



Parenting Style and Altruistic Behavior of Adolescents' life

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ABSTRACT:- The growth of industrialization and consequent urbanization of life gives rise to a commercial outlook to life. For the present day generation, the prime importance of life is success, success at any cost. Modern society is full of complexity especially for adolescents because, this stage is turbulent, but crucial. As adolescents perceive their parents to be old fashioned they tend to become rebellious. This acculturation gap is a factor that may influence parent-adolescent conflict and that has been linked with negative outcomes in adolescence. On the other hand, in a human society, we expect that people will learn to cooperate, to live together, to care for others and to empathize with others' sorrows. Conjunctively, we also expect and hope for a peaceful world devoid of violence. So, parents play an important role in promoting and fostering altruistic nature in their adolescents. Thus, early emergence of altruism protects children against development of antisocial tendencies and destructive behaviors. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to ensure that this stock of altruistic tendencies can rightly be channeled through the right kind of parenting, so that adolescents can grow into humane citizens.

Keywords:- Parenting Style, Adolescent, Altruism

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization and Information Technology have brought forth revolutionary changes in human culture and civilization and make unique trends all over the world. The impact of mechanization and the e-world is transforming the adolescents lives both physically, socially, emotionally and psychologically. It also includes changes in thinking, beliefs, values and customs of adolescents.

Modern society is full of complexity especially for adolescents because, adolescence is the age of doing new things and gathering new experiences. Adolescents also ensure significant changes in their ability to assess and comprehend complicated situations and their expectation to become independent and unique individuals (Stang & Story, 2005). This transitional period accompanied by many needs, problems and responsibilities along with the various changes in all aspects of personality of adolescents leads to emotional instability, anxiety and many other negative emotions among them. On the other hand, to search for self-identity and status of their lives, adolescents are frequently confused about what is right and what wrong attitude of their life is.

Parent-adolescent relationship is one of the most influential factors by which adolescents adopt social interactions, education, nutrition and also problem behaviors (Hair, Jager & Garrett, 2002). Parent adolescent relationship is directly correlated with self-confidence, empathy and cooperative personality (Barber & Erickson, 2001; Hair et al., 2002). Due to rapidly changing social scenario, parents and their adolescent children experience a huge gulf in their style of thinking, believes and outlooks. Media regularly portrays the problems of adolescence like, gang violence, school shootings, alcohol-related accidents, drug abuse, and suicides. While this can accelerate with tactless parental behavior and it can also be dissipated by the right sort of parenting. So, there has always been a debate regarding what exactly a 'good parenting' approach is. Healthy parental behavior is a valuable gift that a child can receive and a parent can give.

It is imperative that parents can nurture the adolescent to become humane citizens, especially to build up a peaceful and non-violent society as envisaged by Gandhiji. For that reason the most valuable social issues that parent usually tries to teach their children are sharing, caring, helping as a whole try to foster altruistic behavior that make their children kind and generous.

II. DEFINITION OF THE KEY WORDS

- **Parenting Style:** Parenting is a complex process involving much more than a mother or father providing food, safety and succor to the child. According to Darling and Steinberg(1993), parenting style refers to “a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parent’s behaviors are expressed.”
- **Adolescent :** WHO (2013) identifies adolescence as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood. Adolescents aged between 10-19 years account for more than one-fifth of the world’s population although more recent research suggests that adolescence can continue into the early 20s (Egbert,2002).
- **Altruism :** Altruism is defined as the voluntary manner intended to benefit a person(s) without expecting external rewards (Millon, 2003). It is the wilful sacrifice of one’s own interests or well-being for the sake of others. According to Robinson & Curry (2005) defined altruism as the manifestation of caring, selflessness which is non-contingent upon reward.

III. PARENTING STYLES

Parents assume special importance during the first years of life. They guide their young from complete infantile dependence into the beginning stages of autonomy. Their styles of care giving can have both immediate and lasting effects on children’s moral and social functioning in areas from pro-social development to peer play to academic achievement (Bornstein et al.,2007). As the infant reaches the stage of adolescence, he or she is fraught with many changes in- personality and adjustments with the world in different ways. According to Darling & Steinberg (1993); Darling (1999), parenting style is a constellation of behaviors and attitudes towards the child and that work as taken together or separately to motivate the child and create an emotional atmosphere in which parental attitudes are expressed. Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. So, parenting as the style of child upbringing refers to a privilege or responsibility of mother and father, together or independently to prepare the child for society and culture (Veenes,1973a). So, parents have unique attitude, behavior, belief, values and family culture and all these criteria vary from parent to parent (Bibi et al.,2013).

