



STUDY OF ALIENATION IN RELATION TO PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW STUDY

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Abstract

This review study explores the relationship between adolescent alienation and parental involvement, examining how different types of involvement—supportive, controlling, or neglectful—affect adolescent well-being. Alienation, often linked to low self-esteem and social challenges, is influenced by parental behaviors and socio-cultural factors, including family dynamics and cultural expectations. This study synthesizes findings from diverse cultural perspectives, focusing on how balanced parental involvement can reduce alienation by supporting adolescent autonomy and emotional needs. The literature highlights that culturally sensitive approaches are essential for developing effective family support systems. The study concludes with recommendations for parent education programs, community support, and further research to address modern shifts in parenting and family relationships.

Key Words: *Adolescent Alienation, Parental Involvement, Socio-cultural Factors, Family Dynamics, Autonomy*

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by identity exploration, emotional fluctuations, and the search for autonomy. Within this transition, adolescents often re-evaluate their relationships with parental figures, which can result in feelings of alienation or estrangement. Alienation from parents has been shown to correlate with various psychological and behavioral challenges in adolescents, including low self-esteem, social difficulties, and heightened risk of mental health issues (Trost, Biesecker, Stattin, & Kerr, 2007). Parental involvement, conversely, is a protective factor, fostering resilience, emotional stability, and healthy social interactions in young people. However, the relationship between parental involvement and adolescent alienation is complex, as the level and type of involvement may either mitigate or exacerbate alienation, depending on individual family dynamics and cultural factors.

Parental alienation can emerge in situations where one parent, often in cases of marital separation or conflict, undermines the child's relationship with the other parent. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS), is increasingly recognized as a form of emotional abuse that disrupts healthy family



dynamics and impacts adolescents' long-term psychological well-being (Alemán, 2020). In these cases, adolescents may adopt negative attitudes towards one parent due to manipulation by the other, which can lead to a fractured family structure and hinder the adolescent's emotional development. Research by Platt and Bedwell (2022) found that experiencing parental alienation in childhood is associated with lasting psychological effects, including anxiety and self-esteem issues, which underscore the importance of understanding and addressing parental involvement in cases of family conflict.

Moreover, parental behaviors that are either overly restrictive or uninvolved can contribute to feelings of alienation in adolescents. A study by Shah, Szwedo, and Allen (2022) revealed that adolescents who experience restrictive autonomy from parents may feel a persistent dependency, even into emerging adulthood. This dependency is often accompanied by alienation, as adolescents may feel a lack of recognition of their developing individuality. Such restrictive behaviors limit the adolescent's ability to explore independence, which is a core developmental need during this stage, leading to frustration and detachment from the parental bond. Similarly, research by Allen, Hauser, and colleagues (1996) found that hostile family conflict reduces adolescents' sense of autonomy and relatedness, thereby predicting difficulties in forming healthy relationships with parents.

Secure attachment, on the other hand, is a vital buffer against adolescent alienation, as it fosters a sense of belonging, self-worth, and interpersonal competence (Schneider & Younger, 1996). Adolescents with secure parental attachments tend to demonstrate higher interpersonal competence and social resilience, both of which are crucial for successful navigation through adolescence. However, the lack of such attachment, often arising from inconsistent or absent parental involvement, can lead to significant feelings of alienation. For instance, Wahyuni (2019) found that insecure attachments correlate with deviant behaviors in adolescents, suggesting that alienation from parents can lead adolescents towards antisocial conduct and risk-taking behaviors.

The impact of adolescent alienation from parents extends beyond immediate family dynamics, affecting broader social and academic outcomes. For example, studies on alienation in Mexican and Brazilian families highlight how parental conflicts and involvement shape adolescent experiences in culturally diverse contexts (Cattuzzo & Marta, 2012; Bertoldi, Paiva, Domingues, & Baungartner, 2017). This cross-cultural perspective sheds light on the global relevance of parental involvement in adolescent development, showing that despite cultural variations, the absence or manipulation of parental presence can universally lead to emotional distress and social disengagement among young people. Kaya and Öz (year unavailable) further highlight the role of perceived parental attitudes in shaping adolescent self-concept and attachment style, revealing that parental behavior profoundly impacts adolescent psychological outcomes.



