

A study on emotional intelligence of teenagers born to teen and adult mothers

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Abstract

Teen pregnancy is a really big issue in the world today. According to WHO (2014) about 16 million girls aged 15 to 19 years and two million girls under the age of 15 give birth every year. In developed countries, teenage pregnancies are associated with many social issues, including lower educational levels, higher rates of poverty, and other poorer life outcomes in children of teenage mothers. Emotional Intelligence is one of the most popular constructs in the field of interpersonal differences research in recent twenty years. It refers to emotional information processing and represents a new way of conceptualizing connection between general abilities and emotions. A link between parenting and emotional intelligence has been documented in a small number of studies. A cross sectional study aimed at emotional intelligence among teenagers born to teen mothers as well as born to adult mothers was conducted on 198 teenagers studying at High Schools and Pre-University colleges of Holenarasipura town of Hassan district. Out of the total 198 teenagers 79 teenagers were born to teen mothers while 119 were born to adult mothers. The study revealed that the mean score of emotional intelligence of teenagers born to teen and adult mothers were significantly different in the aspects of factor B-Empathy, factor D-Emotional stability and Over-all emotional intelligence. Teenagers born to teen mothers have less ability to understand other persons and were emotionally less stable. Over all Emotional intelligence of teenagers born to teen mothers was significantly less than teenagers born to adult mothers. Mothers' age at birth significantly correlates with empathy, emotional stability and overall emotional intelligence of teenagers. These results highlight a need to identify the children born to teen mothers and to train them in emotional intelligence which is responsible for success in all walks of life.

Keywords: Teenager, Emotional Intelligence, Teen mother, Adult mother, Emotional stability, Empathy

Introduction

Teen pregnancy is a really big issue in the world today. The term teenage pregnancy encompasses conception or motherhood by girls aged 19 or younger. According to WHO (2014) about 16 million girls aged 15 to 19 years and two million girls under the age of 15 give birth every year. Worldwide, one in five girls has given birth by the age of 18. According to The Economic Times, teen pregnancy in India is high with 62 pregnant teens out of every 1,000 women ^[1]. In developed countries, teenage pregnancies are associated with many social issues, including lower educational levels, higher rates of poverty, and other poorer life outcomes in children of teenage mothers ^[2]. Many studies during the past decade have documented the social, economic, and health consequences for women who bear children during the adolescent years. More recently, research studies has also centred on the wellbeing of children born to these young women ^[3]. There is considerable evidence especially in western countries which reveals that there are negative outcomes for the babies and children of teenage mothers ^[4]. Studies have revealed the negative effects of adolescent motherhood on the behavioural and emotional well-being of children and these effects may increase as children age. The parent-adolescent relationship serves as a predictor of adolescent emotional well-being. A link between parenting and emotional intelligence has been documented in a small number of studies. Many researchers and policy makers

argue that young mothers, especially teen mothers, are less able to emotionally and financially capable to nurture healthy, well-adjusted offspring ^[5]. There is dearth of literature on role of teen mothers on emotional well-being of children.

Emotional Intelligence is one of the most popular constructs in the field of interpersonal differences research in recent twenty years. It refers to emotional information processing and represents a new way of conceptualizing connection between general abilities and emotions. According to a theoretical approach, emotional intelligence consists of different mental abilities to perceive, use, understand and regulate emotions. According to Goleman, emotional intelligence refers to "the composite set of capabilities that enable a person to manage himself/herself and others" ^[6]. Some researchers suggest that emotional intelligence can be learned and strengthened. Various studies have highlighted impact of emotional intelligence on many aspects of life such as the way they behave and the way they interact with others. Person with high emotional intelligence can recognize his/her own emotions as well as the emotions of others. It helps to form healthier relationship and achieve greater success in life. Studies have been carried out to identify the factors related or associated to emotional intelligence. The studies on emotional intelligence of teenagers especially in Karnataka state are scanty.