Parental acceptance is closely associated with positive outcomes of the child (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002). On the contrary, unreasonable parental expectations and faulty parental behavior patterns adversely affect the child’s psychological wellbeing (Wang, 2002). Another study by Onghena (2004) considered parenting as an important determinant which affects the whole life of a child. It is one of the hardest tasks to describe the parents’ efforts as every parent would hope to succeed in parenting. Parenting style is one of the variables which have been studied extensively for human development.

Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific attitudes and behaviors of both mothers and fathers that work separately and collectively to influence child outcomes and generate an emotional bond in which the parent’s behaviors are expressed (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Darling, 1999). Parenting can be defined on the basis of two components- responsiveness that means, parental emotional characteristics and demandingness, that means set of parental guidelines and disciplines for the child (Fletcher et al.,2008). Both parenting responsive and demanding has been linked to secure attachment in children (Karavasilis, Doyle & Markiewicz, 2003). In terms of the interaction between these two dimensions ,Baumrind(1971) classify parenting styles are of four types: Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive and Neglectful parenting.

Authoritative styles of parenting maintains equilibrium between the levels of responsiveness and demandingness. They control their children according to their age related manner, they make logical demands, create an affectionate and loving atmosphere where children can express their feelings, opinions, offer their points of view and participate in decision making process within the family(Berg et al.,2011). *Authoritarian styles* of parenting are highly demanding but less responsive to their children. According to Baumrind (1966), these parents do not allow the child to express their opinions and needs. These parents pretend that they know the ‘best’ for their children. They attempt to mold and control the behavior and attitudes of their children according to a set of standard. They expect the rules that they impose to be followed without any questions or explanation. *Permissive styles* of parenting are responsive but exert low demands on their children. Baumrind (1971, 1989) found that parents exercise minimal control and authority, and often fail to impose rules and standards and cannot define the limits of acceptable behavior of the child. *Neglectful styles* of parenting exhibits low levels of responsiveness as well as low levels of demandingness. These parents are often disengaging from parental responsibilities. They do not supervise their children’s behavior and do not monitor their actions (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

IV. PROSOCIAL AND ALTRUISTIC BEHAVIOR

Prosocial behavior is an important aspect of normal social and psychological development. It has been found in the study of Berk (2000) that pro-social behavior, such as, sympathy, sharing, and helping is vital for healthy and effective relationships throughout life. Prosocial behavior as the behavior that benefits society. According to Hastings, Rubin & DeRose (2005), prosocial behavior is sympathetic, helpful and considerate behavior towards other people with the intension of actively establishing and maintaining positive relationships among members of a social group. Pro-social activities are planned action that helps other without expecting anything in return (Afolabi, 2013). So, pro-social behavior is an act that benefits other people like sharing with someone, comforting or rescuing distressed person, cooperating with other, helping someone to achieve something, making other feels good by complimenting or appreciating him or her.

The review of many studies suggests that the motivations of both prosocial behavior and altruism have much in common. Both terms encompass the actions that aim to benefit another. Ross et al. (1992) note that prosocial behavior and altruism are different. Miller et al., (1991) stated that altruistic behavior is a subordinate type of prosocial behavior. Millon (2003) termed altruism as an act is unilaterally directed for the benefit of others. So, altruism is the unselfish concern of an individual for the welfare of another (Carlson, Martin & Buskist, 2004). Contrarily, altruism is the essence of a prosocial personality. Altruism is perceived more than just as prosocial behavior, it is motivated by some internal or external reward. By contrast, pro-social behavior is an act that benefits another whether the motive is selfish or altruistic (Eisenberg,1983).

One of the core societal values that parents try to teach their children early on is altruism (Eisenberg, 1983). Another study by George palmer (2009) found that, Altruism is one of the most fundamental familiar and mysterious of all the domain of life. Paddock (2007) defined altruistic behavior as it enumerated from how we observe the world rather than how we act in it. Altruistic behavior is an intentional and voluntary action that benefit others being without obtaining any potential self interest and self benefit (Eisenberg, 1983). Hopkins & Powers (2009) inferred that, altruism is a motivation with an ultimate goal of enhancing the welfare of another. According to Robinson & Curry (2005) defined altruism as the manifestation of caring, selfless and non-contingent upon reward, and it is truly selflessness with no expectation in any kind of advantage. So, most of the parents would foster the type of pro-social behavior that is purely altruistic in their children.

