

## **Parenting style and social anxiety among adolescents**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The present study was taken up to determine the parenting style and assess its impact on the social anxiety among adolescents. The sample of the study involved 120 adolescents (boys=60, girls=60) between the age range of 13 and 18 years. The adolescents were assessed using children social anxiety inventory where as parents were administered parenting style questionnaire (Mandleco *et al.*, 1995). The data was analyzed using Pearson's product moment method of correlation and F-test. For mean comparisons, the sample of parents were classified into three extreme groups high, moderate and low (mean  $\pm$  S.D) on the basis of their scores on parenting style and social anxiety scores of their wards were compared. The results indicated that social anxiety has negative correlation with parenting style. Agreeableness and openness correlated positively with social anxiety. Social anxiety was negatively correlated in case of permissive type of parenting style. However permissive and authoritative parenting style both predicts social anxiety among adolescents.

**Key Words :** Social anxiety, Parenting style, Adolescents

### **INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence makes a rapid change in one's role within a family. Young children tend to ascertain themselves forcefully, but are unable to demonstrate much influence over family decisions until early adolescence (Grotevant, 1997). The adolescent faces the task of increasing independence while preserving a caring relationship with his or her parents (Rawlins, 1992). When children go through puberty, there is often a significant increase in parent-child conflict and less cohesive familial bond. Arguments often concern minor issues of control, such as curfew, acceptance, clothing and the adolescents' right to privacy (Steinber, 2001) which adolescents may have previously viewed as issues over which their parents had complete authority. Parents-adolescent disagreement also increases as friends demonstrate a greater impact on one another, new influences on the adolescent that may be in opposition to parents' values. Social media has also played an increasing role in adolescent and parent disagreement (Social Networking, 2012).

Authoritarian parenting style, which is a combination of high demandingness (control) and low acceptance responsiveness, parents set restrictive rules without explaining why the children should assent and often use physical punishment to achieve obedience. Authoritative parents are demanding and control their children but they are responsive and accepting as well. They impose the rules but

they clarify the reasons behind the rules. They are more sensitive to their children's demand and contribute them in the family decision making. Permissive parents have few rules and demands, persuade children to present their emotions and impulses, and exert low control over their behaviour. Finally, in neglectful parenting style, this is mixture of low acceptance responsiveness and low demandingness, parents rarely devote time and energy for children's upbringing. They are busy with their own problems and ignore or reject their children (Sigelman and Rider, 2009).

Social anxiety is the psychological condition, a person experiences due to the fear of making an embarrassing impression, and in male dominated societies it is experienced more by girls than boys. The ways females are perceived and evaluated by others generate social anxiety in them (Azuma *et al.*, 1981).

According to Schlenker and Leary (1982) anxiety in social situation appears as an individual perceives or expects one's evaluation and an uncertainty regarding satisfactory evaluation from others. Doubts for getting favourable impression in real or imagined social evaluation situations produce such anxieties which result in feelings of apprehension and self consciousness or distress. Social anxiety occurs when one believes that perception of others about them is different from their perception about themselves (Loudin *et al.*, 2003).

### **Objectives:**

One per cent research hence was taken up to assess the impact of parenting style on the social anxiety of adolescents.

### **Review of literature :**

Radulescu *et al.* (2014) has conducted a study on the parenting style and child anxiety, to examine the relationship between parenting style of parents experienced when they were children and the parenting style they use in relation to their children. The battery of tests was applied to a group of children aged between 8 and 11 years ( $n = 30$ ,  $M = 9.87$ ;  $SD = 1.37$ ) who completed anxiety questionnaires and scales to evaluate the current parenting style perception. Their parents completed a questionnaire that highlights native parenting characteristics. Also, in terms of the original parenting, it showed that child separation anxiety is negatively correlated with the maternal care received from his mother, and the care received from the mother from both her parents. There also highlighted about statistically significant correlation between child's social phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder and his father overprotection.

