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Adjustment Problems During Adolescence

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Abstract:

The aim of the present study is to understand the adjustment problems during adolescence. The adolescent period is generally said to be the period of problems in the human span of life. Adjustment is a continuous process of action in the life of human beings right from the period of childhood, adolescence and adulthood with a definite purpose of meeting the needs of the self, the needs of the environment and the needs of the culture. Every situation may need different type of adjustment. If an individual fails to adjust himself to the situation, then the problem arises. In adolescent environment adjustment is the combined influence of several forces that are operating to produce a well adjusted or poorly adjusted personality.

Key words : Adjustment, Adolescence, Environment, Problems

1. Introduction

Adolescence is the period of transition between childhoods to adulthood. In this period rapid physiological changes and demands for new social roles takes place. The adolescents due to these changes often face a number of crises and dilemmas. The adolescent period is generally said to be as the period of problems in the human span of life. The reason for this it is the period in which the human individual is highly sensitive and emotional to the situation. It is the period in which the emotional development and personal adjustment to the situations are taking place. If these two aspects of human life, at the adolescent period went on smoothly in a person then there is no problem. But these two aspects in many cases do not take place successfully. There are several different area through which the adolescents facing so many problems. The period of adolescence has been described as a phase of storm and stress, an age of frustration. This period is marked by frequent conflicts and difficulties in adjustment.

Adjustment has to be made by individuals in all life situations. Every situation may need different type of adjustment. If an individual fails to adjust himself to the situation then the problem arises. The adolescent sometimes does not withstand the severe emotional maladjustment to the situation. Adolescent even discard everything and run away from homes irrespective of the consequences. The mass media of communication report three or four causes every day of these adolescents disappearing from their homes. The television makes announcements with their photographs giving other particulars like age, height, complexion and other information. The parents report to the police who trace and hand them over them to the parents. Thus adolescent period is most critical in human being.

2. Concept of Adjustment

Adjustment is a household word. We speak of people as being well adjusted or poorly adjusted. Related to these terms may be notions being psychologically normal or abnormal we considered as well adjusted people are regarded as successful in the art of living.

Schneiders (1960) stated that human life is a continuous process of adjustment. At every movement man has to adjust to the reality and has to satisfy his needs within the framework of the society to which to belongs. The problems for the man of today appear to have increased manifold and have become inevitable summing up the inevitability of the problems.

Eysenck and Arnold define adjustment as a state in which the needs of the individual on the one hand and the claims of the environment on the other hand are fully individual and the objective or social environment.

According to Boring adjustment is a process by which a living organism maintains balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs".

According to Mann, adjustment is a continuous process of satisfying one's needs rather than something fixed and station, and it involves virtually all aspects of human behaviour.

Boring and Mann are similar in their approach in defining adjustment as a process of satisfying one's need.

Thus, the term adjustment became very popular in psychological studies in the 1930s. It was Shaffer who has given strong emphasis in his classical work the psychology of adjustment, Shaffer (1956) emphasized the biological adaptation of the organism to its living environment.

Lazarus (1976) discussed the process of adjustment in terms of accommodation and assimilation, but when man alludes to defense mechanisms he approaches adjustment as a process and an result that an individual accomplishes successful or unsuccessfully.

3. Significance of the study

Adjustment has become an essential of modern life. In now-a-days everywhere people want to overcome their adjustment difficulties. Especially, the adjustment problems of adolescents are to be understood properly and adequate care should be taken to resolve such problems.

4. Factors influencing adjustment

A comprehensive review of psychological investigations on the adjustment of adolescents with special reference to students would show that a number of socio-psychological factors have a bearing on adjustment.

In the adolescent's environment, adjustment is the combined influence of several forces that are operating to produce a well adjusted or poorly adjusted personality. There are several Indian studies on adjustment problems of adolescents they are as follows :

5. Adjustment and academic achievement

Adjustment and academic achievements are interrelated aspects of adolescent stage. The study made by Rajamanickam and Vasanthal (1993) has brought out several interesting results. It was the study among the school students relating adjustment to their school achievements. It revealed that the better adjusted adolescent students showed very good achievements in their school performance and the students who had low adjustment showed poor achievements in their studies. Therefore adjustment is very necessary in adolescent period because this period is turning point in human life.

6. Adjustment and creative abilities

An attempt was made to test whether adjustment problems had any influence in the creative abilities of the adolescents. Asha (1988) tested this hypothesis. The results showed that the better adjusted boys and girls had high creative abilities. There were three levels of creativity highly creative, moderately creative and low creative. The well adjusted boys were found to be superior in creativity than the well adjusted girls and others. Therefore, in adolescent period well adjustment to family and peer groups they must developed creative abilities.

