

The Relation between Self-esteem, Parenting Style and Social Anxiety in Girls

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Abstract

This study is an attempt to explore the relationship between self-esteem, parenting style and social anxiety in girls. A sample of 100 female students selected from different schools. For data collection Social Interaction Anxiety Scale, Parental Authority Questionnaire and Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scales were used together with demographic sheet. The results indicated that social anxiety has negative correlation with self-esteem but not significant. Further, it indicates that low self-esteem would cause social anxiety and authoritative style of parenting would leads towards social anxiety in girls. Social anxiety negatively correlated permissive type of parenting style. However, Pessimistic and Authoritative parenting styles both predict social anxiety among adolescents.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Parenting Styles, Social Anxiety

1. Introduction

Self-esteem is how we value ourselves; it is how we perceive our value to the world and how valuable we think we are to others. Self-esteem affects our trust in others, our relationships, and our work – nearly every part of our lives. Positive self-esteem gives us the strength and flexibility to take charge of our lives and grow from our mistakes without the fear of rejection (Rosenberg, 1965). Parenting (or child rearing) is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to the aspects of raising a child aside from the biological relationship. The most common partaker in parenting is the biological parent of the child in question, although others may be an older sibling, a grandparent, a legal guardian, aunt, uncle or other family member or a family friend (Lyton, & Romney, 1991). Social anxiety is the fear of interaction with other people that brings on self-consciousness, feelings of being negatively judged and evaluated, and, as a result, leads to avoidance. Social anxiety is the fear of being judged and evaluated negatively by other people, leading to feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, embarrassment, humiliation, and depression (Nichols, 1974).

A number of studies reported that there is significant negative relation between self-esteem and social anxiety which means that if one has high self-esteem then he has low level of social anxiety (Leary, & Kowalski, 1995; Forehand, Nousiainen, 1993; Bryant, & Trower, 1974; Moutier, & Stein, 1999). Further studies showed that parenting style parenting style is significant related with social anxiety as well as self-esteem. Parenting style is significant predictor of self-esteem (Moutier, & Stein, 1999; Rubin, & Chen, 1994; Shaimberg, 1988; Stewart, Bond, Abdullah, Ma, 2001; Lyton, & Romney, 1991).

1.1 Hypothesis

- i. There would be significant relationship between self-esteem parenting style and social anxiety.
- ii. The self-esteem and Authoritarian Style of parenting would be a significant predicting factor for social anxiety.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Sample

The sample for this study consisted of 100 participants. The age of the participants ranged from 15-18 years, it included students.

1.2.2 Tools for Data Collection

The participants will be contacted and interviewed on following valid and reliable scales: The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) to measure social anxiety; the Social Anxiety Scale (SIAS) was developed and published by Mattick and Clarke in 1998. The SIAS is twenty item measures on which respondents rate their experience on social situations associated with social anxiety and social phobia DSM-IV TR criteria. Experiences are rated on a 5-point scale from 0 (characteristic of me) to 4 (extremely characteristic of me). A total of score 60 is possible with cutoffs of 34 or more indicative of social phobia (specific situations of irritation social fears with avoidance and impairment) and 43 or more indicative of social anxiety (generalized irritation fears across numerous social situations with avoidance and impairment).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to measure self-esteem; The Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES), developed by sociologist Dr. Morris Rosenberg, is a self-esteem measure widely used in social science research. The RSES is designed similar to social-survey questionnaires. It is a ten-item

Parenting Authority Scale developed by John R. Buri (1971) which includes permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parental authority prototypes to indicate the perception of respondents about their parental authority. It consisted of 30 items per parent 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) and yields permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parental authority scores for both parents father and mother.

1.2.3 Procedure

Sample of the study was taken from diverse schools of Faisalabad including both Govt. also Private areas. Three scales along with factual information scales are used to get information from sample. The nature and purpose of the study was shared with sample. After collection of the data the sample was thanked for their corporation.

