ROLE OF PARENTS IN CHILD’S MENTAL HEALTH - A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

C. J. Akshatha¹, Thatikunta Raghu², Anil Kumar Rai³, Ravi Prasad Hegde⁴

¹,²Final year PG Scholar, ³HOD; ⁴Assistant Professor;
Dept of Manovijnana Evam Manasa roga, Alva’s Ayurveda Medical College, Moodbidri, Karnataka, India

Email: akshatacj92@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient Indian science which emphasises on importance of parents to raise a healthy child and care of a child even before the intrauterine life. Manusmriti explains that hundred acharyas are equal to one pithaa (father) and thousand pithas are equal to one maatha (mother). Parents play a major role in moulding the satwa of little lives. According to Sushrutha, when a child is taken good care, child will accomplish nityamudagra satwa (stable mind), niroga (healthy), suprasanna mana (mental wellbeing). Due to modern lifestyle, parents become stressed out and they are not able to support the child mentally, physically and emotionally. In this article an attempt is made to understand the importance of parenting and its effect on one’s life have been elaborated in depth.

Keywords: Parenting, Satwa of Child, Stable and healthy mind.

INTRODUCTION

Parenting is a process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood¹. Ayurveda regards child care as it must start from the care of women from the first day of menstrual period to the period during and after gestation². As Kashyapa says “Garbha api prabhruthi baleshu” one has to take care of child since fetal life³. According to Chakrapani, the achara followed by Garbhini sthree (pregnant lady) is one of the contributing factors in garbhavruddi (development of a child)⁴. There are many disorders caused as a consequence of bad parenting like battered child syndrome, conduct disorders or according to ayurveda diseases like jada or mandabuddhi etc.⁵ Treatments like Satwava-jaya can help the parents to bring out the best in their child’s life.

Importance of parenting

Parenting is the labour of love. Parents are usually the first person a child learns to trust. Behind every young child who believes in himself is the parent who believed first. Approximately 68% of women and 57% of men who are parents are reported as having mental health problems⁶. Poor maternal and paternal mental health can cause poor mental health in a child. According to Manusmriti, one who does the Garbhadanadikarma and protects the child by giving annadi is called Guru. In this context parents are referred as Guru².
Parenting
Parenting refers to the intracacies of raising a child from the biological relationship. The most common caretaker in parenting is the biological parents of the child in question, although others may be an older sibling, aunt, uncle, grandparent, a legal guardian, or other family member or family friend. In many cases, orphaned or abandoned children receive parental care from non biological parents. 

Types of parenting
There are 4 types of parenting:-
1) Authoritative
2) Permissive
3) Neglectful
4) Authoritarian

Table 1: Authoritative parenting and its outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authoritative Parenting</th>
<th>Outcome in Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A balance of freedom and responsibility</td>
<td>Learn to accept responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High love(responsiveness) and High limits(demandingness)</td>
<td>Make wiser choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help children learn the necessary skills for self regulation, self- directedness</td>
<td>Cope with change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It relies on the principle of equality and trust.</td>
<td>Better equipped to succeed in work-force which relies on cooperative problem solving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Permissive parenting and its outcome in children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Permissive Parenting</th>
<th>Outcome in Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They are extremely committed to their children that they lack demandingness.</td>
<td>Problem with responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Love and Low Limits</td>
<td>Problem with relationship, Rebellious and defiant when desires are challenged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They worry that children will not like them if they set too many rules.</td>
<td>Problem in understanding the rights of others, Difficulty accepting failures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Neglectful parenting and its outcome in children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neglectful Parenting</th>
<th>Outcome in children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They do not set standard for proper behaviour and do not monitor it.</td>
<td>Indifferent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low love and low limits</td>
<td>Distant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These seem so preoccupied with their problems that they appear to be disengaged from their children.</td>
<td>Non communicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate to reach to needs of the children.</td>
<td>Self absorbed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their attempts to do what they think needs to be done to raise their children end up being neglectful.</td>
<td>Immature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of emotional involvement and supervision.</td>
<td>At risk for drug, alcohol, suicide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Authoritarian parenting and outcome in children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authoritarian Parenting</th>
<th>Outcome in children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They lack responsiveness to the child’s need for warmth and validation.</td>
<td>Would not describe the relationship as loving, caring and warmth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Love and High limits</td>
<td>They are overly concerned about what their parents will do before making a conscious decision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consequences:-
- Suicidal risk: :- Family matters, bad parenting are the contributing factor for causing suicide risk.
- Battered child syndrome: It’s a syndrome refers to the non- accidental injuries sustained by a child as a result of physical abuse, usually inflicted by an adult caregiver. The child abuser
most often injures a child in the heat of anger or during the moments of stress. Usually if the parent is alcoholic, illiterate, single parent or who doesn’t have the control over stressful situations. Conduct disorder: - Divorce, Parental psychopathology, child abuse, negligence, chaotic home conditions can lead to conduct disorders. Webster- Stratton originally developed a treatment intervention for young children with conduct disorder and their families. This intervention includes therapist-led group discussion that emphasizes parent training.

