

IMPACT OF PARENTAL PERSONALITY TRAITS ON PARENTING PATTERNS AND PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Present study intended to investigate the impact of parental personality traits on parenting patterns and parent child-relationships in Pakistan.

Methods and Materials: This study included 342 parents aged between 31 and 57 years, with 159 fathers and 183 mothers, who were selected through purposive convenient sampling from different cities of Punjab, Pakistan. Parents having children of ages 3-14 years were selected as per requirement of the (PCRI) scale. In the present study we have demonstrated, the two Scales Neo-FFI Scale and PCRI scales to test the hypotheses. It was hypothesized that parental personality traits including openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism would predict parent child relationship i.e. parental support, satisfaction, communication, involvement and autonomy.

Findings: The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was estimated for both the scale demonstrated reliable estimates for both scales. From the study through multiple regression analyses it is observed that among the predictors, openness to experience was significant positive predictor of parental support; agreeableness was significant positive predictor of satisfaction, and openness to experience and extraversion were significant positive predictors of communication.

Implications: This study will be helpful for school and family counselors in understanding and dealing with issues related to parents and children.

Keywords: PCRI; Parenting behavior; big five personality traits; Child psychology; parent-child relationship

INTRODUCTION

Positive parenting is a foundation stone that builds the future of child, future of culture and future of society. Specific parenting patterns that develop feelings of positive attachment among children, inspire them to develop strong social feelings, and help them to build their personality are crucial. Children's personality is a reflection of parents' personality because when upbringing a child parents impart their traits in children directly or indirectly (Cunningham, & Thornton, 2006; Hair, Moore, Hadley, Kaye, Day, & Orthner, 2009). In line with a contextual approach, the life span perspective of human development has taken into account socio-economic, political, and historical changes and their effects the development of the individual persons and their relations in the family (Amato, 2005; Crocket & Silbereisen, 2000; Elder, van Nguyen, & Caspi, 1985).

Social and economic changes have had considerable impact on intergenerational relations including vertical or horizontal economic transfers and investments the relationship quality, the continuity or discontinuity of intergenerational relations over time, similarities and differences between the generation with respect to values and mutual perceptions between generations, intergenerational solidarity and support, including grandparents and grandchildren (Gerard, Krishnakumar, & Buehler, 2006; King & Elder, 1997; Kohli&Szydlik, 2000)

According to personality theory proposed by Rohner (2007), personality, aptitude and readiness to respond (emotion, cognition, perception and motivation) and the actual response (overt behavior) in various real life situations or contexts are defined. In Pakistan, few researches have been conducted in past decades which measured parent-child relationships directly or indirectly. Thus, in order to justify those variables which were ignored in former studies, efforts in the present study were engrossed on determining the parental personality traits that affects the positive parenting. Moreover, parental personality traits significantly influence the mental health of children (Abester, Khanjani, Nosratabad, &Beyrami, 2012). Cross-cultural studies reveal the heterogeneity of that occurred between the relationship of parents and their children in specified and different ages, enlightening similarities, and inconsistency across philosophies. So far, organized comparative studies on the life course in various

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cultural contexts are very rare to be seen and not even most preferred (Trommsdorff, 2002).

In all cultures, parenting goals and aims are universal and same as they are general and they should be fulfilled by all the parents. Many psychologists show their own interest in parent-child relationship study beyond their progressive and developing stage (Amato, 2005). Bi-directional parenting depends on the cultural situation which also explains the attainable parent-child relation (Hastings, Vyncke, Sullivan, McShane, Benigbui, & Utendale, 2006). Literature review reveals that Mother's authoritative and authoritarian style is a significant predictor of behavior disorders of childhood (Loona & Kamal, 2012). Moreover, most of all the parenting beliefs and behavior seems necessary to be integrated. In all of these, the bi-directionality is also being involved as this has been really playing an importance in the parent-child relationship (Gerard, Krishnakumar, & Buehler, 2006). Additionally, a subsidiary linkage among parental personality and personality of future adolescents through positive parenting was observed by researchers. The findings confirm that role of positive parents is substantial in the development of personality traits among adolescents in order to endorse competence and individual well-being across the life span (Belsky & Barends, 2002; Schofield, Conger, Donnellan, Jochem, Widaman, & Conger, 2012).

