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Shrinkhla Ek Shodhparak Vaicharik Patrika

Percieved Familial Gender Discrimination in Relation to Ways of Coping of Adolescent Girls



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Abstract

Adolescence is a formative period of rapid physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. During this period, differences in gender roles and gender inequalities become engrained. The way girls perceive familial gender discrimination during this period of storm and stress affects her remarkably. Continuously adjusting to these situations of which she is inexperienced coupled with the demand that adult patterns of behavior must be learnt puts her in stress. She is often faced with contradictory values due to culturally created dependence and parental expectations of independently taken decisions regarding career and education puts her in a state of dilemma. Children sense and perceive their parents attitude towards them through daily experience and that is true in case of familial discrimination too. This creates stress and ultimately arises coping problems in them.

The current study examined the influence of perceived familial gender discrimination and coping strategies on Urban and Rural adolescents'girls later internalizing symptoms and externalizing behaviors, and assessed the moderating roles of gender and cultural orientation.

Participants included 400 adolescents (200 urban and 200 rural).

Scores obtained by all the three groups i.e urban ,rural and total on perceived familial gender discrimination scale, developed by the researcher and Ways of Coping scale by Folkman and Lazarus(1995) were subjected to statistical analysis under four section which are as follows:

Results suggested that among the urban group, girls perceiving less familial gender discrimination were found to use more accepting responsibility coping in dealing with stress whereas among the rural group, girls were found to use more seeking social support, accepting responsibility and positive reappraisal ways of coping in dealing with stress. Among the total group, distancing coping , accepting responsibility and positive reappraisal coping was used effectively by girls perceiving less familial gender discrimination.

Keywords: Discriminatory Practices, Ways of Coping, Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination, Contradictory values, Externalizing behaviour, Internalizing Symptoms.

Introduction

Gender bias is likely to present challenges for some girls and women little is known about the coping methods that girls and women prefer to utilize when confronted with such bias. This merits additional study, given that coping responses have been linked to perceived gender discrimination in the family. Hence, the current research was designed to examine the extent to which girls and women endorse various coping strategies in response to gender discrimination.

Discrimination is a public health issue. Gender discrimination is a social evil of favouring the males over females. Though predominantly seen among traditional families, gender discrimination is a universal phenomenon being practiced both at home and in the society around. In India, gender discrimination favouring men is evident from ancient times as is seen in sex ratio, life expectancy, literacy rate, morbidity and mortality rate, schoolenrolment, school dropout, job opportunities and in the economic and political participation of the women. Females here continue

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to be at a disadvantage and face barriers that restrict their access to resources and inhibit their ability to make informed choices in various walks of life. Gender discrimination is a lifelong process that starts from the womb and ends at the tomb. It threatens the growth and survival of female foetus, female infant, girl. Investigating gender differences is another important step in understanding how perceived discrimination is related to MO youths' mental health, and for understanding the effectiveness of coping.

Objective of the Study

Today growing individualism, modernization and rapid urbanization is causing disruption in the traditional patterns of family life and the position of women as well as the way she was treated in the family.

On one hand she is expected to follow the traditions of the family which sometimes do not fit according to the changing daily circumstances. On the other hand, the modern urban world emphasizes that females are no longer under subjection, but have an egual status with their male counterparts. Adolescence brings different expectations from the parents, where they want their daughters to be modest, restricted in mobility, and submissive in their relationships. Their world is, in a way, restricted. They perceive girls as primarily responsible for household chores, therefore, they prevent them from completing their education and entering the labor force. Therefore, this period being a period of storm and stress along with the perceived familial gender discrimination and also the cultural expectations affects the ways of coping of the adolescent girls. Thus the girl is in a dilemma of whether she should act according to the traditional values which her parents expect (culture) her to follow or according to the changing circumstances She is also in the dilemma whether she should fight against gender discrimination or not and whether she should give importance to these discriminatory practices or not These dilemmas create in her stress and ultimately their ways of coping differ along with the influence of the gender discrimination they perceive in the family. Therefore, keeping this in mind the research was undertaken.

