

IMPACT OF FATHER PARENTING STYLES AND FATHER'S PERCEPTION ABOUT SPOUSE ON CHILDHOOD OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Association between father and father's spouse parenting dimensions and externalizing behavior in children was examined in the present study. It was hypothesized that father, and his spouse parenting styles and dimension as perceived by father, would predict externalizing behavior problem in children.

Place of the Study: Institute of Clinical Psychology, University of Karachi Pakistan, from March 2013 to Aug 2014.

Research Design: Correlational study

Sample and Method: Sample of 75 father and 75 children was collected from different areas of Karachi through purposive sampling strategy. The age range of the children in the sample was 5-12 years. Along with socio demographics, Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ Short Version; Robinson, Mandlco, Olsen, & Hart, 2001) and Devereux Scales of Mental Disorder (Naglieri, LeBuffe, Pfeiffer, 1994) were administered.

Results: Multiple regression analysis (backward selection method) and Pearson correlation were used to test hypotheses. Permissive father parenting was significantly correlated with externalizing problems i.e. conduct, and attention problem. However, authoritative and authoritarian parenting (father and father's spouse both) were not associated with externalizing behavioral problems. As far as father perception about spouse permissive parenting is concerned it is significantly correlated with one aspect of externalizing (conduct) problem. Moreover, Regression analysis of dimensions reveals that father connection dimension and physical coercion are significant predictors of conduct. Verbal hostility dimension has inverse relation with attention problem and conduct, either father or father spouse is concerned. Father spouse permissive style is highly influential in developing conduct, and non-reasoning / punitive is significant predictor of externalizing problems.

Keywords: Father and Spouse Parenting; Internalizing; Externalizing behaviors

INTRODUCTION

Parents are the children's first teacher during the growth and developmental period. Children's personality as well as mental health development is directly affected by the parent's attitude towards their manners and behavior (Wang, & Yuan, 2008; Bi, Wang, Yang, & Wang, 2007). The responsibility of the father is to earn livelihood and the mother's core responsibility is to nurture the child while taking care of the responsibilities related to the household chores. This does not mean that father is free from behavioral training of the child and has no part to play in raising the child. It is not the duty of the mother alone to raise the child but father holds a more or less equal responsibility in the upbringing of the children. Traditional societies still continue to hold the opinion that a father's sole responsibility is to earn for the family and the mother needs to take care of rearing the children. In the contemporary society, there has been some shift in this concept as both parents are deemed to have responsibility towards guiding their children and helping them in becoming well-adjusted adults (Milkie, Bianchi, Mattingly, & Robinson, 2002).

Quality of relationship of father with the mother of the child is one of the important, direct and influential factors on the child (Yeung, Duncan, & Hill, 2000). The cultural differences between Asian and Western societies lead to differences in the role played by the extended family in the socialization of the child. In Pakistan, the extended family influences the child's behavior and personality. On the other hand, in regions such as America or Europe parents hold central position in the child rearing. Cultural images of what make a good father have shifted significantly over recent generations, from the moral teacher of the 20th to the breadwinner and sex role model of the mid-20th century to the nurturing and involved father that began to emerge in the 1970 and continues today (Flood, 2003; Lamb, 2010). Father inclination defends children from engaging in aberrant behavior (Flouri, 2005). Zimmerman and colleagues (2000) concluded one of his research works that adolescents show less problematic behavior if father is supportive in their school related activities. Quality of relationship with children is also associated with low frequency of externalizing and internalizing behaviors (Flouri, & Buchanan, 2002; King, & Sobolewski, 2006).

In addition when father have a positive relationship with their children, the negative effect of having a father with an authoritarian or permissive

parenting styles on increased risk of engaging in delinquent activity and substance use is reduced (Bronte-Tinkew, Moore & Carrano, 2006). Even good relationships with custodial and step father are good predictor of prosocial outcomes in children (White & Gilbreth, 2001). Children living without father are on average, more likely to experience behavioral problems (Horn & Sylvester, 2002).

