

**COMMON PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AMONGST ADOLESCENTS AND THEIR MOTHERS AWARENESS: A SCHOOL BASED STUDY**Vandana Agrawal<sup>1</sup>, Ashwin V. Apte<sup>2</sup>, Chhaya Budhwani<sup>3</sup>**HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:**

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**ABSTRACT:** Adolescence is a period of rapid physical, emotional, mental growth and abilities. This is a period of risk-taking behavior and impulsiveness. Carefree and irresponsible behavior may lead to many problems in them. The most frequently observed problems during this period are psychological disorders like anxiety, depression, violent behavior, eating disorders, and substance abuse. A survey was done at Nalanda Public School Arera colony Bhopal. 108 adolescent girls and their respective mothers were inquired. Anxiety was the commonest disorder observed in adolescents. Mothers of 17 (11.11%) adolescents were unaware of their psychological problems. Common psychological disorders can be very well treated with cognitive behavioral therapy, relaxation techniques, family support and anti anxiety medications where ever needed.

**KEYWORDS:** Anxiety Disorder, Adolescence, Conduct disorder.

**INTRODUCTION:** Adolescence is a period of rapid physical, emotional and mental growth and abilities. This is a period of risk-taking behavior and impulsiveness. Carefree and irresponsible behavior may lead to many problems in them. The most frequently observed problems during this period are psychological disorders like Anxiety Disorder,<sup>(1)</sup> depression, violent behavior, eating disorders, and substance abuse. All these could be interlinked. Most problems of adolescence are due to failure in understanding the anatomical, morphological and psychological changes expected during adolescence. Psychologically, adolescence is such a vulnerable stage that boys / girls of this age are easily carried away by perceptions generated by misleading and misguiding friends and distant brother/sisters. Wrongful messages depicted through Modern Gadgets such as mobiles, TV serials, advertisements, films Publications carrying partially or fully false information also play great role in misleading adolescents. Every adolescent boy or girl is prone to such exposures - which ultimately are retained as perceptions in their minds to form their behavioral patterns.

Schools play a crucial and formative role in the spheres of cognitive, language, emotional, social and moral development of children.<sup>(2)</sup> Any negative feedback from school is likely to have an impact on the emotional, social and family functioning of a child.

Conduct disorder (CD) is one of the most difficult and intractable mental health problems in children and adolescents. CD involves a number of problematic behaviors, including oppositional and defiant behaviors and antisocial activities (e.g., lying, stealing, running away, physical violence, sexually coercive behaviors).<sup>(3)</sup>

Recent studies have shown that females with conduct disorder as compared with subjects without conduct disorder have similar abnormal (disrupted) brain function to that previously observed in males, who tend to have increased aggression and conduct disorder; however, more research is needed to tease out factors such as child abuse that might cause similar findings.<sup>(4)</sup> These differences may be due to genetic differences in DNA methylation,<sup>(5) (6)</sup>

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Anorexia Nervosa is a psychiatric disorder characterized by the refusal of an individual to maintain a minimum normal body weight often to the point of starvation. There are more females with anorexia nervosa having female and male ratio of 5:1.<sup>(7)</sup> The mean age of onset of symptoms and duration of symptoms is 11.2 years and 19.2 years respectively.<sup>8</sup>

### What Can Parents Do?

Parents or other caregivers who notice signs of psychological disorder in a child or adolescent should: Pay careful attention to the signs, try to understand the underlying reasons, and then try to improve the situation. If necessary, talk with a mental health or social services professional, such as a teacher, counselor, psychiatrist, or psychologist specializing in childhood and adolescent disorders. Get accurate information from libraries, hotlines, or other sources. Talk to other families in their communities. Find family network organizations.

Looking into above situation present study was conducted regarding Common psychological problems amongst adolescents and their mothers' awareness.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:** To study the common psychological problems in adolescents. To examine mother awareness about their behavioral problems To help parents recognize their childrens' undiagnosed emotional and behavioral attitude. To guide them to primary care professionals in managing psychosomatic problems where a holistic approach combining attention to physical and emotional aspects is particularly available.

**METHODOLOGY:** A survey was done at Nalanda Public School Arera colony Bhopal. Questionnaire regarding common psychological problems was given to 108 adolescent girls aged 16-18 years. Mothers of 108 adolescent girls were also given a questionnaire to examine the awareness of their problem behaviors. Analysis was then done correlating the results of both mother and daughter response to questionnaire.