More specifically researches conducted by (Belsky & Barends, 2002; Belsky, Crnic & Woodworth, 1995; Metsapelto & Pulkkinen, 2002) revealed that parents with high scores on extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness displayed more positive, supportive and responsive parenting and less negative controlling parenting. While parents scoring low on agreeableness and openness had more tendency for negative effect and were more power assertive and less nurturing. Whereas, neuroticism was associated with less active, less sensitive and less stimulant parenting (Belsky, et al., 1995). The negative association between Agreeableness and Over-reactivity points that hostile interchanges occur more in clinical families compared to nonclinical families. Not previous researches about this negative relationship. Parent personality contributed directly to children's behavior problems. Significantly negative effects were found for Emotional Stability and Conscientiousness. Autonomy was positively related to externalising behaviors (Prinzie et al., 2005)

METHOD

The study has been undertaken to study the relationship between parental personality and parent-child relational problems in parents of Punjab, Pakistan. In the light of the previous research findings, following hypotheses were formulated.

Present study hypothesized that (1) there would be a relationship between parental personality traits and parent-child relationship, (2) openness to experience in parents would predict parental support, satisfaction, communication, involvement and autonomy, (3) conscientiousness in parents would predict parental support, satisfaction, communication, involvement and autonomy, (4) extraversion in parents would predict parental support, satisfaction, communication, involvement and autonomy, (5) agreeableness in parents would predict parental support, satisfaction, communication, involvement and autonomy, and (6) neuroticism in parents would predict parental support, satisfaction, communication, involvement and autonomy.

Participants

Participants for the study included 342 parents with fathers (n = 159) and mothers (n = 183). The sample was selected through purposive convenient sampling from Sargodha, Lahore, Faisalabad and Khushab cities. Parents having children of ages 3-14 years were selected as per requirement of the (PCRI) scale. The age range of parents was 31 to 57 years (M = 41.40, SD = 8.19).

Measures

Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI) is questionnaire by Gerard (1994). Parent-Child Relationship Inventory assesses parent-child relationship problems. PCRI is a parent self-report scale that measures parenting skills and attitudes toward parenting and towards their children. It has 78 items measured on 4-point Likert scale. The inventory has seven content scales comprised of 73 items out of which 26 items are positively worded, and 47 items are negatively worded.

Parental Support scale (SUP) consists of 9 items which measure the level of social and emotional support a parent receives. Satisfaction with Parenting scale (SAT) consists of 10 items measures the level of pleasure and fulfillment individual feels for being a parent. Involvement scale (INV) consists of 14 items which measure parental interaction with his or her child. Communication scale

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(COM) consists of 9 items which measure parent's perception of effective communication with his / her child. Limit Setting scale (LIM) consists of 12 items which focus on parent's experience in disciplining a child. Autonomy scale (AUT) consists of 10 items focusing on parent's ability to develop independence in child. Role Orientation scale (ROL) consists of 9 items indicating parent's perception of gender roles in parenting. High scores on inventory indicate positive parenting.

It has two protocol validity scales. Social desirability scale (SOC) consists of five negative items indicating unrealistically good parent-child relationships. Inconsistency subscale (INC) consists of 10 pairs of items which indicate inattentive and random responses on a scale.

A study reported internal consistencies ranging from .61 to .80 (median=.77) on a sample of heroin-addicted mothers (Suchman, McMahon, & Luthar, 2004). Similarly, in another study conducted on ethnically diverse mothers with lower socio-economic status PCRI carried good internal consistency specifically of limit setting scale (.80) as reported by Raver (2003). Authors Suchman and Luthar (2000) reported PCRI alphas as follows: Limit Setting (.85), Involvement (.81), Communication (.74), Autonomy (.67) on a diverse sample of addicted and non-addicted mothers.

The NEO Five-Factor Inventory-3 is a 60-item instrument that assesses the five factors. Items are measured on 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 to 4. Neo-FFI-3 has five subscales: Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (McCrae, & Costa, 2004).

Results of 20 studies revealed following alpha scores: Neuroticism, .83, Extraversion .75, Openness to experience, .65, Agreeableness .67, and Conscientiousness, .80 (Hull, Beaujean, Worrell & Verdisco, 2010).

Procedure

Participants of the study were selected from 24 schools of Sargodha, Lahore, Faisalabad and Khushab. Institutional approval has been taken for data collection in the form of Questionnaire from parents. Parents having children between 3 to 14 years were contacted through administrative authorities of schools. A written informed consent was taken from each participant. Scales were administered in group settings to save the time of parents. Testing booklets were distributed to each participant, and instructions about each scale were explained. Participants were requested to share their real information. After

administration of scales, parents were thanked for their cooperation. Data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 22.

