

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF ADOLESCENTS: A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHITTAR GRAMA PANCHAYAT

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Abstract

Around one in six person in the world is an adolescent. WHO (2016) states adolescence as a period of preparation for adulthood during which time several key developmental experiences occur. If an adolescent does not get proper care, support, parental warmth and value of relationship, it may affect the overall development of an adolescent. The evolution of nuclear families and the employed parents along with the complexities of modern life has changed the patterns of parent- child interaction drastically. They become overly sensitive to criticism, afraid to make mistakes, blame others and feel like persecuted, shy, timid or withdrawn. 21% of Indian population is adolescents and Government initiates National level programs which enable the adolescents to realize their potential, which is inevitable in making them responsible to their life (NCBI, 2015). By knowing the importance of family environment, one can take these familial attributes into consideration when making choices, in order to resolve the crisis faced by an individual in adolescence and also later period of life. Therefore, the present study aims to understand the relationship between family environment and achievements of adolescents. With the background of different developmental theories, the paper attempts to throw lights on different dimensions of family environment towards the achievement of adolescent.

Key Words: Adolescents, Achievements, Family Environment, Developmental Theories

Introduction

World Health Organization (2016) stated that adolescence as a period of preparation for adulthood during which time several key developmental experiences occur. It is stated that, 1.2 billion adolescents stand at the crossroads between childhood and the adult world. The least developed countries are home to roughly 16 per cent of all adolescents. There are 143 million of adolescents live in Indian population (UNICEF, 2011). A support and concern from significant others during this period is necessary. Character formation is very much related to the family environment (Hurlock,1981). It was reported that, adolescents who frequently have dinner with

their family are less prone to substance abuse. Children who do not spend time with their family for having dinner are 2.5 times as likely to smoke cigarettes, more than 1.5 times as likely to drink alcohol and nearly three times as likely to try marijuana (The Heritage Foundation, 2016). They may become overly sensitive to criticism, afraid to make mistakes, blame others, and feel like persecuted, shy, timid or withdrawn. In order to overcome these difficulties, they may enter into anti social activities like stealing, abusing others. 75% of girls with low self-esteem reported engaging in negative activities like cutting, bullying, smoking, drinking, or disordered eating. Around one of every three deaths among adolescent

males of the low and middle income countries is due to violence (WHO, 2016).

The vast majority of the world's adolescents live in developing countries like India. It is noted that, 21% of Indian population is adolescents and Government initiates national level programmes which enable the adolescents to realize their potential, which is inevitable in making them responsible to their life (NCBI,2015).

1.1. Adolescence as a Period of Transition

The word 'Adolescence' comes from Latin language, adolescence which means "to grow to maturity". The growth in adolescence includes mental, emotional and social maturity as well as physical maturity which are marked different from those in latter part (Hurlock, 1981). It is a period when both the immediate effects and long term effects are important. Adolescence is a pre stage from one stage of development to another. This means that what has happened before will leave its mark on what happens now and in future (Irwin D. B., 1994). Heightened emotionality, demand for independence, sexual maturity is found highly in adolescence. The priority range will change and start to demand the right of coping with their own problems. Conformity to group standards is far more important to adolescents than individuality. They are anxious to shed the stereotype of adolescents and to create an impression that they are adults.

The entire developmental task in adolescence requires a major change in child's habitual attitudes and patterns of behavior. Adolescents start to desire, accept and achieve socially responsible behavior. Achieving emotional independence from parents and other are important for them (Irwin, 1994). The biological changes occur during puberty including sexual maturation, increases in height and weight, completion of skeletal growth accompanied by a marked increase in skeletal mass, and changes in body composition (Schiamberg, 1982). Adolescence is a time of heightened emotional tension resulting from the

physical and glandular changes that are taking place. Most of them do emotional instability from time to time. Adolescent emotions are often intense, uncontrolled and irrational however there is an improvement in emotional behavior with each passing year (Karen B Owens, 2002). During the period adolescents were able to think in more abstract and logical terms. The quality of thinking in terms of great ideals also emerges during the period. The three main characteristics of adolescent thought are the capacity to combine several factors and find solution to a problem, capacity to see that what affect one factor will have on another factor, capability to combine and split factors in a probabilistic manner (Irwin,1994). To achieve the goal of adult patterns of socialization the adolescents must make many new adjustments such as new social groupings, peer influence, changes in social behavior, values in social acceptance etc. Adolescents like to spend most of their time outside the home with peer groups. They want friends those interests and values are similar to theirs, who understand them and make them feel secure. They will make better adjustments in social institutions (Bigner, 1983).