According to Vedantam (2007), altruism is a fundamental and foundational to the brain and pleasurable rather it suppresses or controls basic, selfish urges. Clavien & Chapuisat (2012) have argued that, the term altruism covers variables, concepts and processes across various disciplines. There are four distinct but related concept of altruism: (i) Psychological altruism, the genuine motivation to improve others' interests and welfare (ii) Reproductive altruism, which involves increasing others chances of survival and reproduction at the actors expense, (iii)Behavioral altruism, which involves bearing some cost in the interest of others; and (iv)Preference altruism, which is a preference for others' interests.

V. PARENTING STYLES INFLUENCE THE ALTRUISTIC BEHAVIOR OF ADOLESCENTS

Parenting styles are the first socializing systems that provide adolescents' empathy and pro-social behavior. Effects of parental behavior found resulting pro-social and altruistic nature in adolescents life. Parents play an important role in promoting and fostering prosocial behavior in their adolescents (Bandura, 1986; Hoffman, 2000; Staub, 1979). According to Berk (2000), parenting styles are significantly influence the amount of pro-social behavior that a child shows .Pro-social behaviors have been defined as actions primarily intended to benefit others (Eisenberg, Fabes & Spinard, 2006). Sharing, caring, donating, helping and cooperating are the criteria of altruistic nature and most of the parents desire their child to exhibit such volunteering activities. Parents are always trying to motivate their child to be successful and accepted by society. Parental behavior and attitude are related to child's behavior. It has been found in the study by Hastings et al. (2007), parenting styles are significantly influence the prosocial behavior of children and adolescents.

In the study by Carlo et al., (2007) indicated the relation between parenting styles, parental practices, sympathy and prosocial behaviors in adolescents. The participants were 233 adolescents from public high schools of the United States. The authors found evidence that parenting practices were associated with adolescents' prosocial behavior. Another study by Carlo, Mestre, Samper, Tur, & Armenta(2010), assert that parents are important in fostering pro-social behaviors in adolescents. Results showed that parental warmth, sympathy, and pro-social moral reasoning were predictive of pro-social behaviors.

Many researchers have suggested that, parent-child discussion about moral issues highly associated with the development of prosocial behavior. Parents who engage in the conversation about moral values with their children are more likely to have children who internalize their parents' moral values and standards (Laible, 2004; see Thompson, 2006).This conversation may broaden children's' perspectives on

social, moral issues as well as that discussion makes an intimate relationship between parent and adolescents which should foster the empathy, sympathy and interpersonal prosocial behaviors (Dunn, Cutting & Demetriou, 2000). There is evidence for the direct association between parenting practices and sympathy and prosocial behaviors (Carlo, Hausmann, Christiansen & Randall, 2003; Eisenberg, Zhou & Koller, 2001).

There is a strong significant association between responsiveness, supportive and demanding, controlling nature of parents and adolescents pro-social behavior (Barber, Stolz & Olsen, 2005; Baumrind, 1991; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Supportive parenting is characterized by high levels of parental warmth, positive affect and child centered orientation (Biringen & Robinson, 1991). In the correlational study by Clark & Ladd, (2000); Liable et al.,(2004) suggested that, there is a linked between parental warmth or affection with children's prosocial characteristics. This type of parenting tend to use positive discipline technique like induction that have an impact of child's behavior on other people (Hoffman, 2000). Supportive parenting should be related positively to sympathy and prosocial moral reasoning, whereas parental control (especially overtly strict control) should be related negatively or not significantly to such traits (Carlo, 2006; Eisenberg et al., 2006; see Pratt, Skoe, & Arnold, (2004). Supportive parenting has been positively associated with social competence and pro-social behavior (DeGuzman & Carlo, 2004; Carlo, 2006). Children are more prosocial when they have formed more secure attachment relationships with their parents; when parents avoid punitive and strict discipline; when they use reasoning and provide explanations; when they are sensitive to their children's needs and when they support their children's experience and regulation of emotions (Hastings et al., 2000). Youths' perceptions of their parents' close and warm involvement in their lives has predicted higher levels of engaging in voluntary work in early adulthood (Zaff et al., 2003). So pro-social behavior is an positive action that are used to benefit others (Carlo & Randall, 2002).

