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Research Paper

Effect of Parenting Styles on Adolescents: A Quantitative Study

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ABSTRACT

Collectivistic country like India, where prioritizing the collective (family's or community's) interest over the individual's interest, attentiveness to the needs of others, and maintaining harmonious relationships with the members of the community are encouraged, the immediate family plays a significant role in child-rearing practices. Present study looked to explore the effect of parenting styles on adolescents' emotional and behavioural problems and social adjustment. Samples of adolescents ranging from 12 to 18 years were taken with their parents. Purposive sampling was used and both parents and children were measured separately using standardised scales. A quasi-experimental design was used and data were analysed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics. Results indicated a statistically significant negative relation between fathers' authoritative parenting and adolescents' conduct problems. Moreover, negative relation was found between fathers' authoritarian parenting style and total difficulty of children, and fathers' permissive parenting style was also significantly negatively related with peer problems of children. However, there was no significant relationship found between the parenting style of mothers and the adolescents' behaviour. Also, no difference was found between the male and female adolescent groups on emotional and behavioural difficulty and social adjustment. The study also posed some limitations and suggested future directions.

Keywords: *Parenting Style, Adolescents, Emotional Problems, Behaviour Problems, Social Adjustment*

Parenting style is the range of behaviour parents show towards their children. "Parenting style is defined as the constellation of attitudes toward the child which creates an emotional climate in which parent's behaviors are expressed, it includes both the specific, goal-directed behaviors through which parents perform their parental duties (to be referred to as parenting practices) and non-goal-directed parental behaviors, such as gestures, changes in tone of voice, or the spontaneous expression of emotion" (Steinberg, 1993).

Diana Baumrind identified four types of parenting styles based on three factors i.e., acceptance, behavioural control, and autonomy granting. Authoritative parenting is the most successful parenting style which encourages child growth and development. It involves high acceptance, adaptive behavioural control, and appropriate autonomy granting. Authoritative

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parents are responsive to their child's needs, they are supportive and they guide their children to make appropriate decisions. The Authoritarian parenting style is low in acceptance, acknowledgment, and association, high in hostile behaviour control, and low in autonomy granting. Parents of Authoritarian parenting styles are cold and dismissing. Permissive parents are warm and accepting. However, they permit kids to settle on numerous choices for themselves at an age when they are not yet equipped for such decision-making. Uninvolved parents are low in acceptance, behaviour control, and general aloofness in issues of autonomy granting. Frequently, these guardians are so overpowered by life stress that they have very little time or energy for their child.

Different parenting styles support child development differently. Research has shown that an Authoritative parenting style is an effective style that supports child development in the most appropriate ways. According to Steinberg, Darling & Fletcher (1995), authoritative parenting is linked to many aspects of competence—an upbeat mood, self-control, task persistence, academic achievement, cooperativeness, high self-esteem, responsiveness to parents' views, and social and moral maturity (Steinberg, Darling & Fletcher, 1995). Since authoritative parents display a high tendency to control the child's behavioural outcomes, the child tends to perform well academically and commits fewer antisocial acts than peers with undemanding parents (Steinberg, Blatt-Eisengart, & Cauffman, 2006). Permissive parenting is linked with dependent, non-achieving, and rebellious children (Baumrind, 1971). While, adolescent children of uninvolved parents display many problems like difficulties with school achievement, depression, anger, and antisocial behaviour (Schroeder et al., 2010).

Although, Authoritative parenting style has shown the most positive results with respect to adolescents' mental and behavioural outcomes (Majumder, A., 2016); some researchers have found that the Authoritarian parenting style yields the best results in many East Asian countries. Dutta, I. (2016) did correlational research to find out the relationship between parenting styles and its effect on children's emotional intelligence, value orientation, and social adjustment in the Indian Sample. He found that authoritative parenting was negatively and authoritarian parenting was positively correlated with the social adjustment of students. Here, parents exert greater control and exhibit less warmth in their behaviour towards the child. This is done to cultivate higher self-control in the child so that they can become increasingly achievement focussed. Parents also put significant value on conforming to collectivistic behaviour norms such as respecting elders and cultivating collective harmony.

