

How do Early Education College Students Perceive the Impact of Family Crises on Individuals' Personality Development?

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Abstract

This study was conducted to assess the impact of family crises on preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel; A case study covid-19. The topic demanded a thorough and vigorous investigation of all interrelated aspects. The aims and objectives were explicitly stated to make this research work valid and reliable. The variables were extracted from the main and sub-objectives for their study and accurate measurement. All the variables were operationalized by scientific ethics and the related theories were reviewed for constructing a conceptual framework for the study. The qualitative approach was used to collect and analyse qualities related to the impact of family crises on preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel on the one hand. On the other hand, the quantitative research approach was employed to quantify and measure the impact of family crises on preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel. The questionnaire was a data collection tool in a quantitative approach while the interview was a tool for qualitative data collection. The main findings of the study were, there is a significant correlation between Family crises and mental, cognitive, speech, and language, moral, emotional, and social behavior of preschool children in the Arab sector in Israel. Moreover, a correlation was found between the COVID-19 period and child development, the child's relation with others and child development, and the child with any cognitive negative symptoms & and child development.

Keywords: *family crises, children's development, COVID-19, Arab sector, preschool children*

1. Introduction

A family is a noteworthy institution responsible for a child's shelter, food, clothing, and moral, physical, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive development. It provides associations and contexts in which a child nurtures and becomes an adult. However, family crises could affect the smooth functioning of the family as well as endanger effective child development (Vos et al., 2021). This research study is mainly concerned with identifying the impact of family crises on preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel, especially in the context of COVID-19. To get a thorough understanding of the topic under examination, developing an understanding of the main variables and key terms is

significantly vital. Therefore, this dissertation chapter provided a detailed background to understand the variables and the terms, exhibited the gap in prior studies, and translated the research gap into researchable objectives and questions. Moreover, it presented the study's significance and the conceptual framework.

1.1. Family and its Role in Child Development

Family refers to a group of persons who are united and together by blood relations (siblings, parents, children, uncle, aunt, grandfather, and grandmother), marriage ties (spouse), or adoption (Cheal, 2019). These groups of persons interact with each other regularly. Family plays a vital role in the development of a child's personality. A theory of social learning infers that children learn to behave what they learn from their families and caregivers, which directly influences a child's development (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2020). A study by Hasanah & Deiniatur (2020) exhibited that family is such a concept that shapes a child's personality when he or she makes bonds with others living or not living under the same roof. However, the concept of family is evolving with the dynamics of the external environment that is now concerning for biological factors, sexual orientations, as well as the functioning of men and women (Endendijk et al., 2018). These concerns are now affecting the functioning and structure of families. In the past, the child has not occupied a distinct and central focus. But now, they have attained a key focus of attention as parents are providing due attention to their growth and development.

The role of the family in child development has significant importance. England-Mason & Gonzalez (2020) stated that the family is the main agent of socialisation during a child's development. The reason is that children within their families learn the basic values, attitudes, and behaviours during socialisation with society. After a child is born, the individual development process of the child starts by learning from their family's habits, attitudes, references, speech and language, and emotional response towards situations. The experiences and circumstances provided by families during early child development are unique and make a child's social development effective (Rodd, 2020). Within the family systems, children learn rules of social development, personality development as well as values and duties towards society. Children develop social and psychological behaviours through learning from their parents and families (Abbott, 2021). Hence, families play a vital role in the socialisation process of a child's development by

building the personality that enables them to learn socially accepted behaviours, values, and beliefs.

A study by Guy-Evans (2020) has discussed the "Bronfenbrenner's perspective" on child development. It states that a child has a passive and active role in their development process due to interaction with the family, parents, and evolving environment, resulting in considerable change in a child's personality and behaviour. The environmental events such as parents' divorce, death of a family member, or illness are directly linked with changes in children's development. A theory of ecological systems states the children's development is influenced by the environmental factors and structures embedded in their growth (Soyer, 2019). This theory is further comprised of four structures. One structure is micro-systems in a children development. This system involves activities and interactions occurring in an environment of a children living in, such as parents, families, and siblings. The second is the mesosystem that involves the connections of micro-system networks such as schools (Guy-Evans, 2020). The third is the exo-system that encompasses the environment a child is not directly a part of it, but it still influences their development, such as the workplace of parents. Lastly, the fourth structure is macro-systems encompassing micro, meso, and exo systems in them. These ecological structures vary from geography to geography, with a common thing that families and parents influence children's development (Tudge et al., 2021). Hence, it is inferred from the above that family has a vital role in a child's development.

