

## Parenting and Psychological Wellbeing of Adolescents- An Intervention Study

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**Abstract:** Carol Ryff (1988) proposed well being model with six components -Self acceptance, Purpose in life, Personal growth, Positive relation with others, Environmental mastery, Autonomy. Parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing which influences psychological well being of adolescents. The most consistent predictor of adolescent mental health and well being is the quality of relationship adolescents have with their parents (Resnic et al., 1997). Problems in parenting arise due to lack of skills, so parents can be trained in parenting (life skills training). Life skills training have a significant effect on positive mental health and self esteem of vulnerable adolescents. (Irshad.K.2012). The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of life skills training given to parents on psychological wellbeing of their adolescent children. Quasi-experimental research design was adopted by the researcher for the study. The students were selected on the basis of simple random technique. The sample consisted of adolescent students in 11<sup>th</sup> std (n=60). Psychological wellbeing questionnaire was administered as a screening test. Those adolescents who scored low were selected for the study. They were divided into experimental group (n=30) & control group (n=30). Life skills intervention was given to the parents of experimental group. Life skills questionnaire, psychological wellbeing and parental bonding instrument were the tools used for the study. The data was analyzed with correlation and Independent t-test. Inferences & discussions were made based on the results of the analysis.

**Keywords:** adolescent students, life skills training, psychological wellbeing, Parenting.

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### I. Introduction

Parenting refers to the activity of raising a child rather than the biological relationship (Davies, Martin 2000)<sup>1</sup>. A parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing. Parenting style is affected by both the parent's and children's temperaments, and is largely based on the influence of one's own parents and culture. Diana Baumrind (1966)<sup>2</sup> introduced three parenting styles authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. Maccoby & Martin(1983)<sup>3</sup>, (Steinberg et. al 1994)<sup>4</sup>, (Hetherington et.al., 1999)<sup>5</sup> added one more parenting style-Neglectful parenting. In traditional India, child rearing is women's responsibility with excessive indulgence by mother and female members of extended family.

#### 1.1 Parenting Adolescents

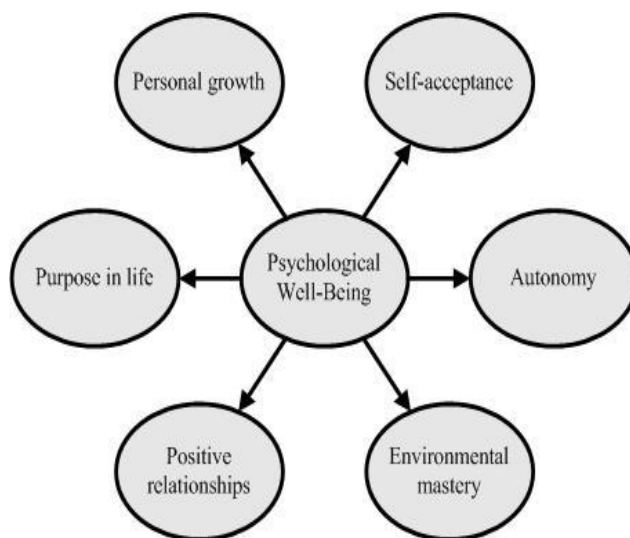
Adolescence is an exciting and dynamic period for young people. No developmental period brings with it such remarkable transformation in the child as adolescence. As adolescents are faced with physical changes and cognitive development they are constantly renegotiating their relationships with family, friends, school and community. It is transition from dependence to independent relationships with parents. The style of parenting can play an important role in helping the adolescents to face this great challenge. (Mckinney & Renk,2008)<sup>6</sup>. In the current scenario, parents perceive that they have the best intentions in raising their children, most of the time they blame the children for being how they are. Unfortunately, it is the parents who had used unfavorable child rearing practices.

