

Influence of Perceived Parenting Styles on the Self-Efficacy of Pakistani Young Adults

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Abstract

The present study examines the relationship between perceived parenting styles and self-efficacy of young adults in Pakistan. Based on Baumrind's framework of parenting styles, which includes authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting, and the self-efficacy theory proposed by Bandura. This study examines how different parental approaches affect a young adult's belief in their capability to handle the different challenges of life. The participants were asked to complete the Parenting Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE). Correlation analysis and descriptive statistics were used to determine the relationship between parenting styles and the self-efficacy of young adults in Pakistan. The results indicated that authoritative parenting style was positively correlated with greater self-efficacy ($r = .89, p < .01$), suggesting that warmth along with clear expectations increases competence and confidence. On the other hand, authoritarian ($r = -.60, p < .01$) and permissive ($r = -.74, p < .01$) parenting styles were found to have either negative or weak associations with self-efficacy. This study provides useful insights for counselors, families, educators, and other stakeholders in developing strategies to support the development of the young population in Pakistan.

Keywords: Perceived parenting styles, self-efficacy, young adults

Introduction

Parenting is considered a pivotal element in determining the cognitive, emotional, and social development of a child. Many psychological outcomes are influenced by parenting styles, including self-efficacy, which refers to the belief in one's own capability to shape and implement

actions that are required to succeed in life. Self-efficacy stands out as a core element in the transition to resilient and competent adulthood. In many developing nations, including Pakistan, where familial structures and parental authorities play an important role in shaping the behavior of young adults, exploration of the effects of

parenting practices on self-efficacy is very important.

Baumrind (1966) was the first one to conceptualize parenting styles. He categorized these parenting styles into three main categories: permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian. These parenting styles differ in their levels of responsiveness and demandingness. Authoritative parents are nurturing but firm. They promote autonomy but with clear expectations. Authoritarian parents. On the other hand, show less warmth and exercise more control. They often emphasize compliance over mutual dialogue. Thirdly, the parents demonstrating a permissive style of parenting show high responsiveness but exercise low control, which gives considerable freedom but limited guidance (Baumrind, 1991)

Numerous studies were conducted across Western and Northwestern cultures that link authoritative parenting with high levels of self-efficacy and better psychosocial adjustment in adolescents and children (Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002; Turner et al., 2009). Albert Bandura, in 1986, proposed social cognitive theory, which asserts that self-efficacy can be affected by parenting styles through the four primary bases, i.e., verbal persuasion, mastery experiences, vicarious learning, and emotional states. Self-efficacy beliefs can also be significantly enhanced by supportive parenting that provides prospects for success, affirms

children's abilities, and models effective coping. According to UNDP statistics, 63% of Pakistan's population is under the age of 30 (UNDP, 2023), which makes the psychological development of young adults a matter of national importance. Despite the prevalence of patriarchal family systems and dominance of collectivist values, there is rapid exposure to global cultural trends and education, which is shifting the self-perceptions and expectations of young adults.

However, there is very limited indigenous research on the effects of parenting styles on psychological constructs like self-efficacy in the context of Pakistani culture, where the reputation of the family and respect for authority have greater importance than individual autonomy. The studies conducted in Pakistan reveal that academic achievement, mental health, and self-esteem of young adults are significantly influenced by the parenting styles (Ali & Iqbal, 2012; Yousaf et al., 2015).

Given the increasing need for emotionally resilient and self-directed individuals in Pakistan's growing knowledge economy, this gap in research is both urgent and relevant. It has also been established that university students' decision-making abilities are linked to academic self-efficacy and parenting style. Parental practices are known to impact the development of personality in young people (Farid et al., 2022).

Overall psychological wellbeing of adolescents and young adults has been found to be influenced by parenting styles, and results have verified that certain child-rearing practices like an authoritative parenting style were connected to better psychological wellbeing. Self-esteem is another psychological factor influenced by parenting style in young adults. Authoritative parenting style has been known to improve academic motivation and future orientation (Demir & Sezai, 2023). Whereas it has been demonstrated that overprotective caregivers were associated with reduced self-esteem, increased stress, anxiety, and depression, and in some cases also led to avoidant attachment style (Kara et al., 2024).

