

Perceived Parenting Styles on Locus of Control and Coping Strategies among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to examine the relationships between different types of perceived parenting styles with locus of control, and coping strategies among young adults. Data was collected from 235 participants, who were from different states of India including 155 females and 85 males, who were aged between 18 and 30 years. The tools used for the study were the Perceived Parenting Style Scale, Rotter's Locus of Control Scale, and Brief-Cope. The major findings of the study revealed significant correlations between authoritative parenting style and internal locus of control, as well as between authoritative parenting style and problem-focused coping strategy. Conversely, authoritarian parenting style was significantly negatively correlated with problem-focused coping strategy, and significantly correlated with avoidant coping strategy. Additionally, permissive parenting style was found to be significantly correlated with avoidant coping strategy. These findings suggest that perceived parenting styles play a significant role in shaping young adults' locus of control and coping strategies. Specifically, authoritative parenting style appears to be associated with a more internal locus of control and adaptive coping strategies, while authoritarian and permissive parenting styles are associated with a more external locus of control and maladaptive coping strategies. These findings highlight the importance of parenting style in influencing young adults' cognitive and behavioral responses to stress.

Keywords: *Perceived Parenting Style, Locus of Control, Coping Strategies and Young Adults*

Perceived Parenting Styles

The role of parents in a child's growth and development is crucial, according to research. The parenting style a child experiences during their early years has a significant impact on their psychological well-being, according to studies. Psychologists who specialize in child development believe that how parents raise their children can influence their personality, intellect, and behavior (Mekertichian & Bowes, 1996). It is suggested by both theory and research that parents can still have an impact on their children's lives even when they are no longer in regular contact with them (Lapsley, Rice, & FitzGerald, 1990; Kenny, 1987).

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Darling and Steinberg (1993) defined parenting style as the overall quality of interactions between parents and children, which serves as a role model for individuals to learn everything from their family.

Perceived parenting style can be defined as an individual's subjective perception of the parenting practices they received during their upbringing (Darling & Toyokawa, 1997).

Baumrind (1971) proposed three distinct parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Maccoby and Martin built upon Baumrind's work by expanding on the typologies across families with varying socioeconomic backgrounds and identified a fourth parenting style, neglectful.

Authoritative parenting is a parenting style characterized by high responsiveness and high demandingness. It involves emotional support, high standards, appropriate autonomy granting, and clear bidirectional communication (Baumrind, 1991). Individuals with an authoritative parenting style are much more stably attached and demonstrate greater mental health compared to those who were raised with other styles (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Lamborn et al., 1991).

Authoritarian parenting style is characterized by high levels of control, strict rules, and low levels of warmth and responsiveness towards children. This style is often marked by a focus on discipline, obedience, and compliance, with less emphasis on nurturing and emotional connection with the child (Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

Permissive parenting style, as described by Baumrind (1971), is a parenting style characterized by low levels of demandingness and high levels of responsiveness. This style of parenting is often referred to as indulgent, non-directive, or lenient parenting. Children of permissive parents are often described as lacking in self-control and possessing poor social skills. They may also struggle with authority figures and have difficulty following rules and regulations (Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

Neglectful parenting, also known as uninvolved parenting, is characterized by a lack of warmth, responsiveness, and involvement in a child's life. Neglectful parents often provide for their children's basic physical needs such as food and shelter but neglect their emotional and psychological needs. Neglectful parents may be emotionally distant or preoccupied with their own lives, leaving their children to fend for themselves (Baumrind, 1991). Children of neglectful parents may struggle to form healthy attachments and relationships later in life (Berger, 2011). They may also lack the social and emotional skills needed to navigate social situations and form positive relationships with peers and authority figures (Piko & Balázs, 2012).

Locus of Control

Locus of Control is an important aspect of personality. The concept was introduced by Julian B. Rotter, which refers to an individual's belief about the degree of control they have over the events that affect their lives (Rotter, 1966).

An internal locus of control is associated with the perception that an individual's power to execute a necessary behavior is contingent upon control that comes from within themselves. Individuals with an internal locus of control orientation believe that they have the power to execute necessary behaviors through their own efforts and abilities. They feel that their

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actions and capabilities directly determine the outcomes of events in their life. Those with an internal control orientation tend to view situations as obstacles to be overcome rather than threats (Rotter, 1966).

