

Research Paper

Relationship between Parenting Styles, Anxiety and Subjective Well-being among College Going Students

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ABSTRACT

The behaviour patterns of parents are found to be a factor that induces anxiety in children. Anxiety is said to be not something that is self-induced but one that is being induced in a child because of the patterns his or her parents follow. The kind of parenting style a person has also contributes towards the well-being of an individual. The current study aimed to see the relationship between parenting style, anxiety, and subjective well-being among college-going students in India. The study consisted 120 students among which 60 were male and 60 were females studying in different colleges. Results revealed that parenting styles of both mother and father had insignificant association with anxiety. The study also revealed that there is weak but positive and significant relationship between a mother's permissive parenting style and subjective well-being among college students. There is also a significant positive relationship between both mother and father's authoritative parenting style and subjective well-being. Negative and insignificant relationship was found between anxiety and subjective well-being among college students. Also, there is no significant gender difference in parenting styles of mother and father, anxiety and subjective well-being.

Keywords: Parenting Styles, Anxiety, Subjective Well-Being

Parenting Styles

Parenting is a crucial role to play and is one of the major concepts of developmental psychology. It holds lots of significance in a child's life as it has a lot to do with what a child will become in the later years of his or her life. Parenting style is basically about the strategies that parents adopt to raise their children. It includes a child's parent's behaviour towards them and the kind of environment they provide to them. The more secure the emotional environment the more the emotional stability of the child in the later years of life. In parenting style, there is no hard and fast rule that two children raised in the same household by the same parents would have the same pattern of behaviour. The behaviour of children in the same household can be completely opposite to each other while children not sharing the same household can have the same pattern of behaviour.

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In the study conducted by Diana Baumrind in around the 1960s on preschool-age children, she found out different types of parenting styles. The parenting styles were three in number and were based on the kind of interaction parent and child have with each other.

The three parenting styles identified by Diana Baumrind are-

- 1. Permissive parenting style-** The parents with this parenting style are supposed to be the ones who are indulgent and have no to very less demands from their children. The expectations of parents from their children are also low and they exert very less pressure and control over their children.
- 2. Authoritarian parenting style-** Parents with this parenting style are known to be the ones who exert a very high level of control over their kids and expect them to follow defined rules and regulations set by them. The authoritarian parenting style is the one where the parents are not at all available for their child's emotional needs. They are very strict and have a high level of expectations from their child.
- 3. Authoritative parenting style-** In this parenting style parents are known to be democratic but at the same time, they do have set rules and regulations for their kids to follow. Authoritative parents are emotionally available for their kids. Being democratic or emotionally available does not mean that they are not strict, these parents are strict but at the same time are fair.

Anxiety

As per the WHO's report, in 2019 over 301 million people had disorders related to anxiety basically anxiety disorders like generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder so, and so forth. Among 301 million people who were surviving with the disorder 58 million were believed to be children and adolescents. The level of severity among the people was so high that it had an impact on them to a level that it led to distress and function impairment of even basic tasks. The treatment for anxiety can be customized as per the age and severity of an individual and it can even include medications along with the therapies.

The prevalence of anxiety disorder in India as per the research conducted in the year 2016 was 2.57%. the female gender and people from the metro cities were the risk factors for anxiety. The treatment gap and percentage of people suffering from anxiety were around 82.9% and 60% respectively.

Anxiety is believed to be one of the natural responses of an individual towards stress. It is basically the feeling of fear and uneasiness which might or might not lead to excess sweating, an increase in heart rate, and uneasiness in an individual. Anxiety often makes a person apprehensive about what is going to happen and what's about to come in the near future. As per DSM criteria if a person has anxiety for at least or more than 6 months and it is impacting the normal functioning of an individual then it is said to be that the person has an anxiety disorder.

The symptoms of anxiety vary from person to person and the severity of those symptoms also varies. The person experiencing anxiety can feel out of control and often feel that they have lost the connection between their mind and body. Anxiety in simple words is being in a constant state of worry where you might be fearing about one or the other event. People with anxiety are prone to experiencing panic attacks.

