

PARENTING STYLE OF WORKING AND HOMEMAKER MOTHERS AND THE SELF-CONCEPT OF THEIR ADOLESCENTS

Anika Yadav¹, Dr. Manini Srivastava²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, University of Delhi,

² Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Lucknow

Abstract: The study compared working and homemaker mothers' parenting style and the self-concept of their adolescents. The sample consisted of a total of 60 mothers (30 working and 30 homemakers) and their adolescent kids of the age range 13-19 years. Parenting Style and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ- short version) by Robinson et al. (2001) and Self-concept Questionnaire by Dr. Mukta Rani Rastogi were used to assess parenting style of mothers and self-concept of adolescents respectively. Most mothers in this study had authoritative approach to parenting and their working status had no effect on the style of parenting they adopted. The results didn't show any significant difference in the self-concept of adolescents with working and homemaker mothers. Also, the 3 different parenting styles doesn't seem to be producing any difference in the self-concept of adolescents.

Keywords: working and homemaker mothers, parenting style, self-concept, adolescents.

Introduction

A child's need for mother is as basic as need for food. The role of mother is very vital in rearing of child. She is the one who is continually there with and for her child, the one to whom s/he turns for love, attention, guidance, assurance, and reassurance. Gebremedhin (2005) stated that mothers develop a special bond with their child even before s/he is born, and this bond is established from the start of pregnancy itself and continues till adolescence. This creates a special place for mothers in the lives of their children. Mother continues to be the object of highest importance throughout the life of an individual. So, it can be said that how an individual is at any given time, how s/he views herself/himself is greatly determined by the mothering s/he got, or the relationship s/he had with her/his mother. And this relationship can be greatly impacted by the parenting style of the mother. Parenting Style refers to the strategies parents use in child rearing, the way parents do the upbringing of their children, and the representation of how parents respond and demand to their children. Parents tend to use various measures to control their children and to help them socialize (Baumrind, 1991).

Diana Baumrind identified 3 types of parenting:

- i) **Authoritarian:** shaping, controlling, and evaluating the attitudes and behaviours of the child by comparing them with an ideal way of conduct that they (parents) have set. This set standard of conduct is typically absolute in nature and parents expect and value obedience. Such parents favour disciplinary and strong measures to tackle the situations where there is conflict between parents' thoughts and expectations and the child's beliefs and actions.
- ii) **Authoritative:** directing the child's activities in ways that are rational and issue- oriented; and encouraging healthy conversations. Parents who adopt this parenting style set a policy of conduct that is based on some reason and they also share this reason with the child. They value disciplined conformity, but when the child behaves in ways that don't conform to the set policy, these parents solicit objections, and at the same time value their child's autonomy and self-will.
- iii) **Permissive:** behaving in a non-disciplinary, accepting, and confirmatory manner towards the impulses, desires, and actions of the child. Such parents decide the policies by consulting their children's decisions and also give explanations for family rules. Their demands regarding orderly behavior and responsibilities are few. They neither present any ideal for the child to follow, nor are actively involved in the shaping of their child's behaviors and actions.

The child is able to differentiate between the positive and negative evaluations done by the parents. Based on this differentiation, s/he includes in the self only the actions and feelings that are approved by the parents or any other significant person and excludes the ones that s/he regards unworthy, or the ones that were disapproved. The degree of importance the adolescents place on certain characteristics of the self and the appraisal of her/his abilities in that area is the foundation for the overall self-concept (Harter, 1990). Self-concept consists of the views and beliefs a person has about herself or himself. It includes the attributes of the person and who and what the self is. Lowe (1961) refers to self-concept as one's attitude towards self, and according to Paderson (1965), self-concept is an organized structure of perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and values which an individual considers as a characteristic part of himself or herself.

During the period of adolescence, a person might feel disoriented about the prevailing thoughts and emotions, and at the same time, s/he might also discover certain things about self. This happens because in this stage the social roles played by the individual changes and s/he experiences change in physical, emotional, intellectual areas. Different levels of perceived self- concept have found to correlate with scholastic achievement, social competence, emotional

health, delinquency, and suicide (Hagborg, Masella, Harter, 1990, 1991; McCauley, Mitchell, Burke & Moss, 1988; Merrell, Cedenno & Johnson, 1993; Patton, 1991; Rosenberg, 1965; Sohlberg, 1989; Stivers, 1990).

