

Relationship between parent-child relation and children's academic anxiety

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ABSTRACT

Academic anxiety is a type of state anxiety. The desire for excellence in academics has become a key factor for children's personal growth. Anxiety can occur with high educational expectations without understanding of personal quality of children and pressure for academic achievement according to desire of parent, teacher rather than children's self-desire, personal quality or ability to achieve. Among the several factors that affect academic achievement, parenting style is one of the most important. Parent-child relation can be trigger of academic anxiety. The rationale behind the present study is to assess the relationship between parent-child relation and academic anxiety among the children. For the purpose of study 200 samples were randomly selected. Academic anxiety scale by A. K. Singh & A. Sen Gupta and Parent-Child Relation scale by Govind Tiwari were used. Findings of the Pearson Product moment Coefficient of correlation (r-test) revealed that parent-child relation and academic anxiety are correlated significantly. Parents should desist from setting a grade target too high for their wards to meet. It has been well known that children are important assets to any country. Healthy parent-child relation is an important factor for overall healthy growth and development of the children.

Keywords: *Children, Academic anxiety, Parent- child relation*

Now a day, academic anxiety is considered to be a universal phenomena existing world-wide, although its context and manifestations is influenced by many other factors, such as children's ability of cognitive differentiation, parent-child relation within home environment, materialistic thinking over humanistic thoughts and high educational expectations without understanding the personal qualities of children. Parental pressure for academic achievement is also an important factor for children's anxiety and depression. Anxiety is an emotion based on the appraisal of threat, an appraisal which entails symbolic, anticipatory and uncertain elements. Anxiety results when cognitive systems no longer enable a person to relate meaningfully to the world. Anxiety may explain student's feelings of helplessness following failure. According to Cole, Joan, Lachan, Seroczynski & Jonathan (1999) those who suffer from severe academic anxiety tend to avoid academic settings. Feelings of anxiety are not inherently abnormal, but can become severe enough to

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impair functioning in some individuals. When functioning is significantly impaired, one or more anxiety disorders may be diagnosed.

Anxiety plays a crucial role in human life because all of us are the victim of anxiety in different ways (Goodstein and Lanyon, 1975). Generally, anxiety can be either a trait anxiety or a state anxiety. A trait anxiety is a stable characteristic or trait of the person. A state anxiety is one which is aroused by some temporary condition of the environment such as examination, accident, punishment, etc. Academic anxiety is a kind of state anxiety which relates to the impending danger from the environments of the academic institution including teacher, test, certain subjects like Mathematics, English, etc.

There are some factors which can precipitate test anxiety among the students. Some parents put pressure on their children by expecting nothing short of high grades from them. Two types of pressure are relevant here. One is outcome pressure in which an individual's performance is influenced by the consequences of the testing results and the other is monitoring pressure in which an individual's performance is impacted due to the presence of an audience (Jones and Petrucci, 1995). High expectation from parents in terms of grade is capable of putting too much pressure on children which can be counterproductive.

Parents basically mould and shape their children into adults through their world of influence. A way of reflection between parent and child relationships is parenting and it is a complex activity that includes many specific attitudes and behaviours that work separately and collectively to influence child outcomes and generate an emotional bond in which the parent's behaviours are expressed (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Darling, 1999). Parenting can be explained in terms of two components such as parental responsiveness and demand (Fletcher, Walls, Cook, Madison, & Bridges, 2008). Parental demand is the extent to which parents set guidelines for their children, and how their discipline based on these guidelines. Parental responsiveness is the emotional characteristic of parenting. Responsiveness passes on to the degree to which parents support their children and attend their children's needs. Both parenting responsive and demanding has been linked to secure attachment in children (Karavasilis, Doyle & Markiewicz, 2003).

Many studies explored that Authoritative parenting styles has been related to children and adolescents' academic achievement (Amato and Gilbreth, 1999), optimism, (Baldwin, McIntyre, & Hardaway, 2007), confidence level, persistence, task involvement and rapport (Strage & Brandt, 1999), motivation (Gonzalez & Wolters, 2006), externalizing problem behaviour and attention problems and poor subsequent math achievement is results of high levels of control in mothers and low levels of support in fathers (Gadeyne, Ghesquiere, & Onghena, 2004). Various studies have concluded strong relationship between parenting styles and the academic achievements of children and stable and strong relationship between parenting style and a wide variety of adolescence outcomes, including subjective well-being and self-esteem, health and risky behavior, and school results and enrolment (Chan & Koo, 2010, 2011). Authoritative parenting to be associated with high level of academic performance and study skills. The study indicates that authoritative styles have more positive impact on academic achievement (Aiyappa, & Acharya, 2012). Authoritative parents are caring and open minded to their children opinions. These parents provide directions and support to their children. Lack of discipline, undemanding and highly responsive behavior represents characteristics of permissive parenting. Children are free to make decisions in their social matters. There is no compulsion or direction from parents to

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their children. Authoritarian parents are highly unresponsive, highly demanding and expect obedience from their children (Ross and Hammer 2002).

