

Development of Familial Role Identification Scale for Adolescents With Perceived Parental Disharmony

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Family plays a pivotal role in the growth and development of the individual and disharmony brings significant distress among family members. To deal with this distress, the family member may seek sources of support to assist in the coping process. An adaptive attitude that leads to this behaviour may result in the adoption of certain roles. In the current study, a standardized assessment measure, that is, The Familial Role Identification Scale for Adolescents (FRIS) was developed to identify these roles. In the development phases of the study (Phase I and Phase II), 40 items were formulated through interviews using open-ended questions and tested for narrative ambiguities. In the main study, FRIS was administered to 390 participants (Boys = 191; Girls = 199) with the age range of 10 to 18 years ($M = 14.70$; $SD = 1.20$). Concurrent Validity was examined by using the Role Identification Scale for Children (Samuel et al., 2014). Exploratory Factor Analysis with Varimax Rotation was used to analyze the items and form a factorial structure, that yielded 3 factors indicating different roles adopted by adolescents as Hero, Withdrawal and Mascot with acceptable psychometric properties. Cultural context implications of the results were discussed.

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Families are a fundamental aspect of building society, community, and culture. Pakistan predominantly represents the

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collectivistic culture here, families are known to be the core of the need fulfilment of each individual (Masood & Sahar, 2014). In Pakistan, the family structure is of two types, nuclear (based on parents and children) and joint family system (where one family is living with the extended family members or grandparents under one roof). Usually, it is observed that in joint family systems, the roles of the members are divided in a way that parents, grandparents or paternal uncle and aunts are responsible for decision making in every context and youngsters have roles of obedience. This family dynamics of Pakistani culture becomes the base for individuals to learn and cope with life challenges.

In Pakistan, families have been practising this traditional family system with role division from generations, where the parents, grandparents and in certain circumstances the extended family members are influencing and interfering with the decision making of the young ones (Agha et al, 2008). Among the theorists of social constructivism, Systemic theory highlighted the parts as a *whole* and presented the family as a system that is self-governing and independent with its set patterns and rules (Dallos & Draper, 2005; Erdem & Safi, 2018). These patterns are maintained through homeostatic features which proposes that a family system will always work toward establishing balance and maintaining the equilibrium between the members of a system. The members are representing a unit and individual issues are influencing and disturbing balancing the equilibrium between the family that is considered as an indication of family dysfunction (Oh et al., 2011).

Previously, disharmony in family systems was only explored within the context of families dealing with substance abuse of a certain member (Black, 2009; Potter & Williams, 1991; Samuel et al., 2014; Vernig, 2011; Wegscheider-Cruse, 1981). However, in the present research, parental disharmony is explored which equally affects a family system and challenges the psycho-social functioning of members of family systems. The core phenomenon that highlighted the need for this research was because every system works well with complete correspondence of each familial role, however, if one or two of these roles experience disharmony, the system gets challenged as well the members involved in it.

It is commonly observed that in a system where parents have a disharmony in their relationship, and in the consequence the adolescents are inclined to adopt multiple roles to harmonize the family system (Cummings & Davies, 2002). However, researchers suggest that acquired roles in such disharmonious scenarios might be the antecedent of future challenges in an adolescent's life (Manley et

al., 1990). Furthermore, this familial role phenomenon helps in developing the identity of the individual as well as help in understanding reliability and interpersonal skills. These familial roles can be a powerful way of determining a person's way of coping with later life affairs.

According to Perez (2015), the secondary roles are the ones that are acquired and come into being when adolescents develop a sense of self. In the context of family, Landy (2009) proposed a model of roles acquired by the members of the family which postulates that secondary roles as behaviours that are performed to find one's part in the system of role plays and role reversals. Moreover, it is a major part of psychological development. The third and final stage of roles is known as the tertiary level in the familial model of role performance, they are played to adjust the outer environment in case of any disharmony in the family system.

Among role performances in the family system, problems occur if there is an ambivalence in the role identification of primary figures in the family system (Parents) which is followed by confusion in role performance or overabundance for secondary figures who are the children in the family (Cummings & Davies, 2002). Therefore, in the phase of perceiving disharmony between parents, role reversal takes place and other members like children in the family try to take up some of the behaviours to cope with family distress (Kosner et al., 2014). Therefore, such disharmony is described as the perceived parental dissonance which disturbs the balance of the family system and sends children with a secondary level of roles towards role reversals and multiple role performance.

