VII
Lack of interest in sports	15 (5.0)	27 (9.0)	258 (86.0)	1.19	IX
Unsympathetic towards family relations	48 (16.0)	18 (6.0)	234 (78.0)	1.38	VI
Negative or low feelings	75 (25.0)	27 (9.0)	198 (66.0)	1.59	V
Depression	180 (60.0)	21 (7.0)	99 (33.0)	2.27	III
Behavioural problems	225 (75.0)	15 (5.0)	60 (20.0)	2.55	I
Poor future parenting	210 (70.0)	9 (3.0)	81 (27.0)	2.43	II

When parents repeatedly use hostile strategies with each other, some children can become distraught, worried, anxious and hopeless. Others may react outwardly with anger, becoming aggressive and developing behavioural problems at home and at school. Children can develop sleep disturbances and health problems like headache and stomachache, or they

may get sick frequently. Their stress can interfere with their ability to pay attention and create learning and academic problems at school. Most children raised in environments of destructive conflict have problems forming healthy, balanced relationships with their peers. Even sibling relationships are adversely affected.

Table 5: Distribution of teenagers according to the methods used for resolving parental conflicts

Methods of resolving parental conflicts	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank
Teenagers should carry positive messages between parents	210 (70.0)	90 (30.0)	1.70	V
Avoid conflicting situations	240 (80.0)	60 (20.0)	1.80	III
Creating a positive, warm and caring relationship among family members	210 (70.0)	90 (30.0)	1.70	V
Having love and affection towards siblings	210 (70.0)	90 (30.0)	1.70	V
Giving freedom to parents for outing	135 (45.0)	165 (55.0)	1.45	VII
Avoid sleeping in parents' bedroom	285 (95.0)	15 (5.0)	1.95	II
Having meals together with family	300 (100.0)	-	2.00	I
Be supportive	300 (100.0)	-	2.00	I
Taking professional help	225 (75.0)	75 (25.0)	1.75	IV
Engage in social activities	75 (25.0)	225 (75.0)	1.25	VIII
Yoga and meditation	15 (5.0)	285 (95.0)	1.05	XI
Creating religious beliefs and faith toward God	75 (25.0)	225 (75.0)	1.25	VII
Hold family meetings/ceremonies	30 (10.0)	270 (90.0)	1.10	X
Be truthful and loyal towards each other	150 (50.0)	150 (50.0)	1.50	VI
Establish boundaries	30 (10.0)	270 (90.0)	1.10	X
Forgive and accept differences	45 (15.0)	255 (85.0)	1.15	IX

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage of respective values)

It is good for teenagers to try to get out of the situation as soon as parents start to have an argument. As parents are too deep into their own issues and problems they cannot protect teenagers, this is why they have to start protecting themselves. Also, make sure that one's siblings do not get pulled into it. It's good to leave the room, lock, take a walk, and meet friends. Conflict usually engenders strong emotions and even anger but, in such a state, teenagers are unlikely to be particularly rational or in the mood for compromise. Sometimes parents do not even realize the effect they have on their children. So teenagers should create positive, warm and caring relationship among family members. Healthy family relationships help all members of a family feel safe and connected to one another. While all families go through good and difficult times, a family with positive, warm and caring relationships is still able to interact with one another in a safe and respectful way. Positive interactions between family members outnumber difficult ones.

Conclusion

Conflict can range from parents disagreements to arguments to physical fights. Conflict can also look like uncomfortable silence, anger and hostility. Sometimes they can solve problems that lead to conflict quickly. At other times, it can be hard to work out solutions. In families where there is a high level of parental conflicts, teenagers are at a greater risk of development. Parents argue and openly challenge each

other on family-related matters. Parental conflicts affect the teenager's social, physical, emotional and psychological development. Parents who handle their disagreements or conflicts in a constructive way meaning maintaining calmness and respect despite a difference in opinion a child is likely to feel more safe and secure in the home.

Recommendations

1. It is important to protect and shield teenagers from being exposed to conflicts between parents.
2. Parents should agree to raise problems at a good time and place. Do it when the teenagers are not present, when there is enough time to discuss the issue, when there are no other competing demands such as dinner, and when both are calm.
3. Parents should avoid arguing in front of their teenagers and save heated discussions for behind closed doors.

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