INTRODUCTION
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Theoretical Background

Family relations and development

Family is an integral social institution fulfilling the physical, economical and emotional needs of the family members and carry out functions which are essential for permanence, integration and modify social system. Despite the individual opinion in the family, each family member shares common goals, resources and physical space. Without a specific family system, the child cannot learn when and how to express feelings, handle conflict, and confer differences. The basic notion of family is to teach children with social norms, values and interpersonal skills which will enhance one’s well-being in a larger environment outside the family.

For building a harmonious relationship among family members, mutual trust and shared interests are important which provide crucial strength among the family members which can create differences and issues that can escalate various conflicting situations. Levels of relationship might differ from individual to individual like between husband and wife, parents and children and siblings. Grandparents, however, are the most intricate part of the family, adding more layers to the family. Apparently, efforts are made to maintain co-ordination which is acceptable by all.

Rapid social, economical and political development laid an adverse effect on Indian families. Families have been undergoing structural and practical modifications that have been impacting socialization and relationships within and outside families.
Relationships during Adolescence

In the recent past due to declining social support from relationships, progress of women empowerment, exposure to media, rising cut-throat demands of the market, financial system and higher standards of achievement are few aspects that have altered the family and put more importance on relationships and communally caring settings, specifically during adolescence, the time when an adolescent is attempting to break out of family patterns of middle childhood to attain an identity. Brooks-Gunn & Reiter, (1990) expressed that during the period of teenage each girl and boy experience higher level of excitability, arousal and emotions affecting behaviour and relationship. During this time of rapid change and alteration adolescents are expected to expand in essential areas of identity, intimacy, autonomy, sexuality, and achievement. During adolescence, a fine line exists between sensitive, respectful parental involvement and intrusive over involvement that does not adequately respect adolescent need for separateness and independence. Adolescents feel most optimistic towards parents when they encourage them to contribute in conversation and seek advice from them about decision taken but reserve the right to make absolute decision. Teenagers gave lowest ratings to parents who are repressive and do not consult with their children in making family decisions (Elder, 1980).

Regardless of varying family roles during adolescence, the home environment and parents are still significant for the behaviours and choices of adolescents. The family’s attitudes become matters of great concern to the developing boy or girl. Through a process of guidance, negotiation and even conflict, adolescents may possibly not only shape their actions and conduct but also describe and redefine their bonding with the parents and other siblings. Teenagers identify parents as significant persons and express more satisfaction while their parents were present than in their
absence (Montemayor & Brownlee, 1987). Adolescents who have a good relationship with their parents are less expected to connect in a variety of risk factors, such as smoking, drinking, fighting.

There is no apparent justification for the variation in results, or for the mutual continuation of increased conflict and closeness within these relationships, but there are many variables indicating differential relationship of adolescents.

**Sex differences in adolescent relationships**

Families are not free from gender biasness when it comes to forming norms of behaviour for their children, especially the ethical ones. Adolescent’s relationships with the female family members are less constructive than those with male family members. Adolescent relationships with their mothers incorporated high levels of both disagreement and dispute (Steinberg 1990). What is allowable and satisfactory for the boys could be a ‘no-no’ for the girls and, what is regrettable is that, this is not done secretly but the girls are told in as many words that they are expected to act in a different way from their male siblings. In some families, certain outwardly unwanted behaviour of one child is allowed to pass without any unfavourable reaction from the parents but a similar act of another child evokes dissatisfaction. Some children compare the reactions of their parents to their behaviour and actions with those of the parents of their peers. As a result, they may either get positively predisposed towards their parents or become resentful.

**Parental discord**

Most significant area of family existence that influences the expansion and development of the children is the relationship between their parents. Vigorous and pleasant-sounding relationship between parents sends constructive and pleasing
signals to the children and generates amiable surroundings in the family. When parents show assistance, communal respect, fair communication, and penance to each other’s needs, this helps the child to develop positive attitudes towards both males and females (Tames and Cabrera, 1999). Parental attitudes influence the way parents treat their children. In turn, it influences child’s attitudes toward them and the way they behave. Fundamentally, therefore, the parent-child relationship is dependent on the parent’s attitudes. If parental attitudes are favourable, the relationship of parents and children will be far better than when parental attitudes are unfavourable. Many cases of maladjustment in children as well as in adults can be traced to unfavourable early parent-child relationships which developed because of parental attitudes. Even though cloaked in behaviour that suggested favourable attitudes, were actually unfavourable.