Methodology

A cross sectional study was carried out to assess the level of emotional intelligence among teenagers born to teen mothers and to compare with of teenagers born to adult mothers. A total of one hundred and ninety eight (198) teenagers studying at selected high school and pre-university colleges of Holenarasipura town in Hassan District of Karnataka were the sample. Of the total sample, 79 teenagers were born to teen mothers and 119 teenagers were born to adult mothers. 35 females and 44 male teenagers were born to teenage mothers while 65 females and 54 males were born to adult mothers. A self-framed questionnaire and Emotional Intelligence Scale [7] were administered to the sample. Self-framed questionnaire consisted personal information, socio-economic information, paternal and maternal information particularly related to marriage and pregnancy. The emotional intelligence was assessed as a whole and individually under ten different factors such as self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment, altruistic behaviours. Higher the score on all these factors indicate the high level of emotional intelligence. The collected data were computed and analyzed with help of IBM SPSS statistic 19.0 version. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis was carried out. Frequency distribution, percentage, mean and standard deviation were calculated. F-test and chi-square was applied to see the significant difference and association between the groups of variables. The correlation was applied to know the relationship between emotional intelligence with study variables.

Results and Discussion

Table -1 reveals personal and familial characteristics of teenagers born to teen and adult mothers. With respect to age

groups, majority (26.9%) of teenagers born to adult mothers were in the age of 14 years while majority (25.3%) of the teenagers born to teen mother were observed in the age group of 18 years. Among teenagers born to teen mothers, more percentage of female (31.4%) and male teenagers (44.1%) were observed in 17 and 18 years of age group respectively. Among teenagers born to adult mothers, more percentage of female (29.2%) and male (25.9%) teenagers were observed in 14 and 13 years of age group respectively. With regard to birth order, majority of teenagers born to adult mothers (94.1%) and born to teen mothers (72.2%) were second born child in their family. With respect to education, more than 1/4th of teenagers born to adult mother were studying in 9th standard while majority of the teenagers (34.2%) born to teen mother were studying in 2nd year PUC. Among the Teenagers born to adult mothers, more percentage of males (25.9%) and females (29.2%) were studying in 8th and 9th standards respectively. Among teenagers born to teen mothers, majority of males (36.4%) and females (31.4%) were studying in 2nd year PUC. With respect to family structure, equal percentage of teenagers born to teen mothers (88.6%) and adult mothers (88.2%) were living in nuclear families. Around 2% of samples were living in joint family while around 9.5% of total population were living in extended families. With regard to religion, cent-percentage of teenagers born to teen mothers and 99.2% of teenagers born to adult mothers were Hindus and 0.8% of teenagers born to adult mothers were Christians. With regard to total family income, 83.2% of families of teenagers born to adult mothers and 91.1% of families of teenagers born to teen mothers have total family income of Rs. 10,000 and less per month.

Table 1: Personal and Family Characteristics of Teenagers Born To Teen and Adult Mothers

Individual Characteristics			Teenagers born to adult mother			Teenagers born to teen mother		
			Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Age in Years	13	No	17	14	31	3	6	9
		%	26.2	25.9	26.1	8.6	13.6	11.4
	14	No	19	13	32	1	7	8
		%	29.2	24.1	26.9	2.9	15.9	10.1
	15	No	11	10	21	10	9	19
		%	16.9	18.5	17.6	28.6	20.5	24.1
	16	No	6	6	12	5	2	7
		%	9.2	11.1	10.1	14.3	4.5	8.9
	17	No	10	7	17	11	5	16
		%	15.4	13.0	14.3	31.4	11.4	20.3
	18	No	2	4	6	5	15	20
		%	3.1	7.4	5.0	14.3	34.1	25.3
Birth order	First born	No	4	2	6	9	13	22
		%	6.2	3.7	5.0	25.7	29.5	27.8
	Second born	No	60	52	112	26	31	57
		%	92.3	96.3	94.1	74.3	70.5	72.2
	Third born	No	1	0	1	0.0	0.0	0.0
		%	1.5	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Class	8th STD	No	17	14	31	3	6	9
		%	26.2	25.9	26.1	8.6	13.6	11.4
	9th STD	No	19	13	32	1	7	8
		%	29.2	24.1	26.9	2.9	15.9	10.1
	10th STD	No	11	10	21	10	8	18
		%	16.9	18.5	17.6	28.6	18.2	22.8
	IST PUC	No	12	13	25	10	7	17
		%	18.5	24.1	21.0	28.6	15.9	21.5

