

Mental Health of Parents of Children in Conflict With The Law

Kumara K.S

Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Mangalore University, Mangalore.

Abstract:

The mental health of parents of children in conflict with the law is a critical but often overlooked aspect of the criminal justice and child welfare systems. Parents of children who become involved in the criminal justice system face unique challenges. These challenges can have a profound impact on their mental health and overall well-being. Parents of juveniles in conflict with the law often experience significant stress and emotional strain. They grapple with a mix of emotions, including guilt, shame, frustration, and worry, which can lead to anxiety and depression. The situation can disrupt family dynamics, affecting relationships with other children, partners, and extended family members. Parents need adequate support systems and coping strategies to navigate these challenges effectively. Communities and policymakers should work to reduce the stigma associated with parents of children in conflict with the law and provide resources to support these families.

Keywords: *Mental health, Parents, conflict with the law, juvenile children*

Introduction

There The mental health of parents of children in conflict with the law is a matter of significant concern and complexity. When a child gets caught up in the criminal justice system or encounters legal problems, not only the child is affected, but their parents as well. The emotional and psychological toll on parents in such cases can be profound. The experiences of these parents are characterized by a unique set of challenges, as they grapple with the legal

troubles and behavior of their children. These challenges can have far-reaching implications for their mental health and overall well-being. Understanding the mental health of parents in these circumstances is not only critical for the well-being of the parents themselves but also for the support and guidance they can provide to their children during this difficult time.

This exploration delves into the various aspects of the mental health of parents of

Please cite this article as: Kumara K.S. (2024). Mental health of parents of children in conflict with the law. *SRUJANI: Indian Journal of Innovative Research and Development*, 3(3), 119–127

children in conflict with the law, shedding light on the emotional impact, stressors, coping mechanisms, and the broader implications of this often-overlooked issue. By examining the challenges these parents face and the potential interventions and support systems available, we can gain insights into the larger picture of the criminal justice system's impact on families and the importance of addressing the well-being of both children and their parents in such circumstances.

What is mental health?

According to the world health Organization, good mental health is related to mental and psychological well-being. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Who are the parents of children in conflict with the law?

The parents of children in conflict with the law are the biological or legal guardians of these minors who have become involved in illegal activities or have committed offenses that bring them into the criminal justice system. In many cases, the parents are responsible for the upbringing and care of the child, and they play a significant role in the child's development and behavior. When a child is in conflict with the law, it is often a complex situation that may involve various factors, including family

dynamics, social influences, and individual circumstances. In such cases, the parents may be called upon to support their child in navigating the legal system and addressing the underlying issues that led to the unlawful behavior. Depending on the jurisdiction, parents may have legal responsibilities and obligations related to their child's legal situation.

The object of the study

- To know the socio-demographic profile of the parents whose children are juvenile.
- To know their strategies or techniques to manage the stress

Methodology: for the paper the data is obtained from the primary and secondary sources such as various journals, e-journals and book.

Research Design: The research has adopted a descriptive research design by conducting a study on mental health-related among parents.

Tools Used for Data Collection: The researcher used a questionnaire which had two parts. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of socio-demographic details of the respondents. The second part of the observation consisted of respondents.

Review of Literature

The single-parent home in simplistic terms uses the traditional methodological practice of collapsing all single-parent households into a single category (broken homes). Treating all single-parent families

as theoretically and empirically equivalent is problematic, however, for several reasons. Most important, it ignores differences that might exist between households that experience divorce, death, or no marriage, especially in terms of family bonds and resources that may condition involvement in delinquency relative to one another and to intact households (Cernkovich and Giordano, 1987, Juby and Farrington, 2001, Sprey, 1967, Wells and Rankin, 1991)

Some scholars have argued that the association between parental divorce and negative outcomes can be explained by parental absence. Parental absence is predicted to be associated with negative outcomes as it results in the removal of resources from the home leading to lower socioeconomic status (SES), less parental supervision, less parental attention and support, and decreased attachment to parents (Amato, 1993; Amato & Keith, 1991)

Ambert (1994) analyses three general areas of research pertaining to parenting with a focus on the international perspective of the same and how concepts around parenting are constructed. She deconstructs the Western dominant ideas in parenting which promote mothering as parenting and focuses on how intense emotional bonding between child and parent is conceptualized. Time and again, it is emphasised that parenting is influenced by cultural practices and concepts of the time some of which have found eternal presence especially in the

cultural context. Parenting is also constructed according to the ideologies and paradigms that were dominant in sciences and professions at the time which in turn would dictate what is good for the child or socially acceptable as childrearing practices.

