



RESILIENCE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG ADOLESCENTS AS A FUNCTION OF PERCEIVED PARENTING STYLE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines resilience and emotional intelligence in adolescents perceiving their parents as showing either functional or dysfunctional patterns of parenting. It also seeks to assess the nature of behavior displayed by dysfunctional parents. The Measure of Parental Style, The Resilience Scale and The Emotional Intelligence Scale were administered to a sample of 100 adolescents belonging to an age range of 16 to 19 years. Data was analyzed using percentages, as well as, t test was applied to measure difference in resilience and emotional intelligence between the two groups. Results obtained revealed that a greater majority of dysfunctional parents used over-controlling behavior as compared to abusive and indifferent behavior. Besides, lower level of resilience was found among adolescents with dysfunctional parenting. With regard to emotional intelligence, findings indicate that dysfunctional parenting was associated with lower level of emotional intelligence. Thus, the study implies that parenting is an important factor influencing personality development of adolescents.

KEYWORDS: Parenting, Resilience, Emotional Intelligence.

Introduction:

A parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing. The quality of parenting is far more essential than the quantity of time spent with the child. For instance, a parent can spend an entire afternoon with his or her child, yet the parent may be engaging in a different activity and not demonstrating enough interest towards the child. Parenting styles are the representation of how parents respond and demand to their children. Parenting practices are specific behaviors, while parenting styles represent broader patterns of parenting practices (Spera, 2005). The quality of the relationship between parents and children is considered as the determining factor of adjustment and their interaction to each other as well as psychological and emotional atmospheres dominant on the family form the behavioral and personality characteristics of children (Sarmast, 2006). Various studies have been performed indicating that one of the most effective factors on the development and formation of adolescent's personality is their parent's parenting practices (Belsky & Barrendz, 2002; Prinzieh et al., 2004). Diana Baumrind is a researcher who focused on the classification of parenting styles. Baumrind's research is known as "Baumrind's Parenting Typology" and she has categorized four types of parenting, namely, Authoritative, Authoritarian, Indulgent and Neglectful.

Adolescence is a period of development where lot of changes (physical, emotional and psychological) take place. This period can have lot of influence of parenting styles adopted by their parents which can also affect their resilience. Resilience is the ability of an individual to come out of an adverse situation. Resilience has been defined in many different ways. Many views of resilience include metaphors associated with adaptability despite adverse circumstances or obstacles (Klarreich, 1998). All resilience definitions include the capacity to face challenges and to somehow become more capable despite adverse experiences. Most definitions emphasize that resilience is a process, rather than a fixed constitutional attribute, influenced by everyday decisions (Masten, 2001). According to this interpretation resilience is conceptualized as a protective mechanism that modifies an individual's response to risk situations and operates at critical points during one's life (Newcomb, 1992). People who display resilient adaptation become stronger by learning new skills, developing creative ways of coping, and meeting and overcoming life's challenges (Luthar & Zelazo, 2003). Exposure to multiple protective or resilience factors can increase one's chance of competent social adjustment because it indirectly moderates the effects of risk exposure (Rutter, 1990). Risk for susceptibility to emotional distress, protection from situations of risk, and ways of responding to adversity may be gender-based during adolescence (Gardano, 1998; Fergusson & Horwood, 2001). For example, Turner, Norman, and Zunz (1995) report that boys may be at risk when there are extreme levels of interdependence within the family whereas girls may be at risk when there are extreme levels of independence or disengagement in family interactions. Girls tend to self-destruct with quiet, disturbed behaviors rather than act out with externalized behaviors as boys do. Young people display more resilience when parenting practices encourage autonomy, offer effective discipline, support adjustments to cope with financial realities and provide links to the community and social networks (Gilligan, 2001).

