

Abstract:-

Marriage and family are necessary, as they meet man's deepest needs. It provides a person an opportunity for a secure and protected satisfaction of his needs for companionship, affection, and sexual expression (Landis 1954). Ruch (1970) rightly says that by mere fact that two people are suited to each other does not guarantee that they will make a successful marriage. They must learn to live together, share, accommodate compromise, adjust and plan together.

Golden Research Thoughts

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTS' MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AND THEIR DAUGHTER'S MARITAL ATTITUDE



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INTRODUCTION

Marital adjustment is 'the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other. Every marital relationship has its own adjustment demand because it involves two people, with different family background and personality coming together. Conflicts among the couples are common in every phase of marital life. The frequency and intensity of the conflicts are determined by the level of understanding among the couples and the willingness both have to adapt and adjust with each other according to the demands the arise in family environment.

The nature of relationship among the parents usually has its impact on the overall family environment and the attitudes of their children towards various facets of their own life. The potential impact of parent's marital life on what an adolescent or young adult thinks about his or her marriage has been an area of interest to many researchers. Child and family mental health professional have long believed that the quality of parent's marital relationship influences their children's functioning (Webster et al 1994)

According to this theoretical perspective, it is believed that individuals learn attitudes and behaviors through imitation, modeling, observation, and experience (Segrin et al., 2005). Social learning theory can also be used to predict and explain relationship characteristics for individuals whose parents have a well adjusted family life and also the ones whose parents are mal adjusted. Maladjustment among the parents can lead to arguments, quarrels, lack of emotional interaction and poor coordination in their family related responsibilities which the children are more likely to observe. This can lead to the weakening of the attitude of the children and increasing their apprehensions about the nature of problems they may have to face in their own relationship. Several studies suggest that young adults whose parents had interpersonal behavior problems exhibited more problems themselves e.g., frequent criticizing and showing anger easily etc, (Amato, 1996; Caspi et al 1988; Jacquet et al 2001; Sanders et al., 1999). There is also a strong association between parental marital conflict and children's overall well-being, including marital attitudes (Jenkins & Smith, 1991).

Kinnaird et al (1986), found that children from intact families have significantly more positive attitudes toward marriage than do individuals from divorced and remarried families. In their study they also studied the relationship between mothers' marital status and their daughters' attitudes toward marriage, divorce, and premarital sexual activity. The findings revealed that females from intact families had more positive attitudes toward marriage than did those from divorced and step-families.

OBJECTIVE:

In the present study, the authors have made an effort to study the relationship between the marital adjustments of parents and the marital attitude of their adolescent daughters.

METHOD:

Samples of 122 adolescent undergraduate female students(aged 17 - 20), and their parents, living together were taken by purposive sampling technique. Students living away from family, divorced or single parent were not included in the sample. Marriage attitude scale (MAS) by Dr.Promod Kumar, Sardar Patel University was administered to the sample of daughters. The Marriage attitude scale is a 38 item, self administered scale, consisting of "yes"/"?"- doubtful/"no" response options to choose from. The Marital adjustment questionnaire by Dr.Promod Kumar and Dr. Kanchana Rohati, Sardhar Patel University was administered to the sample of parents. The marital adjustment questionnaire is a 25 items self-administered questionnaire, with "yes"/"no" type items. The areas measured are the sexual, social and emotional areas. The data was scored and given to a statistician for statistical analysis. SPSS package was used and Pearson's correlation test was done. Results are discussed below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table I show the correlation between the marital adjustment of mothers and fathers and marital attitude of the daughters.

VARIABLES	CORRELATION VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE
Marital adjustment of mother	.301 **	Significant
Marital attitude of daughter		
Marital adjustment of father	.145	Not Significant
Marital attitude of daughter		

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

There is a significant relationship between the marital adjustment of the mother and the marriage attitude of the daughter, $r = .301$, p (2-tailed) significant at 0.01 level. On the other hand, there is no significant relationship between the marital adjustment of the father and the marriage attitude of the daughter. This shows that mother's marital adjustment is significantly correlated with daughter's marriage attitude than that of the father's marital adjustment, in the sample.

Kinnard et al (1986) in their study has also found a significant relationship between mother's marital status and adjustment influencing the daughter's attitude towards marriage and divorce. The mothers tend to transmit her ideas and behavior towards marriage to the children, and this may affect their ideas and attitude towards their future marriage and relationship.

Children and adolescents are likely to spend large amounts of time observing their parents' marriages. Because of the proximity and intensity of children's observations of their parents' marriages while growing up, it seems particularly likely that children's attitudes about marriage and its alternatives will be shaped by these early impressions. As a result, children's marriage-related attitudes are expected to be influenced by the extent to which parents' relationships provide primarily positive or negative images of marriage. (Mick et al 2006)

Sprague et al (1997) in his study on examining college students' marital attitudes as a function of structural (i.e. parental marital status, gender) and family environment (i.e. conflict, cohesion, and expressiveness while growing up), has found that parental conflict and divorce may affect children's attitudes towards marriage because parents tend to transmit negative ideas and behaviors about marriage to their children. These negative ideas and behaviors are often internalized by the children, which often leaves them with feelings of fear about marriage, anticipating that they too might end up divorced.

CONCLUSION:

This clearly explains that marital adjustment among parents; especially mothers have implications for daughter's attitudes toward marriage. When they tend to observe increasingly unhappy relationship among their parents and declining marital quality over time, it may lead to developing a negative attitude towards this type of relationship in future. It can be assumed that when the parents' marital quality is high, the daughter's attitude may similarly be enhanced.

The utility of the study is to highlight this relationship so that future studies and intervention programs can be implemented focussing on the marital adjustment of parents, much at an earlier stage, like conducting awareness programmes for parents during PTA meets by trained psychologists in schools and colleges which may enhance the marriage attitude of their children in future. Also, awareness programme and pre-marital counseling can be suggested to those adolescent students who seem to have negative attitude towards marriage based on the perceived marital adjustment among the parents.

Limitations:

Small sample size, focused on one City College.

Only daughters were taken as samples.

Working, non-working mothers, family type, birth order of the daughter, siblings' details, SES, were not controlled.

Recommendation for further research:

Larger samples from various city colleges can be taken.

Samples can include both boys and girls.

Variables like birth order, family type – like living with grandparents, can be included.

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