

## **Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors**

**Warda Moawad Zaki<sup>1</sup>, Gehan Ahmed Abed<sup>2</sup>, Safaa Diab Abd El Wahab<sup>3</sup>, Safaa Ibrahim Shattla<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Clinical Instructor of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, <sup>2,3,4</sup>Assistant Professor of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Menoufia University.

**Abstract: Background:** Marital conflict has been associated with many problems during adolescence such as conduct problems, aggression, and antisocial behavior, as well as internalizing problems, such as depression, anxiety, withdrawal, lack of confidence and self-esteem. The purpose of this study was to assess the effect of marital conflict among parents on their adolescents' behaviors. **Design:** A descriptive correlational design was utilized. **Setting:** The study was conducted in preparatory, secondary and high industrial schools at Shebin El-kom City and Shanawan village, Egypt. **Sample:** A purposive sample of 250 adolescents was selected. Three Instruments were utilized for collection of data: Social characteristics structured interview questionnaire, Self-Reported Strengths and difficulties questionnaire and Kansas marital conflict scale. **Results:** It was found that there was a highly statistical significant positive correlation between total marital conflict score and total behavioral score. The study concluded that there was a significant relationship between parents' marital conflict and their adolescents' behavior. Therefore, it was recommended that parents of adolescents with behavioral problems should be included in the comprehensive intervention program on, social services and assistance to improve the social and psychological functioning of parents who experience marital conflict and the effect of this conflict on their adolescents' behaviors

**Keywords:** Marital Conflict, Behavior, Adolescence.

### **Introduction**

The marriage is entering a new phase of life, which is the very important part of personal and social life of each person. How to start and forming relationships is effective on the behavior and their subsequent impacts, and can put a positive or negative influence on spouses and adolescents, hence, the quality of the marital relationship, not only effect on the level of mental health, but also in their

adolescents mental health and other social roles ( Sheykh & Emadian, ,2020) .

Not all families provide an environment that allows for healthy discovery, development and growth, as many families experience marital conflict (Kader & Roman, 2018).. Conflict can be defined as disagreement or incompatibility between people due to different

## *Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors*

objectives, perceptions, and interests. Marital conflicts are kind of ongoing significant mismatches between married couples who are shown by at least one of them (Molajafar et al., 2015).

Boostanipoor and Zaker ( 2016 ) have provided some classifications of the effective factors of the marital conflicts: money, sexual affairs, kindred relations, friends, children, drug use, the way of spending leisure time, the religious differences, sexual infidelity, end of mutual love, emotional problems, financial problems, physical abuse, communicative problems, marriage in Youngness and job conflicts and all these factors precipitate marital conflict, which in turn affects negatively on their adolescents.

Adolescence, a transitional period from childhood to adulthood is a critical period when young people begin to engage in health risk behaviors such as smoking tobacco, inadequate fruit consumption, inadequate vegetable consumption, alcohol consumption, and physical inactivity and experience high level of psychological distress (Vieira et al., 2018 ). According to the bio psychosocial model, biological/physiological factors, psychological factors and social/-environmental factors which interact and making adolescents demonstrate behavior problems, these behavioral problems triggered by conflict between parents (Atorkey & Owiredua, 2021).

Many studies show that marital conflict plays a central role in adolescents maladjustment ( Camisasca et al.,2016 ). Parents in high-conflict marriages are less warm toward their adolescents, more rejecting, harsher in their discipline, and more withdrawn and depressed than parents in low-conflict marriages . When family conflict increases parental harshness, rejection, and

inconsistency, it may lead to adolescents maladjustment, such as internalizing and externalizing problems ( Xerxa et al.,2020 ).High level of marital conflict is linked to interparental inconsistency, which in turn leads to a high level of adolescent risk-taking behavior Ye et al.,2021 ).

Risk behaviour can be defined as any behaviour that places a person at risk for negative physical, psychological or social consequences (Gaubé et al., 2019). According to the World Health Organization, nearly two-thirds of premature deaths are associated with conditions or behaviours that began in adolescence such as Substance use, sexual behavior, violence, eating behaviours, physical activity and suicide-related behaviours ( Taghizadeh et al.,2016). Disruptive and aggressive behaviour in adolescence may lead in the future to unfavorable developmental trajectories, dropping out of school, criminal activities, psychological disorders, and poor job performance. These effects on health and functioning also have high financial consequences ( Vermeulen et al.,2017 ) .

Psychiatric nurses are in a position to encourage health promotion by assessing lifestyle patterns of youth and intervening to facilitate positive and decrease negative behaviors. This is particularly true for school nurses and community-health nurses in primary health care settings (Bushy, 2020). Mental health nurses have a key role in providing direct support to children, young people and their families, as well as educating and supporting other professionals including teachers and school nurses to promote emotional and psychological wellbeing. Specialist nurses can provide a range of therapeutic interventions including cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical therapy

## *Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors*

and family therapy, as well as the management of deliberate self-harm (Nurkhodjaev et al., 2020).

### **Significance of the study**

Marital conflict is a risk factor that has been linked to several forms of maladjustment among adolescents, including behavioral and emotional problems, sleep disturbances and academic difficulties (Philbrook et al., 2018). World Health Report showed the prevalence of behavior disorders related to marital conflict worldwide was 10.3 % among adolescents ages 12-19 (Vanchindorj et al., 2017). Adolescents have to experience sudden changes in their environment, since they begin to take on different social roles. The speedy social change and development are associated with greater emotional and behavioral health risks. Their physical body exceeds their emotional maturity, and their peer pressures usually prevail their common sense (Hickie et al., 2019).

A cross sectional study conducted among adolescent students reported that 18.5% of students had behavioral problems with the highest proportion had emotional problems (19.1%) followed by conduct problems (14.3%), hyperactivity problems (13.4%) and lastly peer relations problems (7.6%). Abnormal impact score of these problems was reported among 13.7% of studied students (Mowafy et al., 2015).