Theoretical Framework

This study examines the relationship between parenting styles and self-efficacy among Pakistani young adults and is grounded in the parenting styles theory proposed by Diana Baumrind and the concept of self-efficacy developed by Albert Bandura. These theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive framework to enhance our understanding of how the socialization practices of parents affect the development of young adults' beliefs regarding their ability to manage the challenges of life and their overall competence.

Authoritative parents provide support along with warmth, appropriate levels of guidance and control. They encourage independence while

maintaining and communicating clear expectations. On the other hand, authoritarian parenting exercises strict control, limited emotional responsiveness, and higher demands, Whereas. Permissive parenting involves acceptance and warmth but minimal regulation and structure (Baumrind, 1967). Due to these different parenting approaches, family environments also differ, that affect psychological development of children, including their ability to cope with challenges, dependence, and confidence.

Social cognitive theory proposed by Bandura has self-efficacy as its central construct, which refers to a person's belief in their own capability to take actions and achieve anticipated outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Motivation, persistence, and a person's approach to handling stressful situations and difficult tasks are affected by these beliefs. Family environment, especially parenting behaviors, shape these beliefs through feedback, encouragement, and opportunities for independent problem-solving. Parents who are more supportive foster greater competence and confidence, whereas inconsistent and controlling parents also influence how individuals perceive their abilities.

Based on these theoretical perspectives, parenting styles can be considered an important familial factor associated with the development of self-efficacy beliefs. Therefore, the present study

explores the relationship between different parenting styles and the level of self-efficacy among Pakistani young adults using a correlational research design.

Variables of the Study

The parenting styles, theorized by Diana Baumrind (1960s) is the independent variable in this study. According to this theory, parenting styles fall into four distinct categories: Authoritarian, Authoritative, and Permissive. Authoritarian parenting style is associated with very strict parents who have high demands from their children but lack warmth and support. Authoritative parenting style, however, is comparatively democratic in its approach. They are more aligned towards nurturing and support. Moving forward, the permissive parenting style only focuses on providing warmth and treats the child as a friend. Lastly, as the name suggests, in the uninvolved or neglectful parenting style, the parents are least responsive and detached from their children and may also subject the child to physical and emotional abuse. This study will

focus only on the first three parenting styles and will investigate their impact and influence on the dependent variable, i.e., self-efficacy.

The dependent variable of this study is self-efficacy. The concept of self-efficacy was given by a psychologist named Albert Bandura (1997). According to his theory, self-efficacy refers to one's ability to face or tackle a particular situation or challenge. It influences the motivations, drives, and psychological well-being of a person. High self-efficacy is associated with being able to successfully face different challenges of life, including academic, professional, and personal challenges.

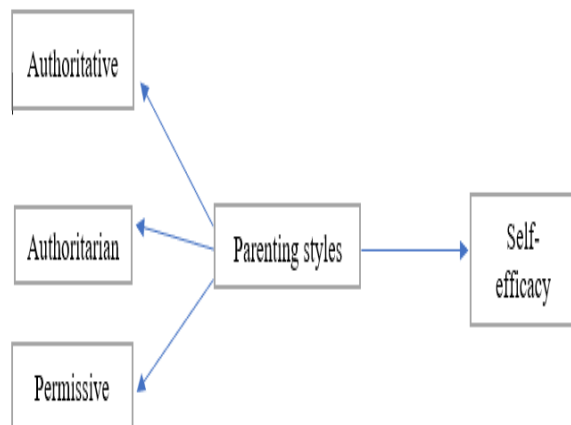
Rationale of the Study

There is growing concern about how parenting style influences self-efficacy in Pakistani young adults. Despite the importance of self-efficacy in individual and academic achievement, there has been little research on how cultural and financial variables influence it in Pakistan. This knowledge gap needs more research on the influence of different parenting styles on young adults' self-efficacy.

So, the findings of the study were expected to help us enhance academic and psychological support and parenting styles, allowing young adults to succeed in life. This study aimed to answer the question about how parenting style influences a young adult's academic achievement, mental health, and success over the long term and how cultural and regional differences influence these effects.

Figure 1

Theoretical Model of Current Study



Objectives

- To find the relationship between perceived styles of parenting and young adults' self-efficacy.
- To explore differences among genders in perceived styles of parenting and self-efficacy among young adults.