The environment created at home accelerates or retards the development of the child and influences the achievement and aspiration of the child. In context of these views the research is conducted by Kumar (2013) to find out the relationship between academic anxiety and home environment. On a sample of 120 subjects 60 from urban area and 60 from rural area, the result revealed that the Academic Anxiety and Home Environment scores of adolescents correlated significantly. Studies show that a rejected person is always in self doubt. The children who are rejected by their parents show the disorders manifested through inward-turned symptoms, such as anxiety, loneliness, fearfulness and depression; such children become easily victimized and will develop into individuals who are socially isolated, with few ties to others and little skill in establishing relationships (Schafer 2004).

Purpose and Hypothesis

A theoretical construct designed to assess Parent-child relationship in relation with children's academic anxiety.

Hypothesis

1. It is hypothesized that Healthy Parent-Child relationship would be related to low level of academic anxiety.
2. It is hypothesized that Unhealthy Parent-Child relationship would be related to high level of academic anxiety.

Sample

For the purpose of the study incidental cum purposive sampling method was used. 200 samples were selected. The children aged 11-16 years were chosen who live with their parent and not at hostel to fulfill the purpose of the study researcher preferred to select respondents purposively.

Tools

1. **Academic Anxiety Scale:** Academic anxiety scale for children was developed by A.K Singh & A. Sen Gupta. The AASC consists 20 items. There are two types of items-positive and negative. The high score on the test indicates high academic anxiety and low score on the test indicates low academic anxiety. The inventory has no time limit but ordinary 10 to 15 minutes are sufficient for completion of the inventory. The reliability of this scale is .65 and validity is .57.
2. **Parent-Child Relation Scale:** The present test has been developed by Govind Tiwari. This parent-Child relation test measures the attitude of Fathers and Mothers towards various aspects of their relation to the child. The reliability of this scale is .79 (split-half) & .78 (test-retest) and validity is .69.

Procedures

Before distribution of the test booklet general information were explained. Then test-booklet administered and data were collected. The analysis of data was done according to the manual. For the purpose of this study 'r' has been calculated separately to measure healthy parent-child relation and Unhealthy parent-child relation with academic anxiety. These two factors namely healthy parent-child and unhealthy parent-child relation have been discussed separately in different tables in relation with Academic anxiety (Table-1 & Table-2).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table – 1 Showing correlation between Healthy parent-child relation and Academic anxiety among children.

Variable	N	r	df	P
Healthy Parent-child relation VS Academic Anxiety	200	-0.648	198	P<.01

Findings displayed in table no.-1 shows that there is negative correlation (N = 200, r = -0.648, df = 198, P < .01) between Healthy parent-child relation and Academic Anxiety. The healthy parent child relationship comprises of Acceptance, Submission, Encouragement, Love, Democracy, Trust, Reward and Tolerance. All these positive qualities make a healthy and trusted parent-child relationship. Positive parent – child relationship makes the children high achiever, cooperative and less anxious.

Table – 2 Showing correlation between Unhealthy parent-child relation and Academic anxiety among children.

Variable	N	r	df	P
Unhealthy Parent-child relation VS Academic Anxiety	200	0.860	198	P<.01

Findings displayed in table no.-2 shows that there is positive correlation (N = 200, r = 0.860, df = 198, P < .01) between Unhealthy parent-child relation and Academic Anxiety. Unhealthy parent child relationship comprises of Rejection, Dominance, Discouragement, Hate, Authoritarianism, Distrust, Punishment and Hostility. Studies show that all these negative parental attitudes make the children timid, shy, withdrawing and troublesome (Symonds 1939).

CONCLUSION

The research findings show that unhealthy parenting style along with parental pressure, expectations make the children vulnerable of being academically anxious. Low academic anxiety is related to healthy parent-child relationship.

The researcher is fully aware of the limitation of her research work relating to the size and distribution of samples and statistical techniques applied for the analysis and the treatment of the data. The sample was not substantially large (N=200) and the subject comprising of the sample belong to the limited areas. It would have been more remote areas of the population in order to make the sample more representative to its population.

The findings of the present study have wide implication in clinical fields and all other bodies related to home setting, parents, counsellors, mental health workers. Today in different ways parents and children are suffering from stress, depression, suicide ideation and so on related to academic achievement. Therefore other attributes or psychological variables can be studied that can influence the parent-child relation and academic anxiety.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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