7. Adjustment and aspiration

Generally believed that adolescents will have a high level of aspirations. Ravi Sandhu (1997) studied the adjustment problems of high and low aspirant adolescent. Every one may claim that he/she can achieve the said goal, irrespective whether he/she could it or not. Aspiration is an ego involved goal seeking desire that a person sets for himself. The more ego an individual has the higher aspiration he sets in and the more it relates to the areas of behaviour. But it sometimes affects his adjustment. Thus the adjustment is affected by the ego one sets for oneself. This was what the investigator had observed in her study. Here we understand that more ego adolescent has higher aspiration he adjust to environment definitely achieved. Sometimes he fail to adjust with environment faced so many problems. The adolescents always aspire for high achieve and also may work hard to achieve their aims. To this the family background of the students always function as the feeding source.

8. Adjustment and Criminality

Criminal behaviour pattern has been classified as antisocial behaviour in the society. Generally the anti-social behaviour like delinquency, theft, violence and other similar behaviour are found to be prevailing more among the persons maladjusted in society. But now an individual becomes a delinquent and develops criminal tendencies has become a subject matter for the psychologists to investigate as several of the psycho-social factors are found to be having an influence on the criminal and antisocial behaviour of the individual. Whether such tendencies originate at the adolescent level or they are situation incidences has been investigated and tested by Vijayalaxmi A. Amminbhavi (1997) among the adolescent boys and girls. The results of this study show that the adolescent students adjustment problems had positive relationship with the criminal tendencies of the students. The adolescents who were poorly adjusted had a higher level of criminal tendencies than the well adjusted students. Other factors that have an influencing effect on criminal tendencies are poor adjustment at home, poor health, poor social adjustment, poor and emotional adjustment and the birth order. The adolescent boys had higher criminal tendencies than the girls.

9. Adjustment and Gender

In the Indian culture children of different genes are not treated in the same manner by the parents. There is a general tendency among the parents to give more importance to male children and little or no importance to female children. Thus children are put into differential treatment and thereby the discriminated female child develops a sense of insecurity, helplessness and maladjustment in the family situation. Female children are put into several or deal and hard work all through life while the male children enjoy the favours of the parents.

It is very unfortunate that the parents of the twenty-first century expect that their daughter should be submissive, docile, accept differential treatment and carryout more works. But if a female child questions the differential treatment of her parents she is put into severe stress which results in maladjustment, depression and other emotional problems. The adjustment of such girls is very much affected by this type of differential treatment. This problem was studied by Swatantra Jain (1995) among 300 adolescent girls. He has taken much efforts in bringing out the intricacies of the problem.

The type of parent-child relationship and the adolescent students achievements seem to have some effect on adjustment problems of the adolescents. This problem was investigated and tested by Poramita Chaudhury and Jayati Basu (1998) in their studies. It

was observed that the type of relationship the mothers have with children significantly influence the school adjustment of the adolescent boys which also determine their school achievements.

10. Adjustment and socio-economic status

The socio-economic status of the family was found to be another important factor to influence educational and occupational aspirations of the adolescent students who showed high and low achievements in schools. This problem was investigated by Khan and Tschaie Jemberly (2002). The authors observed that many of the adolescent students were from nuclear families. Most of the mothers of the students had only primary education and few of them were illiterates. The main cause of the low achievement of the students was large family size. Another reason seemed to be the low education of the mothers. It is observed that the educational status of the parents determine their involvement and motivation of their children's educational levels.

11. Adjustment and family

The family in every culture functions as the primary institution in inculcating the socio-cultural norms and values discipline and other aspects of behavioural patterns on the children. All these characteristics are induced in the child by the process of socialization. The child is made to learn the best lessons of citizenship both from the father and mother. As the child grows into an adolescent several problems arise due to various changes in the environmental conditions. The adolescent period is a critical period of human life as it mostly determines a person's future. The present generation is highly competitive and each one in the family has to earn his/her bread. Women with adequate qualifications get employed in some organization in the interest of their children's education and welfare. The adolescents try to develop confidence in their children, the adolescent boy/girl should have some self esteem about himself/herself and have confidence that he/she can make best scholastic achievements. Studies in this area have conflicting views. Some of the investigators tried to clarify this issue. Sadhana Mittal (1997) had conducted a study among adolescent girl students of working and non-working mothers. The results showed that the children of working mothers. The results showed that the children of working mothers have made better scholastic achievements and also had the self-concept than the children of non-working mothers. This shows that the children of working mothers have developed more of self-concept and they also wanted to be like their mothers make better school achievements get into a job and earn, whereas the children of non-working mothers did not develop such self confidence and aspiration. Therefore lack of self confidence and aspiration leads to adjustment problems of adolescents.

12. Conclusion

Thus, above factors influenced adjustment problems of adolescents. The adolescent period is a stormy one in which several types of problems emerge in all cultural societies. The adolescent boys and girls are highly sensitive to personal remarks and very much conscious of their self-esteem. They easily get emotional and frustrated. They also become aggressive and violent and go to the extent of facing any situation. Therefore the adjustment problems of adolescents play an important role in the development of personality.

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