



Influence of Educational Level of Parents on the Psychological Well-Being of Adolescents

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Abstract: The family serves as the primary environment for the growth and development of adolescents. Among various family-related factors, the educational level of parents plays a crucial role in shaping the psychological health of children. Educated parents are generally more aware of developmental needs, effective parenting practices, and the importance of emotional support and guidance. The present study aimed to investigate the influence of parental educational level on the psychological well-being of adolescents.

A sample of 120 adolescents studying in Classes XI and XII was selected from junior colleges in Nagpur city. The participants were categorized into three groups based on the educational level of their parents: low educational level, moderate educational level, and high educational level. Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Carol Ryff was administered to assess the psychological well-being of the participants. Means, Standard Deviations, and One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed for data analysis.

The findings revealed significant differences in psychological well-being among adolescents belonging to different parental educational backgrounds. Adolescents whose parents possessed higher educational qualifications exhibited significantly better psychological well-being compared to those whose parents had lower educational attainment. The study highlights the importance of parental education in fostering healthy psychological development and positive mental health among adolescents.

Keywords: Psychological Well-Being, Parental Education, Adolescents, Mental Health, Family Environment

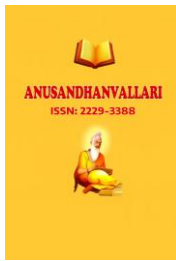
Introduction

Psychological Well-Being (PWB) has emerged as one of the most important indicators of positive mental health and optimal human functioning. Contemporary psychology emphasizes that well-being extends beyond the absence of psychological disorders and includes positive psychological functioning, self-realization, meaningful relationships, personal growth, and life satisfaction. Carol Ryff (1989) conceptualized psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct consisting of six components namely Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance.

Adolescence represents a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood characterized by rapid biological, cognitive, emotional, and social changes. During this stage, adolescents strive to establish their identity, develop self-confidence, form social relationships, and prepare for future responsibilities. Their success in navigating these developmental tasks significantly influences their psychological well-being.

Among the various factors affecting adolescent well-being, family environment occupies a central position. The family serves as the first institution of socialization and significantly influences children's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development. Parents play a critical role in shaping attitudes, aspirations, coping strategies, and self-perceptions of adolescents.

Parental education is one of the most significant indicators of family background. Educational attainment equips parents with knowledge, awareness, communication skills, and effective child-rearing practices. Educated parents



are more likely to provide intellectually stimulating environments, encourage independent thinking, support academic achievement, and foster positive emotional development.

Higher parental education often leads to greater awareness regarding mental health, educational opportunities, and developmental needs of children. Such parents tend to adopt democratic parenting styles, maintain effective communication, and provide emotional security. Consequently, adolescents raised by highly educated parents may experience better psychological adjustment and well-being.

In contrast, lower levels of parental education may restrict access to educational resources, limit awareness regarding adolescent developmental needs, and affect the quality of parent-child interactions. These factors may indirectly influence the psychological health of adolescents.

Numerous studies have reported that parental educational attainment significantly affects children's academic achievement, self-esteem, social adjustment, and mental health. However, relatively fewer studies have focused specifically on its influence on psychological well-being among adolescents in the Indian context.

The present study attempts to examine the influence of educational level of parents on the psychological well-being of adolescents and seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on positive youth development.

Review of Related Literature

Ryff (1989) proposed a multidimensional model of psychological well-being comprising autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.

Ryff and Keyes (1995) established the validity and reliability of the psychological well-being model and emphasized its importance in understanding positive mental health.

Eccles and Harold (1996) reported that parental educational attainment positively influences children's academic and psychological adjustment.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) found that parental educational background significantly contributes to children's cognitive and emotional development.

Jadhav and Havalappanavar (2009) observed that demographic variables significantly influence psychological well-being among college students.

Sharma and Kaur (2014) reported that family-related variables play an important role in adolescent well-being.

Singh and Gupta (2015) found that supportive family environments significantly contribute to psychological well-being among adolescents.

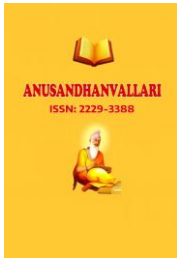
Pandey and Srivastava (2016) reported that parental educational status influences emotional adjustment and positive mental health among Indian youth.

Sharma et al. (2021) found that adolescents receiving greater parental support and guidance demonstrated higher psychological well-being.

The literature indicates that parental education serves as an important determinant of adolescent development and psychological functioning.

