

A Comparative Study on Parent-Adolescent Relationship among Government and Private School Girls

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Abstract: *Adolescent period is one which perplexed parents, psychologists and adolescents themselves for many years. Adolescents experience a decline in the desire for companionship with their parents, experience an increase in conflict and distance in relationship with their parents. Adolescents are most likely to become autonomous if their parents keep their rules to a reasonable minimum, explain them, and continue to be warm and supportive. When parents are rejecting and over strict or rejecting that teenagers are most likely to rebel and get into trouble. The magnitude of this disturbance was still under debate within the body of research that examines the relationship between adolescents and their parents. Keeping this as a background, the present study was conducted with an objective to study parent adolescent relationship among government and private school girls from Jammu city. The sample comprised of 400 adolescent girls, selected randomly from government and private schools of Jammu with 200 girls from each school. Parent-Child relationship Scale developed by Nalini Rao (1989) was used as a tool for data collection. Data was analysed by using Mean, S.D. and T-test. The result reveals significant difference between the two groups on the domain Protecting for both fathers as well as mothers. In case of mothers, highly significant difference was obtained on the domains of Object Punishment and Indifferent, while significant difference was seen on the domain Symbolic Punishment. It can be concluded that relationship between the parents and adolescents was to some extent influenced by the type of school.*

Keywords: Relationship, Adolescents, Generation Gap

1. Introduction

A challenging period of major physical and psychological changes in a young person's development as well as changes in their social interactions and relationships (WHO, 2008). The word adolescence is derived from the Latin word, "adolescere" which means to grow up. Adolescence is the developmental transition between childhood and adulthood entailing major physical, cognitive, and psychosocial changes. This period also carries great risks. Some young people have trouble handling so many changes at once and may need help in overcoming dangers along the way.

Parents gradually loosen the reins as their school-aged children become adolescents, but they by no means cease to set rules and monitor their child behavior. They give adolescents more freedom to be out with their friends away from parental eyes, but they still watch closely to see their children are doing well in school and are not developing any serious problems. Viewing their children as more mature, parents not only give them more freedom but also demand more of them. Adolescents, meanwhile, stop seeing their parents as the all-knowing, all-powerful figures they once seemed to be and ask their parents to give reason for their rules. Yet, they still respect their parents and wait their approval. In short, "the bond with parents is not severed so much as it is transformed" during adolescence.

It is when parents are rejecting and over strict or rejecting and over lax that teenagers are most likely to rebel and get into trouble. It is unfair to blame adolescent problems such as rebelliousness and delinquency entirely on "bad

parenting." Instead, it is quite likely that responsible and level-headed adolescents "produce" parents who are loving and reasonable in setting rules, and that this positive parenting further contributes to adolescents autonomy. By contrast, parents, who are confronted with a teenager who is rude, hostile and aggressive may become hostile in return and further compound their child's problem. Positive relationships between parents and their children can help protect youth from engaging in risky behavior. Specifically, parents who are emotionally supportive and warm with their children and have well-organized households and routines have adolescents who are less likely to use substances, such as alcohol or marijuana, or engage in delinquent behavior (Crosnoe et al., 2002). Parenting practices characterized by warmth and support, consistent and firm discipline, and close monitoring have been shown, for several decades, to be important for the positive development of young children. It has now been shown to be equally important for the healthy and safe development of adolescents (Steinberg, 2001). In addition, when authoritative parenting strategies are utilized, youth have higher rates of academic achievement, positive peer relationships, are more self-reliant (Crosnoe et al., 2002; Steinberg, 2001).

The parent/adolescent relationship is truly a partnership and its quality depends on what both parents and their children to renegotiate their relationship. Apparently, most parents and their teenagers do not experience a large generation gap and maintain positive feelings for one another, yet they also rework their relationship so that it becomes equal. As a result, most adolescents are able to achieve autonomy while also shifting to a more mutual or friend like attachment to their parents ([http://control your emotions.blogspot.com/2008](http://controlyour emotions.blogspot.com/2008)).

Volume 4 Issue 8, August 2015

www.ijsr.net

Quality of parent-child relationship reaches a very crucial stage when a youngster reaches adolescence. The conflict between parental control and independence confusion over emerging identity (Erikson, 1968; Campbell et al.). Adolescence is viewed as a period of transformation and reorganization in family relationships. This shifting and renegotiation of authority and control, along with a host of correlated biological, social, cognitive, and self-definitional/personal identity transitions that occur during this period, results in transformations in the pattern of family interactions and is associated with the emergence and escalation of conflict between adolescents and their parents (Montemayor, 1986; Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991). Research supports the claim that conflict is an integral component of parent-adolescent relationships (Laursen, 1995). Several investigations have shown that conflict between parents and adolescents is the most stressful during the apex of pubertal growth (Steinberg, 1988). Also, early maturing adolescents experience more conflict with their parents than adolescents who mature early or on time (Collins and Steinberg, 2006). So, the present study was undertaken to assess the relationship of adolescent girls with their parents and to compare their relationship with their fathers and mothers.