With respect to the trends of parenting and change in parenting styles, under-monitoring and over-monitoring are concluded to have contributed significantly to problem behaviour in adolescents (Gardner et al., 2009). However, interestingly, the study has confirmed the correlation between increased youth/adolescent problem behaviour and decreased maternal mental health. It has to be probed if this is an aftermath of gendered expectations of parenting which is however not in the ambit of this study.

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ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**Table 1: socio-demographic profile of respondents**

Variable	No of Respondents (n:50)	%
Gander		
Male	30	60
Female	20	40
Age		
25-35	15	30
36-45	16	32
46-55	19	38
Marital Status		
Married	19	38
Single parents	16	32
Divorced	5	10
Separated	10	20
Education		
Illiterate	24	48
Primary	15	30
Secondary	7	14
college	4	8
Occupation		
Farmer	7	14
Daily wage	33	66
Employ	10	20
Monthly income		
Below-5000	6	12
5001-10000	10	20
10001-15000	24	44
15001 +	10	20
Residential area		
Rural	32	64
Urban	18	36
Religion		
Hindu	20	40
Christian	8	16
Muslim	15	30
Others	6	12
Family structure		
Nuclear	40	80
Joint	10	20

Source: Primary Data

Gender

Gender distribution of respondents in studies involving parents of children in conflict with the law indicates the proportion of male and female participants, helping to identify potential gender-specific challenges and responses in the context of juvenile justice. This data is crucial, for understanding disparities and tailoring support systems for both fathers and mothers involved in these situations. Recognizing the gender dynamics can lead to more comprehensive and effective interventions in this complex domain. It is clear that total number of respondents was 50. In this study (60%) of respondents are male, and (40%) of respondents are female.

Age

The age of parents can provide insights into generational influences on juvenile behavior. Younger or older parents may have different parenting styles and resources. It is clear that total number of respondents was 50. (30%) of the respondents are aged 25 to 35. (32%) of respondents are aged 36 to 45, and (38%)of respondents are aged 46 to 55.

Marital Status

The marital status of parents, whether they are married, single, divorced, or separated, can impact family stability and support systems, this study found that 38% of respondents are married, (32%) of respondents are single, and (30%) of respondents are divorced or separated.

Educational Background

The level of education parents has received can influence their economic opportunities, parenting skills, and the environment in which their children are raised. Out of the total respondents, (48%) of the respondents are illiterate, 30% of the respondents passed the primary level, (14%) of the respondents have an education up to high school, and only (8%) of the respondents are studied up to the PUC level.

Income and Occupation

Socioeconomic status, income levels, and employment status are essential indicators of a family's financial stability, which can impact the quality of life and opportunities available to their children. The above table shows that (12%) of the respondents are getting a below income of 5000, (20%) of the respondents have an income is 5001 to 10000, (44%) of respondents are getting 10001 to 15000, and (20%) of respondents have a monthly income of was 15000. A parent's occupation often determines the family's socioeconomic status. Lower socioeconomic status can be associated with increased stress, limited access to resources, and a lack of social and economic opportunities, (14%) of respondents are farmer, (33%) of respondents are daily wage worker, and (20%) of respondents are employer.

Residential Area

The neighbourhood and community in which a family resides can influence

access to resources, the prevalence of crime, and the overall environment in which children are raised, most of the respondents are coming from rural areas, numbers of the percentage were (64%). And the remaining percentages (36%) of respondents are in urban areas.

Religion

Religion distribution among respondents in studies involving parents of children in conflict with the law allows us to explore the diverse religious affiliations and potential influences on their coping mechanisms and support networks. Understanding the role of religion can help design culturally sensitive interventions and support systems that respect and accommodate various belief systems. Recognizing the religious diversity among these parents is essential for providing holistic assistance in this challenging context. . In this study (40%) of the respondents are Hindu, (16%) of respondents are Christian, and (30%) of respondents are Muslim, (12%) of respondents are Others.

Family Structure

The composition of the family, including the number of siblings and extended family members involved, can impact the dynamics within the household.

This study found that (80%) of respondents are coming under the nuclear family, and 10% of respondents are coming under joint family or extended

family. Over respondents are more supported by the nuclear family.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents based on their techniques for managing stress

Variable	No of Respondents (n:50)	%
Healthy Eating		
Yes	28	56
No	22	44
Meditation		
Yes	43	86
No	7	14
Biofeedback		
Yes	34	68
No	16	32
Positive Self-talk		
Yes	28	56
No	22	44
Sleep		
Yes	39	78
No	11	22
Hobbies and leisure Activities		
Yes	31	62
No	19	38
Time Management		
Yes	36	72
No	14	28
Social support		
Yes	40	80
No	10	20
Professional help		
Yes	31	62
No	19	38
Exercise		
Yes	41	82
No	9	18

Source: Primary Data

Healthy Eating: A well-balanced diet can help your body cope with stress more effectively. Avoid excessive caffeine and sugar, which can increase stress. (56%) of respondents are healthy food eating, and (44%) of respondents do not healthy food eating.

