

Role of Mothers' Expressed Emotions in Psychopathology and Social-Emotional Competence in Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To study the role of mothers' expressed emotions in psychopathology and social-emotional competence in adolescents.

Study Design: Cross sectional study.

Place and Duration of Study: Department of Psychology, University of Gujrat, Gujrat Pakistan, from Jul 2020 to Aug 2021

Methodology: Five hundred mothers and their five hundred adolescents were approached to measure the role of mothers' expressed emotions in psychopathology and social-emotional competence in adolescents. For this purpose, parental Expressed Emotions Scale-1 was used, and to assess the psychopathology and social-emotional competence in adolescents, Social Anxiety Scale-2 and Social-Emotional Competence Scale-3 were used.

Results: Artificial neural network (ANN) analysis was used to identify the mothers' expressed emotions as predictors of social anxiety and social-emotional competence in adolescents. Results showed incorrect predictions was for training data (60%) and for testing data (28%), which signify the current results that around 72% of right decision about mothers' expressed emotions as a predictor of social anxiety and social-emotional competence in adolescents.

Conclusion: In the teenage period, youth face an increasing number of psychological, social, and developmental challenges. Mothers are the first teachers of their children. When they fail to support them and display ways of negatively expressing emotions, it leads to overall mental health issues, in which social anxiety is the most common challenge.

Keywords: Adolescents, High expressed emotions, Low expressed emotions, Psychopathology, Social anxiety, Social-emotional competence.

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INTRODUCTION

Psychopathology or mental disorders in adolescents have many root causes due to their predisposing and environmental issues; the aetiology of the disorders in adolescents may differ from individual to individual.^{1,2} Social anxiety is intense fear in one or more social situations, causing considerable distress and impaired ability to function in at least some aspects of daily life.^{3,4} Some studies have found that social anxiety is highly coexisting with other mental disorders, particularly other anxiety and depressive disorders.^{5,6} At least one co-morbid disorder was found in two-thirds of adolescents with generalised social phobia.⁷

Social and emotional competence is one of the most widely investigated human social and emotional behaviour areas. In recent decades, more emphasis has been placed on developing social competence.⁸ Young people and adults who understand their feelings and the feelings of others are much more likely to be successful in relationships than those without the

ability.⁹ further expressed emotions associated with adolescents' social-emotional competence in numerous ways. Research has shown that the frequently positive response of mothers creates more expressive behaviour in children. A familial positive and emotional pattern increased expectations for normative expression and emotional skills in children.¹⁰ The present study was conducted to examine the role of mothers' expressed emotions in psychopathology and social-emotional competence in adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

The cross sectional study was conducted in different cities of the District Gujrat (Pakistan) from July 2020 to Aug 2021 after approval from the Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB), University of Gujrat.

Inclusion Criteria: Mothers and their adolescents aged 11-19 years were included.

Exclusion Criteria: Mothers who were single or divorced or suffered from any mental and physical disability were excluded.

Four important ethics of individual human rights, self-esteem, skill, responsibility, and integrity, are addressed in the study using informed consent, selec-

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tion of subjects, risk-benefit analysis and privacy. A sample of 500 mothers and 500 of their adolescents were recruited by the rule of thumb as 6-10 observations (participants) on single questions (60×8=480) from the community and educational institutes using a purposive sampling strategy. After getting the educational institutions list from the District Education Office Gujrat, 12 institutions (8 schools and four colleges) were randomly selected. Adolescents approached with permission of the authorities and teachers of 7th to 12th-grade students and securitised only those adolescents whose parents consented to participate in the study. The adolescents were clearly instructed about instruments and response choices instructions. The social anxiety scale and social-emotional competence scale were applied to adolescents. They were approached at their working and convenient place. The parental expressed emotions scale was administered to mothers to measure the role of mother-expressed emotions. They were instructed to read the items cautiously while responding. The participants were informed that participation would be voluntary, and the researchers maintained assured and ethical consideration.

Data was analysed through an artificial neural network by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS-25) and Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS-25) for Windows.