**Sources of parental attitude**

- Many times parents form the “dream child” concept before a child’s birth. When the child falls short of parental expectations, parents are disappointed and this encourages the development of a rejecting attitude.
- Parents who enjoy the parental role, are happy and well adjusted to marriage reflect their favourable attitudes towards their children.
- When parents feel adequate for the parental role, their attitude toward their children and children’s behaviour are far more favourable than when they feel inadequate and unsure of how to bring up their children.
- Parents who are satisfied with the sex, number and characteristics of their children have more favourable attitude than parents who are dissatisfied.
- If parents’ reason for having a child was to hold together a faltering marriage and if this did not work, the attitude toward the child will be far less
favourable than if parents wanted the child to add to the satisfaction of their marriage.

- How children react to parents influences the parents’ attitudes toward them. If children show affection and dependence on their parents, parents react to them very differently than they do when their children are independent and more attached to outsiders than to them.

**Effects of parental attitudes on family relationships**

Parental attitudes have a strong impact not only on family relationships but also on the attitudes and behaviour of children. Most of those who become successful as they grow older come from homes where parental attitude toward them were favourable and where a wholesome relationship existed between them and their parents. Such a relationship produces happy, friendly children who are appealing to others, relatively free from anxieties, and constructive, interdependent member of group. Poorly adjusted children by contrast are usually the product of unfavourable parent child relationships. Children who are deprived of attention and affection from parents are hungry for affection, they are afraid of being left out. Furthermore, they are over willing to please and to do things for others. All this is a form of compensation and an attempt to buy affection at any cost.

**Parenting**

Parents classified as accepting and responsive often smile at, praise and encourage their children. They express a great deal of warmth, even though they can become quite critical when a child misbehaves. Less accepting and relatively unresponsive parents are often quick to criticize, belittle, punish, or ignore a child. They rarely communicate to children that they are valued or loved.
Demandingness/control refers to the amount of regulation or supervision parents undertake with their children. Controlling/demanding parents place limits on their children’s freedom of expression by imposing many demands. They actively monitor their children’s behaviour to ensure that these rules are followed. Less controlling/demanding parents are much less restrictive. They make fewer demands and allow children considerable freedom to pursue their interests and make decisions about their own activities.

It is also likely that one of the parents may become less involved in the parenting of the child, whether due to exigencies of the situation (job, etc.) or due to her or his own difference. Adolescents reporting to get relatively warm parenting by both mothers and fathers had a smaller association of stressful events with symptoms of depression as compared to other adolescents. Further; those adolescents who reported relatively harsher discipline by both parents had a higher association of stress with depressive symptoms as compared with other adolescents (Wagner et al. 1996).

Harmony and cohesiveness in the parent-adolescent relationship are associated with less sibling conflict and a more positive sibling relationship. Parents and teenager usually share similar values and attitudes about important issues and decisions: ideas of right and wrong, for example, or what good a marriage is, or what the long-run value of education is (Coleman 1980, Collins 1991). People from different social strata and ethnic backgrounds face different kinds of problems, pursue different goals, and adopt different values about what it takes to adapt to their environments. Black adolescents reported higher levels of family adaptability than did white adolescents (Lowe and Wayne 1982).
Parental attitude for child-rearing (rigid v/s permissive) and emotional reactions of family members (emotionally stable v/s disturbed), amount of support, parental acceptance/responsiveness and parental demandingness/control are important aspect of relationship. The child of emotionally stable parents can be expected to exhibit well-controlled behaviour reactions whereas the child of emotionally disturbed parents may become confused or frustrated individual, reflecting in his own behaviour the personality defects to which he has been exposed.

**Communication**

Communication is the key to harmonious relationships within the family. Several levels of communication are present in a family environment- sharing between husband and wife, parents and children and between siblings. Many parents have no idea what their adolescents really think because of not giving chance to explain. However adolescents' attributions for their past and present communication problems significantly predict their current satisfaction (Vangelisti 1992). Both mothers’ and fathers’ separate communication as well as their interaction effect is also linked to the development of delinquent behaviour in adolescents (Moitra and Mukherjee 2012).

**Influence of family size on family relationship**

The larger the family size, greater the number of interactional system and leads to greater friction at home often counteracted by the authoritarian discipline of the parents especially within large families.

The composition of the family also affects the relationships. When the family is composed more of females than male members which might result to have closer and more continuous relationships with one another could lead to greater friction.
Family relationships are also affected by parental attitudes toward family size. While large family can create a favourable emotional climate in the home because they are happy in their parental roles and willing to make the personal and financial sacrifices demanded by a large family. While on the other hand parents wanting their family to stay small but have a large family, parental attitude will tend to be unhealthy, will resenting to make sacrifices in time, efforts, and money and often blame each other for the larger than hoped for family.