In the early 1960s and 1970s, Family Therapy was originated and influenced the concept of family roles to find the dysfunctional patterns in families (Radmall, 2001). The types of roles observed have been under a taxonomy; outsider roles (Landy, 1993, 2009) which include rebel and deserter, they have the chance to escape away from the family and take outsider position, Parentified roles (Goldklank, 1986) which includes a hero who can do no wrong, responsible child or golden child and under similar taxonomy of self-caretaker, breadwinner and family navigator (Kosner et al., 2014). Researches that focused on the importance of family roles since the 19th century (Ackerman, 1962, 1966; Black, 2009; Jackson, 1965; Olson, 2000; Satir, 1972; Wegscheider-Cruse, 1981).

Nevertheless, the relation of psychological wellbeing with roles or behaviours children acquire to get through parental disharmony has never been examined systematically in Pakistani culture where

families are based on enmeshed boundaries and several disharmonized family systems are reported in abundance. Moreover, as the family is a set of different personalities united together, the perception of conflict appears to be multidimensional and has been rarely acknowledged. To understand the impact of parental disharmony it is necessary to understand children's perception of the stressor and the meanings children interpret from them to show a behavioural outcome in the form of acquired roles (Glaser & Hecht, 2013).

These acquired roles are addressed in the theories mostly based on the individualistic culture, whereas, very limited data is available to understand the roles adopted by the adolescents who perceive parental disharmony in a collectivities culture. The current state of the art highlights the assessment protocol for the adolescent's role where the disequilibrium is caused due to the father alcoholism (Samuel et al., 2014). In the collectivistic culture, parental disharmony is increasing due to multiple personal, economic and social factors that are not addressed in the previously developed measures. The issues like low socio-economic conditions, poor spousal relationships, and interpersonal difficulties are the factors that promote parental disharmony in a collectivistic culture (Wong, et al, 2018). Henceforth, in the present research, the roles acquired by the siblings are explored within the perceived scenario of disharmony between parents of the family system. In this research, the question was to identify the behaviours adolescents acquire to cope through perceived parental disharmony that brings distress to the familial roles.

Method

To construct a culturally relevant and psychometrically valid scale for assessing familial role identification among adolescents' children perceiving parental disharmony, this study went through the following phases:

Phase I: Item Generation

The phenomenology of the construct Role Identification in adolescents was explored in this phase. The phenomenological question used to inquire about the phenomenon was "*What behaviors do children usually take for when they witness their parents arguing?*" For an exploration of phenomenology, this phase included 20 participants (Boys = 10; Girls = 10) approached through purposive sampling. Responses were recorded and collated in exact verbatim. The final item structure included 40 items. Later, responses were

analyzed for duplications, ambiguities, or incorrect grammar. 4 point rating scale was utilized for items, where 0 stands for 'not at all' and 4 stands for 'a lot'.

Phase II: Pilot Study

The items finalized in the first stage was given to 20 participants (Boys = 10; Girls = 10) selected through purposive sampling (Cann et al., 2008; Hertzog, 2008; Isaac & Michael, 1971). Participants were between the age ranges 10-18 years. The time estimated to complete the measure was almost 15 minutes and no difficulties in workable nature were reported.

Phase III: Main Study

The main study aims to establish significant psychometric properties for indigenously developed instrument called Familial Role Identification Scale for Adolescents (FRIS).

Participants

In Pakistan total number of adolescents is 73,854,000 (UNICEF Data: Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women, 2016). According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), for a population that is equal to or greater than 1,000,000, the required sample size is 384. The Yamane's (1967) estimation, sample size (n) 399.9 is evaluated where population size (N) is 73,854,000 and level of precision (e) is 0.05. Thus, this study has considered a sample size of 399 derived from Yamane (1967) as a larger sample size will also cover the non-response bias.

Multi-stage sampling was used in this phase to approach the sample. Strata were developed and divided into two halves of boys and girls. Further, the sample was subdivided based on the 8th (132[34%]), 9th (118 [30%]) and 10th (140 [36%]) classes. These participants were further divided into sectors of school i.e., public schools (192[49%]) and Private schools (198 [51%]). The age range of participants was 10-18 years ($M = 14.70$, $SD = 1.20$).

Measures

Demographic Performa. This section was characterized of personal and familial characteristics of participants including gender, class, age, school system, family size, family system and birth order.