1.2. Family Crisis and Child Development

A family crisis refers to a situation that requires a change in the normal function of routine activity. It is usually comprised of three-stage process including onset, disorganisation, and reorganisation (Mackova et al., 2019). Stage one, onset entails crisis is started and its increased realisation of occurrence. Initially, it starts with a family's response towards crisis is generally denial and disbelief. The prime importance of this stage is that it defines the problem that leads to a family crisis, and gradually it makes everyone believe in its occurrence. The second stage is disorganisation which involves disbelief, and the sudden shock of a family crisis makes it impossible to think, behave, and function them effectively it could be immediate as well as delayed due to substance use (alcohol or drugs) (Coelho et al., 2020). This stage is severe chaos for families as the crisis directly hits them.

Finally, the third stage involves reorganisation, where the family takes acts of why and how a family crisis has happened despite of all the precautionary measures (Ekwe, 2021). Hence with these three stages, one can assess the situation of a family behaving during crises.

The crises in families are usually occurred due to disability, unemployment, infidelity, divorce between parents, major physical illness, abuse and violence, substance abuse, or death of a spouse or a closed-family member (Georgi-Findlay, 2020). Unemployment is a major family crisis that affects the family's bread earners, leading to family crises. However, its effects can be reduced if the family downsizes its expenditures. The other significant crisis is infidelity, which involves the act of cheating or being unfaithful to a partner of spouse by engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship. The infidelity is a family crisis as it breaks the commitment and promise between one family member and the other (Warach & Josephs 2021). The family member commits infidelity due to workplace friendships, revenge, ageing (wants to be young), dissatisfaction with the existing relationship, and absence from a partner.

A family crisis results when any of the spouse, parents or children is involved in substance use such as drugs, alcohol, or smoking. Substance use is, in fact, used by individuals to mitigate the stress, but in real, they lead to a whole family stress (Balogh, 2021). Similarly, the death is a severe family crisis if it leaves many loopholes or questions that are unanswered, such as in suicide. It brings anger as well as guilt in family members, which are considered to be a mortal sin. Likewise, the death of a child, parent, or spouse is hard to deal with, leading to severe stress in the family as the loss is difficult to comprehend in words (Walsh, 2019). Hence, it is inferred that, unemployment, infidelity, death, substance use, and illness are some of the types of a family crisis.

A family crisis results in stress and anxiety situations affecting normal routine activities of all the people falling under a family group, including siblings, children, and grandparents. But the worse outcome of family crises is seen in preschool children (age from one to six years old) as they disturb their development and growth negatively (Jalongo, 2021). A family crisis impact can be mitigated by the change, which is itself stressful. Families' who experience crises over a period of time exhibit less collaboration, cohesiveness, fighting over things, stressful situations, and absence of spending quality

time with their children (Benner & Mistry, 2020). Moreover, they exhibit less conflict management skills, scolding their kids, thus leading to adverse impacts on children development and behaviour

The children whose family is in crisis are in extreme stress and exhibit signs including loss of appetite, trouble sleeping, worrying or concern on little or minor things, sometimes misbehaving with others, and becoming quite (Lavigne-Cerván et al., 2021). To address the disruptions caused by family crises on a child development, families are advised to deal with the stress of their child by communicating openly with them about the situation. Families who keep secret crises by not discussing with their children experience dual stress, one in themselves and the other in their children (Mackova et al., 2019). So, families should talk honestly and openly with their children. Moreover, they should practice healthy lifestyle exercises to mitigate the stress such as mediation, yoga, and outing as well. Although, the stress in children's development could be dealt with the adequate support and effective caregiving strategies by parents and families. The families with feelings of affection and implementing strategies could impair the weak development needs of their preschool children effectively.

1.3. COVID-19 and preschool children development

The global health crisis COVID-19 has resulted in severe long-term distress since the 1930s worldwide. It has led to negative disruptions, including school closure, poor economic performance, and lockdown restrictions (Gassman-Pines et al., 2020). According to Szmigiera (2022), COVID-19 has affected 1.5 billion students worldwide with school closures. Similarly, it has caused reverberations for families that lost their closed-one (parent, child, spouse, or other close family member), become unemployed, become sever ill (mentally or physically), loss of income, involved any family-member in substance use to mitigate its effects (Kalil, et al., 2020). Hence, it is inferred that COVID-19 has severely disrupted families and their children alike.