Research Design

| N=400 | | | | |
|-------|-------|--|--|--|
| RURAL | URBAN | | | |
| 200 | 200 | | | |

Hypothesis

The perceived familial gender discrimination will be found significantly related to the ways of coping of adolescent girls.

Methodology Sample

200 Urban adolescent girls and 200 rural adolescent girls of Std. - X constituted the sample for the present study. Girls were selected from Rajasthan Government Senior Higher Secondary Schools, belonging to Jaipur District. Only those girls were selected as subjects who had one or more brothers. Girls who had no brothers were not included.

Measurement Devices

An interview schedule was prepared to conduct case study of selected subjects and for this a sample of 20 girls from urban and rural group scoring high on Perceived familial gender discrimination scale (perceiving less gender discrimination) and 20 girls from urban and rural group scoring low perceived familial gender discrimination scale (perceiving more gender discrimination). 80 samples were selected for the purpose of case study.

Review of Literature

According to Singh (1975) studies on women and children's society such as India, tend to ignore topics related to young children and women. Gender discrimination in India continues to harm the lives of girls. The mindset and attitudes that exist within communities and schools, consciously subconsciously, become an obstacle in a girl's life, especially in Northern India where girls and women experience higher rates of gender discrimination. Adolescence is a key developmental stage as both boys and girls begin to be influenced by social expectations and begin to recognize the restrictions on their behaviours due to their gender. Left untouched, inequitable gender attitudes persist into adulthood, and perpetuate disparities that exist from gender inequality, such as violence, poverty, lower education, employment, health and a lack of safety for women and girls (Dalal, Lee, & Gifford, 2012; Das et al., 2014; Reed, Silverman, Raj, Decker, & Miller, 2011; Santana, Raj, Decker, La Marche, & Silverman, 2006; Verma et al., 2006).

During early adolescence, individual perceptions about gender norms begin to form and are still malleable, and therefore by addressing gender equity and bringing to the fore gender discrimination, adolescents have the potential to alter their short and long-term gender attitudes (Yu et al., 2017).

In Amrita Pritam's Pinjar (Short Story) When a daughter is born, she screams twice, once for the pain and the second time for the sorrow.

There is an inadequacy in research on female-childhood and adolescence. While some studies on socialization have provided a world-view of girlhood in India (Anandlakshmy, 1975; (Madan, 1965); (Minturn & Hitchcock, 19630); Ross 1961), few have taken adolescent girls as the focus. Researchers have dealt with the subject of women's status, (Cormack, 1961(b) Jacobsons & Wadley,(1977); (Kapoor, 1976) (Khanna & Varghese, 1978) and source studies and reports using a sociological approach, have considered factors, such as modernization, employment, education and marriage in relation to women's status (Hate, 1969) Kapoor, (1976), (Ranade & Ramachandran, 1970), (Sethi, 1976), (YMCA of India, 1971). However, the emphasis in these studies or reports is on adult women rather than on girls.

One of the unique characteristics of gender discrimination is that it occurs in many contexts in women's lives. Not only can women experience discrimination at work or from strangers, but women often live with and love (e.g., brothers, fathers, sons,

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romantic partners) members of the group that has historically oppressed them. For example, women in both Canada (Foster, in press) and the U.S. (Swim et al. 2001), report feeling excluded by trusted individuals in their social networks. In addition, unlike many isolated stressors such as a bad grade or a move, both Canadian (Foster 2001, in press) and American women (Branscombe et al. 1999; Landrine et al. 1995) expect to encounter discrimination repeatedly in the future. It may not be surprising therefore, that discrimination can have a negative impact on well-being; in both Canada (Foster 2000; Matheson et al. 2008a, b) and the U.S. (Klonoff et al. 2000; Landrine et al. 1995) discrimination has been associated with psychological and physical consequences such as anxiety, depression, headaches and increased blood pressure.

