

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Family plays a vital role in the formation of the personality of an adolescent. Family members, especially parents, set the stage for the development of many essential personality traits in an adolescent (Mathur and Sarma, 2005). It is well recognized that social relationships play a vital role in adolescent development. Among all social relationships, the relationship between parent and adolescent is a crucial one. The quality of the parent-adolescent relationship is a key factor in the healthy social and emotional development of an adolescent.

Adolescence is considered the most critical stage of human life after infancy when the child requires parental support to a large extent. In infancy, the child needs physical support and assistance of the parents while in adolescence psychological support is required (Sarma and Dube, 2015). During adolescence, the biological, cognitive, social and emotional changes that take place in the child trigger transformations in the parent-child relationship. Physical, cognitive and social maturation of adolescents produce inherently unstable relationships or undermine patterns of interactions in close relationships that are established during childhood (Collins and Laursen, 2004). Significant changes in the amount, content and perceived meaning of interactions become distinct. However, if a positive and favourable relationship between parents and adolescents exists, it enables them to grow, explore, gain experiences and adjust to the developmental challenges of this period (Bireda, 2013).

Adolescence is a period of development and consolidation of the social self, of one's identity and understanding of the self in relation to the social world (Sharma and Goswami, 2014). It is also the period of the heightening of all emotions such as anxiety, fear, love, anger, etc. Emotional restlessness and instability sometimes make them optimistic, pessimistic, moody and sometimes depressed, desperate, violent and delinquent. Hence, developing social competence and emotional competence are essential tasks during adolescence. Social competence is the ability and interpersonal skill of an individual in effectively meeting a person-situation interaction or successfully dealing with an individual environmental factor. For a successful interpersonal interaction, a high order social competence is an essential quality to have. Adolescents must master in various social competencies to be more successful and adaptive in their social life situations (Kurian and Prakasha, 2016). These competencies consist of initiating conversation, active listening, checking one's own understanding of others, getting along with different cultures and groups, reading social cues, understanding the listener, empathy, previewing, greetings, controlling emotions, following the rules, respecting views of others, self-monitoring, educational persistence, self-esteem, caring, self-determination, creative thinking, communication, interpersonal competence, self-awareness, and coping with emotions (Kurian and Prakasha, 2016).

Like social competence, emotional competence is also one essential attribute of adolescents' personality. It is the efficiency of an individual to deal with emotional situations effectively (Sharma and Bharawdaj, 2007). An adolescent is expected to show a reasonably emotionally matured behaviour after passing through this stage. Adolescents must acquire the ability to regulate emotions, learn self-soothing techniques, learn how to be aware of their own emotions, understand the consequences

of emotions for others, distinguish feelings from facts to avoid biased emotion-driven behaviour, manage emotional arousal regarding empathy and sympathy, and learn how to manage feelings of love, hate, or indifference in relationships with the opposite sex (Adams, 2005). Adolescents' risky behaviours, such as hard drug use, sexual partners, and behaviour problems, are associated with deficits in emotional skills like emotional awareness, expressivity, and regulation (Hessler and Katz, 2010).

Empirical evidence shows that adolescents' perception of their parental behaviour plays a vital role in their personality development. Adolescents who perceive parental acceptance differ significantly from adolescents who perceive parental rejection in their personality characteristics. Bhargava and Sidhu (2005) have mentioned that accepted children tend to be outgoing, emotionally stable, obedient, happy, venturesome, vigorous, self-assured, controlled, and relax and unfrustrated, whereas the rejected children tend to be reserved, emotionally less stable, aggressive, serious, shy, shrewd, apprehensive, careless, and tense. Children's home adjustment, anxiety, security, insecurity, frustration, and feelings of adequacy are very much influenced by how they perceive their parental behaviour (Mathur and Sharma, 2005). Parentally accepted children possess a high level of self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, and integrity, and high ability of managing relations than parentally rejected children. Besides, parentally accepted children are more concerned about self-development, more oriented towards values, and committed and possessed a high level of altruistic behaviour as compared to parentally rejected children (Shah, 2014).

