

Parent Peer Attachments in Relation With Adolescent Autonomy

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Abstract

There are many conceptualizations toward emotional autonomy : separation individuation, detachment, psychosocial maturity, self efficacy, independence and self determination, which makes it a multidimensional concept. In the last two decades an increase can be seen in the number of eclectic theories, which describe autonomy from a broad perspective, referring to thoughts, feelings and actual behavior. Researchers have suggested that parent adolescent attachments have an adaptive function by providing a secure base from which adolescents can independently explore new situations. Keeping in mind the literature, in this study an effort has been made to use the eclectic conceptualization of autonomy which says that autonomy development takes place in context of supportive relationships. Attachment to parents and peers is correlated with the dimensions of attitudinal, functional and emotional autonomy. A sample of 50 male and 50 female adolescents belonging to 15 to 17 years of age group was used for the purpose of the study. The psychological tools used are inventory for parent and peer attachment, and a measure of adolescent autonomy. The results are elucidated on the basis of inter-correlations. The implications of such a study are that during parental counseling, the counselors can help the parents to realize the importance of supportive relationships for enhancing autonomy.

Key Words: Peer attachment , autonomy