The Familial Role Identification Scale for Adolescents. It was an indigenously developed scale constructed newly and was used in studying three types of Roles identified by adolescents ($N = 390$). The scale was based on 4 point rating scale (*never* = 0, *sometimes* = 1, *often* = 2, *always* = 3) and comprised of 40 items after the completed phase psychometric validation and EFA. Instructions of the instrument stated, “Read carefully and respond that to what extend each statement represent your behaviour after *witnessing parents having an argument*”. High scores in the respective factor indicated high identification with that role.

The Role Identification Scale. (Samuel et al., 2014). RIS is a scale based on 4 factors named as Hero ($\alpha = .90$), Aggressor ($\alpha = .90$), Mascot ($\alpha = .89$) and Withdrawn ($\alpha = .88$). RIS comprise 122 items and 5 points scale. To establish concurrent validity of the developed measure, Role Identification Scale was used. This scale was the only representative scale for the construct of Role identification developed in Pakistan. This scale was previously developed to assess the role identification phenomenon among adolescents whose fathers were dealing with substance dependence disorder.

Procedure

Approval of the project from the research committee and schools was acquired for the collection of data. Selected schools were from Government and Private sectors. 5 Private schools and 4 Government schools were approached personally. Participants were tested in groups of 10 participants at a time. Ethical rights and the brief purpose of the study was provided to the participants. They were also informed that the information collected from them will only be used for research purposes and confidentiality will be maintained. Designed protocol containing measures for demographic characteristics, Familial Role Identification Scale for Adolescents (FRIS) and previously designed Role Identification Scale (RIS; Samuel et al., 2014) was provided to participants. Each perform took 15 minutes on average to be completed by each participant. Participants were debriefed about the study to resolve the queries regarding research. Data was collected from 400 participants but 10 of these perform as were discarded due to incomplete information. After 2 weeks, 90 from the total 390 participants were selected for retest reliability of developed scale (FRIS).

Results

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The total number of items was 40 which were systematically processed based on their unexpected or weak correlation in the phase of Exploratory Factor Analysis. Only the items with the most appropriate and high correlation were included in the final version of the measure. Exploratory Factor Analysis via Varimax Rotation and principal components analyzed the items to form factorial structures was used. Varimax rotation is the method of orthogonal rotation. The main assumption behind using the Varimax rotation was to maximize the variance of factors, increase the Orthogonality, Interpretability and Simplification of the factors. Overall, the final appropriate items provided by Factor Analysis were 32 in number.

Factor Analysis was conducted by computing item correlation for 40 items collected through the item generation process. Table 1 explained the factor loadings among items that were significant. The items for FRIS were selected on the basis of the criteria of having factors loading .40 or greater (Kline, 1993). Factor Analysis provided 15 items on Factor 1, 10 items on Factor 2 and 7 items on Factor 3. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value and Bartlett test's value were found to be significant ($p=.001$) with an adequacy of .80

According to Kahn (2006) and Kim and Mueller (1978) factors that are formed through Varimax Rotation are not related to one another. The criteria derived from researches (Cureton & D'Agostino, 2013; Kaiser, 1974; Kim & Mueller, 1978; Kline, 2015; Raubenheimer, 2004; Revelle & Rocklin, 1979) was used to find the number of factors: The most significant method of determining the number of factors is through Eigen value which was greater than 1 in present research and was attested through graphical representation of Scree Plot (Cattell, 1966). Kaiser's criterion (1974) was also used for determining the number of factors by total variance experienced. Factor analysis required two stages named as Factor extraction and the Factor rotation.

Scree plot showing extraction of factors for Role identification scale.

Figure 1. Scree Plot Showing Factor Analysis.

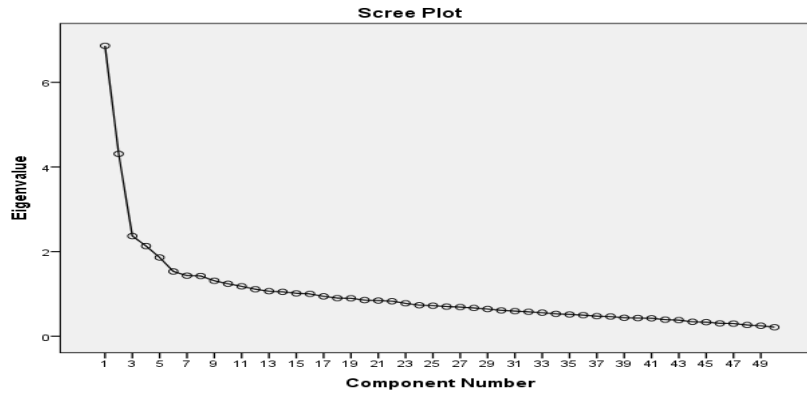


Table 1

Factor Structure, Eigen Values and Item Correlation of 32 Items of Familial Role Identification Scale for Adolescents with Varimax Rotation (N = 390)