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The symptoms of anxiety generally include the following things-

- People not being able to concentrate.
- Constantly feeling restless because of one or the other reason.
- People often feel difficulty sleeping.
- Being in a constant state of irritability and fatigue, even when the person has done nothing to feel so.
- There are constant thoughts and beliefs that a person is not able to control
- Lastly, the symptoms can also include pain in the body without any reason.

Anxiety can be seen occurring in college students and the possible reasons for this are then one can think of. One of the major reasons that one could consider is their being unable to adjust and adapt to the college environment. Anxious thoughts creep in when there is a problem with adjusting and this often leads to students self-doubting themselves and constantly worrying about things. In a survey done internationally in 2020, it was found that in 36 universities 34% of students had anxiety levels ranging from moderate to severe. The possible reasons for this are identified as the pressure of performing well in academics, moving out of the house for studies, financial problems, and new social settings.

Subjective Well-Being

It is basically how an individual sees and evaluates his or her life. The evaluation that a person does involves activities and domains that are specific. In other words, subjective well-being is about how well a person's life is going and to what extent they are happy and satisfied with their life. The subjective well-being of an individual is impacted by factors like internal and external. The internal factors that influence well-being are personality and a person's outlook in various situations whereas external factors involve people of the family and society with whom they interact in their day-to-day life, if not interact but are part of that.

A high level of subjective well-being is seen in people who have a high level of life satisfaction. Also, these people experience less negative affect and more positive effects. Subjective well-being indicates an individual's happiness and mental health condition. It is believed to be one of the predictors of a person's longevity and wellness. It's often said that the absence of mental illness does not mean there is a presence of well-being in an individual's life. Subjective well-being is also supposed to and believed to have a positive correlation with factors like job satisfaction, sense of achievement, and quality of life they experience. Apart from this, there are certain factors that are negatively associated with well-being and those factors are neuroticism, psychoticism, and other similar aspects.

Ed Diener in 1984 gave a model on subjective well-being. The model given by the psychologist comprised three major components which were somewhat related to each other. The three components of the models were-

1. Positive affects frequency- The positive affect frequency majorly focused on how frequently individuals feel positive moods and emotions.
2. Negative affect infrequency- The negative affect infrequency majorly focused on seeing how an individual does not experience negative moods and emotions.
3. Evaluation of cognition- It focuses on the fact that how an individual perceives his life and how satisfied they feel they are in their life.

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As per research conducted in 2017, it was found that people with higher subjective well-being have an increased level of longevity. A good level of well-being is also associated with good immunity in an individual. The research also suggested that subjective well-being has the power of reducing some of the negative effects of stress. It promotes fast healing and decreases the risk of life-threatening events like strokes, etc. Authoritarian parenting style is one such parenting style that does not contribute towards the well-being of the children but rather has a negative impact on the children while on the other hand, authoritative parenting style is believed to be contributing towards the wellbeing of the children.

Rationale

A student's success and well-being are highly influenced by the way he or she has been reared by their parents. The parenting style of parents not just influences the behavior and development of an individual but also has a great influence on their academic performance and subjective well-being which if not up to the mark can trigger anxiety and may result in high anxiety levels.

Studying the relationship between anxiety and parenting style is important because if there is a relation between the two then it is important to note that anxiety to some extent is good and makes an individual efficient but if it is in excess then it might result in life dissatisfaction so in order to deal with these and for the betterment of students who are at the peak of making their careers it is important to study the relationship between the variables and work as per outcome we get from the study.

The majority of the past studies focused on parenting style and other variables like anxiety and subjective well-being in children and adolescents making the conduction of the current study even more important. The studies done on college students are limited in the context of parenting style and how it affects not just the levels of anxiety of the student but their well-being as well.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Minggui Ge et al. (2022) did a study to examine the association between the mental health of college students and their parent's parenting style. The study was done to give a practical framework for raising the student's mental health. The sample size of the study was 300 college students from Anhui Province and they were asked to fill out questionnaires like parenting style a Chinese version of the revised Eysenck personality questionnaire. The data was analyzed by using statistical tools and the result showed that personality traits like psychoticism and neuroticism had gender differences among themselves. The findings saw that the mother's educational level has a greater impact on the mental health of students as compared to the father. The students showed more maternal rejection, punishment, and over-protection, and all of this from both parents led to high anxiety levels. Apart from this, the result observed that the style of parenting from the parents depended on the personality traits of an individual and it had an impact on the mental health of the student.