Hypotheses

- There will be a significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and self-efficacy, and a significant negative relationship between authoritarian and permissive parenting style and the young adults' self-efficacy.
- There will be significant differences between males and females in perceived parenting styles and self-efficacy.

Method

Research Design

This was a cross-sectional study. The research design was correlational. Purposive sampling technique was used to gather data because it is time- and cost-effective.

Participants

The present study comprised a purposive sample of young adults (N=300) aged between 18 and 24 years. Participants, both males (n=150) and females (n=150), took part in the study.

Instruments

The Parental Authority Questionnaire

developed by Buri in 1991, based on Baumrind's model, was used in this study to assess the different styles of parenting, such as authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. The number of items used on this scale is 30. The responses in this scale were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree). PAQ has high internal consistency and validity. (Buri,1991)

General Self-efficacy Scale, developed in 1995 by Schwarzer and Jerusalem, was used to measure self-efficacy of individuals. This scale consists of 10 items. It is a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1= Not at all true, 2= Hardly true, 3= Moderately true, 4= Exactly true).

The scale has a high internal consistency with alpha values ranging from 0.76 to 0.90, which means it is a reliable measure of general self-efficacy. (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995)

Procedure

Data for this study was collected from universities by approaching students to fill printed questionnaires of both scales. Each participant filled in both forms one by one. They were guided about the purpose of the research and advised being honest and sincere in filling the items, as there were no right or wrong answers in the research. They were given appropriate time to read each statement carefully and then fill in each questionnaire. Ethical considerations were considered, and both scales used in the research were openly available to be used for research purposes. Verbal consent was taken from all the participants, and it was made clear to them that their responses would remain anonymous, and they could leave the study at any time they wanted.

Results

Table 1

Frequency and Percentages of Demographic Characteristics of the Study (N=300).

Variables	n (%)	M (SD)
Gender	Male	150 (50%)
	Female	150 (50%)

SD=Standard Deviation, M=Mean, f=Frequency, %=percentage

Descriptive analysis was performed to get the mean and standard deviation for the study variables, e.g., perceived parenting styles and self-efficacy.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles, and Self-efficacy (N=300).

Variables	M	SD	Min	Max
Authoritative	3.52	0.60	1.2	4.8
Authoritarian	3.42	0.67	1	5
Permissive	3.43	0.66	1	5
Self-Efficacy	2.99	0.63	1	4

Note: M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, min=minimum, max=maximum

Table 3

Reliability Score of Sub-scales of Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive style of Parenting, and Young Adults' Self-efficacy (N=300)

Scales	<i>k</i>	α
Authoritative	10	0.772
Authoritarian	10	0.776
Permissive	10	0.824
Self-Efficacy	10	0.851

k=no. of items, α =Cronbach's alpha reliability

Table 4

Pearson Correlation Analysis between Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive style of Parenting, and Young Adults' Self-efficacy (N=300)

Variables	1	2	3	4	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Authoritative	-	.81**	.88**	.89**	3.52	0.60
Authoritarian		-	.69**	-.60**	3.42	0.67
Permissive			-	-.74**	3.43	0.66
Self-Efficacy				-	2.99	0.63

*Note: ** $p < 0.01$*

The correlation analysis revealed significant relationships between the study variables. Authoritarian parenting was strongly negatively correlated with self-efficacy ($r = -.60$, $p < .01$). Authoritative parenting showed a significant positive relationship with self-efficacy ($r = .89$, $p < .01$). Additionally, permissive parenting was significantly negatively correlated with self-efficacy ($r = -.74$, $p < .01$).

Table 5

Independent Sample T Test to Compare Men and Women

Variable	Men (<i>M</i>)	Women (<i>M</i>)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	LL	UL
Authoritative	72.24	69.2	1.66	0.04	35	90
Authoritarian	71.01	67	2.043	0.02	30	65
Permissive	70.47	67.51	1.52	0.12	25	45
Self-Efficacy	28.40	30.73	1.65	0.01	28.5	30.5

*Note: ** $p < 0.01$*

The results of an independent samples t-test indicate significant gender differences in perceived parenting styles, i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive, with t-values of 1.66, 2.043, and 1.52 along with p-values of 0.04, 0.02, and 0.12, respectively. There were significant differences between males and females on self-efficacy as well, with $t = 30.73$ and $p = 0.01$.