1.2.4 Statistical Analysis

After data was collected, the data was entered in Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 for analysis. Pearson's Product Moment correlation was applied to see the relationship while multiple regression analysis conducted to identify predictors.

1.3 Results

Table No 1

Correlation Table

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. SA	-	-.190	.10	.11	.07
2. SE		-	.06	.23	-.03*
3. AUTH			-	.31	.09
4. AUTHN				-	.08
5. PER					-

Note; SA= Self-anxiety, AUTH= Authoritarian, AUTHN= Authoritative, PER= Permissive

The above table depicts that Self Esteem related negatively with social anxiety but it was non-significant. Moreover, there is negative significant relation between Permissive parenting style and self-esteem.

Table No 2

Regression analysis for variables predicting social anxiety in Male Adolescents ($N= 100$).

Variables	B	Standardized B
Self-esteem	.260	-.241
Parenting Style		
Authoritarian	.040	.317
Authoritative	.485	.328
Pessimism	.098	.212

The above table implies that Pessimistic and Authoritarian Parenting Styles both predict Social Anxiety among adolescents included in the sample. The rest did not show significant predictive relationship with Social Anxiety.

1.4 Discussion

This study investigates the relation between self-esteem, parenting style and social anxiety in girls. It was hypothesized that there is significant relation between self-esteem, parenting style and social anxiety in girls. Researchers have shown that two parenting styles (authoritarian and permission) are more likely to have a negative impact a child's mental health.

The major findings elicited that low self-esteem is a predictor of social anxiety but not significant. Self-esteem, the general self-evaluation one makes of oneself, can vary throughout life particularly during major life changes. It is no wonder then that during the changes and challenges of adolescence there can be significant fluctuations in a teenager's assessment of their own self-image and/or self-worth. Researches show that that self-esteem acted as a moderator between introversion and social anxiety. It is estimated that up to a half of adolescents will struggle with low self esteem, many of these occurrences during the early teen years (ACT, 2003). Although studies may show self-esteem levels drop it does not always mean they become unhelpfully low; they just are lower than previous levels.

One of the most significant periods for increased rates of lower self-esteem is the transition from one stage of education to the next. The most observable of these is the transition from primary (elementary) to junior high or middle school. Research has shown that between the ages of 8 and 18 teens self esteem levels drop markedly, girls more so than boys.

Going from being the eldest kid in the playground who is very familiar with the environment to being one of the smallest with high levels of uncertainty and anxiety can be a real challenge for many teens. This

change in status and comfort level is often internalized by the adolescent as a sense of being inadequate or inferior – resulting in lower self-esteem. Similar drops in self-esteem level also occur frequently in the transition from junior high to senior-high and from senior high to university or college.

This will often be the case for teenagers who do not have a strong sense of identity – an understanding of who they are and/or what they want to do. The confusion generated by the range of extra choices and increased significance of the decisions to be made can cause older adolescents to feel inadequate and ill equipped. There is also a suggestion that this rate of low self esteem in transition to tertiary education is due to generations of children receiving significant degrees of empty or false praise growing up.

Strong relational and communal networks are important co-relational factors for teenagers who have healthy self-esteem. Having a strong bond with family and feeling secure and loved definitely against low self esteem (Baldwin & Hoffman, 2002). Indeed in studies done amongst teenagers from both upper and lower socio-economic backgrounds, strong family units were found to have protective benefits for a teens self esteem (Rhodes et al., 2003).

Moreover, authoritarian parenting style is a predictor for social anxiety but not significant reason might be because of social desirability on the part of the subjects/ participants. Mothers and fathers play quite different roles in parenting. In Pakistani cultures, mothers are typically seen as warmer and less controlling, supporting the popular saying “strict father, kind mother” (Ho, 1987). Bhatnagar, writes “the father is expected to play the role of an authoritative, responsible for discipline, while the mother is the real head of the family to whom children turn for economic, physical and emotional support”.

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