By affecting families, it has resulted in significant harm to children development especially those belonging to low-income and educated families. Moreover, it has adversely affected preschool children's development that are physically and mentally sensitive to development inputs. Gromada et al. (2020) has exhibited that COVID-19 has profound negative effects in families where parents lost jobs and income that caused stress,

depression, and anger symptoms. As a result, these parents negatively interact with their children leading to ineffective children's development problems. Similarly, Glynn et al. (2021) have inferred that parents who have positively interacted with their children during the pandemic, these children exhibited greater emotional, physical, and social development. These parents and families have developed positive-parent interaction by spending time in collaborative problem-solving activities with their children which has strengthened their development effectively (Benner & Mistry, 2020). Hence, it is inferred from these research studies that positive parent and family interaction during COVID-19 has resulted in effective child development.

1.4. Child Development

Child development encompasses a series of changes in a child's behaviour and attitude from birth to adulthood, including speech and language, cognitive, emotional, sensory, and physical abilities (Goodway et al., 2019). Child development is affected directly by the education of the children, genes, parental upbringing, incidents in prenatal life, environmental factors, and learning of the child. The child development is divided into two types of development such as healthy and unhealthy development. The healthy development from its name implies that which nourishes and fosters a child's skills, competencies, and abilities (problem-solving, emotional, physical, and behavioural) (Brooks-Gunn, 2019). This could be possible with a strong and balanced diet, quality education, and supportive and strengthening family system. On the other hand, the unhealthy development of the child is characterised by conflicts, crises (social, economic, family, and health), wars, accidents, and terrorist attacks. However, family crises have serious damaging effects on childhood development than any other development. The unhealthy child development impairs them physically and psychologically, leading to severe diseases including neurological (stress, anxiety, or anger, irritation) as well as cardiovascular diseases (Fothergill & Peek 2021). The recovery of a child from unhealthy development is only attributed to family support, but still, it has long-term effects on a child's behaviour and attitude.

By living with families, children learn their mother tongue, how to behave and react to people in society as well as an understanding of the external environment during the early years of their age. Values and norms exhibited by the families in upbringing children

development, shape personality, values, and practices in their personal and professional life. Children's development is a multifaceted concept that is posing serious challenges to parents nowadays (Peerapur, 2019). The reason is that the development of children from one to six years of age has a profound impact on their physical, psychological, speech and language, cognitive, behavioural as well as emotional skills and abilities in their adulthood. Vos et al. (2021) exhibited that in the age of six, significant cognitive changes happen that assist in understanding the world around them. They gain new skills and competencies to solve problems, explore ideas, learn to reflect, start to judge, understand the behaviour and attitude, and analyse the consequences of commands and instructions provided to them. Therefore, it is inferred that at this stage, a child's life is free from financial and materialistic tensions, and they are able to stimulate their abilities effectively. But family crisis negatively disrupts a child's preschool mental, cognitive, behavioural, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social development, laid the problem statement of this research study.

1.6. Research Aim and Objectives

This research study aims to assess compressively the significant impact of family crises on preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel. This research aim is further broken down into specific and researchable objectives as provided below:

- To explore the factors that give rise to family crises in the Arab sector in Israel.
- To examine the role of disrupted parenting during family crises on children development in the Arab sector in Israel.
- To assess the mental, cognitive, behavioural, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social behaviour of preschool children during family crises in the Arab sector in Israel.
- To examine the association between the COVID-19 pandemic and child's mental, cognitive, behavioural, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social development in the Arab sector in Israel.
- To examine the relationship between family crises during COVID-19 and preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel.
- To provide recommendations to parents in curbing the effects of family crises and promoting healthy preschool child development.

1.8. Significance of the Study

The significance of any research study lies in providing maximum benefits to the maximum number of people. The more the maximum benefit, the more a study is significant. The significance of this research is in its providing of an exhaustive literature

review on the key variables and terms (family, family crises, pandemic COVID-19, and preschool children development) are diverse. Secondly, this research study identifies the noteworthy involvement of families in preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel. Thirdly the study explores the possible factors that give rise to a family crisis in the Arab sector in Israel. Fourthly, the study will exhibit the association between family crises during COVID-19 and preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel. Fifthly, the study presents suitable recommendations to parents to mitigate the effects of family crises to promote healthy preschool child development in the Arab sector in Israel during COVID-19. Hence, this research study is significantly vital for academicians, parents, and society as they would be better able to address the disruptions caused by family crises in healthy preschool children's development and invest in well-being and development initiatives for their children competitively.

