

Parenting Styles Influence on Adolescent Children

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Abstract

This study examines parent/child relationships and their possible influence on esteem. The parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and unmatched, are assessed (by child report) and compared to levels of global and specific domains of self-esteem, to determine whether parenting style influences self-esteem in children. Eighty-four children aged 11-12 years of age; male and female were asked to complete three questionnaires. The questionnaires were: Child Report of Parental Behaviour Inventory to ascertain their parent's parenting style; Harter's (1985), Self-Perception Profile for Children (SPPC), to measure the child's self-esteem and a demographic; questionnaire. ANOVA and ANCOVA were used to assess the influence of parenting styles on global and specific domains of self-esteem. The results found significantly higher global, scholastic and physical self-esteem in children of parents practicing authoritative parenting style in comparison to authoritarian parenting styles. No significant results were found for permissive and unmatched parenting styles.

1. Introduction

Because of the complexity of the variables involved in this study i.e. self-esteem and parenting, the literature review firstly explores research on self-esteem and parenting separately, then combined, in order to provide a greater understanding to the background of the study. Therefore, information from the literature is provided in separate sections to explain what is meant by self-esteem, and its development and measurement. Likewise, literature on parenting background and specific styles of parenting are detailed and then links between parenting and self-esteem is discussed. A theoretical framework regarding self-esteem and parenting is also detailed separately. The concept of self-esteem is one that is difficult to clearly define. To some it is confidence in our ability to think; confidence in our ability to cope with basic challenges of life; confidence in our right to be successful and happy; feelings of being worthy, deserving, entitled to assert our needs and wants, achieve our values, and enjoy the benefits of our efforts (Hooks, 2003). Self-esteem encompasses all these characteristics. But it is most importantly a personal judgment of self and sense of worth primarily based upon externally imposed criteria (Alford, 1997). Externally imposed criteria include societal judgments or assumptions, family values, or perceived success and failures in various areas of life. Self-esteem is described as a personal evaluation that an individual makes of her or himself, their sense of their own worth, value, importance, or capabilities (Myers & Myers, 1992; Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 1978). It can encompass a positive or negative orientation toward oneself. Rosenberg (1965) described self-esteem as a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self. Self-esteem refers to an individual's sense of his or her value or worth (Huit, 2004), or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1993). Self-esteem is generally defined as "a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself" (Coopersmith, 1967). According to researches, family factors as one of the external factors influenced self-esteem. Therefore, the present study focused on parenting styles as an important external (family) factor. Darling and Steinberg (1993) conceptualized the

parenting styles as a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child, and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parents' behaviours are expressed. According to Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, and Darling (1992) there are three styles of parenting including: "acceptance-involvement", "psychological autonomy-granting" and "behavioral strictness supervision". Acceptance-involvement is based on one's perception of amount of paying attention and responsiveness of parents; these parents are warm, firm, involved, and sensitive to their children's changing needs, and set realistic standards and clear rules (Jaffe, 1998).

The research regarding the development of self-esteem has caused some confusion and is an area that is still being explored. Earlier thoughts about the development of self-esteem are included in the work of Cooley (1902), who was one of the leading writers on self-esteem development. He suggested that self-esteem development was based on a social support system, with significant others playing the major role by providing positive regard for the person. Accordingly, the individual internalizes the positive or negative feedback from significant others, which then provides the esteem for the self. While some studies found that parental control has no relationship (Gecas, 1971) or negative relationship (Grove, 1980) with self-esteem, other studies found that parental authority is positively related to self-esteem (Buri, et al., 1988; Buri, 1989). Namely, DeHeart, Pelham, & Tennen (2006) examined relationship between parenting style and implicit self-esteem. The results showed that people who reported that their parents engaged in more caring behaviors would have higher implicit self-esteem and people who reported that their parents were more overprotective than most would have lower implicit self-esteem. In addition, they found that different aspects of parenting are differentially related to implicit and explicit self-esteem. Also, Grove (1980) examined the relationship between parental behavior and children's self-esteem. Scholte et al., (2001) found that supportive parenting is positively related to self-esteem. Thus, self-esteem and parenting styles or parental behaviors are highly correlated. The present study examined the effect of parenting styles on self-esteem. The main question of the study was which one of the parenting styles predicts the self-esteem? Also, the effect of gender variable in this relationship was examined.

