

Parental Styles and Depression among Adolescents

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The present study was planned to examine the relationship between parental styles and depression among adolescents. The sample of the study involved 100 adolescents (males=50, females =50) between the age range of 14 and 16 years and one of their parent thus making the total sample of 200. The adolescents were assessed with Children Depression Inventory whereas parents were administered Parenting Authority Questionnaire-R, to check parental style. The data were analyzed by using Pearson's Product Moment method of correlation and t -test .For mean comparisons, the sample of parents was classified into two extreme groups' i.e High vs. Low (Mean \pm 1 S.D.) on the basis of their scores on parenting style and depression scores of their wards were compared. The results showed that (i) Authoritarian Parenting Style has significant positive correlation with depression, (ii) Permissive Parenting style has significant negative correlation with depression. (iii) There is a significant difference between males and females on measures of depression. (iv). The two extreme groups (high vs. low) showed significant differences on their depression levels.

Keywords: Depression, Parenting Styles

Depression is one of the most widespread mental disorders among adolescent's population, second only to alcohol abuse (Kringlen, Trgersen, & Cramer, 2001) in Western society and the scenario is not so bright in Asian societies. Depression is an affective, or mood disorder. It is an illness that immerses its sufferers in a world of self blame, confusion and hopelessness. It is an illness of the mind and the body. Some could argue that depression is a way of coping with life's pressures (Schwartz & Schwartz, 1993). Depression in adolescents has just recently been acknowledged as a problem (NIMH, 2000; Nunley, 2001). Depressive symptoms are often viewed as normal adolescent behavior or moodiness. Adolescents with depressive symptoms have difficulty expressing how they feel and may use other means of expression such as acting out, which often is interpreted as misbehavior (NIMH, 2000).

Other studies (Fombonne, 1998; Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Seeley, 1998) found that approximately 8-10% of adolescents scored above the cutoff for clinical depression on self report measures. Depression in adolescents is increasing at an alarming rate and statistics on adolescent depression are sobering. Depression is the main problem faced by the mental health professionals as an independent disease and it is a major associated factor in other problems like suicide, substances abuse and common cause of school failure and school dropout among adolescent (Birmaher et al., 1996). Studies have indicated that depression in adolescents affect approximately 35-40% of the adolescent population. Most alarmingly among adolescents, one among five may suffer from depression (Ruston, Forcier, & Schectman, 2002).

Depressions in adolescents usually cause more social and interpersonal

difficulties that directly lead to self related problems (Sharma, Yadava, & Sunita, 2001). To escape from the pain of depression, some youth's experiment with drugs or alcohol or become sexually promiscuous (Hankin et al., 1998). Berms (1995) observed that twice as many women as men report depressive symptoms in the course of their lives. During the age period from 25 to 45 years, married women have a particularly high rate of depression, while unmarried women in this age bracket have a much lower rate which is more similar to the rate for men (Paykel, 1991). This difference may reflect the greater stress for married women from both heavy child care responsibilities and support provision for extended families, in addition to job stress. Low income and economic need are additional stressor that affects women more often than man, and may be related to the higher rate of depression for women (Beekman, Copeland, & Prince, 1999). Not only this, depression among married couples also becomes one of the casual factors for depression among adolescents via parenting styles of their mother and father.

Parenting Style: Categorizing parents according to parental demandingness and responsiveness creates a typology of four parenting styles i.e. Indulgent (Permissive), Authoritarian, Authoritative and Uninvolved (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Each of these parenting styles reflect different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices and behaviors and a distance balance of responsiveness and demandingness.

Indulgent Parents are more responsive than they are demanding. They are nontraditional and lenient, do not require mature behavior, allow considerable self regulation and avoid conformation. (Baumrind, 1991). Indulgent parents may be further divided into two types: democratic parents, who thought leniently, are more conscientious, engaged and committed to the

child and non-directive parents i.e permissive parents. Permissive parents allow the "child to regulate his own activities as much as possible, avoid the exercise of control" (Baumrind, 1966). Such parents place few, if any demand on their children, allowing children, "complete freedom to make life decisions without referring to parents for advise" (Hickman, Bartholomae, & Mckenry, 2000).