Research evidence also shows that every single aspect of positive parent-adolescent relationship leads to the development of self-identity, self-esteem, and social

competence (Kafle and Thakali, 2013). Positive parent-adolescent relationships develop positive personality and positive outcomes such as mental and emotional well-being, adjustment, self-competence, and self-esteem. Similarly, supportive parental interaction encourages autonomy, and connectedness which protect against stress from life events and can stabilize externalizing and internalizing problems. Parental attachment, autonomy, connectedness, trust, and supportive family interactions play an important role in adolescent psychosocial development (Kafle and Thakali, 2013). Positive relationship experiences, such as companionship, satisfaction, approval, and support, predict increases in security, and negative experiences, such as pressure and criticism, predict decreases in security (Ruhl, Dolan, and Buhrmester, 2015). Secure attachment is associated with less engagement in high-risk behaviours, fewer mental health problems, and healthy adjustment and enhanced social skills (Kobak, Cole, Ferenz-Gillies, Fleming, and Gamble, 1993). Parent-child interaction, level of involvement, and secure attachment are some of the parameters which provide the foundation for social competence (Sharma, 2015). As Steinberg (2001) has stated, the well-functioning youth perceive their relationships with their parents to be positive.

Researchers have also explored that parental acceptance is positively associated with pro-social competence behaviour and negatively associated with aggressive behaviour (Chen, 1994). Maternal acceptance, in particular, is related to social competence (Kim, Han, and McCubbin, 2007). On the other hand, parental rejection is associated with depression (Crook, Raskin, and Eliot, 1981; Naz and Kausar, 2013) and maladjustment of adolescents (Naz and Kausar, 2013). Further, parental rejection is negatively related to locus of control of adolescents (Crockett, Brown, Russell, and Shen, 2007).

A few studies have explored that parents' love and protection have a significant contribution towards the career maturity of the adolescents (Palit and Neogi, 2015) and parents' symbolic punishment, object punishment, demanding, indifferent, symbolic reward are significantly and positively related to the emotional stability of adolescents (Arora and Kour, 2014). Further, parents' loving and symbolic reward behaviour patterns are positively related to the academic achievement of adolescents while protecting, rejecting and demanding behaviour patterns of parents are negatively related to academic achievement (Singh, 2013). Adolescents with the high level of academic achievement develop a higher level of mother-child relationship on loving, symbolic reward, indifferent, symbolic punishment, object punishment, demanding and neglecting areas of parent-child relationship as compared to adolescents with the low level of academic achievement (Sharma, 2012). Loving and object reward dimensions of the parent-child relationship are positively related to the locus of control of adolescents, while punishment, rejecting and neglecting dimensions are negatively related to the locus of control of adolescents (Gupta, Jasoria, Sing, and Gautam, 2014).

Existing literature in the field of parent-adolescent relationships has recognised that the relationship between parents and adolescents is the most critical factor in the social and emotional development of adolescents. Studies have revealed that adolescents who are socially skilled describe their parents as warm, supportive, flexible and as providing more autonomy while monitoring their children's activities (Engels, Dekovic, and Meeus, 2002). A family where emotional bonding and communication between adolescents and parents are adequate with clear behavioural standards, the adolescents can become emotionally competent, responsible, independent, confident and socially competent (Biradar, 2006).

While adolescence is the time of growth, change and opportunity, transitioning into adulthood can bring moments of insecurity, helplessness, frustration, and isolation. Adolescence marks a significant turning point in the parent-child relationship. Due to the increased sense of identity at this stage, it is usual and inevitable to develop parent-adolescence conflicts. It is an essential task of parents to provide them with love, support, self-confidence to grow fully into their lives. Researchers have explored that parental warmth, affection, care, comfort, nurturance, and support have positive influence on children's development, whereas the significant withdrawal of parental warmth, care, love and affection, and the presence of physically and psychologically hurtful behaviours have a negative influence on children's development (Rohner, Khaleque, and Cournoyer, 2012). Hair, Jager, and Garrett (2002) have also explored that high-quality relationships with parents are related to several beneficial outcomes, such as psychological health, improved academic performances, and success in relationships as adults, whereas the absence of such quality relationships is related to harmful outcomes, such as delinquency and psychological problems. Therefore, studying the influence of parent-adolescent relationships on social competence and emotional competence is seemed to be an important area in the field of adolescent research.

1.2 NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Social competence and emotional competence are two essential attributes of human personality. During adolescence, individuals must attain mastery of specific social and emotional competencies. The development of appropriate social competencies during childhood and adolescence facilitate adjustment, satisfaction, well being, and social acceptance by peers, positive self-esteem, and self-confidence.

Individuals who are socially competent can elicit positive responses from others, interact effectively with peers and adults, and are adept at forming close relationships. Emotional competence helps children and adolescents cope effectively in particular circumstances. It also contributes to children's social competence and well-being along with school readiness and mental health. Lack of emotional competency leads to frustration, anxiety, conflict, aggression, lack of adaptability, depression, and psychosomatic disorders (Desai, 2006, p.16).