1.2. Adolescence as a Period of Achievements

Adolescents have unrealistically high levels of aspirations. Adolescents who are realistic about their abilities will experience more successes than failure. This will lead to greater self confidence and self satisfaction, both of which contribute to better self concepts (Pickhardt, 2010). Aspirations tend to decline as children mature in response to their growing understanding of the world and constraints imposed by previous choices and achievements. This decline is particularly marked for those, who face multiple barriers. Aspiration means a strong desire to achieve something high or great. A well-developed identity gives on a sense of one's strengths, weaknesses, and individual uniqueness. A person with a less well-developed identity is not able to define his or her personal strengths

and weaknesses, and does not have a well articulated sense of self. Identity Achievements are individuals who have experienced a decision-making period and are pursuing self-chosen occupation and ideological goals. Identity-achieved individuals have shown such personality, features as the high levels of achievement motivation and self esteem.

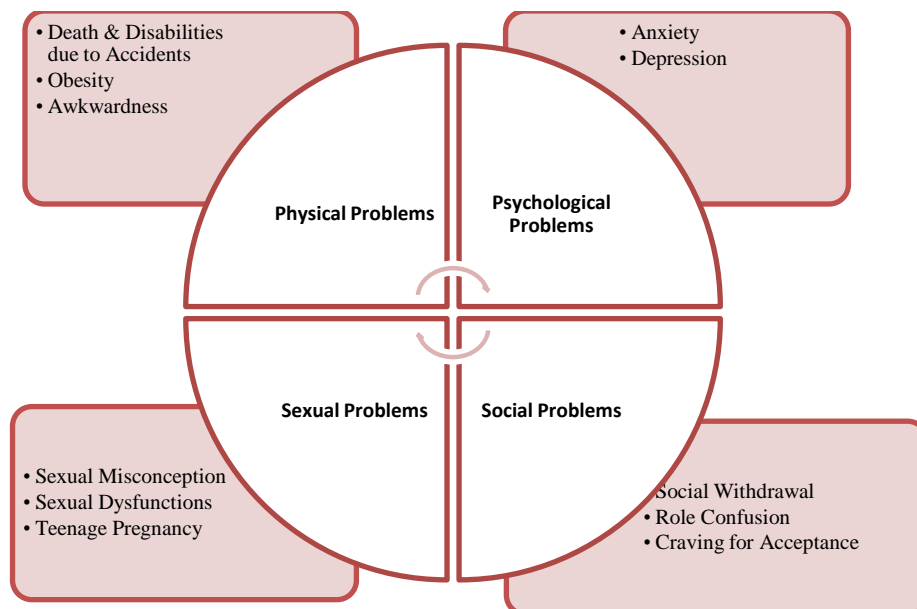
1.3. Adolescent Problems

The adolescents require little in the way of constant care but a great deal of consideration in all their affairs. The changing needs, competence and social interaction of the adolescents stimulate changing interaction, activities and values among family members

affect the adolescent development. As they gain physical stature and cognitive skills, they are likely to challenge parental authority. The principles that family members have emphasized as important for responsible, moral behavior are frequently tested. The questions they raise and the choices they make reflect not only what we have learned but also what they are experiencing in the present. Questions are raised about their preparation of their own future (Hurlock, 1981). Different types of physical, psychological, social and sexual problems facing by an adolescent are shown in the graph below.

Graph no 1

Problems of Adolescents



1.4. Socialization Agents and Adolescents Development

Socialization describes a process which leads to desirable outcomes as regards the society where it occurs. Socialization is very important for an adolescent because it sets the ground work for all future socialization. Adolescents who did not establish good foundation during childhood will be unable to master the developmental tasks of adolescence. Late matures have less time in

which to master the developmental tasks of adolescence than early matures or those who mature at the average age. Many late matures have barely completed the puberty changes when adolescence is drawing to a close. Different agents of socialization have a social purpose and permanence, transcending individual human lives and intention help an adolescent to achieve developmental milestones (Crowell, 2013). Peers influence the adolescent's

personality pattern in two ways. First, the self concepts of adolescents are reflections of what they believe their peers' concept of them are and, second, they come under peer pressures to develop personality traits approved by the group (Papalia, 1992). For most adolescents, school is a prominent part of their life. Some of the same qualities that characterize families of adolescents who do well also characterize adolescents' positive relationships with their teachers and their schools. One additional factor, adolescent perception of teacher fairness, has also been found to be associated with positive adolescent development. Professionals should be alert to the difficulty that adolescents can have with school transitions and be ready to provide additional support and guidance during these period (Irwin, 1994). Family is one of the inseparable socialization institutions which laid the foundation of adolescent development.