2. Materials and Methods

For the study, 400 adolescent girls were selected from the Jammu city through random sampling technique and the tool used for collection of data was Parent-Child Relationship Scale (PCRS) developed by Rao (1989). The scale consisted of 100 items categorized into ten dimensions namely, Protecting, Symbolic Punishment, Rejecting, Object Punishment, Demanding, Indifferent, Symbolic Reward, Loving, Object Reward and Neglecting. Each respondent scores the tool for both father and mother separately. Respondents were asked to read each statement carefully and think how well it described the behaviour of their father's and mother's towards them. After the data collection, the data was carefully analyzed and interpreted using mean, S.D and t-test.

3. Results

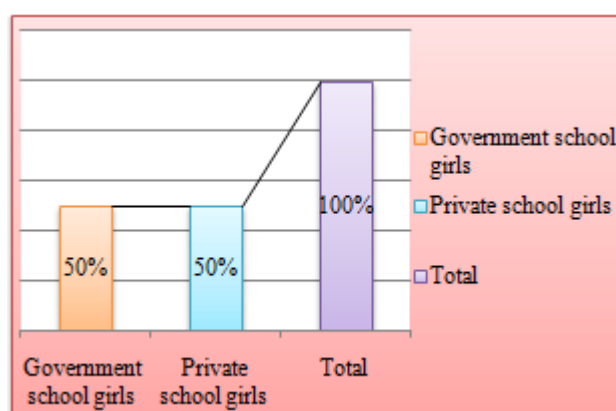


Figure 1: School wise distribution of adolescent girls

Fig 1 reveals that there is equal distribution of girls in Government (50%) and private schools (50%). 200 girls

were selected from government schools and 200 from private schools. Thus altogether making a total of 400 girls.

Table 1: Mean, SD and 't' value collected by Parent-child relationship: A comparison between Government and Private school girls (Fathers)

Dimensions	Govt. School girls (n=200)	Private school girls (n=200)	t' value	Probability
Protecting	30.41±6.25	28.25±6.12	3.48**	0.00
Symbolic Punishment	24.58±4.98	25.30±5.03	1.52	0.12
Object Punishment	22.41±5.87	22.80±5.32	0.69	0.46
Rejecting	19.95±5.48	20.80±5.59	1.53	0.12
Indifferent	22.50±4.53	23.09±5.21	1.20	0.22
Neglecting	19.72±5.73	20.00±5.14	0.50	0.61
Demanding	24.71±5.50	24.61±5.51	0.16	0.87
Loving	28.79±5.58	27.93±5.40	1.55	0.12
Symbolic Reward	29.56±5.96	29.35±5.66	0.36	0.71
Object Reward	27.26±4.99	27.24±5.15	0.03	0.97

**=significant at 0.01 level

*= significant at 0.05 level

In table no.1, the comparison of government and private school girls with regard to the domains of parent child relationship is presented. This table show the scores for father. Regarding the first domain *i.e.* Protecting, the data indicates that in case of father, the mean value of Government school girls was higher than the private school girls. The mean value with regard to government school girls was 30.41 (Fathers) and for the private school girls was 28.25 (Fathers). The 't' test also shows that this difference was significant in case of fathers. It confers that fathers of Government school girls were more protecting towards their daughters as compared to fathers of private school girls

In case of Symbolic Punishment for fathers, adolescent girls from private school scored higher on this domain. For the fathers, the mean value for Government and private school girls was 24.58 and 25.30 respectively.

For another aspect of punishment *i.e.* Object Punishment, it was observed that private school girls secured higher in case of father. For fathers, the mean value of Government and private school girls was 22.41 and 22.80.

In terms of Rejection, Indifferent and Neglecting which are the negative aspect of the Parent child relationship, it may be found from the data presented in table, that on all these negative domains, private school girls were higher than the government school girls. As far as Rejection is concerned, the mean value for Government and private school girls was 19.95 and 20.80 respectively. Similar picture was seen for the other two domains *i.e.* Indifferent and Neglecting. For the domain indifferent, the mean values for the Government and private school girls in regards to their fathers were 22.50 and 23.09 respectively.

Regarding the domain 'Demanding', the mean scores of adolescent girls from private schools was (Father =24.61) and that of Government school girls (Father=24.71). Although there is difference in the mean scores of

government and private school girls but this difference was not much that it is to be termed as significant.

So far as the domain 'Loving' is concerned, it shows the perception of child/adolescents expression of affection for the parents. It was revealed from the data that there is not much difference between Government and private school girls in case of fathers. The mean value of Government school girls was 28.79. In case of private school girls, the mean values for father was 27.93. The results of the test of significance even show that this difference was insignificant.

For the last two domains –Symbolic Reward and Object Reward, it was again observed that there is not much difference between Government and private school girls in case of fathers. Regarding the Symbolic Reward, in case of fathers, the mean value for the Government and private school girls was 29.56 and 29.35 respectively.

In regards to the Object Reward, similar picture was apparent. The mean value for fathers of Government school girls was almost similar to private school girls. In case of mothers, private school girls scored slightly more (mean value 29.17) than the Government school girls (mean value 28.71). Even the result of 't' test also shows that there is no difference between the two sample groups as far as Symbolic and Object Reward were concerned. So it may concluded that in terms of giving rewards to the daughters, the parents of either Government school girls or Private school girls had no difference for the daughters.

