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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### GENDER BASED COMPARISON OF ADOLESCENTS IN REFERENCE TO COMMUNICATION RELATED CONFLICT BETWEEN PARENTS AND ADOLESCENTS

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#### ABSTRACT

Adolescence is viewed as a period of transformation and reorganization in family relationships (Steinberg 1991). In the adolescents year adolescents' faced many challenges, like physical, psychological, social etc. parents- adolescents conflict is one of them. Conflict between parent and adolescent is an opportunity to communicate. Parent-child conflict during adolescence is characterized as a dyadic, interpersonal event involving overt behavioral opposition including quarrels, disagreements, and arguments (Shantz, 1987). The present study aims at assessing the gender difference on communication related parents- adolescents conflict in upper socio- economic group. The study was conducted in Allahabad city. A total sample of 300 adolescents comprising of 100 adolescents each (50 boys and 50 girls) from lower, middle and upper socio economic groups. Sample was selected using stratified random sampling technique for the study. Socio- economic status scale by Kuppuswamy (1962) revised by Kumar and Tiwari (2014) was used to ascertain the socio economic status of the selected respondents. To find out the gender based comparison of adolescents in reference to communication related conflict between parents and adolescents. Self made questionnaire was administered on the selected adolescents in the age group of 13- 19 years. The study revealed that the mean score of boys were higher than girls thus boys were found to have significantly more conflict with their parents on issues related to communication than the girls counterparts of upper, middle and lower socio- economic groups.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is one of the risky phases of life by cause of magnitude and complexity of changes that occur. Adolescents in this stage become aware of their rapidly changing bodies and start to worry about their physical appearance. They might experience shyness, blushing, modesty, and a greater interest in privacy. Development of their self-concept refers to a set of opinions, abilities, and thoughts by which they categorize their selves. For adolescents, their self-concept begins being much more complex and concrete than it was when they were children. Adolescence is a period of increasing independence from the family, in which the pressure of intergenerational disagreements over primary morals, norms, and behaviors is common in form of parents and adolescents conflict over such issues. Parents influence a child's ethical and pro-social progress in many ways. Such as, providing information about attractive ways to behave, direct modeling of pro-social behavior, encouraging and directing proper behavior etc. In the adolescent age family conflict is a common problem. Conflict is a term broadly conceptualized and defined as a disagreement between individuals or groups of individuals (e.g., Hall, 1987).

Steinberg (2001) When children go through puberty, there is often a significant increase in parent-child conflict and a less cohesive familial bond. Arguments often concern minor issues of control, such as curfew, acceptable clothing, and the adolescent's right to privacy which adolescents may have previously viewed as issues over which their parents had complete authority. Between parent and adolescent, there is usually more verbal conflict than was true during the childhood years as the developmental forces of separation, opposition and differentiation cause a healthy young person to push for more individuality and independence, and cause healthy parents to restrain this push in the interests of safety and responsibility. Now it seems to be an endless number of disagreements about requests to be satisfied, freedoms to be allowed, information to be reported, support to be provided, habits to be formed, responsibilities to be taken, work to be done, time to be spent, activities to be pursued, and so forth. Some common cause of communication related parents-adolescents conflict. Separation from parents is the process of pulling away from parent and family to create one's own independence in home and outside the home. So now there are more conflicts over the young person's demand of reduced involvement of family in his \ her endeavors. Opposition is the

process of actively and passively challenging parental authority in an effort to become more self-determined. During adolescence there are more conflicts over arguing with parental demands over delaying in response to parental requests and over disobeying parental rules. In the many situations adolescents do not like to take responsibility and tend to blame other's rather than looking at our own roles and responsibilities. Parents orenerally struggle with adolescents in instilling good habits and uprooting the bad habits, which generally is reason for continuous friction between parents and adolescents. Parents generally think that adolescents fail to utilize their time properly and waste a lot of time, therefore parents have a lot of suggestions for the utilization of adolescents time which then raises friction. During adolescence, teens struggle to separate from their parents and in establishing their own identities, and becoming more independent. Parents give the basic guideline of safety to their adolescents. Which adolescents don't appreciate at this age. Conflicts commonly arise, for example, when the teenager's "I want" confronts the parents' "You can't," or when the parent's "You must" confronts the teenager's "I won't." One of the most important skills in communication is listening. If a person feels properly listened to, they feel understood and less alone because someone has taken the time to care. Take time to listen to your parents, and ask them to listen to what you are saying. Try to have conversations at a good time, when everyone is calm and relaxed. It is not OK for young people to be abusive to parents. Being abusive won't convince them you are right - it is more likely to have the opposite effect. As you move through adolescence and into young adulthood, your relationships with your parents seem to get better. Parents can be some of your best supports, supporting young people through the good times and the bad. Positive relationships are important for good health. If you have supportive, loving relationships you are more likely to feel happy and satisfied with your life.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Exploratory research design was adopted for the present study and cross sectional survey method was used for collecting the data. A total of 300 adolescents in the age group of 13- 19 years, comprising of 100 adolescents each (50 boys and 50 girls) from lower, middle and upper socio economic groups respectively were selected using stratified random sampling technique from different schools of Allahabad city. Kuppuswamy (1962) Socio Economic Status Scale revised by Kumar and Tiwari (2014) was used to ascertain the socioeconomic status of the sample and a Self made questionnaire on parents – adolescents conflict was used to assess the gender based comparison of adolescents in reference to communication related conflict between parents and adolescents

