Impact of Family Environment and Encouragement on Overall Development of Adolescents (13-16 Yrs)

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence can be an over whelming stage for both the children and parents alike, since this period is considered as a stage of storm and stress. Parents often feel unprepared to face this challenging stage, yet during adolescent years, support from the parents can greatly influence the growth and overall development of their children. Therefore, this study was undertaken with a purpose to analyse the role of family environment in dealing with this sensitive and vulnerable stage.The main objective of this study was to find out the role of family members in providing a conducive environment for the overall (social, moral and emotional) development of the adolescents of s from Patna town. The study was conducted on 13-16 years old adolescents selected from 3 schools of Patna. Total sample constituted of 100 adolescents. An in-depth interview schedule was used to collect data from the sample. The results of the study revealed that parents were over concerned about the peer group of the adolescents, which was causing hindrance in the development of social skills. Also the parents were not tactfully addressing sensitive issues like emotional outbursts, healthy discussions regarding taboo issues with their adolescents. The stage of adolescence might be tough and challenging but this phase will also eventually pass. By supporting and encouraging children and providing them with a conducive home environment, parents will not only help them ride these rough waves but would also bring them safely to shore towards a bright future.

Keywords: *Conducive, Social, Moral, Emotional, Adolescence, Family Environment*

1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are the young people aged between 10 to 19 years. This phase broadly covers three stages early adolescence (10-13), mid adolescence (14-15) and later adolescence (16-19). It is a transitional stage of physical, physiological and psychological development from puberty to legal adulthood. Worldwide more than 1.2 billion are adolescents: this indicates that roughly one in every six persons is an adolescent .About 21% of Indian population is adolescents (about 243 million) (Strategy Handbook Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram. Adolescent Health Division Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Government of India. January 2014). India has the largest adolescent population in the world.

Fig 1- Proportion of adolescents and World population
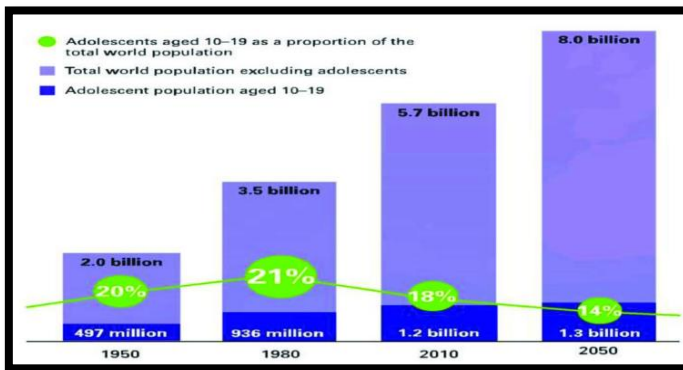
Source: progress for children; A report card on adolescents. UNICEF

Table 1: Adolescent's percentage in the top and bottom five States

Top Five State	% Adolescent	Bottom Five State	% Adolescent
Uttar Pradesh	24.5	Kerala	16.3
Rajasthan	22.9	Tamil Nadu	17.2
Uttrakhand	22.5	Karnataka	18.9
Bihar	22.5	Maharashtra	19.0
Jharkhand	22.2	Andhra Pradesh	19.3

(Source- C ChandramouliRelease of social and cultural tables: Age. Data highlights. August 2013. Census of India 2011)

These young people are the future of the nation, forming a major demographic and economic force. They have specific needs which vary with gender, life circumstances and socio economic conditions. It is a period of preparation for undertaking greater responsibilities like familial, social, cultural and economic issues in adulthood.

This period is defined as the period of transition between childhood to adulthood that involves biological, cognitive and socio emotional changes (Larson, Wilson, Brown, Furstenberg and verma, 2002).

Adolescent from a socially important segment of the population. Apart from physical health, a positive social health constitutes holistic health of the adolescents and this is where family plays a very important role.

Importance of Family during Adolescence

Adolescence is an important developmental phase along the path to adulthood years during which youth become increasingly independent from their families. Yet parents and other family members play a critical role in the promotion of adolescents' well-being, by providing a positive support system within which these young minds can explore their changing identity.