It is well known that social as well as emotional competence can be developed through skill enhancement programmes, but many researchers (Saarni, 1999; Schaffer, 2004; Semrud-Clickman, 2007) have recognized that parent-child relationship sets the foundation upon which social competence and emotional competence of an individual are built.

The existing literature has analysed the association between parent-adolescent relationships and diverse aspects of adolescents' development, such as adjustment, academic achievement, depression, conduct problems, autonomy, self-esteem, self-concept, self-confidence, achievement motivation, pro-social behaviour, emotional expressivity, social maturity, and emotional maturity. Researchers have studied the relation of parenting style with social competence, and their primary focus is peer-related social competence. Studies on the relation between the parent-child relationship and emotional competence have been found with children up to middle childhood, but no study has been found with adolescents. Further, not a single study has been found on the relation of different dimensions of parent-adolescent relationship with the social and emotional competence of adolescents.

The investigator has felt that an in-depth study can be done on the influence of parent-adolescent relationships on the social and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls. The investigator has strongly felt that it will be able to add some knowledge to the existing body of literature.

The present study will throw light on the following aspects:

- It will reflect the differences in parent-adolescent relationships between adolescent boys and girls.
- It will also reveal the differences in social competence and emotional competence between adolescent boys and girls.
- The study will throw light on the association of parent-adolescent relationships and adolescents' social competence as well as emotional competence.
- The study will throw light on the effect of parent-adolescent relationships on the social competence and emotional competence of adolescents.
- The study will help to increase awareness among parents on the importance of healthy parent-adolescent relationships.
- It will also help to increase awareness among the community that parent-adolescent relationships are related to adolescents' social and emotional competence.
- Insights on the relationship between parent-adolescent relationships and adolescents' social and emotional competence will assist the teachers, school

administrators, and counsellors in the delivery of active support and care to adolescents.

- It will help the educational planners to develop the appropriate plan and programmes for enhancing parent-adolescent relationships, social competence, and emotional competence.

Thus, it has been expected that findings from the present study will provide valuable guidance for those who are engaged in setting policy and developing and operating programmes to promote healthy adolescent development.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Adolescence is that period of human life when individuals experience significant changes in their relationships with parents. The period of adolescence creates distance and conflicts in the parent-adolescent relationship as the family system adjusts to the physical and social changes that are taking place (Bireda, 2013). The adolescents and parents learn new patterns of interaction that will facilitate this change in the family structure. It is worthwhile to pursue research on why some adolescents maintain better relationships with their parents and effectively meet a person-situation interaction, and effectively deal with emotional situations than others who seem to have more conflict in their relationships with parents and experience lack of competence in dealing with social and emotional situations.

How do adolescent boys and girls perceive different dimensions of the parent-adolescent relationship? Is there any difference between adolescent boys and girls with respect to different dimensions of the parent-adolescent relationship? How do adolescent boys and girls perceive their social competence and emotional competence?

Is there any difference between adolescent boys and girls with respect to social competence, and emotional competence? Is there any relationship between the parent-adolescent relationships and social competence, and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls? Do the parent-adolescent relationships have a significant effect on social competence and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls? These are the certain questions which arise in the mind of the investigator, and for that reason, the investigator planned to undertake the present study.

In the light of the review of the literature and the identified gap, it has been found that the present study can throw light on the various issues raised above, and hence the study has been entitled as,

“A study on the influence of parent-adolescent relationships on social and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.”

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the above-mentioned issues, the investigator framed the following objectives.

1. (a) To study the differences between adolescent boys and girls with respect to parent-adolescent relationships.
- (b) To study the differences between adolescent boys and girls with respect to father-adolescent relationships.
- (c) To study the differences between adolescent boys and girls with respect to mother-adolescent relationships.

2. To study the differences between adolescent boys and girls with respect to social competence and its competencies.
3. To study the differences between adolescent boys and girls with respect to emotional competence and its competencies.
4. To study the relationship between social competence and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.
5. (a) To study the relation between parent-adolescent relationships and social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

(b) To study the relation between father-adolescent relationships and social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

(c) To study the relation between mother-adolescent relationships and social competence of adolescent boys and girls.
6. (a) To study the relation between parent-adolescent relationships and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

(b) To study the relation between father-adolescent relationships and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

(c) To study the relation between mother-adolescent relationships and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.
7. (a) To study the effect of parent-adolescent relationships on the social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

- (b) To study the effect of father-adolescent relationships on the social competence of adolescent boys and girls.
 - (c) To study the effect of mother-adolescent relationships on the social competence of adolescent boys and girls.
8. (a) To study the effect of parent-adolescent relationships on the emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.
- (b) To study the effect of father-adolescent relationships on the emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.
 - (c) To study the effect of mother-adolescent relationships on the emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

1.5 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses were formulated to test the objectives:

H_{01(a)}: There is no significant difference between adolescent boys and girls with respect to parent-adolescent relationships.