	2 PUC	No	6	4	10	11	16	27
		%	9.2	7.4	8.4	31.4	36.4	34.2
Family Structure	Extended	No	7	4	11	3	5	8
		%	10.8	7.4	9.2	8.6	11.4	10.1
	Joint Family	No	3	0	3	1	0	1
		%	4.6	0.0	2.5	2.9	0.0	1.3
	Nuclear	No	55	50	105	31	39	70
		%	84.6	92.6	88.2	88.6	88.6	88.6
Religion	Christian	No	1	0	1	35	44	79
		%	1.5	0.0	0.8	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Hindu	No	64	54	118	35	44	79
		%	98.5	100.0	99.2	100.0	100.0	100.0
Family Income	10,000 & Less	No	55	44	99	31	41	72
		%	84.6	81.5	83.2	88.6	93.2	91.1
	above 10000	No	10	10	20	4	3	7
		%	15.4	18.5	16.8	11.4	6.8	8.9
Total	No	65	54	119	35	44	79	
	%	54.6	45.4	60.1	44.3	55.7	39.9	

Table – 2 reveals mothers' age at menarche, age at marriage, age at first conception, age at birth of the present child, number of conception and number of children alive. With respect to mothers' age at menarche, mothers in both the groups i.e. teen and adult mothers have same mean age at menarche (12.2 years and 12.1 years). There was no significant difference observed among teen and adult mothers with regard to age at menarche. With respect to mothers' age at marriage, the mean age of 16.5 years was observed among teen mothers while mean age of 17.9 years was observed among adult mothers. Highly significant difference was observed between groups with regard to mothers' age at marriage. Teenage mothers have mean age of 17.6 years as their age at first conception while adult mother have mean age of 18.9 years as their age at first conception. Highly significant difference was observed between teen

mothers and adult mothers groups with regard to age at first conception. With respect to mothers' age at birth of present child (sample of the present study) teenage mothers were at mean age of 18.6 years while adult mothers group were at 21.2 years of age at birth of present child. Highly significant difference was observed between teen and adult mothers with regard to their age at birth of present child. Significantly different number of conception was observed between teenage mothers and adult mothers. Adult mothers have the mean of 2.0 ± 0.3 while teen mothers have mean of 1.9 ± 0.5 . With regard to number of children alive, less mean score (1.7 ± 0.5) was observed among teen mothers while adult mothers have significantly high mean score (1.9 ± 0.4). Highly significant association was observed between adult and teen mothers with regard to number of children alive.

Table 2: Details of Mothers' age at Menarche, Marriage, at first conception and at birth of the present child

Mother's Age		Age at Menarche	Mother Age at Marriage	Age at First conception	Age at birth of the present child	No of conception	No of children alive	
Adult Mother	Female (n ₁ =65)	\bar{x}	12.0	18.0	19.1	21.5	2.0	1.9
		SD	1.3	0.9	0.9	1.3	0.3	0.4
	Male (n ₂ =65)	\bar{x}	12.4	17.7	18.8	20.9	2.0	1.9
		SD	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.3	0.4
	Total (n=119)	\bar{x}	12.2	17.9	18.9	21.2	2.0	1.9
		SD	1.2	0.9	0.9	1.2	0.3	0.4
Teen Mother	Female (n ₃ =35)	\bar{x}	12.0	16.6	17.6	18.7	2.0	1.8
		SD	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.6	0.5	0.4
	Male (n ₄ =44)	\bar{x}	12.2	16.4	17.6	18.6	1.8	1.7
		SD	1.2	1.3	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.5
	Total (n=79)	\bar{x}	12.1	16.5	17.6	18.6	1.9	1.7
		SD	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.5
ANOVA		0.128 NS	88.527**	84.319**	304.851**	5.189*	11.338**	
Significance		P<0.721	P<0.000	P<0.000	P<0.000	P<0.024	P<0.001	

Table – 3 reveals mean values of emotional intelligence under different factors for teenagers born to teen and adult mothers. The mean score of emotional intelligence of teenagers of both teen and adult mothers were nearly same under all aspect of emotional intelligence except for factor B-Empathy, factor D-Emotional stability and Over-all emotional intelligence. Under factor B – empathy, teenagers born to teen mothers have significantly less means score (19.09 ± 2.81) than teenagers born to adult mother (20 ± 2.59). This confirms that teenagers born to

teen mother have less ability to understand other persons. With regard to factor D-emotional stability, teenagers born to adult mothers (16.54 ± 1.8) have significantly high mean score than teenagers born to teen mother (15.87 ± 1.99). This result indicates that teenagers born to teen mothers are emotionally less stable. With respect to overall emotional intelligence, teenagers born to teen mother have significantly lesser mean score (137.43 ± 7.4) than the score of teenagers born to adult mothers. This result confirms that emotional intelligence of

teenagers born to teen mothers was less. On the whole, it may be concluded that teenagers born to teen mothers have less empathy, emotional stability and emotional intelligence than teenagers born to adult mothers.