Authoritarian Parents are highly demanding and directive, but not responsive. Authoritarian Parents with clearly defined rules that they expected their children to follow without questioning or even discussion. They are as the really strict parents, authoritarian parents hold high expectations for children and believe that parents are and should be, in complete control. According to Baumrind (1996) these parents "shape, council and evaluate the behavior and attitudes of the child in accordance with a set of standards of conducts, usually an absolute, standard, which values obedience as a virtue and favors punitive, forceful measures to curb the child . Authoritarian parents are obedience and status oriented, and expects their orders to be obeyed without explanation (Baumrind, 1991).

Authoritative Parents are both demanding and responsive. These parents are an integration of the other two parenting styles, setting clear rules and expectations but also encouraging discussion and give and take, especially as their children get older and are able to take more responsibility for them. Such parents "remain receptive to the child's view but take responsibility for firmly guiding the child's actions, emphasizing reasoning, communication and rational discussion in interactions that are friendly as well as tutorial and disciplinary" (Baumrind, 1996). Authoritative parents "monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are

supportive, rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self regulated as well as cooperative.”

Parenting Style and Depression:

In the last two decades, research has provided strong evidence of association between parenting styles and variations in adolescent's outcomes (Baumrind, 1991; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991; Laskey & Cartwright, 2009; Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, Mounts, & Dornbusch, 1994). As originally conceptualized by Baumrind (1967) parenting typologies consist of authoritative, permissive, authoritarian and disengaged parenting styles which affect the overall behavior of the child. Magnussen (1991) found that both adolescents and parental over-control are associated with higher level of depressive symptoms.

Reiss et al. (1995) examined the effect of different parenting styles on adolescent's depression and antisocial behavior and compared it with the influence of environmental influences alongwith genetic influences. Ayvazian (1996) investigated whether parenting style is related to child motivation, level of depression, problem behavior and self esteem. The investigators found that there exists positive relationship between parenting style and level of depression and problematic behavior of the child. Jackson and Schemes (2005) conducted a study in which authoritative parenting was found to be associated with positive outcomes for children and adolescents. In their study, university students who perceived their parents as authoritative showed higher self esteem, lower depression and better universal adjustment during the student's transition into, and throughout, university. These relations were mediated by student level of optimism. In another study they found that high school students perceive their parents as authoritative were high on self efficacy and low on depression.

Some other studies (Ayvazian, 1996; Dwairy, 2004) found significant associations between parenting style and depression. It is found that positive correlation exists between authoritarian parenting style and depression. It is observed that authoritarian style lead to higher level of depression among children and adolescent whereas negative correlation has been found between permissive parenting style and depression. Adolescents show lesser experiences of depression where parents apply permissive parenting style. Dwairy (2004) studied relationship between three parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive) and the mental health of adolescents. Mental health problems are found to be associated more with authoritarian and less with authoritative and permissive parenting style. Other studies (Dearing, 2004; Fenton, 1998; Liu- Yih-Lan, 2003; Mckenna, 1999) found similar results in parenting styles and measure of depression among adolescents. There seems to be marked increased possibility for adolescent's depression when parents do not have warmth, caring and affection for their adolescents.

The present study aimed at understanding about adolescent's depression is related with different parenting styles. The major objectives are:-

1. To study the relationship of depression with parenting style among adolescents.
2. To analysis the mean differences on measures of depression between adolescents, categorized according to high and low parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive).
3. To study the difference between males and females on measures of depression.

In the present research the following hypotheses were purposed:

1. Authoritarian and Authoritative parenting style would have positive association with depression whereas Permissive parenting style will show negative correlated with depression among adolescents.