Parents make direct and indirect investments in their children by providing material resources, engaging in care giving activities, transferring knowledge, maintaining the home environment, and supplying other social and economic supports (Hewlett 2000). Family structure links to child and adolescent well-being are thought to operate through three primary mechanisms: the family's access to resources, the quality of parenting and the home environments to which children are exposed, and family stress and parental psychological well-being (Amato 1993, 2005; Carlson and Corcoran 2001).

Differences in the quality of parenting and the home environment may be both indirectly and directly influenced by family structure. For example, the constraints on the time and effort that single mothers can invest in parenting are likely to be more stringent than those faced by two-parent families (Carlson and Corcoran 2001).

Social parents may have fewer incentives to invest in children than biological parents do and also may have less parental authority in children's care (Cherlin 1978; Hofferth and Anderson 2003).

Family structure and its impact on Family Environment

The quality of cultural and moral upbringing is slowly degrading in today's societies. Many social psychologists assume that this decline originates from family's environment. Long periods of absence of working fathers from home, working mothers, disintegration of family structure, aping the western societies, technological advancements and socioeconomic crisis are considered the main reasons of unbalance in families. Unfavorable family atmosphere creates disruptions and affects the overall development of a child. In his research, Steinberg investigated five types of families: a) intact affectionate families; b) responder families; c) indifferent families; d) autocratic families; and e)

dysfunctional families. The findings show that intact and affectionate families and also responder families are the best types of families for the upbringing of a child. Dysfunction, autocracy, and indifference lead to anxiety, depression, antisocial behavior, and a severe delinquent mentality in children while family solidarity leads to mental health in children. A child's family deeply affects formation of their personality, maladjustment, and tendency for delinquency through its child-parent relationship and unique structure. Because of the new trends in the structure of the family parenting has becomes more challenging and complex and may cause adverse affect on the overall development of a child.

Issues related to adolescents

Changing one's perception regarding the parents, the peers and the self, boys and girls at this stage may respond to their elders with irritation, distrust and suspicion. They are easily offended and are quick to complain that the adults do not understand them or that they do not treat them fairly, they are highly sensitive and self conscious. Sometimes they may over power by their emotions of anger, fear and love. Conflicts with parents may arise over his manner of dress, the friends they choose, the way they spends there time, the condition of their table and there room; conflicts also arise because they seem to lack respect and consideration for others. Sometimes they act like dependent child but sometimes they may resist the efforts of the adults to treat them as a child. The girls may express her resentment of these demands of parents by rebelling against her mothers. Lack of understanding at this stage period may lead to considerable damage not only to parent child relationships but also to the personality of the growing child.

Another major issue that is seen in the society these days with regards to adolescence is the change in the dynamism of Indian family structure. With the advent in working women culture in our society, mothers are not able to give enough time to their children and at times to compensate for this they provide their children with materialistic substitutes. From care givers; at times the modern parents just become providers.

Adolescents need parents and family support as much as they did when they were younger since it is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood lot of guidance and support needs to be given to the adolescents which

is missing as parents are busy in their respective professions. It is also seen that in later stages such adolescence lacks emotions and feeling and are highly materialistic.

Consequently, Parents fail to provide a conducive environment required for the overall well-being of the adolescent since they are hardly there for their children during this crucial period of life.

It is also seen that few parents have a tendency of overprotecting their child because of which the child may lack: self confidence, decision making skills, overall personality development and socializing skills. The adolescent may either suppress or on the contrary could be a total rebel.

Statement of the problem

1. Adolescents today is unfortunately not only a period of preparation for and transformation to adulthood (Louw & Louw,2007), but has become a period in which adolescents increasingly face many new challenges which they are often ill prepare for.

2. Exposure of alcohol , drugs , sexually transmitted diseases, and an increasing incidence of teenage depression as well as suicidal behavior have become a threat to adolescent well being (Haven, 1996; Larson, Wilson, & Mortimer,2002)

3. The family is still a secure emotional base where the adolescents feel love and acceptance no matter what's going on in rest of his or her life. The family can build and support their child confidence, self belief , optimism and identity.

Therefore supportive and closed family relationship protect their children from risky behavior.