Parents learn child rearing practice good/unfavorable from their parents and implement it unconsciously or consciously on their children trying to bring out the best. Parents give least importance to the thought that the conditions in which they and the children are growing are different. In present times children grow up in nuclear family with no support from grandparents or at times with one or no siblings. They are now the centre of the parent's universe, where the children have to deal with pressures of fulfilling their parent's expectations which most of times are unrealistic. Many children today are alone or with Baby sitters most of the time. Parents try to substitute their presence with expensive toys or immediate gratification of their children's whims and fancies. Children today grow up watching television, playing violent video games, making them

insensitive to others emotions and at times overexposure to media leading to various behavioral and conduct problems due to lack of proper supervision.

### **1.2. Psychological Wellbeing**

The term psychological well being (PWB) connotes a wide range of meanings, usually associated with wellness. Most studies in the past defined ‘wellness’ as not being sick, as an absence of anxiety, depression or other forms of mental problems. PWB includes esteem, positive affect, daily activities, satisfaction, absence of suicidal ideas, personal control, social support, absence of tension, and general efficiency (Bhogle and Prakash, 1995)<sup>7</sup>. Carol Ryff (1988)<sup>8</sup> proposed well being model with six components -Self acceptance, Purpose in life, Personal growth, Positive relation with others, Environmental mastery, Autonomy. Parenting style influences psychological well being and personality of adolescents.



Carol Ryff's<sup>9</sup> model of psychological well-being

### **1.3 Parenting Style and Psychological Well-Being**

Authoritarian parenting leads to adolescent aggressiveness, conduct disorders and rebellion. (Lanborn & Steinberg 1993)<sup>10</sup>. Children of indulgent parents had low hope, higher psychotism, involved in drug use, development of conduct disorder and antisocial personality (Baumrind, 1966)<sup>11</sup>. Adolescents from neglectful parents show symptoms of depression, behaviour problems (Crittenden et al., 1994)<sup>12</sup>, impulsive, involve in delinquent behaviour, drug abuse (Steinberg 2001)<sup>13</sup>.

## **II. Current Status of Adolescents**

Adolescents today encounter difficulties and more life challenges than previous generation, yet they are provided less guidance and intervention for their personal development. (Pajares & Urdan, 2004, p.3)<sup>14</sup>. The biological and psychological turmoil within the adolescent and other factors like family system, parenting, poverty, child abuse, socioeconomic status, school environment, peer pressure etc. aggravates the problems faced by adolescents. Thus mental, social and behavioral correlates of health problems have resulted in lowered quality of life. A variety of signs may point to mental health problems or serious emotional disturbances in adolescents, leading to disruption of emotional and adjustment functioning.

According to report by UNICEF 2012<sup>15</sup>, each year 20 percent of adolescents experience mental health problems. As per report by Social inclusion of youth with mental health conditions, 20 percent of youth experience mental health condition each year on a global level. (United nations children's fund 2012). UNICEF 2009<sup>16</sup> states that young people below 25 years of age represent almost 50 percent of the world's population. India has the largest population of adolescents in the world with 243 million individuals aged between 10 -19 years. If such a large population is at the threshold of suffering from mental illness, this requires immediate attention for some intervention strategies.

Research evidence indicates that the single most consistent predictor of adolescent mental health and wellbeing is the quality of relationship the young people have with their parents. (Resnick et al.,1997)<sup>17</sup>. Positive parenting practices delay risk behaviour in risk naive youth, moderate behaviour in risk experienced youth and promote optimal youth development

### **2.1 Need for Parental Training**

Every parent child relationship is different very personal as it is based on the interaction between two individuals, and each of whose personality is unique. Some children are easy to deal with some are difficult. The easy dealing child can be disciplined well and they never trouble their parents in any way. But some are born with a different temperament who cannot be disciplined with severe scolding, or punishing. So children should be understood based on their nature, their inherent personality and nurture their upbringing pattern. Problems in upbringing arise as the child does not have a role model or the parents are not around most of the time, the rules laid down are inconsistent.