Tanvideepak Shah and Titiksha Pol (2020) did a study to figure out the prevalence of depression and anxiety in college students. The study consisted of 400 college students aged 18 to 25 years. A self-created questionnaire, as well as the Beck Depression and Anxiety Inventory, were used for data collection. The result depicted that depression affected around 48.30% of the students, while anxiety affected 50% of these individuals. The study concluded that college students experience moderate-to-severe levels of depression and

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anxiety, which should be confirmed, diagnosed professionally, and treated as fast as attainable.

Mahasneh, A.A. (2022) did a study to examine the association between social support and subjective well-being. Also, the study was done to see the difference in gender in the subjective well-being of the university students of Hashemite. The sample size of the study comprised 679 students both male and female and they were selected by the purposive method. To collect data tools like the College Student Subjective Well-being Questionnaire and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support were utilized. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant gender difference in the subjective well-being subscale of academic and school connectedness and no difference in gender led to or affected the level of subjective well-being.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

To see the relationship between parenting style, anxiety, and subjective well-being among college-going students.

Objective

- To study gender differences in parenting styles of mother, father, anxiety and subjective well-being among college-going students.
- To study the relationship between mother's parenting style and anxiety among college-going students.
- To study the relationship between father's parenting style and anxiety among college-going students.
- To study the relationship between mother's authoritative parenting style and subjective well-being among college-going students.
- To study the relationship between father's authoritative parenting style and subjective well-being among college-going students.
- To study the relationship between anxiety and subjective well-being among college-going students.

Hypotheses

- There will be no significant gender difference in mother's and father's parenting style, anxiety and subjective well-being.
- There will be no significant relation between mother's parenting styles and anxiety among college-going students.
- There will be no significant relation between father's parenting styles and anxiety among college-going students.
- There will be significant relation between mother's authoritative parenting style and subjective well-being among college-going students.
- There will be significant relation between father's authoritative parenting style and subjective well-being among college-going students.
- There will be no significant relation between anxiety and subjective well-being among college-going students.

Variables-

Independent Variable: Parenting Style

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Dependent Variables: 1- Anxiety
2- Subjective Well-being

Sample

The study selected 120 students from different colleges aged 18-25 via random sampling method. It included college students who were willing to participate and excluded college students with any sort of mental disorders.

Tools

To collect data from the sample population of 120 college students, three tools were used.

1. The parental authority questionnaire was the tool utilized to collect data for independent variable i.e., parenting style. The tool parental authority questionnaire was developed by John R. Buri in the year 1971. The tool consists of 30 items for both mother and the father. Basically, the forms for both parents are different, though the questions are the same. The 30 items questionnaire has three subscales and the subscales are permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative. Each sub-scale of the questionnaire consists of 10 items.
2. Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale was used to collect data for dependent variable i.e., Anxiety. To measure anxiety levels among college-going students Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale was utilized. The rating scale is developed by M. Hamilton in 1959. The rating scale has a total of 14 items that study both the psychic and somatic anxiety of an individual. The somatic anxiety consists of possible physical problems a person might have whereas the psychic anxiety consists of mental agitation and psychological issues a person might have.
3. The third tool used in the study for the subjective well-being variable is PGI GWBS and the scale was developed by Santosh K Verma and Amita Verma (1989). Over the years the scale has undergone several changes. The scale measured a lot of aspects initially but was later simplified and shortened so that it can be easily administered to the Indian population. The scale used in the study is 20 items scale.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were employed in the study. In inferential, T-test and Pearson Correlation were employed to see gender difference and relationship between variables. SPSS Version 16 was used for statistical analysis and interpretation of data.

