

The Influence of Negative Perceptions Held Toward Parents on Personality Functioning Among Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out to identify whether negative perceptions held toward parents have a significant relationship with the level of personality functioning and whether negative perceptions held toward parents predict the level of personality functioning among adolescents. The sample of the study consisted of 300 adolescents (male = 140 and female = 160) from the state of Goa. The measures used for the purpose of the study were the Young Parenting Inventory (YPI – R2) (2018) by Louis, J. P., Wood, A., & Lockwood, G. and the Level of Personality Functioning Scale – Self Report (LPFS-SR) (2017) by Morey, L.C. The statistical analyses applied were Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Regression Analysis. The results of the study indicated that there exists a highly significant positive correlation between negative perceptions held toward parents and personality functioning. The study also suggested that negative perceptions held toward parents significantly and positively contributed to personality functioning. Further, the implication of the study is discussed.

Keywords: *Negative Perceptions, Personality, Personality Dysfunction, Parenting, Adolescents*

Personality dysfunction with its complexity originates in the context of relationships with the self and others. Leslie Morey (2017) defines personality functioning as impairments in self – functioning that includes Identity and Self – direction; and interpersonal functioning which includes Empathy and Intimacy. Its main feature includes marked distress in an individual's response to an enduring pattern of inner experience and behaviour that deviates significantly from the expectations of cultural norms (Gunderson J.G. & Lyons – Ruth K. 2008). Interpersonal processes play a major role in the development of the capacity for interpersonal functioning. Largely, attachment and relationship quality with parents and peers are found to be important for the development of the capacity for empathy and intimacy in adolescents. Maladaptive parenting, described as maltreatment, abuse or neglect experienced by a child from their caregiver is one environmental stressor that contributes to the etiology of personality dysfunction (Steele, K.R. et al, 2019). The present study thus explores the influence of negative perceptions held toward the parents' parenting i.e. degradation and rejection, competitiveness and status seeking, emotional

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inhibition and deprivation, punitiveness, controlling, overprotection and overindulgence on personality functioning among adolescents.

Aim & Objectives

- To study the relationship between negative perceptions held toward parents and personality functioning among adolescents.
- To study the contribution of negative perceptions held toward parents on personality functioning among adolescents.

Hypotheses

- **H1:** There will be a significant relationship between negative perceptions held toward parents and personality functioning among adolescents.
- **H2:** Negative perceptions held toward parents will significantly impact personality functioning among adolescents.

METHOD

Participants

The present study consisted of a total of 300 adolescents within the age group of 15 to 19 years, across the state of Goa. In this sample, 140 were male and 160 were female adolescents.

Sampling Design

Purposive sampling method was employed for the selection of 300 adolescents across the state of Goa.

Instruments

The Young Parenting Inventory (YPI – R2) (2018) by Louis, J. P., Wood, A., & Lockwood, G. It consists of six subscales and 36 items that measure perceived past parenting experiences using a six-point Likert scale. The six subscales are labeled as: degradation and rejection, competitiveness and status seeking, emotional inhibition and deprivation, punitiveness, controlling, overprotection and overindulgence.

The Level of Personality Functioning Scale – Self Report (LPFS-SR) (2017) by Morey, L.C, consists of 80 items rated on a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Totally False/Not at all true) to 4 (Very True).

Procedure

The primary data for this study was collected through purposive random sampling from 300 adolescents across the state of Goa after informed consent was obtained. The maintenance of confidentiality of identity and responses as well as briefing participants on the purpose of the study was ensured. The Young Parenting Inventory (YPI – R2) (2018) by Louis, J. P., Wood, A., & Lockwood, G. and the Level of Personality Functioning Scale – Self Report (LPFS-SR) (2017) by Morey, L.C were administered to assess negative perceptions held toward parents and personality functioning respectively. A personal data sheet was also handed over to the participants for the collection of demographical details. Finally, debriefing of the study was done.

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Data Analysis

With the aid of SPSS 20, the data was carefully examined; coded, scored and statistical analysis was performed. Using the respective scale manuals as reference the participant responses were scored and analyzed applying Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Regression Analysis to verify the proposed hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the correlation coefficient for negative perceptions held toward the father and mother and personality functioning among adolescents.

	Personality Functioning
Negative Perceptions – Father	.306**
Negative Perceptions – Mother	.395**

**p < 0.01: Highly Significant

Table 1 reveals that negative perceptions held toward the father and mother's parenting are significantly and highly correlated to personality functioning among adolescents, that is, $r = .306$, $r = .395$ ($p < 0.01$) respectively.