Sr. No.	Item No.	Statements	F1	F2	F3
1.	2	Distracting parents during their fight.	.49	-.29	.33
2.	4	Separately calm each parent.	.49	-.19	.34
3.	6	During fight try to make parents relax and quite	.52	-.26	.27
4.	8	Explain to one's parent that do not worry	.57	-.02	.11
5.	11	Request parent not to fight with each other	.64	-.18	.17
6.	15	Discuss the importance of parents	.66	-.08	.23
7.	16	With the help of siblings try to end the fight	.65	-.21	.08
8.	18	Try to stop parents from the fight	.62	-.22	.22
9.	20	Able to handle siblings	.45	.16	.05
10.	24	Cook something for parents to make them happy	.47	-.01	.17
11.	25	Helping parents in their chores	.42	.08	-.12
12.	30	Give glass of water to parents	.49	.05	.11
13.	31	Hide father's mistakes in front of mother	.48	.13	.02
14.	32	Hide mother's mistakes in front of father	.43	.16	.02
15.	48	Stay silent and pray from God	.52	.12	-.12

Continued...

Sr. No.	Item No.	Statements	F1	F2	F3
16.	10	Find a place where nise of fight cannot reach	.06	.41	.11
17.	17	Wait for the fight to end	.17	.42	-.03
18.	23	In anger leave parents company	-.05	.46	.15
19.	27	Make oneself busy	-.06	.51	.06
20.	36	Leave parents on their own	-.27	.49	-.08
21.	39	Crying in alone	.40	.42	-.19
22.	40	Forcefully try to sleep	.16	.58	.09
23.	41	Stay in bed and wait until the fight is over	-.07	.52	.19
24.	45	Quietly leave the room where parents are fighting	-.05	.51	-.09
25.	49	Mentally wander off during the fight of parents	-.042	.51	.33
26.	13	Distract parents from fights ask them to do a task.	.22	-.08	.54
27.	14	Went to friends" home	-.07	.20	.43
28.	22	Crack jokes to end the fight	.32	.05	.47
29.	29	Switch on TV to distract parents from fight	.02	.11	.48
30.	35	Move things to distract parents from fight	.23	.22	.40
31.	42	Request parents to go for outing	.29	-.01	.49
32.	50	To distract parents, perform naught acts	.03	.17	.61
Eigen Values			6.06	4.23	3.24
% Variance			12.12	8.67	6.48
Cumulative %			12.12	20.59	27.07

Note. Items with .40 or above loading are boldfaced.

The underlying number of factors in a variable is highlighted through Eigen Value by retaining the factors which show more than 1 or 1 and excluding the others (Kaiser, 1974). This method is known to be useful for choosing the number of factors and total variance in items for these factors. Moreover, Cattell (1966) also suggested Scree Plot method to verify the numbers of factors that can increase the validity of instrument. Factor rotation was used to manipulate the factors geometrically in order to increase their interpretability and distinctive meanings. Therefore, methods used in this stage were Varimax orthogonal rotation and the principal component analysis (Sheskin, 2003).

Factor Description

On the basis close examination of the items corresponding to each factor and the theme, each factor was assigned a label on the basis of the commonality of the themes emerged by the researchers.

Factor 1: Hero

There are 15 items in this factor. The items in this factor assess the role of heroic nature and have positive way of coping through stressful event like perceived parental disharmony. Items in these factors comprise of statements like “being responsible”, “intervening in the situation”, “offering solutions to parents like making them quite”.

Factor 2: Withdrawal

The items in this factor are 10 in number. Statements represent the role of a child which is negatively coping through stressful situation. Items are “going away from the incident where it cannot be heard”, “waiting for situation to be over, to react for it”, “Expressing anger by running away from situation”.

Factor 3: Mascot

The items in this factor are 7 in number. Statements represent negative coping from stressful situation. Items are “making fun of the issue which is the base of argument” “Asking parents to do something for him/her to divert their attention from argument”, “Becoming mischievous in order to divert their attention”.

Psychometric Properties of FRIS

In order to gain psychometric properties of FRIS; Concurrent validity, Split-half Reliability, Test-retest Reliability were computed.

