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THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN PROMOTING FAMILY MENTAL SECURITY

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ABSTRACT

As the first teacher of children, a mother plays a very sensitive and significant role in providing family mental security and health. A mother has various duties and roles such as regularly monitoring the healthy growth of children and creating an affectionate and gentle environment at home. Therefore, mental security and the level of mental health should be promoted in the family via the preparation of appropriate grounds as well as a situation in which parents; especially mothers can help their children have a healthy mind through familiarity with mental health issues. The main objective of mental security is to be free from doubt, anxiety and fear and to have trust and reasonable and consistent confidence as well. If mothers can provide their children with mental security and help them achieve their educational achievement and ultimately a strong character, they have accomplished their favorable aims. The present study was conducted to investigate the role of women in promoting family mental security applying a library method and analytical-descriptive approach. The major objectives of the current study include: to determine factors involved in mental security before and after birth, status of schools with regard to family mental security, status of life skills training with respect to family mental security and its effect on the mental health and security of the community.

Keywords: Women, Mental Security, Family Health, Life Skills Training, School, and Community

INTRODUCTION

Mental security means having a quiet mind and soul and being free from fear in the way that human life will be sweet and pleasant. One of the human needs observed in most psychological theories and studies on human characteristics is the need for security. It is Cristal clear that today the behavior of an individual and society is the result of several factors among which family; school and community are the most important ones. When one is infant and child, the three above-mentioned basic factors establish their personality and plan the basis of their future behaviors. If family, school and community perform their duties well, the chance of success for the child will augment during adulthood; otherwise, if the mentioned factors do not do their duties for any reason, the compatibility of the individual will be very difficult and sometimes impossible in adolescence and adulthood.

Family is the main core of every society and the center of maintaining mental health and security. Experts in Psychology and Educational sciences consider family as one of the most important institutions affecting human behavior and education (Safi, 1994) because family is the first and most durable factor in the personality development of children and adolescents and underlying their physical, ethical, social, intellectual, and emotional growth. Due to having emotional basis, family should support children and provide them with required experiences and readiness. Hence, child's personality, his mental and physical health, his educational, occupational and economic future, social and cultural adaptation, his family formation etc. are influenced by the family. Family deviations, lack of family mental health and social and economic problems affect the society in terms of the effect that the family has on its members. Individuals grown in family enter the community and enter their healthy or unhealthy features received from the family into the community too. Thus, the health of a community is highly dependent on the health of its families.

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Hence, the especial role of women as a mother and fundamental basis of family is important in upbringing children, giving affection to them and paying attention to healthy physical and mental development of children. Women are more responsible for family management which is in both emotional and psychological aspects and the current affairs of the home. Women should plan to create a suitable emotional and psychological environment as well as nice and happy environment at home and if needed, in order to be successful and good manager at home, it is better to have necessary and required trainings. Therefore, it is obvious that mental security is one of the most vital needs of human society and the most important rights of children from parents, especially mothers.

Mental Security and its Fundamentals

Security is literally defined as safety, confidence and relaxation in face with fear (Akhavan, 2006).

Security has objective, psychological and mental aspects. In other words, security includes physical confidence and relaxation as well as mental and psychological relaxation (Lakzai, 2006). Still, in another definition, security is to be not in danger or to be protected from danger (Mirarab, 2000). Security is the sense of personal value, confidence, self-esteem and acceptance on the part of the group (Shoarinejad, 1985). As it was mentioned, the meaning of security indicates that objective, psychological and mental security is laid in the concept of security and the sense of safety indicates the psychological and mental security. Therefore, it can be said that mental security means the sense of comfort, convenience and reliability and lack of fear in human (Shamlo, 2009).

According to the introduction on the importance of family and relationships between parents and children, especially the role of mother as the most important element in forming this institution, it can be said that the desirable and healthy growth of children in all aspects is due to the effective communication between parents and children. Investigating the psychological principles of desirable and effective communication between parents and children is considered as one of the most important issues in family and its healthy and security which are discussed in the following.