- Enuresis: - Birth of a sibling, the start of a school, the breakup of a family because of divorce or death etc can lead to enuresis. Supportive environment and toilet training can be done.

- Encopresis:- Harsh and punitive parenting, sexually abused and behavioural effected children, parental separation, loss of a best friend, an unexpected academic failure can cause encopresis. Family tensions about the symptoms must be reduced and non punitive atmosphere is established.

Maternal deprivation or single parenting: - In this case Robertson and Bowlby explains 3 progressive emotional variations in child’s mental health because of maternal deprivation.

1) Protest: - Child cries and protests angrily when the parent leaves. They will try to cling on to the parent to stop them leaving.

2) Despair: - The child’s protesting begins to stop and they appear to be calmer although still upset. The child refuses others attempts for comfort and often seems withdrawn and uninterested in anything.

3) Detachment: - If separation continues the child will start to engage with other people again. They will reject the caregiver on their return and show strong signs of anger. At the age of 3 these things causes negative effect on their understanding of the world and future interactions with others.

Ayurveda Perspective:

Satwa of a child is just like the satwa of a mathaa and pithaa. Whatever the mother listens during her pregnancy period does have the effect over the satwa of a child. According to Kashyapa, in the 3rd month of intrauterine life itself, manas forms. So, one must take care of the manas of child since the intrauterine life. Rejecting or ignoring the wishes of Dauhruda can lead to vathakshobha causing Manovikruthi in the child. It can also produce Bhaya and Jada (Mandabuddi) in the child. Next in postnatal stage too, if the mother is having krodha, avathsalya or shoka it can lead to Sthanyanasha which may hinder the child development. So the mother needs to have a calm mind.

In case of absence of parents, Dhatri (care taker) is given the utmost importance. According to kashyapa, Happiness and sorrow of child is rooted in dhatri. There are many qualities explained for dhatri such as Sheelavathi (cultured), Achapala (Of quite natured), Alolupa (ungreedy), Arysani (not having any bad habits), vatsala (Loving nature), Akshudrakarmini (not engaged in mean deeds). The dhatri if she has these qualities can raise a child having healthy mind and body. In the present era if the women tries her best to incorporate these qualities she can raise a well balanced civilized citizen to our country.

How to take care of Satwa of a child according to Ayurveda:-

According to Astanga Uttaratantra:- Abhiyukthaha Sadachara: - One should be faithful with good conduct and healthy habits; should have an affinity towards child care. Parents must follow a satwik life style with good sense of hygiene, talks politely with respect. Child nurtured with such Kumaradhara, adopts a similar behaviour in life as it learns a lot by observation and mimicking others.
Nalolupa: - He / She should not be greedy. Greediness may be in terms of food, money, facility. They may be involved in child kidnapping.

Baalachittavith: - That is to read and understand the psychology of the child. While talking, playing one should behave in coordination to the mental status of the child and should respect the feeling of child. Should not be having Sthulavikatagamini (fickleness of mind), Durachara (Bad conduct). The child learns the behaviour without differentiation of good or bad

According to charaka: -
Nachaasyavitrasanam: Frightening the child, scolding, creating fear complex in the child is a bad practice. This leads to unexplained fear with consequences of future psychological disturbances like personality and behavioural problems.

Thasminrudatyabhunjaane, avidheyatha: - He/ she should not be frightened by taking the name of the nonexisting / invisible things like bhutha, rakshasa, pishacha etc. Child seeks love, security, affection etc from parents/ care taker. Instead of creating this, they create a fear complex which adversely affects the mental development of child by creating confusion and hampers creativity.

According to Sushrutha:
Balampunargatrasukhamgruhneeyath: - Child should be kept in a place which is comfortable to it or else while lifting from lying position it may get scared.

Nachaenamtarjayeth: - Do not do activities, that which causes irritation to the baby. Excessive talking, beating can cause irritation to child.

Sahasanaparthibhodayetvitasabhayaath: - Child should not be awakened suddenly as it may induce fear and confusion in child.

Nityamchaenaanuvarthethapriyashatairajidyamsu: - Parents must communicate with love, affection, soft and sympathetic words.