From a theoretical perspective, individual psychology's parenting model based on Adlerian theory, suggests that an autocratic parenting style may not be effective because it implies a superior/inferior relationship between parent and child this approach to child rearing fails to produce responsibility in children. Furthermore permissive parenting is potentially harmful for children because it fails to give them a sense of personal achievement. A democratic parenting style was suggested as the most ideal for psychological adjustment because behavioral compliance and psychological autonomy are viewed as interdependent objectives (Gfroerer, Kern, & Curlette, 2004). Many studies on parenting practices and childhood outcome have built upon Baumrind's 1971 seminal classification of parenting style which originally suggested three different, styles most present in family atmosphere. Authoritative parenting marked by patterns of warmth, non-punitive discipline and consistency, was found to be associated the presence of several adaptive behaviors in children, in comparison to authoritarian styles marked by pattern of low warmth, harsh discipline and inconsistency and permissive style discern able by low levels of supervision (Maccoby, & Martin, 1983).

The robust influence of punitive and unpredictable child rearing through deficient emotional warmth predict negative outcome in children like conduct. Another, point of view that might be crucial to the later social problem of the child is the attachment of those children who are institutionalized are less likely to develop a healthy attachment with their parent consequently the child develop disruptive behaviors. A study examined that ambivalent (undecided) and controlling attachment is the baseline of the cause of externalizing problem (Sclafani, 2004). Moreover, disorganized attachment may also be the cause of externalizing problems among children (Scott, Briskman, Woolgar, Humayun, & O'Connor, 2011).

In early childhood behavioral difficulties are quite common, many of children will mature yet few will continue till to have considerable challenges. Regrettably, much less is identified about which children will continue

displaying difficulties, making it difficult to intervene before maladaptive behavior becomes entrenched. A number of parenting and parent's characteristics (ineffective discipline, maternal depression, parenting stress, and limited social support) have consistently been found to be associated with externalizing behavior in young children.

Many researchers have identified child, parent, parent child relationship factors that are related to the development of externalizing behaviors (Campbell, Shaw, & Gilliom, 2000). Parenting behaviors are affected by the child characteristics such as difficult temperament and negative emotionality (Owens, & Shaw, 2003). Plenty of work has been done to observe that boys are at greater risk to develop behavioral issues as compare to the girls. However, more boys than girls have behavioral difficulties in elementary school and beyond, there are still a considerable number of girls who show consistently high levels of externalizing behavior and similar negative outcomes as boys (Schaeffer, Petras, Ialongo, Masyn, Hubbard, Poduska, & Kellam, 2006). Harsh parenting and low parenting warmth predict behavior in girls (Miller, Loeber, & Hipwell, 2009). Parenting behaviors can function as a risk factor, but also protective factor in the development of behavioral problems in children. Theoretical model suggests that reciprocal relationship in which child behaviors actively shape parenting behaviors as well as other way around (Burke, Pardini, & Loeber, 2008). Several studies have indicate that specific parenting behaviors, such as inconsistent or harsh discipline love withdrawal, guilt induction (Barber, Stolz, & Olsen, 2005) and limited positive involvement (Kawabata et al., 2011) are the risk factors for the development and maintenance of externalizing behaviors on children. Positive parenting behaviors, parental sensitivity, acceptance may protect children from developing negative behavior out comes (Schaeffer et al., 2006). One of the main theoretical mechanisms under lying parenting behaviors and externalizing behavior problem is the coercion theory (Patterson, 1982). The central idea is that in a coercive cycle, aversive child behaviors reciprocally influence parenting behaviors in which negative reinforcement results in the maintenance of undesirable behaviors in both child and parent (Reid, Patterson, & Snyder, 2002). Researchers have found that parenting practice aggravate the behavioral problem of a hyper active child (Chronis et al., 2003). As this disorder has its theoretical background with regard to its origin which is considered as a neurological problem. There is only preliminary evidence to support the theory of genes causing ADHD (Nigg, 2006). It is documented that family background, misbehavior on the part of parent and caregiver provide an opportunity to the child to learn aggression or negative behaviors in response (Chao, 2001).