RESULTS

Artificial neural networks (ANN) identified the mothers expressed emotions as predictors of social anxiety and social-emotional competence in adolescents. Results showed significant input on the left side as a predictor of mother-expressed emotions and output on the right side in the form of social anxiety and social-emotional competence in adolescents.

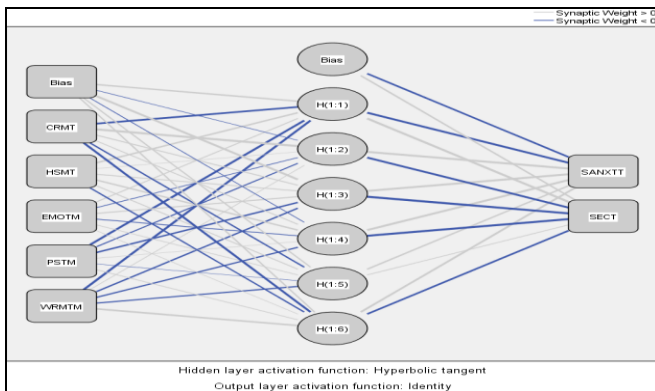


Figure: Social Anxiety and Social-Emotional Competence in Adolescents

The multilayer perception had three function layers in the form of input as independent variables: mother-expressed emotions of critical comments, hostility, emotional over-involvement, positive remarks and warmth. This information went through three layers: input, hidden and output layers. The input layer transforms input in the form of output or outcome variables. Percentage of sample data in training and testing that used was for artificial neural network is shown in Table-I. Percentage of Incorrect Predictions of sample during Training and Testing is shown in Table-II.

Table-I: Percentage of sample data in Training and Testing that used was for Artificial Neural Network

Division of Data	n	Percentage
Training	335	71
Testing	145	29
Total	500	100

Table-II: Percentage of Incorrect Predictions of sample during Training and Testing

Division of Data	Incorrect Prediction %
Training	0.60
Testing	0.28

DISCUSSION

Adolescents face challenges of sustained pressure from the home environment and from society at the same time. The mothers not only support them but also provide an understanding of personal needs and other's emotions, which helps them to cope with these situations.^{11,12} A significant predictive relationship has been found between the mother-expressed emotions and the adolescent's social anxiety and social-emotional competence. Previous research provides shreds of evidence for the relationship among parental high-expressed emotions and mood, anxiety, and other mental disorders in adolescents.^{13,14}

The incorrect predictions percentage was for training data 60% and for testing data 28%, which signifies the current results that around seventy-two per cent of right decisions out of 100 were predicted in the form of mother-expressed emotions in adolescents psychopathology by the artificial neural network.

The results showed that the mothers who expressed emotions of critical comments and hostility caused social anxiety in adolescents, and the mother's level of criticism and disapproval toward their children were found to be positively related to behavioural and emotional problems in adolescents.¹⁵ On the other hand, the mothers who expressed positive emotions of

warmth and positive remarks positively enhanced social-emotional competence in adolescents.¹⁶ Current findings support the previous research regarding the mother's expressed emotions consistently linked with anxiety and psychotic disorders in youth.¹⁷ The findings show that mother-expressed emotions caused social anxiety in young people.¹⁸ A substantial link was identified between mothers' uttered emotions and their children's clinical disorders.¹⁷ Role of mother-expressed emotions found to be more persistent for child's well-being, academic success, and future relationships. The same findings revealed through the current study that mother-expressed emotions of warmth and positive remarks positively affect an adolescent's social and emotional competencies.

CONCLUSIONS

In the current study, mothers expressed emotions are strongly associated with psychopathology and social-emotional competence in adolescents. The study explored youth mental health issues like social anxiety and additional navigation of variables. The study was based on the mother's expressed emotions with their normal adolescents, the first study in Pakistan. Although it would not be possible to find gender, age and institution-wise differences in a single study, it will be helpful to provide grounds for future researchers to explore these aspects in their studies.

Conflict of Interest: None.

Author's Contribution

Following authors have made substantial contributions to the manuscript as under:

SA: Conception, study design, drafting the manuscript, approval of the final version to be published.

ZB: Data acquisition, data analysis, data interpretation, critical review, approval of the final version to be published.

Authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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