Effective Factors in the Creation of Mental Security before and after Birth:

Family has certainly a major role in providing mental security and preventing behavioral disturbances. Women are mothers who pay particular attention to the health of the family. A mother allocates all her efforts to provide a healthy environment for her family (Zarandian and Hemmatian, 2006). Providing a healthy family environment plays a large role in the prevention of mental and behavioral illness and disorders. It should be said that family has a special role in becoming a model and training social and ethical behaviors and norms. A baby learns talking, walking, etiquette, responsibility, compassion, helping others, aggression etc. from his parents in his early stage of development. In child psychology especially in the last years of primary school, the child's behavior is basically considered as a mirror of parents' behavior. Therefore, parents should be aware that children always consider their parents' behavior and speech as a model. Parents' emotional stability leads children to internalize values and have healthy and consistent personality (Khorshidvand, 2009).

Hereditary and congenital factors are one of the important factors in the creation of mental disorders which are effective more than other factors in children's body and mind before and after birth. In addition, all environmental factors, economic situation of family, concerns and anxieties in pregnancy period, maternal illness during pregnancy, trauma before and after birth and other psychological and physical factors of mother may be effective in determining the fate of the child and creating irreparable damages. Chronic anxiety and uncertainty of mother in the ability for material duties has an adverse effect on the personality of the fetus. Similarly, mirthfulness of mother can help the emotional development of the healthy child (Bradshaw, 2007).

At birth, mother is the first one with whom the baby establishes an emotional relationship. Love and security is one of the basic requirements for the training and development of children. Children learn the need for security from mother during pregnancy (Mirzai, 2009). Physical contact after birth is an important and basic part in the initial emotional bond (Hoffman *et al.,* 2005) and the relaxation resulted from the physical contact in feeding is a determinant factor in infant's attachment to his mother (Mason *et al.,* 2001). Since attachment is one of the effective psychological fundamentals in desired relationship

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between parents and children, it can be said that in addition to mothers, fathers and other caregivers can play a large role in infant's attachment. Children spend the early years of their life in family environment which are educationally the most important years of their life (Moetamedi, 1994). The relationship between child and family members, especially mother in this period has been known as one of the most fundamental factors in the development of personality (Milanifar, 2000). Hence, if any disorder occurs at this relationship, its results will manifest throughout the life, in the way of children's or adolescents' compatibility with the environment and the establishment of correct relationship with other people. Methods applied by parents to train their children are strongly under the influence of expanded environment, school and culture in which the family lives. It should be noted that these methods is affected by characteristics of children too (Kakia, 2001). So, it can be said that child rearing is neither so easy to be considered as an insignificant issue nor to be overlooked. Through understanding children, familiarity with their problems and issues in different age stages, awareness of the correct education and applying the correct method, it is possible to achieve the desired training (Pringle, 1994).

Childhood is crucially important in the growth and development of children. The foundation of physical, mental, emotional and social development of children is indeed formed within these years (Shaigan, 2005). Therefore, lack of proper relationship between parents and unnecessary discrimination and encouragement will make the child's mind unbalanced. He needs parental affection, particularly mother and feeling of security in family for the establishment of mental and emotional foundation and the creation of a favorable personality. Children need to be recognized as important ones. One of the most useful things which a mother can do is to attend her children and appreciate and encourage their work (Johnson, 2003).

When a mother works outside, she should respond to the emotional needs of children with the help of the father and other family members. Studies show that even those mothers who work at home very much and attends to her children less, causes mental, emotional and social shortages in them (Ramezani, 2004). One of the most significant factors in emotional, behavioral and social disorders of children is parental misbehaviors as well as the use of punishment. In families where mothers suffer from severe mental stress or a lot of problems, young children are punished. In all these cases, what will effectively help children to reduce misbehavior is to inform parents, counsel on the issues of family and children, help them solve the family problems, establish better social relationships with others, recognize behavioral features of children in different ages and the way to deal with them.

Respect to wife is one of the other cases having a great impact on the education of children. When a mother is venerated and respected by his husband at home, she will attempt to train her children with a spirit full of affection, relaxation, sense of self-esteem and happiness. But if she is exposed to mental and physical harassment and her thoughts and personality are humiliated and insulted especially by children at home, it is clear that she would not have a healthy mind; consequently, she would not only lose his relaxation, but also her anxiety would affect children.

