Parental Attitudes of Female Students toward Child-Parent Interactional Behavior

Kh. Tavakol*, H. Naji**, N. Saberi***

Abstract

BACKGROUND: Bringing up children is one of the most complicated responsibilities an adult experience in his/her life. However, most people are not completely prepared to become a parent. Current study was carried out to analyze the attitude of participants toward becoming parent.

METHODS: This is a descriptive study in which questionnaire 1-1-PI which is consisted of 32 items was used. Sampling method was stratified random sampling. 400 questionnaires were distributed among participants and the data was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods.

RESULTS: Findings demonstrated that 116 cases (31 percents) scored 0-64 and 63 cases (17 percents) scored 65-95 and 192 cases (52 percents) scored 97-160. These scores were respectively considered positive, neutral and negative overall attitude toward parenting.

CONCLUSIONS: Some parents considerably lack fundamental parenthood skills. They are unaware of their children’s needs, capabilities and potentials. A solution could be planning to improve (future) parents’ awareness of children’s development.

KEY WORDS: Parental attitude, children, parents’ behavior

Bringing up children is one of the most complicated responsibilities an adult experience in his/her life. However, most people are not completely prepared to become father or mother (1). Parents serve as the first models for their children. Everybody discovers the image of manhood and womanhood in his parents for the first time. Therefore, degrees of wellbeing of parents would affect children. In addition, it is important who the parents introduce as ideal model. Some parents considerably lack fundamental parenthood skills as they are unaware of their children’s needs, capabilities and potentials in accordance with their developmental stage (2). Some parents are under stress or affected by emotional stresses which prevents them from being good parents. Campbell believes that some parents are not aware of parental skills and more importantly, of elements necessary for emotional development of children (3). Children learn aggressive behaviors by observing and imitating and parents as the first model for children are sometimes aggressive (2). Violent behaviors are results of interaction of biological, psychological and sociological processes (4).

Cultural environment including attitudes toward disrespect, corporal punishments and nurturing are also predisposing factors for child neglect (5). Children learn aggression as they observe the father controls other members of the family with violent behavior. Physicians, nurses and medical care staff have three critical duties of discovering, reporting and preventing misbehaviors. They primarily,
should detect what is defined as misbehavior to be able to encourage preventive plans \(^2\). It is supposed that behavioral problems should be modified using behavior therapy methods. To do so, prevention should be based on raising the awareness of parents about growth and development of children and parents’ expectations.

Issuing instructions on children-parents relationship and training children is necessary \(^5\). Important aspects of children-parents relationships are evaluation of knowledge and attitude of parents toward parental role, their perception toward children treating, assessment of their feelings and reactions to stresses, their interaction with children and finally attachment of children to parents \(^6\). It is apparent that regarding the importance of the problem, prevention should be started as soon as possible. To do this, authorities have opportunities to teach parents the parental skills.

Also, parents could be thought a series of skills of disciplining children without causing any physical or psychological harm. The aim of current study was to assess the attitude of participants toward parenthood.

**Methods**

It is a descriptive study in which questionnaire 1-1-PI with 32 items was used to gather data. Sampling method was stratifying as primarily a list of all-girl high schools in Falavarjan, Isfahan was prepared and then cases were randomly and evenly selected.

The research was carried out in Falavarjan all-girl high schools. As there were little cultural differences at the target population and the cases were easily accessible, it was ideal for the study. The study was carried out in the school year 1378-79. Inclusion criteria were being first, second or third grade of high school or pre-university girl which meets the characteristics of the study. Basic variable was parental attitude toward child-parent interactional behaviors. 371 cases were selected according to the sampling method. Participants filled a questionnaire of 32 items on likert scale. Finally the data was analyzed using descriptive analysis method of relative frequency.

**Results**

Our findings about physical punishment demonstrated that twenty percents of cases were marked 0-16 points which is categorized as negative attitude. Sixty nine and eleven percents marked 25-40 and 17-24 points which were classified as positive and neutral attitudes, respectively.

Also, results on attachment of parents with children showed that thirty two, fifty one and seventeen percents scored 0-16, 26-40 and 17-25, respectively. The scores were respectively considered as negative, positive and neutral attitude.

Regarding the expectation of parents from their children, forty and forty one percents got 0-16 and 25-40 points, regarded as negative and positive attitude, respectively. In addition, attitude of participants of the study toward role displacement were positive in forty one percents, negative in thirty seven and neutral in twenty two percents.

The overall attitude toward parenting was negative in thirty one percents, positive in fifty two percents and neutral in seventeen percents.

**Discussion**

Results demonstrated that ill-behaved families have different attitudes toward children’s development. They have unreasonable expectations from their children which are beyond their potentials. This would affect exercising discipline and punishment \(^5\). Also, ill-behaved parents are not aware of the normal developmental expectations \(^7\). Marshall in a study showed that attitude toward coherency was poor in 3.8 percents of 508 studied students. In these cases intervention to correct the attitude was needed \(^8\). Dolz believes that ill-behaved parents have less interactional sensitivity and coherency behaviors. This would lead to less friendly behaviors between the child and ill-behaved parent \(^9\). Parsa considered that emotional misbehaviors could be expectations that
are unreasonable or beyond the capabilities of the children (10). It seems that ill-behaved parents have mistaken ideas about children-parents relationship also they have inappropriate responses to their children’s behaviors, comparing other parents.

It is recommended to train fundamental parental skills to future parents to have good knowledge of needs and potentialities of children.

References