Need of the study

This study would not only highlight the area of parenting which need to be taken care of but also would suggest how small changes in the family environment would help adolescents to lead a successful life. Therefore the purpose of the study was to find out the impact of family environment on the development of adolescents.

Objective of the study

1. To find out the role of family members in providing a conducive environment for the overall development of the adolescents.

2. To find out the impact of family environment on the following aspects of adolescents:-
- Social
- Moral
- Emotional

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

1. **Overall development**

   In the study the variables included are
a. Social Development
b. Moral Development
c. Emotional Development
d. General Development

i. Social Development

In social development we restrict over relationship with peers, role of family environment in social development and their impact.

ii. Moral Development

In the study moral development is in terms of family and parents and what adolescent is imbibing from their family environment.

iii. Emotional Development

In the study emotional development is relationship between adolescent's emotion and the support that they get from the family especially during the time of crisis

METHODOLOGY

The present study is on **"**Impact of Family Environment and Encouragement on overall development of Adolescents (13-16 yrs)

Locale:

The locale of the study was selected from schools of Patna.

Setting:

The study was conducted at three schools of Patna

- Mount Carmel
- Christ Church Diocesan School
- Lohiya Nagar Mount Carmel high school

Research design:

Cross sectional study was followed to conduct the present study among children of age group 13-16yrs.

Sampling method:

Based on the objective of the study purposive incidental sampling technique was adopted.

Sample size:

80 male and 80 female adolescents falling in the age group of 13 to 16 years would be taken as respondents for the study from the above-mentioned locale.

Details of the Sample:

Samples for the study were selected from middle income group.

Inclusion criteria of the sample:

1. Both sexes
2. The students were selected random from grade 7 to 10.
3. Aged from 13 to 16 years

Tools

Tools were designed on the following basis
- Demographic profile
- Social aspects
- Moral aspects
- Emotional aspects

Method of data collection:

In-depth Interview schedule was used for collecting the information from the respondents.

Data analysis:

Tabulation and frequency distribution methods were used for the data analysis. Data entry and analysis were performed using Microsoft excel spread sheets.
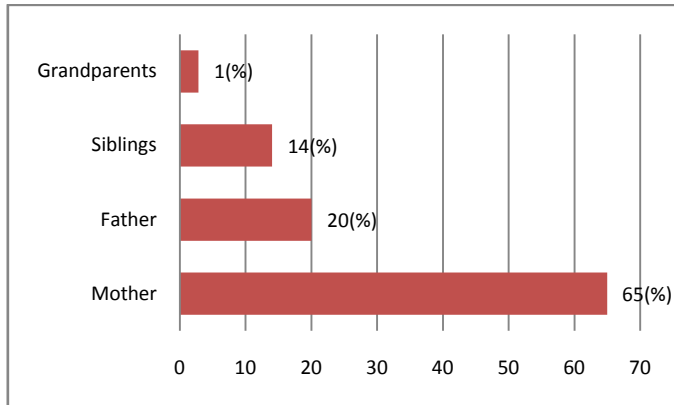
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
SOCIAL:

Table-1 Response regarding involvement of family members in day to day activity.

Sl .No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Mother	65	65
2.	Father	20	20
3.	Siblings	14	14
4.	Grandparents	1	1
	Total	**100**	**100**

**Fig-1 Involvement of family members in day to day activity.**

The above given table highlights that majority (65%) of the respondents stated that mother was the only family member who was actively involved in areas like: daily routine, health, eating habits, monitoring their behavior, discussing school activities, academic performance, attending parent-teacher conference, extra curriculum activities, peers and friends. Involvement from the parent's side not only helped the adolescents' overcome challenges and does well, but also gave them a sense of confidence and security and motivated them to do better in life.

