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IS TODAY'S TEENAGER STRESSED? AN ANALYSIS BASED ON PSYCHODIAGNOSIS

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to understand the main causes and symptoms that lead adolescents to demonstrate so much stress or anguish in the face of their daily lives, considering the performance of a psychological assessment as a tool to assist in this understanding. This study will be carried out through a literature review through searches of articles in databases, as well as books that address the subject. Adolescents marked by the transition to adulthood were found as results, who are faced with the failure of childhood ideals and the search for new cultures, a new group, in addition to their physical changes, their desires that were previously repressed and that are now reappearing. These transformations can cause stress, in addition to family and social relationships, daily and school factors, and pregnancy in girls. Thus, the adolescent can go through moments of stress and the psychological evaluation, with the battery of tests appropriate to the adolescent, can favor the treatment and understanding of the causes for stress in this phase.

Keywords: Adolescence. Stress. Psychological evaluation.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Many cases of possible stress in the adolescent age group have been growing these days. Adolescents begin to show symptoms of discouragement, lack of interest in studies, in relationships with peers, parents and teachers, as well as aggressiveness, lack of patience and some end up isolating themselves and are unable to express their feelings verbally with their parents, for example. Thus, parents end up seeking psychological care for their child with the hope of understanding the situation in which their child is.

Stress represents a state of emotional excitement where stimuli affect the person's homeostasis, requiring a process of adaptation, alterations, in addition to releasing adrenaline in the body, which generates physiological and psychological changes (MARGIS et al., 2003).

The initial reactions to stress occur in a similar way in all people, who have sweating, tachycardia, muscle tension, a feeling of alertness, dry mouth. The hormonal reaction triggers changes in the body, as the physical and emotional parts are interconnected, so the physical reaction manifests in the psychological and vice versa (LIPP; TRICOLI, 2011).

In adolescence, young people are faced with situations that require responsibilities that were not previously demanded of them, so coping with such events can generate moments of stress (PERUZZO et al., 2008).

It is in adolescence that puberty begins, so the differentials between boys and girls appear, in addition to the awakening of sexuality and an active sexual life (LIPP; TRICOLI, 2011).

In adolescence one does not experience the drama of ignorance, but of too much knowledge, badly repressed and its brutal return, which were designed to forget, which agitate and disturb the environment in which the young person finds himself (RASSIAL, 1997).

Psychologists have increasingly used psychological assessment strategies, with defined objectives, to find answers to questions, aiming at a solution. Evaluation strategies apply to a variety of approaches and resources available to the psychologist (CUNHA, 2000).

In view of the above, the following research question was elaborated: could psychodiagnosis contribute to the understanding of the factors and symptoms of stress in today's adolescents?

In view of this, it is understood that adolescents are going through a transition phase, where both physical and psychological changes are happening all the time. Dealing with this transition is not always an easy task and they end up not understanding what is going on with them. With this, it is believed that adolescents submitted to a psychological evaluation

process with the application of psychological tests appropriate for their age or if they had psychological support could understand themselves better or seek help as soon as possible.

In view of the above, as many cases are emerging, it is necessary to verify how the application of a battery of psychological tests can help in understanding the causes and symptoms for possible stress in this phase of adolescence, as it is interesting to understand what this adolescent experiences, raising suspicions of anguish, sadness, psychopathology, family problems.

In addition, this study may contribute as a source of research for the academic and professional community of both psychologists and other professions. To help educators, parents, the adolescents themselves so that they can integrate, because they begin to understand this phase together.

Therefore, this research aims to conduct a literature review on the contributions of psychodiagnosis in the understanding of stress in adolescents.

2 METHODOLOGY

This is a literature review, with a qualitative approach, carried out from January to March 2017.

For Gil (2008), in a collection of bibliographic data, the work is developed through materials already prepared, with the advantage of allowing the researcher to cover a range of phenomena. Thus, this study seeks the interconnection of several authors on the subject in question for a better understanding.

Using the following keywords: "adolescence", "psychological assessment" and "stress", we searched the Virtual Health Library (VHL) and the Scielo, Pepsic and other databases, where 16 articles were found, according to the inclusion criteria. As inclusion criteria, articles in Portuguese, complete, available and published between 1999 and 2016 with reliable methodology and that addressed more specifically the relationship between stress and adolescence, reporting the main causes and symptoms, in addition to the subject of psychological assessment and psychological tests.

The selected articles were divided into two points for a better understanding of the subject. These points comprise the results and discussions of the present study. The first point will bring a discussion about adolescence today and its relationship with stress. The second is about the importance of psychological assessment and which psychological tests can be used in a battery to detect the main causes of stress in adolescents. Printed literature was also used.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Initially, 30 scientific articles were collected, in addition to some books on the subject. However, only 16 of these articles were used, and others were excluded by the selection criteria on the theme. And after being filtered by the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the articles used were: seven articles from Scielo, two from the Virtual Health Library (VHL), four from Pepsic, one from UFRGS, one from UNICEUB and one from PUCPR. The other subjects were collected from printed literature.