An external locus of control is characterized by the belief that outside factors, rather than one's own abilities or actions, determine outcomes. Individuals with an external locus of control tend to attribute their successes and failures to factors outside of their control, such as luck, fate, or powerful others (Rotter, 1966). The child's perception of the level of parental acceptance is the primary determinant of their external locus of control (Cohen et al., 2008b).

Coping strategies

Coping strategies refer to the conscious efforts individuals make to manage stress, difficult situations, or challenging emotions (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Coping strategies can be a crucial factor in determining an individual's ability to effectively manage stress and maintain their mental health.

Appraisal-focused coping strategy is used to manage stress by modifying one's cognitive appraisal of a stressful situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). It involves changing one's perspective, beliefs, or goals to decrease the perceived threat or increase the perceived ability to manage the situation.

Problem-focused coping is a type of coping that aims to address the underlying problem. It involves taking actions to change the circumstances that are causing stress. This can be done through seeking information, generating possible solutions, and actively removing stressors. According to Carver et al (1989), problem-focused coping involves dealing with the cause of the problem.

Emotion-focused coping aims to reduce negative emotions related to stressors. Instead of addressing the problem directly, this type of coping mechanism aims to change the perception of the stressor or shift the focus of attention away from it. It involves strategies such as expressing emotions, seeking comfort and support from others, and avoiding the source of stress. Emotion-focused coping can be beneficial when the situation cannot be changed (Compas et al., 1999).

Avoidance-focused coping is a type of coping strategy that involves cognitive and behavioral efforts aimed at denying, minimizing, or avoiding dealing directly with stressful demands (Cronkite & Moos, 1995; Penley, Tomaka, & Wiebe, 2002). Avoidance coping techniques include cognitive avoidance, which involves not thinking about the stressor, and distraction, which involves engaging in other activities to avoid thinking about the problem (Compas et al., 1999).

Young Adulthood

The period of young adulthood is a very crucial stage of human life. The concept of young adulthood has evolved over time, with changes in cultural and societal norms impacting the age at which individuals are considered to be adults. (Settersten & Ray, 2010). Young adulthood is a time of transition and change, with individuals experiencing a range of challenges and opportunities as they navigate the shift from adolescence to adulthood. (Arnett, 2000)

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Valke and Fernandes (2017) examined the correlation between perceived parenting styles emotional maturity and locus of control of young adults. There was a significant correlation between authoritarian parenting style and locus of control. It was found that there was a significant positive correlation between authoritarian parenting style and external locus of control. There was a negative correlation observed between authoritative parenting style and emotional immaturity. M. C. Fujica (2019), examined the relationship between Locus of Control (LOC) and coping strategies among school-going adolescents was investigated. The findings indicated that adolescents with an External Locus of Control tended to use Emotion-Focused coping strategies more frequently than those with Internal and Intermediate Locus of Control. On the other hand, adolescents with an Internal Locus of Control tended to use Social Support coping strategies more frequently compared to those with External and Intermediate Locus of Control. Lin and Lian (2011) conducted research to examine the relationship between parenting styles and coping capability in Malaysian adolescents. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in authoritarian parenting between parents, but mothers tended to prefer authoritative parenting compared to fathers. Parenting styles were found to be correlated with adolescents' coping capability. There were no gender differences in adolescents' coping styles.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study used Correlational Research Design with the Quantitative approach. It is investigating relationships between variables without controlling and manipulating any of them.

Sample

The questionnaire was administered to 235 participants. The participants consisted of 155 females and 85 males coming from two parenting background. The samples are in an age range of 18-30 years.

Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between the authoritative parenting style and locus of control among young adults.
2. To examine the relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and locus of control among young adults.
3. To examine the relationship between the permissive parenting style and locus of control among young adults.
4. To examine the relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategies among young adults.
5. To examine the relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategies among young adults.
6. To examine the relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Avoidant coping strategies among young adults.
7. To examine the relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategies among young adults.
8. To examine the relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategies among young adults.
9. To examine the relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Avoidant coping strategies among young adults.
10. To examine the relationship between the permissive parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategies among young adults.