Table: 2 Response regarding recreation time with parents

Sl.No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	62	62
2	No	38	38
	Total	100	100

Fig: 2 Response regarding recreation time with parents
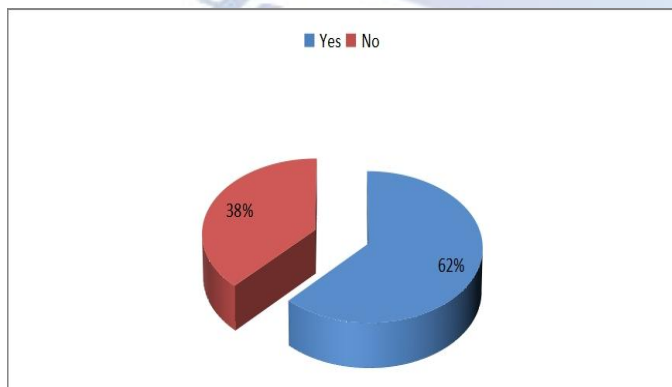
From the above given table it is clear that majority (62%) of the respondents had recreational time with the

parents. Recreation time especially with the family not only help bonding well with the family member but also inculcates positive social behavior especially amongst adolescents.

Table-3 Parents concern regarding peer group.

S.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Concerned	100	100
2	Not Concerned	0	0
	Total	100	100

Table-4 Reason of parents concern regarding their peer group

S.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Safety & Security	55	55
2	Fear of distraction	42	42
3	Trust issue	3	3
	Total	100	100

Fig-3 Reason of parents concern regarding their peer group
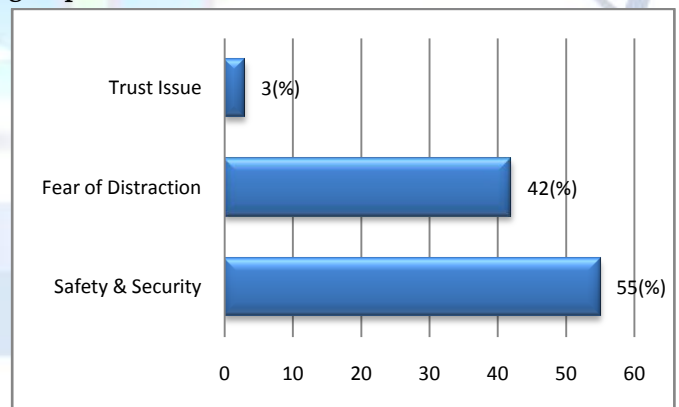
Table-5 Response of Adolescents regarding Parent's concerns

Sl.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Agree with them	0	0
2	Upset	57	57
3	Not	43	43

	bothered		
	Total	**100**	**100**

**Fig-4 Response of Adolescents regarding parents concern**
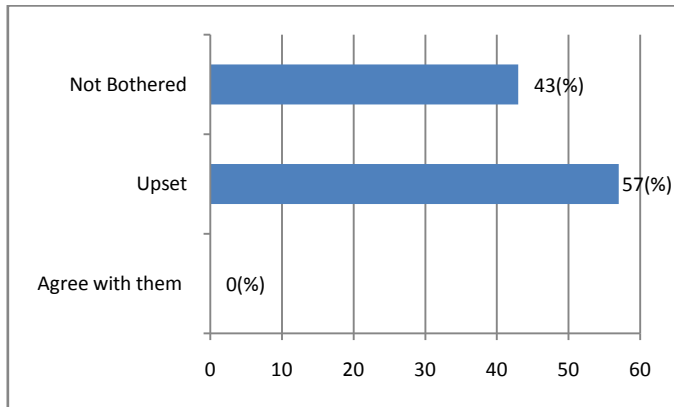
The above given table gives us an insight regarding concerns of parents about the peer group and it is very clear from the table that 100 Percent parents were concerned .The major reasons seen behind this were safety and security (55%) and fear of getting distracted (42 %) specially from academics. And the above given table also highlighted that the majority (57%) of respondents were upset with their parents regarding their interference.

Table-6 Response regarding kinds of parenting.

