

Effect of Inter-Parental Conflict on Psychological Well - being and Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students at Benha City

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Abstract

Background: Inter- parental conflict play an important role in adolescence behavior which has been escalating over the years and have dire consequences on psychological well-being and academic performance on adolescents. **Aim:** was to assess the effect of Inter- Parental Conflict on psychological well-being and academic achievement among secondary school students at benha city. **Design:** A descriptive correlational research design was used in conducting this study. **Setting:** The study was conducted at two secondary schools in Benha city (Umm Almuminin secondary school for girls and Qalubia National Bank secondary school for boys) from the total (5) governmental secondary schools in Benha city. **Sample:** A cluster sample with simple random technique (28)3who was chosen from the above mentioned setting . **Tools:** Data was collected by using the following tools: 1st tool A structured Interview Questionnaire: It consisted of two parts of Part I: Socio–demographic data of students, Part II: Socio–demographic data of family. 2nd tool Children’s Perception of Inter Parental Conflict (CPIC) Scale , 3rd tool Psychological Well-being Scale and 4th tool Academic Achievement Scale. **Results:** Nearly half of studied students had moderate perception of inter parental conflict, more than one third had moderate psychological well-being and more than half had poor academic achievement . **Conclusion:** There is a highly statistically significant negative correlations between the total perception of inter parental conflict and total psychological well-being. Also between total academic achievement and total perception of inter parental conflict. On the other hand there is a highly statistically significant positive correlation between total psychological well-being and total academic achievement. **Recommendation:** Develop Psycho educational programs for adolescents about conflict resolution strategies and periodical workshops for school students to help them to cope with consequences of inter parental conflict & enhance their psychological wellbeing.

Keywords: Academic achievement, Inter- parental conflict, Psychological well-being.

1. Introduction

Secondary school students refer to age between 15-18 years which is called middle and late stage of adolescence. Adolescence is the period of development that begins at puberty and ends in early adulthood. This stage is accompanied with different changes in psychological, physiological, social and cognitive domains, psychosocial problems such as behavioral, emotional and educational problems among adolescents. Adolescents are vulnerable to psychosocial dysfunction when they suffer from physical injuries, psychological trauma or major changes in their environments especially in the absent of strong support system and presence of inter-parental conflict [1]

Inter-Parental Conflict (IP) is defined as expression of negative affect between parents. It is a term that represents a continuum of parental behaviors ranging from verbal disagreements to physical violence. It has several dimensions including frequency, interval, intensity, and mode of expression and the level of resolution all of which are significant importance in considering the impact of inter-parental conflict .Some of the major factors causing marital conflict among couples include: financial stress, sex and intimacy ,selfishness, infidelity, misunderstanding, household responsibilities, children, expectations, stepchildren, in-law’s interference, busy schedules, and addiction to substances; Whatever the causes of the conflict, the way couples handle the conflict issues determines the quality of marital relationship [2].

Inter-Parental Conflict may be constructive, destructive. Constructive conflict marked by cooperation, problem solving, support, physical affection,

and working toward a resolution. Destructive conflict has been linked to positive outcomes for children conflict including behaviors like verbal or physical aggression, stonewalling, or hostility has been linked to a host of negative outcomes on Psychological wellbeing of children, including their internalizing and externalizing symptoms [3]

Psychological wellbeing has been defined as a person's sense of wellbeing and satisfaction with life circumstances as well as a person's health status and access to resources and opportunities. The WHO defines the psychological wellbeing as person’s perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and appreciation system in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectation, standards and scars. More multidimensional and subjective concept of psychological wellbeing comprising physical, social wellbeing and functional domains [4]. Students Living in households marked by high levels of inter-parental conflict are at risk negative not only on psychological wellbeing, serious mental health problems and future psychiatric disorders but also Academic achievement [5].

On the other hand secondary schools Students appear to be vulnerable to externalizing problems such as verbal and physical aggression, noncompliance, and delinquency, as well as internalizing problems such as internalizing problems such as depression, anxiety and

suicidality. Living with inter parental conflict also increases the risk of students displaying poor interpersonal skills and low levels of social competence and deficits in student's academic Achievement [6].