RESULTS

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Reliabilities for Neo-FFI and PCRI (N = 342).

| Scales | Subscales | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | α | Range | | Skewness |
|---------|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| | | | | | Potential | Actual | |
| PCRI | Support | 24.97 | 5.63 | .46 | 1-4 | 1.10-1.42 | .20 |
| | Satisfaction | 23.56 | 5.27 | .43 | 1-4 | 1.31-1.42 | -.08 |
| | Involvement | 40.90 | 9.32 | .65 | 1-4 | 1.13-2.47 | .47 |
| | Communication | 27.00 | 7.25 | .89 | 1-4 | 1.08-1.56 | -.63 |
| | Limit setting | 29.91 | 5.81 | .61 | 1-4 | 1.19-1.51 | 1.65 |
| | Autonomy | 22.75 | 7.03 | .81 | 1-4 | 1.15-2.48 | 1.35 |
| | Role orientation | 22.68 | 5.37 | .80 | 1-4 | 1.23-1.62 | 1.45 |
| Neo-FFI | Total | 210.01 | 30.31 | .93 | 1-4 | 1.00-1.54 | 1.37 |
| | Openness | 41.66 | 5.76 | .36 | 0-4 | 1.76-1.15 | -.15 |
| | Conscientiousness | 43.45 | 5.96 | .56 | 0-4 | .94-2.14 | -.55 |
| | Extraversion | 40.67 | 6.38 | .50 | 0-4 | .93-1.24 | -.02 |
| | Agreeableness | 37.47 | 6.16 | .50 | 0-4 | 1.31-2.42 | .57 |
| | Neuroticism | 34.72 | 6.84 | .48 | 0-4 | .98-1.23 | .27 |
| | Total | 197.96 | 22.68 | .80 | 0-4 | .84-3.01 | .29 |

Note. Standard error for PCRI is .13 and for Neo-FFI is .27

The results in Table 1 demonstrates that main scales and subscales showed high alpha reliabilities. Neo Five Factor Personality Inventory has coefficient alpha reliability of .84, while reliability coefficient for Parent child relationship inventory is .91. Reliability coefficients for sub-scales of Parent Child Relationship Inventory, which ranged between .45 for support to .87 for communication. Reliability coefficients for sub-scales of NEO-FFI, which ranged between .31 for openness to experience to .58 for conscientiousness. Univariate normality analysis confirms that all the scores were normally distributed i.e. value of skewness was less than 2.

Table 2

Multiple Regression Analysis Computed for Personality Traits as Predictors of Parent Child Relationship (N = 342)

| Variables | Support | | Satisfaction | | Involvement | | communication | | Limit settings | | autonomy | | Role orientation | |
|-----------|---------|----------------|--------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| | B | R ² | B | R ² | B | R ² | β | R ² | B | R ² | β | R ² | β | R ² |
| Ne | -.04 | .01 | .01 | .02 | .12 | .07 | .01 | .06 | .12 | .03 | -.03 | .002 | -.001 | -.01 |
| Op | .14* | .01 | .09 | .02 | .07 | .01 | .17* | .03 | -.10 | .01 | -.10 | .002 | -.04 | -.01 |
| Co | .04 | .18 | | | .02 | | | .01 | .06 | | .06 | | .01 | |
| Ex | .05 | | -.09 | | -.11* | | -.19** | | .12 | | .12 | | .10 | |
| Ag | -.13 | .17* | | | .04 | | | .03 | -.09 | | .09 | | -.05 | |

*p > .05. **p > .01. Ne= Neuroticism, Op=Openness, Co=Conscientiousness, Ex=Extraversion, Ag=Agreeableness

Table 2 suggested that 1% of the variance in support can be explained by a model comprising constructs of big five personality traits. Overall the model was found to be significant, and among the predictors, openness to experience was significant positive predictor of support. Table 2 also demonstrated the effect of big five personality traits on satisfaction and explained that 2% of the variance caused by predictors. Overall this model was found to be significant and among the predictors, agreeableness was significant positive predictor of satisfaction. Table further accounted for the effect of big five personality traits on involvement and explained that 1% of the variance produced by predictors. Overall this model was found to be a significant positive predictor of involvement. Moreover, results yielded the effect of big five personality traits on communication and explained that 3% of the variance caused by predictors. Overall this model was found to be significant and among the predictors, openness to experience and extraversion were significant positive predictors of communication. Results finally explained the effect of big five personality traits on limit settings, autonomy, and role orientation.

DISCUSSION

The study has been designed with the aim to assess the parent child relationships using two Scales Neo-FFI Scale and PCRI scale and how their subscales correlated with each other to provide a model to assess the parent's personality and how it affected the child upbringing. Neo-FFI scale as described by Digman (1990), five-factor model of personality is considered a comprehensive framework for the categorization of personality. To achieve the objectives of the study, it was hypothesized that there would be a relationship between parental personality traits and parent-child relationship. After having conducted a multiple regression analysis on the data, the results of this study provided numerous significant observations that confirmed what previous literature has stated. The results obtained from the execution of this study are discussed here.