H_{01(b)}: There is no significant difference between adolescent boys and girls with respect to father-adolescent relationships.

H_{01(c)}: There is no significant difference between adolescent boys and girls with respect to mother-adolescent relationships.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between adolescent boys and girls with respect to social competence and its competencies.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between adolescent boys and girls with respect to emotional competence and its competencies.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between social competence and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{05(a)}: There is no significant relationship between parent-adolescent relationships and social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{05(b)}: There is no significant relationship between father-adolescent relationships and social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{05(c)}: There is no significant relationship between mother-adolescent relationships and social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{06(a)}: There is no significant relationship between parent-adolescent relationships and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{06(b)}: There is no significant relationship between father-adolescent relationships and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{06(c)}: There is no significant relationship between mother-adolescent relationships and emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{07(a)}: There is no significant effect of parent-adolescent relationships on the social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{07(b)}: There is no significant effect of father-adolescent relationships on the social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{07(c)}: There is no significant effect of mother-adolescent relationships on the social competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{08(a)}: There is no significant effect of parent-adolescent relationships on the emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{08(b)}: There is no significant effect of father-adolescent relationships on the emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

H_{08(c)}: There is no significant effect of mother-adolescent relationships on the emotional competence of adolescent boys and girls.

1.6 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

Influence:

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, “Influence is defined as the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something, or the effect itself.”

In the present study, the term “influence” refers to the effect of independent variables (i.e., ten dimensions of parent-adolescent relationship) on dependent variables (i.e., social competence and emotional competence).

Parent-adolescent relationships:

The term “parent-adolescent relationships” refers to ten dimensions of characteristic behaviour of parents (both father and mother) as experienced or perceived by the adolescent boys and girls. The ten dimensions are protecting, symbolic punishment, rejecting, object punishment, demanding, indifferent, symbolic reward, loving, object reward and neglecting.

Father-adolescent relationships:

The term “father-adolescent relationships” refers to ten dimensions of characteristic behaviour of fathers as experienced or perceived by the adolescent boys and girls.

Mother-adolescent relationships:

The term “mother-adolescent relationships” refers to ten dimensions of characteristic behaviour of mothers as experienced or perceived by the adolescent boys and girls.

Protecting:

Protecting refers to the defending attitude of parents overtly expressed in the acts of guarding, sheltering and shielding the child from situations or experiences perceived to be hostile, oppressing and harmful.

Rejecting:

Rejecting refers to the parents’ behaviour evident in renouncing the child in aversion. The disposition is indicated in being disdainful and in outright refusal of the child.

Demanding:

Demanding refers to the expression of authority and claim by parents with imperious command over the child, executed in the exercise of overall control.

Indifferent:

Indifferent refers to the expression of unconcerned apathetic, passive and impartial behaviour and functioning of parents without either importance or interest in the child.

Loving:

Loving refers to the expression of fondness, devoted attachment, and amiableness of parents shown to the child.

Neglecting:

Neglecting refers to the careless slighting treatment of parents indicated in accustomed omission and deliberate disregard towards the child which might leave the child to devalue himself.

Symbolic reward and object reward:

Symbolic reward and object reward refer to the symbolic expression of appreciation by parents for emotional, psychological security of the child as against physical, tangible, concrete action of warmth. Both indicate the parent's acceptance of the child which is a precursor for the child to achieve, aspire and advance.

Symbolic Punishment and object punishment:

Symbolic and physical means by which parents show their temporary annoyance with the child.

Social competence:

According to Wikipedia: the free Encyclopaedia, "Social competence is a complex, multidimensional concept consisting of social, emotional, cognitive and

behavioural skills as well as motivational and expectancy sets needed for successful social adaptation.”

In the present study, the term “social competence” refers to the social ability and interpersonal skill of an individual in effectively meeting a person-situation interaction or successfully dealing with an individual environmental factor. It is the totality of eight competencies, namely, social sensitivity, social maturity, social skills, social relations, social leadership, social tolerance, social competition, and pro-social attitude.

Social sensitivity:

It is the personal ability to perceive, understand, and respect the feelings and viewpoints of others. It is an empathic ability to understand other feelings and thoughts correctly and to be acquainted with the general knowledge of social rules and norms. It refers to awareness and consciousness of group ability.