### RESULTS:

	ADOLESCENTS N=108	MOTHERS N=108
WITH DISORDER	48 (44.45%)	31 (28.7 %)
WITHOUT DISORDER	60 (55.55%)	77 (71.29%)

**TABLE 1: No. of adolescents and mothers with or without disorders**

Mothers of 17(11.11%) adolescents were unaware of their psychological problems.

	CAUSES FROM ADOLESCENTS EXPLORED N=48	CAUSES FROM MOTHERS EXPLORED N=31
ANXIETY	24 (50%)	19 (61.29%)
ANOREXIA NERVOSA	12 (25 %)	8 (25.8%)
LEARNING DISABILITIES	8 (16.66%)	3 (9.67%)
DEPRESSION	2 (4.16%)	1(3.22%)
CONDUCT DISORDER	2 (4.16 %)	0 (0%)

**TABLE 2: Disorders as submitted by adolescents and mothers**

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ANXIETY was the commonest disorder observed in adolescents which was missed by few mothers. However conduct disorder was completely missed by mothers which is a serious matter.

CAUSES FROM ADOLESCENTS EXPLORED N=48	CAUSES FROM MOTHERS EXPLORED N=31
Brilliant academic achievement -12 (25%)	Working Parents – 12 (38.7%)
Excessive Competition -10 (20.8%)	Lack of communication -10 (32.2%)
Over Expectation by Parents -10 (20.8%)	Generation Gap-5 (16.1%)
Modern Gadgets such as mobiles -8 (16.6%)	Family Disputes -4 (12.9%)
Lack of Family Support -8 (16.6%)	

**TABLE 3: Causes leading to disorders**

In adolescents Brilliant academic achievement desire created abnormal behavior whereas in working parents more causes of abnormal behavior were observed.

**DISCUSSION:** Study done by Sahoo S,<sup>(1)</sup> Khess CR. Ranging from mild to extremely severe, depressive symptoms was present in 18.5% of the population, anxiety in 34.4%, and stress in 20%. Study done by Khyati Mehtalia G. K. Vankar<sup>(9)</sup> anxiety was present in 32.8% high school adolescents and was equally common in both genders. The most frequent social anxiety was related to public speaking. anxiety was associated with difficulty coping with studies, lack of Confiding relationship with family members and perception of having less number of friends. Deb Chatterjee & walsh.<sup>(10)</sup> in a study found that anxiety was prevalent in the sample with 30.1% of boys and 17.9% of girls. Adolescents with working mothers were found to be more anxious. A substantial proportion of the adolescents perceived they did not receive quality time from mothers (21.3%). A large number of them also did not feel comfortable to share their personal issues with their parents 40.0% for mothers. D.V. Venu Gopal and A. Ashok<sup>(11)</sup> conducted a study 452 adolescents (48.9%) had emotional and behavioral problems.

Raakhee A. S and Aparna N<sup>(12)</sup> in a study revealed that 36.8% of the adolescence experienced the other type of anxiety disorder and that the females were found to have high score on generalized anxiety, separation anxiety and total anxiety. The presence of anxiety disorders among the adolescents calls the attention of the parents, teachers and educationalists to take actions for the improvement of mental health of school children. Vishal Chhabra, MS Bhatia, Sahil Gupta, Pankaj Kumar, Shruti Srivastava<sup>(13)</sup> The incidence of social anxiety in this sample of the population of school going children under the age group 14-17 years was found out to be 40.3%. Pathak R, C. Sharma R, U C Parvan et al<sup>(14)</sup> in a study found the prevalence of behavioural and emotional problems in adolescents to be 30%, with girls exceeding boys in all age groups. Rajesh Kumar, Shankar Prinja, P V M Lakshmi<sup>(15)</sup> reported adolescents having some health problem predominantly (60%) problems were psychological and behavioural in nature. To resolve these problems boys consulted mainly friends/peers (48%) while girls consulted their mothers (63%). Gordon T. Harold and Rand D. Conger<sup>(16)</sup> in a study found both parent hostility and adolescent awareness of the frequency of marital conflicts were significantly related to adolescent perceptions of parent hostility. When controlled for earlier distress, adolescent report of parent hostility significantly predicted the later internalizing and externalizing symptoms of these teenagers.

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**CONCLUSION:** Mother/adolescent communication is related inversely and significantly to adolescent behavioral problems. Mothers of 17(11.11%) adolescents were unaware of their psychological problems. Parents, schools and the community at large share the responsibility of harnessing an adolescent's potential for the betterment of self and society. If any of these unusual symptoms noticed which is repetitive and progressive should seek medical and psychological help. Common psychological disorders can be very well treated with cognitive behavioral therapy, relaxation techniques, family support and anti anxiety medications where ever needed.

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