

Solution Focused Thinking in Relationship with the Discipling Experience among Adolescents

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Abstract: The study examines the influence of the disciplining experience on the solution focused thinking among adolescents. The discipling experience mainly focuses on parental warmth and punishments. Hundred late adolescents will be chosen for the study using the purposeful sampling method. Solution Focused Inventory (SFI) will be used to measure the solution focused thinking, and the Discipling Experience Measure (DEM) will be used to assess the disciplining experience by the participants. Correlation analysis will be used to find the relationship between solution focused thinking and discipling experience. Regression analysis will be used to find out if the discipling experiences (Punishment vs parental warmth, healthy vs unhealthy discipling, perception regarding the discipling) contributes to solution focused thinking.

Index terms: Disciplined experience, Parental warmth, Punishment, Solution focused thinking.

I. INTRODUCTION

Solution-focused methodologies had its foundations in family therapy, where Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg realized that the general focus of the therapies was on negative perspectives. They understood that the sessions, when giving more importance on the positives rather than concentrating on the issue, were proficient and quicker in finding the solutions (de Shazer, 1985). Solution focused therapy, or solution focused brief therapy (SFBT) gives more importance to the solutions, than the issue (Murphy, 1994). It is a method for being solution focused about a problem, instead of being problem focused. Through this therapy the idea of solution focused thinking came into play. Solution focused thinking helps an individual to focus on the constructive side instead of harping on the deformities of the problem. It urges to approach a problem with quality, discovering the new possible pathways to deal with it using whatever resources that are accessible (de Shazer 1985).

On the other hand, problem focused thinking encourages the individual to be stagnant and brood on the issue. It denies inspirations to deal with it. The solution focused thinking uses the resources of now and then basic systems. It contains the thoughts and hypotheses which challenges numerous presumptions (Rhodes & Ajmal, 2004). The solutions emerge from the present and grow through the future. The past is just the reference to the problem. In the case of problem focused thinking the past experience is given more importance. It focuses more on the past which mostly refers to the problem situation. In the present days solution focused thinking has been proved to be more effective and efficient.

Solution focused thinking need not be an inbuilt part of one's cognition. It can be developed through certain steps. To have solution focused thought, we ought to be mindful and clear about the problem and its circumstance, have the capability to comprehend the significance of it (Mueller, 2013). The solution of an issue relies upon the expectations or desired outcomes (Shazer and Berg, 1985). The importance is to "what works!" Once recognized what works, accomplish a greater amount of it. However, if a method doesn't work, avoid applying it again, because it may lead to something else! It is simpler to repeated successful behavior patterns than to change or stop the existing problematic behavior (Murphy, 1994).

Factors that makes an individual solution focused or problem focused may be various. One of the factors that might be influencing the thinking pattern may be the disciplining experiences. Disciplining modifies the behavior of an individual, develops a character, protect the mental health, and has far reaching consequences. Parents do not undergo a professional training to apply disciplining methods. As per the attitude of the parent, disciplining experiences of an individual range from the extreme warmth to the extreme punishment of a continuum. Punishments helps a parent to instil fear in the child and thus avoid the elicitation or emission of undesirable behavior. Warmth, on the other hand, gives the child a sense of security. Though warmth and punishment tend to generate a different perspective among the children. both the technique has its own role in determining the future disciple of the child.

According to Hoffman (1964) both punishment and warmth has a positive correlation with the healthy experiences of the child. Durrant (2005) contrasts with this, saying that the effects of physical punishment are hard to understand in the long run. It may help in gaining immediate compliance. It helps in suppressing the behavior and compelling discipline in a particular moment (Newsom et al, 1983; Larzelere, 2000). There are chances that the punishment in childhood leading to future antisocial or aggressive behavior (Gershoff, 2002; Fergusson and Lynskey, 1997; Cohen and Broo, 1995; Mulvaney and Mebert, 2007). Hoffman (1964) also looked into the fact that the children who received more warmth were low in aggression.

If parental warmth or punishment experiences contribute to the thinking patterns of an individual is not a new question. There are various studies which showed that cognition may be shaped by parenting. However, studies have not yet explored if the disciplining has an influence on the solution focused or problem focused thinking. The present study is an attempt to find out if the parental warmth or disciplining experiences has a relationship with the solution focused or problem focused thinking in the adolescents. We assume that majority of the adolescents idealize parental warmth as healthy disciplining method.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the solution-focused thinking and the disciplining experiences among the adolescents.

2. Sample

The study included a sample of 101 adolescents between the age group of fifteen to twenty years of age of which sixty were women and 41 were men. The purposive sampling technique was used.

3. Procedure

The data was collected through online questionnaire. The questionnaire includes both the two measures used for measuring solution focused thinking and the disciplining experience of the late adolescents. The questionnaire was made using google form and shared among the sample group.

4. Measures

Solution Focused Inventory (SFI) was used to measure the solution focused thinking. The inventory has 12 items. There three subscale which measures the problem disengagement, goal orientation and resources activation of the sample group.

Disciplining Experience Measure (DEM) was used to assess the disciplining experience by the participants on two bases mainly the parental warmth and parental punishment. The DEM also measures the perceived healthiness of discipline and also how “disciplining helped me” of the sample group. The reliability of the solution focused inventory of the present study was 0.68 (Cronbach’s alpha). The reliability of parental warmth was 0.87 and for parental punishment the reliability was 0.85.

5. Statistical Analysis

The Mann Whitney U was used to statistically determine if there is any significant difference among men and women in the solution focused thinking, perceived healthiness in disciplining experience, warmth experience, punishment experience and if the disciplining helped. Spearman’s rho correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between solution focused thinking and the disciplining experience among the late adolescents.