Table – 4 reveals gender wise mean values of emotional intelligence under different factor for teenagers born to teen and adult mothers. The mean score of emotional intelligence of both male and female teenagers born to teen mothers as well as born to adult mothers were nearly same under all aspect of emotional intelligence. There was no significant gender difference observed among teenagers born to teen mothers as well as teenagers born to adult mothers. The obtained result is substantiating the findings of other studies, Emotional Intelligence does not respect the gender and far more similarities exist than differences between the genders. The findings of the present study is contrary to the findings of the studies where mean score of emotional intelligence for the girls is found to be greater than the boys and a study revealed that males have high level of emotional intelligence than that of females [8-11].

Table – 5 reveals the correlation values between personal, family and maternal factors with emotional intelligence among teenagers. Gender of the teenagers significantly negatively correlates with mothers' age at birth of the present child. Age of the teenagers highly significantly negatively correlates with mothers' age at birth of the present child, and significantly negatively correlates with family income and emotional stability. Mothers' age at birth of the present child highly significantly correlates with emotional stability and significantly correlates with empathy, and overall emotional intelligence.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study it may be concluded that teenagers born to teen mothers have less ability to understand other persons and were emotionally less stable. Over all Emotional intelligence of teenagers born to teen mothers was significantly less than teenagers born to adult mothers. Mothers' age at birth significantly correlates with empathy, emotional stability and overall emotional intelligence of teenagers. These results highlight a need to identify the children born to teen mothers and to train them in emotional intelligence which is responsible for success in all walks of life.

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Table 3: Mean values for emotional intelligence under different factors of teenagers born to teen and adult mothers

Mother's Age		A Self-Awareness	B Empathy	C Self-Motivation	D Emotional Stability	E Managing Relations	F Integrity	G Self-Development	H Value Orientation	I Commitment	J Altruistic Behaviour	Overall Emotional Intelligence
Adult Mother (n ₁ =119)	\bar{x}	15.45	20.00	23.12	16.54	17.17	12.34	8.47	7.97	8.13	8.51	137.71
	SD	2.414	2.591	2.263	1.812	1.884	1.504	1.248	1.546	1.672	1.192	8.198
Teen Mother (n ₂ =79)	\bar{x}	15.22	19.09	23.20	15.87	16.81	12.23	8.35	8.25	7.95	8.46	135.43
	SD	2.146	2.811	2.355	1.996	1.949	1.656	1.251	1.315	1.592	1.338	7.350
Total (N=198)	\bar{x}	15.36	19.64	23.15	16.27	17.03	12.30	8.42	8.08	8.06	8.49	136.80
	SD	2.308	2.711	2.295	1.911	1.913	1.563	1.247	1.461	1.639	1.249	7.931
F-value		0.549	5.140*	0.070	5.170*	1.315	0.314	0.354	2.050	0.452	0.033	3.968*
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.460	0.024	0.792	0.024	0.253	0.576	0.552	0.154	0.502	0.855	0.048

Table 4: Gender wise Mean values for emotional intelligence under different factors of teenagers born to teen and adult mothers