Sl.No.	Variables	Response	Percentage %
1.	Authoritative	53	53
2.	Authoritarian	38	38
3.	Permissive	7	7
4.	Neglectful	2	2
	Total	**100**	**100**

**Fig:-5 Response regarding kinds of parenting.**
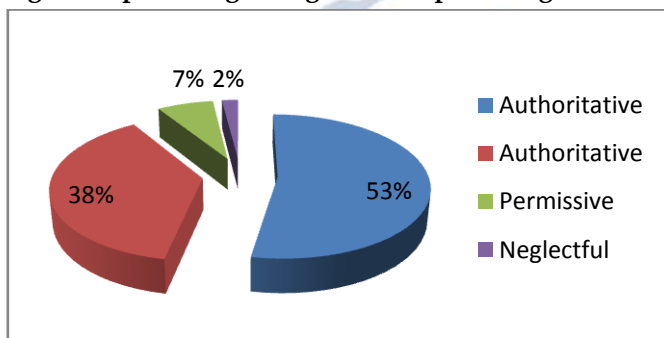
Kind of parenting has a very strong influence on the overall development of an adolescent. The above given tables implies towards the fact that majority (53%) of the parents had and authoritative style of parenting. Here the parents are caring and sensitive towards the need of the child but at the same time set clear limits for the child, consequently the adolescent has a very positive image about them and have a good overall development. Also the social development of an adolescent relies a lot on the upbringing style of the parents and authoritative parenting is considered to have a positive influence on the development of social skills amongst adolescents.

MORAL:-

Table: 7 Response regarding allotment of household work by the parents.

Sl.No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	94	94
2	No	6	6
	Total	**100**	**100**

**Fig: 6 Allotment of household work by the parents**
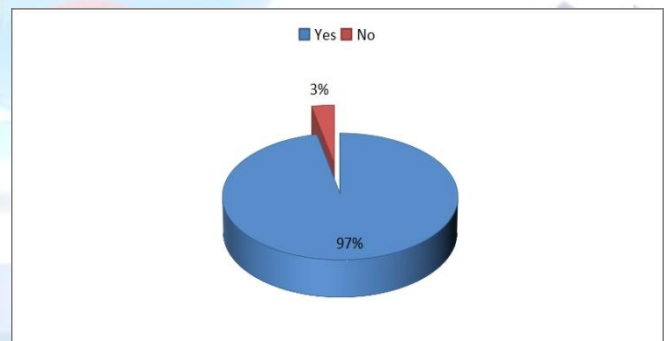
The above given tables shows that majority (97%) of the parents allotted household responsibilities to the respondents .This was a very positive step by the parents which would not only encourage bonding with the other family member but would also help them to build sense of responsibility towards the house & family member. This might help in developing quality of a care giver which could help them in their family lives.

Table -8 Response regarding parents being role models to their adolescents

Sl.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	73	73
2.	No	27	27
	Total	100	100

Fig: 7 Response regarding parents being role models to their adolescents
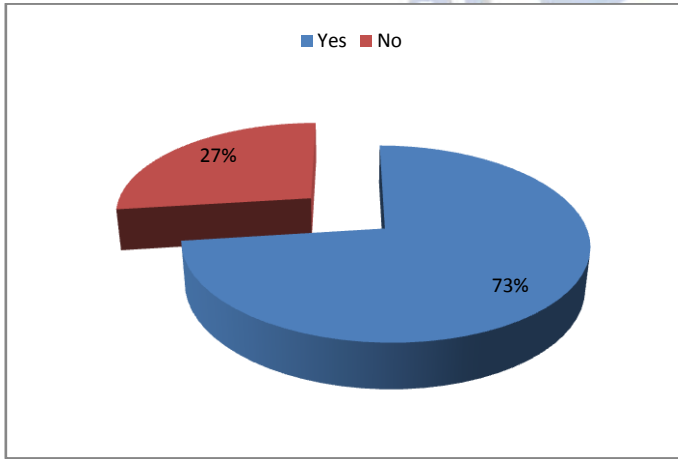
It is also very clear from table that majority 73 % of the respondents were following what their parents practiced as far as moral behavior was concern. The adolescents followed what the parents did rather than what they said thus the parents needed to set a good example.

