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**CHALLENGES IN PARENTING AND RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
NEEDED FOR AN EFFECTIVE PARENTING: AN EXPLORATORY
STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

"We can improve our relationships with others by leaps and bounds if we become encouraged instead of critics." - Joyce Meyer

Relationship skills are a set of skills which are very much helpful to build healthy, happy and strong connections. These skills help to build happy and deep connections easily. A strong connection or bond can be developed which can enable an individual to secure base and engage in activities with the people who are actually required to care about. Through social and emotional life skills, relationship skills can be nurtured.

Life Skills are essential 21st century skills, use to deal with daily life situations, make important decisions, and enhance the quality of life. These skills support an individual to establish healthy relationship, empathize others, connecting emotionally and socially with other members of the society.

Parents of 21st century face lots of issues and challenges while parenting their children. The parents of adolescent kids face more challenges as this period is the 'period of stress, storm and strife,' according of Stanley Hall. The changing dynamics of society, hormonal changes and transitional insecurities make them confused, vulnerable and unpredictable. They needed to handled with compassion, empathy and friendly attitude by their parents. An array of parenting styles are needed to be amalgamated to handle them efficiently and effectively. Knowledge of SEE Learning which prominently reflect in relationship skills can be incorporated by the parents in their parenting styles to make it effective and productive. SEE Learning provides knowledge on how to foster the development of social, emotional and ethical intelligence in an individual. This knowledge is very much essential to healthy parenting. A healthy parenting paves the younger generation in healthy living with better adaptation in society.

An exploratory study has been taken up in the present research work by the researcher to find out the challenges faced by the parents of adolescents. A semi structured interview questionnaire has been structured and face validation conducted. Data were collected from 9 pairs of parents. Purposive sampling was employed. Gender differences were analysed qualitatively. It has been observed that generally cognitive life skills are used by parents to handle their kids to cater their challenges. Suggestions have been provided on usage of



relationship skills in parenting. The study would be significant as it shall give a direction for further research studies in this relatively unexplored problem area.

KEYWORDS: Life Skills, Relationship Skills, Parenting Style, Adolescents, Emotional Intelligence.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent period of a life is full of challenges and opportunities. Adolescents are the huge human resources of any country. Channelizing these huge human resources is very important for the growth and development of the society.

Parents play a major role in nurturing and moulding of a human life. Effective parenting plays a supportive and fostering role in growth and development of an individual. The parents of 21st century faces a lot of challenges in parenting.

Life skills are the important skills which are essentially required to adjust, adapt and thrive effectively in societal life. The adolescents require the support and nourishment of effective parenting. Inculcation of life skills in day to day life of the adolescents by the parents can help the parents to overcome the challenges of parenting as well as challenges faced by the adolescents.

PARENTING

Parenting is a process that prepares your child for independence. As your child grows and develops, there are many things you can do to help your child.

EFFECTIVE PARENTING

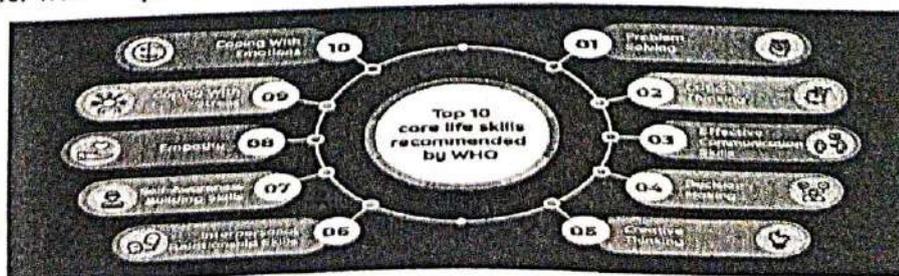
Effective parenting is defined as the ability to interact and engage with children in such a way that they learn and grow into remarkable adults. Parent needs to take daily effort to connect with children on a meaningful and personal level.

PARENTING STYLE

Parenting style is a psychological concept that refers to a set of attitude which influence the overall growth and development of a child. There are four parenting styles viz. authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and uninvolved. Authoritative parenting style is the most conducive parenting style which provides positive nurturing environment. Authoritarian is the strict parenting style while uninvolved is the harmful one. The blend of authoritative and permissive is the desirable one to deal with adolescent child.