Outcome:-
Enamanabhihathamanaabhivardhathe, nityamudagrasatwasampa, suprasanamamaascha.

This type of parenting leads to uninterrupted growth, development of child. He will have good quality of mental status with more positive satwa; free from diseases and have pleasant mind

Satwavajaya in parenting:
Jnana: - adhyatmajnānāma: knowledge about self or knowing self.

It’s about helping the parents to self evaluate and handle their emotions in front of children. This also helps to connect with the children.

Vijnana: - Shastrajnanam

It’s about educating the parents regarding parenting, various types of parenting and consequences of bad parenting.

Dhairya: - Anunnatischethasaha

In permissive type of parenting, helping the parents to overcome their fears in putting rules to their children is very important. It will built confidence in parents to discipline their child in a right way.

Smrithi: - Anubhutharthasadhanam

It’s about probing into the past of parents to know how they were brought up and help them to let go of negative inputs about parenting.

Samadhi: - Vishayebhonyirvarthanmonitoriyamana

It’s about advising the parents to read books to know more about spirituality; so that they become stress free in this modern life style. Pranayama, Dhyana etc help the parents to keep their mind stable and raise their child in a healthy way as mind of a child have a great influence by parents mentality.

Treatment:
➢ Any identified psychiatric disorders; it needs to be treated in accord with recommended practice guidelines.
➢ There are parenting groups that are helpful for parents who have been maltreating their children. These focus on child development education, disciplinary styles, as well as technique for anger management.
➢ It’s important to provide emotional support, encouragement to parents in learning to plan for
upbringing the child and to resolve their own inner psychic conflicts.

**Transactional analysis**
- It is based on two notions, first that there are 3 parts or ‘ego states’ to our ‘personality and secondly that these converse with one another in ‘transactions’ (hence the name).
- Conflicts occur in crossed transactions, where each is talking to a different level.
- The goal of the therapy group was to identify transactional states among group members and to change childhood “life scripts” into more adaptive adult patterns.31

**Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**
- Parents and therapist collaborate to maintain the variables in child’s environment and family system, to develop plans to change parental behaviours when necessary and to rearrange contingencies in the immediate environment to foster the child’s recovery.
- Reinforcing and praising the child’s effort at copying, no matter how small, is essential for parents to learn in CBT.32

**DISCUSSION**

*As thaitthariyaUpanishad says, Matrudevobhava |\* Pitrudevobhava 1 - 33
Parents have a godly position in our life. Parenting is a skill that must be learnt by gaining knowledge and experiences. Child can be influenced by media, peers, school environment etc but good parenting can bring them back to track and prevent further damage to the child’s mind. *Ayurveda* explains how to build a healthy harmonious family in this way. As a *Chanakya*, great philosopher; ancient teacher explains ‘lalayeth panchavarshani, dasha varshani thadayeth, prapta shodasha varsham cha putram mitravadachareth’ *i.e.* raise a child with love and care till 5yrs, from 10-16yrs teach discipline with love and limits, be a friend after 16yrs. In the Modern life style, single parenting, divorce are increasing enormously which can have a permanent emotional damage to the child’s mind. So authoritative parenting has to be understood in a deeper way to avoid many problems to both parents and children.

**CONCLUSION**
Parenting has a vital influence over the complete mental health of a person. *Ayurveda* gives different norms of behaviour like sadvrutta, achararasayana to take care of our *satwa* and also mentions how to behave with a child to take care of its *satwa*. Every human being has within him the potential of a new society. An ideal parenting can be the reason for a good generation, and in turn can create a healthy society.