Academic achievement has been defined as the level of knowledge and skills acquired by students in academic studies. Academic achievement is one of the determining factors of students' success in the future. When students understand the concept well, it is assumed that they will be able to overcome daily problems easily. It influenced by various factors. These may have social, economic and psychological nature. Parent conflict can directly or indirectly affect the academic performance of students. Students from conflicted families have fear, distorted mind, lose focus and become hopeless. Furthermore, Students may also develop poor memory, feel insecure and may struggle with future relationships can cause stress, anger, anxiety and lead to lower performance at school and academic progress [7]

Management and resolution of inter parental conflict is an important factor in reducing the negative effects of inter parental conflict. Promotion of positive conflict management strategies at the level of the inter parental relationship aimed at remediating the adverse effects of inter parental conflict on children. Effective evidence based early intervention and prevention program development are essential if these destructive patterns and cycles across generation. So, the nurse can be helpful to the students for exploring their feelings about conflict and conflict resolution, listening to students and their families, encouraging them to explore issues and options, enabling them to manage their personal situations and Including parents in treatment is essential, and educating them regarding the deleterious effects parent conflict [8].

Significance of the study

Inter parental conflict is a common problem in today's world. This phenomenon is a huge social problem in developed countries and has been increasing in developing countries. Exposure to Inter parental conflict is a big source of stress for adolescent .Adolescent from homes characterized by inter parental conflict are 5–7 times more likely to negative psychological wellbeing and significant psychological problems relative to the general population. Researches indicate that between 20% and 40% of parents who live together report significant clinical levels of distress in their relationships and between 3.3 – 10 million adolescent witness some form of inter parental conflict annually [9].

The primary focus of this research is concerned with student's perception of Inter-parental conflict because such conflict severely affects psychological well-being and academic achievement among them. The sample of 15-18 age was chosen because adolescence is the critical period for the development of healthy behaviors and life styles and Inter-parental conflicts have marked impact on adolescent behavior in this age . On the other hand there is a lack of researches about the effect of inter-parental conflict on psychological wellbeing and academic achievement among adolescents

of secondary schools in Egypt. Therefore this study will be conducted to assess effect of Inter-Parental Conflict on Psychological Wellbeing and academic achievement among secondary school students.

Aim of the study

This study aims to assess the effect of inter-Parental conflict on Psychological well-being and academic achievement among secondary school students at benha city.

Research questions:

1-What are levels of psychological wellbeing and academic achievement among secondary school students at benha city?

2-What is the effect of inter-parental conflict on psychological wellbeing and academic achievement among secondary school students at benha city

Subject and methods

I-Technical design:

Research design:

A descriptive correlational research design will be used in this study.

Research setting:

The study was be conducted at two secondary schools in Benha city (Umm Almuminin secondary school for girls and Qalubia National Bank secondary school for boys) from the total (5) governmental secondary schools in Benha city. All grades (first, second and third grade) will be included.

Research subject:

Sample type:

A cluster sample with simple random technique will be chosen from secondary schools in Benha city for the study.

Sample size:

The target of this study will be consist of 283 students from secondary schools in Benha city calculated according to population size which is nearly 1118 student according to information obtained from the director of secondary school in Benha city.

Tools for data collection:

Data collection will be conducted using the following tools:

Tool (1): A structured Interview Questionnaire:

It was developed by the researcher, designed on Arabic format in suitable language to suit students which will be concerned with the followings:

Part I: Socio-demographic data of students: It was include (student's age, sex, grade , residence, birth order, family size)

Part II: Socio-demographic data of family: It was include (parent age, occupation, , family income, level of education, Type of family, Numbers of rooms)

Tool (2): Children's Perception of Inter Parental Conflict (CPIC) Scale:-

It is self- report measure designed for adolescents within ages 9 and 17 years but further studies extended the suitability of the scale to late adolescents and emerging adults aged 18–25 years. This scale was developed by [10] modified by [11] to assess marital conflict from the child' s perspective. It consists of 48

statements assessing conflict properties (frequency, intensity, and resolution), perceived self-blame, perceived threat, triangulation, and stability. The statements have three possible responses: "True", "Sort of True", or "False." Each response is assigned a score between 1 and 3, (True = 3, "Sort of true = 2 and False=1).