**Interdependence of relationship**

Interdependence of member, a key element of an Indian family, helps to foster the spirit of togetherness and provides the necessary strength and stability. The equation can be damaged if cooperation and assistance are not forthcoming. Parent’s care regarding their adolescents is assessed by the interest the parents show towards their children, by the amount of quality time spent with them and by their willingness to stand beside them and help them as needed (Amato, 1990; Gecas and Seff, 1990).

**Response to the expectations of others**

In many Indian families, parents are very sensitive to the views and perceptions of others with regard to the actions and social behaviour of their children. The family lives by the standards of others. This is particularly true of those families that are engaged in a lot of social activities (Elvira and Bruna 2010).

**Social class difference**

Adolescents are significantly influenced by the type of family in which they grow up (parent’s level of education, income, types of works, as well as by their lifestyle) and cultural values. In general, differences between the values, child rearing
practices, and expectations of middle class parents and those of working and lower
class parents closely paralleled differences in the nature of their day to day work
experience. For example, parents who worked as professionals (doctors, lawyers) or
upper level executives or who owned their own business generally experienced a high
degree of autonomy and independence in spending their time at work. Although they
often worked quiet hard and earned high salaries, much of their sense of satisfaction
came from intrinsic sources that they controlled rather than from extrinsic sources
controlled by others. Adolescents in middle class families are encouraged to be
independent and to regulate or control their own behaviour rather than rely on the
rewards or punishments of others to determine how they would act.

Spacing and birth order

The attention adolescents get from their parents depends partially on the birth
order and spacing of the children. Middle born adolescents sometimes feel cheated of
parental attention and support. They express a sense of being “pushed around” in
terms of family rules and regulations. Parents tend to be more punitive and less
supportive when their children are spaced too closely together. Several researchers
have uncovered important interconnections among parent child, sibling, and peer
relationships in adolescence. Combination of ineffective parenting (poor problem-
solving skills, weak supervision skills, parent-adolescent conflict) and sibling conflict
(hitting, fighting, stealing, cheating) at 10 to 12 years of age was linked to antisocial
behaviour and poor peer relations from 12 to 16 years of age (Bank, Burraston, and
Snyder, 2004).
Parent- adolescent problem issues

During the adolescence period the values and attitudes of adolescents become increasingly distanced from those of their parents for the most part, the generation gap is a stereotyped. The conflict between parents and children does increase during the early adolescence period (Collins and Steinberg, 2006). During adolescence children view themselves as increasingly emancipated from their parents’ conventional perspectives and control, depending on factors such as age difference, changes with the time in the social pattern of behaviour, different cultural backgrounds, and education inequalities between parents and children.

One of the most important development tasks that adolescents face is to achieve a mature and healthy sense of autonomy- the capacity to make one’s own decisions and to manage life tasks without being overly dependent on other people. Conflict between parents and children about self-governance issues become much more common early in adolescence and gradually decline in frequency throughout the adolescence year (Laursen, coy and Collins, 1998 and Smenta, 1996).

Parents expect adolescents to show responsibility in performance of family chores, care of personal belongings, clothes and room, use of the family automobile, use of the telephone, doing work for others outside the home, use of family property or belongings: furniture, tools, supplies, equipment. Adolescents agree more with their peer than with their parents. (Carlson et al, 1991). Much of the friction stems from the different perspective that parents and adolescents adopt. Parents view conflict through a moral or social- conventional, feeling that they have a responsibility to monitor and regulate their child’s conduct, whereas the adolescent, locked in his quest for autonomy views his nagging parents as infringing on personal rights and choices (Smetana and Daddies 2002)
In a study on Chinese adolescents it was reported that conflicts were primarily with mothers, of moderate frequency and severity, and occurred over everyday issues. Chinese adolescents reasoned about conflicts primarily in terms of personal jurisdiction; personal reasoning, decreased with age and was more frequent among males than females (Yau Jenny and Judith 1996). Often arguments centre around simple day to day issues such as appearances, style of dress, hair length, participation in household chores and family activities, choice of music, choice of friends, or neglect of schoolwork, How often and where they are allowed to go out, going out on school nights, frequency of dating, ride in cars.

