

International Journal of Statistics and Applied Mathematics

ISSN: 2456-1452
Maths 2023; SP-8(5): 932-935
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<https://www.mathsjournal.com>
Received: 15-07-2023
Accepted: 19-09-2023

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A study of parenting methods and their effects on stress and self-esteem

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22271/math.2023.v8.i5Sm.1312>

Abstract

In this study, parents' parenting methods were identified, classified as OK or NOT-OK, and their stress levels and self-esteem were compared between the two parenting philosophies. The study's major goal was to measure parents' levels of stress and self-esteem and to compare these levels between parents with OK parenting methods and those with NOT-OK parenting styles. It was predicted that parents with OK parenting styles and those with NOT OK parenting styles would have the same levels of stress and self-esteem, and that these parents would also experience an inverse relationship between stress and self-esteem. The study took into account a sample size of 147 people, 75 of whom were men and 72 of whom were women, living in Kernal City and having adolescents. The Parenting Style Inventory by Purohit (2003), the Stress Questionnaire by Latha (1988), and the Self Esteem Inventory by Thomas & Rai (1985) were the questionnaires used for the study. The findings showed that stress and self-esteem varied between two different parenting approaches and that stress and self-esteem among parents had an inverse relationship.

Keywords: Parenting, self- esteem, stress, parents, adolescents

Introduction

The child's family is the child's primary developmental setting. Consequently, a family plays a significant influence in a child's growth. Parents are primarily responsible for raising their children. Thus, parenting is the skill of valuing a child throughout their entire existence. Depending on the situation, parents adopt a variety of parenting philosophies. We cannot categorically state that parents always adopt a specific style.

But regardless of the circumstance, every parent would adhere to a prevailing style. This prevalent parenting style may be brought on by certain individual characteristics, such as stress, self-esteem, personality, etc., or it may be brought on by certain general factors, such as occupation, age, gender, etc. Whatever the parenting approach, it does have a negative impact on the child's general development. The three parenting philosophies advocated by Baumarind (1961-1971) are authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. Parents often employ one of these philosophies.

Authoritarian parents place many restrictions on their children, demand tight conformity, hardly ever explain to their kids why they must follow all of these laws, and frequently resort to coercive, harsh methods to get their way.

Authoritative parents, on the other hand, are more flexible and tend to allow their kids a lot of freedom, but they are cautious to explain the rules they set and make sure the kids abide by them. Permissive parents are less strict and more lax in that they rarely impose strict rules on their kids' behavior and let them express their emotions and impulses freely. They also do not closely watch what their kids do. Later, Baumarind identified a different parenting technique known as indulgent parenting style, in which parents adopt a very relaxed and uncontrolled attitude toward their children and show the least amount of concern for them. With regard to parenting styles, there are numerous categories.

There are 12 different parenting styles, according to Transactional Analysis, including Supportive, Normative, Problem-Solving, Resilient, Innovative, Confronting, Task-Obsessive, Sulking, Aggressive, Bohemian, Rescuing, and Prescriptive.

The first six of these styles were classified as OK, and the remaining six as NOT-OK.

In terms of parenting, the manner in which parents raise their kids depends not only on the individual but also on psychological factors like stress, self-esteem, personality, and emotional stability as well as social factors like socioeconomic status and culture.

In a study on the influence of parents' self-esteem, mastery orientation, and social background on their parenting styles, Aunola *et al.* (1999) [2] discovered that while parents' low educational status was associated with authoritarian parenting, their low self-esteem and use of mastery-oriented strategies were associated with authoritative parenting and low parental stress. The majority of studies show that having high self-esteem is predicated on having positive thoughts about oneself, having realistic judgments of one's strengths and limitations, and having a propensity to prioritize one's strengths above one's weaknesses. In their study on the association between clinic mothers with behavior problems and non-clinic mothers' parenting practices, Sanders & Woolley (2005) [17] found that clinic mothers reported considerably poorer self-efficacy than non-clinic mothers. They discovered that self-efficacy measurements were strong predictors of mother discipline style across the entire group. According to Brown & McGill (1989) [4], both positive and negative stressful life events, such as marriage and promotion, have a negative impact on a person's health. This will undoubtedly have an effect on parenting. According to several studies (Goodman *et al.*, 1994; Gordon *et al.*, 1989; Murray *et al.*, 1993; Radke-Yarrow *et al.*, 1992) [7, 8, 14, 16], depressed mothers displayed more negative mood, were more critical, rejected, and expressed more negative affect toward their children. These parenting styles would be influenced by parenting life stress, social support, and cultural norms. Numerous studies have demonstrated that high levels of parenting stress have an impact on parenting effectiveness (Landry *et al.*, 2002; Byron, 2003) [10, 5]. Is linked to higher punitive parenting and less supportive parenting (Leinonen, 2002) [12]. According to Stratton (1990) [19], the different stressors, such as familial, interpersonal, and child stressors, appear to have the capacity to substantially alter parenting practices by making some parents more irritable, critical, and punitive.