Several studies have found the genetic component of this disorder, but how the genetic is involved is still a question mark (Freitag, Rohde, Lempp, & Romanos, 2010). In behavioral management of ADHD children parents have their significant role (Barkley, 2000) thus parents are the critical part of treatment for these children. The research background is quiet strong with reference to psychological problems of child and the impact of parenting styles (Laskey, & Cartwright-Hatton, 2009). Alizadeh and Andries (2002) figure out the significance between parenting and ADHD. It was also seen that authoritarian parents have more ADHD child than non-authoritarian parents (Alizadeh, & Andries, 2002). Whether they are authoritative, authoritarian and permissive, parents differ in the way that they discipline children and manage child behaviors in the home. Researches indicated that certain parenting practices are adequate than others.

Rationale of the study

Childhood behavioral problems and high level of antisocial behaviors are the one of the best predictor of future conduct problem (Miller-Lewis et al., 2006). Variety of later life difficulties are associated with childhood negative outcome. Regrettably once children have acquired pattern of serious externalizing behavior; it is hard to transform their routes. Intervention design to reduce problem behavior in older children and adolescents have had limited success especially when children come from socio-economically disadvantaged group (Kazdin, 1995). Available literature on parenting, behavioral out comes and other factors effect on our children and adolescents observed as well (Anjum, & Malik, 2010; Jabeen, Haque, & Riaz, 2013). Further the combined and separate factors of parenting are assessed in Pakistan (Ejaz, & Mehmood, 2009) but only father and his perception about his spouse parenting; its link with childhood pathology is not documented yet. On the basis of available literature the aim of the research was built to assess the father parenting and his perception about spouse, and how the discrepancy between self and perception about spouse affect the child externalizing behavioral problems. Further it was also important to investigate the unique contribution of father parenting dimensions and its impact on externalizing behaviors in Pakistan. This might be a very first study in this regard to assess father as well as father perception about his spouse parenting styles.

Hypotheses

1. Parenting styles of father (Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive) will predict externalizing behavior problems in their children
2. Father's spouse parenting styles as perceived by father (Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive) will predict externalizing behavior problems in their children.

METHOD

Participants

A sample of 75 fathers was selected from different areas of Karachi, Pakistan during the period of August 2013 to July 2014. The age range of the child is between 5-12 years old (mean age of the child is 8.58, SD 2.175). The mean age of father and spouse are 40.84, standard deviation 7.059 and mean 34.97 and standard deviation 5.544 respectively. Parents belong to middle socioeconomic status that was determined by house and expenditure survey of statistics Islamabad. The minimum education level of the fathers was intermediate. The basic sample selection criteria were based on the age of the child that was range between 5-12 years which is considered as middle childhood. Only those father and children were selected who never been diagnosed with any psychological problem and has no physical disability.

Measures

Devereux Scales of Mental Disorders (DSMD)

DSMD (Naglieri, LeBuffe, Pfeiffer, 1994) is consisted of 101 items and it is a parent rating scale of children aged 5-12. For taking response on these 101 items there are five options ranging from Never, to Very frequently for the behaviors that occurred in the past four weeks. This scale has three main categories to assess the disorders in children. Externalizing (conduct and delinquency scales) measures behaviors that involve conflicts between an individual and his or her environment. Internalizing (Depression and Anxiety scales) measure behaviors that reflect individual's state of psychological wellbeing, in current study researcher have used only the scores of externalizing

behaviors. In Critical pathology (autism and acute problems scales) children manifest severe disturbance in behavior.

The scale's internal reliability co-efficient range from a low of .97 to a high of .98. The internal reliability co-efficient for the externalizing, internalizing and critical pathology composites scores also ranging from low of .88 (critical pathology composite parent rating for females aged 5-12). The t-test reliability co-efficient for children age 5-12, the following median corrected test, retest co-efficient were obtained .91 for the six scales, .95 for the three composites and .96 for the total scores.

