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Relationship between family environment and behavioral disorders among children in Haryana state

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Abstract

The children's social and physical development is being adversely affected by the "behavior problems". From childhood to adulthood, a person's life trajectory is greatly influenced by their interactions with their family. The main factor influencing reception is a person's personality traits. In addition to inheriting some familial potential, the child's views, attitudes, goals, and overt behavior throughout his formative years are all reflections of the influences from his upbringing. This study looks at how behavioral disorders are viewed by moms and children in connection to the family environment. The study was conducted in Haryana state. A sample of 480 respondents was included in the study, i.e., 240 children and 240 mothers. A total of 240 children in the age group of 11–17 years residing in the rural and urban areas of Haryana state and their mothers (240) were interviewed with the help of Goodman's Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (2000) and Shah's Family Climate Scale (2006). Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine the inter-correlation between family environment and behavioral disorders. The findings show a strong correlation between behavioral disorders and the family environment. The study's findings recommend intervention programs meant to improve children's home environments.

Keywords: Children, mothers, family environment, influence, behavioral disorders, intervention

Introduction

Children of today are the future of tomorrow, this powerful statement assumes special importance in the context as children comprise one-third of the total population in India (Mohil *et al.* 2018) ^[1]. The process of growth and maturation that takes place in children from birth through puberty is referred to as child development. It includes all of the cumulative changes that kids go through as they grow older in terms of their physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. Children's abilities, skills, and behaviors are shaped by a combination of factors including experiences, genetics, and environment. The child's behavior is greatly influenced by his upbringing and experiences, both at home and outside of it. Experiments with children showed that the family is a crucial factor in the psychosocial development of an individual. According to the ecological and social systems approach, the family and school are key socialization bodies (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Moos, 1990) ^[2]. ^[3]. The term behavior contains motor activities, cognitive activities, and effective activities (Kalaivani, 2012) ^[4]. The child's behavior is influenced by definite objective determinants, which include the individual characteristics and people of his family structure, his ordinal position within the family structure, and the sex of the child (Jersild, 1954) ^[5].

Any interference in mental or emotional development can cause behavioral disorders in children (Datta *et al.*, 2018) ^[6].

The behavioral problems are having a significant impact on the child's bodily and social development. It's the key concern of frustration to parents. Parent-child relationships get disrupted, which creates family conflicts and disharmony (Jogdand and Naik, 2017) ^[7].

Family interactions play a vital role in an individual's life pattern from babyhood through adulthood. The abundance of an individual's personality patterning originates from reception. Not only does the kid receive certain family potentialities, but throughout his developing years, his attitudes, beliefs, ideals, and overt behavior reflect the impacts of home experiences on him (Crow and Crow, 1965) ^[8]. The development of a genuine emotional bond is influenced by the parents' strong emotional bond with their child. Rejection and broken families within the sort of separation, divorce, desertion, and death of a parent or denial of benefits of privileges, punishment, pressures, and embarrassment of deprived socioeconomic conditions also disturb the social adjustment and behavior of the kid (Kundu, 1989) ^[9]. Family is an essential element in the psychosocial development of an individual.

Parental fights and conflict, cold, harsh, and bossy parental attitudes, and inconsistent discipline characterized the overall home dynamics of bullies (Oliver *et al.*, 1994; Rigby, 1994) ^[10, 11]. From an initial age, these children displayed their own behavior toward irritable, ineffective, and sometimes violent parenting. Poorer psycho-social

health in families was found to be absolutely correlated with children's bullying behavior. In contrast, friendly family relations were related to positive peer social relations (Rigby, 1993)^[12].

Review of Literature

According to Mohil *et al.* (2018)^[1], successful parent-child relationships and the family environment have a range of effects on parent-child relationships, including the behavioral and safe functioning growth of young children in later life. As per the findings, half of the 81 children had a positive parent-child relationship, while two had a negative parent-child relationship. The study found a negative association between parent-child relationships and the prevalence of behavioral problems in children ($r = -0.20$). There's a connection between the parent-child relationship and the incidence of behavioral problems in children.