So parenting is not an instinctual knowledge. It is a science and an art that needs to be learnt. Problems in parenting arise due to lack of skills. These skills can be learnt through undergoing proper training. Parents can be trained in parenting that affirms the dignity and humanity of both parents and children.

### **2.2 Life Skills Intervention for Parents of Adolescents**

Life skills are the positive behaviour and ability to adjust efficiently with the needs and challenges of everyday life. UNICEF (2001)<sup>18</sup> defines life skills as a behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas; Knowledge, attitude and skills. Life skills training have a significant effect on positive mental health and self esteem of vulnerable adolescents. Life skills intervention can be given to parents of adolescents to improve psychosocial health of adolescents.

## **III. Review of Literature**

### **Parenting and Psychological Well-Being**

Madhu Gupta, Dimple mechtani (2015)<sup>19</sup>, in their study explained that child rearing patterns nurtures the child physically and contributes to overall well being. Their research findings indicated that an authoritative parenting style produced positive developmental outcomes. The study recommended parents to show concern to their children and develop Psychological and social positions in them.

Mohammad Reza et al., (2014)<sup>20</sup> examined the relationship between Psychological wellbeing and parenting styles with students mental health. The results indicated that Psychological well being and authoritative parenting styles were significantly related with mental health and permissive parenting styles had significant positive relationship. Thus mental health is predicable by psychological well being and parenting styles. Takahiro Hasumi et.al (2012)<sup>21</sup> investigated parental involvement and mental well being of Indian adolescents (13-14 yrs). The study revealed that parental involvement decreased with increasing age, while poor mental health was significantly associated with a decreased likelihood of parental involvement (low levels of depression, loneliness and anxiety). The study recommended health care professionals to encourage parents to be actively involved in adolescent's lives for development of psychological well being.

Bamanjit Sandhu, Bikramjeat sing, Suninder Tung & Nidhi kundra (2012)<sup>22</sup> investigated "Adolescent identity formation, psychological well being and parental attitudes". Results revealed that adolescent boys high on identity achievement experience psychological well being while girls reflect less on identity. Parental acceptance is associated with identity achievement and avoidant parenting is related to lower identity. Status identity achievement is high in adolescent boys with both parental acceptance and concentration. The study recommends for development of identity enhancement programs for adolescents.

### **Parenting Intervention**

Chand N, Farrugia et al., (2013)<sup>23</sup> did a study on promoting positive youth development through a brief parenting intervention program. Parents of adolescents completed pre and post intervention assessments of parenting and family relationships in order to examine the effects of participation on family functioning and positive youth development (PYD). The results suggest that brief parenting intervention may produce favorable outcomes for families with adolescent children, including the promotion of important aspects of PYD.

Irshad.K. (2012)<sup>24</sup> examined the effect of life skills training on mental well being and self esteem among vulnerable adolescents. The effect of life skills on 40 trained and untrained vulnerable adolescents mental well being and self-esteem were compared. The results revealed that life skills training have a significant effect on positive mental health and self esteem of vulnerable adolescents. The research emphasizes the need for life skills intervention to reach vulnerable adolescents.

May Lim et al., (2005)<sup>25</sup> tried to investigate "A one session intervention for parents of young adolescence". It was a 2 hour parenting program. The results based on self reports and observer ratings reflected a trend toward greater parental involvement among parents in experimental group compared to parents in the control group. The findings further revealed that intervention even for a brief period of 2 hours can be effective at motivating parents to change behaviour.

### **Problem and Hypotheses**

**AIM:** To find the influence of parenting training on psychological well-being and life skills of adolescents.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To establish relationship between Life-skills and Psychological wellbeing.
2. To find the relationship between mother's and father's parenting style.
3. To find the influence of parenting training (life skills) on adolescent's psychological wellbeing and life skills.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There will no relationship between Life-skills and Psychological wellbeing of adolescents.
2. There will be a significant relationship in pre test and post test scores of mother's and father's parenting style.
3. There will be a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of experimental group on psychological well-being and life skills.
4. There will be no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group on psychological well-being and life skills.
5. There will be a significant difference between the experimental and control group in pre and post test scores on psychological wellbeing and life skills.