Emotional and behavioral problems have serious negative consequences for adolescents' academic achievement and social development. These problems could be accompanied with chronic health problems or intensifying the present medical problems, like substance abuse and suicidal behaviors. (Deighton et al., 2018). For this reason this study was conducted to determine the relationship between

marital conflict among parents and behaviors of their adolescents.

### **Theoretical Definitions:**

#### **Marital conflict:**

Is theoretically defined as natural and inherent phenomena to marital relations, as a result of different interests, opinions, perspectives between couple members and an overt opposition between spouses, which generates disagreements and relationship difficulties (Delatorre & Wagner, 2018). In the present study it is operationally defined as the disagreement and difference between the parents of adolescents that will be measured by Kansas Marital Conflict Scale developed by (Kanas, 1985) and modified by (Cha & Joyce, 2017).

#### **Behavior:**

Is theoretically defined as the internally coordinated responses, actions or reactions of a person in response to external or internal stimulus situation (Tramonti et al., 2019). In the present study it is operationally defined as any forms of behavior conducted by adolescents that are considered inappropriate by members of the social group to which an adolescent belong that will be measured by Self-Reported Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire developed by (Goodman et al., 2002).

### **Method**

#### **The purpose of the study:**

The present study was carried out to determine the relationship between marital conflict and behaviors of adolescents

#### **Research questions:-**

Is there a relationship between marital conflicts and adolescence behaviors?

*Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors*

**Research Design:**

Descriptive co-relational design was utilized to achieve the purpose of the study.

**Setting:**

The study was conducted at preparatory and industrial schools in Shebin EL- Kom city, and in secondary schools in Shanawan village at Menofia governorate to be representative of the target population.

**A purposive sample of 250 adolescent who had the following criteria:-**

Free from history of psychiatric illness, chronic illness, or neurological disorder because these illnesses may interfere with results, age ranges from 12-19 years.

Sample size was calculated according to the study design and the objectives of the study. Based on review of past literatures Such as “Prevalence and predictors of emotional and behavioral problems among rural school Egyptian adolescents (17) found that prevalence of behavioral problems among adolescents was 18.5%, the subject size has been calculated using the following equation: The average of the study sample will be calculated within the following equation:  $n = \frac{[DEFF * Np(1-p)]}{[(d^2/Z^2(1-\alpha/2)^2 * (N-1) + p(1-p)]}$  Where  $z = 1.96$ ,  $P = 5$ ,  $D = 1$ , 95% confidence intervals was used, with a sample size of 198 adolescent students which was approximate to 200 adolescents (Open Source Statistics,2021).

**Instruments:**

Three tools were utilized to accomplish the purpose of the study.

**Instrument (1): Structured: socio-demographic questionnaire**

It was developed by the researcher to obtain demographic data of the studied subject including age, sex, place of residence and information about families such as father and mother's occupation, age, income, and educational level.

**Instrument (2): Previous Marital**

**Conflict Scale :-**

The scale developed by Kansas (1985) and modified by (Cha & Joyce,2017). It was used to assess marital conflict in parents. It consists of 27 items that aims to measure the marital conflict .It includes three sections regarding the beginning of a conflict (Do you both begin to understand each other's feelings reasonably quickly?), the middle of a conflict (e.g., Are you both able to identify clearly the specific things about which you do agree?), and the ending of a conflict (e.g., Are you both willing to give and take in order to settle the disagreements?). It is rated on a 5 point Likert scale which are: 1 = Never , 2 = Once in a while, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Frequently, 5 = Almost Always. It was translated into Arabic and back to English by the researcher.

**Total scores will be graded as follows:**

Minimal Marital Conflict	(27-63)
Moderate Marital Conflict	(64 – 100)
Maximum Marital Conflict	(101-135)

The reliability of the tool was done using Cronbach alpha reliability test and proved to be strongly reliable at0.81.

**Instrument (3): Self-Reported**

**Strengths and Difficulties Likert**

**Scale:-**

It was developed by (Goodman et al.,2002). It was used to assess emotional and behavior problems of

## *Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors*

adolescents. It includes 25 items and contains 5 scales (Emotional symptoms scale, Conduct problem scale, Hyperactivity scale, Peer problem scale and Panrosocial scale) of 5 items screening for emotional and behavior problems of adolescents. The response format is 3 points Likert scale which are : (0) Not True (1) Somewhat True (2) Certainly True . It was translated into Arabic by (31). by the researcher .The maximum score is 20-40. Studies have shown that SDQ has good internal test-retest reliability (0.86 ) as well as adequate construct validity with different subjects

**Total scores will be graded as**

**follows:**

Normal Behavior	(0-15)
Borderline Behavior	(16-19)
Abnormal Behavior	(20-40)

The reliability of the tool was done using Cronbach alpha reliability test and proved to be strongly reliable at 0.76.

**Ethical consideration:**

A written approval was obtained from the Ethical and Research Committee of the Faculty of Nursing, Menoufia University. The researcher clarified the purpose of the study to every participant in the study. Formal written consent was obtained from the participants related to their acceptance to participate. They were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality. The adolescents were informed that participation in this study was voluntary and they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

**Procedure:**

Before starting any step in the study, an official letter was submitted from the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing the directors of preparatory, secondary and industrial schools at Shanawan village and Shebin El-kom city , to

obtain the official approval to collect data for the study.

All participants were provided with required information about the purpose and methods of data collection. Then, they were asked to fill the questionnaires according to the following steps: The researcher started data collection by introducing herself to the participants. Data collection from each participant lasted for 1hour. The researcher collected the data during the morning two days/week. The researcher began to collect data from 15 participants daily in each of the selected settings. The process of data collection took three months from 15 November to 15 January.