There are 14 items reversed (1,2,6,9,13,17,20,23,27,28,30,36,39,47) true=1, sort of true =2 ,false =3 with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived inter parent conflict.

Scoring system:

- Score from (1 to 47) mean mild perceived inter parental conflict
- Score from (48 to 83) mean moderate perceived inter parental conflict
- Score from (84 to 126) mean high perceived inter parental conflict

Tool (3): Psychological Well-being Scale:

This scale was developed by [12]. It was translated into Arabic and validated by [13] to assess Psychological wellbeing. It consists of 42 items covering six dimensions (Autonomy, Environmental mastery, Self-acceptance, Personal growth, Purpose in life, Positive relations with others). Responses were rated on a 3 point Likert scale labeled from (disagree =1 agree = 2 and agree strongly =3) High values indicate high psychological well-being.

Scoring system

- Score from (1 to 41) mean mild psychological wellbeing
- Score from (42 to 83) mean moderate psychological wellbeing
- Score from (84 to 126) mean high psychological wellbeing

Tool (4): Academic Achievement Scale:

It was developed by [14]. It consists of 10 items used to evaluate the students' academic achievement and level of memory skills. The statements have two possible responses (apply=1, not apply=2)

Scoring system

- Score between (5-10) mean good academic achievement.
- Score between (0-4) mean poor academic achievement

II-Operational design:

- Content Validity of tool:

Content validity of tools was done by jury of 5 experts in Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing; and who checked the relevancy, comprehensiveness, clarity and applicability of the questions. According to their opinions, no modifications were done .

- Reliability of the tool:

Test the reliability of the tools through Alpha Cronbach reliability analysis.

| Tools | Alpha Cronbach |
|---|----------------|
| Children's Perception of Inter Parental Conflict (CPIC) Scale | 0.822 |
| Psychological Well-being Scale | 0.809 |
| Academic Achievement Scale: | 0.835 |

Ethical consideration:

The consent for participation of the students were taken after the purpose of the study was explained to them. Before data collection, the students were informed about the aim and nature of the study and what would be done with the results. They were given the opportunity to refuse to participate. They were informed that they have right to withdraw at any stage of the research. Also they were assured that, the information would remain confidential and used for the research purpose only. The researcher emphasized that participation in the study was entirely voluntary and anonymity of the students were assured through data coding.

Pilot study

After the tools were designed, they were tested through a pilot study, which was done before its application in the field work to check clarity and feasibility of the designed tools to be sure that it was understood and to estimate the time needed to complete its items. It was carried on a sample of 10% of studied students .No modification was done accordingly who were included later from the main study sample to assure stability of the results.

Fieldwork (data collection procedure)

The researcher visited the selected schools from 9 am to 1 am, two days per week by rotation.: almost 18-20 student /day. In each school, study aim and importance was clarified to the head master and class teachers to gain their support and cooperation. In each class, the researcher explained the study purpose to the students. Questionnaire sheets were distributed to students in the class and they were asked to fill them individually. Each class interview lasted for 30 to 40 minutes during gaming classes &space times. Data were collected throughout the period from beginning of November , 2021 till December, 2021.

III- Administrative design

Before data collected an official letter was addressed from the faculty of nursing Banha University to the directors of schools at the above mentioned settings requesting their cooperation and permission for conducting the study. All of the authorized personnel provided the needed information about the purpose and the importance of the study.

IV- Statistical analysis

All data collected were organized, coded, computerized, tabulated and analyzed by using The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program (version 25), which used frequencies and percentages for qualitative descriptive data, Chi-square was used for relation tests, mean and standard deviation was used for quantitative data and person correlation coefficient (r) was used for correlation analysis and degree of significance was identified. A highly statistical significant difference was considered if p-value < 0.01, statistical significant difference was considered if p-value < 0.05 and non-statistical significant difference was considered if p-value p > 0.05.

2. Results

Table (1) Shows that, less than two thirds (60.1%) of studied students their age between 15 to less than 17 years old with mean age was 16.67 ± 1.05 . More than two thirds (67.5%) were females. Regarding their Family size, about three quarters (74.6%) had small family. As regard Students' birth order, less than half of them (47.7%) were first, while less than one quarter (20.5%) of them were second. Less than two thirds (60.4%) are from urban area.