Strict parenting is characterized by high parental expectations for children and have repercussions when children do not meet the required expectation (Maccoby & martin,1983). Punishment has been found to be negatively correlated with children's prosocial characteristics (Krevans & Gibbs, 1996; Liable, Carlo, Torquati, & Ontai, 2004; Robberts, 1999). Punitive parenting is thought to negatively impact pro-social behavior of adolescents. Punitive parents use harsh, physical punishment and high levels of control have been negatively linked to pro-social behavior (Knafo & Plomin, 2006). Some researchers have indicated that, there was a negative correlation between strict, punitive techniques of discipline that are used by parents and adolescents altruistic or pro-social behavior (Asbury, Dunn, Pike & Plomin, 2003; Bar-Tal, Nadler & Blechman, 1980; Deater-Dackard, Dunn et al., 2001; Olugokinski & Firestone, 1974, Krevans & Gibbs, 1996), empathy (Janssens & Garris, 1992; Krevans & Gibbs, 1996) and sympathy (Spinrad et al.,1999). So, all these evidence supports that angry, punitive parenting decreases the children's prosocial behaviors. Less prosocial children might exhibit more undesirable behaviors that elicit more punishment from parents; they may elicit fewer feelings of warmth and close attachment from parents.

Authoritative parenting is typically thought to be the best parenting style, because they provide both support and strictness and this style is positively associated with positive social behavior in children and adolescents (Carlo, McGinley, Hayes, Batenhosst & Wilkinson,2007; Hoffman,2000; See Eisenberg & Murphy,1995). Authoritative parenting provides pro-social behavior that children may emulate, encouraging children to be more caring and make children more receptive, foster altruistic behavior for others (Hastings et al.,2000). In the study by Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer & Alisat (2003) analyzed the contribution of parenting styles to adolescent's prosocial development when adolescents perceived their parents are more authoritative. Authoritarian parents may undermine children's' pro-social behavior (Hastings, 2000). Authoritarian parenting is a lack of concern for the children's needs, using hostility, parental rejection and that may hinder in fostering pro-social and altruism in adolescents life. Punitive, authoritarian parenting styles has been unrelated for mothers (Iannotti, Cummings, Pierrehumbert, Milano and Zahn-Waxler, 1992; Russell et al., 2003) ; and negatively related for fathers (Dekovic & Janssens,1992; Hastings et al.,2000; Russell et al.,2003) to children's pro-social behavior and sympathy and this negative relation with sympathy may increase with age (Hastings et al.,2000).

VI. CONCLUSION

Education is about all-round development. In order to provide a well- rounded education, parent must create opportunities for children to develop their emotional intelligence, helps children to acquire the knowledge and skills to control and manage the emotion, demonstrate concern for others, establish positive relationships and constructively handle challenging social situation that helps to enhance psychosocial competence among the children and adolescents. This study puts the ball in the parents' court in the quest for all round education of the adolescent. It shows that, just sending children to school cannot ensure complete future citizens. Parents must understand that being overtly protective of children's feelings gets in the way of their emotional growth, their styles of nurturance contribute on children's academic achievement and various psycho social aspects of

development. It is believed that there are some roles that are better performed by parents which children tend to accept most readily than any other person in their life. Adolescence is a time when a person is torn by conflicting feelings. On the one hand, he is eager to be free, and on the other hand, he wants that there is always someone behind him who supports and takes care of him. This study puts light on the fact that the healthy home environment especially parents can be a strong source of support for developing adolescents.

This study is an eye-opener for parents so that they may resolve their own conflicts. They have to sit together and give proper time to their children's activities. They may learn to cooperate with each other and combine various elements of their unique parenting styles. It has been assured that, children are more altruistic when they have formed more secure attachment relationships with their parents, when parents use reasoning and provide explanations; when they are sensitive to their children's needs and are warm with their children; and when they support their children's experience and regulation of emotions. Altruism or prosocial aspects are sympathetic, helpful and considerate behaviors towards other people with the intension of actively establishing and maintaining positive relationships among members of a social group. Therefore, there is every need for parents to be aware of their actions and attitudes as parents so that the future citizens can build a happy, peaceful and prosperous India.

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