**Statistical Analysis**

Data was entered and analyzed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) statistical package version 22. Graphics were done using Excel program. Quantitative data were presented by mean (X) and standard deviation (SD). It was analyzed using student test for comparison between two means, and ANOVA ( F) test for comparison between more than two means.

Qualitative data were presented in the form of frequency distribution tables, number and percentage. It was analyzed by chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test. However, if an expected value of any cell in the table was less than 5, Fisher Exact test was used( if the table was 4 cells) , or Likelihood Ratio (LR) test (if the table was more than 4 cells). Level of significance was set as P value <0.05 for all significant tests

**Results**

**Table (1):** Social characteristics of studied adolescents: This table showed that 62.8% of the studied adolescents are in late adolescents (62.8%), with mean of  $17.8 \pm 1.7$  years. More than half of them are females (53.2%).

***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

Majority of them are living with their parents (92.4%), while 7.6% of them are living with either the father alone or the mother alone or with the father and his wife, or the mother and her husband, or with the relatives. Regarding their education, majority of them are in secondary school education (37.6%). More than half 56% live in rural areas. As regards birth order, approximately one half of them are first birth order (44%).

**Table (2):** Marital conflicts among parents having different social characteristic: showed that more than three quarters of adolescents have moderate level of marital conflicts. Meanwhile, the fewest percentage was for parents having minimal marital conflicts. Therefore, there were highly statistical significant differences at .01

**Table(3):** Abnormal behaviors among adolescents having different social characteristics: showed that, there are statistical significant difference between each of adolescent age, education, gender, residence, housing and birth order regarding Grand total SDQ Behavioral categories (P= P<0.01, P<0.0002, P<0.001, P<0.002, P<0.02, P<0.01 respectively). Concerning age, abnormal behavioral showed a higher significant percentage among late adolescence than among early adolescence (82.2% vs. 61.3%). Industrial education show higher percent of abnormal behavioral followed by preparatory education (81% vs 73.4%). Female have the highest

score of abnormal behavioral than male with percent of (84.2% vs 63.3%). Majority of adolescents lived in urban areas have abnormal behavioral with percent of 80% than in rural areas with percent of 67.3%. The second order has the lowest score in abnormal behavior while fifth and first order has the highest percent of abnormal behavior (83.3 vs 60.3%). Majority of housing condition has abnormal behavior, and its percentage range from 81.9% for unsuitable housing condition to 73.7% for suitable housing condition and the difference is significant (P<0.02).

**Table (4):** Marital conflicts among parents having different levels of self-reported strengths: This table showed a significant relationship between parents marital conflict and their adolescents behavior.(P<0.0001). Approximately two thirds of parents suffering from minimal marital conflict(57.7%), have adolescents with normal behavior, while parents suffering from moderate or maximum marital conflict have adolescents with abnormal behavior with a percentage of 82.4% and 84% respectively with a high statistically significant difference (P<0.0001).

**Figure (1):** Percent distribution age of studied adolescents: This figure revealed that, 62.8% of the studied adolescents are in late adolescents' age and 37.2% of the studied adolescents are in early adolescents' age.

*Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors*

**Results**

**Table (1): Socio demographic characteristics of the studied adolescents (N= 250)**

Socio demographic characteristics	N0.	%
<b>Age (Years):</b>		
Early adolescents ( 12-14 years)	93	37.2
Late adolescents ( 15-19 years)	157	62.8
<b>Mean ± SD</b>	<b>17.8 ± 1.7 years</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	117	46.8
Female	133	53.2
<b>Education:</b>		
Preparatory	82	32.8
Secondary	94	37.6
Industrial high school	74	29.6
<b>Residence:</b>		
Urban	110	44
Rural	140	56
<b>Housing condition:</b>		
Suitable	185	74.0
Unsuitable	65	26.0
<b>Living with whom?</b>		
Parents	231	92.4
Father only	3	1.2
Mother only	11	4.4
Father and his wife	2	0.8
Mother &her husband	2	0.8
With relatives	1	0.4
<b>No. of siblings:</b>		
1 – 3 siblings	214	85.6
4 – 6 siblings	33	13.2
> 6 siblings	3	1.2
<b>Birth order:</b>		
First	110	44
Second	76	30.4
Third	45	18
Fourth	13	5.2
Fifth	6	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100</b>

**Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors**

**Table 2 : Marital conflicts among parents having different social characteristics**

Total Marital conflicts			Grand total MCS categories							
			Minimal Marital Conflict.(27-63)		Moderate Marital Conflict (64 – 100)		Maximum Marital Conflict (101-135)		Chi-square	
			N0.	%	N0.	%	N0.	%	X <sup>2</sup>	P-value
<b>Age of father (years)</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Total / raw</b>								
	30-< 40 Y	23(100%)	0	0	18	78.3	5	21.7	LR=7.9	P<0.04 Sig.
	40- <50 Y	153(100%)	21	13.7	132	86.3	0	0		
	50 – 60 Y	67 (100%)	5	7.5	55	82.1	7	10.4		
> 60 Y	7(100%)	0	0	7	100	0	0			
<b>Father Education</b>	Illiterate/R&W	29(100%)	0	0	17	85.6	12	41.4	LR=24.6	P<0.0001 HS
	Elementary education	28(100%)	2	7.1	16	57.2	10	35.7		
	2ry education	84(100%)	20	23.8	61	72.6	3	3.6		
	University &above	109(100%)	4	3.7	105	96.3	0	0		
<b>Father job</b>	Work	238 (100%)	25	10.5	188	79	25	10.5	LR=3.1	P=0.53
	Not work	10 (100%)	1	10	9	90	0	0		
	Dead	2 (100%)	0	0	2	100	0	0		
<b>Age of mother</b>	20-< 30 Y	2(100%)	0	0	2	100	0	0	LR=21.7	P<0.0001HS
	30- <40 Y	134(100%)	2	1.5	112	83.6	20	14.9		
	40 – <50 Y	90 (100%)	4	4.4	81	85.6	5	5.6		
	50 - 60 Y	24(100%)	20	83.3	4	16.7	0	0		
<b>Mother education</b>	Illiterate/R&W	32 (100%)	3	9.4	13	40.6	16	50	LR=17.8	P<0.001 HS
	Elementary education	19(100%)	0	0	17	89.5	2	10.5		
	2ry education	87(100%)	11	12.6	72	82.8	4	4.6		
	University &above	112(100%)	12	10.7	97	86.6	3	2.7		
<b>Mother Job</b>	Work	98(100%)	1	1.0	74	75.5	23	23.5	X <sup>2</sup> =24.2	P<0.0001 HS
	Not work	152(100%)	25	16.5	125	82.2	2	1.3		
<b>Family Income</b>	Enough	137 (100%)	18	13.1	108	78.8	11	8	LR=19.1	P<0.004 HS
	Enough and save	91 (100%)	3	3.3	74	81.3	14	15.4		
	Not Enough	11 (100%)	4	36.4	7	63.6	0	0		
	Not Enough and debt	11(100%)	1	9.1	10	90.9	0	0		
<b>Relation between mother and father</b>	Good	197 (100%)	10	5.1	165	83.8	22	11.2	LR=27.9	P<0.0001 HS
	Misunderstanding	30 (100%)	12	40	17	56.7	1	3.3		
	Father Control	18 (100%)	3	16.7	13	72.2	2	11.1		
	Mother Control	5 (100%)	1	20	4	80	0	0		
<b>Type of family</b>	Nuclear	155(100%)	24	15.5	121	78.0	10	6.5	X <sup>2</sup> =26.2	P<0.001HS
	Extended	95(100%)	2	7.4	78	82.1	15	10.5		
<b>Chronic illness</b>	Yes	85(100%)	8	9.4	69	81.2	8	9.4	X <sup>2</sup> =0.21	P=0.90 NS
	No	165(100%)	18	10.9	130	78.8	17	10.3		
<b>Total</b>			26	10.4	199	79.6	25	10		

**Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors**

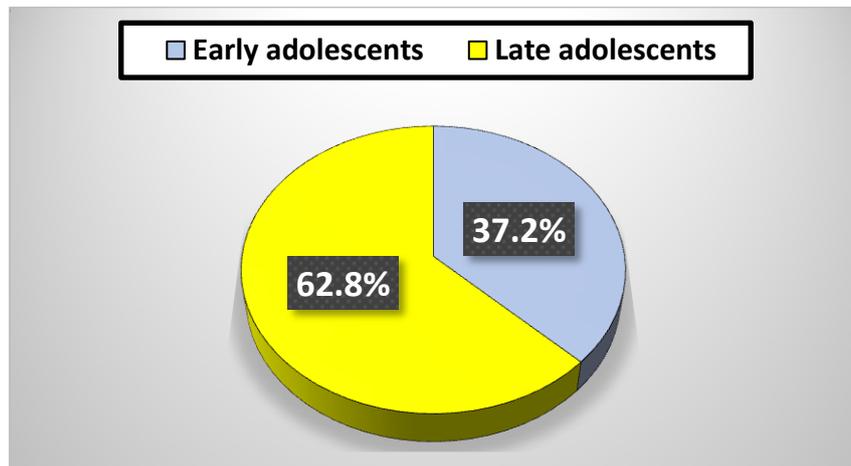
**Table 3: Abnormal Behaviors among Adolescents Having Different Social Characteristics**

Total SDQ			Grand total SDQ Behavioral categories							
			Normal (0-15)		Borderline (16-19)		Abnormal (20-40)		Chi-square	
			N0.	%	N0.	%	N0.	%	X <sup>2</sup>	P-value
Age of adolescents (years)	Categories	Total								
	Early adolescents (12-14 years)	93(100%)	8	8.6	28	30.1	57	61.3	X <sup>2</sup> =7.2	P<0.01 Sig.
Late adolescents (15-19 years)	157 (100%)	15	9.6	13	8.3	129	82.2			
Education	Preparatory	94(100%)	8	8.5	17	18.1	69	73.4	X <sup>2</sup> =13.2	P<0.0002 HS
	2ry education	82(100%)	18	21.9	27	32.9	37	45.2		
	Industrial high sch.	74(100%)	7	9.5	7	9.5	60	81.0		
Gender	Male	117(100%)	13	11.1	30	25.6	74	63.3	X <sup>2</sup> =9.8	P<0.001 HS
	Female	133 (100%)	10	7.5	11	8.3	112	84.2		
Residence	Urban	110 (100%)	17	15.5	19	17.2	74	67.3	X <sup>2</sup> =9.1	P<0.002 HS
	Rural	140 (100%)	6	4.3	22	15.7	112	80		
Housing condition:	Suitable	228 (100%)	20	8.8	40	17.5	168	73.7	LR=11.6	P<0.02 Sig.
	Unsuitable	22 (100)	3	13.6	1	4.5	18	81.9		
No. of siblings	1-3	214(100%)	19	8.9	33	15.4	162	75.7	X <sup>2</sup> =1.8	LR=3.9, p=0.42 NS
	4-6	33 (100%)	4	12.1	8	24.2	21	63.6		
	> 6	3(100%)	0	0	0	0	3	100		
Birth order	First	186 (100%)	11	5.9	29	15.6	146	78.5	LR=12.2	P=0.01 Sig
	Second	58 (100%)	12	20.7	11	19	35	60.3		
	Fifth	6(100%)	0	0	1	16.7	5	83.3		
Relation between mother and father	Good	197 (100%)	18	9.1	34	17.3	145	73.6	LR=9.7	P=0.13NS
	Misunderstanding	30 (100%)	2	6.7	2	6.7	26	86.7		
	Father Control	18 (100%)	3	16.7	2	11.1	13	72.2		
	Mother Control	5 (100%)	0	0	3	60	2	40		
Total		250 (100%)	23	9.2	41	16.4	186	74.4		