Prevention from anxiety and fear in children is an important point which should be attended by mothers. Mothers are more responsible for family emotional health at home (Shaikhi, 2001). Thus, in this regard, we should pay attention to mother's physical and mental relaxation so that she can quietly, intimately and carefully talk with her children and help them solve their problems (Abedi and Naghibi, 2007). The origin of jealousy in children also pertains to their desire for the exclusive love of mother. Since jealousy cannot be totally eliminated from the child, quenching or fanning the fire of jealousy largely depends on the training method and affection of mother (Jinot, 1973).

Puberty can be considered as one of the most important life periods within which family structure has a significant impact on the social-emotional development of an individual. Teenagers are physically growing, emotionally sensitive, limited in terms of experience and very fragile and under influence in terms of social culture because biological, mental and social factors are simultaneously involved in the emergence of adolescence. With regard to mental health, recognition of such developments which causes dramatic changes in the behavior of adolescents is very important and accepted by all psychologists in order to train mental health and familiarize adolescents and parents with issues and problems related to

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this course of life, (Milanifar, 2007) because relationships of parents with each other and children play a determining role in mental health. If these relationships have a good foundation, they will assist teenagers in this difficult process; otherwise, it would be of no help at all. When family relationships are poor, the ground for creating problems will be provided (Setode and Bahari, 2007). Hence, the capability of mothers in child training should be augmented and they should have the chance to become aware of how to train their children. The realization of this issue is not possible unless family education is developed.

One of the ways which can be effective in creating confidence in adolescents and solving their mental and security problems is the meetings that are held among family members at home. In these meetings, children can state their failures, frustrations and fears at home and discuss them. Sincere dialogue and expression of parents' positive and pleasant emotions in dealing with their children create friendliness and interest in them and increase the strength and intensity of parents' relationships with them which is another fundamental principles of communication between parents and children (Hargie, 2005). In addition, parents require regular trainings on how to establish security and mental relaxation for their children at home and know how to solve their problems in relation to these issues and if necessary, gather their problems and solve them with the help of counselors (Shakohi and Bromand, 2007). Due to the events of puberty, adolescents do not talk about their secrets and feelings with their parents the same as childhood. Moreover, talking about the type of activities, and their friends and places where they go has declined and they do not want to inform their parents when they return home. The other psychological basis is empathy i.e. parents understand the feelings of their adolescents and respect their wishes (Dimatteo, 2009). One of the reasons of the decline in the relationship between parents and adolescents is that parents always try to give advice to them, change their views, mention their mistakes and teach them things. The important point is that our aim of talking to our children is just to talk and empathy with them and nothing else (Fontenelle, 2004). Therefore, caring about mental development of adolescents is essential from the perspective of parents; particularly mother and abnormal behaviors should be timely detected to prevent the occurrence of any mental disorder. We all know that prevention is prior to treatment and this principle should be considered in training too.

School Status in Association with Family Mental Security

School is an especial social space where the education and development of the personality of today's children who are future-makers of the tomorrow of the society are created and managed in light of appropriate training methods, favorable space and suitable mental environment for it. The course of study is the most important courses of life for children, especially their emotional development. Hence, the creation of a safe and healthy environment in school is required for a happy and confident growth of children (Atkinson and Hornby, 2009). Achieving educational objectives that schools consider as their main objectives, requires the provision of the mental security of students. Several studies show that the mental health of students has a direct relationship with their academic achievement and students who somehow suffer from mental problems often face with educational degradation. The major mental needs whose ignorance will cause anxiety in children or adolescents include: the need for affection; belonging to a group; assertiveness; security; order and aim that should be considered in planning and training skills required for their mental health and security (Shariatmadari, 2007). Parents should know that providing educational facilities and modern systems are not sufficient for academic achievement; however, home environment should be filled with relaxation and security so that children do not feel insecure and anxious. In this regard, mother can be effective in supplying their mental health and security through creating a safe and secure environment. Therefore, if these factors are not considered, children or adolescents will face with lack of academic success. This in return, causes blames of parents, school authorities and friends and leads to the intensification of the sense of rebellion, lack of interest in continuing education, leaving school and eventually committing a crime (Hashemi, 2010). Although schools may give special attention to these cases, without the cooperation of family, they will not completely be successful in preventing unintentional injuries and lack of physical and mental security in students.