Parenting Styles & Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ Short Version; Robinson et al., 2001)

Parenting styles and dimensions scale, an abbreviated form consisted of 32 items was administered for self and spouse reported practices for parents of children age 5-12 years old. It is a five point rating likert scale anchored by 1=Never to 5=Always. PSDQ short version consisted on three main domains 1) Authoritative 2) Authoritarian 3) permissive parenting styles. First two domains have further three subdivisions are called dimensions of parenting that gives us immense knowledge about single parenting style, the authoritative parenting have connection dimensions, Regulation dimension, and Autonomy granting, while the authoritarian parenting have physical coercion, verbal hostility, and Non Reasoning / Punitive Dimensions. The dimension introduced in Permissive parenting is Indulgent Dimension. The authoritative, authoritarian and permissive subscales have 15, 12 and 5 items respectively. Scores were computed for each subscale by calculating the mean of all items per subscale. The internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach alpha) of current study for father and fathers spouse is .71 (authoritative), .91(authoritarian) .79 (permissive), .73 (authoritative), .81 (authoritarian) and .75 (permissive) respectively.

Procedure

The very first step was taken in this regard was the approval of the topic by the Board of Advanced Studies and Research (BASR) University of Karachi, Pakistan. Afterwards, researcher bought Devereux Behavior Scales of Mental Disorders from one of Pearson's Franchise in Asia, India. Permission was taken from the author of parenting styles and dimensions questionnaire. After taking these initial steps, researcher, took permission from the authorities of the

residential colonies, participants were approached through personal references like colleagues and friends. The researcher went door to door and inquires about the child age and also the availability of at least one parent in house for the completion of forms. Those who showed willingness to give information about their child behavior and their rearing styles were introduced about the topic and the purpose of the research. It was informed to them how it would be helpful in the future for the parents and their children in our culture. The predetermined criterion for inclusion and exclusion was also considered while taking consent and other information. Participants were informed to the consent containing information regarding the purpose of the research including the term of confidentiality and their right to withdraw from the research at any time. Subsequently, the researcher asked them to fill the given 1) Demographic sheet 2) Devereux Scales of Mental Disorders 3) Parenting Styles & Dimension Questionnaire. Participants were informed to their right to withdraw from the research at any point and time. They were ensured regarding confidentiality of their information. Researcher approached the participants on self-references however, their participation was on volunteer basis. Volunteering cooperation of participants was acknowledged and appreciated.

Data Analyses

Data analysis were performed using descriptive (frequency, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Correlation and backward regression analysis). The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was employed as the correlation measure in this study, with a significance level of .05 or lower. The backward selection method of multiple regressions was used to investigate the unique and combine contribution of explanatory variables (parenting styles) on the criteria variable i.e. externalizing behavior problems. In regression analysis all independent variables were included in model to check the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

The backward selection method begin with a model that include all the independent variables that modeler wants to consider. Then it attempts to delete one variable at a time by determining whether the least significant variable currently in the model can be removed because it has the least partial correlation. Once variable is removed from the model it cannot be re-enter at subsequent steps. Moreover, last model summary of significant covariates is included in the tables of regression analysis to check the predictive relation between dependent and independent variables.

RESULTS

Table1

Descriptive statistics of socio-demographic variables

Demographic	Mean Age	Standard Deviation
Child Age	8.58	2.175
Father Spouse Age (Mother)	34.97	5.544
Father Age	40.84	7.059
Socioeconomic Status	Frequency	Percentage
Middle Lower	46	30.7
Middle/Middle	73	48.7
Middle Upper	31	20.7
Father Spouse Education level(Mother)		
Intermediate	73	48.7
Graduation	29	19.3
Master	32	21.3
Post master	16	10.7
Father Education Level		
Intermediate	37	19.3
Graduation	47	31.3
Master	57	38.0
Post master	17	11.3
Family System		
Joint	62	41.3
Nuclear	88	58.7
Father Spouse Working Status(Mother)		
House Wife	111	74.0
Working	39	26.0
Father working Status		
Service/Job	96	64.0
Business	46	30.7
Labor	8	5.3
Psychological problems in family		
Yes	18	12.0
No	132	88.0

Table 2

Correlations between Father and Father spouse parenting styles and externalizing behavior

Parenting Styles		Externalizing	
		Conduct	Attention
Father	Authoritative	.17	.14
	Authoritarian	.11	.13
	Permissive	.32**	.27*
Father Spouse	Authoritative	.13	.11
	Authoritarian	-.06	-.03
	Permissive	.26*	.21

According to the results presented in Table-1 permissive father parenting was significantly correlated with externalizing problems i.e. conduct ($p < .01$) and attention problem ($p < .05$). However, authoritative and authoritarian parenting (father and father spouse both) was not associated with externalizing behavioral problems. Father spouse permissive parenting is concerned it is significantly correlated with one aspect of externalizing i.e. conduct ($p < .05$) problem.