Laboviti (2015) studied perceived parenting styles and their Impact on Depressive Symptoms in Adolescent 15-18 Years Old. The aim of the research was to study the perceived parenting styles of adolescents themselves and linkages with the symptoms of depression in teens as well as analysis of the relationship between them. Measuring instruments that were used in this research were, 'Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)' which was supplemented by an instrument with 30 teenagers and statements that can be used simultaneously for both the mother and father. Another instrument 'Depression Scale for Children (CES - DC)'. The rate of depression CES - D was used for the first time by Lenore Radloff while she worked at the National Institute of Mental Health. These questionnaires were completed by 100 adolescents 15 -18 years. This is a correlation study, which attempts to reveal the relationship between two variables that appear in the research questions. In this study it was found that there is a meaningful relation between parenting style and depressive symptoms and parenting style in specific the authoritative parenting style.

Wittchen *et al.* (1999) has conducted a study on the social fear and social phobia in a community

sample of adolescents and young adults: prevalence, risk factors and co-morbidity on the paper describes prevalence, impairment, pattern of co-morbidity and other correlates of DSM-IV. Social phobia in adolescents and young adults, separating generalized and non-generalized social phobias. Data was derived from the baseline investigation of the Early Developmental Stages of Psychopathology Study (EDSP), a prospective longitudinal community study of 3021 subjects, aged 14-24. Lifetime prevalence of DSM-IV/CIDI social phobia was 9.5% in females and 4.9% in males, with about one-third being classified as generalized social phobias. Twelve-month prevalence was only slightly lower, indicating considerable persistence. Social phobia was found to be quite prevalent in 14-24 year-olds. The generalized subtype of social phobia was found to have different correlates to be considerably more persistent, impairing and co-morbid than non-generalized social phobia.

Walsh *et al.* (2010) has conducted a study on the anxiety among high school students in India: Comparisons across gender, school type, social strata and perceptions of quality time with parents. The study also examined adolescents' perceptions of quality time with their parents. A group of 460 adolescents (220 boys and 240 girls), aged 13-17 years were recruited to participate in the study via a multi-stage sampling technique. The data were collected using a self-report semi-structured questionnaire and a standardized psychological test, the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory. Results showed that anxiety was prevalent in the sample with 20.1% of boys and 17.9% of girls found to be suffering from high anxiety. More boys were anxious than girls ( $p < 0.01$ ). Adolescents from Bengali medium schools were more anxious than adolescents from English medium schools ( $p < 0.01$ ). Adolescents belonging to the middle class (middle socio-economic group) suffered more anxiety than those from both high and low socio-economic groups ( $p < 0.01$ ). Adolescents with working mothers were found to be more anxious ( $p < 0.01$ ). Results also showed that a substantial proportion of the adolescents perceived they did not receive quality time from fathers (32.1%) and mothers (21.3%). A large number of them also did not feel comfortable to share their personal issues with their parents (60.0% for fathers and 40.0% for mothers).

Kashdan *et al.* (2001) has conducted a study on the Social Anxiety Disorder in Childhood and Adolescence: Current Status and Future Directions. The majority of studies to date, however, are limited by inadequate control conditions. Other findings include some support for the utility of parental involvement in treatment, significant advancements in outcome measures and impressive durability of gains for the majority of treatments. Future directions are suggested, including experimental and naturalistic studies of developmental pathways and maintenance factors, the incorporation of "positive psychology" constructs in treatment and prevention, and the continued delineation of differences between child, adolescent, and adult manifestations of SAD.

## METHODOLOGY

Research design is a logical task and is taken to ensure that the evidence collected enable to answer questions or to test theories as unambiguously as possible. The research design followed in the present study is exploratory research design in which cross sectional method was adopted. Cross sectional study is employing a single point of data collection for each participant or system being studied. It is used for examining phenomena expected to remain static through the period of interest.

The urban areas of Lucknow city were selected purposively to conduct the study. Being a capital city, some schools existing in Lucknow were identified and were included as sample in the study. Apart from this, the researcher's familiarity with the area made the researcher to select

Lucknow as the locale of the study.