Souza and Crepaldi (2019)^[13] found that entangled family functioning was correlated with hyperactivity symptoms, relationship problems, and conduct problems in the child. Decent mother-child relationship was negatively associated with symptoms of hyperactivity and emotional difficulties. Risky educational practices were positively correlated with behavioral disorders, symptoms of hyperactivity, and emotional and behavioral problems.

Zhang and Wang (2020)^[14] looked into the connection between early adolescent problem behaviors and perceived school environment, family functioning, and psychological suzhi. Researchers suggested that we should supply positive support for young people's growth and development, parents should maintain a warm family environment, foster successful parent-child communication, and establish close parent-child relationships.

Fosco *et al.* (2012)^[15] investigated the role that mother, father, and sibling interactions and parental supervision play in preventing bad behavior in the early stages of adolescence. Parental monitoring and father-youth connectedness were linked to lower levels of problem behavior over time, while conflict with siblings was linked to higher levels of problem behavior.

The effect of parental style and peer attachment on bullying and cyberbullying behavior was investigated by Charalampousa *et al.* (2018)^[16]. The research included 861 children and adolescents who attended public schools in

Cyprus. The results indicated that parenting seems to be a significant predictor of all styles of bullying and victimization, conventional and cyber, in early adolescents. Tinkew *et al.* (2006)^[17] found that the earliest instances of delinquency and drug use are predicted by the father-child relationship and the father's parenting style. A more supportive father-child relationship predicts a lower probability of engaging in multiple first risky behaviors, in step with discrete time logistic regressions. Having a father who has an authoritarian parenting style is linked to a higher risk of juvenile behavior and substance abuse. 14. Two-way interaction models also show that when fathers have a healthy relationship with their adolescent, the negative effects of authoritarian parenting are minimized. Permissive parenting predicts less risky behavior. For male adolescents, the positive impact of the father-child relationship on risk behaviors is larger than for female adolescents.

Methodology

The state of Haryana served as the research site for this study. The children aged 11 to 17 studying in government senior secondary schools in two districts of Haryana state, namely, Fatehabad and Hisar, were selected purposefully. From each district, a sample of 120 children and their mothers (120) were included in the research. 240 children and 240 adults made up the overall sample for this study, which consisted of 480 respondents. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) by Goodman (2002)^[18] was used to evaluate behavioral disorders.

The baseline versions of the Parent Report Measure for Youth aged 11–17 (PY1) and the Youth Self-Report for Youth aged 11–17 (YR1) were used for data collection. SDQ has five subscales: emotional symptom scale, conduct problem scale, hyperactivity scale, peer problem scale, and pro-social scale of five items each. The Family Climate Questionnaire by Shah (2006)^[19] was used to evaluate the family environment. The FCS consists of 90 statements divided into 10 dimensions, and each dimension has nine items. The responses are sought on a 3-point scale, and the range score could be 0 to 180. The records were examined using correlation.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Relationship between family environment and behavioral disorders as perceived by children

Family environment	Behavioral disorders as perceived by children				
	Emotional problem	Conduct Problem	Hyperactivity	Peer Problem	Pro social
Restrictiveness vs. Freedom	0.23*	0.31*	0.25*	0.06	0.27*
Indulgence vs. Avoidance	0.03	0.20*	0.09	0.24*	0.03
Partiality vs. Fairness	0.12	0.23*	0.04	0.02	0.17*
Attention vs. Negligence	0.19*	0.12	0.10	0.14	0.27*
Acceptance vs. Rejection	0.21*	0.26*	0.28*	0.11	0.01
Warmth vs. Cold Relations	0.25*	0.04	0.03	0.13	0.31*
Trust vs. Distrust	0.11	0.20*	0.23*	0.21*	0.25*
Dominance vs. Submissiveness	0.03	0.01	0.08	0.06	0.16*
Expectation vs. Hopelessness	0.12	0.26*	0.07	0.18*	0.06
Open Communication vs. Controlled Communication	0.14	0.23*	0.09	0.29*	0.20*

The data in Table 1 establishes the correlations between family environment and behavioural disorders of children as perceived by children. Children's emotional problems and aspects of their family environment, such as freedom vs.

restrictions ($r = 0.23^*$, $p < 0.05$), attention vs. neglect ($r = 0.19^*$, $p < 0.05$), acceptance vs. rejection ($r = 0.21^*$, $p < 0.05$), and warmth vs. cold relations ($r = 0.25^*$, $p < 0.05$), were found to be significantly correlated by Pearson correlation.