In recent years, we have developed notable understanding of the fact that parenting behaviors and styles has marked influence on adolescent emotional and behavioral outcomes. A lot of empirical work has been done on the linkages between parenting and self-concept of adolescents. This area of study is important because the behaviors one exhibits in adulthood are somewhere affected by the parenting one gets during adolescence. There are arguments in favour and in opposition of the employment of mothers, but whichever direction one supports, it is very clear that employment of mother does affect the adolescent in a lot of ways. Juyal & Sharma (2015) made an attempt to examine the impact of parenting of employed mothers on the self-concept of their adolescents. They found significant difference between the parenting of homemaker and employed mothers. The result was in the favour of parenting behaviours of homemaker mothers in the dimension 'faulty role expectations vs. realistic role expectations'. They also found in their study that the adolescents of employed mothers had high self-concept (social, temperamental, and total self-concept). What a person thinks about herself/himself has a crucial role to play in the personality and development of that person. The formation of self-concept is an ongoing process, having its roots in the socialization of an individual, especially the kind of parenting a person gets. Whether one's parents were controlling and demanding, or understanding and facilitating, or lenient and uninvolved shapes up the personality of that individual. Mothers play an extremely vital role in the initial socialization of the child. If the mother is employed, it has its own implications on the upbringing and development of child and on its basis a lot of question arise, for instance, is there any difference in the rearing practices adopted by mothers who are employed and the mothers who aren't? If yes, then does it affect their adolescent children, especially their self-concept? Is there any difference in the self-concept of adolescents of working and homemaker mothers? Does gender difference exist in self-concept of adolescents?

The present study was done to find answers to these questions, the focus was on the parenting style and its effects on the adolescent.

Objectives:

- i. To evaluate parenting style of working and homemaker mothers with their adolescents.
- ii. To study self-concept of adolescents of working and homemaker mothers.
- iii. To see the effect of parenting style of mothers on the self-concept of their adolescents.

Method

Participants:

The sample consisted of a total of 60 mothers, of which 30 were working and 30 were homemaker. Their adolescent kids were also involved in the study to look for their self-concept. The age of mothers ranged from 35-45 years and that of adolescents was of the range 13-19 years.

Tools:

Parenting Style and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ- short version), developed by Robinson et al. (2001) was used to assess the parenting style of mothers. It consists of 32 items and for each item there's a five-point likert scale on which the respondent had to mark her level of agreement. The self-concept of adolescents was assessed using Self-Concept Questionnaire developed by Dr. Mukta Rani Rastogi. It has 51 items which have to be rated on a five-point scale. The scale not only measures self-concept of an individual as a whole but also 10 constructs of self-concept.

Procedure:

The willing subjects were approached and given a brief of the present study. The mothers were given separate instructions with the "PSDQ" and adolescents were given the "Self-Concept Questionnaire" with proper instructions for the same. The required amount of data was calculated, and scoring was done as per the stated norms. The appropriate statistical measures, t-test and ANOVA were applied, and interpretation of the obtained results was done. The confidentiality of the results was taken care of and the data was used only for the purpose of this study.

Results

Majority of both, working as well as homemaker mothers included in the study exhibited authoritative parenting style and only few of them exhibited authoritarian and permissive parenting. Therefore, it leads to the conclusion that there isn't any difference in the parenting style of working and homemaker mothers. Both category of mothers use logical consequences to communicate life lessons to their children and adopt a positive discipline at home to reinforce good behavior among their adolescents and prevent them from adopting certain behavioral problems.

A higher self-concept was observed in adolescents of working mothers, although this difference was very small. To look into the validity of the difference, t-test was done on the 2 samples- adolescents of working mothers and adolescents of homemaker mothers.

Table 1.1: Showing t-test between self-concept of adolescents of working and homemaker mothers.

<u>Working Status of Mothers</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>S.D</u>	<u>t-score</u>	<u>Df</u>	<u>Significance</u>
Working	30	170.04	20.71	-0.92	48	Insignificant at both levels (0.01 and 0.05)
Homemaker	30	174.52	14.63			

The t score indicates that there isn't any significant difference in the self-concept of adolescents of working and homemaker mothers, and so the observed difference could be ruled out. Thus, it can be said here that employment of mother has no advantage or disadvantage over the mothers who don't work in context of self-concept of their adolescent offsprings.

Researches have found out that children having parents with authoritative parenting style had better self-concept, psychological wellbeing and life quality than children having parents with authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. To investigate whether difference in self-concept of adolescents exists in the present study on the basis of parenting they got from their mothers a Two-Way Analysis of Variance was calculated.

Table 1.2: ANOVA Summary Table.

(Self-concept of adolescents of working and homemaker mothers exhibiting 3 different types of parenting, viz., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive.)

<u>Source of Variation</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>Df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Critical Values of F</u>
Working Status	273.78	1	273.78	0.84	4.07 7.24
Parenting Style	874.7	2	437.35	1.35	3.22 5.22
Interaction	211.42	2	105.71	0.33	3.22 5.12
Error	14283.88	44	324.63		
Total	15643.78	49			

None of the F-ratio came out to be significant, which means that neither the working status nor the parenting style adopted by the mothers have significant effect on the self-concept of adolescents.