In the Indian context, parenting style is strongly influenced by the collectivistic cultural values of prioritizing the collective (family's or community's) interest over the individual's interest, attentiveness to the needs of others, and maintaining harmonious relationships with the members of the community. As a consequence, the immediate family plays a significant role in child-rearing practices. It is commonly believed that the children are reflections of their parents, and therefore the child's overt behaviour must adhere to the family's values.

Child-rearing practices can also be rooted in the collective consciousness. In Indian Mythological epics, like in Mahabharata, it is mentioned, "what is a good parenting style, what values and beliefs need to be inculcated in a child, what is an ideal child, etc." The norm is that mata-pita (mother-father) are meant to have the highest position in one's life (*"Mata, pita, guru, daivam"*).
"सर्वतीर्थमयी माता सर्वदेवमय: पिता।

मातरं पितरं तस्मात् सर्वयत्नेन पूजयेत्॥"
-*Subhastani*

Therefore, it can be said that the collectivistic and mythological background of the Indian context heavily emphasises the role of parents in a child's life. How this context translates into practices such that it impacts the emotional and social wellbeing of the child is what the current study seeks to explore. To bridge the gap in the existing literature, the present study is designed to explore the effects of parenting style on adolescents' behaviour and emotional problems, and social adjustment. The sole reason to take adolescents as a sample is that it is a time when parent-child conflict peaks. Moreover, the academic and social foundations laid during this period, influence the decisions made by adolescents as young adults. The current study could be used as a stepping stone to explore the most suitable parenting style for adolescents in the Indian context to minimise the instances of parent-child conflict, thereby increasing positive social and emotional outcomes even in these times. Further providing a baseline understanding of the relationship between parenting style and adolescents' emotional and behavioural problems will help researchers, clinicians, and practitioners to better aid clients in Individual and Family Therapy.

Hypotheses of the Study

H1. There would be a significant relationship between fathers' authoritative parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores.

H2. There would be a significant relationship between fathers' authoritarian parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores.

H3. There would be a significant relationship between fathers' permissive parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores.

H4. There would be a significant relationship between mothers' authoritative parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores.

H5. There would be a significant relationship between mothers' authoritarian parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores.

H6. There would be a significant relationship between mothers' permissive parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores.

H7A. There would be a significant difference between male and female participants on the measure of difficulty score.

H7B. There would be a significant difference between male and female participants on the measure of social adjustment score.

Research Question

R1. Which parenting style is frequently used by Indian parents?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study population consisted of adolescents belonging to the age group of 12-18 years (Age mean= 16.06). For the quantitative research, there was a sample of 43 adolescents (22 boys and 21 girls) and 43 parents (43 fathers and 43 mothers). Purposive sampling method was used to collect the data. The demographic variables under the study were educational qualifications, gender, age, employment status and job stress (for working parents), socioeconomic status, and family composition (joint or nuclear). Children and parents were measured separately using standardised scales.

Research Design
In the present study, a quasi-experimental design was used. The variables were parenting styles, emotional problems, behavioural problems, and social adjustment.