As per the conduct problem aspect of behavioral disorders, results revealed that conduct problems were significantly correlated with restrictiveness vs. freedom ($r = 0.31^*$, $p < 0.05$), indulgence vs. avoidance ($r = 0.20^*$, $p < 0.05$), partiality vs. fairness ($r = 0.23^*$, $p < 0.05$), acceptance vs. rejection ($r = 0.26^*$, $p < 0.05$), trust vs. distrust ($r = 0.20^*$, $p < 0.05$), expectation vs. hopelessness ($r = 0.26^*$, $p < 0.05$), and open communication vs. controlled communication ($r = 0.23^*$, $p < 0.05$).

The hyperactivity problem was found to be significantly correlated with restrictiveness vs. freedom ($r = 0.25^*$, $p < 0.05$), acceptance vs. rejection ($r = 0.28^*$, $p < 0.05$), and trust vs. distrust ($r = 0.23^*$, $p < 0.05$).

Behavioural disorder's domain peer problem was

significantly correlated with indulgence vs. avoidance ($r = 0.24^*$, $p < 0.05$), trust vs. distrust ($r = 0.21^*$, $p < 0.05$), expectation vs. hopelessness ($r = 0.18^*$, $p < 0.05$), and open communication vs. controlled communication ($r = 0.29^*$, $p < 0.05$).

Pro-social behavior was significantly correlated with restrictiveness vs. freedom ($r = 0.27^*$, $p < 0.05$), partiality vs. fairness ($r = 0.17^*$, $p < 0.05$), attention vs. negligence ($r = 0.27^*$, $p < 0.05$), warmth vs. cold relations ($r = 0.31^*$, $p < 0.05$), trust vs. distrust ($r = 0.25^*$, $p < 0.05$), dominance vs. submissiveness ($r = 0.16^*$, $p < 0.05$), and open communication vs. controlled communication ($r = 0.20^*$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 2: Relationship between family environment and behavioral disorders as perceived by mother

Family environment	Behavioral disorders of children as perceived by mother				
	Emotional Symptom	Conduct Problem	Hyperactivity	Peer Problem	Pro social
Restrictiveness vs. Freedom	0.21*	0.28*	0.23*	0.02	0.26*
Indulgence vs. Avoidance	0.06	0.29*	0.11	0.24*	0.20*
Partiality vs. Fairness	0.11	0.27*	0.12	0.06	0.21*
Attention vs. Negligence	0.26*	0.04	0.14	0.08	0.17*
Acceptance vs. Rejection	0.05	0.31*	0.25*	0.04	0.29*
Warmth vs. Cold Relations	0.20*	0.09	0.02	0.07	0.32*
Trust vs. Distrust	0.23*	0.20*	0.13	0.16*	0.25*
Dominance vs. Submissiveness	0.18*	0.21*	0.28*	0.07	0.20*
Expectation vs. Hopelessness	0.12	0.17*	0.08	0.32*	0.07
Open Communication vs. Controlled Communication	0.25*	0.05	0.04	0.31*	0.02

Table 2 presents the data that demonstrates the associations between the family environment and children's behavioral issues as reported by their moms. A substantial association has been observed, as indicated by Pearson correlation, between family environment features and emotional difficulties in children. These aspects include: warmth vs. cold relations ($r = 0.20^*$, $p < 0.05$); attention vs. negligence ($r = 0.26^*$, $p < 0.05$); dominance vs. submissiveness ($r = 0.18^*$, $p < 0.05$); communication vs. controlled communication ($r = 0.25^*$, $p < 0.05$); and restrictiveness vs. freedom ($r = 0.21^*$, $p < 0.05$).