Table 2: Mean, SD and 't' value collected by Parent-child relationship: A comparison between Government and Private school girls (Mothers)

<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Govt. School girls (n=200)</i>	<i>Private school girls (n=200)</i>	<i>t' value</i>	<i>Probability</i>
Protecting	32.23±6.97	30.30±6.13	3.06**	0.00
Symbolic Punishment	26.95±5.60	28.25±5.56	2.32*	0.02
Object Punishment	23.72±6.40	25.27±5.18	2.66**	0.00
Rejecting	19.95±5.48	20.80±5.59	1.53	0.12
Indifferent	22.94±4.85	24.34±5.01	2.83**	0.00
Neglecting	19.94±6.63	20.09±6.10	0.24	0.80
Demanding	25.52±5.69	26.34±5.29	1.48	0.13
Loving	29.99±6.50	30.06±5.54	0.11	0.90
Symbolic Reward	28.21±5.94	28.5±5.59	0.62	0.53
Object Reward	28.71±5.57	29.17±5.33	0.84	0.40

**=significant at 0.01 level

*= significant at 0.05 level

In Table no. 2, the data indicates that regarding the first domain *i.e* Protecting in case of mothers, the mean value with regard to government school girls was 32.23 and for the private school girls was 30.30. The 't' test also shows that this difference was significant in case of mothers. It shows that mothers of Government school girls were more protecting towards their daughters as compared to mothers of private school girls.

In case of Symbolic Punishment for mothers, adolescent girls from private school scored higher on this domain. The mean value for Government and private school girls was 26.95 and 28.25.

For another aspect of punishment *i.e* Object Punishment, it was observed that in case of mothers, the mean value of Government and private school girls was 23.72 and 25.27. The value of 't' test also shows significant difference at 0.01 level. So it may be said that mothers of the private school girls believed in giving object punishment to their daughters.

In terms of Rejection, Indifferent and Neglecting, which are the negative aspects of the Parent child relationship, it may be found from the data presented in table, that on all these negative domains, private school girls were higher than the government school girls in case of mother. As far as Rejection is concerned, mean value for mother was 20.82 for Government school girls and 21.97 for private school girls. Similar picture was seen for the other two domains *i.e* Indifferent and Neglecting. Regarding domain indifferent, for the mothers, the values were 22.94 and 24.34 respectively. The 't' test shows that difference is significant in case of mothers.

Regarding the domain 'Demanding', the mean scores of adolescent girls from private schools was (Mother = 26.34) and that of Government school girls (Mothers =25.52). Although there is difference in the mean scores of government and private school girls but this difference was not much that it is to be termed as significant.

So far as the domain 'Loving' is concerned. the mean value of Government school girls was 29.99. In case of private school girls, the mean value was 30.06. The results of the test of significance even show that this difference was insignificant.

For the last two domains –Symbolic Reward and Object Reward, it was again observed that there is not much difference between Government and private school girls in case of mothers. Regarding the Symbolic Reward. For the mothers, mean value for Government and private school girls was 28.21 and 28.57 respectively.

Regarding the domain Object Reward, In case of mothers, private school girls scored slightly more (mean value 29.17) than the Government school girls (mean value 28.71). Even the result of 't' test also shows that there is no difference between the two sample groups as far as Symbolic and Object Reward were concerned.

4. Discussion

On comparing the Government and private school girls for their relationship with their parents, the results reveal that 't' test shows highly significant difference between the two groups on the domain Protecting for both fathers as well as mothers. It indicates that parents of Government school girls were more protecting towards their daughters as compared to parents of private school girls. It may be due to the fact that parents of government school were more concerned about their daughters for the safety reasons. This is very obvious because they are cautious about the security and well being of their girls. In Government school, the environment for the girls is not so conducive to be on their own. Parents perceived that they are less attended by the authorities, and even in case of any emergency they are not

even informed in any way. Rather in private schools, due care and protection is provided to the individual child. This was one of the reasons for which the government school girls perceive their parents to be more protecting towards them. In case of mothers, highly significant difference was obtained on the domains of Object Punishment and Indifferent while significant difference was seen on the domain Symbolic Punishment. It was found that mothers of the private school girls believed in giving Object Punishment to their daughters. This difference might be due to the fact that mothers of private school girls are more educated and are more aware about the ways of parenting *i.e* when to become lenient and when to become strict. They know that any ill behaviour must be treated by giving limited punishment so that it would not happen in future. Due to this, private school girls also perceive their mothers to be more indifferent than government school counterparts.

5. Conclusion

The results on Parent-Child Relationship Scale indicates that our sample was receiving positive parenting. Private school girls significantly achieve higher scores on the domains Symbolic Punishment, Object Punishment and Indifferent in case of mothers whereas government school girls scored higher on single domain *i.e*. Protecting for both the parents. Further, results of 't' test shows significant difference across school. This difference might be due to the fact that mothers of private school girls are more aware about the ways of parenting. It is further concluded that majority of the adolescents share a positive 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.

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