**REFERENCES**
1. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parenting
2. Sushrutha samhita, Edited with ‘Sushrutavimarsini’ Hindi commentary along with Special Deliberation etc, By Dr. Ananthram Sharma, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Volume 2, shareera sthana, chapter 2, shloka 25, page no. 18-19
3. Kashyapa samhitha, P. V. Tewari, Chaukhabha Visvabharati, A text with English Translation and commentary, chikitsa sthana, chapter 18, shloka 63-65, page no. 253
5. Sushrutha samhita, Edited with ‘Sushrutavimarsini’ Hindi commentary along with Special Deliberation etc, By Dr. Ananthram Sharma, Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Volume 2, shareera sthana, chapter 3, shloka 18-21, page no. 35-37
8. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parenting
11. “ Family problems are the leading reason behind suicides” –TOI- April 5, 2017, 11:55 IST
12. www.healthofchildren.com/B/Battered-Child
13. Syndrome.html
15. psychiatry, Third Edition, Benjamin James sadock,
16. Wolters kluwer Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, chapter 40, page
17. no. 625.
18. Kaplan and sadock’s comprehensive Text book of
19. psychiatry, Ninth Edition, Volume 1, chapter 52,
20. page no. 3866.
22. psychiatry, Third Edition, Benjamin James sadock,
23. Wolters kluwer Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, chapter 43, page
24. no. 642.
25. Kaplan and sadock’s concise Text book of clinical
26. psychiatry, Third Edition, Benjamin James sadock,
27. Wolters kluwer Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, chapter 43, page
28. no. 643.
29. Kaplan and sadock’s concise Text book of clinical
30. psychiatry, Third Edition, Benjamin James sadock,
31. Wolters kluwer Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, chapter 43, page
32. no. 639.
33. Kaplan and sadock’s concise Text book of clinical
34. psychiatry, Third Edition, Benjamin James sadock,
35. Wolters kluwer Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, chapter 43, page
36. no. Page 641
37. https://www.simplypsychology.org/bowlby.html
38. Charaka Samhita, Shrichakraapanidatta virachita
39. ‘Ayurveda dipika’ ki ‘Ayushi’ Hindi Vyakhyva
40. Vibhushitha, Editor- Vd. Harish Chandra Singh
41. Kushwaha, Choukambha Orientalia, shareera sthana,
42. chapter 8, shloka 16, page no. 858-859
43. Kashyapa Samhita, P. V. Tewari, Chaukhamba
44. Visvabharati, A text with English Translation and
45. commentary, shareera sthana, chapter 2, shloka 4-6,
46. page no.113
47. Charaka Samhita, Shrichakraapanidatta virachita
48. ‘Ayurveda dipika’ ki ‘Ayushi’ Hindi Vyakhyva
49. Vibhushitha, , Editor- Vd. Harish Chandra Singh
50. Kushwaha, Choukambha Orientalia, shareera sthana,
51. chapter 4, shloka 15, page no. 795-797
52. Sushrutha samhita , Edited with ‘Sushrutavimarsini’
53. Hindi commentary along with Special Deliberation
54. etc, By Dr. Ananthram Sharma, Chaukhamba
55. Surbharati Prakashan, Volume 2, shareera sthana,
56. chapter 10, shloka 30, page no. 139
57. Kashyapa Samhita, P. V. Tewari, Chaukhamba
58. Visvabharati, A text with English Translation and
59. commentary, shareera sthana, chapter 18, shloka no
60. 3, page no. 247.
61. Sushrutha samhita, Edited with ‘Sushrutavimarsini’
62. Hindi commentary along with Special Deliberation
63. etc, By Dr. Ananthram Sharma, Chaukhamba
64. Surbharati Prakashan, Volume 2, shareera sthana,
65. chapter 10, shloka 25, page no. 136-137
66. Astanga Sangrahata Of Vagbhata, Translated by Prof.
67. K. R. Srikantha Murthy, Uttar sthana, Chaukhamba
68. Orientalia, Volume 3, chapter no 1, shloka no. 71-72,
69. page no. 11.
70. Charaka Samhita, Shrichakraapanidatta virachita
71. ‘Ayurveda dipika’ ki ‘Ayushi’ Hindi Vyakhyva
72. Vibhushitha, , Editor- Vd. Harish Chandra Singh
73. Kushwaha, Choukambha Orientalia, shareera sthana,
74. chapter 8, shloka 64, page no. 882-883
75. Sushrutha samhita , Edited with ‘Sushrutavimarsini’
76. Hindi commentary along with Special Deliberation
77. etc, By Dr. Ananthram Sharma, Chaukhamba
78. Surbharati Prakashan, Volume 2, shareera sthana,
79. chapter 10, shloka 46, page no. 142
80. Charaka Samhita, Shrichakraapanidatta virachita
81. ‘Ayurveda dipika’ ki ‘Ayushi’ Hindi Vyakhyva
82. Vibhushitha, , Editor- Vd. Harish Chandra Singh
83. Kushwaha, Choukambha Orientalia, sutra sthana,
84. chapter 1, shloka 58, page no 26-27
85. Kaplan and sadock’s comprehensive Text book of
86. psychiatry, Ninth Edition, Volume 2, chapter 25,
87. page no. 2473-2474.
88. Kaplan and sadock’s comprehensive Text book of
89. psychiatry, Ninth Edition, Volume 1, chapter 30,
90. page no. 2835.
91. Kaplan and sadock’s comprehensive Text book of
92. psychiatry, Ninth Edition, Volume 2, chapter 51,
93. page no. 3748-3749.
94. Taittariya Upanishad, Chapter 1, 11 anuvaka, 2
95. shloka.

Source of Support: Nil
Conflict Of Interest: None Declared