In his 1995 book, *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman defines emotional intelligence as "the capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships". In the last decade or so, science has discovered a tremendous

amount about the role emotions play in our lives. Researchers have found that even more than IQ, your emotional awareness and ability to handle feelings will determine your success and happiness in all walks of life. EI moderates conflict by promoting understanding and relationships, and fostering stability, continuity and harmony. It also links strongly with concepts of love and spirituality. EI adds emotional stability that makes us more capable and efficient in establishing successful interpersonal relationships as, it is a requirement for dispute resolution. When EQ is high, one is able to experience feelings fully as they happen. In a study of Malaysian secondary school students, Liao, Liao, Teoh, and Liao (2003) found a positive correlation between parental monitoring and emotional intelligence. Punitive discipline has also been found to correlate to children's lower level of emotional understanding (Pears & Moses, 2003) and to lower emotional regulation (Morris, Silk, Steinberg, Myers, & Robinson, 2007).

The present study examines the level of resilience and emotional intelligence among adolescents based on their perceptions of parental style. The dysfunctional parental style is assessed across three measures: Indifference, Abuse and Over-control.

Method

Objectives:

- To study the nature of dysfunctional parental behavior as perceived by adolescents.
- To assess the level of resilience among adolescents with dysfunctional parenting v/s functional parenting.
- To study the level of emotional intelligence among adolescents with dysfunctional parenting v/s functional parenting.

Hypothesis:

- A greater percentage of parents with dysfunctional style will display over-control as compared to abuse and indifference.
- There will be a significant difference in the level of resilience among adolescents with functional and dysfunctional parents.
- There will be a significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence among adolescents with functional and dysfunctional parents.

Participants:

A total of 100 adolescents were selected for the study on the basis of convenient sampling technique. The Measure of Parental Style (MOPS), The Resilience Scale and The Emotional Intelligence Scale were administered to a sample of 100 adolescents belonging to an age range of 16 to 19 years. The sample was further divided into 2 groups based on the measure of their perceived parenting styles obtained from the MOPS. There were 46 adolescents who perceived their parents as showing dysfunctional style, whereas 54 adolescents perceived their parents as displaying functional parenting.

Tools for Data Collection:

- **The Measure of Parental Style (MOPS)** developed by Parker, G., Roussos, J., Hadzi-Pavlovic, D., Mitchell, P., Wilhelm, K. and Austin, M-P was used

to assess adolescents perceptions about the parenting styles of their parents. This scale measures parenting styles across three measures: Indifference, Abuse and Over-control. A score of 15 and below indicated absence of any dysfunctional behavior and as such, were categorized as functional parents. The total score for each category provides a dimensional measure showing the degree to which that parental style was experienced by the adolescent.

- **The Resilience Scale** by Gail M. Wagnild and Heather M. Young was used to measure resilience among adolescents. High scores indicate a greater degree of resilience.
- **The Emotional Intelligence Scale** developed by Anukool Hyde, Sanjyot Pethé and Upinder Dhar was used to measure the level of emotional intelligence in adolescents. A high score on the scale indicates a higher level of emotional intelligence.

Data Analysis:

The data was scored according to the test norms. The results have been tabulated as well as represented graphically. Percentages and means are used to analyze the data. Further, for the two groups, namely, adolescents perceiving parents as displaying functional parenting and those perceiving their parents as displaying dysfunctional parenting, the test of significance, that is, t-test, was applied for the scores of resilience and emotional intelligence. The above analysis is done with the help of the SPSS package (Version 20).

Results and Discussion:

Table 1-Percentage of dysfunctional parental behavior as perceived by adolescents.

Measures of dysfunctional parenting styles	Percentage
Indifference	20%
Abuse	3%
Over-control	77%



As can be seen in Table 1, a majority of parents displayed over-control (77%), followed by indifference (20%). Also, a small percentage of parents were found to be abusive (3%). Most parents are over-controlling, because they may want their child to behave appropriately in society. Over-control is a form of parenting used most often by parents. Another reason for such parenting may be due to the fact that today's adolescents are greatly influenced by media and peer pressure. So over-controlling parents shield their children from anything that the parents think might hurt them, and at the same time, limits children's freedom excessively. On the other hand, some parents are so wrapped up in their own schedules that they fail to provide adequate supervision and emotional support to their children. These indifferent parents are generally not involved in their child's life, but will provide basic needs for the child.