**Table 4: Marital conflicts ( MC ) among parents Having Different Levels of Self-Reported Strengths**

Groups of grand total MC	Groups of grand total behavior						Total		P value
	Normal (0-15) -		Borderline (16-19)		Abnormal (20-40) -				
	N0.	%	N0.	%	N0.	%	N0.	%	
Minimal MC (27- 63)	15	57.7	10	38.5	1	3.8	26	100	$X^2=63.4,$ $P < 0.0001$ HS
Moderate MC (64-100)	6	3	29	14.6	164	82.4	199	100	
Maximum MC (101-135)	2	8	2	8	21	84	25	100	
<b>Total</b>	23	9.2	41	16.4	186	74.4	250	100	

**Fig.1: Percent distribution of age of studied adolescents (N=250)**



### Discussion

Experiencing marital conflict during adolescence period may excessively occupy adolescents' attention and energy, and render youth susceptible to the development of problem behavior over time (Zhou et al., 2020). Since adolescence is a critical phase during which individuals transition from children with high dependency on parents and/or caregivers to adults who are independent members of society (Dahl et al., 2018). The current study hypothesized that there is a relationship between marital conflict among spouses and their adolescents, .

Regarding to marital conflicts among parents having different social characteristics, the current study showed that there was a significant relationship between parents age and marital conflict. This may be due to the decreasing of experience in solving marital problems among young ages of both parents .This result is consistent with Demeke (2019) who conducted a study about "Determinants of marital conflict among governmental employed workers " It was revealed that age of partners, educational status, monthly income, significantly predicted marital conflict. Also,

***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

Delatorre and Wagner (2018) who conducted a study about " Marital conflict management of married men and women" it was revealed that age of spouses when facing crisis inherent to the marital life cycle seem to be important for the management of conflicts by the couple.

The current study reported that there was a significant relationship between education and marital conflict .This is because of the lower the level of education, the lower the level of experience in life, and the decreasing ability in solving problems so, marital conflict is higher among low levels of education in both parents. This result is consistent with Liu et al., ( 2020) who conducted a study about " The spillover mechanisms linking family conflicts and juvenile delinquency among Chinese adolescents" it was found that Parental education was relatively low , so higher marital conflict. This result is contradicted with Tasew and Getahun (2021) who conducted a study about" Marital conflict among couples "it revealed that parents' age and educational status not effect on marital conflict.

The current study displayed that there was a significant relationship between family income and marital conflict. This is because of the lower level of income increases marital conflict due to decreased money and inability to meet needs. This result is consistent with Tiruwork (2015) who conducted a study about" Inter parental conflict and its influence on adolescent's academic self-regulation" it was reported that financial problems are strongly associated with marital conflict. While inconsistent with skalemariam and Minwagaw (2014) who conducted a study about" Divorce in east Gojjam zone: Rates, causes and consequences " which revealed that marital conflict can be caused by psychological factors

but not indicated socio cultural and economic factors as the causes of marital conflict.

The current study illustrated that there was a significant relationship between relations of parents and marital conflict. Relations between parents, misunderstanding increases marital conflict due to poor communication and difficulty in understanding each other's point of view correctly. This result is consistent with Tahmasebi and Ahmadi (2015) who conducted a study about" The relationship between marital conflict and marital commitment of married couples" which revealed that the lower the level of commitment in relationship between parents, the higher the level of martial conflicts. The result of the current study also showed that there was a significant relationship between mothers working and marital conflict. Mothers who are working have additional load and pressure in their responsibilities toward her family so, higher levels of marital conflict. This result is in the same line with Raza et al., ( 2018) who conducted a study about" A longitudinal examination of work–family conflict among working mothers in the United States " they was found a positive relationship between mothers working and marital conflict . The current study showed that there was a significant relationship between extended family and marital conflict. The extended family is associated with increasing of marital conflict this may be due to increased stress, increased responsibilities, comparison and a lack of privacy and personal space within extended family. This result is consistent with Ali et al., ( 2021 ) who conducted a study about " Influences of extended family on intimate partner violence " it was revealed that extended family can have a considerable impact on conflict within couples. On the other hand this study is

***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

contradicted with Cross et al., (2021) who conducted a study about "Instrumental social support exchanges in African American extended families " it was found that extended family frequently gave support and received support from family members during illness episodes, financial support, help with responsibilities, and transportation assistance.

Concerning abnormal behaviors among adolescents having different social characteristics, the current study showed that abnormal behavioral show a higher significant percentage among late adolescence (15-19 years). This critical stage is characterized by independency so adolescents may break roles, risk taking, fighting or drinking. This result is consistent with Matković et al., (2021) who conducted a study about " Relationship between alcohol consumption habits and the perception of parental behaviors among adolescents " it was reported that late adolescence more accompanied by abnormal behaviors. In the same context, Mayne et al. (2020) who conducted a study about " Clustering of unhealthy behaviors in a nationally representative sample of US children and adolescents " it was revealed that Unhealthy behavior among adolescents increased significantly with age .

The present study demonstrated that industrial education show higher percent of abnormal behaviors among adolescents . This may be due to lack of awareness , peer popularity, peer pressure so, spreading of risky behaviors especially in industrial schools . This result is consistent with Janković (2021) who conducted a study about " Assertiveness, self-esteem and parental influence (fathers) as factors in high-risk behavior of high school students " it was revealed that risky behaviors among high school students were high. Besides Malekpuor

et al., (2020) who conducted a study about "The Effect of Education Program for Mothers and Adolescents on Reducing Behavioral Problems and Increase the Social Skills of Adolescents Girls in During Puberty " it was found that education could play an important role in behavioral problems social skills during adolescence.