This can be attributed to the fact that during adolescence, it's not just the parents who the adolescents interact with. Their world no more revolves around parents, like the way it happened during childhood, and now includes various other people and environments as well which seem to have an effect on the self and growth of individual. Adolescence is a stage of transition, it is a dynamic state where an individual is experiencing changes physically, emotionally and mentally. His/her relationships are changing, his/her perspectives are changing. All this is a lot to take in for them and so their concept of their own self keeps changing. At one point of time they may feel competent and confident and the other moment might have a feeling of inadequacy and inefficiency.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to study the parenting style of working and homemaker mothers and the self-concept of their adolescents. As already discussed in the previous chapter, the tools used for the conduction of study were PSDQ by Robinson et al., and Self-Concept Questionnaire by Mukta Rani Rastogi.

Majority of mothers in this study had authoritative approach to parenting and so their employment overall had no effect on the self-concept of the adolescent. Authoritative mothers are highly demanding as well as responsive. They exhibit more supportive behaviors than being rough and harsh with their children. They encourage communication, express the reasons behind the rules they've made, and use reasoning, power, and shaping to reinforce objectives. Research has shown that this style of parenting often results in positive adolescent outcomes and is observed to be the most effective and advantageous style of parenting among majority of families. This was also evident in the research findings as high number of adolescents who were a part of this study scored high on self-concept.

There wasn't any significant difference in the self-concept of adolescents with working and homemaker mothers. Also, the 3 different parenting styles doesn't seem to be producing any difference in the self-concept of adolescents. This was because although few mothers fell into the category of permissive parenting style, the scores were almost comparable and so there wasn't a clear-cut differentiation in the parenting. Although, observation of means gave a picture wherein adolescents of authoritative mothers had

highest self-concept, followed by adolescents of permissive mothers. The lowest self-concept was those of the authoritarian mothers. The reason behind no significant difference in the self-concept of adolescents with working and homemaker mothers could be that during adolescence, it's not just the parents who the adolescents interact with. Their world no more revolves around parents, like the way it happened during childhood, and now includes various other people and environments as well which seem to have an effect on the self and growth of individual. Adolescence is a stage of transition, it is a dynamic state where an individual is experiencing changes physically, emotionally and mentally. His/her relationships are changing, his/her perspectives are changing. All this is a lot to take in for them and so their concept of their own self keeps changing. At one point of time they may feel competent and confident and the other moment might have a feeling of inadequacy and inefficiency.

The instructions and commands given by the parents in the form of parenting style aid in the formation of several faulty beliefs in the individual which govern their personality and life decisions. A good knowledge about this can be obtained by the self-concept of an individual as it gives an insight into what a person thinks of herself/himself. By knowing the concept they hold about themselves, their faulty beliefs could be traced and could be worked upon to bring growth and positive change in their personality. Mothers of adolescents are more likely to be employed outside the home than are mothers of younger children. The effect of the mother's working on the mother-child relationship depends to a greater extent on the child's age at the time the mother starts to work. If she starts going to her work before any definite or defined relationship is formed with the child, and before the child becomes used to her presence, the effect of her employment will be minimal. If strong attachments have been formed, however, the child will suffer from maternal deprivation, behaviour problems, and a drop in academic performance etc. The work roles of parents are changing and it is believed that the mothers, adolescents, and the whole families as well have learnt to adjust to changing patterns. The families where the mothers are working share the workload of house and also the several responsibilities of the household. It is suggested that these changes in role expectations have decreased the stress associated with maternal employment, and so the adolescents too have become accustomed to their mothers working and have developed a better understanding of it. Emotionally mature person has the capacity to withstand delay in satisfaction of needs. S/he has the ability to tolerate a reasonable level of frustration. They believe in devising plans for long term and are proficient in of delaying or modifying her/his expectations regarding demands of circumstances and conditions. A child who is emotionally mature has the ability to effectively adjust with oneself, with family members, and with the peers from the school, society and culture. But one shouldn't understand maturity as something that is merely about the power and capacity for exhibiting such attitude and behavior, maturity also enables a person to enjoy it completely.

The current study contributes to the literature by addressing an important area of research. That is, the findings here present the readers with suggestions regarding the need to pay attention to parenting styles in future research endeavors, as styles of parenting as well as perceived styles of parenting may differ with the gender of the parent.. It also points to some key directions for research in future. Specifically, an examination of other factors that create an impact on the self-concept of the adolescents could be investigated. Additionally, future research could more vigorously investigate the various constructs of self-concept and how they are individually affected by the working status and parenting style of mothers. Furthermore, how factors such as parent ethnicity, marital quality, and child characteristics may mediate or moderate adolescent's outcomes could also be explored.

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