3.1 STRESS IN ADOLESCENCE TODAY

The person is considered a child at the age of up to 12 years, and the adolescent at the age between 12 and 18 years. Both enjoy all the rights related to the human person without prejudice and that facilitate their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development in conditions of freedom and dignity (BRASIL, 2008).

It is in adolescence that physiological puberty disturbs the image of the body that was built in childhood, and can present itself as a catastrophe for the adolescent, as he begins to acquire the attributes of the body of his parent of the same sex, but the generations are different. Adolescence not only represents anatomical-physiological changes and new social demands, but also, according to the readings of Freud and Lacan, a second moment of identification with the real, the imaginary and the symbolic. The emergence of the real occurs with puberty, which is not reduced to physical transformations, but confronts the subject with the impossible of sexual intercourse, promised for later; the impossible of limits, where the familiar space is a frightening infinity; the impossible of death, because it is verified that the father is mortal without the need to kill him and that growing up is related to aging (RASSIAL, 1999).

The performance of the adolescent operation is accompanied by the late encounter of the Other sex, and the adolescent subject will wander in search of figures to anchor his identifications, as this Other assumes an important value in adolescence and puts at risk the validation of the Name-of-the-Father (LIMA, 2006).

With these confrontations, the imaginary game takes place immediately. The adolescent needs to reconstruct the image of the body that includes the new genitality, where the trace of bisexuality is erased for a value of relationship with the other sex. And in the symbolic games of the adolescent operation, he is in need of new signifiers, because the Other has broken down, and the subject needs to invent new names for the father. Even so, the adolescent operation is not reduced to these states of the real, imaginary and symbolic,

but metapsychologically, adolescence can be experienced, both for one and for the other, as a "second birth, an entry into life" (RASSIAL, 1999).

In adolescence, there is a malaise that projects itself on the outside, a "not being well in your skin". It is a moment in which negative feelings about oneself are not repressed within oneself and are ready to reappear (RASSIAL, 1997).

In view of this, the adolescent finds himself in a moment of failure of the identifications and ideals of childhood, where the primary identification with the family environment is put to the test, and his self must seek new cultures to anchor himself and perceive himself as operative. A task of finding one's place in the social and occupying it (COUTINHO, 2005).

For Calligaris (2000), adolescents try to get together in groups, which can be more or less closed, but which demonstrate to the world their identity and that differs from the universe of adults and other groups. They have the same look, the same cultural preferences and the same behaviors. And that these groups change quickly.

Thus, transformations and changes are verified in this adolescent, from physical changes to his desire to belong to a group, his departure from identification with parental figures in search of a social bond, an identity. Emotional instability in adolescence can be similar to other periods of life, where it is required to face developmental tasks, which can be stressful, such as entering the adult world, middle age, or old age. The process of adolescence should not be distorted or understood as an always problematic phase (OLIVEIRA-MONTEIRO et al., 2012).

With these physiological, emotional and psychological transformations due to age, being an adolescent is also a search for a cultural attitude, reflecting society's expectations about a certain group. In addition, realize that when they talk about their feelings, they show themselves to be fragile, lonely, misunderstood and excluded. In adolescence, circumstances involving conflicts, fights, misunderstandings are natural and no benefits are found by escaping from it, but if exaggerated and disproportionate reactions persist, they can be harmful to the adolescent (CRIVELATTI et al., 2006).

Going through these situations can trigger *stress*. Stress represents a reaction that the body experiences in any situation that represents a greater challenge than it can imagine, in addition to being composed of physical and emotional components. Stress can end up being beneficial when in moderate doses, because in moments of tension, the human body produces adrenaline or dopamine, a substance that provides cheer, vigor, enthusiasm and energy. With adrenaline, the person is alert, ready to fight or flee from difficult situations. In this phase of *stress* it is still possible to feel tachycardia, dry mouth, knot (pressure) in the stomach, cold hands. Stress can also be ideal and even negative. Ideally, the person learns

to manage stress and commands the alert phase efficiently, managing to alternate between being alert and being unalert. And *negative stress* is related to excessive *stress*, where the person exceeds their limits and exhausts their ability to adapt to stressful situations and both physical and emotional damage occurs, as the quality of life suffers damage, and the person can get sick (LIPP, 2014).

It is important to note that there are four phases of *stress*, as described in chart 1:

Table 1. Phases of *Stress* and Description.