LIFE SKILLS

Life skills are an array of skills which supports an individual to thrive and adapt effectively in the life. WHO has provided ten core life skills





RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

Relationship skills supports to develop mutually healthy and productive relationships. Major life skills involved in developing healthy and productive relationship are: communication, empathy, assertive skills, self advocacy and conflict resolution.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions of own self and others and use it rationally. The major skills involved in Emotional Intelligence are: motivation, self-regulation, empathy and social skills. Self regulation is the outcome of one of the major skills, self-awareness.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Adolescence is the period of a life span where an individual faces lot of challenges. A change in socioeconomic dynamics after covid is having a huge impact in psychological behaviour of this group of individual. Parents are facing challenges in parenting due to this situation. Effective parenting which nurture emotional intelligence through practical skills can cater to this problem in a great deal. The present study is aiming to understand the challenges faced by the parents in parenting and suggesting them for life skills to be taught to enhance emotional intelligence.

REVIEW ON RELATED LITERATURE

Y. Sridevi (2015) reveals that, Life skills are skills which help to deal with real and present threats that confront a person's life. Life skills help youth strengthen their development and contribute to the motivation and skills to develop and maintain positive behavior. The researcher also suggested that the school children and the adolescents should be encouraged to in house hold activities to strengthen their life skills.

Prajapati Ravindra, Bosky Sharma and Sharma Dharmendra (2017) revealed that Life skills education, have found to be an effective psychosocial intervention strategy for promoting positive social and mental health of adolescents. They also emphasized that, the Life skills education plays an important and major role in all dimensions of human development as strengthening coping strategies and developing self-confidence and emotional intelligence as well as enhancing critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills.

Irannezhad Sedighe (2017) studied on, 'Effectiveness of life-skills training on the mental health of 2nd grade female High School students in Bam-Iran,' used a quasi-experimental research method (pretest, post-test with control group design), found that training has improved the mental health of female students in 2nd grade of high school with significant effect on self-esteem and general health.

Kakavandi Khalil *et al* (2017) worked on, 'The effectiveness of life skills training on the quality of life of mothers of children with hearing impairment', used a quasi-experimental research method (pretest, post-test with control group design), found that the mean quality of life in dimensions of physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environmental health increased in the experimental group. The intervention on life skills training increased physical activity and physical health and reduced physical pain in the experimental group. It was also found that LST reduced psychological problems and improved psychological health of participants. Hence the researchers inferred that LST is effective in improving the quality of life of mothers who have children with hearing impairment.



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OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the challenges faced by the parents of an adolescent in parenting.
2. To understand the differences in facing the challenges by the mother and the father.
3. To compare the challenges faced the parents with reference to gender.
4. To understand the differences in handling the challenges by the mother and the father.
5. To find out the life skills practiced by the parents while handling the challenges of parenting.
6. To provide them suggestions for better parenting.

TOOL OF THE STUDY

A semi structured interview questionnaire has been structured and face validation conducted. Total 22 questions were framed for the interview session. The questions for the parents were framed based on assumed expected challenges. The assumed expected challenges are as follows:

1. Lack of self confidence, self awareness and self esteem
2. Friends are considered more important
3. Advice is considered as criticism
4. Generation gap
5. Technology interrupts the conversation
6. Mental instability (mood swings)
7. Changes in the family as institution
8. Relationship problems
9. Rebellious behaviour