Tools
- **Demographic details:** Demographical variables were, age, gender, educational qualification, annual income of the family, family composition, and working status of parents.
- **Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire:** It was developed by Robert N. Goodman, Meltzer, & Bailey (1998) to assess the behavioural and emotional problems in adolescents. It is divided into five subscales i.e., emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems, and prosocial behaviour. The current version consists of 25 items and 5 items for 5 subscales. For the current study, the fifth dimension of the scale, i.e., pro-social behaviour was excluded because it was the positive aspect while the study focussed on the difficulty of the adolescents. Each item is answered using a 3-point Likert-type scale where somewhat true is always scored as 1 however other two options i.e., not true and certainly true change with items. The total score for each subscale ranges from 0-10. The reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.76 for the total score, 0.72 for hyperactivity, 0.63 for prosocial behaviour, 0.73 for emotional symptoms, 0.55 for conduct problems, and 0.56 for peer problems. It also has high criterion as well as convergent and divergent validity.
- **Parenting Style and Dimension Questionnaire:** It was developed to measure the parenting styles within the typologies of Baumrind. It is divided into three subscales i.e., Authoritative parenting style, Authoritarian parenting style, and Permissive parenting style. The current version consists of 32 items, 15 items of Authoritative, 12 items of Authoritarian, and 5 items of Permissive parenting style. Each item is answered using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1= Never and 5= Always). The score for Authoritative parenting ranges from 15 to 75, and scores for Authoritarian range from 12 to 60, similarly, scores for Permissive range from 5 to 25. The Cronbach's alpha reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.79 for Authoritative, 0.81 for Authoritarian, and 0.86 for Permissive. It was administered separately to mothers and fathers to measure their beliefs and perceptions separately.
- **Social Adjustment Scale:** It was developed by Dutta. I, (2010) to measure the social adjustment in adolescents. It is a self-administering scale. The current version consists of 60 items, where 32 items are positive and 28 items are negative. Each item is answered using a 5-point Likert-type scale where 5 is for 'all the time' and 1 is for 'never'. The total score would indicate the intensity of maladjustment in an adolescent. The reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.85 for the total score and the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was found to be 0.88. It also has high content validity.

Procedure
After finalising the research topic, the target population and questionnaire were finalised. It was decided to take parents into consideration in order to get in-depth knowledge of the research problem. Before data collection, eligible participants were told about the purpose of the study and then informed consent was taken from the interested participants. Participants were informed about their rights and the confidentiality of the research stating that their responses would be recorded anonymous and the data would not be shared with anyone but would be used for research purpose only. Finally, the selected participants fulfilling the inclusion/exclusion criteria were given relevant instructions for completing the

questionnaires. Purposive sampling method was used to collect the data. Data were analysed with the help of SPSS.

RESULTS

From the raw scores, mean and standard deviations were calculated. An independent t-test was used to find out the significant mean differences between the two groups i.e., male and female adolescents. Finally, the Pearson product-moment method of correlation was analysed to find out the relationship between the variables of parenting styles and child difficulty score and social adjustment score.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Parents' Demographics (N=43)

Demographics	Father		Mother	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Employment Status				
Working	43	100	17	40
Non-Working	0	0	26	60
Work Stress of Working Parents				
Mildly Stressful	15	34.88	1	5.8
Moderately Stressful	23	53.48	15	88.23
Extremely Stressful	2	4.6	0	0.00
Not at all Stressful	3	6.9	1	5.8
Age				
30-35 years	1	2.32	2	4.65
36-41 years	7	16.27	12	27.90
42-47 years	13	30.23	20	46.51
48-53 years	21	48.83	8	18.60
54-59 years	0	0.00	1	2.32
60-65 years	1	2.32	0	0.00
Educational Qualifications				
Schooling	5	11.62	14	32.55
Bachelors	17	39.53	20	46.51
Masters	21	48.83	6	13.95
Doctorate	0	0.00	3	6.97
Annual Income of the family				
Less than a lakh	4	9.30	4	9.30
1-2 lakh	16	37.20	16	37.20
2-5 lakh	13	30.23	13	30.23
More than 5 lakhs	10	23.25	10	23.25
Family Composition				
Nuclear	34	79.06	34	79.06
Joint	9	20.93	9	20.93

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Adolescents' Demographics (N=43)

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	22	51.16
Female	21	48.83
Age		
12	2	4.65
13	1	2.32
14	3	6.97
15	3	6.97
16	7	16.27
17	8	18.60
18	19	44.18
Educational Qualifications		
High School	15	34.88

Senior Secondary	16	37.20
Undergraduate	12	27.90

Table 3: Shows Summary of Coefficient of Correlation between Fathers' Parenting Style and Adolescents' Difficulty and Social Adjustment Score (N=43)

Measures	Total Difficulty Score	Emotional Problem	Conduct Problem	Hyperactivity Problem	Peer Problem	Social Adjustment
Fathers' Authoritative Score	.058	-.083	-.321[*]	.067	-.118	-.061
Fathers' Authoritarian Score	-.311[*]	-.176	-.290	-.065	-.262	-.206
Fathers' Permissive Score	-.257	-.066	-.102	-.133	-.348[*]	-0.69

It is observed from table 3 that there is a statistically significant (at .05 level) negative relationship between fathers' authoritative parenting style (r=-.321) and child's conduct problems, fathers' authoritarian parenting style (r=-.311) and total difficulty of children, and father's permissive parenting style (r=-.348) and peer problems of children. All the values are significant at .05 level, which means it has 95% of accuracy that different parenting style does influence children behaviour differently.