PHASES	DESCRIPTION
Alert Phase	It is the positive phase of *stress*, as the person prepares for action automatically, making the person more attentive, strong, motivated.
Resistance Phase	It starts when the person remains alert for several periods, then the body takes action to prevent the total waste of energy, where it tries to resist and unconsciously tries to reestablish inner balance.
Near Exhaustion Phase	In this phase, the person goes through tensions that exceed the limit of what is manageable, there is a break in physical and emotional resistance, even though there are moments when I was able to laugh, work, make decisions, but these episodes are interspersed with moments of discomfort, in addition to a lot of anxiety.
Exhaustion Phase	It is the negative and pathological phase, where a very serious inner imbalance occurs, the person goes into depression, and can no longer work or concentrate on daily activities. It also comments on some recommendations to protect yourself from stress, which are: healthy eating, relaxation, physical exercise, emotional stability with positive thoughts about life and quality of life, living harmoniously in the social, affective and professional areas, as they all interfere with health

Source: Author's construction, according to LIPP (2014).

Adolescents, like children or adults, can experience these phases of *stress* depending on their daily lives, social relationships, family relationships, among other factors. In a study carried out with adolescent students from public schools in the State of Pernambuco with the objective of associating health risk behaviors (smoking, alcohol consumption and drug use) with indicators of psychosocial stress, it was possible to show that: exposure to alcohol consumption and drug use are directly associated with indicators of psychosocial stress in adolescents; exposure to smoking was not related to psychosocial stress; drug use was associated with suicide plans among boys and thoughts of suicide among girls; exposure to

alcohol consumption was a factor associated with suicidal thoughts in both girls and boys (CARVALHO et al., 2011).

In another study to evaluate the prevalence and factors associated with stress in adolescent students in the city of Canoas/RS, where adolescents answered the Stress Scale for Adolescents (ESA) and a questionnaire on sociodemographic data, family relationships, sexuality, drug use and risk behaviors, it was possible to perceive that: prevalence of stress in 10.9% of the sample, 10.3% in boys and 11.4% in girls. Adolescents who classified their relationship with their father and mother as regular/poor and a regular/poor home environment had a prevalence of stress. Parents of adolescents with stress show less interest in their child's studies. Risky behaviors, such as accidents and unprotected sex, generate stress. Despite having access to knowledge, many young people are exposed to STDs, and this generates stress (SCHERMANN et al., 2014).

In an analysis of other aspects that cause stress in adolescents, in a study carried out with students of pre-university entrance exams in Porto Alegre/RS of private courses with the objective of associating entrance exams and possible psychosomatic manifestations generated by them, it was possible to understand that 61.7% of the participants presented some form of stress, and the form that most predominated was psychological, demonstrating that the entrance exam can generate cases of stress. And that the entrance exam is a rite of passage for young people, a milestone that separates adolescence from adult life (PERUZZO et al., 2008).

In contrast to the above research, another survey carried out with third-year students in the Federal District to assess the level of stress, it was noticed that only 13.16% of the sample of students presented stress and that most were female, demonstrating that they did not present excessive stress. It was also found that there were no significant differences in the relationship between stress and future plans, which may be a non-harmful stress for the adolescent (MACHADO et al., 2011).

Another important factor to be analyzed would be the correlation between signs, symptoms and the presence of stress in pregnant adolescents. A study conducted in Maceió/AL with pregnant adolescents from health units sought this study. It was possible to see that only 19.3% of the adolescents surveyed did not present stress. The predominance of stress was in the phases of resistance and exhaustion. Frequent crying was reported by 62.8% of the adolescents and that 23.8% of them were in the stress exhaustion phase. The signs and symptoms of pregnancy were exacerbated by stress, but prevalent in the physiology range (CORREIA et al., 2011).

Stress in adolescents can also be related to compulsive buying and materialism. In a study on this relationship, it was noticed that stress and materialism influence the purchasing behavior of adolescents and that children and adolescents are cited as vulnerable consumers due to their psychological and cognitive conditions. And that if, since childhood, the individual receives instructions on how to consume properly, it is expected that as an adolescent he will not direct his weaknesses and tensions to compulsive buying (MEDEIROS et al., 2015).

Finally, everyday stressors in adolescents is also a fact to be analyzed. In a study carried out with students from public urban and rural schools in the state of Ceará, it was noticed that out of a total of 30 daily stressors, 45.6% of the sample experienced more than 15 stressors, and that the stressors with the highest intensity were: not using a computer, internet, video game or cell phone; being sick; ending a dating or friendship relationship; have tests at school. Along with these stressors and those of fighting with siblings or colleagues; having to obey the parents' orders; not having money to buy what they want and not having time to do what they like were high in the daily lives of adolescents in both urban and rural areas (ABREU et al., 2016).