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLING

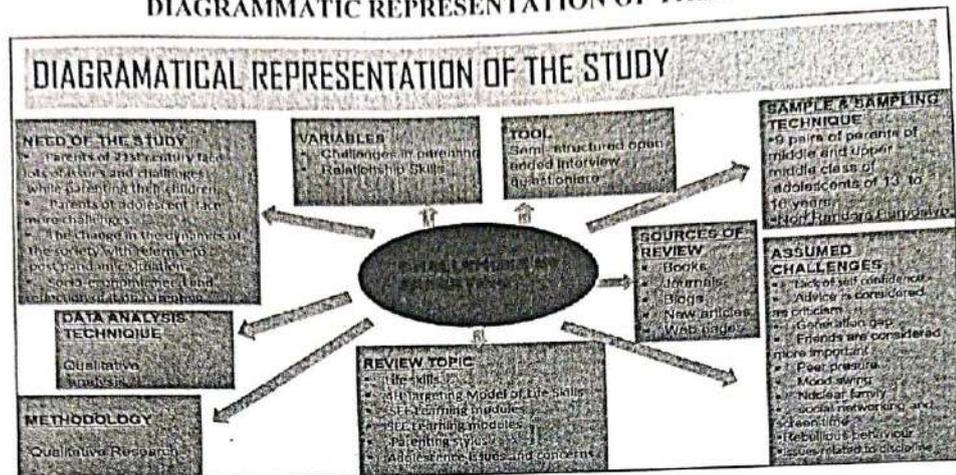
Data were collected from 9 pairs of parents through interview. Purposive sampling was employed.

DATA ANALYSIS

Collected raw data is tabulated as per the area of expected challenges in qualitative method of data analysis of data reduction.



DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE STUDY



FINDINGS

- Girls are easy to handle and easy to deal in parenting.
- Technology is a challenge of course, but manageable more with the girls than the boy. The boy was addicted to online games and require to restrict the browsing time. Girls are glued to Instagram reels
- All the four kids are not under peer pressure and do not give much priority to the words of friends.
- Advises of parents are taken constructively.
- Mothers don't find generation gap where the fathers do find it as a challenge in parenting.
- Parents found the zeal, etiquette and discipline these areas need to pay attention and it's a challenge to inculcate these qualities in their kids.
- Children do not open up to their father in sharing their emotion and feeling.
- Among the 9 of the children, 4 girls are better in the position with regards to self confidence and awareness than the 5 boys. The boys still is in need of guidance.
- For all of them professional life hampers a bit in the parenting, but try to compensate by spending a quality time with kids. Fathers most of them talked about going out for a movie or dinner or outing. Mothers mentioned about talking to the kids and sharing we time.
- Fathers who are in business and corporate, find it difficult even to spend quality time with their kids and hence they are not able to connect to their kids. they are majorly relying upon their spouse for parenting
- All the parents put their consent that nuclear family is a disadvantage in parenting accept two families.



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- For all of them mood swing is an obvious situation for being in adolescent, but parents handle it sensibly and kids are also sensible and manageable with their behavioral outcome.
- Fathers are not comfortable to talk about sexuality and sexual health and hygiene whereas mothers provide the guidance although 4 of them are not that much free to discuss.
- Working mothers are try to maintain balance and hence the professional life is not hampering the parenting. Other one is a home maker so she gets opportunity to provide full attention.
- All the kids are guided and helped by their parents to face the challenges of the life, parents provide real life examples and examples of own.
- None of them having any relationship or break up issues.
- Working mothers are try to maintain balance and hence the professional life won't hamper the parenting. Other one is a home maker so she gets opportunity to provide full attention.
- All the kids are guided and helped by their parents to face the challenges of the life, parents provide real life examples and examples of own.
- None of them having any relationship or break up issues.
- Parents are using the required life skills in a blend and harmonically.
- They are using required life skills (thinking, social and emotional, prescribed by WHO) to handle the challenges.
- Thinking skills and social skills are majorly used. Mothers are sound in interpersonal skills than fathers.
- Hence the challenges that they are facing are well managed by them.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The skills which are in practice should be continued with.
- Assertive skills can be used where they are required, specifically when discipline, etiquette and moral values are concerned.
- Resilience enhancing skills can be practiced which will enhance the self awareness and self confidence.
- Yoga, mindful meditation and other mindful activities can be make into practice for the well being and to enhance coping skills.
- Parents are suggested to enhance emotional intelligence by nurturing relationship life skills.

The diagrammatic representation of suggestions to enhance emotional intelligence by nurturing relationship life skills.



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APPENDICES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENT

TOPIC: CHALLENGES OF PARENTING AND LIFE SKILLS NEEDS FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING.

PERSONAL DATA

NAME OF THE PARENT:	
AGE:	
GENDER:	
OCCUPATION:	
MEMBERS IN THE FAMILY AND RELATIONS:	
ECONOMIC STATUS:	

