

# Comparison of Level of Depression and Anxiety of Female Students in High School Raised by Different Parenting Styles in Bandar Abbas

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## ABSTRACT

Depression is a mood disorder, which is associated with feelings of emotional despair, incompetence, guilt, fear and worthlessness. Anxiety is defined as a defused, unpleasant and often ambiguous sense of fear. This sense is often associated with one or more than one physical feelings (anxiety often manifests specific physical symptoms). Parenting styles are defined as the methods, which typical parents use to rear their children. This study aimed to compare levels of depression and anxiety of female adolescents whose parents used four different parenting styles to rear their children. This study is a kind of ex post facto study. The sample included 310 individuals who were selected using multistage stratified random sampling method. Parental behavior and SCL90 questionnaires were used as data collection tools. One-way ANOVA with Scheffé post-hoc test were used to analyze the results while SPSS was used for data analysis. The findings showed that there is statistically a significant difference between rates of depression in four parenting styles (0.0001). Scheffé post-hoc test showed that authoritarian group had the highest rate of depression while the authoritative group had the lowest rates of depression. The difference in the level of anxiety between four parenting styles was also statistically significant (0.0001). Scheffé's test showed that the authoritarian group had the highest rate of anxiety while the uninvolved group had the lowest rate of anxiety.

**KEYWORDS:** Depression, Anxiety, Adolescent, Parenting Style

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The "family" as a social system includes a group of individuals who live together and procreate and rear children through marriage. Throughout history, this social system and institution has played an essential role in human development and socialization (1). In all cultures, family gives (teaches) the pattern of "self" to the family members (2). The results obtained from numerous studies have shown that inappropriate family environment causes incompatibilities in the children. In contrast, healthy and appropriate family environment creates mental sufficiency and self-reliance in both children and adolescents (3). Since 1920, developmental psychologists were interested in how parents foster social development and competence in their children (or how the parents help their children in their social development and competence).

One of the most powerful approaches in this context is a study titled as parenting styles (4). Parenting styles are defined as the methods, which parents use to rear their children (5). Parenting styles are defined as the set of behaviors that describe the interaction between parent and the child over a wide range of situations. It is assumed that an effective and interactive environment is created through the parent-child relationship (6).

Certainly, dealing with children requires specific information and knowledge in every period of lives of the children, so that proper training can be provided in accordance with that era and the kind of children that the parents should deal with. Unfortunately, many families tend to rear their children based on their own experiences and observations regardless of the necessity mentioned above. In fact, parents should develop with their children as well, so that the parents can always understand their offspring and meet their children's needs at every stage of development of their children (5). The importance of how to establish proper relationship between the child and the family members, especially the parents, is one of the most important factors in a child's personality development (7).

Adolescence is considered as a high-risk stage of development in the adolescents because there may be various situation in which a variety of psychological problems may occur in this period (1). Adolescence is the most vital stage of human life due to major developments of adolescents in various aspects of their lives. In this period, the adolescents undergo three fundamental developmental stages defined as three broad domains including psychological, social and environmental changes. In general, adolescents are more vulnerable since they experience the vital developmental period referred to as identity crisis and role-taking stages. Female adolescents are particularly more vulnerable in this stage of their lives due to their particular characteristics or special circumstances they encounter in this period (8).

Family factors and parenting styles are considered as important factors in the etiology of mental disorders, especially depression and anxiety. Currently, in the present study, the researcher tends to find the answer to the following questions. Is there a significant relationship between parenting styles and depression and

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anxiety of girls? Which parenting style may lead to the least level of depression and anxiety in the adolescents? Which parenting style may lead to the highest levels of depression and anxiety in the adolescents?

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was an ex post facto kind of study. The statistical population included all high school students in Bandar Abbas in 2012-2013 academic years. A sample of 310 individuals was selected using multi-stage stratified random sampling method. Parental behavior and SCL 90 questionnaires were used as data collection tools.

After visiting Department of Education in District One and Two, ten schools were randomly selected. Then, reference letter were provided for the selected schools from the Department of Education. Then, these schools were visited. The principals of the chosen schools were informed of the goal of the research as well as the methods of the study. One class was randomly selected. In the class, the principal and vice-principal explained the goal and topic of the research to the students. Then, the students were asked to fill out the parental behaviors and SCL 90 questionnaires given their present status. The questionnaires were filled out anonymously. Then, the students did not need to worry about disclosure of their names or any information on their mental status to others. Since there were many questions in the questionnaires, the time given to the students to fill out the questionnaires was infinite. This matter was discussed with the schools' principals before and they consented to work corporately with the researcher in this matter. However, it took at least half an hour and at maximum forty minutes to complete this task. After the task was done, the researches appreciated the efforts of the participants and school administrators who had great cooperation in performing this study.

After the task was done and the questionnaires were filled out, each questionnaire was examined separately. Then, 31 questionnaires, which were not completely filled out or were fill out of boredom, were separated from rest of the questionnaires. Then, the remaining 310 questionnaires were entered in SPSS for data analysis.

In analysis of collected data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The descriptive statistics methods, which were used in this study, included frequency, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum scores, charts and tables. The inferential statistical methods, which were used in this study, included one-way analysis of variance with Scheffe's ad hoc test.

## 3. RESULTS

In this section, descriptive indexes of study variables have been presented. In table 1, percentage distribution of individuals of the samples reared by various parenting styles has been given.