3.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT – PSYCHODIAGNOSIS

Psychological evaluation can help detect the possible causes of stress in adolescents. It represents a technical and scientific process carried out individually or collectively with the use of instruments, methods, such as psychological tests, which are used when it is necessary to measure a psychological characteristic (intelligence, personality, attention), and the test is carried out according to demand. It should be emphasized that the results of the evaluation consider the historical and social context and its effects on the psyche (SANTOS, 2011).

Psychological assessment is not limited to the exclusive use of psychological tests, but adds them to this process with the objective of obtaining information about aspects of the subject's psyche. Psychological tests are considered reliable if they comply with the minimum criteria of reliability and validity (ANACHE, 2011).

Cunha (2000) reports steps in the realization of psychodiagnosis. Initially, the process occurs through referral, seeking to understand the causes, the hypotheses that led the subject to present such difficulty, all through initial interviews, as a psychodiagnosis is requested with the purpose of a nosological classification and a dynamic understanding of the subject to facilitate their treatment. Psychodiagnosis has limited time, so after establishing the hypotheses and the objective, the psychologist is already able to establish the techniques that will be necessary, thus, the contract is established. With the contract, both parties seek

to fulfill the obligations so that the psychodiagnosis happens in a favorable way. Then, the battery of psychological tests is assembled according to the subject's demand and then the administration of the tests takes place. With the tests applied, the psychologist performs the survey and analysis of the data obtained, in addition to the observations obtained during the application of the tests. Finally, there is the diagnosis and prognosis, but the psychologist does not always need to reach the highest level of interference to obtain a diagnostic hypothesis or the most probable diagnosis. And then the results are communicated to the subject.

It is with this process of psychological evaluation, of psychodiagnosis, that it is possible to understand the possible causes and symptoms of stress in adolescents, using clinical observations, initial interviews and the application of appropriate tests for the subject. For Leite (2011), when a psychologist decides to apply a psychological test, he must verify whether its use is appropriate for the individual through age group, level of education, gender, etc. Thus, for the stress demand in adolescents, a possible battery of psychological tests would be: Adolescent Stress Scale, Family Support Perception Inventory, and Adolescent Social Skills Inventory.

The Adolescent Stress Scale (ESA) is a personality test with the objective of quantitatively assessing stress in adolescence, verifying the existence of stress, its phases, in addition to indicating the most frequent reactions in adolescent behavior, measuring physical, psychological, cognitive and interpersonal reactions and stressful situations (COSTA et al., 2010).

The Family Support Perception Inventory (IPSF) is a personality test and aims to assist in the identification that the subject has of his family support, detection of family patterns (BAPTISTA, 2008).

And the Social Skills Inventory for Adolescents (IHSA) seeks to detect social skills for this audience in six main areas, such as: empathy, self-control, civility, assertiveness, affective approach and social resourcefulness. He is able to analyze the skills present or absent in the adolescent's repertoire (CAMPOS, 2011).

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Reading articles and books on the subject reported that there are many factors that contribute to the emergence of stress in adolescents. This adolescent is a subject in transformation, in change, because he is in a phase of transition to adulthood, so responsibilities are assumed, doubts arise and many times he does not understand what is going on.

The adolescent perceives the change in his body image, there is identification with the real, the imaginary and the symbolic. He is faced with the desire for sexual intercourse, but it is still impossible and promised for later. He perceives limits to be obeyed and responsibilities to be fulfilled and assumed, which before was not so demanded. A family environment that is not always favorable, in addition to beginning to understand aging and death.

Along with all this, this adolescent begins his search for a social group to fit in, as he leaves parental identifications for social identifications. He will be part of groups, he will identify himself and will change over time.

All these changes can affect his well-being and generate stress in the face of situations that he cannot handle alone. The search for a therapeutic process can help, but also, carrying out a psychological evaluation with a battery of tests suitable for the adolescent can help even more in their treatment.

In the articles studied, it was possible to perceive that stress can exist in adolescents and that factors, such as family relationships, social relationships, pregnancy in girls, use of alcoholic beverages, pre-university entrance exam environment, all are related to stress, in addition to perceiving that stress has an influence on the compulsive buying of adolescents.

There are many tests that can detect the presence of stress-generating factors in adolescents, but for this study it is possible to highlight the Adolescent Stress Scale, the Family Situation Perception Inventory and the Social Skills Inventory for Adolescents. All provide results for the factors studied in the articles.

The ESA scale will help detect the existence of stress and in which phase the adolescent is and perceive which reactions are most present, whether physical or psychological. The IPSF will help in understanding existing family situations and how adolescents identify family support. And the IHSA will detect in which areas adolescents have more social skills.

Thus, the difficulties encountered were to select the articles according to the intended objective of the study, as many articles did not relate the adolescent to stress or to psychological assessment.

In view of this, it is suggested that new field studies be carried out, especially with the applicability of the instruments mentioned in the study to favor the understanding of adolescent stress.

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