RESULT

1. Mother's Parenting Styles and Gender Difference

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
MPS	FEMALE	60	31.53	5.598	.226
	MALE	60	32.75	5.344	.226
MRS	FEMALE	60	32.33	7.285	.865
	MALE	60	32.55	6.647	.865
MTS	FEMALE	60	34.62	6.434	.176
	MALE	60	36.13	5.739	.176

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2. Father's Parenting Styles and Gender Difference

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
FPS	FEMALE	60	32.73	5.089	.275
	MALE	60	33.77	5.225	.275
FRS	FEMALE	60	31.33	7.257	.309
	MALE	60	32.63	6.666	.309
FTS	FEMALE	60	35.07	6.393	.349
	MALE	60	36.08	5.403	.349

3. Anxiety, Subjective Well-Being and Gender Difference

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Sig. (2-tailed)
A	FEMALE	60	20.93	12.982	.347
	MALE	60	18.77	12.130	.347
SW	FEMALE	60	7.92	5.604	.448
	MALE	60	8.82	7.245	.448

4. Correlation between parenting styles of mother, father and anxiety

Variable	Anxiety (Mother)	Anxiety (Father)
Permissive Parenting	.041	.030
Authoritarian Parenting	.029	.071
Authoritative Parenting	-.038	-.017

5. Correlation between parenting styles of mother, father and subjective well-being

Variable	Subjective well-being (Mother)	Subjective well-being (Father)
Permissive Parenting	.181*	.165
Authoritarian Parenting	.064	.123
Authoritative Parenting	.225*	.225*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

6. Correlation between anxiety and subjective well-being

	Subjective well-being
Anxiety	-.134

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1 of the study is accepted as there is no significant gender difference in parenting styles of mother and father, anxiety and subjective well-being.

When data were analysed on the basis of gender, it was found that there is no significant difference between male and females in terms of the mother's parenting style as the significance values for all the subscale was higher than .05. The results in Table 1 shows that the mean score of female and male in MPS is 31.53 and 32.75 while in MRS it is 32.33 and 32.55. The sub-scale MTS had a mean score of 34.62 and 36.13 for females and males. The males in the study were found to have a slightly higher mean than the females. The results of the study support another past study which revealed that there is no significant gender difference in mothers' permissive and authoritarian parenting styles. The results of the study also found that all the parenting styles of mothers had males with slightly higher mean

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scores (Samina Yasmin, 2018). As per the findings of Kausar and Shafique (2008) boys in Pakistan perceive their mothers to be more authoritative when compared with girls.

There is no significant difference between male and females in terms of father's parenting styles as well because the significance values for all the sub-scales are higher than .05. The results in Table 2 shows that the mean score of female and male in FPS is 32.73 and 33.77 while in FRS it is 31.33 and 32.63. The sub-scale FTS had a mean score of 35.07 and 36.08 for females and males. The males in the study were found to have a slightly higher mean than the females. The findings of the study support another past study which revealed that there is no significant gender difference in fathers' authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles though the permissiveness of fathers does have gender differences. Same to the mother's parenting style, the father's parenting style also had males with slightly higher mean scores than the female (Samina Yasmin, 2018).

In Table 3, it can be seen that there is no significant gender difference among college-going students' anxiety. The mean value for females in anxiety is 20.93 and the mean value for males is 18.77 with SD 12.982 and 12.130 respectively. Though the gender differences are insignificant females have slightly higher levels of anxiety in comparison to males as they have higher mean scores. The reason for this could be the frequent changes in the hormones of females and them not being able to control their worries (Fatemeh Bahrami, et al. (2011). In yet another study, which conducted research to see statistical anxiety among male and female students it was found that there was no significant gender difference among the students which is unlikely of other past studies which say that there does exist a significant difference between the two genders (A Alizamar, et al. (2019).

In Table 3, it can be seen that there is no significant gender difference among college-going students' subjective well-being. The mean value for females in subjective well-being is 7.92 and the mean value for males is 8.82 with SD 5.604 and 7.245 respectively. Though the difference is the insignificant value of the mean is higher for males than females, which means males have slightly higher subjective well-being. The current result supports another past study which revealed that there exists no significant difference in the subjective well-being of males and females. Irrespective of gender people perceive subjective well-being almost similarly (Ahmad M. Mahasneh, (2022).

Hypotheses 2 and 3 of the study are accepted because the current study has found an insignificant relationship between permissive parenting style and anxiety among college students for both mother and father. We can see in table 4, that there is also an insignificant and positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and anxiety. Lastly, it was found that there is a negative relationship between authoritative parenting style and anxiety which is again insignificant.