III. RESULT

Normality tests indicated that the data of solution focussed thinking was normally distributed, but of disciplining experience measure was not normally distributed. Table 1 summarises whether the solution focused thinking and disciplining experience differs concerning the gender of the participants.

Table 1

Difference between men and women in solution focused thinking and disciplining experience ($N_{Women} = 60$ $N_{Men} = 41$)

| | Gender | Mean Rank | Mann-Whitney | |
|---------------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|
| | | | U | Z |
| Solution focused thinking | Women | 51.97 | 1172.00 | 0.40 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|---------|------|
| | Men | 49.59 | | |
| Perceived Healthiness | Women | 51.43 | 1204.00 | 0.19 |
| | Men | 50.37 | | |
| Warmth experience | Women | 55.58 | 955.50 | 1.90 |
| | Men | 44.30 | | |
| Punishment experience | Women | 47.14 | 998.50 | 1.60 |
| | Men | 56.65 | | |
| Disciplining Helped me | Women | 49.01 | 1110.50 | 0.83 |
| | Men | 53.91 | | |
| Not Significant | | | | |

Mann Whitney U test showed that there is no significant difference between man and women in solution focused thinking, perceived healthiness in the disciplining experiences, warmth experiences, punishment experiences, and in the feeling that disciplining helped.

Correlation analysis was used to find out if there is a significant relationship between the solution-focused thinking and the disciplining experiences among the adolescents.

Table 2

Correlation analysis which shows the relationship between solution focused thinking and disciplining experience (N = 101)

| Sl No | | Quartiles | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----------|------------------------|-----------|--------|-----|--------|-------|--------|---|
| | | I | Median | III | | | | |
| 1 | Disciplining Helped me | 60 | 75 | 90 | | | | |
| 2 | Punishment Experience | 40 | 52 | 63 | .465** | | | |
| 3 | Warmth experience | 61.5 | 68 | 72 | .507** | .247* | | |
| 4 | Perceived healthiness | 7 | 8 | 8 | .243* | .047 | .293** | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----|----|----|------|-------|------|------|
| 5 | Solution focused thinking | 44 | 49 | 53 | .054 | -.013 | .131 | .008 |
|---|---------------------------|----|----|----|------|-------|------|------|

**p < .01, *p < .05

Correlation analysis showed that Solution focused thinking does not have a relationship with disciplining experiences. But there was a moderate positive correlation with the feeling that ‘disciplining helped me’ and, punishment experience and warmth experience. ‘Disciplining helped me’ has a weak positive correlation with perceived healthiness in disciplining experience. It is surprising to see that the warmth experience and punishment experience has a positive correlation. It is interesting to see that perceived healthiness in disciplining experience is correlated with warmth experiences and is not correlated with punishment.

IV. DISCUSSION

Results showed that solution focused thinking is not influenced by the disciplining experiences of the adolescents. In solution focused thinking the decisions one make depends on the values the person holds. For solution focused thinking the mental health of the person is very important. It works better and faster for the people with positive cognition. The person should be able to manage the problems with the resources they have. The values, the mental wellness and positive orientation are practices one develops from childhood which are brought about by parents (Keeney, 1944). Though solution focused thinking is not directly correlated with the disciplining experience of the adolescents, the parental disciplining techniques and style have an indirect effect on the solution focused thinking of the person.

Adolescents think that parental warmth is healthy. This is because the disciplining techniques used by parents can be effective depending on the perception the children have on the disciplining experience. It is common that the adolescents tend to find parental warmth to be healthier and more appropriate for disciplining them. As parental warmth is a part of inductive parenting techniques which involves explaining calmly to the child about the bad behaviour and ways to improve it. It is more inclusive of the child. This gives the adolescents a positive perception on the disciplining which leads to acceptance with the parents (Patrick, 2009).

Adolescents think that the punishment experiences are not correlated to healthiness, but results show that punishment experience has a positive correlation with the ‘Disciplining helped me’ factor. The effects of punishment are hard to understand in the long run. Punishment helps to gaining immediate compliance. It helps in bringing discipline at that particular moment (Newsom et al, 1983; Larzelere, 2000). But studies show that there is strong relationship between punishment in childhood and future antisocial or aggressive behaviour (Gershoff, 2002; Fergusson and Lynskey, 1997; Cohen and Brook, 1995; Mulvaney and Mebert, 2007). Physical punishment also has a relationship with mental health problems like depression, anxiety (Gershoff, 2002). The above situations are when physical punishment is adhered. But studies show that punishment when milder or in terms of verbal punishment which include assertiveness helps in improving the discipline of the adolescents.

V. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to understand if the solution focused thinking has a relationship with the disciplining experience. It is understood that disciplining experience has no relationship with the solution focused thinking among the participants of the study. Though there was no direct relationship with the solution focused thinking and the disciplining experience, studies show that these two factors are interlinked. Various factors that induce solution focused thinking are brought about in childhood by parents. Also, solution focused thinking can be acquired during the latter phases of life and need not be induced during childhood. Parents can focus on making the child goal oriented and problem disengaged from childhood, which may lead to later solution focused thinking when they are adults. Findings showed that both punishment and parental warmth have a positive correlation on 'Disciplining helped me'. Parental warmth has a correlation with perceived healthiness of disciplining experience but punishment is not correlated with the same. Both punishment and parental warmth is required for better disciplining of the children. Parents are advised to adopt disciplining techniques that are inclusive of the children (inductive techniques) which is a mixture of both warmth and punishment on appropriate levels.

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