

Abstract

The current study is conducted to explore experiences of pubertal changes and its relationship to mental health problems in adolescent girls. The dissertation is comprised of three studies. Study I was about constructing an indigenous scale about pubertal changes experiences for adolescent girls. Study I was further divided into two phases of scale construction and establishing psychometric properties of newly developed scale. The sample of 194 adolescent girls was selected for scale construction and establishing psychometrics of scale. A separate sample consisted of 364 girls was selected to validate internal structure of scale through Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Government and private schools were approached to get a representative sample. The results of scale construction were obtained through inter-item correlation; factorial structure was completed through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Through factor analysis three factors named as 'Emotional distress', 'Behavioral maturation' and 'Self-care and management' were converged with eigen value > 1 . of experiences of pubertal changes in adolescent girls. Psychometrics properties were established through reliability, concurrent and discriminant validity analyses. Study II was designed to investigate relationship of pubertal changes experiences to the associated factors. To conduct this study a larger sample of adolescent girls (N=906) was selected from Government and Private Schools. All girls were selected from grade 7th, 8th and 9th through random stratified sampling. Pubertal Changes Experience Scale (Tasleem, Ijaz & Iftikhar, 2020), Mental Health Inventory (Bashir & Naz, 2013), Body Dissatisfaction scale (Tariq & Ijaz, 2015), Alabama parenting Questionnaire (Frick, 1991) Life Orientation Scale Urdu version (Huda & Kausar, 2013). The hypothesis testing was done through correlation analysis, mediation, and moderation and

mediated moderation analysis. It is also established in the Study II that pubertal changes influence social role of adolescent girls and psychological distress. Moreover, role of life orientation was emerged as a moderator between pubertal changes experiences and mental health problems of adolescent girls. These findings lead the discussion that suggested development of life skills and competence during adolescence that helps them to grow positively and compete smartly with the challenges of upcoming life. Study II provided empirical evidence about psychological distress during pubertal changes experiences in adolescent girls. So the third study was designed to introduce an intervention educational program that address said problems of adolescent girls and help them to grow and develop potential strengths. Study III aimed to implement a youth development program that is specifically designed for adolescent girls who are going through transitory period of puberty. This program was skill-based training program including interpersonal and life skills implemented in a Government higher secondary school in Lahore city. This intervention program was tested for its efficacy. This intervention program was executed in groups and it emphasized the connectedness throughout process of learning rather what they learned at the end of discussions. Total 30 adolescent girls were participated in this study. Non parametric tests were used to analyze the results of experimental and control groups. The results suggested the youth development program has helped adolescent girls to reduce their psychological and emotional distress and their psychological well-being was improved. This program empowered learners to strengthen their potentials to reduce the risk of indulging any problematic behaviors which are associated with age of adolescence. Overall this study contributed in addressing an important developmental event of pubertal changes specifically in adolescent girls. It will help in early and timely detection of

psychological and emotional problem which are caused due to pubertal changes. Youth development program is helpful in providing directions to the school management to train adolescents with positive life skills that may help them to become more competent and independent individuals in later life.

Keywords: Pubertal Changes, Mental Health Problems, Life Orientation, Transitory Period, Adolescent Girls, Intervention Program