Aim of the Study

The main aim of the study was to examine the influence of educational level of parents on the psychological well-being of adolescents.



Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the psychological well-being of adolescents.
2. To classify adolescents according to parental educational level.
3. To compare psychological well-being among adolescents belonging to different parental educational groups.
4. To determine whether parental educational level significantly influences psychological well-being.

Hypothesis

Assuming that all other factors remain constant, it was hypothesized that:

Adolescents belonging to families with highly educated parents will exhibit significantly better psychological well-being than adolescents belonging to families with moderately educated or less educated parents.

Sample

The sample consisted of 120 adolescents studying in Classes XI and XII from various junior colleges in Nagpur city.

The participants were classified into three groups:

Group	Educational Level of Parents	N
Group I	Up to Secondary Education	40
Group II	Higher Secondary to Graduate	40
Group III	Postgraduate and Above	40

Age range of participants was 16 to 19 years.

Tools Used for Data Collection

Psychological Well-Being Scale

The Psychological Well-Being Scale developed by Carol Ryff (1989) was used.

The scale measures six dimensions:

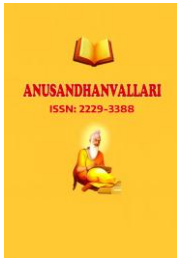
- * Autonomy
- * Environmental Mastery
- * Personal Growth
- * Positive Relations with Others
- * Purpose in Life
- * Self-Acceptance

The scale possesses satisfactory reliability and validity and has been widely used in psychological research.

Statistical Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed using:

- * Mean



* Standard Deviation

* One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations of Psychological Well-Being Scores according to Educational Level of Parents

Educational Level of Parents	N	Mean	SD
Up to Secondary Education	40	154.20	15.84
Higher Secondary to Graduate	40	168.73	16.42
Postgraduate and Above	40	182.55	14.69

The table indicates that adolescents whose parents possessed postgraduate and higher educational qualifications obtained the highest mean score on psychological well-being ($M = 182.55$), followed by adolescents whose parents were educated up to graduation ($M = 168.73$).

The lowest mean score was obtained by adolescents whose parents had education only up to the secondary level ($M = 154.20$).

Table 2 ANOVA Summary

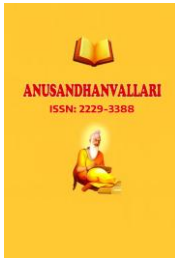
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F
Between Groups	16,724.58	2	8,362.29	17.46**
Within Groups	56,014.27	117	478.75	—
Total	72,738.85	119	8841.04	—

$p < .01$

The obtained F-ratio of 17.46 was found to be significant at the 0.01 level, indicating significant differences among the three groups.

The findings reveal that parental educational level exerts a significant influence on the psychological well-being of adolescents.

Adolescents belonging to highly educated families exhibited greater autonomy, self-confidence, environmental mastery, personal growth, and purpose in life. Educated parents tend to provide emotionally supportive environments, encourage problem-solving skills, and promote independent decision-making.



Furthermore, educated parents are generally more aware of adolescent developmental needs and mental health concerns. Their ability to communicate effectively and provide academic as well as emotional support contributes positively to the psychological well-being of their children.

The findings are consistent with earlier studies conducted by Eccles and Harold (1996), Desforges and Abouchar (2003), Pandey and Srivastava (2016), and Sharma et al. (2021), which reported significant positive effects of parental educational attainment on adolescent development and psychological health.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Educational level of parents significantly influences the psychological well-being of adolescents.
2. Adolescents whose parents possess higher educational qualifications demonstrate better psychological well-being.
3. Psychological well-being tends to increase with increasing parental educational attainment.
4. Family educational background plays an important role in fostering positive mental health.
5. Parental awareness and educational attainment contribute significantly to adolescent adjustment and psychological growth.

Educational Implications

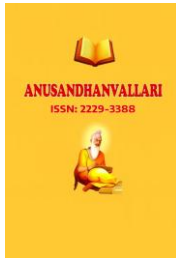
1. Parent education programmes should be organized in schools and colleges.
2. Awareness regarding adolescent mental health should be promoted among parents.
3. Schools should strengthen parent-teacher partnerships.
4. Counseling services should involve parents in promoting adolescent well-being.
5. Educational institutions should provide guidance to families with lower educational backgrounds regarding effective parenting practices.

Limitations of the Study

1. The study was confined to adolescents studying in junior colleges.
2. The sample size was limited.
3. The study was conducted in a specific geographical region.
4. Only parental educational level was considered.
5. Other variables such as socio-economic status and family structure were not included.

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