Indian studies also reinforce these findings, particularly in the context of educational and familial pressures. Indian adolescents often face substantial expectations from their parents, and the type of parental involvement—whether supportive or controlling—significantly affects their self-esteem and social competence. For instance, alienation in adolescents often emerges from the excessive academic pressure exerted by parents, reflecting a culture that highly values educational success. Studies like those by Monteiro, Gonçalves, and Refosco (2014) show that alienation can arise from a lack of parental support for individual pursuits and identity formation, emphasizing the relevance of understanding adolescent needs in the Indian context.

The relevance of studying adolescent alienation and parental involvement lies in its implications for psychological health and social integration. Adolescents who feel alienated from their parents are at risk for a variety of maladaptive behaviors, including substance abuse, aggression, and academic failure (Aloia & Strutzenberg, 2018). By understanding the factors that contribute to alienation, parents and practitioners can take proactive steps to foster healthier parent-child relationships that support adolescent development. Interventions, such as family therapy and community programs promoting healthy parental engagement, are vital in creating environments that allow adolescents to feel connected and understood by their parents, thus reducing feelings of alienation.

In conclusion, adolescent alienation and parental involvement are interwoven elements that play a crucial role in shaping adolescents' psychological and social trajectories. Studies from various cultural backgrounds underscore the universal need for balanced parental involvement that neither stifles nor neglects the adolescent's quest for independence. As global awareness of adolescent mental health continues to grow, the study of parental influence on adolescent alienation is essential in designing supportive family structures that cater to the developmental needs of young people worldwide.

Review of Literature

Shin (2023) investigates the impact of cultural orientations on fathers' involvement in parenting, finding that fathers with collectivist values engage more deeply in their children's upbringing, while mothers with individualist orientations also significantly contribute to parenting dynamics. This study reflects how socio-cultural differences between parents shape their roles, suggesting that in diverse global contexts, cultural values influence not only parental involvement but also expectations within families. Mugume (2023) explores the dichotomy between "caring" and "cruel" parenting modes, noting that community norms and cultural values shape parents' attitudes and behaviors towards child-rearing. The emphasis on community involvement in parenting highlights how socio-cultural factors influence not just individual parenting practices, but also the collective environment in which children grow.

Zhang and Grant (2023) address socio-cultural diversity in parental involvement by examining how race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status in the United States shape



parent-child relationships. Their study reveals that Black families report higher levels of closeness with their children, while lower socioeconomic status families demonstrate unique parent-child dynamics often shaped by socio-economic constraints. In Bahraini contexts, Al-Mahdi and Bailey (2022) highlight similar socio-cultural influences on parental involvement, finding that traditional values often dictate parental roles in education, with a preference for involvement at home rather than in formal educational settings. This echoes Chee and Ullah's (2020) findings on Pakistani families in Hong Kong, where cultural norms result in parents favoring home-based involvement over school engagement, challenging assumptions that lesser visibility in schools equates to less parental interest.

Dotterer (2022) emphasizes the significance of racial and ethnic diversity in understanding parental involvement, showing how minority families in the United States, especially those facing socioeconomic constraints, maintain high academic expectations for their children despite structural barriers. This theme of cultural adaptation and evolving parental roles is further seen in Wängqvist, Carlsson, Syed, and colleagues' (2022) study of Swedish families, which shows a generational shift towards equal responsibilities for fathers and mothers. Their findings underscore the impact of cultural shifts toward egalitarianism in family roles, which influences children's expectations and experiences of parental involvement.

