

## Parenting Style and Gender in Relation to Mental Health Among Adolescents

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present investigation was to study the effect of parenting style and gender on mental health of adolescents. There were two independent variables, the first independent variable was parenting style, varied at two levels, positive parenting style and negative parenting style and second independent variable was gender that was varied at two levels male and female, the dependent variable was mental health. For this purpose, the sample was consisted of 80 subjects, 40 males and 40 females of age range 14-18 years of age. The mental health of subjects was measured by mental health scale constructed and standardized by Dr. Kamlesh Sharma (2002). The parenting scale was used in this study for categorizing the positive and negative parenting style, constructed by R. L. Bhardwaj, H. Sharma and A. Garg (1998). Obtained data were analysed by using the Mean value, S.D value and two way ANOVA. The results indicate that parenting style significantly affect the level of mental health of adolescents and gender is not an influencing factor for mental health of adolescents.

**Keywords:** Parenting Style, Gender, Relation, Mental Health, Adolescents

In general, mental health refers to the personality's overall and harmonious functioning. Mental health is defined as a person's ability to adapt to the environment and to one another with optimum efficiency and pleasure. It is the capacity to keep a cool head, a sharp intellect, socially courteous conduct, and a cheerful demeanour. Mental health relates to what one feels inside too, how one manages one's thoughts and emotions, and how one manages one's emotions and feelings. Being much more secure in one's environment, dealing with one's feelings, and enhancing resilience in one's ability to bounce back may all help to boost one's ego and trust. Mental health is crucial since it has an impact on just about everything a someone does, such as what they eat, how they sleep, the things they like and rest with, and the actions they take. According to a proponent of the idea of good mental health, it entails a successful synthesis of the elements, including which the people are, where he is, and what he wants to be.

A healthy person's behaviour is governed by ideas that unite his or her outlook on life, holdings of long-term objectives, and acceptable ties to the past. Mental health refers to an

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individual's emotional and spiritual resilience, which enables them to appreciate life while also surviving hardship, suffering, and disappointment. It's a sense of fulfilment and confidence in one's personal and others' worth and respect **Jahoda (1958)**. The capacity of a person to form peaceful connections with others and to engage in or contribute positively to developments in his social and physical environment is described as mental health, according to the **WHO Expert Committee (1959)**.

People who have excellent mental health are self-assured. Fears, anger, love, jealousy, guilt, or concerns do not overwhelm them. They have a laid-back, easygoing attitude toward themselves and others. They may make fun of themselves. Mentally healthy individuals don't overestimate their talents or accept their own flaws readily. They have self-esteem and regard for others. They believe they are capable of dealing with the majority of unusual circumstances that may arise. They love life and find happiness in modest pleasures. People that are mentally well are able to face life's challenges. They handle their own issues and are unaffected by them. They quickly adapt to their surroundings, and they attempt to mould everything to their liking.

### *Parenting style and mental health*

Parenting style is a concept that captures typical differences in parents' efforts to manage and socialize their children. (**Baumrind, 1991**). The unique patterns of child raising behaviour collected across time and circumstance are referred to as parenting style. (**Lamborn et al., 1991**). Some psychologists (**Darling & Stienberg, 1993**) are of the opinion that parenting style is more akin to a family's environment, a collection of attitudes and beliefs than a set of particular parenting methods or behaviour. Some parenting methods promote optimum development; while others obstruct good development. Parents have a critical influence in shaping a child's personality. Several studies have emphasized the importance of parents in the development of mentally healthy children. Both direct and indirect influences are exerted by parents on their children's behaviour. However, when family dynamics change, parents have fewer opportunities to shape their children into healthy individuals. To educate males how to be guys and girls how to be girls, parents employ differential reinforcement (**Lytton & Romney, 1991**).

The development of teenage antisocial behaviour is often seen to be the consequence of a combination of familial and personal variables, with the child's aggressive behaviour accounting for a significant portion of that pattern. Children with challenging temperaments and early behavioural difficulties, for example, are more likely to have later teenage aggressiveness and conduct issues. This developmental path is also shaped by the child's social surroundings. Inadequate parenting methods, such as poor parental monitoring and supervision, as well as high rates of severe and inconsistent punishment, have been found to lead to aggressive behaviour in children (**Tammy, 2004**).

### *Gender and Mental Health*

Gender has developed as the term, particularly in feminist usage, to represent the cultural and social characteristics of the sexes as definite from the biological differences between males and females. **John Money** adopted the term in 1955 to refer to sexual attitudes of people. He first described the term gender role to discuss whether hermaphrodites socially disclosed themselves as male or female. Mental health is achieved by maintaining a balance between masculine and feminine qualities. Taking either set of qualities to an extreme and to the exclusion of the other is detrimental. A non traditional gender role orientation would

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combine the best of both genders: a social focus (reciprocally supportive relationships and a balance between interests of self and others) and active coping strategies.