Table 3

Effect of Dimensions of Father Parenting Styles on Externalizing Behavioral problems (Conduct and Attention)

Conduct	B	S.E	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	-.18	.10	-1.86	.06
Father connection Dimension	.38	.12	3.04	.00
Father Physical Coercion Dimension	.35	.38	2.81	.00
Attention	-.05	.10	-.55	.58
(Constant)	-.05	.10	-.55	.58
Father Physical Coercion Dimension	.37	.20	1.87	.06
Father Verbal Hostility Dimension	-.45	.19	-2.33	.02
Father Non- Reasoning/Punitive	.23	.13	1.79	.07
Father Indulgent	.18	.11	1.69	.09

Table shows dimensional analysis of father parenting styles connection dimension (sub domain of Authoritative parenting) and physical coercion (sub domain of authoritarian parenting styles) are significant predictor of conduct ($p < .01$). The *B* value of both these dimensions is positive (.38 & .35

respectively) indicates that as the scores of father connection dimension and physical coercion dimension increase one time it will increase the conduct score B times. However, rest of the dimension of father parenting included in the current model has no significant impact individually on conduct, but they have importance in prediction of conduct score.

Another separate model was run to evaluate the predictive relation between father parenting dimensions and attention problem of the child. Researcher observed regarding father parenting dimension only verbal hostility dimension has inverse relation with attention problem at ($p < .05$). The negative value of B (-.45) reveal that as the verbal hostility in father increased it decreased the attention problem in the child.

Table 4

Effect of Father-Spouse Parenting Styles on Externalizing Behavioral problems (Conduct and Attention)

Conduct	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>
(Constant)	-.18	.10	-1.86	.06
Father Spouse Verbal Hostility Dimension	-.21	.10	-2.05	.04
Father Spouse Permissive	.28	.10	2.71	.00
Attention				
(Constant)	-.05	.10	-.55	.58
Father Spouse Verbal Hostility Dimension	-.26	.11	-2.34	.01
Father Non- Reasoning/Punitive	.28	.11	2.60	.01
Father Permissive	.27	.10	2.51	.01

Two separate backward regression models were run to find out significance of spousal parenting on externalizing behavioral problems (conduct & attention problem). Model results shows that Father spouse permissive styles is highly influential in developing conduct at ($p < .01$) B value (.28) indicates that as the permissive practice of the father spouse increase the chance of conduct problem would increased as per marginal effect of permissive style. On the other hand father spouse verbal hostility dimension is negatively influencing the conduct problem ($p < .05$). The regression coefficient value, -.21 of verbal hostility representing that as verbal hostility score increases by one unit it would lessen the child conduct score -.21 times, keeping the other factors fixed. The rest of the model express father spouse parenting effect on attention problem from all the dimensions included in the model only the dimensions of authoritarian and

permissive parenting are significantly affecting the attention problem in children. Father spouse non-reasoning / punitive and permissive parenting are significantly influencing at ($p < .05$) with B value (.28 and .27) respectively indicating its real impact on the child pathology. While father spouse verbal hostility is negatively affecting ($p < .05$) the scores of pathology in child, in other word as the verbal hostility is on the mark there must be less ($B = -.26$) attention problem in children.

DISCUSSION

Parenting is thought to be always putting effort to bring good future out comes in their off spring. But it may contaminate the behavior when parents forget to practice in way to bring up their children a civilized citizens due to many different factors (their personality, parent's own parenting, parents psychological difficulties etc.); Consequently it contribute to develop psychopathology in children.

Parenting practicing is one of the major factors of developing externalizing behavioral problems in children. A family who faces difficulties in how to discipline their children leads to externalizing behaviors (Sclafani, 2004). In present study our first hypothesis that authoritative parenting lead to no significant externalizing problem is evident through the findings in (Table 2) and it is consistent with previous literature on parenting and externalizing behavioral issues in children (Bradley, & Corwyn, 2008). It was also assumed that consistent authoritarian parenting would also be not significantly related with externalizing behavior.