Concurrent Validity

Concurrent validity was assessed through Role Identification which was constructed for adolescents with alcoholic fathers. It was the only scale with similar construct that was constructed indigenously therefore it was used to examine the validity of the present scale.

Table 2

Inter-Factor Correlations of FRIS and RIS, Cronbach Alpha, Means and Standard Deviation (N=390)

Factors	F1 RISA	F2 RISA	F3 RISA	RIS F1	RIS F2	RIS F3	RIS F4
F1 RISA	-	.01	.40***	-.24**	-.10	.41***	.34***
F2 RISA	-	-	.21**	.30**	.17	-.13	-.18
F3 RISA	-	-	-	.07	.16	.27**	-.01
<i>M</i>	25.4	9.6	7.1	46.9	42.9	26.5	23.5
<i>SD</i>	9.2	5.6	4.1	11.6	17.9	5.9	5.7
α	.85	.71	.70	.75	.73	.59	.67

Note. FRIS F1 = Hero, FRIS F2 = Withdrawn, FRIS F3 = Mascot, RIS F1 = Hero, RIS F2 = Aggressor, RIS F3 = Mascot, RIS F4 = Withdrawn

** $p < 0.01$. *** $p < 0.001$.

The Table indicated a moderate relationship among factors of FRIS and Role Identification scale of Adolescents with alcoholic fathers. The first factor called „Hero Role“ is positively related with factors called “Mascot” and “Withdrawal” of scale RIS and negatively with the first factor of RIS called “Hero”. The second factor called “Role of Withdrawn” of FRIS is positively related to the first factor of RIS called “Role of Hero”. The third factor called the Mascot Role of FRIS is positively related to the third factor of RIS called the Mascot Role. The pattern of relationship might be because contexts in which construct was studied were varying where FRIS represented the parental discord and RIS represented the children having alcoholic fathers.

Test-retest Reliability

Test-retest reliability of FRIS based on 90 Participants (15%) of the total sample ($n=390$) was completed after an interval of two weeks. The results showed test-retest reliability to of Hero $r = .80$ ($p < .001$), Mascot $r = .78$ ($p < .001$) and Withdrawal with $r = .78$ ($p < .001$).

Split-half Reliability

The split-half reliability of the scale was also investigated, and the result showed that Spearman-Brown correlation was .72 which is acceptable reliability.

Discussion

Globally, it is an established fact that parents put a great impact on a child's learning, but this impact varies according to culture being individualistic or collectivistic (Royen, & Sathar, 2013). Where collectivistic culture is practised their norms, name, harmony, and loyalty towards family is cherished (Triandis, 2001). Moreover, group conformity and cohesion of family is considered more important than individualistic self-growth (Chao & Tseng, 2002). Cultural difference in terms of importance for family cohesion is comparatively different for Pakistan and as soon as the homeostatic feature or balance of family is perceived to be affected, reactions of family members will be different for children living in a collectivistic culture like Pakistan (Saleem, et al., 2015). These reactions in response to a perceived disharmony were named as the roles identified by children living in the family system.

Since the study of identified roles have much importance in terms of disharmonious families, the construct lacked its theoretical reliance in collectivistic culture due to the unavailability of an indigenous scale that could assess the identified roles of children in perceived situations of disharmony when primary figures called parents are the reason behind it. There were previously several measures for Role identification among adolescents (Black, 2009; Potter & Williams, 1991; Samuel et al., 2014; Vernig, 2011; Wegscheider-Cruse's, 1981, 1989) but the particular context of perceived parental disharmony wasn't studied. The present study aimed to create an indigenous representative scale and investigate the psychometric properties of FRIS for children perceiving parental disharmony. Results declared it to be a valid and internally consistent scale for studying the concept of Role Identification among adolescents of collectivistic culture.

The scale for role identification was studied through factors describing roles of hero, withdrawn and mascot. The role of the hero was a description of behaviours that are intended to intervene in the disharmonious event or try to reach out to the authority figures to find the temporary or permanent solution for the perceived disharmony. A characteristic feature of this factor that differentiated the scale from other foreign developed measures is that it highlighted the major phenomenon of a collectivistic culture where children have limited emotional boundaries (Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2010) and emotions are expressed in a certain way which defines the standard of respect and parents have a strong place in their life. Moreover, religious inclinations are a significant aspect because Pakistan is an Islamic state and religious beliefs are known to have great power on a

person's psychosocial issues. The religion is the fundamental aspect of Pakistani household where all the discipline, rules and regulations are taught based on religious practices. Therefore, the disobeying parents are considered a sinful act and are discouraged (Pargament & Koenig, 2000).