Table 4: Shows Summary of Coefficient of Correlation between Mothers' Parenting Style and Adolescents' Difficulty and Social Adjustment Score (N=43)

Measures	Total Difficulty Problem	Emotional Problem	Conduct Problem	Hyperactivity Problem	Peer Problem	Social Adjustment
Mothers' Authoritative Score	-.112	.175	.191	-.041	-.213	-.084
Mothers' Authoritarian Score	-.159	-.088	.025	-.170	.145	-.083
Mothers' Permissive Score	-.144	.079	.039	-.192	-.292	.086

It is observed from table 4 that there is no statistically significant relationship between mothers' parenting style and children behaviour.

Table 5: Results of Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value, and p-value on the measures of Total Difficulty (Emotional Problem, Conduct Problem, Hyperactivity, and Peer Problem) and Social Adjustment (df=4, N=43)

Measures	Males (n=22) Mean±SD	Females (n=21) Mean±SD	t-value	p-value
Emotional Problem	3.90±1.84	3.95±2.49	.065	.949
Conduct Problem	3.00±2.02	2.87±1.27	-.275	.784
Hyperactivity Problem	4.18±1.81	3.19±2.13	-1.1642	.108
Peer Problem	3.77±1.65	4.38±2.01	1.083	.285
Total Difficulty	14.86±4.46	14.38±5.15	-.329	.744
Social Adjustment	124.54±44.09	152.38±41.07	2.139	.038

It is observed table 5 that the t value is not statistically significant for all dimensions i.e., emotional problem, conduct problem, hyperactivity problem, peer problem, total difficulty, and social adjustment. It is inferred that there is no significant difference between the two groups (Male and Female adolescents) in these dimensions and therefore, male and female adolescents experience similar levels of Emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problem, and social Adjustment.

Table 6: Shows Summary of Parenting Styles (N=43)

Parenting style	Mother	Percentage	Father	Percentage
Authoritative	33	76.74	33	76.74
Authoritarian	5	11.62	6	13.95
Permissive	4	9.30	2	4.65
Blank	1	2.32	2	4.65

It can be observed from table 6 that maximum parents exhibit an Authoritative parenting style. Therefore, the answer to research question 1, "which parenting style is frequently used by Indian parents?", will be 'Authoritative Parenting.'

DISCUSSION

Parenting is the process of raising a kid. It's similar to the nutrients required for a seedling to mature into a large and bountiful tree. As a result, proper parenting is necessary for a child to develop into a lovely human being. Parenting styles differ from country to culture, and the value system is divided on some of the most important aspects of parenting, as evidenced by the contrast of Indian and Western parenting approaches. When a child is born, its mother, or in a larger sense, their parents, establishes the child's first link to the world. An infant sees the world through the eyes of its parents and tries to imitate all they see in their parents. As a result, a parent-child bond creates the groundwork for the 'construction of their lives.' Hence, the objective of the present study was to explore the effect of parenting styles on adolescents' emotional and behavioural problems and social adjustment.

It was hypothesised that there would be significant relation between fathers' authoritative parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores. The results indicated a significant but negative relationship between the authoritative parenting style of fathers and one of the dimensions of difficulty score i.e., conduct problems. Since the authoritative parenting style offers reasonable control over child behaviour, it gives children autonomy to express themselves. Past research has also shown results in favour of the current study. Alizadeh, S., Mansoor (2014) reported the relationship between parenting style and child behaviour problems of externalising and internalising. It was found that the authoritative parenting style was significantly related to the child's fewer internalising and externalising symptoms. However, there was no significant correlation between fathers' authoritative parenting style and adolescents' scores on other dimensions, namely, total difficulty, peer problem, hyperactivity, emotional problem, and social adjustment. Many past researches had shown similar results. Rosli, N. A. (2014) explored the impact of different parenting styles on child's emotional and behavioural problems. They found no significant relationship between parenting style and child emotional and behavioural problems. The possible reason could be found in past literature where researchers had seen that Indian parenting is a mixture of both Authoritative and authoritarian parenting, therefore, Authoritative parenting alone was not enough to influence a child's adjustment or difficulty in many areas (Natranjan, 2010).