**Justification of the study**

Parents affect the social, emotional, and intellectual development of their adolescents. Although many people believe that adolescents lose respect for their parents and feel less close to them than they did in early or middle childhood years, these beliefs are largely unfounded. Warm and sensitive parents who often talk to their child and try to stimulate their curiosity contribute to positive development outcomes. Their children are securely attached, willing to explore, sociable, and show signs of positive intellectual development. It also helps if both parents are sensitive, responsive caregivers who support each other in their roles as parents. Securely attached adolescents feel freer to disagree with parents, take independent stands, and become autonomous without worrying about losing parental warmth and affection (Allen et.al, 2003).

Parents of adolescents, especially mothers, often speak positively about their relationship with their adolescents (Collins & Laursen, 2006). They note positive change such as increased independence and maturity and feel that the parent-child
relationship becomes closer rather than chillier (Shearer, Crouter, & McHale, 2005). Although attachment to parents may remain strong during adolescence, the connectedness is not always smooth. Early adolescence is a time when conflict with parents escalates (Adams & Laursen, 2001; Collins & Steinberg, 2006; Holmbeck, 1996) which usually does get better as adolescents move from early to late adolescence. Still, time spent together decreases, and this can make adolescents feel less emotionally close to their parents. A modest increase in parent-child conflict is also common at the onset of puberty (Steinberg, 2002).

The increased conflict in early adolescence may be due to a number of factors: the biological changes of puberty, cognitive changes involving increased idealism and logical reasoning, social changes focused on independence and identity, maturational changes in parents, and expectations that is violated by parents and adolescents (Collins & Laursen, 2004; Collins & Steinberg, 2006). From the above discussion we know that parents’ and adolescents’ relationship depends on various factors of influence as they learn new patterns of interactions and behaviours that facilitate their development and adjustment, but we have not identified all of the factors that become significant in the maintenance of parent-adolescent relationships. To add to our understanding of what takes place in the relationship, both internally and in the family system, researcher reviewed some more literature which has been presented in the next chapter.

Review of literature indicates that the issue of parent adolescent relations has been researched extensively. Many factors are at play in the determination of how well adolescents get along with their parents. But it is also evident that studies conducted on varied aspects of relationship have been based on some theoretical construct or limiting the study to one or two aspects. Results are somewhat
contradictory and indicate that we currently do not understand in what ways each of them affects the relationship.

In addition some cultures are marked by less parent-adolescent conflict than others (Larson Reed 1990). Moreover fewer studies have been reported in Indian context. There are several questions needed to be answered such as -

1. How do adolescents rate the overall quality of their relationships with their parent(s) by the affect (feelings that exist among family members), cohesion (closeness), control (type of guidance and discipline) and flexibility (degree of adaptability, tolerance), treatment (kind or abuse)

2. How much adolescents interact with their parent(s), How do adolescents rate the affect of their parent(s) in each of these interactions and how many of the interactions with their parents are positive and how many are negative?

3. How difference between birth orders, male/ female, opposite/same sex, adolescent ratings of interaction quality and importance of their relationship relate to the adolescent’s rating of the overall quality of their relationships?

4. In what ways adolescents’ parents are supportive and in what ways they are not, what are the matters of agreement and disagreement, what do they expect from each other and kind of criticisms adolescents received from parents?

5. How different dimensions of parenting and family environment affect parent-adolescent relationship quality?

6. How personal qualities of adolescents and nature of family relations relate to different dimensions of relationship and perceived relationship satisfaction?

Broadening the vein of research to include additional aspects of the relationship may help in identifying the variables responsible for quality of
adjustment and provide more understanding about why some parents and adolescents get along better than others.

Keeping in mind, the need to examine the quality of parent-adolescent relationships, this research ‘Patterns of Parent–Adolescent Relationship and factors of influence’ has been designed to answer above questions using input from adolescents themselves so that their perspectives may be added to the research in this area.

Objectives: study has been planned with the following objectives in mind-

1. To assess the quality of parent-adolescent relationship
2. To explore differences between mothers and fathers for sons versus daughters
3. To study adolescent’s rating of the overall quality of their relationships in relation to difference between age, birth orders, socio economic status, education, family size.
4. To study quality of adolescent relationship in relation to dimensions of parenting
5. To assess the general disagreement of adolescents in day to day life with parents in relation to issues and outcomes

Delimitations of the study

1. The present study was limited to the adolescents studying in 7\textsuperscript{th}, 9\textsuperscript{th} and 11\textsuperscript{th} classes of some selected schools of Delhi.
2. Adolescent-parent relationship quality was judged on the basis of cohesiveness, flexibility, family communication, and family satisfaction only.
3. Only adolescents’ perceptions were included in the study.