Social maturity:

According to Dictionary of Education of C.V. Good, “Social maturity is a state of development in which the attitudes, understandings, feelings, and skills of the individual with respect to human relationships, social tools, and social institutions are those which tend to be typical of the adult.” It refers to social expertise.

Social skills:

The term social skill describes the person’s knowledge of and ability to use appropriate social behaviour to a given interpersonal situation.

Social relations:

A social relation is a relationship between two or more people. It is an action which solicits a reaction from the other person or people and is the underpinning for society and the social structure.

Social leadership:

Social leadership means to devote one's life and talents to improving society regardless of social standing, wealth or privilege.

Social tolerance:

Social tolerance is the ability of a person to act with civility among other members of society in social, public environments accepting the differences of each person living in that society.

Social competition:

Social competition means the striving of individuals to attain the most favourable position in a system of social cooperation.

Pro-social attitude:

Pro-social attitude is a mindset of a person to act for the benefit of other people or the society as a whole.

Emotional competence:

According to Wikipedia: the free Encyclopaedia, "Emotional competence refers to one's ability to express or release one's inner feelings (emotions). It implies an ease around others and determines one's ability to effectively and successfully lead and express."

In the present study, the term “emotional competence” refers to the efficiency of an individual to deal with emotional situations effectively. It is the totality of five emotional competencies, namely, adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions, ability to function with emotions, ability to cope with problem emotions, and enhancement of positive emotions.

Adequate depth of feeling:

A feeling of being confident or capable with all reality assumptions is termed as the adequate depth of feeling. It is specifically associated with effective judgement and personality integration, which ensures active participation in living.

Adequate expression and control of emotions:

It is a tendency marked by adequate emotional expressiveness based on fulsome expression and control of emotions. Any form of inadequacy in either expression or control of emotions may lead to uncontrolled and disorganized emotionality.

Ability to function with emotions:

A characteristic pattern of emotional reactivity which does not let the individual be influenced in his adequate mode of functioning that helps him in performing actions of daily routine properly.

Ability to cope with problem emotions:

Certain problem emotions play a destructive role and pose potential damage to the life orientations of the individual’s course of life. Ability to cope with problem emotions is an ability to resist the harmful effects of such emotions.

Enhancement of positive emotions:

It refers to the competency of the person to develop a predominance of positive emotions in the personality make-up of him to ensure a meaningful and fairly integrated life.

Adolescents:

Adolescents are, in general, the boys and girls of the age group of 10 to 21 years (Pratt, 2005). In the present study, adolescents refer to the boys and girls of the age group 14 to 16 years, studying in class IX and X in the private high schools of Darrang district of Assam.

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study was undertaken with the following delimitations:

1. The study area was confined to the Darrang district of Assam.
2. The study was delimited to adolescent boys and girls of the age-group 14-16 years, studying in the Classes IX-X.
3. The study was restricted to the private high schools of Darrang district of Assam.
4. The study was delimited to the co-educational Assamese medium private high schools.

1.8 PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

The present study has been conducted in the private high schools of Darrang district. Darrang district is situated in the central part of Assam, India in between 26°09' N to 26°40' N latitude and 91°45' E to 92°22' E longitude. It is on the north bank of mighty river Brahmaputra. The district is bounded by Arunachal Pradesh (State),

Bhutan (Country) and Udalguri district in the North, Sonitpur district in the East, Morigaon and Kamrup district in the South, and Kamrup district in the west. The river Brahmaputra flows in the South of the district. The Headquarter of Darrang district is at Mangaldai, and it is 68 km away from Dispur, the State capital of Assam.

According to the Census Report of 2011, the total population of Darrang district is 9,28,500, out of which 475,273 are males while 453,227 are females. The average sex ratio is 954 females per 1000 males. Out of the total population, 6% of people live in urban areas while 94% live in rural areas.

In terms of religious composition, around 64.34 percent of total population in the district is Muslim while the Hindu constitutes 35.25 percent. Other religions followed by the people in this district are Christian (0.18%), Sikh (.05%), Buddhist (.01%), Jain (.08%), etc.

As per the Census 2011, the literacy rate of Darrang district is 63.08 percent as against the literacy rate of 72.19 percent in Assam. The male literacy rate is recorded as 67.87 percent while the female literacy rate is 58.04 percent in the district.

Darrang is a multilingual district wherein Assamese is the principal language and the lingua franca in the region. However, Bodo, Bengali, and Hindi language are also spoken in the district.

Figure 1 represents a map of the Darrang district showing the location of the sample schools.

Figure 1: Map of Darrang District (Showing Location of the Sample Schools)