This “gender curriculum” in the home environment influence children. Parents who show the clearest patterns and style of differential reinforcement have children who are relatively quick to label themselves as girls or boys and to develop strongly sex-typed toy and activity preferences **Fagot et al., (1992)**. Fathers play a central role in gender socialization; they are more likely than mothers to reward children’s gender-appropriate behaviour and to discourage behaviour considered more appropriate for the other sex **Lytton Lytton & Romney, 1991; and Leve & Fagot, (1997)**. Boys and girls are treated differently by their parents, which contributes to sex disparities in ability.

Several studied have revealed that female have significant impact on the mental health **Akhta, A. (2013)**. Boy and girls those are belonging to different socio- economic state found that equal mental health and high or low socio- economic status **Deoli, C.P. & Dimri, jaya (2014)**. The study on factors influencing mental health and results found that there is no significant differences mental health of boys and girls of same age group **Taak (1999)**. Gender identity plays a large role in psychosocial development and mental health **Younger et al., (2004)**.

The mental health of adolescents, their academic achievement and the educational and occupational status of parents were positively related **Anand (1989)**. An association of permissive parenting with greater academic entitlement and more perceived stress with poor mental health conditions with a difference in between mother and father in case of certain students **Barton and Hirsch (2015)**. Stress and anxiety were potent mediators between some styles of maternal parenting and depression of female student suggesting a greater susceptibility of daughters to maternal parenting styles contributing to either failure or preparation for managing and avoiding significant stressors **Barton and Kirtley (2012)**. Rural communities the authoritarian style is more predominant in the parenting of male adolescents, while the authoritative style is more predominant in the parenting of female adolescents. In urban communities, on the other hand, the authoritarian style was more predominant in the parenting of female adolescents. The connectedness of all female adolescents with their family was stronger than that of male adolescents. The connectedness of girls was found to be more emotional and financial in villages and to be more functional in town. Female adolescents reported a higher frequency of psychological disorders. Mental health was associated with authoritative parenting, but not with authoritarian parenting **Dwariy M. & Mensar K.E (2006)**.

**An ICMR (1984)** study conducted at Bangalore, Delhi, and Lucknow and Walt air during 1981-93 showed that 1835 children and adolescents were referred to child guidance clinics. Boys have more mental health than girls. **Mental health survey report (2015)** “A specific pattern was observed for the distribution of various mental morbidities among males and females. The prevalence rates were reported to be higher in males for substance use disorders and psychotic disorders whereas with the exception of BPAD, the prevalence rates were higher in females for mood disorders and neurotic stress related disorders.”

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Statement of problem**

- To study the effect of parenting style and gender on mental health of adolescents.

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### Objectives

- To study the effect of parenting style on mental health of adolescents.
- To study the effect of gender on mental health of adolescents
- To study the interaction effect between parenting style and gender on mental health of adolescents.

### Hypothesis

- There will be no significant effect of parenting style on mental health of adolescents.
- There will be no significant effect of gender on mental health of adolescents.
- There will be no significant interaction effect between parenting style and gender on mental health of adolescents.

### Sample

A total of 80 adolescents (40 male and 40 female) have been selected as the sample on the basis of random sampling technique.

### Design

A 2x2 factorial research design was applied in the present research. The data were analyzed to see the significant effect of parenting style and gender on mental health. The independent variables “Parenting style and Gender” were designated as A x B respectively. The first variable- **Parenting style (A)** having two distinct categories **positive parenting style (A1)** and **negative parenting style (A2)**. The second variable- **Gender (B)** having two categories namely **male (B1)** and **female (B2)**. The dependent variable is mental health of adolescents.

### Measuring tools

Following tools were used for the measurement of variables under study:

- **Case record sheet:** It was used to get general information about subjects, like name, age, gender, type of family, and so on.
- **Mental Health scale** constructed and standardized by Dr. Kamlesh Sharma consisted of 60 items based on some parameters. The scale had high reliability (.88) and validity (.79).
- **Parenting Style scale** developed by Dr. R. L. Bhardwaj, Dr. Harish Sharma and Smt. Amita Garg. This scale includes of 40 items. This scale had high reliability (.72) and validity (.75).

### Procedure for data collection

First of all, the request was made to the principles for granting permission to collect data from the student of their schools and colleges. The rapport was established with the students. The measuring scale of the research was applied to a selected sample of student from different schools and colleges. Verbal consent taken from the participants and they were given a brief description about the purpose of data collection and were assured that the data collected from them will only used for research purpose and will be kept confidential. Data were checked, and scoring was done with the help of the scoring key.