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This is important to note given that perceived discrimination is a type of stressor that may be beyond the adolescent's control. Similarly, a study by Sobralske (2006) indicated that a common theme that prevented men from seeking treatment was the idea

that men should not complain about their problems. Thus, gender (via gender socialization) may influence the effectiveness of coping strategies that youth employ when faced with ethnic discrimination.

Results and Analysis

Scores obtained by all the three groups i.e. urban, rural and total on High School Personality Questionnaire, Adjustment Inventory for school students, ways of coping scale and P.G.I. Health questionnaire were subjected to statistical analysis, which is presented in four sections.

- 1 Statistics of variable under study.
- 2 Pearson's 'r' between Perceived familial gender discrimination and variables under study.
- 3 Mean difference between high and low perceived familial gender discrimination score groups on variables under study (t-ratio).
- 4 Factor analysis of variables under study.

Result-I

Statistics of variables under study

Table 1.1
Statistics of Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination in relation to Ways of Coping of Rural Adolescent Girls

| S.No. | Variables | | Mean | Std. Dev. | SEM |
|-------|---------------------------------|------|--------|-----------|------|
| 1 | Gender Discrimination | GD | 20.265 | 2.875 | .203 |
| 2 | Confrontive Coping | CC | 9.920 | 2.572 | .182 |
| 3 | Distancing Coping | DC | 7.760 | 2.820 | .199 |
| 4 | Self Concept Coping | SCC | 10.240 | 2.889 | .204 |
| 5 | Seeking Social Support Coping | SSSC | 11.580 | 4.105 | .290 |
| 6 | Accepting Responsibility Coping | ARC | 9.910 | 2.940 | .208 |
| 7 | Escape Avoidance Coping | EAC | 11.610 | 4.063 | .287 |
| 8 | Planful Problem Solving Coping | PPSC | | 2.776 | .196 |
| 9 | Positive Reappraisal Coping | PRC | 9.645 | 3.202 | .226 |

Table 1.1 shows the means of the variables related to, ways of coping of the rural group. Along

with the means, & Standard deviation (S.D.) and standard error Mean (SEM) are given-

Table 1.2
Statistics of Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Ways Ofcoping of Urban Adolescent Girls

| S.No | Variables | | Mean | Std. Dev. | SEM |
|------|---------------------------------|------|--------|-----------|------|
| 1 | Gender Discrimination | GD | 20.045 | 3.193 | .226 |
| 2 | Confrontive Coping | CC | 9.790 | 2.997 | .212 |
| 3 | Distancing Coping | DC | 7.435 | 2.633 | .186 |
| 4 | Self Concept Coping | SCC | 9.095 | 3.015 | .213 |
| 5 | Seeking Social Support Coping | SSSC | 10.960 | 4.017 | .284 |
| 6 | Accepting Responsibility Coping | ARC | 8.980 | 2.812 | .199 |
| 7 | Escape Avoidance Coping | EAC | 11.340 | 4.277 | .302 |
| 8 | Planful Problem Solving Coping | PPSC | 8.545 | 2.819 | .199 |
| 9 | Positive Reappraisal Coping | PRC | 8.550 | 2.936 | .208 |

Table 1.3

Statistics of Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Ways of Coping of The Total Group.

| S.No | Variables | | Mean | Std. Dev. | SEM |
|------|---------------------------------|------|--------|-----------|------|
| 1 | Gender Discrimination | GD | 20.155 | 3.036 | .152 |
| 2 | Confrontive Coping | CC | 10.597 | 3.298 | .165 |
| 3 | Distancing Coping | DC | 11.048 | 3.173 | .159 |
| 4 | Self Concept Coping | SC | 14.005 | 3.536 | .177 |
| 5 | Seeking Social Support Coping | SSSC | 10.387 | 3.495 | .175 |
| 6 | Accepting Responsibility Coping | ARC | 8.995 | 2.554 | .128 |
| 7 | Escape Avoidance Coping | EAC | 13.245 | 3.982 | .199 |
| 8 | Planful Problem Solving Coping | PPSC | 12.645 | 3.106 | .155 |
| 9 | Positive Reappraisal Coping | PRC | 16.447 | 3.987 | .199 |