Table (2), Concerning their family data data, less than two thirds (62.9%) of them between ages of 40-45 years old with mean age was 42.47 ± 4.99 . While more than two thirds of mothers (69.3%) are between ages of 35-40 years old with mean age was 37.7 ± 3.13 . Regarding Level of education, almost half (48%) of father and mother have Intermediate education. As regard Occupation most of fathers (87%) were Employed, while. Nearly three quarters (70.3) of mothers are Unemployed/ housewife.

Regarding their marital status, the majority of parent (92.9%) are married. As well Family income, more than three quarters of them (77.7%) had enough income. In

addition Type of family, most of them (83.0%) have Nuclear family.

Fig. (1) Shows that, nearly half of studied students (42.4%) had Moderate perception of inter parental conflict, whilst more than one third of them (35.0%) had high perception inter parental conflict, and less than one quarter (22.6%) of them had mild perception inter parental conflict.

Fig. (2) shows that, more than one third of studied students (39.2%) had moderate psychological well-being, less than one third (31.8%) had high psychological well-being and so, 29.0% of them had mild psychological well-being.

Fig. (3) Shows that, more than half of them (59.7%) were poor academic achievement, while more than one third of them (40.3%) are good academic achievement.

Table (3) there is a highly statistically significant negative correlations between the total perception of inter parental conflict and total psychological well-being at $p\text{-value} = < 0.01$. Also between total academic achievement and total perception of inter parental conflict. On the other hand there is a highly statistically significant positive correlation between total psychological well-being and total academic achievement

Table (1) Frequency distribution of the studied students according to their socio-demographic data (n=283).

| socio-demographic data of the studied students | N | % |
|--|-----|------|
| Age | | |
| 15- < 17 years | 170 | 60.1 |
| 17 - ≤ 19years | 113 | 39.9 |
| $\bar{x} \pm S.D$ 16.67 ± 1.05 | | |
| Sex | | |
| Male | 92 | 32.5 |
| Female | 191 | 67.5 |
| Family size | | |
| Small family size | 211 | 74.6 |
| Large family size | 72 | 25.4 |
| Student birth order | | |
| First | 135 | 47.7 |
| Second | 58 | 20.5 |
| The last | 90 | 31.8 |
| Residence | | |
| Urban | 171 | 60.4 |
| Rural | 112 | 39.6 |
| Grade | | |
| First | 100 | 35.3 |
| Second | 97 | 34.3 |
| The last | 86 | 30.4 |

Table (2) Number and percentage distribution of the studied students' according to their family data (n= 283).

| Father data | N | % |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Age | | |
| 35 – <40 year | 44 | 15.5 |
| 40-45year | 178 | 62.9 |
| >45 year | 61 | 21.6 |
| \bar{x} S.D 42.47±4.99 | | |
| Level of education | | |
| Illiterate | 19 | 6.7 |
| Read and write | 13 | 4.6 |
| Basic education | 24 | 8.5 |
| Intermediate education | 137 | 48.4 |
| High education | 85 | 30.0 |
| postgraduate studies | 5 | 1.8 |
| Occupation | | |
| Employed | 247 | 87.3 |
| Unemployed | 36 | 12.7 |
| Mother data | | |
| Age | | |
| 30 – <35year | 29 | 10.2 |
| 35-40 year | 196 | 69.3 |
| >40 year | 58 | 20.5 |
| \bar{x} S.D 37.7±3.13 | | |
| Level of education | | |
| Illiterate | 24 | 8.5 |
| Read and write | 21 | 7.4 |
| Basic education | 19 | 6.7 |
| Intermediate education | 118 | 41.7 |
| High education | 93 | 32.9 |
| postgraduate studies | 8 | 2.8 |
| Occupation | | |
| Employed | 84 | 29.7 |
| Unemployed/ housewife | 199 | 70.3 |
| Family marital status | | |
| Married | 263 | 92.9 |
| Widowed | 14 | 5.0 |
| Divorced | 6 | 2.1 |
| Family income | | |
| Not enough | 52 | 18.4 |
| Enough | 220 | 77.7 |
| Enough and more | 11 | 3.9 |
| Type of family | | |
| Nuclear | 235 | 83.0 |
| Extended | 48 | 17.0 |
| Numbers of rooms | | |
| 1-4 | 208 | 73.5 |
| >4 | 75 | 26.5 |