2. Material and methods

The stage of early childhood is sensitive to the influence of the environment. The early life of a child is either improved or deteriorated; it depends on the mother, father, siblings, and other family members. This was the rationale that this study was conducted to explore the impact of family crises on preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel: A case study covid-19. Given the profound nature of the subject area, it was a mixed-method research approach. The cross-analysis of both approaches made a novel contribution to the academia on the literature on family crises during covid impacts on preschool child's development. The sample size for quantitative data was (n=225) and participants in the qualitative were 10 participants. As there was a primary source, data collections were self-administered. The questionnaire was developed for the quantitative data collection while interviews were conducted the for qualitative data collection method in the Arab sector in Israel. The quantitative data were analyzed on SPSS whereas the qualitative data were manually analyzed by the thematic analysis. Both forms of data

3. Results

Correlation analysis

H1₀: Family crises do not negatively affect the mental, cognitive, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social behavior of preschool children in the Arab sector in Israel.

H₁: Family crises negatively affect the mental, cognitive, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social behavior of preschool children in the Arab sector in Israel.

Correlations

			Family crises	Health, Cognition, Moral, Behavior
Spearman's rho	Family crises	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.253**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	225	225
	Health, Cognition, Moral, Behavior	Correlation Coefficient	-.253**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	225	225

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation is the association between two variables and Spearman's rho correlation test is the correlation between ordinal variables. Family crises and health, cognition, moral, and behavioral problems were ordinal variables; hence Spearman's rho correlation was conducted. As the sig. 000 is less than the level of significance.05, the null hypothesis is rejected because there is a significant correlation between Family crises and mental, cognitive, speech, and language, moral, emotional, and social behavior of preschool children in the Arab sector in Israel. Further, Spearman's rho Correlation Coefficient tells not only the strength of relationships but also the direction whether positive or negative. The correlation coefficient of -.25 indicates a negative correlation between Family crises and health, cognition, moral, and behavioral problems.

H₂₀: COVID-19 pandemic has not a negative effect on a child's mental, cognitive, behavioural, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social development in the Arab sector in Israel.

H₂: COVID-19 pandemic has a negative effect on a child's mental, cognitive, behavioural, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social development in the Arab sector in Israel.

Spearman rho correlation was used because the concerned explanatory variables were ordinal and categorical rather than continuous. The predictor variables' multicollinearity issue has not been detected at all in the following correlation table;

			Correlations					
			child development	child with any of cognitive negative symptoms	child's physical health	child's Speech & language proficiency	child's relation with other children	covid period
Spearman's rho	child development	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.256**	-.014	-.057	.204**	.241**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.832	.396	.003	.000
		N	225	225	225	225	211	225
	child with any of cognitive negative symptoms	Correlation Coefficient	.256**	1.000	.022	-.015	.028	.104
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.738	.824	.688	.119
		N	225	225	225	225	211	225
	child's physical health	Correlation Coefficient	-.014	.022	1.000	-.107	.026	-.097
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.832	.738	.	.110	.711	.149
		N	225	225	225	225	211	225
	child's Speech & language proficiency	Correlation Coefficient	-.057	-.015	-.107	1.000	.041	-.017
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.396	.824	.110	.	.550	.802
		N	225	225	225	225	211	225
	child's relation with other children	Correlation Coefficient	.204**	.028	.026	.041	1.000	.016
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.688	.711	.550	.	.813
		N	211	211	211	211	211	211
	covid period	Correlation Coefficient	.241**	.104	-.097	-.017	.016	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.119	.149	.802	.813	.
		N	225	225	225	225	211	225

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The independent or explanatory variables of the binary regression model intercorrelation were analyzed on Spearman's rho correlation in the above table. It was a preliminary assessment of Spearman's rho correlation as the assumption of binary logistic regression analysis. Vatcheva et al. demarcate .7 or above Spearman's rho correlation for concluding high multicollinearity whereas an intercorrelation less than .7 does not cause many issues and thus remains no strong threat to the assumption of multicollinearity (Vatcheva et al., 2016). The spearman rho positive correlation was found between COVID period and child development (sig.000, rho=.24), child's relation with others and child development (sig.003, rho=.20), and child with any cognitive negative symptoms & and child development (sig.000, rho=.25). However, the spearman rho correlation was not found among explanatory variables. No intercorrelation means the multicollinearity assumption was not violated for the analysis of the binary logistic regression model. After this the above multicollinearity as a preliminary

4. Discussion

The family of the child is found to be the main stakeholder in the child's early learning language & communication of his/her concerns, addressing biological, emotional, and cognitive needs. The family maintained early childhood in all spheres

including feeding and toileting. The interview discussion of the participants focused on the role of primary caregivers more than any other topic concerning the early life of a girl and boy child. However, there were differences in qualitative and quantitative results on parental involvement in a child's education in the previous research studies conducted in the context of the Arab sector in Israel. For example, Freud et al. (2018), the quantitative study highlighted Arab community was highly involved in the child's essential decisions such as selecting peer groups and schooling (Freund et al., 2018). In contrast, the recent qualitative study conducted interviews during COVID observed the opposite. The study concluded that Arab parents were not as involved in a child's development as the Jewish sector (Sharabi & Cohen-Ynon, 2021). The mixture of two qualitative and quantitative made this study bridge these gaps and present multidimensional novel results on the parental involvement in child's development in the Arab sector in Israel.