Regarding the conduct problem aspect of behavioral disorders, results revealed that conduct problems were significantly correlated with restrictiveness vs. freedom ($r = 0.28^*$, $p < 0.05$), indulgence vs. avoidance ($r = 0.29^*$, $p < 0.05$), partiality vs. fairness ($r = 0.27^*$, $p < 0.05$), acceptance vs. rejection ($r = 0.31^*$, $p < 0.05$), trust vs. distrust ($r = 0.20^*$, $p < 0.05$), dominance vs. submissiveness ($r = 0.21^*$, $p < 0.05$) and expectation vs. hopelessness ($r = 0.17^*$, $p < 0.05$).

The hyperactivity problem was found to be significantly correlated with restrictiveness vs. freedom ($r = 0.23^*$, $p < 0.05$), acceptance vs. rejection ($r = 0.25^*$, $p < 0.05$), and dominance vs. submissiveness ($r = 0.28^*$, $p < 0.05$).

Behavioural disorder's domain peer problem was significantly correlated with indulgence vs. avoidance ($r = 0.24^*$, $p < 0.05$), trust vs. distrust ($r = 0.16^*$, $p < 0.05$), expectation vs. hopelessness ($r = 0.32^*$, $p < 0.05$), and open communication vs. controlled communication ($r = 0.31^*$, $p < 0.05$).

Prosocial behavior was significantly correlated with restrictiveness vs. freedom ($r = 0.26^*$, $p < 0.05$), indulgence vs. avoidance ($r = 0.20^*$, $p < 0.05$), partiality vs. fairness ($r =$

0.21^* , $p < 0.05$), attention vs. negligence ($r = 0.17^*$, $p < 0.05$), acceptance vs. rejection ($r = 0.29^*$, $p < 0.05$), warmth vs. cold relations ($r = 0.32^*$, $p < 0.05$), trust vs. distrust ($r = 0.25^*$, $p < 0.05$) and dominance vs. submissiveness ($r = 0.20^*$, $p < 0.05$) at 5% level of significance.

Discussion

As per mothers's and children's responses, results related to all domains of family environment were significantly correlated with all aspects of behavioral disorders, i.e., emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity problems, peer problems and pro social problems. The results of Singh and Devi (2018) [20] support the current investigation and look at the relationship between the family environment and the mental health of secondary school children. They discovered that mental health and family environment have a significant positive correlation. The results also revealed that the mental health of male and female students in government and government-aided schools has a significant positive relationship with the family environment. The results were also supported by the study of Mohil *et al.* (2018) [1], who concluded that successful parent-child relationships and family environment have a range of effects on parent-child relationships as well as the behavioral and safe running growth of pre-schoolers later on life. The research found a negative relationship between parent-child relationships and the prevalence of behavioral problems in preschool children. Pathak *et al.* (2011) [21] conclude that an alarming number of youngsters suffer from emotional and behavioral issues that begin from their family climate. Fosco *et al.* (2012) [15] examined the importance of parental monitoring and family relationships (mother, father, and sibling) in the avoidance

of problem behavior in early adolescence. Parental monitoring and father-youth connectedness were connected to lesser levels of problem behavior over time.

Conclusion

The home environment has an impact on children's behavioral issues in addition to other socio-demographic factors. Parents' counselling sessions should be planned to enhance parental awareness regarding children's behavior and behavioral disorders so they can support their children to lead a happy life. The results of this study suggest interventions designed to enrich the family environment of children. Family-based interventions may be potentially effective for a variety of behavioral disorders in children.

Implications of the study: The findings of the present study will be valuable for counsellors, institutions, and agencies working with children for suitable counselling, planning therapeutic strategies, designing and developing services for (maintaining behavioral problems of the person), better family relationships of children, which help in maintaining their behavior.

Limitation of the study: The data for the present study has been collected only through a survey. Other methods, like interview schedules, longitudinal case studies, observations, etc., can also be introduced for extensive information collection. Due to the small sample size, the research judgments can't be generalized to a large population.

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