### **Method of Investigation**

#### **Research Design**

The research design adopted for this study is 'Quasi Experimental Research Design', comprising of an experimental group that will undergo Psychological intervention and a control group that will not undergo any intervention. Pre test and post test will be administered on both the groups. The post test was done after 3 weeks of intervention. Under Quasi Experimental Research design this study undertakes "before and after with control group" design.

#### **Selection Criteria of Sample**

##### **Inclusion criteria**

Literate parents of adolescents for intervention, biological parents of adolescent students, parents of adolescents in management schools, adolescent students aged 15 – 17 years.

##### **Exclusion criteria**

Illiterate parents of adolescents, adopted parents of adolescent students, parents of adolescent students in special school and government schools.

#### **Sampling Technique**

The initial sample consisted of 100 students studying in XI std from two schools of Trichy. The age of the respondents was 15-17 years. The researcher selected every 2<sup>nd</sup> student as sample for the study. Thus simple random sampling method was used where 100 students were administered life skills assessment scale as a screening test. Those students with low scores on this test were selected for second stage of study. The selected students for the study were assigned to experimental group (n=30) and control group (n=30). The parents of these adolescent students in experimental group were given intervention, which consisted of ten core life skills modules for 6 hours.

#### **Variables**

Independent variables- Parenting training (Life skills intervention).

Dependent variable- Psychological wellbeing, Life skills development, Parent's gender.

Operational Definition of the variables

Parenting training (Life skills training) – It is teaching and training parents of adolescents to implement the core life skills in their parenting style.

Parenting style – It is a Psychological construct that represents strategies used by parents in child rearing.

Life skills – Life skills are positive behaviour and ability to adjust efficiently with the needs and challenges of everyday life.

Psychological well being – It connotes wellness physically and psychologically with an absence of mental problems.

### Tools Used For the Study

Name of the Tool	Author	Year	Variables Measured
Life skills	Rajasenan Nair, Subasree & Sunitha	2009	Life skills
Psychological well-being	Carol Ryff	1989	Psychological well-being

### Description of the Tool Used

Personal data sheet

This personal data sheet gives information about the demographic details like age, education, socio- economic status and family pattern.

### Life Skills Assessment Scale

The test is constructed by Nair, Subasree & Sunitha in the year 2009. The multidimensional life skills assessment scale consists of 78 items with a five point scale for each respondent to answer. It measures the eight core life skills. It has both positive and negative statements. The reliability coefficient on split half is 0.82, test retest reliability is 0.91 and Cronbach's alpha is 0.84.

### Scales of Psychological Well Being

The scale was developed by Ryff in the year 1989. This scale has six 14 item of psychological well being constructed to measure the dimensions of autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance, the scale consists of 84 items. The Internal consistency (alpha) coefficients for autonomy is .83 and correlation with 20 item parent scale is .97, .86 coefficient alpha for environmental mastery, correlation with 20-item parent scale is .98. For personal growth the coefficient alpha is .85 and correlation with 20-item parent scale is .97, for positive relation with others the coefficient alpha is .88 and correlation is .98 for purpose in life coefficient alpha is .88 and correlation with parent scale is .98. For self acceptance coefficient alpha is .91 correlations with parent scale is .99. The items are responded using six point format.

### Procedure for Data Collection

The principal of two schools were explained the purpose and importance of study. After obtaining permission from the principal a convenient date was fixed for collecting the data. The students were administered Life skills assessment scale as a screening test. Among them, those with low score in life skills that is score of 324 and below were selected for the second stage of study. The selected students for the study were assigned to control group (n =30) and experimental group (n = 30). The parents of experimental group were selected for intervention. They were given training in life skills.

