

**Mother-Adolescent Relationship and Empathy: Mediating Role of Positive and
Negative Experiences**



Research Project: PSY 450

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Session (2013–2016)

BS Psychology

A Thesis Submitted In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of BS Psychology

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND
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Research Completion Certificate

Certificate that the research work contained in this thesis titled “Mother-Adolescent Relationship and Empathy: Mediating Role of Positive and Negative Experiences” has been carried out and completed by **Ms. Maria Sana Amin**, Student No: 13002141009; Student BS Psychology, session 2013 – 2016, under my supervision. This study is an independent research work and carried out under given instruction and consideration.

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Declaration

I, Ms. Maria Sana Amin, Student No: 13002141009, student of BS in the subject of Psychology, session of 2013 - 2016, hereby declare that the material printed in this thesis titled “Mother-Adolescent Relationship and Empathy: Mediating Role of Positive and Negative Experiences” is original work and has not been printed, published or submitted as research work, thesis or publication in any form in any university, research institution in Pakistan or abroad.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved mother; Mariam Ghani, my grandparents Abdul Ghani Khokhar and Jamila Ghani Khokhar, my uncle Usman Ghani Khokhar, my cousins Muhammad Bilal Chishti, Amina Sajjad, Rabia Sajjad, Aisha Sulman, my friends Anum Atiq, my niece Hajrah Bilal, my mentor and supervisor Dr. Farzana Ashraf for their care, love, support and encouragement in completing my thesis.

Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to thank Allah Almighty for giving me the strength, encouragement and facilities to complete my research paper. Without His grace and blessing, I would have not accomplished my goal. Secondly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Farzana Ashraf for her patience, kindness, and guidance over the past semesters. I am indebted to her for taking the time to understand, encourage, and help me throughout my time at University of Management and Technology. You enabled me to do something; I never thought was possible to write a thesis. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to work with you; it was such a positive and rewarding experience. I am also thankful to Dr. Iftikhar Ahmed, chairmen of psychology department for explaining all research associated issues to me clearly. I would like to thank my all class mates specially Anum Atiq, Sana Tahir and Hira Sajjad and seniors specially Ansa Watto, and Havaida Munir, their guidance and help make me able to complete my work on time.

Special thanks to my teachers Miss Haya Fatimah, Sir Sultan Shuja, Dr. Rabia Farooqi, Miss Sidra Afzal, my brother-in-law Sulman Rafique, my sister-in-law Rania Bilal, for their guidance, kindness, and gentleness. I am truly thankful to Allah for giving me such warm hearted teachers and family. I would like to give tribute to our beloved land *Pakistan*, who gave me the courage to live independent with pride and psychologically make me capable to compete with the people of other nations.

Finally, I want to thank the library staff and schools administration that facilitated me in my research.

Maria Sana Amin

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Abstract

Bowlby's (1990) theory of attachment suggests that the bond between mother-child plays a prototype of all forthcoming relationships of adolescents. The aim of this research is to explore the impact of mother-child relationship on adolescent empathy and adolescent positive and negative experiences. The sample size was 232 adolescents who were enrolled in government and private schools. These participants are recruited through simple random sampling technique. The age range was 11-18 years ($M=14.71$, $SD= 2.27$). Results demonstrates that there is a positive correlation between mother-child relationship and empathy, pro-social empathy, positive experiences and negatively correlated to negative experiences of adolescents. Moreover, the findings of this research also confirm that female adolescents show significantly high level of empathy, pro-social empathy, affective empathy and negative experiences as compared to male adolescents. Furthermore, simple regression analysis reveals that mother-adolescent relationship is a positive predictor of adolescent positive experiences, empathy and negative predictor of adolescent negative experiences. Also, adolescent positive experiences are positively predicted pro-social empathy. Besides this, mediated pathway couldn't be tested due to an insignificant correlation between positive and negative experience and empathy. In conclusion, along with adolescents' own experiences, mothers attitude towards their child influence their forthcoming relationships. Similarly, if this dyad of mother-adolescent is unhealthy, it may lead toward the psychological as well as pathological problem in adolescent later life. This research may contribute to create awareness among mothers about the effect of their relationship on adolescent empathy and adolescent positive and negative experiences.

Key Words: Mother-adolescent relationship, Empathy, Adolescence Positive and Negative Experience.

Chapter I

Introduction

The phase of adolescence is also known as teenage in some modern western societies which start from the ages of 10-18 years (Smith, 2016). According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2003) adolescent age is between 10-19 years old, a provisional phase between the late childhood and early adulthood, also known to be challenging. It is characterized by the phase in which an obvious change is perceived in the biological, cognitive, and social and identity development. Moreover, changes in the family relationships, peer relationships and friendships are also unavoidable (Smith, 2016).

Biologically, adolescence is characterized by the pubertal changing in terms of the hormones and physical development of the body which increase the chances of complexity in group interactions and social behavior (Choudhury, Blakemore, & Charman, 2006). When the pubertal changes start, an adolescent becomes sexually mature which help adolescents to understand the difference between boy and girl (Smith, 2016).