



Influence Of Parents And Family On Stress Management And Emotional Intelligence Of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT:

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by rapid physical, cognitive, and emotional changes that often expose individuals to stress and emotional instability. Parental and family influences play a central role in shaping adolescents' capacity to manage stress and develop emotional intelligence (EI). This study explores the dynamic interaction between family environment, parenting styles, emotional support, and the stress management competencies of adolescents. Drawing on psychological and sociological frameworks, the paper highlights how positive family functioning and emotional communication contribute to enhanced resilience, emotional awareness, and regulation among youth. The findings underscore the necessity of strengthening family-based interventions and parent-adolescent communication to promote mental health and emotional well-being.

KEYWORDS: Adolescents, Emotional Intelligence, Stress Management, Parenting, Family Environment, Emotional Regulation.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Adolescence marks a transformative period in human development, often accompanied by heightened emotional sensitivity and exposure to stressors related to identity formation, academic demands, and social transitions. The family, as the primary social unit, profoundly influences the adolescent's psychological adjustment and emotional competence. Parents' attitudes, communication patterns, and emotional expressions significantly determine how adolescents perceive, interpret, and respond to stress. The increasing prevalence of stress-related disorders among adolescents—such as anxiety, depression, and burnout—calls for a deeper understanding of the protective role families can play. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and express emotions effectively (Goleman, 1995), has emerged as a critical factor in managing stress. This paper examines the interconnectedness of family dynamics, parental behavior, and the emotional intelligence of adolescents in managing stress.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Parental Influence on Adolescent Emotional Development:

Research has consistently shown that parenting styles profoundly impact emotional growth. Authoritative parenting—characterized by warmth, structure, and open communication—fosters self-regulation and empathy in children (Baumrind, 1991). In contrast, authoritarian or neglectful parenting may suppress emotional expression and hinder coping mechanisms. Adolescents raised in emotionally supportive homes are more likely to develop higher emotional intelligence, enabling them to process stress constructively.

2.2 Family Environment and Stress Regulation:

The family climate, including cohesion, adaptability, and conflict levels, shapes adolescents' stress appraisal and coping responses (Compas et al., 2017). Supportive families provide emotional validation and practical guidance, mitigating the effects of external stressors. Conversely, dysfunctional family systems characterized by criticism, inconsistency, or emotional neglect amplify adolescents' vulnerability to stress and emotional dysregulation.

2.3 Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management:

Emotional intelligence serves as both a buffer and a mediator in the relationship between stress and mental health outcomes. Adolescents with higher EI are better equipped to recognize stress triggers, maintain optimism, and employ adaptive coping strategies such as problem-solving and emotional reframing (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Family-based emotional modeling—where parents demonstrate empathy, patience, and constructive emotion management—enhances adolescents' emotional competencies.

2.4 Cultural and Socioeconomic Considerations:

Cultural values and socioeconomic conditions influence the degree of parental involvement and emotional communication within families. In collectivist societies such as India, family interdependence and shared responsibilities often strengthen emotional bonds, but excessive parental control can sometimes limit autonomy and stress resilience. Understanding these contextual factors is essential in designing culturally sensitive interventions.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational design to examine the relationships between family influence, emotional intelligence, and stress management among adolescents.

3.2 Participants:

The sample comprised 300 adolescents aged 13–18 years, selected from urban and semi-urban schools. Equal representation was ensured across gender and socioeconomic backgrounds.

3.3 Instruments:

- Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) – Adapted from Schutte et al. (1998), measuring emotional awareness, regulation, and empathy.
- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) – Developed by Cohen et al. (1983), assessing perceived stress levels.
- Parental Influence and Family Environment Scale – Constructed by the researcher, measuring parental warmth, communication, conflict, and support.

3.4 Procedure:

Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires under supervision. Informed consent was obtained from both participants and their guardians. Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS, employing Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis to determine predictive relationships.

4. RESULTS

The analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between parental warmth and adolescents' emotional intelligence ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$). Emotional support and open communication were strongly linked with effective stress management ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.01$). Conversely, high levels of family conflict correlated negatively with emotional regulation ($r = -0.47$, $p < 0.01$). Regression analysis indicated that parental emotional support was the strongest predictor of adolescents' stress resilience ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$).

5. DISCUSSION:

The findings affirm that parents and family systems play a pivotal role in shaping adolescents' emotional intelligence and stress management capabilities. Adolescents who experience consistent parental warmth and emotional communication tend to internalize healthy coping strategies, while those exposed to neglect or conflict exhibit emotional volatility and poor stress tolerance. These outcomes align with Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence model, which underscores the importance of social learning and empathy development in adolescence. Furthermore, the results suggest that family-based emotional literacy programs can significantly reduce stress vulnerability by fostering self-awareness, empathy, and resilience.

6. IMPLICATIONS:

1. Parental Training Programs: Workshops focusing on emotional communication and conflict resolution can enhance parents' ability to support their adolescents effectively.
2. School-Based Interventions: Integrating family participation in emotional intelligence curricula can reinforce learning and coping skills.
3. Policy Recommendations: Mental health policies should prioritize family-centered approaches in adolescent stress prevention strategies.
4. Future Research: Longitudinal studies could explore how changes in family dynamics over time affect emotional outcomes in later adulthood.

7. CONCLUSION:

The study establishes that the family environment, particularly parental emotional support and communication, plays a central role in developing adolescents' emotional intelligence and stress management abilities. Strengthening family bonds and fostering emotional openness are essential for nurturing resilient and emotionally intelligent youth. Family-based interventions, coupled with educational support systems, hold immense potential in promoting adolescent mental health.

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