Table: 9 Response regarding setting rules in the house

Sl.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	85	85
2	No	15	15
	Total	100	100

Fig: 8 Response regarding setting rules in the house.
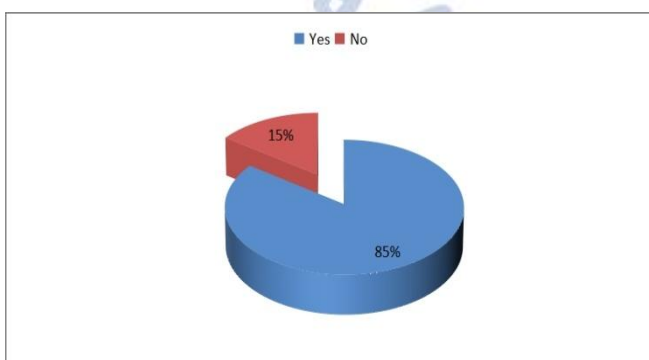
Table: 10 Response regarding parent's action when breaking of rule

Sl.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	90	90
2	No	10	10
	Total	100	100

**Fig: 9 Response regarding Parent's action when breaking of rule**
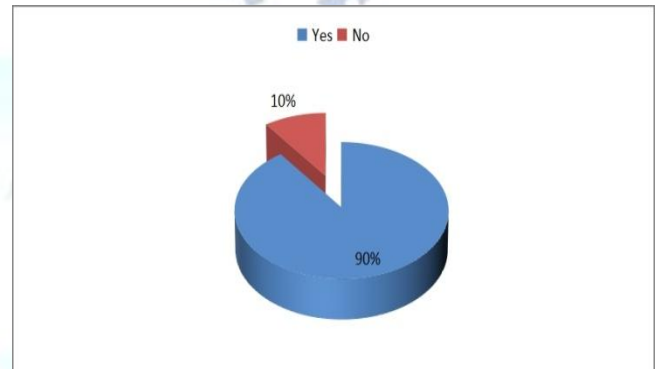
Settings Rules and discipline in the house and taking action if the rules are broken by the parents certainty help in moral development of adolescents and from the above given table it is quite clear that majority (85%) of the parents did set rules for their adolescents. These rules were basically for: academics, household work, behavior and conduct and following timetable. Further the table also highlight that majority of the parents 90 % would take some action if the rule were broken. Consequently the respondents seriously tried to follow the rules set in the house which in turn helped them set some standard and inculcate the sense of what is right and wrong in future. When the parent sets rules, boundaries and standards of behavior they give their children, a sense of consistency, predictability and stability.

Table: 11 Response regarding parents set a limit for money to be spent

Sl.No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	81	81
2	No	19	19
	Total	100	100

**Fig: 10 Response regarding parents set a limit for money to be spent**
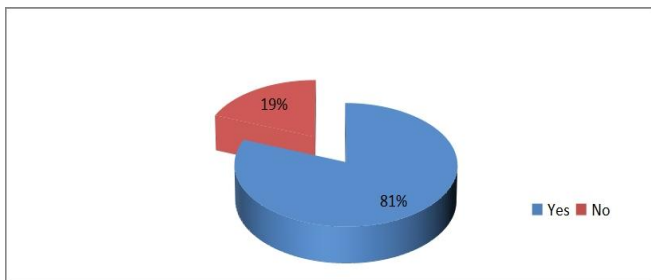
Giving your child an allowance is one good way to help her understand the value of money. But you must decide how much the allowance will be, taking into account your resources, your child's age and what expenses the allowance will cover (lunches, clothes, church donations, entertainment or whatever). An allowance can help your young teen learn how to save and how to use money wisely.(Helping Your Child through Early Adolescence, 2005; www2.ed.gov)

Table-12 Discussion regarding sensitive issues.

Sl.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	39	39
2.	No	61	61
	Total	100	100

Fig-11 Discussion regarding sensitive issues
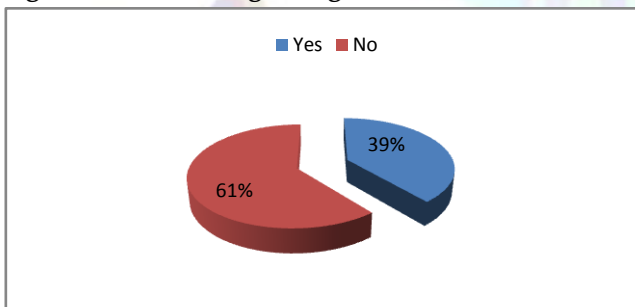
It is evident from the study that majority (61%) of the parents were hesitant in discussing sensitive issues which are considered taboo in our society and as they thought that it not necessary and children will come to know about these things of their own. These studies result in a low or a moderate attitude towards sex education. This kind of attitude has prevailed for decades in the Indian society. Parents find it unnecessary for their children to learn or know more about sexual intercourse and reproduction. Certain issues such as sex education, marriage, divorces , early pregnancy, sexual abuse are certain sensitive issues which need to be