Harmonious personal relationships are an important goal of this Islamic culture. In Pakistan, the role of parents in child overall development is central, and they are expected to take their responsibility seriously, while, children are expected to obey, both generations are exhorted to deal with each other in a gentle and affectionate manner (Obeid, 1988). Parenting that supports a child's autonomy is proposed to lead to healthy development. Thus, on the one hand, Markus and Kitayama (1991) were predicted that in Pakistani communal culture, parental autonomy-granting were neither common nor associated with positive outcomes. On the other hand, autonomy-granting was related to psychosocial adjustment (Stewart, Bond, Ho, Zaman, Dar, & Anwar, 2000). Further, in Pakistan authoritative parenting was mostly observed in parent child relationship. Effective limit-setting is one characteristic of the authoritative parenting style (Baumrind, 1971), which was found to be with positive social developmental outcomes of the children (Clark, & Ladd, 2000). The results of the present study are in consistent with previous research findings of Denham et al. (2000), in which the workers observed poor limit-setting poses difficulty in parent child interaction.

Present study demonstrated the significance of different personality traits of parents towards positive parenting. The low level of five personality traits of Neo-FFI scale found to be associated with behavioral inhibition in children and adults (Muris, & Dietvorst, 2006). As suggested by Depue and Collins (1999), extraversion shoots from a biological system indorsing dynamic process and

examination of the environment. Hence, higher scores on this volatile characteristic to be related with lower scores on the personality trait of extraversion. In the present study we had observed Extraversion to be a significant positive predictor of involvement (see Table 2).

Therefore, we can say that the parents who agreeable in nature were found to be more involved with their children, such children will show less temperamental characteristic. In addition, though genetic causes also affect the children behavior but one cannot ignore the effect of outer environment on the behavior of growing children. We cannot predict specific personality traits which are influenced by social factors (Bleidorn, Kandler, Riemann, Angleitner, & Spinath, 2009), Rohner (2007), in his study used the term “parental acceptance”, for those verbal, physical and symbolic behaviors that parents practice, or are supposed to practice, to show these feelings, which displays parents’ involvement in the quality of the affectionate relationship between parent and child. These findings suggest that our model was successful in predicting the possible predictors of parent's personality traits that affects positive parenting. The major implication of these findings from our perspective, is that they provide method of predicting parent-child relationship problems by estimating the contribution of big five personality traits, which are likely to result in successful parenting.

It was also observed ‘openness to experience’ as significant positive predictor of support, while ‘agreeableness’ as only significant positive predictor of ‘satisfaction’, whereas, ‘openness to experience’ and ‘extraversion’ as significant positive predictors of communication. Though, the effect of big five personality traits on ‘limit settings’, ‘autonomy’, and ‘role orientation’ were found to be non-significant in present study. However, we cannot ignore the contribution of these predictors on positive parenting. Thus, to demonstrate influence of psychological attributes of parents on parenting, Prinzie et al. (2009) performed meta-analysis. Results have explored that low level of neuroticism and higher levels of extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness were related to more warmth and control on the part of parents. On the other hand, lower levels of neuroticism and higher levels of agreeableness were related to the establishment of more sustenance for autonomy.

Moreover, previous studies have revealed that positive parenting generates an indirect relationship between parental personality and later adolescent personality (Schofield et al., 2012). The result of the study demonstrated the significant correlation between parent personality and parenting, which was consistent with the findings of previous studies of Spinath and O'Connor (2003). The study of McCabe (2014) explained the influence of

parental psychological problems on parenting using meta-analysis. These findings suggest that our model was successful in predicting the possible predictors of parent's personality traits that affects positive parenting. The major implication of these findings from our perspective is that they provide method of predicting parent-child relationship problems by estimating the contribution of big five personality traits, which are likely to result in successful parenting.

Further, in Pakistan authoritative parenting is mostly observed in parent child relationship. Effective limit-setting is one characteristic of the authoritative parenting style (Baumrind, 1991), which is found to be with positive social developmental outcomes of the children (Clark & Ladd, 2000; Kochanska et al., 1997). The results of the present study are in consistent with previous research findings of Denham and Kochanoff (2003), in which the workers observed poor limit-setting poses difficulty in parent child interaction.

As the study demonstrated the significance of different personality traits of parents towards positive parenting, the study showed the fruitfulness of use of Neo-FFI and PCRI scale and their sub-scales in the study. The low level of five personality traits of Neo-FFI scale found to be associated with behavioral inhibition in children and adults (Shatz, 2005; Muris & Dietvorst, 2006). As suggested by Depue and Collins (1999), extraversion stems from a biological system promoting active approach and exploration of the environment.

Conclusion

The present study observed parent child relationship problem in Pakistan. On the basis of our findings, we could suggest, an emphasis should be placed on improving supportive parental roles and strengthening parent-child relationships. Gender differences should be considered while designing, implementing and evaluating parent child relationship problems. Overall, joint efforts between parents, teachers, schools, families and communities are vital for healthy child personality development.

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