On the other hand, reverse in the family positive role and involvement breed opposite outcome. Interviewees explained even a small difference between father and mother on the matter relating to a child's socialization could lead to huge gaps. This coincided with the second chi-square results. The test revealed a significant association between parental dissatisfaction with each other and the preschool child's development. The father and the mother are the first and foremost humans in the early life of a child. From dawn to dusk, a child finds the presence of a father and mother much more than any other human being in the home. He/she makes the parents role models by imitating and indoctrinating their way of life. Prevoo and Weel, the study analyzed placebo regression on the disruption variable. there was a significant inverse correlation between disrupted family and the early child's personality development (Prevoo & Weel, 2015). Consistent, the results and chi-square test of this research study concluded that 'Disrupted parenting during family crises has a relationship with children's development in the Arab sector in Israel'.

Thus, the family crisis was the key concern of this whole study. It was given due place in both qualitative and quantitative data. Family crises were observed in multifarious forms during interviews and existing reviews of literature for developing the questionnaire. A major form of family crisis observed in the thematic analysis was

economic hardships. However, child's development was disproportionately affected by parental lack of understanding and cooperation with each other. Thematic analysis observed other family crises including extramarital affairs, drug or alcohol consumption, violence in the family, and unemployment. The quantitative data analysis of correlation highlighted not only the association between family crises and a child's poor growth but also showed the direction of the correlation. Family crises negatively affect the mental, cognitive, speech and language, moral, emotional, and social behavior of preschool children in the Arab sector in Israel. Man-Whitney U test revealed gender differences as girl child were more affected by family crises than boy child. While focusing on child abuse, the study of Lev-Wiesel et al. (2014), explored the key factors that could discourage child violence and negative emotional trauma of children due to child abuse. With the purpose to discourage child maltreatment, the study found sexual, witnessing family violence, physical, neglect, and emotional forms of abuse (Lev-Wiesel et al., 2014).

This study employed logistic regression in the quantitative data analysis to measure the factors in isolation and total contributory role in the preschool child's development. It was hypothesized that the COVID-19 period, child's relationships with others, a child with any negative cognitive symptoms, child's language & speech proficiency, and child's physical health are the explaining factors of preschool child's development in the Arab sector in Israel. Surprisingly, a child's language & speech proficiency and child's physical health were not statistically significant predictors of a preschool child's development. COVID-19 period, child's relation with others, and child with any negative cognitive symptoms were found statistically significant explaining factors for preschool child's development in Arabs in Israel. Covid period was negatively affecting child's productive activities and child's relationships with others as revealed by another study conducted on children during the pandemic. The findings of the study were commendable; screens including mobile & TV activities increased during covid followed by a decrease in the frequency of child's physical activities, and sedentary habits developed in both child genders i.e., boys and girls during the pandemic times in Portugal (Pombo et al., 2021). Especially, covid negatively affected the child's mental and

cognitive functioning in Arabs in Israel as concluded by the logistic analysis odd ratio in this study.

5. Conclusion

There is no denying the fact that this study is a significant contributor to the literature on the impact of family crises on preschool children's development in the Arab sector in Israel; A case study covid-19. The findings of this study have detailed the impacts of family crises on the preschool child's development. The forms of the family crises have been given a theoretical foundation and the extent they impact the child's emotional and behavioural growth. The child is a victim of a disorganized family. He/she does not develop his/her socio-emotional makeup and thus it undermines the capacity to be functional in society. Preschool children aged from three to five or to the maximum of six years is an age of sensitive learning and physical change. At this age, the child realizes the parents, family, and outside world. He learns to speak, walk, and do his/her task with the assistance of his father and mother. The economic security and peaceful atmosphere in a home free from violence, disputes, and drug or alcohol consumption are key to assisting the child to realize these essential functions of life. However, any disruption at the age results in serious consequences for the children's development in the Arab sector in Israel. The child lags behind preschool development which is the first and foremost step to outperform in school life and the later adolescent age career.

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