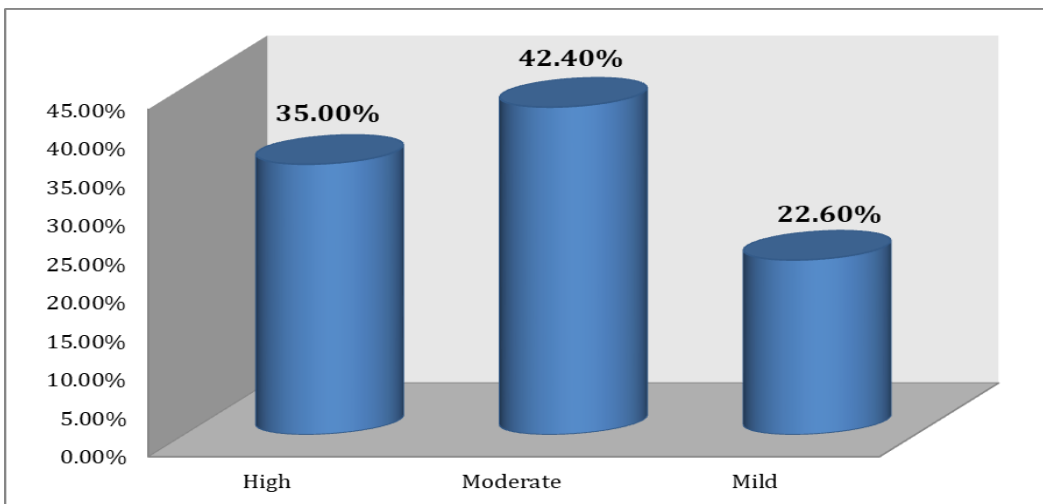


Fig. (1) Percentage distribution of the studied students' according to their total perception of inters parental conflict scale (n=283).

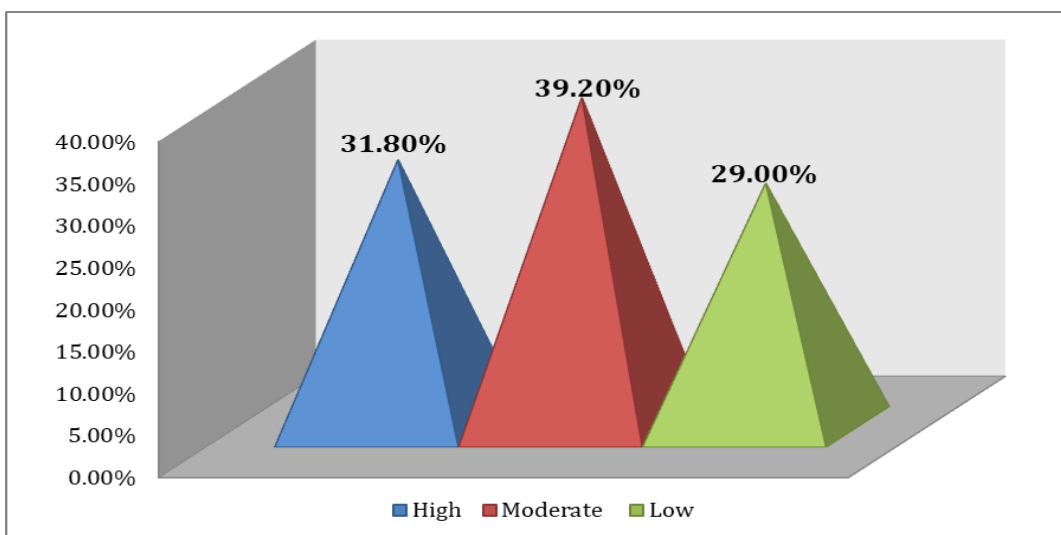


Fig. (2) Percentage distribution of the studied students' according to their total psychological well-being scale (n=283).

