

A STUDY ON “THE BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS OF THE SINGLE CHILD IN A FAMILY”

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Abstract

Research indicates that the development of a child's behavior is strongly influenced by how the family functions. Family life is where the child spends most of his or her learning time. This study found that a single child faces more psychological and psycho-so problems as compared to those having siblings. The behavioral problem questionnaire and parental problem questionnaire tools have been used in this study. The findings from the study indicated that anxiety and parental attitude effects behavioral problems of a single child.

Key Words: *Family, Behavior, Parental Attitude, Single Child, Cognitive and Emotional Development.*

Introduction

Social work is a profession, which provides service to help in relieving distress, preventing suffering, removing social injustice provide opportunity for social development. Practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior, of social economic and cultural institutions; and of the interaction of all these factors.” (Ghatage, 2006)

Families play an enormously important role in child social and emotional development. Parents being a child's first teacher and also his personal coping consultant. Elkin and Handel (1978) defined “The family is the first unit with which children have a continuous contact and the first context in which socialization patterns develop.”

The family is profoundly important to the developmental, emotional and cognitive growth of a child. A child will learn about relationships, manners, self-esteem, worth and loyalty, all by watching and participating in family. The ability to handle life's issues and demands is based upon psychological foundations of early family experiences. Within the society, parents identify certain values that are important for the development of their children (Goldsmith 2000).

Single children face social behavioral problems because they do not grow up with siblings. As they missed out daily interaction, they prefer to remain lonely. Therefore, these children are generally termed as spoilt and selfish children.

Children having no siblings, were found to be suffering from psycho-social problems psycho-somatic problems like aggressiveness, loneliness and depression are the most common problems. Due to less social interaction, these children face problems in expressing themselves and have an introvert nature. Ultimately, such children have a propensity to act against natural tendencies to fit socially. This leads to an uncomfortable situation for the child emotionally and psychologically.

It was also found that a single child is more vulnerable to psycho-somatic problems like recurrent bouts of abdominal pain, body dimorphic disorder, indigestion and hysterical fits. The Family Pediatrics Report (2003) explained that the development of children is significantly influenced by interpersonal relationships within the family.

Children who are raised by parents and siblings who are both responsible and dedicated, usually perform well in school. Affection and protection are evidently crucial for the health of a child. Thus, children need to receive love and protection of their healthy emotional development.

The term behaviorally disordered is used to define students labeled seriously emotionally disturbed in federal legislation and called by a variety of labels in state and local school districts. The topics addressed include the assessment of students who are potentially eligible for special education, procedures followed in making decisions about eligibility and placement, interventions and their efficacy and suitability for generalizing, personnel preparation and interagency cooperation. Various conclusions and recommendations are reviewed in the broad context of the special challenges behaviorally disordered students present to educators, as well as the characteristics of behaviorally disordered students in general.

Methodology

Problem Behavior Problem of the Single Child in a Family

Objectives

1. To study the Behavioral problems and parental attitude of the single child family.
2. To compare the effect of parental Attitude on the Behavioral problem.
3. To know the correlation between the Behavioral problem and age.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no relationship between behavioral problems of children parental attitude.

H₀₂: There no relationship between behavioral problem of child and age of child.

H₀₃: There is no relation between parental attitude and age of child.

Methodology

Tools Used

1. Behavioral problem questionnaire prepared by the investigator.
2. Parental attitude questionnaire by prof. Venkatesh Kumar.G

Sample

A sample of 50 parents having single children were taken from Mysore City and their attitude towards their children and the behavioral problems of their children were collected individually using the questionnaires.

Procedure

Behavioral problem questionnaire and parental attitude questionnaire was given to one of the parents of the single child before the questionnaires were given, the parents were explained on why the survey was being conducted & how to answer the questionnaire. The parents were also assured about the absolute confidentiality of the answers.

The filled questionnaires were collected and scored by the investigator and the scores were analyzed statistically by finding the Mean, standard deviation, significant difference, correlation T-test and Independent Sample Test.

Results and Discussion

To study the behavioral problems of the single child a questionnaire prepared by the investigator having 38 questions was used. Similarly, to study the parental attitude questionnaire having 50 questions was used.

The answered questionnaires where scores individually and tables were prepared. The results are presented below.

Table 1: Correlation Coefficient of Behavioral Problem With Other Variables

Variable-1	Variable-2	Correlation	df	Significant
Behavioral problem	Parent attitude	-0.702	48	0.000
Behavioral problem	Age	0.314	48	-0.027
Behavioral problem	Age	-228	48	0.112

** Correlations is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlations is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Behavioral Problems and Parental Attitude (Correlation)

Between these 2 variables correlation coefficient of -0.702 was found. This indicated that more is the Behavioral problem lesser will be the parental attitude and vice-versa. The correlation coefficient of -0.702 is found to be highly significant ($P < .000$).