1.4.1. Family Environment

Immaturity in family relationship or making derogatory comments about their appearance or behavior is especially common during the early years of adolescence. Adolescents need guidance and help in mastering the developmental tasks of adolescence. When family relationships are marked by friction, feelings of insecurity are likely to be prolonged, and adolescence will be deprived of the opportunity to develop poise and more mature patterns of behavior. The adolescence whose family relationships are unfavorable may also develop poor relationships with people outside the home. While all relationships, a person who

consistently has difficulty getting along with others is regarded as immature and unpleasant to be with. Family members must be able to maintain a degree of authority about standards or limits that continue to operate for adolescents. They must be able to balance freedom, support and limit setting in the needed proportions, so that their children can grow independent while still being able to rely on an atmosphere of family reassurance (Newman, 1989).

1.5. Methodology

The major objective of the present study is to find out the role of family environment on the achievements in adolescence. The adolescents in Chittar Grama Panchayath, Pathanamthitta District, Kerala are considered as the Universe of the study. The study follows Diagnostic Research Design and Survey was the method adopted by the researcher for data collection. A five point scale questionnaire prepared by the researcher was the instrument used for collecting data from the 90 samples. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics in IBM SPSS version 20. Chi square, One Way ANOVA and Independent Sample T Test were used to test the hypothesis.

1.6. Findings

In order to assess the family environment of the respondent, researcher tried to find out the attitude of parents, communication within the family, relation and belongingness among family members. Self esteem, social commitment, future foresight, acceptance and self identity are considered as the dimensions of achievement.

Table no 1
Socio Demographic Details

Component	Frequency & Percent
Place of Residence	
Urban	2 (2.2%)
Rural	88 (97.8%)
Total	90 (100.00%)
Type of Family	
Nuclear Family	66 (73.3%)
Joint Family	20 (22.2%)
Single Parent Family	4 (4.4%)
Total	90 (100%)
Birth Order	
Only Child	10 (11.11%)
First Born	39 (43.3%)
Second Born	35 (38.9%)
Third Born	5 (5.6%)
Fourth Born	1 (1.1%)
Total	90 (100%)

The table depicts socio demographic details of the respondents. Equal number of respondents from both the gender is selected of the study. The major family types which most of the respondents belongs to nuclear family and most

of them are hailed from rural area. Thus, most of the respondents do not experience the presence of their grandparents. Majority of the respondents are first born or second born and 11.11 % are single child.

Table no 2
Assessment of Family Environment [Total Respondents: 90]

Component	Frequency & Percent
Relation with Family Members	
Low Level of Family Relationship	26 (28.9%)
Moderate Level of Family Relationship	0 (0.00%)
High Level of Family Relationship	64 (71.7%)
Parental Attitude	
Low Level of Positive Parental Attitude	25 (27.8%)
Moderate Level of Positive Parental Attitude	42 (46.7%)
High Level of Positive Parental Attitude	23 (25.6%)
Communication with Family Members	
Low Level of Communication	32 (35%)
Moderate Level of Communication	33 (36%)
High Level of Communication	25 (27%)
Leisure Time Activities in Family	
Low Level of Family Activities	32 (35.6%)
Moderate Level of Family Activities	34 (37.8%)
High Level of Family Activities	24 (26.7%)
Feel of Belongingness	
Low Level of Belongingness	29 (32%)
Moderate Level of Belongingness	37 (41%)
High Level of Belongingness	24 (26%)
Peer Pressure	
Low Level of Peer Pressure	60 (66.7%)
Moderate Level of Peer Pressure	4 (4.4%)
High Level of Peer Pressure	26 (29.8%)

The table gives details about the family environment of the adolescents. Majority of the adolescents have a high level of relation with their family members and a small percent shows low level of relation, however there is nobody with moderate level of relation with family. Looking up into the table we can find out half of the respondent's parents have a moderate level of positive attitude towards their adolescents. Most of the respondents have low and moderate level of communication within family while 27% shows high level of

communication. Leisure time can be spending by engage in different activities such as visiting friends and relatives, planning outing, movies etc. Majority of respondents shows moderate and low level of activities while 26% shows high level of leisure time activities. Majority of the respondents shows moderate level of belongingness within their family which gave them a feeling of security. Peer pressure among the respondents is low. Only 30% shows high level of Peer Pressure.