The result of the current study illustrated that majority of adolescents lived in urban areas have abnormal behavioral. This may be due to difference of culture, traditions and the desire for urbanization among adolescents. This result is matched with Massar and Patil (2020) who conducted a study about " Effects of Parenting Practices and Marital Satisfaction on Adolescent Behavioral Problems " it was reported that behavioral problems of rural adolescents was found higher compared to urban adolescents. While the result is contradicted with Hanimoglu (2018) who conducted a study about " Deviant Behavior in School Setting " who revealed that There was no direct relationship between negative effects of social environment , residence and adolescent's behavioral problems.

The current study showed that the second order has the minimal score in abnormal behavior while fifth and first order has the highest percent of Abnormal Behavior. This may be due to that first order adolescents are more risky taking, belief that they are mature enough to do what they want any time, but youngest order is more pampered and not have enough experience to deal with any problems. This result is contradicted with the study conducted by Breining et al., (2020) who conducted a study about " Birth order and delinquency " which was revealed that in families with two or more children, second born sons are more

## *Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors*

likely to be disciplined in school and enter the criminal justice system than are their firstborn siblings. Also, is contradicted with Mikhalchenkova et al., (2020) who conducted a study about "Strategies of Adolescents' delinquent Behavior And Reasons For Its Emergence" it was revealed that most adolescent delinquents were second children in their families and the firstborn children were the organized and demonstrated obedience with ethics and law.

The result of the present study discovered that unsuitable housing condition has more percent of abnormal Behavior. This may be due to that environment in which adolescents live is important as poor sanitation, poor ventilation or distance from services all these conditions increase adolescents problems especially their behaviors. This result is agreed with Fowler et al., (2018) who conducted a study about "Pathways to and from homelessness and associated psychosocial outcomes among adolescents leaving the foster care system" it was revealed that unsuitable housing was related to behavioral problems and high school dropout among adolescents. Also, Kobulsky et al., (2022) who conducted a study about "Neglect, Abuse, and Adaptive Functioning: Food Security and Housing Stability as Protective Factors for Adolescents" it was reported that the important role of housing for promoting adaptive functioning among adolescents.

Regarding marital conflicts among parents on having different levels of self-reported strengths, the result of the current study revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between marital conflict and their adolescents' behavior. This may be due to many reasons such as family income that money problems make adolescents unable to meet their needs so, increase

engagement in risky behaviors. In addition to poor communication between parents, negative relations between parents, lack of trust between parents, inability to handle family issues properly, lack of experience of parents in dealing with family problems, lack of attachment of either adolescents to their parents or lack of attachment between parents and their adolescents, inability of parents to deal effectively with their adolescents problems. All the previous reasons are significant issues which will negatively affect their adolescents' behaviors and will make them more liable to engage in risky behaviors.

The result of the current study displayed that there was a positive significant relationship between marital conflict and their adolescents behavior in which, the more the level of marital conflict is, the more percent of abnormal behavior among their adolescents and the more engagement of risky behaviors. This result is in the same line with Olatunji and Idemudia (2021) who conducted a study about "The multidimensionality of inter-parental conflict on aggression and mental health among adolescents" who was revealed that there was a positive association between parents' marital conflict and adolescents behavioral problems. This result is also in the same line with Buehler (2020) who conducted a study about "Family processes and children's and adolescents' well-being" it was reported that there is a positive correlation between inter-parental conflict and adolescents' behavioral problems.

In addition to, these results are consistent with the study by Lucas et al., (2020) who conducted a study about "Inter parental conflict, attention to angry interpersonal interactions, and adolescent anxiety" it was revealed that frequent marital conflicts cause

## ***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

multiple psychological and behavioral problems among adolescents. These results are consistent with Van Dijk al., (2020) who conducted a study about "A meta-analysis on inter parental conflict, parenting, and child adjustment in divorced families " it was reported that correlations between inter parental conflict and adolescent adjustment were mostly significant . Also, It was agreed with Fosco and Feinberg (2018) who conducted a study about " Inter parental conflict and long-term adolescent substance use trajectories " it was reported that adolescents who grow in families with parental marital conflict have been found to have internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems. Moreover this results matched with Martin et al., (2017) who conducted a study about " A process model of the implications of spillover from coparenting conflicts into the parent–child attachment relationship in adolescence " it was revealed that there was association between conflict in the co-parenting relationship and adolescent behavioral problems. These results consistent with Roberts al., (2019) who conducted a study about " Family conflict and adolescent compulsive buying behavior" it was revealed that marital conflict impacts negatively on adolescents' attitudes and behaviors .

Also, these findings matched with Rachel al.,(2017) who conducted a study about " Associations Between Marital Conflict and Adolescent Conflict Appraisals, Stress Physiology, and Mental Health" it was found that there was a relationship between parental conflict and adolescents' elevated internalizing behavioral problems. These results are contradicted with Zhou and Buehler (2019) who conducted a study about " Inter parental Hostility Interacts with Inter parental Cooperative Conflict to

Predict Adolescent Social Competence Through Parent–Child Relationship Quality" it was reported that cooperative marital conflict was associated with lower levels of adolescents behavioral problems.

### **Conclusion:**

The current study concluded that there was a positive significant correlation between total marital conflict score and total behavioral score, and there was a significant relationship between parents' marital conflict and their adolescents' behavior.

### **Recommendations:**

This study recommended that parents of adolescents with behavioral problems should be included in the comprehensive intervention programmers to educate them on, social services and assistance to improve the social and psychological functioning of parents who experience marital conflict and the effect of this conflict on their adolescents' behaviors.