In current study permissive parenting has highly correlated with externalizing problem Table 1 (conduct and attention problem). Permissive parents tend to encourage the child to make independent choices and allow unrestricted behavior. They avoid setting rules and disciplining their children for fear of disrupting the natural development of child (Sclafni, 2004). On the other hand literature highlights that conflicting environment in the family increase the susceptibility of the aggression and non-compliance in children (Ramos, Guerin, Gottfried, Bathurst, & Oliver, 2005). This is a common observation during clinical practice in the Pakistani middle class parents they use to set no boundary in order to identify with elite class where restriction are restricted and most western and American values are followed in life styles. Parents most of the time busy in attending and arranging get together to enjoy their life. They preferred to spent money on children rather quality of time to listen their children's problems,

understand difficulties faced by them. This ambivalence results in severe pathology in children (Sclafani, 2004).

Cultural values are much important. Unfortunately people of Pakistan inherited having two cultures one is by region and the other is by religion. Regional culture is more about Indian whereas religion is Islam or Arab culture. Muslim parents (authoritarian parents) have strong belief that they would be rewarded by Allah Almighty when they brought up their children according to the teachings of Prophet (PBUH). That is giving them quality time, talk to them nicely, respect them and nourish them with good food to make them good citizen. The industrial life style makes the parents so busy in earning more and more money and they forget the actual responsibility being a parent. It is obvious that Pakistani people are in the period of cultural transition and they were already confused between the two, the region and religion. But now there are western and American trends that are making them more muddled, what to follow and what not to follow.

Additionally, regression model results reveal predictive relation among different dimension of father parenting styles and childhood psychopathology i.e. conduct and attention problem. In Table 3 father physical coercion that is highly critical in nature is predicting conduct problem consistent with Sharma and Sandhu (2006). However, father physical coercion, non-reasoning / punitive and permissive parenting is affecting the attention scores but not significant though it is not significant but consistent with previous findings (Daniels, 2009). Similar findings were observed by Sharma and Sandhu (2006) as rules are always enforced in authoritarian parenting whereas permissive parents are too lenient to set boundaries. According to family system theory these both styles produce negativity in children as too lenient and too rigid are extreme poles in setting limits and boundaries (Sharf, 2012). But verbal hostility dimension is significantly and negatively predicting attention problem. Table 4 shows that father's spouse verbal hostility and permissive patterns as perceived by father are related to externalizing expression more towards conduct. However, verbal hostility of father spouse negatively affecting the attention problem, yet father spouse permissive and non-reasoning/punitive are positively contributing in development of attention problem the other aspect of externalizing pathology. Such type of parental behaviors induces frustration intolerance in children; create negative emotions that result in aggressive and delinquent behaviors. Negative emotions may increase misattribution of hostile intent and distortion in social information processing. Regression analyses support the social information and

coercion model like verbal hostility, non-reasoning/punitive dimensions significantly externalizing behaviors (Crick, & Dodge, 1994; Patterson, 1982).

Conclusion

It is concluded on the basis of analyses of the data lose boundaries or indulgent, physical coercion and non-reasoning/punitive parenting are vulnerable to permute externalizing patterns in children. Conclusion from the present study is based exclusively on the parents biased response where social desirability is utmost rather the actual discrepancies in children and parenting behaviors which are the cause of behavioral disturbances in children. There is no other measure used to recheck response bias. Issues of confidentiality is prevailing because of perceived stigma with psychological nature problems, parents restrict their actual response as their children may not be stigmatized.

Limitations and Recommendations

Sample size and no control over response bias are the basic limitation of the present research. There are many other factor that have their contribution like parenting of only child, parenting of only girls and only boys how do they differ with reference to gender in patriarchal society where son is always stays up. There is also need to find association between consistencies and inconsistencies between father self and his perception about his spouse behavior with children as a mother parent. How this inconsistency effect the children development and their emotional problems. There must be community based seminars and workshops to educate the parents regarding outcomes of their styles that they are consistently using to bring up their children.

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