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11. To examine the relationship between the permissive parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategies among young adults.
12. To examine the relationship between the permissive parenting style and Avoidant coping strategies among young adults.

Hypotheses

- H₁ There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and locus of control among young adults.
- H₂ There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and locus of control among young adults.
- H₃ There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and locus of control among young adults.
- H₄ There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategy among young adults.
- H₅ There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategy among young adults.
- H₆ There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategy among young adults.
- H₇ There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategy among young adults.
- H₈ There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategy among young adults.
- H₉ There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategy among young adults.
- H₁₀ There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Avoidant coping strategy among young adults.
- H₁₁ There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Avoidant coping strategy among young adults.
- H₁₂ There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and Avoidant coping strategy among young adults.

Tools used for the study

Three measures were used in this study,

1. Perceived Parenting Style Scale:

The Perceived Parenting Style Scale developed by Divya and Manikandan (2013) measures the perception of the children about their parents' behavior. It measures perceived parenting style of the subject with regard to three parenting styles- authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. It consists of 30 items. It is a five-point Likert scale with response category Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, and Never. All the items in the scale are worded positively and scored 5 to 1.

Reliability and validity: Cronbach Alpha coefficient for authoritative style was 0.79, authoritarian 0.81 and permissive 0.86. All the styles of the perceived parenting style scale have an acceptable level of reliability. The authors claim that the scale has face validity.

2. Rotter's Locus of Control Scale:

The Rotter's locus of control scale was standardized by Dr. Anand Kumar and Dr. S.N. Srivastava (1985). The scale is a forced choice instrument which consists of 29 pairs of statements, 23 of which are scored, each alternative keyed as to a belief in either internal or external control of reinforcing event and 6 filler items which are not scored.

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Reliability and validity: The split half reliability of the scale is 0.88 which is significant. Estimates for reliability via the split half method correlated by Spearman Brown formula are equal to 0.73 and test-retest are equal to 0.85. The test reported good discriminant validity.

3. Brief-COPE

The Brief-COPE is a 28 item self-report questionnaire designed to measure effective and ineffective ways to cope with a stressful life event. Respondents rate items on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1- "I haven't been doing this at all" 2- "A little bit" 3- "A medium amount" 4- "I've been doing this a lot". Total scores on each of the scales are calculated by summing the appropriate items for each scale.

Reliability and Validity: Carver, (1997) stated, "reliability and validity studies of Original Brief COPE reported that the internal consistency coefficients of the subscales exceeded the value of .50." Poulus et al. (2020) validated the scale among 316 esports athletes and found the following means and standard deviations for each subscale. Problem focused- 2.47 (0.63), Emotional focused - 2.23 (0.49) and Avoidant coping - 1.64 (0.45)

Procedure

The respondents were young adults from various parts of the country. Few individuals were briefed personally about the purpose of the study and then they were asked to fill the Google form. Some of the participants filled the Google form after it was sent them through various social media platforms with detailed message regarding the study. The participants were allowed to withdraw from the research any time. The purpose and criteria for the study was mentioned in the first page of the form along with an attached consent form before answering the questionnaire. SPSS software was utilized for data interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table No. 1 Correlation between Authoritative Parenting Style, Authoritarian Parenting Style, Permissive Parenting Style and Locus of Control

Variable	Authoritative Parenting Style	Authoritarian Parenting Style	Permissive Parenting Style
Locus of Control	-0.146*	0.100	0.052

*Note: * $p < 0.05$*

Table 1 reveals the Pearson correlation for the variables authoritative parenting style and locus of control with a correlation coefficient ($r = -0.146^*$) and the corresponding p-value (< 0.05), there is a statistically significant negative correlation between these two variables. On the Rotter's locus of control scale, an internal locus of control is represented by a lower score, whereas an external locus of control is represented by a high score. Thus, (H_1) is accepted which states that "There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and locus of control among young adults." The findings here are consistent with an earlier study by (Keshavarza.S & Baharudina. R, 2012) where it was found that authoritative parenting was significantly related to internal locus of control and high self-efficacy in adolescence. Skinner (1986) showed a correlation between authoritative parents and an internal locus of control in adolescents.