### **References**

- Ababneh, O., & AlOmari, A. (2016). Outcomes of penetrating keratoplasty with imported corneas compared with local corneas. *Cornea*, 35(9), 1211-1215.
- Ali, P. A., O'Cathain, A., & Croot, E. (2021). Influences of extended family on intimate partner violence: perceptions of Pakistanis in Pakistan and the United Kingdom. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(9-10), 3965-3993.
- Atorkey, P., & Owiredua, C. (2021). Clustering of multiple health risk behaviours and association with socio-demographic characteristics and psychological distress among adolescents in Ghana: a latent class analysis. *SSM-population health*, 13, 100707.

***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

- Boostanipoor, A., & Zaker, B. (2016). The questionnaire of marital conflicts: A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). *International Journal of Psychological Studies*, 8(1), 125-32.
- Breining, S., Doyle, J., Figlio, D. N., Karbownik, K., & Roth, J. (2020). Birth order and delinquency: Evidence from Denmark and Florida. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 38(1), 95-142.
- Buehler, C. (2020). Family processes and children's and adolescents' well-being. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82(1), 145-174.
- Bushy, A. (2020). Rural nursing: Healthcare Delivery and Practice Issues.
- Camisasca, E., Miragoli, S., & Di Blasio, P. (2016). Families with distinct levels of marital conflict and child adjustment: Which role for maternal and paternal stress?. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25(3), 733-745.
- Cha & Joyce. (2017). "The Influence of Self-Compassion on Conflict Resolution Processes in Marriages". Doctor of Psychology (PsyD). 237.
- Cross, C. J., Nguyen, A. W., Chatters, L. M., & Taylor, R. J. (2018). Instrumental social support exchanges in African American extended families. *Journal of family issues*, 39(13), 3535-3563.
- Dahl, R. E., Allen, N. B., Wilbrecht, L., & Suleiman, A. B. (2018). Importance of investing in adolescence from a developmental science perspective. *Nature*, 554(7693), 441-450.
- Deighton, J., Humphrey, N., Belsky, J., Boehnke, J., Vostanis, P., & Patalay, P. (2018). Longitudinal pathways between mental health difficulties and academic performance during middle childhood and early adolescence. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 36(1), 110-126.
- Delatorre, M. Z., & Wagner, A. (2018). Marital conflict management of married men and women. *Psico-usf*, 23, 229-240.
- Demeke, W. (2019). Determinants of marital conflict among governmental employed workers in Debre Markos town. *Bahir Dar Journal of Education*, 19(2), 125-137.
- Fosco, G. M., & Feinberg, M. E. (2018). Interparental conflict and long-term adolescent substance use trajectories: The role of adolescent threat appraisals. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 32(2), 175.
- Fowler, P. J., Toro, P. A., & Miles, B. W. (2018). Pathways to and from homelessness and associated psychosocial outcomes among adolescents leaving the foster care system. *American journal of public health*, 99(8), 1453-1458.
- Gaube, S., Lerner, E., & Fischer, P. (2019). The concept of risk perception in health-related behavior theory and behavior change. In *Perceived safety* (pp. 101-118). Springer, Cham.
- Goodman, R., Ford, T., & Meltzer, H. (2002). Mental health problems of children in the community: 18 month follow up. *Bmj*, 324(7352), 1496-1497.
- Hanimoglu, E. (2018). Deviant Behavior in School Setting. *Journal of Education and Training studies*, 6(10), 133-141.
- Hickie, I., Scott, E., Cross, S., Iorfino, F., Davenport, T., Guastella, A., ... & Scott, J. (2019). Right care, first time: a highly personalised and measurement-based care model to manage youth mental

***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

- health. Medical Journal of Australia, 211, S3-S46.
- Janković, U. (2021). Assertiveness, self-esteem and parental influence (fathers) as factors in high-risk behavior of high school students: The case of Montenegro. *Sociologija*, 63(1), 50-71.
- Kader, Z., & Roman, N. (2018). The effects of family conflict on the psychological needs and externalising behaviour of preadolescents. *Social Work*, 54(1), 37-52.
- Kanas, N. (1985). Inpatient and outpatient group therapy for schizophrenic patients. *American journal of psychotherapy*, 39(3), 431-439.
- Kobulsky, J. M., Yoon, D., Villodas, M. T., Schuler, B. R., Wildfeuer, R., & Reyes III, J. N. (2022). Neglect, Abuse, and Adaptive Functioning: Food Security and Housing Stability as Protective Factors for Adolescents. *Children*, 9(3), 390.
- Liu, T. H., De Li, S., Zhang, X., & Xia, Y. (2020). The spillover mechanisms linking family conflicts and juvenile delinquency among Chinese adolescents. *International journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology*, 64(2-3), 167-186.
- Lucas-Thompson, R. G., Seiter, N. S., & Lunkenheimer, E. S. (2020). Interparental conflict, attention to angry interpersonal interactions, and adolescent anxiety. *Family Relations*, 69(5), 1041-1054.
- Malekpuor, M., Famarzi, S., & Abedi, A. (2020). The Effect of Education Program for Mothers and Adolescents on Reducing Behavioral Problems and Increase the Social Skills of Adolescentâ s Girls in During Puberty. *Clinical Psychology and Personality*, 17(2), 113-124.
- Martin, M., Sturge-Apple, M., Davies, P., Romero, C., & Buckholz, A. (2017). A process model of the implications of spillover from coparenting conflicts into the parent-child attachment relationship in adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology*, 29(2), 417-431.
- Massar, D., & Patil, P. B. (2020). Effects of Parenting Practices and Marital Satisfaction on Adolescent Behavioral Problems. *Journal homepage: <http://www.ijcmas.com>*, 9(3), 2020.
- Matković, R., Petak, A., & Ključević, Ž. (2021). Relationship between alcohol consumption habits and the perception of parental behaviors among adolescents in the Split-dalmatia county. *Kriminologija & socijalna integracija: časopis za kriminologiju, penologiju i poremećaje u ponašanju*, 29(1), 105-144.
- Mayne, S. L., Virudachalam, S., & Fiks, A. G. (2020). Clustering of unhealthy behaviors in a nationally representative sample of US children and adolescents. *Preventive Medicine*, 130, 105892.
- Mikhailchenkova, N., Bolshakov, S., & Bolshakova, Y. (2020). STRATEGIES OF ADOLESCENTS' DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR AND REASONS FOR ITS EMERGENCE. *Revista Inclusiones*, 519-526
- Molajafar, H., Mousavi, S., Lotfi, R., Ghasemnejad, S., & Falah, M. (2015). Comparing the effectiveness of mindfulness and emotion regulation training in