According to Erozkan and Atilgan (2012), authoritarian parenting styles were correlated to anxiety and its sensitivity. Authoritarian parenting style as per the study worked as predicting factor for anxiety among people. The authoritarian and permissive parenting style of a father was positively related to the anxiety of children. The study stated that not just the parenting style of mothers matters but the father's parenting style also matters a lot and has an effect on the overall growth, well-being, and development of children. The study believed that the authoritative parenting style of the mother can be helpful in decreasing the effect of anxiety on children basically it works as a shield for the children (Sahithya Br et al. (2019).

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A study found a relationship between parenting style and children's anxiety. It stated that anxiety and anxiety-related disorders are likely to develop in people who have parents with authoritarian parenting styles, meaning that there is some sort of relation between parenting style and development and levels of anxiety among children. It also stated that the relationship between the two variables is often affected by factors like punishment and parental control. Lastly, the study depicted that the relationship between authoritative parenting style and anxiety was negative (Yosi Yaffein,2021). Authoritative parenting style and neglectful parenting style didn't have an impact on the anxiety meaning that there is a negative relationship between them. Also, it stated that the father's parenting style for instance, from the present study's authoritative parenting style does not have a relationship with anxiety and in general, as well does not have significant relationship between them. The supposed reason for the situation was considered to be the less amount of time spent by the fathers with their children in comparison to mothers (Diluxshy Sanjeevan et al.,2018).

Hypotheses 4 and 5 of the current study is accepted as it has found a weak but positive and significant relationship between both mother's and father's authoritative parenting style and subjective well-being among college students. There is also a significant and weak but positive relationship between both mother's permissive parenting style and subjective well-being. Lastly, there is an insignificant yet positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and subjective well-being of both mother and father and permissive parenting style of just father as shown in table 5.

Authoritative parenting style among all three parenting styles showed a good correlation with the subjective well-being of undergraduate students. Its findings were also that one of the predicting factors for subjective well-being is authoritative and it was highest among the three parenting styles. On the other hand, the authoritarian parenting style was the poorest independent factor for predicting subjective well-being (Amininiye Macgregor Manuel et al. 2020). A study witnessed a significant relationship between parenting styles, life satisfaction, and emotional regulation. The study saw that children with an authoritarian parenting style were low on life satisfaction and children with an authoritative parenting style were high on life satisfaction (Dr. Ravindra Singh et al. 2021).

Hypothesis 6 of the study is accepted as the current study has found insignificant and negative relationship between anxiety and subjective well-being as shown in table 6. High subjective well-being scores and levels are the results of low scores in anxiety and intrinsic religiosity. The anxiety and subjective well-being of individuals are negatively related and activities like good sleep, and financial independence were positively related to subjective well-being. High anxiety in students gives rise to and is associated with fewer positive events and affects in a student's life whereas low anxiety levels meant fewer negative affects. Basically, anxiety and negative affects are associated with each other meaning that low anxiety low the negative affect, and high anxiety high is the negative affect (Leonardo Machado, et al. (2018).

CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to see the relationship between parenting style, anxiety, and subjective well-being among college-going students. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the permissive and authoritarian parenting styles of both mother and father had a positive but insignificant association with anxiety in college students. While authoritative parenting style of mother and father on the other hand has a negative

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association with anxiety which is again insignificant. The permissive parenting style of the mother and the authoritative parenting style of both mother and father had a significant positive relationship with the subjective well-being of college students. The permissive parenting style of the father and authoritarian parenting style of both mother and father also have a positive relationship with subjective well-being but the relationship is weak and insignificant. The anxiety and subjective well-being of college students do not have a significant relationship between them and have a negative correlation which means higher anxiety lower well-being and vice versa. The study found no significant gender difference in the variables i.e., mother's and father's parenting style, anxiety, and subjective well-being among college students.

Limitation

- One of the limitations could be the sample size of the study, as the sample size consisted of just 120 students therefore on a larger population the findings of the study cannot be generalized.
- The total number of items in the study was around 94, making it a time-consuming process to fill the questionnaire because of which there's a possibility of dishonest or random answers from the students.
- The current study focused on just the college population which makes it dicey to whether or not the study can be generalized to other populations.

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Conflict of Interest

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