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How children or adolescents work in the school environment is largely attributed to their family relationships. Happy and intimate family relationships lead them to more success and reinforce the motivation for work in them, while unhappy and non-intimate family relationships are reasons for their emotional stresses (Ahadi and Mohseni, 1993). Among from factors which parental behavior causes behavioral disorders in children or adolescents in school environment include: excess and negligence in affection, punishment and abuse, parental conflict, parental separation, cultural poverty etc. Hence, school can invite parents to attend various meetings of the school for the prevention or elimination of these problems or give responsibility for some health and educational activities in school to parents and thereby, make a communication between parents and school authorities (Kaviani, 2008). Clearly, cooperation, collaboration and partnership of families with schools is a crucial and important issue and in so doing, families are able to share expectations, standards and their interest issues, particularly in relation to their children with the trainers. Teachers and trainers also share their knowledge and skills, needs and objectives with parents. So, such mutual encounters will result in a fruitful and effective sequence (Mofidi, 2007).

Children, especially teenagers are considered as valuable material and spiritual capitals of every society and need support and correct education (Hamidi, 2005). Given the maturity, a type of imbalance occurs in the mental and emotions of teenagers, so the content of the curriculum should help students to make a gradual mental and social balance (Maleki, 2000). Hence, the required context should be considered in various religious, social and cultural fields and the hierarchy of education should meticulously be regarded (Soltanifar, 2008).

Training mental security through school links children and adolescents to the social needs and expand loyalty and belonging values among them (Hawamdeh and Edwan, 2010). Since mental security is required for any subsequent progress in all periods of life (Mansouri and Dadsetan, 1997), common understanding of parents and teachers about the aim and criteria of home and school can largely help children and adolescents to feel confident in the two environments in which they live and to ensure that home and school does not conflict but complementary to each other (Ghazi, 2004).

Status of Training Life Skills in Relation with Family Mental Security

Life skills are practical abilities and skills leading to positive and adaptive behaviors and required for the sense of accomplishment, strength and happiness in general and ordinary daily life (Adib, 2003). Researchers emphasize the positive effect of life skills on the use of intelligence and cognitive capacities, confidence, the prevention of violent behaviors and personal and social damages (Navabinejad, 1994).

Families are responsible for preparing their children for life in the society that is they should teach them how to live in the society and teach basic skills and how to deal with the society. Unconditional acceptance is also another psychological principles based on which parents should know the abilities and talents of their children, accept them as they are and do not impose their own opinions on them (Navabinejad, 1996) because most of our reactions in relation to our children have a potential impact on their self-esteem and they will either positively or negatively be influenced by them (Stanhaus, 2001, 106). Quoted by Chahn, in this field, Motahari suggests that mental health is a psychological maturity which is created by the maximum effectiveness and satisfaction from individual and social conflict including positive emotions and feedbacks of teenagers about themselves and others (Motahari, 2001). Therefore, skills training and giving responsibility to children are actions leading them to the achievement of self-esteem and independent identity. Transferring duties and responsibilities to children is necessary for training responsible and committed children and work and responsibility give meaning and durability to life. Without doing a valuable and important work and sufficient commitment and skills to do it, reaching maturity and mental health is not possible (Shepherd, 2009). In so doing, mother can help children in the field of training skills, earning outcome for personal expenses based on age requirements, helping with homework, contributing to the welfare of other humans and lots of other similar things (Lickona, 1998).

Teachers are also effective factors in training the required skills to students. Using education services leads ultimately to supplying social security in students (Safi, 2010). Researches show that training the

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life skills significantly causes to decrease alcohol and narcotic consumption in the youth and establishes security in the community (Smith, 2004). Undoubtedly, a dynamic community needs an infrastructure change which will be realized through the application of scientific and technical plans (Jahani, 2006).

Family Health and its Effect on the Mental Security of the Community
As the smallest social institution, family is the most vulnerable group against social damages in a way that most problems and damages occur first in the family and if they are not prevented, they will penetrate to the community and in these difficult conditions, problems and injuries cannot be easily controlled. In families where parents do not agree with each other and have an insecure and precarious atmosphere, or parents are separated from each other, a suitable context is created for adolescents' disorders. It can be said that children growing in stressful families will be highly ready to commit a crime in the future. Mother usually plays an important role in this regard because mother gives all necessary attention and affection to the child in the early life and teaches him the way to love others (Farjad, 1998).

