

Parent child relationship research paper example

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



The topic of this paper is parent/child relationship. A positive parent child relationship is an essence of child's psychological, emotional and social development. Parent/child relationship is defined as the combination of feelings, behaviors and emotions that are particular to certain parent and their children. Three types of problems are faced by the children due to conflicting parent child relationship; social adjustment problems, problems in adopting discipline and problems in educational settings. Studies has been quoted which show that the children personality is directly affected by the behavior and attitudes of the parents . This paper shall focus on the social problems faced by the child due to conflicts in parent child relationship. The social adjustment problems can cause certain other problems at school, in learning, conduct disorders, anxiety and depression, drug abuse, criminal behavior etc. the developmental theory of Jean Piaget shall be applied to the parent child relationship. Military parent child relationship will also be discussed. The problem of conduct disorder in children due to faulty parent/child relationship will be explored and treatment techniques shall be discussed in this paper. Thus, it provides an overview of the parent/child relationship and what are the effects of conflicts in this relationship on the personality of the children in social settings.

I choose to write about the topic of parent/child relationship because I believe that the bond between the parent and their children is one of the purest one in this world. The relationship is unique and pure to its essence. The quality of parent / child relationship plays a crucial role in building up child's future.

Parent child relationship defined

Though there is no specific definition of this most important relationship in this world, however we can put it in these words; a parent child relationship is based on combination of behaviors, feelings and expectations that are particularly unique to a certain parent and their children. The relationship encompasses child's development to the full extent. The quality of this relationship is determined by many factors such as age of the parent's and their self-confidence, how stable is parent's marriage, and the characteristics which are unique to the child as an individual in contrast to parents etc. In a parent/ child relationship the role of mother is of central importance from the beginning. It is the mother to whom the child look forward to for his/her physical needs after birth which slowly encompasses other areas of life as well. So the self- confidence of mother on her competency leads towards a better parent child relationship. Majority of parents have positive relationship with their children (Steinberg, 2005) and studies show that parents and their adolescents generally have close emotional bonds (Collins & Laursen, 2004).

Change in family dynamics

There has been a considerable change in family dynamics during the past 3 to 5 decades.

There has been an increase in the average age of marriage of the women and more children are born to women after 30 years of age.

In USA, the percentage of children belonging to two parents family has decreased from 85% to 69% (Schor, 2003), while in Great Britain there has been an increase i. e. 23% in the children's living with a single parent as

compared to 18% in 1991. Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi families in majority of the cases are couple families.

In the last 50 years the rate of divorce has almost doubled.

The working women percentage has increased. The parental involvement in childcare has also increased in past years (Garfield & Issaco, 2006).

Types of the problems faced due to conflicting parent/child relationship

A conflicting and strained parent/ child relationship can cause many problems at every developmental stage of children.

Social adjustment problems: many social problems can be encountered due to conflicting parent/child relationship such as loneliness, adjustment problems at school and with other classmates, learning disorders, anxiety and depression, drug abuse, suicide, criminal behavior etc (Mcleod et. al, 2007).

Problems in adopting discipline: children may become selfish, defiant, develop unstable, reckless, violent, deceitful or disruptive behavior patterns.

Problems in educational settings: children develop disruptive behavior patterns including bullying, careless behavior, decrease in learning ability and problems in academic achievements.

I will proceed with the discussion of social problems faced by the children due to faulty parent child relationship. The process of socializing starts from the time of birth. The primary caregivers of the child are center of his attention. The behavior of the parents is of primary importance. When parents attend to their baby's needs, nurture them and show affection, child is able to develop a secure attachment with the child and vice-versa. I shall

discuss problems faced by children in adolescent due to problems in parent/child relationship.

Literature review on social problems in children due to disturbed parent child relationship

In a study conducted by Routhbaum and Weisz (1994) Meta – analysis of 47 studies was done to find inconsistencies in the concurrent association between caregiving of parents and externalizing of child behavior. It was found that older children develop stronger parent child associations than younger children and better with mothers than with fathers. The externalizing of behaviors was linked more strongly with pre-natal care giving of pre-adolescent boys than it was for girls.