### Ethical Considerations

The participation in the study was voluntary and participant's confidentiality was ensured. The considerations of these ethical issues were necessary for the purpose of ensuring the privacy as well as safety of the participants. Consent and confidentiality was maintained. The respondents were advised that they could withdraw from the study even during the process.

### Life Skills Intervention

The intervention module adopted for the study is from "Facilitator's manual on enhancing Life Skills" developed by Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, (RGNIYD). The module has been reviewed by experts and pilot tested by conducting training programs for adolescents. The modules used by the researcher for the present study is given below-

Session	Life skills/ Topic	Content
1	Introduction of life skills	Ice Breaker, ground rules, Introduction to Life skills.
2	Self awareness & Empathy	Activity on self esteem, Empathizing with adolescents.
3	Creative thinking & Critical thinking	Being creative, Media's effect.
4	Decision making & Problem Solving	Discussing decision making, Practice decision making & Problem solving, Setting smart goals.
5	Effective communication & Interpersonal relation	Components of communication, types, Non-verbal communication, Understanding relationship.
6	Coping with emotions & stress	Understanding emotions, Taking responsibility for our feelings, managing stress, Thinking and behaving in a positive way.
7	Conclusion , post test & feedback	Written and oral feedback

The parents of experimental group were trained for 2 hrs on weekends for a period of 3 weeks. The training took place in the school premises. The data was collected from both groups in pretest and posttest.

**Statistics**

The data collected was analyzed statistically using SPSS. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Pearson’s product moment was used to find the correlation between psychological wellbeing and life skills. Independent “t” test was used to determine the difference in pre-test and post-test between the experimental and control group.

**IV. Results**

**TABLE- 1:** Relationship between life-skills and psychological well-being

Variable	Mean	R	Significance
Life Skills	256.24	-.142	.326 NS
Psychological Well-being	170.90		

NS-Not Significant

From Table 1, it can be inferred that there is no significant relationship between Life Skills and Psychological Well-being. Hence, the null hypothesis that, “There will be no relationship between Life-skills and Psychological wellbeing of adolescents” is accepted.

**TABLE -2:** Relationship between mother’s and father’s parenting style in experimental and control group.

Variable	Group	Mean	“r” value	Sig
Mother parenting	Pre-test	44.35	.559**	.000
	Post-test	49.88		
Father parenting	Pre-test	42.07	.594**	.000
	Post-test	47.48		

P < 0.01

Table 2, denotes there is a significant relationship in pre-test and post test scores of mother’s parenting and similar relationship is found in pre and post test scores of father parenting. Thus the hypothesis that, “There will be a significant relationship in pre test and post test scores of mother’s and father’s parenting style” is accepted.

**TABLE-3:** Mean differences in pre-test and post-test of experimental group in psychological well-being and Life skills.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	“t” value	sig
Psychological well-being	Pre-test	30	158.27	12.76	-7.625**	.000
	Post-test	30	171.97	12.53		
Life skills	Pre-test	30	252.83	21.387	-7.218**	.000
	Post-test	30	268.50	21.346		

P < 0.01

From the above Table-3, it can be inferred that parenting intervention has influenced adolescent’s psychological well-being and life skills. Thus intervention given to parents has influenced psychological wellbeing and life skills of adolescents. Thus the hypothesis that, “There will be a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of experimental group on psychological well-being and life skills after intervention” is accepted.

**TABLE -4:** Mean Differences In Pre-Test And Post-Test Of Control Group In Psychological Well-Being And Life Skills.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	“t” value	Sig
Psychological well-being	Pre-test	30	172.57	22.16	-2.741**	.010
	Post-test	30	176.73	21.44		
Life skills	Pre-test	30	271.17	26.273	-3.309**	.003
	Post-test	30	275.97	26.327		

P < 0.01

The above Table – 4 indicates that, the pre and post- test scores of control group for the variables psychological well being and life skills are significant. Thus the hypothesis that, “There will be no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of control group on psychological well-being and life skills after intervention” is rejected.