Relationships among family members will be strong, when a family as a system is established based on correct recognition and education principles (Mason, 1991). The higher the level of education and knowledge of a family, the lower the rate of delinquency in children will be (Blaghat and Hashemi, 2010). Thus, through recognizing and using the correct methods of education, parents should put their children's childhood under their training in the best form. Parents take both children and society away from the possible problems by their education (Rahbari, 2006). Nowadays, parents, especially mothers play a vital role in creating mental health, feeling of freshness and physical and mental coordination and adaptation of their children (Mohseni, 2000). Perhaps, in childhood, family attempts for physical health of children, while undoubtedly, the mental health of individuals depends on family during adolescence and young periods. Undoubtedly, if there is a friendly atmosphere in the family and children can truly state their problems and resolve them by the guidance from their parents, many social problems will be resolved (Molaii, 2011). Such families are united. In these families, many emotional relationships are established between parents and children and the mother tries to create a friendly and intimate relationship with children. If children do not suffer from mental and physical problems, it can be hopeful to see less deviant tendencies such as crime. However, it should not be ignored that this correlation should be real not forced and artificial (Ibrahimi, 2010).

One of the family functions which help the society to enjoy mental security is legal and ethical responsibility of taking care of children. In addition to physical protection and care fro children, disabilities from impairment or illness of children make the necessity and importance of the issue very much. These children need their mothers' attention and affection more than other children. If mothers neglect the maintenance and protection of such children, this can cause irreparable consequences in the community (Boustan *et al.,* 2010).

So, mental security is the background of a healthy society and the sense of security is the ground of human society and the prosperity of society depends on maintaining family mental health and security.

CONCLUSION
Family is a social institution and is considered as a fundamental institution of human society which has a close relationship with the society system on one hand and with the individual himself on the other hand. This valuable institution is in the highest peak in terms of significance and is deemed as one of the fundamental pillars of the community. The achievement of a healthy community is possible in healthy families. Since one of the most important natural human needs is the need for mental security, as the first social institution, family plays an important role in the realization of the mental security of individuals. The main objective of divine system for the formation of family is to achieve mental relaxation, tranquility, passing the path of growth and to achieve human perfection. Obviously, one of the key factors in achieving mental relaxation and security and sustaining it in the family is the existence of woman i.e. mother.

When all the constituent institutions of a society, especially two important and effective ones i.e. family and school have a mutual relationship with each other, they will influence mental and social security and

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will be successful in preventing an increase in the rate of crime in the community because children, adolescents and the youth learn major part of education issues from their models that is parents, especially mothers at home. The educational and training issues of children are most influenced by mothers, while, at school, they are highly influenced by their teachers' behavior whether they want or not. The responsibility of parents and school authority is not limited to familiarize children and adolescences with cognitive, social and ethical values and increase those values, but to change and modify inconsistent behaviors and to provide intellectual maturity and mental health of children and adolescents. Parents' and educators' attention to these social-mental needs not only provides a suitable ground for flourishing the children's latent talents but also is effective in improving their mental health and security.

Based on what was mentioned, mother is the first and most influential factor in promoting family mental security and the most obvious origin for comfort and love and source of family happiness and has a very critical role in providing children's mental and physical health. It should be accepted that those communities which have committed and responsible fathers as well as wise and thoughtful mothers are safer and more dynamic communities compared to others. Therefore, serious attention to family and school which play an important role in creating mental security and personality of children and adolescents is an undeniable necessity.

Suggestions

According to the above-mentioned conclusions, the following items are suggested in order to promote mental security:

A. Since mothers are an effective factor in the creation of physical and mental disorders before and after birth, it is recommended that before pregnancy period, they do required studies about the mental health of the child.

B. Through studying and attending counseling classes, mothers achieve the required awareness and methods to deal with children, especially adolescents in the period of maturity.

C. To promote the education of children and adolescents, parents, especially mothers create appropriate atmosphere for mental and emotional relaxation at home and establish a very intimate relationship with school authorities.

D. Life skills training be held for parents, teachers and young people to promote their awareness and improve their attitude.

E. Communication between family, school and society be established to prevent social damages and provide the ground for improvement and promotion of children and adolescents.

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