India is a collectivist nation where parents are mostly responsible for their children. Children are undoubtedly impacted by the difficulties their parents experience. Therefore, it is crucial for a nation like India to research parenting styles, parental stress, and their self-esteem in order to benefit the next generation by providing appropriate training and behavior modification.

Hypothesis

1. There won't be a discernible difference between parenting styles that are OK and those that are NOT OK in terms of stress levels.
2. The degree of self-esteem will not significantly differ between parenting styles that are OK and those that are NOT OK.
3. Stress and self-esteem among parents will be negatively correlated.

Method

Convenience sampling was used to gather the data from Kernal for the study's sample, which was selected. There are

147 people in the sample, 75 men and 72 women. Fathers and mothers of teenagers made up the sampling.

For this investigation, three standardized questionnaires were used. Purohit's (2003) [15] Parenting Style Inventory was used to assess parenting style, which includes 12 parenting styles that are divided into OK and NOT OK styles, each with six styles (OK Style - supportive, normative, problem solving, resilient, confronting, and innovative; NOT OK Style - sulking, aggressive, bohemian, rescuing, Whitbeck *et al.*, 1992) [20]. Su (2006) [6] discovered that prescriptive and task obsessive behavior). The Stress Questionnaire by Latha (1988) [21], which consists of 52 statements, was used to determine the stress level. The Self-esteem Inventory developed by Thomas and Raj (1985) [22] was used to assess the parents' self-esteem, which consists of 20 statements. The data was analyzed using the Student 't' test and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Results and Discussion

Parents desired to bring their children with affection and love. However, due to time constraints and a lack of information, parents raise their children in their own way. Some parents want their children to be exceptionally brilliant, regardless of their children's intelligence, and hence demand harsh discipline. Some of them are overprotective of their children. They are not protecting and disciplining their children, but rather spoiling them. This variance in parenting style could be attributable to both external and internal reasons. External variables such as children's school environment, peer pressure, odd work hours, parental financial restrictions, and so on may be indirect causes of parental stress, while internal factors such as stress, self-esteem, personality, and emotional stability may be direct reasons. External factors such as children's school environment, peer pressure, unusual work hours, parental financial constraints, and so on may be indirect causes of parental stress, while internal factors such as stress, self-esteem, personality, and emotional stability may have a direct impact on parenting. However, if a person is internally stable, they may easily overcome the external problems.

Table 1: Shows the Mean, Standard Deviation, t- value of self-esteem level among OK and NOT- OK parenting styles.

Sr. No.	Group	N	Mean	SD	't' value
1.	Ok Style	73	28	6.24	10.83**
2.	Not ok style	74	40.3	8.16	

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 1 reveals that there is a substantial difference in the degree of stress between OK and NOT-OK parenting styles, with NOT-OK parents experiencing higher stress than OK parents. Parents' stress may be caused by personal issues such as low self-esteem, financial restraints, concerns about their children's future, and so on. Stress can also be caused by familial and social problems such as insecurity, a lack of social support, neglect by family members, and so on. This parental tension leads to poor treatment of the children by failing to provide proper love and affection. This finding is consistent with the findings of Maccoby and Martin (1983) [13], who discovered that uninvolved parents lack time and energy to spend with their children due to their own anxieties and issues. Stress is a multifaceted process that occurs as a result of events or situations in our environment known as Stressors. The vast range of physical and psychological

reactions that various people have to the same situation is an intriguing element of stress; some may regard an incident as distressing, whereas others simply accept it. Parents who are very stressed can be good parents if they know how to deal. Several studies have found that daily problems are a major source of stress (Kanner *et al.*, 1981; Lazarus *et al.*, 1985)^[23].^[1] The more stress people express as a result of daily annoyances, the worse their psychological well-being, which is definitely reflected in those around them. As a result, one of the elements determining parenting style is stress. Thus, hypothesis 1 is rejected, which asserts that there is no substantial difference in stress levels between OK and NOT OK parenting styles.