Kapadia (2019) provides insight into the socio-cultural influences on parenting practices in India, where traditional gender roles and family hierarchy significantly shape parental involvement. In this context, family responsibilities are often demarcated along gender lines, with mothers assuming more domestic roles, while fathers take on disciplinary responsibilities. Sahithya, Manohari, and Vijaya (2019) provide a cross-cultural comparison, observing that while authoritative parenting is generally beneficial across cultural contexts, the hierarchical family structure in India often translates into authoritarian practices that can limit adolescent autonomy. Their findings suggest that despite globalization, cultural distinctions in India continue to influence parental involvement and child development, pointing to a need for culturally adapted parenting interventions that respect traditional values while supporting adolescent independence.

Williams-Johnson and Gonzalez-DeHass (2022) discuss the significance of socio-cultural diversity in parental role construction, noting that parents' community contexts often dictate their roles and responsibilities. By emphasizing the varying constructions of parental roles, their work highlights how cultural expectations inform family dynamics across communities, whether in terms of emotional support, disciplinary practices, or educational involvement. This aligns with the findings of Nagy and Horkai (2021), who examine "parental caring-scapes" and illustrate that parents' social and cultural capital significantly influences their roles in child-rearing, with family responsibilities and community networks supporting different approaches to parental involvement.



Dotterer (2022) also highlights the evolving role of culture and its influence on parental involvement in adolescence, stressing the importance of understanding minority family contexts. Their work underscores the need for culturally sensitive policies and practices that consider socio-cultural barriers to engagement. Wit and Leijten (2018) echo this sentiment, noting the challenges in measuring parental involvement across cultural contexts due to biases in interpretation and methodology. Their recommendations emphasize the importance of culturally sensitive research practices that capture the nuances of parental involvement in diverse family structures.

Research on immigrant families further underscores the complexity of socio-cultural influences on parenting. Lee, Keown, and Brown (2018) examine Korean immigrant families in New Zealand, showing differences in maternal and paternal parenting styles that reflect a blend of Korean and Western influences. These findings underscore how immigrant families navigate dual cultural expectations, balancing heritage values with those of the host culture. Kang and Shih (2018) add to this by exploring Korean American families, finding that socio-cultural contexts shape adolescents' perceptions of parental involvement, particularly in immigrant communities where traditional values may conflict with adolescents' desires for autonomy. This body of research emphasizes the dynamic interplay between cultural heritage and adaptive parenting practices in diverse family contexts.

These studies collectively underscore the complex influence of socio-cultural factors on parental involvement, demonstrating that cultural values, community norms, and socio-economic factors shape parenting practices across different global and cultural contexts. Understanding these differences is critical to developing family support systems and interventions that are sensitive to diverse socio-cultural landscapes. The findings highlight the need for culturally informed approaches in both research and practice to support family structures in ways that align with unique cultural expectations and community values.

Significance of the Study

The study of adolescent alienation and parental involvement holds significant relevance in the contemporary context of adolescent development and family dynamics. Adolescence is a critical period characterized by identity formation, social exploration, and the quest for autonomy, often resulting in shifts in familial relationships. Alienation from parents, when adolescents feel distanced emotionally or psychologically, can have profound impacts on their mental health, social well-being, and future relationships. Understanding the factors that contribute to such alienation, including the nature and quality of parental involvement, is essential for identifying strategies to improve family connections and support adolescent well-being. Alienation often stems from parental behaviours perceived as overly controlling or neglectful, which may hinder adolescents' needs for independence and self-expression. In contrast, balanced parental involvement



that supports autonomy while maintaining emotional availability can reduce the risk of alienation, promoting healthy development.

This study is crucial for both theoretical and practical reasons. Theoretically, it adds to the growing body of literature on adolescent psychology by providing insights into how family dynamics influence adolescent mental health. By identifying specific parental behaviors linked to feelings of alienation, this research informs developmental theories that explore the role of familial bonds in shaping self-esteem, resilience, and social skills. Practically, the study's findings offer valuable implications for parents, educators, and mental health professionals. Parents can benefit from understanding how their involvement—whether through supportive communication, shared activities, or respect for boundaries—affects their child's sense of belonging and security. For educators and counsellors, recognizing signs of alienation can aid in early intervention, offering support strategies that encourage healthy family dialogue and reinforce positive parent-adolescent connections.