2. Adolescents with High and low parenting styles would be differ significantly on scores of depression.

3. Female participants would show greater depression than male participants.

Method

Sample:

A total sample of 200 respondents including 100 parents and 100 adolescents (50 males and 50 females) who were studying in IX and X standard. The age range of the adolescent's sample was from 14 to 16 years. The sample was selected by using stratified random sampling procedure from various schools of two districts of Haryana. All the schools were having same educational affiliation and catered to the needs of low to middle socio economic status students. Students were contacted in their respective classes through their class teachers while data of parents was obtained through their wards.

Tools:

Children's Depression Inventory (CDI) - (Kovacs, 1981)-CDI is a 27 item self report inventory for measuring the level of depression among children and adolescents. Scale has items related to sadness, self

blame, loss of appetite, insomnia, interpersonal relationship and school adjustment. The internal consistency of the CDI was also sufficient as Cronbach alpha is .79.

Parenting Authority Questionnaire- (PAQ-R), (Rittman et al., 2002)-PAQ-R is a parental self report version of the original PAQ, intended to use with parents of children. The PAQ-R consists of 30 items, 10 items each for three scales representing Authoritarian, Authoritative and Permissive parenting styles. Items are rated on a 5 point Likert type scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree". One month test-retest reliability for 22 mothers was .61 for Authoritative, .87 for Authoritarian and .67 for permissive subscales. Data were also gathered from another sample and One month test retest reliability were found to be .54, .88, .74 for Authoritative, Authoritarian and permissive subscale, respectively.

Procedure:

In the initial stage, the participants were contacted in their respective classes and their willingness to participate in the study was obtained. The subjects were administered Child Depression Inventory. Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) was administered on one parent of the adolescents through them only. All the subjects were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and would not affect their overall performances in the school.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Relationship between Depression and Parenting styles

Variable	Depression	Authoritarian Parenting Style	Authoritative Parenting Style	Permissive Parenting Style
Depression	–	.27**	– .16	– .30**

**p< .01

Table 1 shows the relationship between depression and all three types of parental styles (Authoritarian, Authoritative and Permissive) among adolescents. The Authoritarian Parenting style was found to be positively associated with depression ($r=.27$) whereas Permissive Parenting Style was negatively associated ($r=-.30$). The results clearly demonstrate that the adolescents who are having highly authoritarian parents are having high level of depression, whereas highly permissive parents induce lower level of depression among adolescents, these findings are in line with those obtained by Heaven, Newbury and Mak (2004); Laskey and Cartwright, (2009; Magnussen (1991); Shah and Waller (2002) thus, the first hypothesis is verified.

Parenting Style is considered as an important variable among adolescents in relation to depression. To see the impacts of parenting style on depression, two groups (Low and High on particular parenting style) were formed and compared with each other to see the depression level among adolescents. The sample was classified into two extreme groups (Mean \pm 1 SD) on the basis of their scores on parenting style. Means of the two groups (high vs. low) were compared by using t-test.

The variable Authoritarian Parenting Style has shows significant differences in Table 2. The mean depression scores are 6.21 and 13.66 respectively for low group and high on authoritarian parenting styles. The obtained t-value is 3.32 which is significant at 0.01 level. A careful inspection of the table shows non significant differences on authoritative, a variable of Parenting Authority

questionnaire. On permissive variable, results show marked differences between the groups. The low group of permissive parenting style has higher mean as compared to high group of permissive parenting style counterparts. The obtained t value is 2.21 on this variable which is significant at 0.05 level. The results indicate that high Authoritarian and low permissive parenting style is having higher degree of depression in adolescents as compared to low and high on these two parenting patterns. Thus, the second hypothesis is verified.

Table 3. Mean, SD and t value between male and female on depression scores

Females		Males		t-value
Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
13.68	5.12	8.75	5.76	4.45**

**p < .01

Table 3 presents the mean and SD of males and females and t-value for their depression score. A perusal of the table shows that the mean of males and females is 8.75 and 13.68 respectively. The t-value is 4.45 which is significant at 0.01 level which indicate that depression level is higher in females as compare to male adolescents (Berg et al., 2007).