Behavioral Problems and Age

Between these two variables correlation coefficient of 0.314 was found. This indicates that higher is the age more is the behavioral problem. The correlation coefficient of 0.314 is found to be highly significant ($P < .027$).

Parental Attitude and Age

Between these two variables correlation coefficient of 0.112 was found. This indicated that there is no significant difference between the parental attitude and age ($P < 0.0112$). In other words age factor and parental attitude are found to be independent of each other.

Table 2: Mean of Other Descriptive Values for Behavioral Problem and Parental Attitude for Children below and above 10 Years

Variable	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Behavioral problem	Below 10	36	32.39	10.89	1.82
	Above 10	14	43.29	13.01	3.48
Parent Attitude	Below 10	36	27.08	4.58	0.76
	Above 10	14	24.71	5.36	1.43

Table 3: Results of Independent Samples Test for Mean Behavioral Problem and Parental Attitude Scores of Children Below and Above 10 Years

Variable	t-test of Equality of Means			
	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Behavioral problem	-3.008	48	.004	-10.90
Parent Attitude	1.566	48	.124	2.37

Behavioral Problem and Age

Students with below 10 years of age had mean behavioral problem score of 32.39 whereas students with above 10 years had a score of 43.29. The obtained 'T' value is found to be -3.008 which is significant at 0.004 level. In other words students with higher age group had significantly more behavioral problem compared to students with lower age group.

Parental Attitude and Age

Students with below 10 years of age had mean parental attitude score of 27.08 whereas students with above 10 years had a score of 24.71. The obtained 'T' value is found to be 1.566 which is not significant at 0.124 level. In other words there is no significant difference in the parental attitude of both the age groups.

Summary and Conclusion

This study has been conducted to study the behavior problems of the single child family. Behavior problems are those forms of behavior which indicate that something is wrong with the child himself or with the environment he lives. Thus, problem behavior interferes with social and cognitive functioning and as a whole interferes the development of the child.

The behavioral problem questionnaire had questions, which were all positive concerning the behavioral problem. However in parental attitude questionnaire questions were positive as well as negative in nature.

Both the questionnaire were given to the same parent and asked to complete both the questionnaire separately. The questionnaires were handled to the parents individually. The questionnaires were in simple English so that the parents could understand the questionnaire easily. The two private and reputed schools were approached and addressed of the single children in class 3rd, 4th and 5th were taken. The parents of these children were approached using the address or parents who came to take their children were approached and data was collected from these parents.

The total sample comprised of 50 parents. There was no differentiation between fathers and mothers and any one could answer both the questionnaire. The data was statistically analyzed by finding the mean, standard deviation. Correlation coefficient, 'T' test and indipent sample carried out. The results are summarized below.

Correlation coefficient was found to see the correlation between behavioral problems with respect to parental attitude. From the natures of the correlation coefficient, we observe that there exists a high degree of negative correlation between the behavioral problem and they differ from each other at 0.000 level significance.

From the values of correlation coefficient between behavioral problems with respect to age it is evident that there is a high degree of positive correlation between the behavioral problem and age. These 2 available differ from each other at 0.927 level of significance.

To study if there exists correlation between parental attitudes with respect to age correlation coefficient was found. The values of the correlation coefficient clearly revealed that there is no correlation between the parental attitude and age. This means that these 2 variables do not differ from each other.

The 'T' tests were also carried out to know if there exists a significant difference between and behavioral problem with respect to age. It was found that students with higher age group and significantly more behavioral problem compared to students with lower age group. This co-relation may be because the older children understand the parent's moods and attitudes more correctly because of which the children may react to it more intensely. To study, if there exists any significant difference between the parental attitude and age, 'T' tests were carried out. From results it is evident that there is no significant difference in the parental attitude of both the age groups. The reason for this may be because parents always think their children to be younger than their age and treat them in the similar manner even if their age advances.



To conclude, it is found that

1. Anxiety effects behavioral problem in child.
2. Parental attitude also effects behavioral problem.

The Family Pediatrics Report (2003) indicated that “Families are the most central and enduring influence in children’s lives regardless of their education, composition, income or values.”

Studies have shown that parental behavior influences the child’s behavior and parental training can help the parent in handling the behavior problem of the child more successfully. If the Childs behavior problem has a psychological origin which is related to the parent’s behavior then, alternation of the parental attitude can prevent the behavioral problems of the child. Some studies, which were relevant to the present investigation were reviewed under different topics like single child. Parent and behavioral problem, family and behavioral problem, attention deficiency hyperactivity disorder, bedwetting and stress. There were many studies regarding attention deficiency hyperactivity syndrome, parent and behavioral problem, bedwetting. The Social work intervention like social case work, social group work and counselling will help the children and parents to cope up with the relationship.

Nurturing family relationships lay the foundation for all other relationships. The child-parent relationship has a major influence on most aspects of child development when optimal, parenting skills and behaviors have a positive impact on children’s self-esteem, school achievement, and cognitive developmental behavior.

References

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