***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

- reduction of marital conflicts. *Journal of medicine and life*, 8(Spec Iss 2), 111.
- Mowafy, M., Ahmed, D., Halawa, E., & Emad El Din, M. (2015). Prevalence and predictors of emotional and behavioral problems among rural school Egyptian adolescents. *The Egyptian Journal of Community Medicine*, 33(1), 79-93.
- Nurkhodjaev, S., Babarakhimova, S., & Abdullaeva, V. (2020). Early Detection and Prevention of Suicidal Behavior in Adolescents. *Indian Journal of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology*, 14(4).
- Olatunji, O. A., & Idemudia, E. S. (2021). The multidimensionality of inter-parental conflict on aggression and mental health among adolescents. *Heliyon*, 7(5), e07124.
- Open Source Statistics for Public Health: <http://www.openepi.com/SampleSize/SSCohort.htm> ( reviewed on 6th February -,2021).
- Philbrook, L., Erath, S., Hinnant, J., & El-Sheikh, M. (2018). Marital conflict and trajectories of adolescent adjustment: The role of autonomic nervous system coordination. *Developmental psychology*, 54(9), 1687.
- Rachel G. Lucas-Thompson, Erika S. Lunkenheimer & Adina Dumitrache (2017) Associations Between Marital Conflict and Adolescent Conflict Appraisals, Stress Physiology, and Mental Health, *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 46:3, 379-393.
- Raza, H., van Eeden-Moorefield, B., Grzywacz, J. G., Linver, M. R., & Lee, S. (2018). A longitudinal examination of work-family conflict among working mothers in the United States. In *The Work-Family Interface: Spillover, Complications, and Challenges*. Emerald Publishing Limited.
- Roberts, J.A., Pullig, C. and David, M. (2019), "Family conflict and adolescent compulsive buying behavior", *Young Consumers*, Vol. 20 No. 3, pp. 208-218.
- Sheykh, S & Emadian, S. O. (2020). Investigating the Relationship between the Conflict Resolution Skills among Couples on the Level of Marital Conflict and Their Mental Health (Case Study: Centers of Psychological and Counseling Services of Qaemshahr City). *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research*, 8(1).
- Skalemariam, A., & Minwagaw, T. (2014). Divorce in east Gojjam zone: Rates, causes and consequences wudpecker. *Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 2(1), 008–016.
- Taghizadeh Moghaddam, H., Bahreini, A., Ajilian Abbasi, M., Fazli, F., & Saeidi, M. (2016). Adolescence Health: the needs, problems and attention. *International Journal of Pediatrics*, 4(2), 1423-1438.
- Tahmasebi, M., & Ahmadi, E. (2015). The relationship between marital conflict and marital commitment of married couples in Ayatollah Amoli Azad University. *International Journal of Humanities Cultural*, 2(3), 1065-1075.
- Tasew, A. S., & Getahun, K. K. (2021). Marital conflict among couples: The case of Durbete town, Amhara Region, Ethiopia. *Cogent Psychology*, 8(1), 1903127.

***Marital Conflict among Parents and Its Effect on their Adolescents' Behaviors***

- Tiruwork, T., (2015). Inter parental conflict and its influence on adolescent's academic self-regulation, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa.
- Tramonti, F., Giorgi, F., & Fanali, A. (2019). General system theory as a framework for biopsychosocial research and practice in mental health. *Systems Research and Behavioral Science*, 36(3), 332-341.
- Van Dijk, R., Van Der Valk, I. E., Deković, M., & Branje, S. (2020). A meta-analysis on interparental conflict, parenting, and child adjustment in divorced families: Examining mediation using meta-analytic structural equation models. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 79, 101861.
- Vanchindorj, B., Bayartsogt, B., Yerlan, G., Narm, A., Naidansuren, T., Batdelger, S., ... & Lkhagvasuren, N. (2017). Prevalence Of Emotional And Behavioral Problems Among Adolescence And Some Risk Factors In Mongolia. *Asean Journal of Psychiatry*, 18(2), 1-14.
- Vermeulen, K., Jansen, D., Buskens, E., Knorth, E., & Reijneveld, S. A. (2017). Serious child and adolescent behaviour disorders; a valuation study by professionals, youth and parents. *BMC psychiatry*, 17(1), 1-8.
- Vieira, J., Matias, M., Lopez, F., & Matos, P. (2018). Work-family conflict and enrichment: An exploration of dyadic typologies of work-family balance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 109, 152-165.
- Xerxa, Y., Rescorla, L., Serdarevic, F., Van IJzendor, M., Jaddoe, V., Verhulst, F., ... & Tiemeier, H. (2020). The complex role of parental separation in the association between family conflict and child problem behavior. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 49(1), 79-93.
- Ye, W., Dou, K., Wang, L., Lin, X., & Zhang, M. (2021). Longitudinal association between interparental conflict and risk-taking behavior among Chinese adolescent: Testing a moderated mediation model.
- Zhou, N., & Buehler, C. (2019). Marital hostility and early adolescents' adjustment: The role of cooperative marital conflict. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 39(1), 5-27.
- Zhou, N., Li, X., Zang, N., Buehler, C., Cao, H., Liang, Y., & Deng, L. (2020). Interparental Hostility Interacts with Interparental Cooperative Conflict to Predict Adolescent Social Competence Through Parent-Child Relationship Quality. *Family Process*.