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Table 1.4

Pearson's 'R' Between Perceived Familial GenderDiscrimination and Ways of Coping of Urban Girls N = 200

| Variables | | Pearson's 'r' |
|---------------------------------|------|---------------|
| Confrontive Coping | CC | .0364 |
| Distancing Coping | DC | .1472 |
| Self Concept Coping | SC | .0118 |
| Seeking Social Support Coping | SSSC | .0096 |
| Accepting Responsibility Coping | ARC | 2219(a) |
| Escape Avoidance Coping | EAC | .0168 |
| Planful Problem Solving Coping | PPSC | .0433 |
| Positive Reappraisal Coping | PRC | .1270 |

a= significant at <.001 level (1- tailed significance)

Table 1.4 shows that all obtained correlation values) between perceived familial gender

discrimination scores on ways of coping variable are not significant.

Table 1.5

Pearson's 'R' Between Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Ways of Coping of Rural Girls N = 200

| Variables | 14- 200 | Pearson's 'r' | |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------------|---|
| Confrontive Coping | (CC) | .1496 | |
| Distancing Coping | (DC) | .1011 | |
| Self Concept Coping | (SCC) | .1624 | |
| Seeking Social Support Coping | (SSSC) | .1624(b) | |
| Accepting Responsibility Coping | (ARC) | .0628 | |
| Escape Avoidance Coping | (EAC) | .1875(b) | |
| Planful Problem Solving Coping | (PPSC) | .1195 | • |
| Positive Reappraisal Coping | (PRC) | .1854(b) | |

b= significant at <.01 level (1 tailed significance)

Table1.5 shows that less is the perceived familial gender discrimination, more is the seeking

social support coping, accepting responsibility coping and positive reappraisal coping used by rural girls.

Table1.6

Pearson's 'r' Between Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination and Ways of Coping of The Total Group N = 400

| Variables | | Pearson's 'r' | |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------------|--|
| Confrontive Coping | (CC) | .0643 | |
| Distancing Coping | (DC) | .1239(b) | |
| Self Concept Coping | (SCC) | .0942 | |
| Seeking Social Support Coping | (SSSC) | .0874 | |
| Accepting Responsibility Coping | (ARC) | .1362(b) | |
| Escape Avoidance Coping | (EAC) | .0599 | |
| Planful Problem Solving Coping | (PPSC) | .0837 | |
| Positive Reappraisal Coping | (PRC) | .1628(a) | |

significant at <.01 level significant at <.001 level b=

(1 tailed significance)

This shows that less the perceived familial gender discrimination more is the distancing coping, accepting responsibility and positive reappraisal coping used by the total group of girls.

Table 1.7

t-Ratio Between Mean of Ways of Coping Score among Urban High and Lower Perceived Familial Gender Discrimination Score Groups

| Ways of Coping Variables | | Group | Mean | t-ratio | 2-tail Prob. |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Confrontive Coping | (CC) | 1 | 0.6250 | .47 | .641 |
| . 5 | , , | 2 | 10.3556 | | |
| Distancing Coping | (DC) | 1 | 10.6458 | 2.94 | .004 |
| | , , | 2 | 12.3556 | | |
| Self Concept Coping | (SCC) | 1 | 13.9583 | .54 | .588 |
| | , , | 2 | 14.3556 | | |
| Seeking Social Support Coping | (SSSC) | 1 | 9.9792 | .80 | .428 |
| | , , | 2 | 10.5556 | | |
| Accepting Responsibility Coping | (ARC) | 1 | 8.1250 | 2.64 | .010 |

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| | | 1 | 9.4889 | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|---|---------|------|------|
| Escape Avoidance Coping | (EAC) | 1 | 13.1250 | 1.41 | .162 |
| | | 2 | 12.0000 | | |
| Planful Problem Solving Coping | (PPSC) | 1 | 12.7292 | .33 | .745 |
| | | 2 | 12.9333 | | |
| Positive Reappraisal Coping | (PRC) | 1 | 16.5000 | 1.70 | .093 |
| | | 2 | 17.6667 | | |

N = Group 1 = 48, Group 2 = 45

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The table indicates that the girls perceiving less gender discrimination use more distancing coping and positive reappraisal coping in dealing with stress,

as compared to girls perceiving more familial gender discrimination. No significant difference was found for the rest of the ways of coping variables.