Table no 3
Assessment of Adolescent Achievement [Total Respondents: 90]

Component	Frequency & Percent
Self Esteem	
Low Level of Self Esteem	28 (31.1%)
Moderate Level of Self Esteem	38 (42.2%)
High Level of Self Esteem	24 (26.7%)
Social Commitment	
Low Level of Social Commitment	23 (25%)
Moderate Level of Social Commitment	27 (30%)
High Level of Social Commitment	40 (44%)
Future Foresight	
Low Level of Future Foresight	27 (30.00%)
Moderate Level of Future Foresight	39 (43.3%)
High Level of Future Foresight	24 (26.7%)
Identity	
Low Level of Identity	15 (16.7%)
Moderate Level of Identity	38 (42.2%)
High Level of Identity	37(41.1%)
Acceptance	
Low Level of Acceptance	22 (24.4%)
Moderate Level of Acceptance	43 (47.8%)
High Level of Acceptance	25 (27.8%)

The above table gives the dimensions of adolescent achievements. Greater part of the respondents shows moderate level of self esteem, which gives a confidence within them. Majority of the respondents have high level of social commitment while 30% shows moderate and 25% shows low level of Social commitment. It is evident that respondents are aware about their social responsibilities. Moderate level of

vision about the future is evident among the respondents. Majority of the respondents have moderate and high level of identity, which gave them clarity in their roles. Majority of the respondents show moderate level of acceptance towards others feelings and opinion. Only a small percent shows low level of acceptance towards others.

Table no 4
Relation between Family Environment and Achievement

Family Environment	Adolescent Achievement
-----	.134*
Sig (2-tailed)	.208
N	90

*correlation is significant at 0.05 level of significance

Major finding of the study indexes that family environment is positively correlate with adolescent achievement. Previous studies by Dr. Anita N. Chawla and Olutola Ajila C were also indicated that a family relationship was more predictive of an adolescent's outcome than was personal growth and system maintenance. The intervention showed that parenting style, family

cohesion and expressiveness had influenced the achievement motivation of adolescent.

Majority of the respondents says that family plays an important role in their achievements. Parents of the respondents also providing them with good thoughts. Majority of the respondents agree that their parents helping them in their studies through encouragement. The study clearly shows that a positive attitude

and good communication with parents are necessary for adolescents in order to attain self esteem and future foresight. It is the duty of the parents to congratulate their children for their achievements. Majority says that their parents are proud for their achievements. It is the duty of the parents to support their children in their studies. Majority of the respondents says that their parents help them in the studies.

1.7. Suggestions

- **Social Work intervention for improving family environment and adolescent achievements**

A Social Worker must be understood the adolescent attitudes and characteristics that are the product of the family experience. So there is

a need to build up program, seminars or workshop for adolescents and parents. Social Workers should arrange Education Program, by including both parents and adolescents, as an educational intervention designed to provide information and skills to address concerns of adolescents. So as to facilitate and motivate adolescents' achievement that will empower them to identify their strengths and optimize opportunities in positive and responsible ways. Individual intervention with parents and adolescents would be much supportive and foster relations within them. Friendly home visits by the Social Worker can offer a better Quality of living for Adolescents by solving root cause of problems.

**Graph no 2
Social Work Intervention**



- **Reinforcement and Punishment**

Reinforcement and punishment based on rationale should be used on adolescents only when it is necessary. The obedience of adolescents should arise from the realization of the rationale behind it. The familial environment should be such as adolescents ought to feel free to make suggestions

regarding family matters and also to clarify their doubts originating from their eager mind.

- **Family Get together**

Family members should find time to spend with family. The family supposed to give importance to having a meal with all the members together and parents should find time to hear their children by reducing the time spending before

television, which will give them a feeling of acceptance. Through these means, family bonding can be rejuvenated which leads to a better family environment.

- **Parents as Role Models**

Parents ought to stand themselves as role models keeping in mind that children acquire life time moral values with respect to the behavioral qualities they observe in their parents. Rather than giving advices, parents should be able to lay the pavement which the adolescents follow.

- **Avoid Comparison**

Parents should avoid comparing their children and understand their unique talents and behaviors which set them apart from others.

Conclusion

Adolescent achievements and family environment are the most integral part of the development of an individual. All adolescents have achievement in one way or other. Adolescent achievement refers to the expectancy of finding satisfaction in mastering, challenging and difficult performances. It generally indicates the outcome achieved through the interactions with social institutions. Family is the one of the most important institution among them. It is necessary to give adequate motivation for the adolescents which help them to grow up in a good manner. Now the world is growing up in a competitive manner. In order to stay alive in this competitive world adequate achievement is needed. It is the duty of the family is to give adequate motivation to the adolescents for a good generation to grow up. So sincere efforts are needed to motivate the adolescents and appreciate them for their achievements.

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