Consequently, the description of the heroic role showed a similar dimension of religious beliefs in the higher command (God) for solutions of the disharmony along with other acts of intervening in the situation. Strong belief in God provides a significant hope and power to a person therefore a heroic act can also be introduced as believing in the higher authority and taking the liberty to ask for solutions from him. In such a way, the emotional boundary with parents is maintained as taught in collectivistic culture and at the same time children play their role in acting upon the disturbing situation instead of choosing negative behaviours to establish the balance or run away from the situation. Previously the role of hero has been discussed in individualistic cultures by the name of "family navigator" "little adult" and "golden child". The criterion validity showed an inverse relationship, therefore, establishing more than the contextual scale needs to be developed (Kosner et al., 2014).

The other two dimensions that were explored in terms of role identification are known as Role of withdrawn and Role of mascot. Both of these roles came out to be as negative coping compared to the first role called Hero. Among these dimensions, children use negative coping strategies to establish harmony in the family system. A withdrawn role defines behaviours like running away from the situation and finding alternative interests to externalize his emotional turmoil after perceiving disharmony in the family. A child with the role of withdrawal has been discussed previously as a lost child (Black, 2009) which also found behaviours of withdrawal or denial to adapt to the family stresses or imbalance in the homeostasis of family. Such a child makes himself as little as possible in the family. Role of mascot defines that the person is responsible for containing and expressing the family emotions. In literature, it has also been described as a placator (Black, 2009) and as a lightning rod (Kottler & Englar-Carlson, 2010). Such children consider themselves responsible for holding and diffusing emotions that the family system cannot hold, like making jokes about the perceived disharmonious situation.

The number of children with the role of the hero were comparatively high in data and as they belonged from a collectivistic culture, it could be learned from it that in a collectivistic culture where family play its role in determining a child's development (Walsh,

2002), it also strengthens his coping strategies when countered with disharmonious situations.

Considering stages of social-cognitive development (Zimmerman et al., 2000), it was stated that in middle childhood years from approximately 8 to 11 years of age children start to form alliances with one parent if system is disharmonized while after early adolescents that is after 14 years adolescents, they start distancing themselves from parental conflicts and loyalty conflict wears off and children start building their own personality instead of staying caught up but in a collectivistic culture, it can be represented by the results of the present study that a number of children perceiving disharmony was equal among children with different age levels. In this culture, children stay in the system and belongingness remains even after they reach adulthood (Stewart et al., 2000).

In addition, it can be noticed that the cultural practice of involving children in disputes increases with the increase in child's age like asking children to convey messages to each other or confiding in children for the other parent's suspected faults. Therefore, results on the basis of age were representative of the difference between collectivist and individualistic cultures (Saleem et al., 2015). Therefore, it is well-enlightened fact that stressful events bring coping mechanisms that help in establishing harmony for stable functioning of bio psychosocial nature. In nutshell, it has been revealed that perceived parental disharmony brings role identification for adolescents (Hero, Withdrawn, and Mascot).

Limitations and Further Recommendations

There were no previously used measures for the construct of role identification in terms of family systems therefore concurrent validity was tested with a scale of similar construct but made for a different population. The discriminant validity was not established in the current study it is suggested to measure the construct with variables that will highlight more authenticity of the FRIS. In future it would be a good step to collect data from other countries in Asia as well instead of only one country, to make it more representative of the populations in a collectivistic culture. Research should also include parents and teachers to identify more familial and educational characteristics as determining factors for role identification. The research findings should be used to spread awareness among parents and teachers to highlight the commonly used roles for coping and stress perceived from disharmony in the family system. Further research findings can be used in clinical settings for the management of familial conflicts.

Conclusion

The current research is valid research to measure roles identification in adolescents. It will further help in understanding of complex and dynamic nature of family roles. Exploratory factor analysis was performed to identify the underlined factors of indigenously developed scale Familial Role Identification Scale for Adolescents (FRIS). Total three factors were composed including Hero, Withdrawn and Mascot with total 32 number of items retained. High internal consistency and test retest reliability of measures was found. If roles are identified appropriately in clinical settings, adolescents can be given accurate management to alter the negative behavioral role and decrease the negative consequences in later years of life.

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