Relationship of Parental Acceptance and Rejection with Psychological Wellness in Young Adults

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Abstract

Background: This study was aimed at examining relationship of parental acceptance and rejection with self-concept, life satisfaction, self-esteem and self-efficacy in young adults.

Methods: In this cross sectional study, 152 individuals, with equal representation of male and female, were included. The mean age of the participants was 25 years with minimum 12 years of education with equal representation of students and professionals. A set of standard instruments comprising of Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ), Six Factor Self-Concept Scale, General Self-efficacy scale (GSES) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were administered.

Results: Findings of study showed high rates of parental acceptance from both fathers (60%) and (65%) from mothers. Rejection from mother was more strongly associated with poor self-concept (r=-.321; p=.000), low self-efficacy(r=-.267; p=.001) and less satisfaction with life (r=-.197; p=.01).   Linear regression analysis supports that parental acceptance and rejection can predict self-concept, self-esteem, general self-efficacy and satisfaction with life among individuals.

Conclusion: Parental acceptance or rejection has significant role in relation to psychological wellness and functioning in young adults.

Key Words: Parental Acceptance, Rejection, Self-Concept, Self-esteem

Introduction

Nature of interpersonal relationships especially parent-child relationship has developmental implications for humans, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, and geographic boundaries. Parental acceptance and rejection can be experienced by any combination of four principal expressions: Warm and affectionate, Hostile and aggressive, Indifferent and neglecting and Undifferentiated rejection.[1]

Self generally means the conscious reflection of one's own being or identity, as an object separate from others or from the environment. There are a variety of ways to think about the self. Two of the most widely used terms are self-concept and self-esteem. Self-concept generally refers to the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence.Self-esteem refers to how we value ourselves. Self-efficacy is the people's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance. [2]

Subjects and Methods

Sample: Sample of the study comprised of 152 individuals with equal proportion of male and female participants. The sample was recruited from different educational institutions of Rawalpindi and Islamabad by employing convenient sampling technique.

Demographic Sheet: Gender, age, years of education, occupational status, birth order, number of siblings,parent's current marital status, approximate monthly family income of the participants was obtained on demographic sheet.

Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ): The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) is a self-report instrument designed to measure individuals' perceptions of parental acceptance-rejection. .

General Self Efficacy Scale (GSES): General Self-efficacy Scale (GSES) is designed for adolescents and general adult population.

Six Factor Self Concept Scale: Six Factor Self-concept Scale measures various aspects of self concept which includes power, task-accomplishment, giftedness, vulnerability, likeability and morality.

Satisfaction with Life Scale: It is a measure of life satisfaction.

Statistical Analysis: Pearson Correlation and Linear regression was applied to assess the relationship of parental acceptance rejection with other measures of self-concept.

Table I:Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=152)

Variable	N (%)	F (p) Father	F (p) Mother
Age in years			
18 - 20	17 (11%)		
21 - 23	45 (30%)		
24 - 26	44 (29%)	F=.055 (p=.946)	F=.431 (p=.651)
27 – 29	28 (18%)		
30 – 32	12 (8%)		
33 – 35	6 (4%)		
Birth Order			
1	46 (31%)		
2	45 (30%)		
3	39 (26%)	F=.63 (p=.67)	F=2.2 (p=.06)
4	12 (8%)		
5	6 (4%)		
6	4 (3%)		
Family Monthly Income			
10,000-20,000	15 (10%)		
21,000-30,000	35 (23%)		
31,000-40,000	29 (19%)	F=6 (p=.000)	F=3.3 (p=.04)
41,000-50,000	29 (19%)		
51,000-60,000	33 (22%)		
61,000 and above	11 (7%)		
Education			
12yrs(Intermediate)	16 (10%)		
14yrs(Graduation)	53 (35%)	F=10 (p=.000)	F=9 (p=.000)
16 yrs(Masters)	51 (34%)		
18yrs(M.Phil)	32 (21%)		
Occupational Status			
Students	76 (50%)		
Lecturer	47 (31%)		
Clerk	13 (9%)	F=1.7 (p=.11)	F=1.1 (p=.33)
Admin Officer	7 (5%)		
Exam Officer	7 (5%)		
Career Counselor	2 (1%)		
Total No. of siblings of Participants			
0	6 (4%)		
1	22 (14%)		
2	45 (30%)	F=2.3 (p=.01)	F=2.5 (p=.01)
3	40 (26%)		
4	18 (12%)		
5	12 (8%)		
6-8	9 (6%)		
Parents of Participants			
Both alive	110 (72%)		
Father alive	13 (9%)	F=1.4 (p=.23)	F=.60 (p=.61)
Mother alive	17 (11%)		
Both dead	12 (8%)		
Marital Status of Parents of Participants			
Living together	93 (62%)		
Divorced	25 (16%)	F=7.2 (p=.000)	F=10 (p=.000)
Separated	22 (14%)		
Dead	12 (8%)		
Nature of Marital Relation of Participants' Parents			
Supportive and Caring	96 (63%)		
Unhappy relation	32 (21%)	F=6 (p=.001)	F=13 (p=.000)
Abusive relation	12 (8%)		
Separated Early	12 (8%)		