discussed with the child since they are ignorant and could be a victim too such issues now or in later stages therefore parents should consider it their duty to handle queries regarding such issues. Which each and every adolescent as been reluctant and dismissing of such issues. Adolescents might use wrong ways to fulfil such curiosities and ignorance in these areas might lead to wrong practises also.

EMOTIONAL:-

Table 13 Response regarding communicating freely with your parents

Sl.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Yes	77	77
2.	No	23	23
	Total	100	100

**Fig 12 Response regarding communicating freely with your parents**
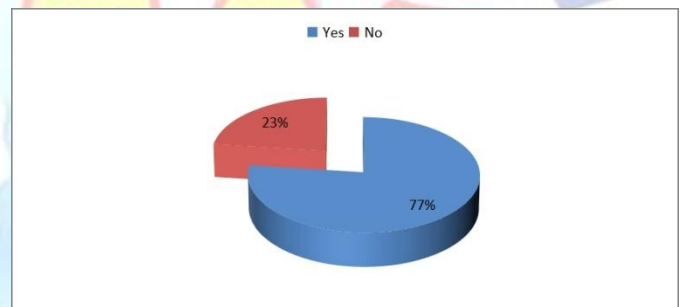
As far as communication was concern a good number (77%) were freely communicating with their parents. Here the emphasis was also on sharing emotions with their parents majority of the respondent also stated that as far as emotional bonding was concern it was more with the mother out of 2 parents. On the other hand table no - shows totally different figure where the levels of understanding of the respondent with the siblings were quite low. Majority of them had no emotional bonding with the siblings.

Table: 14Response regarding support of parents during emotional need and outburst.

S.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	58	58
2.	No	42	42
	Total	100	100

Fig: 13 Response regarding support of parents during emotional need and outburst
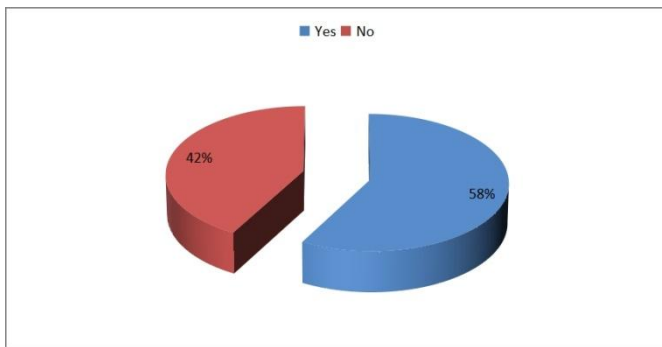

The parents need to come forward to support the adolescents during their emotional outburst. Majority of the respondents got a feeling of rejection indifference or anger, by their parents during emotional outburst (58%). Rather than understanding the reason behind such behaviour, most of the parents also labelled the respondents as rude and ill mannered. Emotional outburst is a very common behavioural aspect during this phase and needs sensitive handling in order to help the adolescence to come out of it.

Table- 15 Support from the family during Emotional Crises of Adolescents

S.No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	71	71
2.	No	29	29
	Total	100	100

Fig: 14 Support from the family during Emotional crises of Adolescents.
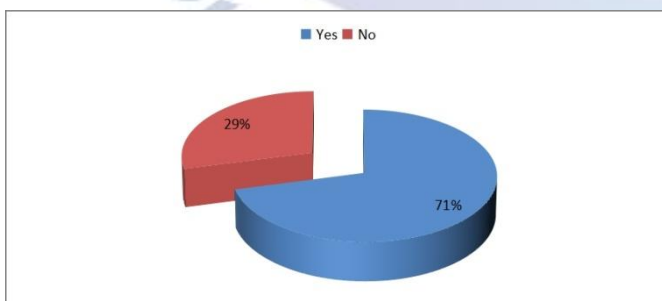
Fairly (71%) good numbers of respondent seek refuse in their family member when they went through emotional crisis. No matter how impart the peer group for adolescent during the time of emotional instability can builds and support their self confidence, self belief,

optimistic identity. Supportive and close family relationship during the time of emotional crises protects the adolescents from risky like substances abuse and depression.