Table 1.8
t-Ratio Between Mean of Ways of Coping Scores among Rural High and Low Perceived Familial Gender
Discrimination Score Groups

| Ways of Coping Variables | Group | Mean | t-value | 2 tail Prob. |
|---------------------------------------|-------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Confrontive Coping (CC) | 1 | 10.3793 | 1.75 | .083 |
| | 2 | 11.6250 | | |
| Distancing Coping (DC) | 1 | 10.5517 | .95 | .343 |
| | 2 | 11.2083 | | |
| Self Control Coping (SCC) | 1 | 13.4828 | 1.78 | .078 |
| | 2 | 14.8542 | | |
| Seeking Social Support Coping (SCCC) | 1 | 10.0172 | 2.78 | .007 |
| | 2 | 11.7500 | | |
| Accepting Responsibility Coping (ARC) | 1 | 8.8448 | 1.64 | .105 |
| | 2 | 9.5625 | | |
| Escape Avoidance Coping (EAC) | 1 | 13.1724 | 3.14 | .002 |
| | 2 | 15.5417 | | |
| Planful Problem Solving Coping (PPSC) | 1 | 12.2931 | 1.87 | .065 |
| | 2 | 13.4167 | | |
| Positive Reappraisal Coping (PRC) | 1 | 14.7069 | 2.32 | .022 |
| | 2 | 16.7292 | | |

N = group 1 = 58, group 2 = 48

Table 1.8 reveals that the variables, seeking social support coping, escape avoidance coping and positive reappraisal coping shows significant difference. This indicates that girls perceiving less familial gender discrimination use more seeking social

support coping, positive reappraisal coping and escape avoidance coping in coping with stress in comparison to girls perceiving more familial gender discrimination. Rest other variables of ways of coping were found to be insignificant.

Table 1.9
t-Ratio between Mean on Ways of Coping Scores in Total High and Low Perceived Familial Gender
Discrimination Score Groups

| Variables | Group | Number of | Mean | t-value | Prob.2 tail |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| | | cases | | | |
| Confronting | 1 | 105 | 10.4762 | 1.14 | .255 |
| Coping | 2 | 93 | 11.0108 | | |
| Distancing | 1 | 105 | 10.5238 | 2.74 | .007 |
| Coping | 2 | 93 | 11.7634 | | |
| Self control | 1 | 105 | 13.7234 | 1.67 | .097 |
| Seeking Social | 2 | 93 | 14.6129 | | |
| Support | 1 | 105 | 10.0095 | 2.43 | .016 |
| Accepting | 2 | 93 | 11.1720 | | |
| Responsibility | 1 | 105 | 8.5429 | 2.92 | .004 |
| Escape | 2 | 93 | 9.5269 | | |
| Avoidance | 1 | 105 | 13.1524 | 1.17 | .243 |
| Planful problem | 2 | 93 | 13.8280 | | |
| Solving | 1 | 105 | 12.5524 | 1.46 | .145 |
| Positive | 2 | 93 | 13.1828 | | |
| Reappraisal | 1 | 105 | 15.6286 | 2.77 | .006 |
| • • | 2 | 93 | 17.1829 | | |

N= group 1=105, group 2 =93

Table1.9 reveals that girls perceiving less gender discrimination use more distancing coping, seeking social support coping , accepting responsibility coping and positive reappraisal coping

in dealing with the stress as compared to girls perceiving more familial gender discrimination. The rest of the ways of coping variables were found not significant. Among the rural group, girls perceiving

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less familial gender discrimination were found to use more seeking social support, accepting responsibility and positive reappraisal ways of coping in their ways of coping with stress. Among the total group, distancing coping, accepting responsibility and positive reappraisal coping was used effectively by girls perceiving less familial gender discrimination.