### Analysis of Data

A two- way analysis of variance has been applied to find out the significance of the main effect and interaction effect.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present research paper was an attempt to study the effect of parenting style and gender on mental health of adolescents. The investigator has selected two independent variables i.e., parenting style and gender. The dependent variable was mental health. Data have been collected to find out the effect of these two independent variables on mental health. A two-way analysis of variance has been applied for statistical treatment. The result of this study is summarized in summary of analysis of variance in table no.1

**Table no. 1 Showing ANOVA Mental health score of Parenting style and Gender among Adolescents:**

Source of Variation	Score of Variation	Df	MS	F	P Value
A (Parenting Style)	2749.51	1	2749.51	13.81**	P<0.01
B (Gender)	201.61	1	201.61	1.01	P>0.01
A x B (Interaction)	904.51	1	904.51	4.54*	P<0.05
Within Group	15125.75	76	199.02		
Total	18981.38	79			

\*\*denotes significant at 0.01 level of confidence

\*denotes significant at 0.05 level of confidence

**Table no. 2 Showing Mean and SD value mental health score of parenting style among Adolescents**

Sr. No.	Variables	Level	Mean Value	SD
1.	A (Parenting Style)	A1 (Positive Parenting Style)	82.28	14.28
		A2 (Negative Parenting Style)	70.55	14.02

**Table no. 3 Showing Mean and SD value mental health score of Gender among Adolescents**

Sr. No.	Variables	Level	Mean Value	SD
2.	B (Gender)	B1 (Male)	74.82	16.72
		B2 (Female)	78.00	14.20

Statistical analysis of data reveals that the 'F' value for the first independent variable, i.e., parenting style is 13.81. This value is significant at 0.01 level of confidence [F (79,1) = 2749.51; P<.01]. It indicates that parenting style significantly affects the level of mental health of adolescents. From the table no. 2 is also showing the Mean and SD value of mental health scores indicates that the group of positive parenting style subject (M = 82.28, SD = 14.28) is showing significantly higher mental health than negative parenting style subjects (M = 70.55, SD = 14.02). It indicates that there is highly significant difference among positive parenting style and negative parenting style adolescents.

Showing summary (table no-1) of ANOVA related the second independent variable, i.e., gender reveals the 'F' value is 1.01. This value is not significant [F (79,1) = 201.61; P>.01] at any level of confidence. It means this factor is not influencing mental health among adolescents. From the table no.3 is also showing the Mean and SD value of mental health indicates that the group of female subjects (M = 78.00, SD = 14.20) is showing higher mental health than male subjects (M = 74.82, SD = 16.72). It indicates that there is minor difference among male and female adolescents. The finding of this study is also supported by another investigator **Dey & Mann (2010)** and **Dhillon Dr. A. and Sharma R. (2014)**.

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From the table-1 showing summary of ANOVA for interaction between parenting style and gender indicates that the 'F' value is 4.54 is significant [ $F(79, 1) = 904.51$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ] at 0.05 level of confidence. It means, the parenting style and gender interact significantly influence mental health among adolescents.

Individuals with good mental health feel comfortable about themselves and mentally healthy people are able to meet demand of life. They cope-up and solve their own problems and plan ahead but do not fear the future. **Dixit and Sharma (2011)** found a significant difference on mental health and anxiety between students with favourable family climate and unfavourable family climate. **Vora (2013)** found the positive perceptions of parenting are related to better, positive outcomes when it comes to mental health and social maturity. This highlights the pertinent role that parenting plays in helping adolescents integrate their personal and social lives more effectively and also opens up avenues for effective interventions when it comes to dealing with adolescents. **Tiwari, V. and Verma, S. (2013)** studied and found perceived paternal psychological support emerged as a significant predictor for most of the mental health problems. **Sarker (1979)** told that the children from families with syncretism division of functions had better mental health. The family structure (excepting syncretism division of functions) was not related to the mental health of the children.

Above findings of the presents study that the adolescents with positive parenting style have less mental illness and good mental health in comparison to those who living in their families with negative parenting style. The presence of a positive child- parent relationship with either mother as father is associated with the fewer of adolescents mental health problems and issues as comparative to not having a close relationship with either parents. Adolescents have better adjustment level in all aspects of life, if their family environment is satisfactory. So mental health can shift all of the time from events, situations, family and friend and may different things that all must be taken into consideration.

### CONCLUSION

The result can be summarized in the following manner-

- Parenting style as independent variable is significant.
- Gender as independent variable is not significant.
- Interaction between parenting style and gender is found to be significant at 0.05 level of confidence in the present context.

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***Conflict of Interest***

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