For the variables authoritarian parenting style and locus of control with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.1$) and corresponding p-value (> 0.05) there is no significant correlation between the two variables. Hence, (H_2) is rejected which states that "There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and locus of control among young adults."

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For the variables permissive parenting style and locus of control with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.052$) and corresponding p-value (>0.05) there is no significant correlation between the two variables. Hence, (H3) is rejected which states that “There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and locus of control among young adults.”

Table No. 2 Correlation between Authoritative Parenting Style, Authoritarian Parenting Style, Permissive Parenting Style and Problem Focused Coping Strategy

Variable	Authoritative Parenting Style	Authoritarian Parenting Style	Permissive Parenting Style
Problem Focused Coping Strategy	0.286**	-0.128*	-0.109

Note: ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Table 2 reveals the Pearson correlation for the variables authoritative parenting style and problem focused coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.286^{**}$) and the corresponding p-value (<0.01), there is a statistically significant correlation between these two variables. Thus, (H4) is accepted which states that “There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategy among young adults.” The present study supports the previous study conducted by (Lamborn et al.,1991) found that adolescents who experienced authoritative parenting were more likely to use problem-focused coping strategies, such as seeking information, planning, and active coping, when faced with stressors related to academic challenges. Similarly, another study by (Steinberg et al.,1991) found that children who experienced authoritative parenting were more likely to use problem-focused coping strategies, such as seeking social support and active coping, when facing stressors related to peer relationships.

For the variables authoritarian parenting style and problem focused coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = -0.128^*$) and the corresponding p-value (<0.05), there is a statistically significant negative correlation between these two variables. Thus, (H5) is accepted which states that “There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Problem Focused coping strategy among young adults.” Dusek and Danko (1994) discovered that children with authoritarian parents reported using problem focused coping behaviours less frequently than students with highly permissive or authoritative parents. A study conducted by Lengua et al. (2005) found that children who experienced higher levels of authoritarian parenting were less likely to use problem-focused coping strategies, such as active coping and problem-solving, when faced with stressors related to academic challenges.

For the variables permissive parenting style and problem focused coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = -0.109$) and the corresponding p-value (>0.05) there is no significant correlation between the two variables. Hence, (H6) is rejected which states that “There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and problem focused coping strategy among young adults.”

Table No. 3 Correlation between Authoritative Parenting Style, Authoritarian Parenting Style, Permissive Parenting Style and Emotion Focused Coping Strategy

Variable	Authoritative Parenting Style	Authoritarian Parenting Style	Permissive Parenting Style
Emotion Focused Coping Strategy	0.060	0.075	-0.013

Table 3 reveals the Pearson correlation for the variables authoritative parenting style and emotion focused coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.060$) and the corresponding p-value (>0.05) there is no significant correlation between the two variables. Hence, (H7) is rejected which states that “There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategy among young adults.”

For the variables authoritarian parenting style and emotion focused coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.075$) and the corresponding p-value (>0.05) there is no significant correlation between the two variables. Hence, (H8) is rejected which states that “There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategy among young adults.”

For the variables permissive parenting style and emotion focused coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = -0.013$) and the corresponding p-value (>0.05) there is no significant correlation between the two variables. Hence, (H9) is rejected which states that “There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and Emotion Focused coping strategy among young adults.”

Table No. 4 Correlation between Authoritative Parenting Style, Authoritarian Parenting Style, Permissive Parenting Style and Avoidant Coping Strategy

Variable	Authoritative Parenting Style	Authoritarian Parenting Style	Permissive Parenting Style
Avoidant Coping Strategy	-0.120	0.257**	0.178**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$

Table 4 reveals the Pearson correlation for the variables authoritative parenting style and avoidant coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = -0.12$) and the corresponding p-value (>0.05) there is no significant correlation between the two variables. Hence, (H10) is rejected which states that “There is a significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and avoidant coping strategy among young adults.”

