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The comparative study of male and female boarding school students' family, school, academic, individual (mental), and cyberspace problems in Mahneshan (based on a content analysis of letters received by advisor)

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Abstract

The adolescence period is associated with many biological, psychological, and social developments. These may cause crisis and problems for them. The behavioral science experts emphasize on mental and behavioral innate differences of these two sexes such as strong emotion and intuitive thinking of women, strong spatial and reasoning thinking of men, tendency of women to relationships with individuals, the attention of attention to practical matters, and tendency of men to aggressive behaviors. It is important and necessary to investigate these developments, problems, and differences. However, this study aimed to compare the level and type of adolescent girls and boys problems according to issues and problems which they mentioned in their letters.

The research method was content analysis. This study aimed to examine the problems of adolescent girls and boys in their own terms. For this purpose, 100 female students and 100 male students in boarding schools in Mahneshan were asked to state their problems. The obtained data were analyzed by independent t-test.

The findings showed that totally 30.5 percent of participants had the problem of exclusion and lack of understanding by family, 31 percent had the problem of lack of concentration and lack of time for study in relation with their academic problems, 26 percent had the problem of loneliness and self-absorption, 23.5 percent had the problem of improper and long duration of school and lack of teaching aids school, and 22 percent had the problem of surfing the internet for a long time.

It was concluded that given the importance of young people familiarity with problems of adolescence period and methods of dealing with problems, it is necessary that the mental health programs will be developed considering the needs and problems of adolescents and their age and academic conditions.

Keywords: Adolescence, Family Problems, School Problems, Academic Problems, Individual (Mental) Problems, Cyberspace Problem.

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Introduction:

The adolescence period is the time of biological, social, emotional, and cognitive growth. If it is not considered satisfactorily, it will probably lead to emotional and behavioral problems in adulthood. Usually, this period begins in ages 10 to 13 and ends in 18 to 22 years old (Nejati, Bikaran, 1997).

This age range generally belongs to people who are generally single, have low share of employment, have more leisure time, are students, have more group solidarity with their friends, mostly address their parents as past generation, address themselves as new generation, and have new needs (Pahlavan, 2005).

Undoubtedly, the problems of children and adolescents are inevitable consequence of poverty, disease, ignorance, abuse and family conflicts, and educational, cultural, and social shortcomings. However, the future of countries, societies, and world relies on children, adolescents, and young adults. Therefore, more scientific research is necessary to recognize these groups. One of the major concerns of parents and school authorities is the recognition of general and specific needs and problems of students. Therefore, they may use scientific and legitimate methods to satisfy their needs and problems. Unfortunately, there are few studies on problems of students. If the type and frequency of students' problems will not be determined, the parents and education authorities will not be able to plan for preventing and solving their problems (Shah Moradi, 2002).

The research on problems of adolescents is one of the important missions of researchers. The recognition of individual, family, and social problems of adolescents will enable planners to take further steps to solve their problems. However, the research questions of this study are as follows:

- Whether there is difference between male and female boarding high school students' family problems?
- Whether there is difference between male and female boarding high school students' school problems?
- Whether there is difference between male and female boarding high school students' academic problems?
- Whether there is difference between male and female boarding high school students' individual (mental) problems?
- Whether there is difference between male and female boarding high school students' cyberspace problems?

Research Hypothesis:

1. According to system model theory of Ji-Hee Lee, Mino Chin, and Renee Koenig, it seems that there is difference between girls and boys family problems.
2. According to Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, it seems that there is difference between boys and girls school problems.
3. According to Emile Durkheim's functionalism and social cohesion theory, it seems that there is difference between girls and boys academic problems.
4. According to Kurt Lewin's field theory, it seems that there is difference between girls and boys personal and psychological problems.
5. According to Habermas's communicative action theory and Kelli and Wolkhart's group effect theory, it seems that there is difference between girls and boys cyberspace problems.

Methodology:

The research method was content analysis-comparative study. This study aimed to examine the problems of adolescent girls and boys in their own terms. For this purpose, 100 female students and 100 male

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students in boarding schools in Mahneshan were asked to state their problems. The obtained data were analyzed by independent t-test.

Findings:

According to Table 1, the most frequency of family problems among girls and boys was for lack of intimacy in home and exclusion and lack of understanding, respectively.