Discussion

The present study examined the relationship between different parenting styles and self-efficacy. The findings indicate that different styles of parenting are significantly associated with how individuals perceive their abilities and confidence in dealing with life challenges. Overall, the results suggest that the family environment and parental interaction patterns can play an important role in shaping individuals' beliefs about their competence.

The results of the correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between authoritative parenting and self-efficacy ($r = .89$). This very high positive correlation can be explained by the strong theoretical overlap that exists between these two constructs. Warmth and support, along with encouragement of autonomy and consistent

guidance demonstrated by authoritative parents, directly contribute to the growth of confidence, independent decision-making, and competence in young adults. Parental influence tends to remain strong throughout adolescence and early adulthood

Parental influence in collectivistic cultures like Pakistan remains strong through adolescence and early adulthood, which further strengthens this relationship. Research conducted by Diana Baumrind identified that authoritative parenting was the most beneficial style for the psychological and social development of children. A similar study by Laurence Steinberg in 2017 also suggested that adolescents raised by authoritative parents displayed greater confidence, competence, and emotional adjustment. The findings of this study align with these perspectives and indicate that emotional

support with balanced parental guidance contributes to higher levels of self-efficacy. Empirical research done in recent times also supports this relationship, showing that parenting styles influence motivation and resilience in academic settings directly.

In contrast, a significant negative relationship between authoritarian parenting and self-efficacy was also observed. Authoritarian parents maintain strict discipline, rigid rules, and very limited emotional warmth. In that situation, structure can help children develop a sense of responsibility, but excessive control reduces their opportunities for personal growth and independent decision-making. According to Bandura's self-efficacy theory, individuals build confidence through encouragement, mastery experiences, and opportunities to take initiative. When individuals grow up in highly restrictive environments, they have fewer opportunities to develop problem-solving skills and autonomy, which can weaken their self-efficacy beliefs. Similar patterns were observed in previous studies where strict parenting was related to lower levels of psychological adjustment and self-confidence.

The findings of the study also demonstrate a significant negative relationship between self-efficacy and a permissive style of parenting.

Minimal structure or behavioral expectations in permissive parenting, along with warmth and acceptance, can also negatively affect the self-efficacy of young adults. Emotional support is beneficial, but the absence of clear boundaries and proper guidance can negatively impact the development of responsibility, discipline, and persistence. The parenting framework proposed by Maccoby & Martin (1983) suggests that parental warmth balanced with appropriate control is optimal for child development. Without proper guidance and consistent expectations, young adults may struggle to confidently manage life's challenges and develop self-regulation skills, which explains the negative relationship between a permissive style of parenting and self-efficacy observed in this study (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

However, females reported slightly elevated levels of self-efficacy as compared to males. This can be understood through the perspective of Albert Bandura and his concept of self-efficacy, which emphasizes that individuals develop confidence through experiences of success, encouragement from others, and the ability to cope with challenges. Differences in academic engagement, coping strategies, and social expectations may contribute to the higher self-efficacy reported by female participants.

Limitations

- This study has no qualitative data; it just provides quantitative results.
- The parenting style can change from time to time, but this study didn't tell us about this shift.
- This study has been conducted on an undergraduate sample, but it didn't

Implications

These findings tell us about the importance of parenting style in shaping young adults' self-efficacy. Psychologists and other people associated with this field can use this information to know about cause of low and high self-efficacy. Many institutions like colleges, schools, and universities can also use this study to guide parents about their parenting style.

Suggestions

Educational institutions like schools, colleges, and universities, as well as NGOs, may focus on providing coaching programs and workshops in parenting to provide awareness to the population. The knowledge of self-efficacy should be included in the curriculum of students.

represent the analysis of less educated people.

- Self-report measures are prone to social desirability and recall bias.
- Regression analysis can also be applied to better determine the predictive power of parenting styles.

Conclusion

Support combined with appropriate structure inculcates Stronger self-efficacy beliefs, whereas very strict or very lenient parenting may hinder the growth of independence and confidence. Future researchers can explore how social, family, and cultural influences relate to parenting styles to affect the development of psychological well-being and especially self-efficacy.

The independent sample test explored gender differences in the present study. The results indicated that males and females differently perceived their parents' parenting styles, which also suggests that participants in both groups reported relatively different experiences in parenting.

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