Table 2: Shows the Mean, Standard Deviation, t- value of self-esteem level among OK and NOT- OK parenting styles

Sr. No.	Group	N	Mean	SD	't' value
1.	Ok Style	73	68.9	10.03	16.73**
2.	Not ok style	74	39.3	7.18	

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 2 reveals that there is a substantial difference in self-esteem between the OK and NOT-OK parenting styles. Low self-esteem prevents parents from reacting to their children and, as a result, they fail to raise their children up on a positive note. This is corroborated by a study conducted by Aunola *et al* (1999)^[2], who discovered that parents' self-esteem and adoption of mastery oriented strategies were connected with authoritative (successful) parenting. Most people have a favorable opinion of them; they recognize that they are not perfect, but they conclude that their positive qualities outweigh their negative ones.

While having a positive self-image is generally advantageous, this is not always the case. Under most circumstances, people with high self-esteem regulate their own behavior better than people with low self-esteem. When the egos of people with low self-esteem are threatened, they may resort to ineffectual, self-defeating strategies, which is nothing but NOT OK parenting. In contrast, if persons with poor self-esteem are pushed around in life, it may fail to provide the benefits that it is normally linked with. Persons with low self-esteem are more prone to regard their behavior as situational, whereas persons with high self-esteem can engage in a wider range of coping activities (Smith, 1992)^[18]. Because persons with poor self-esteem are heavily dependent on their surroundings, they are more likely to display it to their family members, particularly their children. As a result, hypothesis 2 is rejected, which asserts that there will be no significant difference in the level of self-esteem of parents with OK and NOT OK parenting styles.

Table 3: Shows the correlation coefficient of self-esteem and stress of the parents

N	Variables	r
147	Self- esteem and Stress	-0.87**

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 3 displays the correlation coefficient for the relationship between stress and self-esteem, demonstrating that for parents, stress and self-esteem are inversely associated. Self-esteem is the regard or value we have for ourselves, and it is a complicated phenomenon. It includes how we feel about ourselves, our self-image, and what we believe we are and aren't capable of. If we define stress as "our reaction to encountering a situation that requires us to adapt further than

we believe we can currently cope with," it stands to reason that anything that raises the level of "what we believe we are capable of" will lower stress. When a result, when stress levels rise, self-esteem falls, and as stress levels fall, self-esteem rises. As a result, a stressed-out person develops low self-esteem, which causes them to adopt a NOT-OK parenting style, or vice versa. People who have low self-esteem tend to be externally focused and have a lower ability to cope with stress. They accuse and refuse to accept responsibility. They don't take care of themselves and are overly concerned with the views of others. A person with healthy self-esteem, on the other hand, is internally focused. However, having a strong self-esteem allows one to take care of themselves and assume responsibilities. They become independent of the good or poor opinions of others, and as a result, they are more capable of dealing with difficult situations. Self-esteem develops from inside.

High self-esteem may also lead to more active and effective coping as well as increased motivation in the face of stress (Abel, 1996)^[1]. Kreger (1995)^[9] discovered that stress was inversely associated to self-esteem, and that self-esteem may function similarly to attribution style in forecasting the consequences of stress, and that perceived stress may be more related to self-esteem than real stressfulness of a scenario. People with high self-esteem are more successful at managing with stress, thus they may not express their discomfort to others. It could also be because persons with low self-esteem may have weak social support systems as a result of their feelings of inadequacy and lack confidence, which influences low levels of self-esteem and may be associated with a higher perceived level of stress.

The way a parent thinks about himself/herself (his/her self-esteem) affects happiness and might make life more or less difficult for them and others. The way a person talks to themselves about their future and the future of their children, how they interpret things and remark on life within their brains, all have a big impact on their self-esteem. Because of their poor self-esteem, they stress themselves and express it to others, particularly their children, as demonstrated by the current study, which discovered an inverse relationship between stress and self-esteem among parents. Thus, hypothesis 3 is accepted in the current study, which predicts that there would be a negative relationship between stress and self-esteem among parents.

Conclusion

Parents want to shower their children with love and affection. However, due to financial constraints and a lack of information from the outside world, they adapt their parenting technique. Some parents want their children to be exceptionally brilliant, regardless of their children's intelligence; as a result, they impose harsh discipline, while some parents overprotect their children. Children are not protected and are spoiled when parents are overly protective and overly strict. First and first, it is critical to determine the elements that influence parenting, and in this study, a negative association between self-esteem and stress among parents was discovered. This suggests that parents should be advised in such a way that parental stress is reduced, so increasing the parents' self-esteem. Parents with high self-esteem are more likely to feel confident in their ability to raise their children in a better and more effective manner. This would have an effect on the children's conduct, either directly or indirectly. This study discovered a negative relationship between self-esteem and stress among parents, as well as a significant difference in

self-esteem and stress among parents who follow an OK parenting style against a NOT-OK parenting style.

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