Table 1

Family problems			
Gender / Problem type	Girls	Boys	Total
Financial Problems	%10	%20	%15
Lack of attention to education	%6	%6	%6
Too much emphasizing on education	%5	%12	%8.5
Exclusion and lack of understanding from family	%34	%27	%30.5
Lack of intimacy in family and conflicts with parents	%36	%24	%30
Family turmoil (death of parent, divorce, etc.)	%8	%13	%10.5

In fact, the top problems of girls was failure to meet needs such as attention and affection of parents, living in good and healthy family, and living in a secure environment which were their emotional needs. Nearly 36% of girls' problems was related to insincerity and dissent with parents on different issues and 34% was related to exclusion and lack of understanding of family. Interestingly, the economic and financial problems were in third place (10%); this shows that the teenage girls consider the understanding more important than availability of funds and facilities. Nearly 27% of boys 'problems was related to lack of parents' understanding, lack of freedom in personal affairs, and being compared with others by parents and 24% was related to insincerity and conflict with parents. It can be concluded that male adolescents seek for personal identity and defining their position in family and community. They want to be understood and their needs, beliefs, and preferences to be recognized.

According to Table 2, most of female adolescents' academic problems (24%) were related to lack of concentration, lack of time to study, and the stress of having an exam; few female students (8%) had the problem of high volume of courses and heavy texts. The inability of learning and academic failure were the most frequent problems (40%) of male students; few male students (12%) stated the stress of having an exam as their academic problem.

Table 2

Educational problems			
Gender / Problem type	Girls	Boys	Total
Inability to learn and academic failure	%16	%40	%38
Lack of concentration and lack of time for study	%24	%38	%31
Stress during taking an exam	%24	%12	%18
Lack of interest and motivation for learning	%22	%25	%28.5
High volume of heavy courses and curricula	%8	%15	%11.5

According to table 3, most of the female students' school problems (27%) were related to inappropriate behavior of teachers and discrimination of teachers among students; few female students (11%) had the

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problem of improper teaching of teachers. The strict and severe discipline at school, seriousness of school climate, and do not having fun were the most frequent problems (31%) of male students; none of the students (0%) had no problem with married students.

Table 3

School problems			
Problem type \ Gender	Girls	Boys	Total
Inappropriate behavior of students and teachers discrimination among students	%27	%14	%20.5
Married students at school	%11	0	%5.5
Improper teaching of teachers	%11	%17	%14
Inappropriate and prolonged school time and lack of school education aids	%21	%26	%23.5
Strict and severe discipline at school	%15	%31	%23

According to table 4, most of the female students' individual and mental problems (34%) were related to loneliness and self-absorption; 29% of few female students had the problem of fear and despair of future. The loneliness and self-absorption, and fear and despair of future were the most frequent problems (36%) of male students.

Table 4

Individual and mental problems			
Problem type \ Gender	Girls	Boys	Total
Nervousness and mood problems	%22	%12	%17
Lack of self confidence	%16	%7	%11.5
Loneliness and self-absorption	%34	%18	%26
Fear and despair of future	%29	%18	%23.5
Permanent feelings of anxiety and health problems	%21	%13	%17

According to table 5, most of the female students' cyberspace problems were related to sending too many messages (20%) and internet surfing (19%); the girls did not mention watching immoral movies. The reliance on social networks (23%) and internet surfing (22%) were the most frequent problems of male students.

Table 5

Cyberspace problems			
Problem type \ Gender	Girls	Boys	Total
Too messaging	%20	%7	%13.5
Long internet surfing	%19	%25	%22
Watching immoral movies	0	%16	%8
Reliance on internet games	%7	%26	%16.5
Reliance on social networks	%7	%39	%23

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Conclusion:

The findings showed that the boys and girls problems include family problems, academic problems, school problems, cyberspace problems, peer relationship problems, problems related to love and marriage, sexual and moral problems, job problems, and dormitories problems. Totally, 30.5 percent of participants had the problem of exclusion and lack of understanding by family, 31 percent had the problem of lack of concentration and lack of time for study in relation to their academic problems, 26 percent had the problem of loneliness and self-absorption, 23.5 percent had the problem of improper and long duration of school and lack of teaching aids school, and 22 percent had the problem of surfing the internet for a long time.

It was concluded that given the importance of young people familiarity with problems of adolescence period and methods of dealing with problems, it is necessary that the mental health programs will be developed considering the needs and problems of adolescents and their age and academic conditions.

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