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 represent the distribution of the adolescents belonging to the upper socio economic group in reference to their conflict with their parents on issues related to communication. The distribution of boy adolescents across five opinion categories about conflict reflect a very contradictory picture where 34 per cent boys never have any conflict with their parents and 22 percent boys are mostly in conflict with their parents. 18 per cent boys rarely have conflicts. 14 per cent often get into

conflicts whereas 12 per cent boys are not sure about their feelings regarding getting into conflict with their parents. In case of girl adolescents a significant, 44 per cent of them never get into conflict with their parents, 28 per cent rarely get into conflict, 10 per cent often get into conflict, 6 per cent have frequent conflict, whereas, 12 per cent are not sure about it. Results clearly show that little less than half majority of girls as well as boys feel that they do not come across any conflicting situation with their parents in reference to the communication issues, which means that their parents not only grant them liberty but do not oppose their decisions, adolescents have good time management, they follow their parents instructions and they also have developed good habits and parent understand their adolescents' needs and they give adolescents freedom for taking their own decisions which are supported by the parents . Whereas, more than half or majority adolescents have conflicts with their parents in varied degrees from mostly falling into conflicts to not being sure that whether the discussions they have with their parents can be called conflicts or not. Which indicates that now a days adolescents do get into frequent conflicting situations with their parents and the contributing reasons for such conditions are mainly adolescents increasing interest on mobile phones, internet surfing, too much involvement in socialization networking desire to get complete independence from the parents specially regarding the use of gadgets and routine which leads of lots of confusion and conflicts between the parents and their adolescents. Collins (1997) and Fuligni (1998) find that adolescents develop a desire for autonomy, which creates discrepancies in the parent-child relationships and can lead to increased conflicts.

**Table 1. Distribution of adolescents in reference to the conflicts on communication related issues between parents and adolescents in the upper socio economic group**

S.No.	Categories	Boys (N = 50)		Girls (N = 50)	
		(F)	(P)	(F)	(P)
1.	Mostly	11	22	3	6
2.	Often	7	14	5	10
3.	Not sure	6	12	6	12
4.	Rarely	9	18	14	28
5.	Never	17	34	22	44

F= frequency; P = percentage

**Table 2. Distribution of adolescents in reference to the conflicts on communication related issues between parents and adolescents in the middle socio economic group**

S.No.	Categories	Boys (N = 50)		Girls (N = 50)	
		(F)	(P)	(F)	(P)
1.	Mostly	11	22	8	16
2.	Often	8	16	7	14
3.	Not sure	6	12	5	10
4.	Rarely	8	16	14	28
5.	Never	17	34	16	32

F= frequency; P = percentage

Table 2 represents the distribution of the adolescents belonging to middle socio income group in reference to their conflict with their parents on communication related issues. The distribution of boy adolescents across five opinion categories reflecting intensity of conflict shows a picture where thirty four per cent boys are never in conflict with their parents and 22 per cent boys are mostly in conflict with their parents. 16 per cent boys rarely have conflicts, whereas 12 per cent often get into conflicts and another 12 per cent boys are not sure about their feelings regarding getting into conflict with their parents. In

case of girl adolescents a fairly good, 32 per cent of them never get in conflict with their parents on issues related to communication, 28 per cent rarely get into conflict, 14 per cent often get into conflicts, 16 per cent have frequent conflicts, whereas, 10 per cent are not sure about it. Results clearly show that a good per cent of girls and boys both feel that they do not come across any conflicting situation with their parents in reference to the communication related issues, which means that their parents not only grant them liberty parent and adolescent have good communication with their parents, adolescents discuss about their needs like; in the adolescent years adolescents' demand separation from their parents, they are interested in developing their own views, they want to solve their own problems, and the parents are giving the freedom to explore and learn about the world, solve their problems develop their insight. Parents also believe their adolescents. Whereas, more than 50 per cent of adolescents have conflicts with their parents. Between parent and adolescent, there is usually more verbal conflict now than was true during the childhood years as the developmental forces of separation, opposition, and differentiation cause a healthy young person to push for more individuality and independence, and cause parents to restrain this push in the interests of safety and responsibility Collins and Laursen, (2004). Also found that teenage adolescents mostly want separation from their parents, freedom for their work, opposition of parental decision, whereas and the parents want their adolescents, to have good time management, develop good habits, to take their responsibilities. Bickering and squabbling over everyday issues such as chores and responsibilities, household rules, school, autonomy, privileges, and standards of behavior are commonplace for parents and their adolescents, especially during early adolescence.