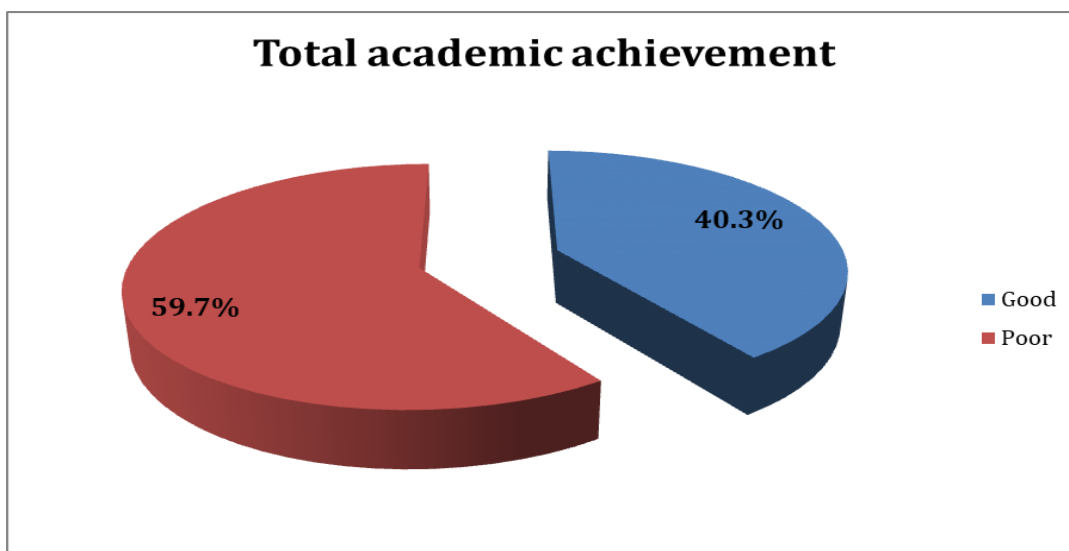


Fig. (3) Percentage distribution of the studied students' according to their total academic achievement (n=283).

Table (4) Correlation between total perception of inter parental conflict, total psychological well-being and total academic achievement of the studied students'

| Variables | | inter parental conflict | psychological well-being | academic achievement |
|--------------------------|----|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| inter parental conflict | r. | | -.599 | -.815 |
| | p | | .001** | .000** |
| psychological well-being | r. | | | .785 |
| | p | | | .000** |
| academic achievement | r. | | | |
| | p | | | |

3. Discussion

Inter-parental conflict (IPC) is a common trait of family life. Which is emphasized in early and middle childhood, conflict between parents continues to play an important role in adolescence. The physical and psychological structure of the home can impact adolescent's behavior and attitude, which are developed by what the adolescents see, view, and experience at home. Thus, it is the home environment which affects the psychological wellbeing & academic achievement of the adolescents. Exposure to interparental conflict in adolescence is a salient, long-term risk factor for internalizing and externalizing problems including increased anxiety, depressive symptoms, aggression, antisocial behavior, poor academic attainment, substance misuse, criminality, and suicidality in the extremes associated with a range of poor outcomes for adolescents, poor social relationships (e.g. peers), lower cognitive skills, risk of dropping out of school, increased risk of psychiatric disorder, suicide attempts . . A key mechanism of IPC risk is found in adolescents' appraisals of IPC that shape their emotional and coping responses to IPC, which in turn impact their long-term well-being [15].

The result of the present study regarding to socio-demographic characteristics of studied students, less than two thirds of studied students are between ages from 15 to less than 17 years old with mean age was 16.67 ± 1.05 . These results come in agreement with a study done by [16]. who reported that student their mean age \pm SD of 16.9 ± 1.03 . From the researcher point of view; this age group was capable of giving reliable feed back on parental conflicts and being aware of parent conflict. On the other hand, this finding was in disagreement with a study carried out by [17] who found that, students , their mean age \pm SD of 15.5 ± 0.83 years.