**TABLE – 5:** Mean differences of experimental and control group in psychological well-being and Life skills.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	“t” value	sig
Psychological well-being	Experimental	30	-13.700	9.841	-6.760**	.000
	Control	30	-4.167	8.326		
Life-skills	Experimental	30	-15.667	11.888	6.938**	.000
	Group	30	-4.800	7.946		

P< 0.01

From the above Table -5, it can be inferred that there is a mean difference of experimental and control group in psychological well being and life skills as the result shows significance at 0.01 levels. So the hypothesis that, “There will be a significant difference between the experimental and control group in pre and post test scores on psychological wellbeing and life skills” is accepted.

### V. Discussion

Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Most parents feel adolescent years are the most difficult years of child rearing as it is in this developmental stage that individual, cognitive, social, emotional, and contextual changes come together (Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein, 2000)<sup>26</sup>, and children try to establish their own identity, enhance the skills necessary for socially responsible behaviour, experience heightened emotionality and feel emotions in a stronger and more persistent manner. Creating a smooth transition from adolescence to adulthood is a major responsibility of parents, and is the main concern of parenting adolescents.

In the current context, adolescents face a great threat to their mental health, as the rates of depression, suicide; homicide, substance abuse etc. are on the rise. Due to these invisible problems adolescents damage their self image, emotional wellbeing, lose confidence to solve problems in daily life, dropping out of school, difficulty in interpersonal relations within and outside family, academic underachievement, undermine school performance, poor social performance etc. Healthy adolescent developments are facilitated by a strong parent-child relationship that allows for disagreement while encouraging the young person to express his or her growing sense of independence. Psychological well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. Psychological well-being is, however, compromised when negative emotions are extreme or very long lasting and interfere with a person’s ability to function in his or her daily life.

In the present study, “Parenting and Psychological wellbeing of adolescents – An intervention study” the mean scores between mother’s and father’s pre-test and post-test scores are 44.35, 49.88 and 47.48, 42.02. The higher post test values of both mother and father parenting indicates that intervention on life skills given to parents had influenced their parenting style. There is a positive influence of intervention on parenting of mothers and father as the “r” value .559 and .594 positive and highly significant as the P value is less than 0.01.

The mean scores of pre and post test in experimental group for the variable “psychological well being is 158.27 and 171.97 and for life skills is 252.83 and 268.50. The increased post test mean scores can be attributed to the implementation of life skills by parents in parenting that improved adolescent’s life skills and enhanced their psychological well being.

The mean score for variables, psychological well being and life skills for control group in pre and post test shows very little variation, though the p value is significant. The significance can be attributed to the influence of weekly orientation programs in the school by student counselor. So though the value is significant the mean scores does not show high increase in pre and post test but at the same time increase in post test values cannot be overlooked. So it can be explained that the input on some positive psychology programs from the counselor has influenced and improved the control group adolescent’s life skills and psychological well being. Thus very strongly it can be said that the intervention on life skills given to parents will definitely influence their parenting style and enhance the adolescent’s life skills and psychological well being.

The mean differences between the experimental and control group for both variables psychological well being and life skills shows, there is a high score for experimental group when compared to control group mean score, it has high significance at 0.01 level. The higher scores in both variables for experimental group can be explained with the influence of intervention (life skills) given to the parents. These findings are similar to the findings of study by Chand N, Farrugia et al., (2013). Thus Psychological wellbeing and life skills are essential for promoting positive mental health and well being among adolescents.

### VI. Conclusion

Psychological well being and life skills are promoted by positive parenting. Children reared by this parenting style will be happy and confident and face challenges of life, thus will contribute to healthy well being and progress of the nation. The present study concludes that, interventions of life skills when given to parents

will influence their Parenting style and thus improve life skills of adolescents and enhance psychological well-being. The study recommends parenting programs for parents of adolescents for transforming adolescents into physically and psychologically healthy adults.

**Limitation:**

- The samples were collected from only two schools.
- The data was collected from a small sample of only 60.

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