The present study was an attempt to see the relationship between depression and measures of parenting styles. It is pertinent to note that results of the study appear to lend substantial support to the hypothesis formulated. Significant associations are found between three parenting style and measures of depression. Correlation between authoritarian parenting style and depression

Table 2. Mean, SD and t value between Parenting based High and Low Groups on Depression

Parenting Styles	Low Group		High Group		t-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Authoritarian	6.21	6.22	13.66	6.28	3.02**
Authoritative	14.81	4.02	12.11	4.88	1.42
Permissive	12.5	2.67	7.27	6.34	2.21*

**p < .01 *p < .05

is positive. It indicates that more the authoritarian parenting style, the higher the level of depression. But correlation between permissive parenting style and depression is negative, that is more permissive parenting style, the lesser experiences of depression among adolescents. No significant correlation is found between authoritative parenting style and depression. Radziszewska, Richardson, Dent, and Flay (1996) and Aunola, Stattin, and Nurmi (2000) found that authoritative parenting style was related to lower levels of adolescent depressive symptoms, and that the highest levels of depressive symptoms were related to unengaged parenting style. Previous studies have established a clear relationship between authoritative parenting, parental care, parental monitoring and adolescent depression (Garber, Robinson, & Valentiner, 1997); Greaven, Santor, Thompson, and Zuroff (2000); Ge, Best, Conger, and Simons (1996); Radziszewska, Richardson, Dent, & Flay (1996).

Radziszewska, et al., (1996) found that authoritative parenting style was significantly related to lower levels of depressive symptoms, and unengaged parenting style with the highest level of depressive symptoms. Studies that examined the relationship between parental care or warmth and adolescent depression (O' Byrne, Haddock, & Poston, 2002; Rey, 1995; Robertson & Simons, 1989) have consistently found a negative relationship. That is, higher parental care or warmth is related to lower rates of adolescent depression. A negative relationship has also been reported by O'Byrne et al (2002). Heaven, Newbury, & Mak (2004) reported more overprotection from parents predicted higher rates of depression in adolescents.

A number of studies (i.e. Ayvazian (1996); Dwairy (2004); Dearing (2004); Fenton (1998); Joshi, Sharma and Mehra (2009); Liu- Yih-Lan (2003); Laskey and Cartwright (2009) and Mckenna (1999) found

similar results in parenting styles and measure of depression among adolescents. There seems to be marked increased possibility for adult depression when neither parent experiences warmth, caring and affection among adolescents. It is found that high authoritarian parenting style leads to higher level of depression as comparison to low authoritarian parenting style which is associated with low depression among adolescents. Authors found that that low permissive parenting style lead to higher level of depression as comparison to high permissive parenting style among adolescents. Ayvazian (1996) found that American families which adopted authoritarian parenting style had higher level of depression in their children. Dwairy (2004) and Pettit, Bates, and Dodge (1997) studied relationship between three parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive) and the mental health of adolescents. Thus, Present study shows that parenting styles have an impact on adolescent depression, so parent's involvement in the treatment of adolescent depression should also be considered. Educating parents on how their behaviors can contribute to and/or help to diminish adolescent depression.

Conclusion

In present study, authors found surprising results in regarding to parenting style and depression. The depression score of both high and low authoritative parenting styles, which is considered to be the optimal parenting style were the maximum. While that of the low authoritarian and high permissive parenting style group were the least. These results indicated that high Authoritarian and low permissive parenting style is having higher degree of depression in adolescents as compared to low and high on two parenting patterns. In today's time, children do not want any interference from their parents. They want to take their own decisions and demands full freedom in life. As these results

are in contradiction with earlier findings, further research in this area is needed to clarify the relationship between parenting style and depression especially in the present day Indian youth.

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A new Book....

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