For the variables authoritarian parenting style and avoidant coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.257^{**}$) and the corresponding p-value (<0.01), there is a statistically significant correlation between these two variables. Thus, (H11) is accepted which states that “There is a significant relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and avoidant coping strategy among young adults.” The present findings were in tune with a study done by Thakre et al (2021) which showed that when compared to permissive and authoritative parenting styles, the use of cognitive avoidance as a coping strategy was higher under authoritarian parenting. One study conducted by Yan et al. (2017) found that children who reported experiencing authoritarian parenting were more likely to use avoidant coping strategies, such as denial, distraction, and avoidance, when faced with stressors. Another study by Varela et al. (2018) also found that adolescents who perceived their parents as being

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more authoritarian were more likely to use avoidant coping strategies, such as emotional withdrawal and avoidance of problems.

For the variables permissive parenting style and avoidant coping strategy with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.178^{**}$) and the corresponding p-value (< 0.01), there is a statistically significant correlation between these two variables. Thus, (H12) is accepted which states that “There is a significant relationship between the permissive parenting style and avoidant coping strategy among young adults.” The present study supports the previous study conducted by Amato et al. (2015) found that adolescents who reported higher levels of permissive parenting from their parents also reported higher use of avoidance coping strategies, such as denial, distraction, and wishful thinking. Similarly, another study by Van Doorn et al. (2018) found that permissive parenting was positively correlated with avoidance coping strategies in emerging adults. The researchers found that individuals who perceived their parents as being more permissive were more likely to use avoidance coping strategies such as avoidance of problems, emotional withdrawal, and disengagement when faced with stressors.

SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship of different types of Perceived Parenting Styles with Locus of Control and Coping Strategies among Young Adults. Independent Variable was Perceived Parenting Styles and Dependent Variables were Locus of Control and Coping Strategies. The questionnaire was administered to 235 participants. The participants consisted of 155 females and 85 males coming from two parenting background. The samples are in an age range of 18-30 years. Convenience sampling technique was used to collect the data. Tools used for the study were Perceived Parenting Style Scale, Rotter’s locus of control scale, and Brief-Cope. The data collected was from individuals who are currently residing in India. Data was analysed using SPSS package. Results shows there is a significant negative and positive correlation between the variables.

CONCLUSION

The major purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of different types of Perceived Parenting Styles with Locus of Control and Coping Strategies among Young Adults. Depending on the findings of the study, the following concluding notes were made:

- The study reveals that there is a significant correlation between authoritative parenting style and internal locus of control.
- Findings of the study portray a significant correlation between authoritative parenting style and problem focused coping strategy.
- When it comes to authoritarian parenting style there is a significant negative correlation with problem focused coping strategy.
- Findings of the study also show a significant correlation between authoritarian parenting style and avoidant coping strategy.
- The study also reveals that there exists a significant correlation between permissive parenting style and avoidant coping strategy.

Implications of the study

Understanding the relationship between perceived parenting style, locus of control, and coping strategies is crucial because it sheds light on how individuals develop their cognitive and behavioral responses to stress and adversity because of parenting they received. Perceived parenting style, locus of control and coping strategies are all important factors in

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the psychological development of individuals. Parenting style, whether it is authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, or neglectful, can shape an individual's perception of control over their life, which in turn affects their coping strategies. Knowledge of the relationship between these variables can inform interventions and support strategies for individuals who may be struggling with stress, adversity, or mental health issues.

Limitations of the Study

Convenience sampling, which involves selecting participants based on their accessibility and availability, may limit the generalizability of the findings. Due to the correlational nature of the study, it may not be possible to establish causality between perceived parenting style, locus of control, and coping strategies. The social desirability level could affect or play a major role in altering or affecting the obtained results as the study mainly uses self-report questionnaires. The sample size is relatively smaller. The data collection was conducted through online, which could have affected the results of the study. The study focused on a specific age group (young adults) and may not capture the full developmental spectrum of individuals. The findings may not be applicable to other age groups.

Suggestions for Future Studies

To improve upon the current study, several future suggestions can be made. First, researchers should consider using a more diverse sampling method to increase the generalizability of their findings. A longitudinal study design and a mixed-methods approach can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between perceived parenting style, locus of control, and coping strategies. Finally, using alternative measures and a comparison group can provide additional insight into the topic.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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