Therefore the hypothesis was proved by the result in all the three groups (Urban, rural & total) which states that 'perceived familial gender discrimination will be significantly related to the ways of coping of adolescent girls".

The second phase of the study included case study of selected subjects. For this a semi structured interview schedule was prepared. Sample consisted of 20 girls each from urban and rural group high on perceived familial (perceiving discrimination gender scale less discrimination) and 20 girls each from urban and rural group scoring low on perceived familial gender discrimination scale (perceiving more gender discrimination). Thus a total 80 sample were selected for the case study.

For urban low on perceived familial gender discrimination score group, 20 girls scoring 16 and below on gender discrimination scale were selected and for urban high in perceived familial gender discrimination score group 20 girls scoring 23 and above were selected.

For rural low perceived familial gender discrimination score group, 20 girls scoring 16 and below on gender discrimination scale were selected. high rural perceived Familial gender discrimination score group, girls scoring '24' and above were selected. In the following tables urban group scoring high and low in perceived Familial gender discrimination scale have been mentioned as 'urban high on PGDS'and urban low on 'PGDS' respectively. Similarly for rural girls scoring high and low on perceived familial gender discrimination scale have been mentioned as 'rural high on PFGDS' and rural low on' PFGDS' respectively.

Thus, the case study revealed m that girls belonging to rural and urban group perceived familial gender discrimination in different areas of life, though the percentage of discrimination varies in both the groups. Thus the case study has supported the results obtained in phase one of the study.

Conclusion

Overall, the results of this analysis have supported previous researchers' hypotheses that perceived discrimination may be related to ways of coping outcomes. In addition, our analysis provides evidence that this relationship may occur through the mechanisms of stress responses and health behaviors. These relationships remained even when important covariates were included in the analyses. Our synthesis of existing literature also suggests that support from family and society support, active coping styles, are most likely to serve a protective function in these pathways. Our findings refine the knowledge base in this area and guide a more mechanistic research agenda. We clarify some of these long-

standing questions in the literature and have suggestions too.

The persistence of gender inequality suggests that there must be on-going social processes that continually recreate gender inequality and try to pull it out as evidence show that perceived discrimination and assumptions about girls and boys shape everyday personal interactions and shape gender inequalities in jobs, wages, authority, and family.

Therefore adolescence is a unique opportunity to address gender attitudes before they become more solidified and impose mental stress due to the perceived familial gender discrimination in the family. It will therefore contribute positively to the ways of coping mechanisms in the adolescent girls who is perceiving gender discrimination.

Implications

Attempt to decrease the development of depression and anxiety later on in adulthood. An intervention that has been proven effective in this is that adolescents know how they can cope better with the stressors for a better and healthier mental health. There is a need to identify and build in mechanisms for early and timely diagnosis of stress among adolescents and provide support to adolescents to adopt problem solving coping strategies rather than emotion focused, to combat stress, is through schools. Gender-sensitization and empowerment programs aimed at young people, precisely at the time when they are forming their gender attitudes, has the potential to diminish gender inequity in the long-term.

Putting more efforts and investing in girls and focusing on their problems will yield better health outcomes for children and families; greater economic prospects for families and communities; more stability and peace; and higher country-level GDP.

Policies can be initiated to empower women in India to fight against the backdrop of economic growth The force of patrilineal social structures can be reduced in order to reduce the son's bias at birth.

Limitations

This research was based only on quantitative analyses. It would be interesting to support these results with qualitative studies (through interviews or focus groups) that would help us to interpret the analyses of the results framed in both the traditional gender roles and cross-effect theories, but also in people's interpretations.

It would be interesting to include the family members as well in future studies to increase the reliability of the study.

Emphasizing the socio -economic status of the family would have also added to the reliability of the study.

The study has been conducted among educated adolescent girls from city and for that reason the findings may not be the same when rural adolescents, or adolescent boys are studied. The cultural and social factors in smaller cities and towns and rural areas, and different socioeconomic strata are much different from those in larger cosmopolitan cities and higher socioeconomic strata.

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