Results

A total of 152 young adults participated in this study with equal representation of male and female participants. The age range of participants was from18-35 years and participants completed 12-18 years of education with mean monthly family income of rupees 35,000. Linear regression analysis showed that parental acceptance rejection turned out to be significant predictor of self-concept. (β= -.249, t=-3.147, p=.002). (Table 1)

Most of the participants reported higher levels of acceptance from both father (60%) and mother (65%). Results showed that parental acceptance was significantly associated with higher number of years of education (p<.01), parents "living together" status (p<.001) and "loving and caring nature of parents' marital relation" (p<.005). Higher levels of monthly income was also associated with father's acceptance (p<.001) and mother acceptance at (p<.05).

Table 2:Relationship of Parental Acceptance with Self-Concept (n=152)

Scales	Pearson r (p) Father	Pearson r (p) Mother	F (p) Father	F (p) Mother
Satisfaction with life scale	-.222 (.006)	-.197 (.01)	7.8 (.006)	6 (.01)
General self efficacy scale	-.133 (.10)	-.267 (.001)	2.6 (.10)	11 (.001)
Six factor self concept scale	-.249 (.002)	-.321 (.000)	9.9 (.002)	17 (.000)

Discussion

Present study revealed that most of the participants had experienced acceptance from both father (60%) and mother (66%) as assessed by Adult Parental Acceptance and Rejection Questionnaires (APARQ). This was expected finding keeping in view the demographic characteristics of participants. Participants were either students or professionals recruited from four recognized educational institutions of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Most of them belonged to middle and upper middle socioeconomic class as indicated by their better family monthly incomes and higher educational levels. It is imperative to cross examine the psychological acceptance and rejection of adults belonging to different demographic strata of the society.

A higher percentage of participants reported acceptance from mother (66%) as compared to father (60%).This finding is also justified in cultural context of Pakistani society where children are more attached with their mothers . This is also due to busy schedules of fathers as they assume their primary responsibility towards their children is meeting their financial needs. In present study sample 63% of participants reported the nature of their parents' marital relation as supportive and caring, 72% reported that both parents are alive and 62% reported their parents are living together. All these variables were also significantly associated with parental acceptance at (p<.001 and p>.005) levels. These findings are inline with previous literature. [3]Rates of rejection experiences by male participants from their fathers (46%) were higher as compared to female participants (32%). This is supported by another study, done on Arab adolescents to measure the relationship of self concept and self esteem with parenting styles. Findings of different studies suggested that perceived parental support is the positive correlate of life satisfaction. [3,4] On the contrary Sche R et al take the effect of parental behaviour, on offsprings' satisfaction, as unpredictable. They consider interference by other factors, i.e., income, high education,etc. [5]

Analysis of participants' responses on items of Satisfaction with Life Scale showed that most of the participants showed moderate to higher levels of satisfaction with life. There could be some other factors which are contributing towards higher levels of satisfaction with life like income, high education etc.A major change (71%) in self-efficacy was attributed to rejection from mothers. Studies suggest that perceived affectionless control of parents for children and family climate accounted for less self-efficacy, low self-esteem and higher depression in children of undergraduates.[6, 7]

Significant positive relationship exists between the authoritative parenting style and the mental health of children. Among boys, the permissive parenting style was associated with negative attitudes towards parents, lower self-esteem and increased identity, anxiety, phobia, depressive, and conduct disorders. Findings showed that more accepting the participants perceived their mothers and fathers to be, the more likely the students were to hold positive self-concepts.[8]

Conclusion

It is imperative to cross examine the psychological acceptance and rejection of adults belonging to different demographic strata of the society.

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