2. Methods

Participants Initially, 150 primary school children grades two (8 years old), three (9 years old), four (10 years old) and five (11 years old) different primary schools of Zahedan city and their mothers (n=150) entered the study. They filled in the self-esteem questionnaire and parenting style questionnaire, respectively.

There is very little research on the development of specific self-esteem areas such as scholastic, athletic, behavioural physical and social self-esteem domains. Scholastic and athletic domains are possibly more competence based, developing more through the feedback and experience the child has had within the domains. However, children are more likely to be stronger in some domains as a result of their global self-esteem. For instance, if they feel good about themselves they may do better socially and have a higher social self-esteem Riggio, Throckmorton and DePaola. (1990) explored social skills and self-esteem, finding that scores on general social self-esteem were significantly, positively correlated with general measures of self-esteem. • Based on their responses, the parents received a rating of between 0 and 120 points. The higher the

score, the more authoritative and authoritarian the parenting style, and the lower the score, the more permissive the parenting style. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as 82% for the entire Baumrind questionnaire and the questionnaire's reliability was reported at 81%, 86% and 78% for the permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles respectively, according to a study by Burri et al.

Self-esteem subscales in children participating in the study

Type of self-esteem	Mean	SD	Range
Public self-esteem (26 items)	15.3	2.5	8–21
Family self-esteem (8 items)	5.7	1.8	0–8
Educational self-esteem (8 items)	5.2	1.5	2–8
Social self-esteem (8 items)	6.1	1.5	2–8
Overall self-esteem (50 items)	32.5	5.6	16–43

• The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory • The self-esteem questionnaire contains 58 items that describe the feelings, opinions or reactions of an individual and it has two choices: like me (Yes) and unlike me (No). The items are divided between five subscales: public scale (26 items), social scale (8 items), family scale (8 items), school scale (8 items), and life scale (8 items). The scores from the five subscales and also the overall score enable identifying the context in which people have a positive image of themselves. The test is rated 0 and 1; a “yes” answer scores 1, and a “no” answer scores 0. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.88 was reported for the questionnaire .

3. Discussion

The results of this study support the general research pertaining to relationships between parenting style and self-esteem among adolescents (Growe, 1980; Felson & Zielinski, 1989; Buri et al., 1992; oh, 2004). Acceptance-involvement and psychological autonomy-granting styles were significant positive predictors of the self-esteem. The parents who behave with their children based on more acceptance and less control, develop high self-esteem in their children. They are warm, supportive, and involved to their children.

The relationship between parenting styles and self-esteem in children

Parenting style	Authoritarian		Authoritative		Permissive	
	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Correlation coefficient	p-value
Public	0.17-	0.1	0.3	0.003	0.1-	0.3
Family	0.05-	0.6	0.17	0.16	0.006	0.9
Educational	0.06	0.6	0.2	0.05	0.1	0.1
Social	0.1-	0.3	0.3	0.006	0.16	0.2
Overall	0.1-	0.3	0.3	0.002	0.04	0.7

Hence, these parents provided to high personal evaluation and sense of self-worth in them. On the other hand, self-esteem is described as a personal evaluation that an individual makes of her or himself, their sense of their own worth, value, importance, or capabilities (Myers & Myers, 1992; Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 1978). Thus, the positive effects acceptance-involvement and psychology autonomy-granting styles on self-esteem are conformed. These findings are agreement with the researches Buri, et al., 1988; Buri, 1989; Scholte et al.,

2001 and Oh, 2004. In relation to gender differences, the results showed there was a significant difference between means scores of girls and boys in behavioral strictness-supervision, so that the means scores of girls is higher than boys in this style.

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