In another study a developmental model for anti-social behavior was developed. After the review of the findings related to the etiology and course of antisocial behavior from childhood to adolescent, a route was developed towards chronic delinquency which is caused by sequential experiences from childhood through adolescent. It was found that ineffective parental styles laid the initial foundation which lead towards anti-social behavior in later parts of life (Patterson, et. al, 1989).

A study was conducted to find the effect of father's custody on social development of the children. It was found that children living with same sex parents are more socially adjusted than with the opposite sex parents. Moreover, an authoritative parenting in a single parent family promoted competent social behavior of the child (John & Warshack, 1979).

Military parent/child relationship

The army personals are often separated from their families due to their duty and responsibilities. Due to absence of one of the parent in the family, creates many challenges and stress in the family. Children may feel isolated, insecure and anxious. The children may respond differently in accordance with their individual personalities and age of development. Infants and toddlers may show disruptions in their schedules, decreased appetite, irritability, sleep problems, tantrum etc. Preschoolers being aware of the absence of the parent may have sleep problems, physical complaints, develop fear etc. School age children may show irritable behavior, aggressiveness and fearful of their parent death. Teenagers may show rebellious and irritable behavior along with challenging the authority. Thus it's important for the parents to understand these problems and try to prepare their children for possible separation beforehand (Military families resource centre, n. d.).

Theory of development

I shall apply the Piaget's Theory of Cognitive development to the effect of parent /child relationship on social development of child. It's one of the most well-known of developmental theories. Piaget believed that the development through lifespan takes place in stages. He explored in his theory how children gain knowledge of the world around them and how they learn to interact within that world with the people around. He developed his approach on the concept of building blocks, in which children learn to socialize in four developmental phases. A qualitative transformation takes place in a sequential manner, which advance from simple towards complex thought

processing. His developmental stages included;

Sensorimotor stage (0-2 years): this stage has six-sub-stages of spatial learning and physical development. The concept of object permanence is gained during this stage along with sensory and motor experiences that promote cognitive development. This is in presence of the primary care givers i. e. parents. The quality of the parent's care giving largely determines development at later stages. A secure relationship predicts better chances of healthy and happy relationship with others as well.

Pre-operational stage (2-7 years): at this stage child become egocentric. They feel that others view the world same as they do. They learn representation skills including language, symbolic play, animism, drawing, use of symbols and internal images. They learn conservation skill, classification and ordering of things and objects. Schooling also starts during this period. A secure attachment at first stage gives an emotional base to the child on which he starts to explore the world outside of parent/child relationship.

Concrete operational stage (7-11 years): systematic thinking ability is attained by child at this stage, in case of concrete objects and activities. They attain ability of internalizing the tasks and reversing the operations. They start understanding other's view point and developing problem solving abilities. The children of responsive and demanding parents during these years thrive better psychologically and socially and have well established patterns of interaction among them.

Formal operational stage (11 through adulthood): children develop pure abstract thinking at this stage. They develop key skills of problem solving

and reasoning (Child development principles and theories, n. d.). Many major transformations in parent child relationship take place during this period.

Parents should understand the psychological need of independence of their children at this stage. The use of authoritative parenting along with warmth and firmness leaves a positive impact on behavior of a youngster.

When children successfully achieve the goals of all the stages, they develop a confident and successful personality.

The infant's attachment to his parents determines the later pattern of development. An emergence from the sensorimotor stage with secure and safe attachment ensures better chances of healthy development at later stages. The parents also need to understand the stages through which the child is passing. They try to rush with the patterns of development which lead them and the children as well into frustration and lack of confidence. Understanding the theory of development by Piaget can help the parents to understand how and when to proceed with the learning and acquisition of a new skill and how to operate in the world around.

Conduct problems in children due to conflicting parent child relationship

The child experience with people expands and broadens as he enters the school age and become more interested in peers. Conduct problems can be caused due to conflicting parent child relationship. The child misbehavior can be result of sorrow, anger, frustration, disappointment or anxiety. Younger children show their distress more through their behavior. In some cases the behavior of the child become increasingly disturbed such as tormenting other children, bullying them, inflicting pain to animals etc. then their

behavior needs to be checked and any underlying emotional or psychological problem needs to be diagnosed.