Meditation: Mindfulness meditation involves staying present in the moment and accepting it without judgment. Regular meditation can help reduce stress and increase overall well-being. 86% of respondents are doing meditation and (14%) of respondents are not practicing meditation, however, the stressful life disappears from the meditation.

Biofeedback: This technique involves using sensors to monitor bodily functions (e.g., heart rate, muscle tension) and learning to control them to reduce stress. (68%) of respondents are practicing biofeedback (32%) of respondents do not practice biofeedback. This practice was more useful the leading a joyful life.

Positive Self-talk: Challenge negative thoughts and replace them with more positive and constructive self-talk. After the situation respondents changed their tasking style positively. (56%) of respondents have positive self-talk. (44%) of respondents do not practice positive self-talk.

Hobbies and Leisure Activities: Engage in activities you enjoy taking your mind off stress and relaxing, who are stressed feeling, they are practicing new hobbies, new hobbies created a new life for the

family, this table shows that (62) percent of respondents are engaged in new activities, and (38) percent of the respondents did not practice.

Time Management: Time management is a crucial skill that can help you become more productive and achieve your goals efficiently. Effective time management can reduce the stress that comes from feeling overwhelmed. Prioritizing tasks, setting realistic goals, and breaking work into manageable chunks can help, this study found that (72) percent of respondents' opinions are managing stress, and (28) percent of respondents' opinions do not manage stress.

Social Support: Social support refers to the assistance, encouragement, and resources that individuals receive from their social networks, including family, friends, peers, and community. It is a fundamental aspect of human interaction and plays a significant role in an individual's well-being, mental health, and overall quality of life, talking to friends, family, or a therapist can provide emotional support. Sometimes, sharing your feelings and problems can significantly reduce stress. (80%) percent of respondents said yes, and (20%) percent of respondents said no.

Professional Help: If stress becomes overwhelming and persistent, consider seeking the help of a mental health professional. They can provide strategies and techniques tailored to your specific needs. "Professional help" refers to the

assistance, guidance, and support provided by trained and licensed professionals in various fields to individuals who are experiencing physical, emotional, psychological, or other types of challenges or difficulties. These professionals have specialized knowledge and expertise to address specific issues and provide tailored interventions. Seeking professional help is a common and valuable approach when individuals face complex or persistent problems that may be beyond the scope of self-help or informal support systems. (62%) percent of respondents said yes because they gave me more confidence in these things. and (38%) percent of respondents said no. because respondents didn't know who this professional.

Exercise: Physical activity can be an excellent stress reliever. It releases endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. It can be as simple as a walk or as intense as a high-intensity workout. Exercise is a physical activity that is planned, structured, and repetitive, with the goal of improving or maintaining physical fitness and overall health. It involves the use of muscles in a way that increases their strength, endurance, and flexibility. (82%) percent of respondents said yes because exercise gave them more confidence and mental strength. and (18%) percent of respondents said no. because they did not know about the exercise benefits of mental fitness.

Findings

Parents of children in conflict with the law often experience heightened levels of stress and anxiety. The uncertainty and stigma associated with their child's legal troubles can be overwhelming.

Depression and Guilt: Many parents report feelings of depression, guilt, and shame related to their child's actions. They may blame themselves for their child's behavior, even if it is not justified.

Impact on Physical Health: The chronic stress and emotional strain experienced by these parents can lead to physical health problems, including sleep disturbances, high blood pressure, and other stress-related conditions.

Financial Strain: The financial burden associated with legal fees, fines, and other related costs can lead to financial stress.

Social Isolation: Parents may withdraw from social interactions due to embarrassment and the fear of judgment from others, leading to isolation and a lack of support.

Loss of Trust: The trust between parents and their child may be eroded, leading to strained family relationships and a sense of betrayal.

Challenges in Navigating the Legal System: Many parents have little experience with the legal system and may struggle to understand the process and secure adequate legal representation for their child.

Coping Mechanisms: Some parents turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse, to deal with the stress and emotions associated with their child's legal troubles.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the mental health of parents of children in conflict with the law is a complex and often overlooked aspect of the juvenile justice system. These parents face unique challenges, including guilt, stigma, and the constant worry for their child's well-being. The emotional toll can be significant, leading to stress, anxiety, and depression. To support both the child and their parents, it is crucial for society to recognize the importance of addressing the mental health needs of these parents, providing them with resources, empathy, and guidance to help them navigate this difficult journey while promoting the rehabilitation and well-being of their children.

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