For selection of the respondents, purposive random sampling technique was adopted. Simple random sample of size N drawn from a population of size N in such a way that every possible sample of size n has the same chance of being selected.

A total of 120 sample were selected from Lucknow city. The total sample was divided in to three groups. A sample of 40 students were selected from private school, 40 government school and 40 aided school students were randomly selected from school going adolescents.

Parenting style questionnaire by Mandleco *et al.* (1995).was used to determine the parenting style of the presents and the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale (LSAS) was used to assess the social anxiety developed by Michael and Liebowitz. The questionnaire included 24 items, each item is assessed with a given situation. The rate of anxiety 0 to 3, mild, moderate, severe and the rate of avoidance 0 to 3 =never 15 occasionally. Scores ranged from “never” to “always” on a 5-point scale. At the end of each section, seoses were added and divided it the number of questions in that section. The calculated score is the total score for that category. The highest score indicates preferred parenting style.

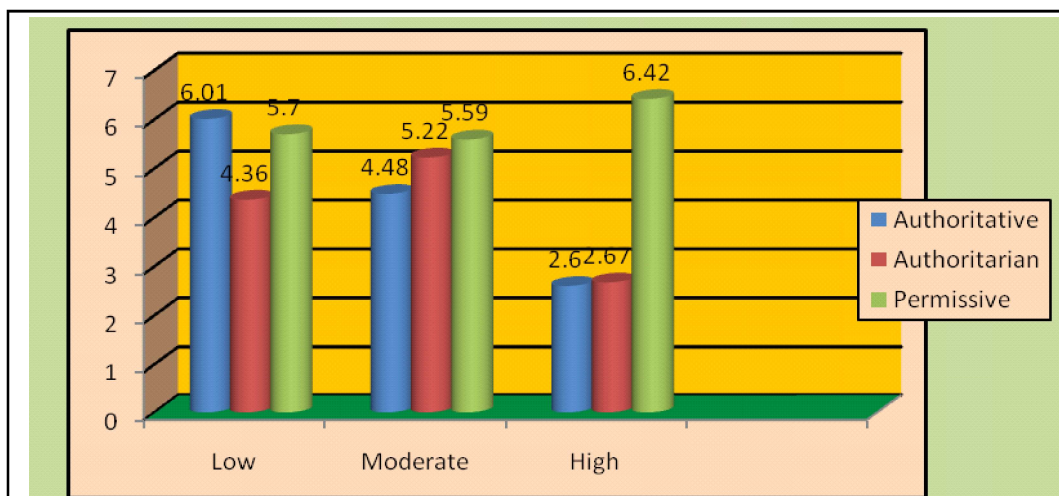
Questionnaire and interview method was adopted to conduct the present research. Data was analysed using relevant statistical techniques using PAS software.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The impact of parenting style on the occurrence of social anxiety of school going adolescents was tested using F test and the same is presented in Table 1 and Fig. 1. Highly significant differences

Social anxiety / Parenting style	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive	F	p
Low	6.01±.88	4.36±1.21	5.70±.89	20.07	.000
Moderate	4.48±1.59	5.22±1.19	5.59±1.59	2.81	.006
High	2.60±2.15	2.67±2.24	6.42±1.30	10.36	.000

\*\*Highly Significant (Significant at 0.01 levels)