Conduct disorders are most frequently diagnosed in children in outpatient clinics. According to one estimate 6% of all children develop some form of conduct disorder. Its more common in boys than in girls (Pruitt, 2009).

Behavioral problems at the age of 7-8 are significant predictors of aggression in adolescence.

Children who express aggression, verbal or physical, very often can be evaluated for having conduct disorders. The clinical diagnosis of conduct disorder requires a persistent and repetitive set of behavior patterns which assault other's basic rights. A child would lack feelings of empathy for others and regret or awareness for the wrong doing.

There are two types of conduct disorders. Children younger than age of ten years, who display persistent conduct problems have childhood onset conduct disorder and the behavior or conduct which shows itself when the child reaches ten years of age are diagnosed with adolescent onset conduct disorders. The children with childhood onset conduct disorders have more chances of having persistent conduct disorders which may ultimately develop in anti-social personality disorders in adults (Pruitt, 2009).

There can be many causes of conduct disorders including biological, psychological and social reasons. The role of the parents is very important in this regard. Parents should keep a constant check on the behavior children display in households and in social settings. The children who suffer childhood abuse in any form during childhood by parents, peers or anyone show more violent and aggressive behavior as compared to others. They are

not very expressive with their feelings. A healthy and warm parent child relationship and understanding on part of the parents can help the child in this problem.

Treatment of conduct disorders

There is not any single treatment approach towards conduct disorders. This is because of the fact that children with conduct disorders might have biological, psychological or sociological vulnerability to conduct problems. It employs a combination of treatment methods which is a more effective technique.

Parent management techniques: the role of parents is very important in treatment of conduct disorders. Treatment for conduct disorders is often family focused. The full participation of the parents, to encourage positive behaviors in their children and use of discipline in more effective ways, produces more significant positive results in the behavior of children.

Through parent management techniques, parents are able to find new ways to interact, learn ways to apply positive reinforcement, linking of misbehavior with appropriate outcomes and they develop better negotiating ways with their children. This helps the children towards better social and academic reproducibility.

Family therapy: this approach helps the families to develop understanding and communication with each other. It propagates mutual understanding, positive reinforcement, directive communication and developing more effective ways for problem solving and resolution of conflict in the family.

Social skills training: these skills enhance the problem solving abilities of child. School based training programs are widely used in this technique.

Individual psychotherapy and medications: along with combined techniques individual psychotherapy is also done to develop a confident and healthy personality of child. In some cases medication is also given along with therapy (Pruitt, 2009).

The role of the parents is of central importance in identifying the problems and understanding them. A child can recover and show positive results if parents co-operate and actively participate in the treatment of their children.

Conclusion

The parent child relationship is based on mutual trust, confidence, and feelings of affection, love and security. The behavior of the children in most of the cases challenges even the experienced and most effective parental practices. The children's behavior, self-esteem, confidence and socialization habits are largely affected by the manner in which the parents respond to their children. The children's expectations are molded by what parents expect of them. The self- image a child creates for himself is reflection of his/her parent's actions and beliefs about him. Many problems related to social adjustment, discipline and educational settings arises due to faulty parent/child relationship. Military parent child relationship is often disturbed by their both or one of the parent leaving them for extended periods of time to fulfill their duty. The child might feel isolated, insecure, irritable, unable to socialize, etc. the problems in area of socialization, can lead towards conduct disorders. It's the responsibility of the parents to keep an eye on the behavior and attitude of their children from the very beginning. Coordinating and cooperating with their children and making them understand the right and wrong behaviors in a society. Understanding of the children's need by

the parents is very important. They should respond to them in timely manner. A positive and healthy parent child relationship provides a psychologically, emotionally and socially healthy individual to the society. it is one of the most important factors in the grooming process of a child. Children should become priority of the parents in life as they are continuity of the human race. They should play their part in making them responsible human beings. The atmosphere of mutual understanding and affection shall create an atmosphere of mutual respect. So when children start feeling the affection and understanding of the parents, they shall start feeling obliged to follow the guidelines of their parents. Ignored children often rise up to become anti-social and trouble makers in the society. Positive communication and understanding assures a healthy parent child relationship. the warmth and positivity of the parent child relationship helps the children to grow up as mature and responsible adults who can handle their own life and can contribute positively in the lives of other as well.

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