The results of a highly significant positive correlation between negative perceptions held toward the father's parenting and personality functioning align with the findings of Prinzie et al (2012) explaining fathers' personality and its relation with children's personality to be a predictor of perceived parenting behaviour in an adolescent. Further it was found that paternal emotional stability is the most important personality factor influencing an adolescent's perceptions toward the father and their personality functioning. Paternal neuroticism, highlighted by a lower stress management threshold potentially leads to less adequate parenting as well (Watson et al., 1994). Thomas and Chess (1977) explain the crucial interplay between parental personality and child personality, where the child's personality characteristics can bring forth differential reactions from parents, thus influencing future interactions, expectations and behaviour (Kochanska et al., 2004; Clark et al., 2000).

The reasons for a highly significant positive relationship between negative perceptions held toward the mother's parenting and personality functioning may be attributed to maternal mistrust, manipulativeness, dependency, neuroticism and empathy that was found to predict the relationship quality with the child (Kochanska et al., 2004). Maternal personality influences parenting and appears to be a significant socialization factor in child development (Xing, S et al., 2018). Through socialization an adolescent learns and behaves in response to the expected consequence of the parents' behaviour. In a case where an adolescent holds negative perceptions toward the mothers' parenting, who also plays the role of a primary caregiver, it influences the adolescents' response to intimacy, the development of their identity and the capacity for empathy; all of which form the base for one's personality functioning.

Thus the hypothesis stating that there will be a significant relationship between negative perceptions held toward parents and personality functioning among adolescents is supported.

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Table 2.1 indicates regression analysis between negative perceptions held toward the father and personality functioning among adolescents.

	Beta Coefficient	t – value	p – value
Negative Perceptions – Father – Personality Functioning	.306	5.55	.000***
$R^2 = .091$		***p < 0.000: Very Highly Significant	
$F(1,298) = 30.804$			

Table 2.1 indicates the results of negative perception toward the father scores’ regressed against personality functioning among adolescents. The results indicate that negative perception toward the father positively predict personality functioning among adolescents, which is depicted by $F(1,298) = 30.804$, $p < 0.000$. Further, $R^2 = .091$ i.e. the model explains 9% of variance in personality functioning. This indicates that higher the negative perceptions held toward the father, greater the degree of personality impairment.

Personality functioning has been defined as impairments in self and interpersonal functioning which includes components of identity, self – direction, empathy and intimacy (Morey L, 2017). The father’s presence or perceived absence plays a vital role in psychological development of adolescents in numerous ways (Ying et al., 2021). His involvement is further associated with positive child health outcomes and is positively correlated with parental well-being (Krishnakumar and Black, 2004). Perceived paternal need support consistently showed a positive effect on changes in perspective taking among both sons and daughters. Father’s companionship can promote improvement in the regulation of emotions and play the role of a partner in a child’s developmental micro system (Gregory et al., 2019).

Table 2.2 indicates regression analysis between negative perceptions held toward the mother and personality functioning among adolescents.

	Beta Coefficient	t – value	p – value
Negative Perceptions – Mother – Personality Functioning	.395	7.418	.000***
$R^2 = .153$		***p < 0.000: Very Highly Significant	
$F(1,298) = 55.028$			

Table 2.2 indicates the results of negative perception toward the mother scores’ regressed against personality functioning among adolescents. The results indicate that negative perception toward the mother positively predict personality functioning among adolescents, which is depicted by $F(1,298) = 55.028$, $p < 0.000$. Further, $R^2 = .153$ i.e. the model explains 15% of variance in personality functioning. This indicates that higher the negative perceptions held toward the mother, greater the degree of personality impairment.

Allport (1961) argued that the basis of strong interpersonal functioning, more specifically capacity for empathy includes a secure home environment. The relationship between the mother and the father and the mother's support for the relationship between the father and the child also play a very crucial role in the relationship between father and his child (Yogman & Eppel, 2022). The attitude of the mother towards the father can directly impact

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the way the child perceives the father. If mother and father have a cordial, intimate relationship with one another, the child is more likely to have an intimate connection with them (Harris, 2002). Mutual trust and respect between parents form the building blocks of development for a child. Thus, failure on the part of the mother to establish and maintain this relationship and failure to meet the expectations the adolescent places over her for support and nurturance could potentially contribute to impairments in the adolescents ability for intimacy, empathy, identity formation and self – direction which are the main components of personality functioning measured in this study.

Therefore, the hypothesis stating that negative perceptions held toward parents will significantly impact the level of personality functioning among adolescents is accepted.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, negative perceptions held toward parents, impact personality functioning among adolescents. Perceptions held toward parents are foundational and determine not only the trajectory of future relationships but also an individuals' capacity for intimacy, expression of empathy, identity and self – direction. Uncovering the basis of negative perceptions held toward parents and building personality by undoing and unlearning negative patterns of thought and behaviour will be crucial to the health of an adolescent's future relationships and wellbeing.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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