Since most of the parents were perceived as displaying over-control, the hypothesis has been supported.

Table 2- Mean, SD and t value of Resilience among the two groups of adolescents

	Type of parenting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value
RESILIENCE	Functional	54	124.20	18.66	4.49**
	Dysfunctional	46	110.17	10.78	

** significant at 0.01 level

Table 2 indicates that there is a significant difference in the level of resilience among adolescents who perceive their parents as functional and dysfunctional ($t=4.49$; $p<0.01$). Results reveal that adolescents who have experienced functional parenting tend to be more resilient than those who have experienced dysfunctional parenting, thus supporting the hypothesis.

A higher level of resilience among parents with functional parenting could probably be due to the fact that functional parents are more likely to create a warm, loving climate that fosters emotional development, which may have further contributed to enhancing the adolescent's level of resilience. On the other hand, because

of their abusive, indifferent or over-controlling behaviours, dysfunctional parents may be responsible for fostering a sense of inadequacy in their children. This maybe a reason their poor resilience. This data is supported by earlier research that pointed out that resilient adolescents have better relationships with their parents (Neighbours, et al; 1993). Thus, warm and loving parental behavior enhances resilience in children.

Table 3-Mean, SD and t value of Emotional Intelligence among adolescents perceiving parents as showing functional and dysfunctional styles of parenting

	Type of parenting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t value
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	Functional	54	135.37	16.00	3.57**
	Dysfunctional	46	124.69	13.43	

** significant at 0.01 level

Table 3 clearly reveals a significant difference in emotional intelligence among adolescents perceiving their parents as dysfunctional versus those perceiving them as functional ($t=3.57$; $p<0.01$). Children from functional families tend to have a higher level of emotional intelligence. This trend in results could be attributed to the fact that when parents display behaviours that include over-control, indifference or maybe even , abuse, it leads to detrimental effects on the child's well-being, causing them to have lower levels of emotional intelligence. It has been found in previous studies that a person's emotional intelligence could be affected by negative and abusive environments (Hein, S. 2003). Past research has also pointed out that emotional intelligence of a child depends on parental love and affection, as well as the child rearing practices (Devi and Rayal, 2004). These results get support from the study by Mayor, Caruso and Salovey (2000), which concluded that emotional competence of children and adolescents correlated significantly with higher parental acceptance. Hence, the nature of parenting is an important factor influencing emotional intelligence in children. Thus, the hypothesis stating that 'There will be a significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence among adolescents with functional and dysfunctional parents', has been supported.

Conclusions:

- Most parents use over-control as a child-rearing style as compared to indifference and abuse.
- Resilience was lower among adolescents with dysfunctional parenting.
- Adolescents perceiving parental behavior as functional had higher levels of emotional intelligence.

Limitations:

There are some limitations to this study. Subjects chosen to participate were not randomized. Another limitation resulted from the size of the sample. Besides, only adolescents in the age group of 16 to 19 years were selected to be a part of this study. Therefore, the results obtained through this study cannot be generalized to the entire adolescent population in Goa. In light of these methodological issues, future research should use a larger representative sample of individuals. This would greatly strengthen the generalizability of the conclusions.

Scope and Significance

The present study helps to gauge the varying concerns that today's adolescent face in the context of parenting. These findings will empower parents to understand their children better and enhance their parenting styles so as to foster a positive impact on the child's personality development. There is a necessity of parents to emerge as charismatic adults to shape the personality and psychological development of children, especially during adolescence. A future study might also investigate the present study qualitatively. Further research will be necessary to enhance and develop appropriate parenting styles that facilitate resilience and help enhance emotional intelligence in adolescent children.

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