CONCLUSION

In this study, efforts were made to find out the awareness level of people in Patna town regarding adolescent. Following conclusion are drawn on the basis of the analysis of the study.

SOCIAL –

1. Majority of the parents were actively involved in the day to day activity of the adolescents, this not only help them though it was also seen in the study that they were mainly involved in academics, daily eating habits and peers. Involvement from the parent's side helped adolescent to cope up with issues like loneliness, anxiety, helplessness and serious issues like suicidal behavior.

2. It was heartening to see majority of the parents were having recreational time with adolescents which not only increased social skills and bonding with parents but also helps in building confidence.

3. Peer group means a world to most of the adolescents and to most of them peer group becomes more important than family but at the same time parents are quite concern regarding the friends with whom their adolescents children mixing with. Although peers helps in developing number of skills amongst adolescents such as sharing and caring , team work and overall personality development. But at the same time if adolescents fall in the bad company it can adversely affect their overall development also peer have a greater influence on adolescents even when compared with the family. Therefore it is evident from the study that all the parents were concerned about the peer group and they feared that the child might get distracted from academics. Although the concerned of the parents justified yet overprotecting them or interfering a lot with the peer group would hamper the overall development of adolescents.

4. Kinds of parenting is also very important as far as development skills was concern as it was seen in the study that most of the parents have Authoritative

style which is most conducive not only for development of social skills but also for social stability.

MORAL –

1. From the study it was concluded that most of the parents were giving good environment for the moral development of adolescents. Majority of the parents were allotting household responsibilities to their adolescents and they were also setting up a good example in front of their adolescents by consciously conducting themselves in a morally responsible way.

2. As far as money matter was concerned and they were also showing concern if the adolescent exceeded the amount being allotted to them. This practice would help to inculcate value for money among the adolescents.

3. When parents are openly discussing sensitive issue with their children they are also guiding them or preparing them to face certain challenges in future. Adolescents are as it is curious to know about issues which are sensitive or taboo in our society and dismissing them off would create a lot of confusion in their mind and they might end up being victims of certain social issues and from the study it was concluded that majority of parents were avoiding such discussions with their adolescents.

EMOTIONAL -

Emotional stability amongst adolescent comes with support, love and understanding from the family during the time of emotional crises or emotional outburst and majority of the parents were seen supporting their adolescents during such crises. Also factors like open environment in the house and healthy relationship with the siblings and other family member's emotional security to the adolescents. Therefore it could be concluded from the study barring certain aspects most of the parents were providing conducive environment for the overall development of adolescents.

SUGGESTIONS

- Parents should not preach by telling them what to do rather be a good listener and be non-judgmental.

- Parents should be genuinely interested in the child and show trust. Their interest and trust might help them in develop confidence

- They should try to motivate them rather than pointing out at their weaknesses all the time. They should focus on attributes like 'bravery', 'empathy 'and 'compassion' rather than just 'intelligence' and 'academic achievements'.

- Avoid over-reacting. Responding too strongly can lead to yelling and shouting and it can shut down conversation.

- With adolescent children, parent has to place themselves in a different culture, place and time. By asking questions and listening, and being involved in their field of interest

- No matter how hard the adolescent pushes the parent, it's best to respond calmly. The respect and self-control that the parent displays in talks with the child may someday be reflected in her conversations with others.

- Parents should try to get familiar with the parents of their child's friends. It helps to know if other parents' attitudes and approaches to parenting are similar to yours.

- Teach your adolescents how to get out of a risky situation. Talk with your child about dangerous or inappropriate situations that might arise and about possible ways to handle them.

- Communicate with your child's teachers, counselors or school principal when necessary.

- Find strengths and build on them. Every child can shine in some area. Identify what your child does best, no matter what it is.

Conflict of interest statement

Authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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