**Table 3. Distribution of adolescents in reference to the conflicts on communication related issues between parents and adolescents in the lower socio economic group**

S.No.	Categories	Boys (N = 50)		Girls (N = 50)	
		(F)	(P)	(F)	(P)
1.	Mostly	19	38	8	16
2.	Often	7	14	8	16
3.	Not sure	5	10	3	6
4.	Rarely	7	14	12	24
5.	Never	12	24	19	38

F= frequency; P = percentage

Table 3 represents the distribution of the adolescents belonging to lower socio economic group in reference to their conflict with their parents on communication related issue. The distribution of boy adolescents across five opinion categories about conflict reflect a very contradictory picture where 24 per cent boys are never in conflict with their parents and 38 per cent boys are mostly in conflict with their parents. 14 per cent boys rarely have conflicts. Another 14 per cent often get into conflicts whereas 10 per cent boys are not sure about their feelings regarding getting into conflict with their parents. In case of girl adolescents a fairly good, 38 per cent of them never get in conflict with their parents on issues related to communication, 24 per cent rarely get into conflict, 16 per cent often get into conflicts, another 16 per cent have frequent conflicts, whereas, 6 per cent are not sure about it. Results clearly show that good percentage of girls and boys both feel that they do not come across any conflicting situation with their parents in communication related issues, which means that their parents not only grant them liberty for their opinions,

thoughts and independence but also respect their identities and believe in them as a responsible person. But those adolescents who get involved in conflicts with their parents, which reflect that their parents adolescents conflict related communication issues, mostly parents are not understand their adolescents' needs for freedom, independence, changed way of talking and way of living etc. Mostly parents and adolescents get involved in conflicts in day to day activities shouldering of responsibilities and developing good habits. As a result, increasing disagreements some time decreases their emotional bonding as well. Shearman and Dumlao (2008) also reported that communication and conflict between young adults and their parents often involves renegotiating rules, roles and relationships concerning day-to-day issues like activities, friends, responsibilities, and school Bradley and Corwyn, (2002). Also support that Lower family socioeconomic status (SES) is associated with harsher discipline practices, less parent-child communication, and greater parent- adolescents conflict.

**Table 4. Gender based comparison of adolescents in reference to communication related conflict between parents and adolescents**

Socio-economic group	Gender	Mean	S.D.	t- score	
		N= 50	N= 50	t cal	t tab
Upper socio-economic group	Boys	37.68	3.04	13.40*	1.98
	Girls	28.92	3.49		
Middle socio-economic group	Boys	39.88	2.84	6.821*	
	Girls	35.76	3.19		
Lower socio-economic group	Boys	45.54	2.11	17.6778*	
	Girls	36.02	3.17		

\*significant =  $p < 0.05$  level

Table 4 shows comparison in the level of conflict between to adolescent boys and girls in reference communication related parents and adolescents across upper, middle and lower socio-economic groups. Result indicates issues across socio economic groups in the upper socio-economic group boys scored higher mean (37.68) in communication related conflict with parents than the mean scores (28.92) of adolescent girls of the same socio-economic group. Further test of significance shows that the t- calculated is more than the t-tabulated, which means that there is significant difference (13.40 \*at .05 level) between the conflict level of boys and girls in reference to the communication. Because the mean score of boys were higher than girls thus boys were found to have significantly more conflict with their parents on issues related to communication than their girl counterparts. Boys of the middle socio-economic group also scored more in communication related conflict (39.88) with parents, than the mean (35.76) scores of adolescent girls. Compression of mean scores revealed that the t- calculated is more than the t- tabulated hence there was a significant difference (6.821 at 5% probability level) found between boys and girls regarding communication related conflict between parent and their adolescents. Same was the case, in the lower socio-economic group, adolescent boys were observed with higher mean scores (45.54) than the mean scores (36.02) of adolescent girls in reference to communication relates conflict with parents. Compression of mean scores showed that the t -calculated was more than the t -tabulated so there also was a significant difference (17.6778\* at 5% level) observed between the level of conflict of boys and girls with their parents. Where boys were found to have significantly more conflict in comparison to the girls. It means adolescent boys of upper, middle and lower socio-economic groups were observed to have significantly more communication related conflict with parents than adolescent girls. It could be because

adolescent girls are less argumentative than boys and girls are more docile and adjustable than boys. Girls understand their family's needs, their responsibilities, and in most cases they also have the ability for good time management, they follow their parents instructions without questioning them whereas, boys do not follow their parent instructions and guides they would rather oppose their parents, these are in most cases irresponsible. Therefore, get into communication related conflict with their parents Renk *et al.* (2005). Reported during adolescence conflicts over matters such as responsibilities, privileges, and relationships are indicative of adolescents' desire for increased autonomy and independence from their parents.

### Conclusion

It can be concluded from the present study that is adolescent boys were considerably greater than adolescent girls which were significantly different (0.5 per cent probability level) was found between gender (adolescent boys and adolescent girls) and socio – economic groups (upper, middle, lower socio-economic group) of communication related parents adolescents conflict. It can be inferred that adolescent boys were frequently conflict with their parent because they were not shared and discussed their problem, thoughts, and opinion with their parents. If they were discussed about conflicting issues, defiantly frequencies of conflict were decrease.

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