Mother's Age		A self awareness	B Empathy	C Self motivation	D Emotional stability	E managing relations	F Integrity	G Self development	H Value orientation	I Commitment	J Altruistic behaviour	Overall emotional intelligence	
Adult Mother	Female (n ₁ =65)	\bar{x}	15.29	20.18	23.05	16.49	17.32	12.20	8.55	8.14	8.20	8.57	138.00
		SD	2.638	2.915	2.132	1.641	1.715	1.325	1.118	1.379	1.481	1.311	8.408
	Male (n ₂ =54)	\bar{x}	15.65	19.78	23.20	16.59	16.98	12.52	8.37	7.76	8.06	8.44	137.35
		SD	2.120	2.143	2.429	2.014	2.069	1.691	1.391	1.715	1.888	1.040	8.003
	Total (n=119)	\bar{x}	15.45	20.00	23.12	16.54	17.17	12.34	8.47	7.97	8.13	8.51	137.71
		SD	2.414	2.591	2.263	1.812	1.884	1.504	1.248	1.546	1.672	1.192	8.198
Teen Mother	Female (n ₃ =35)	\bar{x}	15.26	19.11	23.31	16.31	17.03	12.26	8.34	8.26	8.11	8.63	136.63
		SD	2.174	2.763	2.459	2.111	1.599	1.502	1.235	1.268	1.451	1.114	6.344
	Male (n ₄ =44)	\bar{x}	15.18	19.07	23.11	15.52	16.64	12.20	8.36	8.25	7.82	8.32	134.48
		SD	2.149	2.881	2.295	1.849	2.190	1.786	1.278	1.366	1.702	1.491	8.004
	Total (n=79)	\bar{x}	15.22	19.09	23.20	15.87	16.81	12.23	8.35	8.25	7.95	8.46	135.43
		SD	2.146	2.811	2.355	1.996	1.949	1.656	1.251	1.315	1.592	1.338	7.350
ANOVA		1.248	6.091	.027	4.997	7.663	1.229	.628	1.988	2.418	2.024	105.327	
Significance		P<0.630	P<0.364	P<0.943	P<0.243	P<0.148	P<0.480	P<0.526	P<0.336	P<0.344	P<0.256	P<0.196	

Table 5: Correlation values of personal and familial factors with emotional intelligence factors

	Gender	Age	Birth Order	Family Income	Mothers' Age at Birth of The Present Child	A Self Awareness	B Empathy	C Self Motivation	D Emotional Stability	E Managing Relations	F Integrity	G Self Development	H Value Orientation	I Commitment	J Altruistic Behaviour
Age	r	.046													
	Sig	.522													
Birth Order	r	-.046	-.134												
	Sig	.518	.060												
Family Income	r	.067	.146*	.024											
	Sig	.350	.040	.736											

Mothers' Age at birth of the present child	r	-.208**	-.333**	.273**	.048											
	Sig	.003	.000	.000	.499											
A Self Awareness	r	.034	.059	-.014	.042	.058										
	Sig	.630	.412	.842	.553	.416										
B Empathy	r	-.065	.011	.017	-.024	.177*	.307**									
	Sig	.364	.883	.816	.734	.013	.000									
C Self Motivation	r	.005	.098	-.086	.009	-.056	.184**	.195**								
	Sig	.943	.171	.229	.895	.437	.009	.006								
D Emotional Stability	r	-.083	-.155*	.032	-.068	.199**	.177*	.089	-.042							
	Sig	.243	.029	.651	.344	.005	.013	.213	.558							
E Managing Relations	r	-.103	-.059	.057	.029	.040	.081	.088	.050	.158*						
	Sig	.148	.408	.426	.688	.579	.258	.218	.484	.026						
F Integrity	r	.051	-.007	-.090	-.031	.054	.018	.032	.202**	.251**	-.074					
	Sig	.480	.919	.206	.662	.453	.801	.658	.004	.000	.301					
G Self Development	r	-.045	-.070	-.063	-.017	.095	.243**	.160*	.027	.119	-.058	.008				
	Sig	.526	.330	.378	.814	.183	.001	.024	.705	.094	.419	.914				
H Value Orientation	r	-.069	-.005	-.076	-.033	.029	.148*	.152*	.087	-.017	.114	.016	-.063			
	Sig	.336	.944	.289	.646	.686	.038	.032	.222	.812	.111	.822	.374			
I Commitment	r	-.068	.115	-.012	.023	.012	.108	.115	-.073	-.138	.071	-.092	-.042	.100		
	Sig	.344	.107	.869	.748	.870	.129	.108	.309	.052	.322	.196	.553	.162		
J Altruistic Behaviour	r	-.081	-.036	.003	-.002	.042	.006	.128	.084	.237**	.182*	.161*	-.069	.003	.037	
	Sig	.256	.616	.971	.974	.556	.937	.073	.241	.001	.010	.023	.335	.964	.600	
Overall Emotional Intelligence	r	-.092	.002	-.045	-.013	.159*	.604**	.634**	.470**	.423**	.388**	.325**	.276**	.342**	.240**	.357**
	Sig	.196	.976	.525	.855	.025	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).