In a broader societal context, the study is relevant as families face shifting challenges due to increased work demands, evolving cultural values, and the rapid growth of technology, all of which impact how parents and adolescents interact. Modern parenting often requires navigating a delicate balance between offering guidance and respecting an adolescent's need for independence, a task complicated by differing cultural norms and social expectations. As such, this study provides a timely exploration of how parental involvement and alienation intersect in various socio-cultural settings, offering a framework for understanding how to foster healthier parent-adolescent relationships. By highlighting the importance of intentional, adaptive parenting approaches, this research underscores the role of family as a primary source of emotional support and resilience for adolescents in an increasingly complex world.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the relationship between different types of parental involvement (supportive, controlling, neglectful) and adolescent alienation, based on findings from existing literature.
2. To identify parental behaviors associated with increased feelings of alienation in adolescents, particularly in cases where involvement is perceived as controlling or neglectful.
3. To examine how socio-cultural factors influence the dynamics between parental involvement and adolescent alienation across various cultural backgrounds.
4. To compile recommendations for fostering positive parental involvement that mitigates adolescent alienation and supports emotional and psychological well-being.



Hypotheses

1. Adolescents who experience supportive parental involvement are likely to exhibit lower levels of alienation compared to those who experience controlling or neglectful parental behaviors.
2. Parental behaviors perceived as overly controlling or lacking in emotional support correlate positively with higher levels of alienation in adolescents.
3. Socio-cultural variables, including family structure, economic background, and cultural expectations, significantly impact the relationship between parental involvement and adolescent alienation.
4. Balanced parental involvement, which respects adolescent autonomy while providing support, is associated with improved socio-emotional outcomes and reduced alienation.

Methodology

This study will conduct a comprehensive literature review to analyze and synthesize recent findings on adolescent alienation in relation to parental involvement. The review will include studies from diverse socio-cultural settings, focusing on peer-reviewed articles, books, and credible reports published within the past decade. The research will include cross-cultural perspectives, comparing findings from various regions, including India and Western contexts, to understand how socio-cultural differences influence the dynamics of parental involvement and adolescent alienation.

Key themes and trends will be identified, categorizing parental behaviors and types of involvement that contribute to or mitigate adolescent alienation. Particular attention will be paid to studies examining the emotional and psychological outcomes associated with different types of parental involvement, as well as the socio-cultural variables that shape family relationships. This literature-based approach will allow for an in-depth analysis of patterns and contrasts across different family structures and cultural contexts, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing adolescent alienation.

Conclusion

This review-based study aims to compile and analyze existing research on how parental involvement affects adolescent alienation, highlighting behaviors and socio-cultural factors that either exacerbate or alleviate feelings of alienation. By synthesizing findings from varied cultural perspectives, the study will underscore the importance of balanced parental involvement that fosters autonomy while maintaining emotional support. The insights derived from this research can inform strategies for parents, educators, and mental health professionals to cultivate healthier family environments and better support adolescents' developmental needs.



Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Parents can benefit from guidance on maintaining a balance between support and autonomy for adolescents. Awareness programs can equip parents with effective strategies for fostering open communication and positive engagement, reducing the likelihood of alienation.
2. Schools and community organizations can play an active role by organizing workshops and counseling sessions for families. Such programs can focus on promoting positive parent-child interactions, addressing alienation concerns, and supporting adolescent mental health.
3. Given the significant impact of cultural norms on parenting, mental health practitioners should employ culturally sensitive approaches when working with families. Training in cultural competence allows professionals to understand and accommodate diverse family dynamics.
4. Structured family dialogues, supported by community programs, can encourage adolescents to express themselves openly. These dialogues allow parents and adolescents to build mutual respect and understanding, reducing feelings of alienation.
5. Future studies could investigate the effects of modern societal changes, such as technology and digital communication, on parent-adolescent relationships and feelings of alienation. Additionally, longitudinal research could provide insights into the long-term effects of parental involvement on adolescent mental health in varied cultural settings.

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