Regarding their Family size, about three quarters have small family. this finding was agreement with a study carried out by [18] who found that majority of studied students had small family. As regard to , Students' birth order, almost half of them are first, These results come in agreement with a study done [8] who reported that majority of them first birth . As regards to sex, the current study revealed that, More than two thirds are females.. this finding was in disagreement with a study carried out by [19] who reported that, half students are male

Concerning to their family data data, almost two thirds of them are between ages of 40-45 years old with mean age was 42.47 ± 4.99 . These results come in agreement with a study done by [20] who reported that their mean age \pm SD of 43 ± 1.03 While more than two thirds of mothers are between ages of 35-40 years old with mean age was 37.7 ± 3.13 .These results come in disagreement with a study done by [18] who reported that their mean age \pm SD of 41 ± 1.03 .Regarding Level of education, almost half of father and mother have Intermediate education. . From the researcher point of view; level of education affected level of conflicts.. These results come in agreement with a study done by [16] who reported that half of them have secondary level of education. As regard Occupation Most of fathers are Employed while, nearly three quarters of mothers are Unemployed/ housewife. These results come in same line with a study done by [21].

Regarding their family income, more than three quarters of them had enough income. this finding was in agreement with a study carried out by [20] .As regarding type of family, most of them had nuclear family. this finding was in agreement with a study carried out by [19].

Concerning to total level their total perception of inter parental conflict the result of this study revealed nearly half of studied students had moderate perception of inter parental conflict, whilst more than one third of them had high, a perception of inter parental conflict, nearly quarter of them have mild perception of inter parental conflict This result comes in the same line with a study done by [22] Who reported that nearly two thirds of the students faced inter-parental conflicts in their homes as a result of diverse causes. On the other hand this finding is in disagreement with a study done by [23] who reported that majority of the students have low perception level of parental conflict, while minority experienced moderate parental conflict and. From the researcher point of view; when interparental conflict higher than usual, adolescents perceived more threat and higher levels for internalizing and externalizing problems

Regarding to total psychological wellbeings , the result of this study revealed more than one third of them have moderate psychological well-being, nearly one third have high and less than one third of them have mild. This result comes in the same line with a

study done by [24] who stated the effect of interparental conflict on adolescents psychological wellbeing was moderated

Regarding to total academic achievement the result of this study revealed more than half of them are poor academic achievement , while more than one third of them are good academic achievement . This result comes in the same line with a study done by [25] who stated academic achievement is negatively affected by inter parental conflict . From the researcher point of view; this may be related to Students have fear, distorted mind, lose focus and become hopeless. Furthermore, Students may also develop poor memory, feel insecure and may struggle with future relationships can cause stress, anger, anxiety and lead to lower performance at school and academic progress.

Concerning to correlation between total perception of inter parental conflict, total psychological well-being and total academic achievement of the studied students' , the result of this study revealed that, there is a highly statistically significant negative correlations between the total perception of inter parental conflict and total psychological well-being. Also between total academic achievement and total perception of inter parental conflict. On the other hand there is a highly statistically significant positive correlation between total psychological well-being and total academic achievement. From the researcher point of view; adolescent are strongly affected by inter parental conflict in their families, can develop symptoms of depression, and the greater the conflict, the more serious the symptoms., continuous conflicts between their parents affected psychologically, especially in their way of thinking and their perception of the future. Students who witness quarrel or fights in their family may get depressed leading to poor concentration in school and subsequently affects their academic performance. This supported by [26] who revealed that, statistical significant negative associations between inter parental conflict and academic achievement and [24] who stated higher inter parental conflict was associated with adolescent having more psychological problems and [27] who revealed student psychological wellbeing is strongly related to academic performance.

4. Conclusion

Inter parental conflict is one of the social problems that increases from time to time and year to year. It has been found to pass from one generation to another. There is a highly statistically significant negative correlations between the total perception of inter parental conflict and total psychological well-being. Also between total academic achievement and total perception of inter parental conflict. On the other hand there is a highly statistically significant positive correlation between total psychological well-being and total academic achievement

Recommendations

- Develop Psycho educational programs for adolescents about conflict resolution strategies.
- Periodical workshops for school students to develop programs to cover good relationships and how to give solutions to the conflict and how to cope with consequences of inter parental conflict & enhance their psychological wellbeing.
- Intervention programs for them and their parents that enable them to be more adaptive.
- Increasing community awareness is needed through educational messages in mass media.
- Further research to study developing school curricula to include behavioral and emotional problem for children and adolescents

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