It was hypothesised that there would be significant relation between fathers' authoritarian parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores. The results indicated a significant but negative relationship between the authoritarian parenting style of fathers and total difficulty scores. The possible reason for the current finding could be the Indian culture, here, the role of the father is perceived as a provider, teacher, and moral supporter to the child. (Krishna, 1998). Due to this family creates the authoritarian look of the father, where all big decisions of the family are taken by the father. Such a mentality and practices of the parent may show more parental control over a child's life.

It was hypothesised that there would be significant relation between fathers' permissive parenting style and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores. The results indicated a significant but negative relationship between the permissive parenting style of the fathers and one of the dimensions of difficulty score, i.e., peer problems. The reason behind the findings might be identified with cycles of globalization. This modernization causes the changing perspectives in parenting, including more individualistic qualities. Because of advances in innovation, parents have expanded admittance to western media and culture that may highlight more Permissiveness and self-governance over respecting harmony or collectivistic values (Patel-Amin and Force, 2002).

It was hypothesised that there would be a significant relationship between the parenting styles of mothers (Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive) and adolescents' difficulty and social adjustment scores. The results indicated no significant relationship between the variables. The possible reason could be changes in Indian families' dynamics, particularly in the design and jobs due to globalization. Because of ladies going into the labour force, the kid socialization objectives had been shared by the two guardians. Some researchers pointed out that today fathers are seen as more nurturing, caring, and all the more critically near to their children (Sriram, Karnik and Ali, 2002; Kumari, 2008).

It was hypothesised that there would be a significant difference between male and female participants on the measure of emotional and behavioural problems and social adjustments. T-test revealed no significant differences between the two groups on the measure of emotional and behavioural problems and social adjustment. This means that male and female adolescents experience similar levels of emotional and behavioural problems. Past researches have shown the relationship between difficulty and parenting, Doey et al. (2013) found that anxious boys experienced negative parenting. In context to the present study, it was seen that both groups experienced similar parenting from their parents and therefore showed similar results on their difficulties.

CONCLUSION

Indian households, as a patriarchal society, are often managed by the father or grandfather, with family life and home structure depending on decisions made by male family members Similar results were seen in the present study. The role of the mother in taking decisions for children is often not considered. The present study shed the light on this crucial problem. Although the sample size of the current study was small, it provides significant results and adds to the knowledge of the effect of parenting styles on adolescents' emotional and behavioural problems and social adjustment. The findings of the present study reflected the relationship between parenting style and adolescents' emotional and behavioural problems and social adjustment and thereby provide aid to exploring the most suitable parenting style for adolescents in the Indian context to minimise the instances of parent-child conflict. The adolescence period is said to be the "storm and stress stage" therefore, it is important for

parents to provide a conducive environment for optimal growth and development of the child. The results revealed that in the Indian context all three parenting styles had their own benefits and parents should adopt the parenting style according to their child's needs. The findings of the current research also shed light on the importance of the home environment, such that, it could be such that facilitates a child's development.

The findings of the research provide a baseline understanding of the relationship between parenting styles and adolescents' emotional and behavioural problems and social adjustment that will help researchers, clinicians, and practitioners to better aid clients in Individual and Family therapy. Also, the current study shed light on the impact of culture on parenting styles. Therefore, any intervention in the context of parenting should take culture into consideration. The current study focussed on the family having both parents, future research should cater to the families having a single parent. Many demographic variables like the effect of locality or neighbours should also be studied by future research since these environmental variables have an equal stake in influencing parents and adolescents.

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