**Fig. 1 : Comparison of Social anxiety among fathers adopting various parenting style**

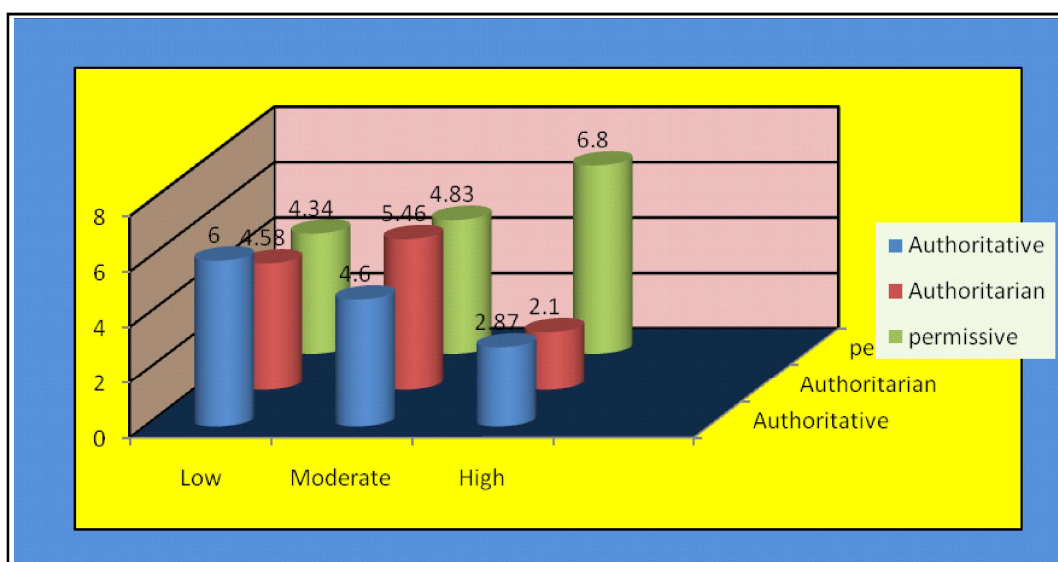
were found in occurrence of social anxiety as null hypothesis is rejected. It can be deduced that highly significant differences were found in the occurrence of social anxiety across the parenting style.

From the data, it is clear that the adolescents with authoritarian fathers demonstrated low social anxiety in comparison to authoritative and permissive fathers. High social anxiety was seen among adolescents with permissive fathers where in significant differences were evident among children with fathers adopting different parenting styles.

The impact of parenting style on the occurrence of social anxiety of school going adolescents was tested using F test and the same is presented in Table 2 and Fig. 2. Highly significant differences were found in occurrence of social anxiety as null hypothesis is rejected. It can be deduced that highly significant differences were found in the occurrence of social anxiety across the parenting style. The social anxiety of the adolescents of authoritative mothers were found to be better in comparison to the adolescents of mothers adopting permissive and authoritarian parenting style.

Social anxiety / Parenting style	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive	F	p
Low	6.0±1.21	4.58±1.28	4.34±1.75	14.51	.00
Moderate	4.60±1.74	5.46±.98	4.83±1.59	3.34	.04
High	2.87±2.08	2.1±2.04	6.80±.58	19.27	.00

\*\*Highly Significant (Significant at 0.01 levels)



**Fig. 2 : Comparison of social anxiety traits among mothers adopting various parenting style**

It is evident from the data that there is a negative correlation between social anxiety observed only in authoritarians father and is non significant. A significant relationship and positive correlation is observed in fathers and mothers adopting authoritative parenting style which explains increase of social anxiety. The adolescents of parents adopting submissive parenting style also showed positive

relationship. The data clearly indicate and will increase the social anxiety.

**Table 3 : Relationship of social anxiety across parenting style**

	Father parenting style		
	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive
Social Anxiety	0.298(0.00)	-0.139(.507)	0.485(.079)
	Mother parenting style		
Social Anxiety	0.235(0.04)	0.281(.107)	0.413(.182)

The social anxiety disorder was found to be showing an adverse effect on life satisfaction (Hambrick *et al.*, 2003). It affects the quality of life of a person severely and make him or her unstable both physically and psychologically. Findings about quality of life, physical and role functioning, and above all physical pain, make the female adolescents report higher levels of social anxiety than their male counterparts it was hypothesised that girls would report higher levels of social anxiety than boys. Study also showed higher scores of social anxiety among boys in the SAD- New subscale only, whereas no difference was found between boys and girls in the SAS-A total score, the SAD-general or the FNE.

### Conclusion:

Adolescents age is the crucial period of one's life, where in the major transition occur during this period. As well, it is the period when the bases for majority of the social anxiety parameters are framed. It can be concluded from the resent study that the schooling do have on effect on the social anxiety and it was observed that the traits ore higher in parenting style than school going adolescents.

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