According to Table 1, as it is observed, 9.32% were reared by authoritative parenting styles while 32.3% were reared by permissive parenting styles, 11.9% were reared by uninvolved parenting styles and 22.9% were reared by authoritarian parenting styles in this study. The diagram relevant to parenting styles is presented as below.

**Table 1.** Percentage distribution of individuals of the samples reared by various parenting styles

Statistical Indicators parenting styles	Frequency	Percentage
Authoritative	102	32.9
Permissive	100	32.3
Uninvolved	37	11.9
Authoritarian	22.9	71
Total	310	100

### Investigating the Hypotheses of the Research

The First hypothesis: There is a significant difference between depressions (level of depression) of the girls raised by four various parenting styles.

In order to analyze this hypothesis, the one-way analysis of variance for the scales in four parenting styles was used. The results obtained from this analysis are presented in the following table.

**Table 2.** Summary of analysis of the results of one-way analysis of variance of Depression Scale in four parenting styles

Indicators	Sum of squares (SS)	Degree of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (MS)	F	sig	
Depression	Between groups	157.67	3	52.56	112.04	0.0001
	Within groups	143.54	306	0.47		
	Total	301.21	309			

According to the above table, as it is observed, level of significance was 0.0001 and the F-value was obtained as 112.4. This indicated that there are significant differences between levels of depression in the four parenting styles. The results of these differences are given in the following table.

**Table 3.** The results of Scheffe test for depression in the four parenting styles

Scale	Mean	Parenting style	1	2	3	4
Depression	1.35	Authoritative	-	0.0001*	0.0001*	0.0001*
	1.96	Permissive	0.0001*	-	0.329	0.0001*
	2.21	Uninvolved	0.0001*	0.329	-	0.0001*
	3.27	Authoritarian	0.0001*	0.0001*	0.0001*	-

According to the table and the obtained level of significance, the results showed that the differences between means of depression in authoritative (1.35) and permissive (1.96) parenting styles, authoritative and uninvolved (2.21) parenting styles, authoritative and authoritarian (3.27) parenting styles are all significant in 0.0001 level of significance. Moreover, the differences between means of depression in uninvolved and authoritarian parenting styles, permissive and authoritarian styles were all significant in 0.0001 level of significance. In other words, the mean scores in depression obtained by the individuals raised by the four parenting styles were different. The results showed that the method of the authoritative parenting style had the least rate of depression while the authoritarian parenting style had the highest rate of depression.

**The Second hypothesis:** There is a difference between levels of anxiety of the girls raised by four different parenting styles.

In order to analyze this hypothesis, one-way analysis of variance for the scales in four parenting styles was used. The results of this analysis are given in the following table.

According to table 4, as it is observed, t level of significance was 0.0001 and the F-value was obtained as 154.01. This indicated that there are significant differences between levels of anxiety in the four parenting styles. The results of these differences are given in the following table.

**Table 4.** Summary of the results of one-way analysis of variance for the scales in four parenting styles

Indicators	Sum of squares (SS)	Degree of freedom (df)	Mean of squares (ms)	F	sig	
Anxiety	Between groups	242.94	3	80.98	154.01	0.0001
	Within groups	160.90	306	0.53		
	total	403.84	309			

**Table 5.** The results of Scheffe test for anxiety in the four parenting styles

Scale	Mean	Parenting style	1	2	3	4
Anxiety	1.38	authoritative	-	0.122	0.0001*	0.0001*
	1.11	Permissive	0.122	-	0.0001*	0.0001*
	0.28	Uninvolved	0.0001*	0.0001*	-	0.0001*
	3.07	Authoritarian	0.0001*	0.0001*	0.0001*	-

According to the above table, the results showed that the differences between means of anxiety between authoritative (1.38) and uninvolved (0.28) parenting styles and authoritative and authoritarian (3.07) parenting styles are significant in 0.0001 level of significance. Moreover, the differences between means of anxiety between permissive (1.14) and uninvolved parenting styles and permissive and authoritarian parenting styles were significant in 0.0001 level of significance. The results showed that the authoritarian parenting style had the highest level of anxiety while the uninvolved parenting style had the lowest level of anxiety.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The results showed that differences in rates of depression among adolescent girls raised by four different parenting styles were statistically significant. Given these findings, it can be stated that each one of the parenting styles lead to different levels of depression in the children. The Scheffe's ad hoc test showed that the authoritarian group had the highest rate of depression while the authoritative group had the lowest rates of depression. These results are in lines with the findings obtained by Goldman et al. They showed that ill behavior parents use strict disciplinary strategies more than appropriate parental strategies such as granting, arguing and encouraging what accomplishment the children have gained. Moreover, Crook et al concluded from the findings of their research that the individuals with depression have assessed their parents as hostile and rejecting kind of parents [9]. The findings obtained by Crook et al are consistent with those obtained in this study. Darling [4] found out that there is highest level of depression in authoritarian group. In addition, he found out that the children whose parents are permissive show the lowest rate of depression. The findings obtained by Darling are consistent with those obtained in this study. The results obtained from analysis of this hypothesis are in line with those obtained by Hoseini Fard [10]. He stated that mothers of children with mood disorders use authoritarian styles more than other styles. The findings obtained by Seifi Gandmani [11] also showed that lower level of depression in the children result from the fact that either parents or at least one of the parents either accepted their children or optimally controlled their adolescents. It may also be due the consistency between the parenting styles applied by the parents. They showed that minimal control and acceptance, or apparent inconsistency between the parents may

lead to the worst outcomes. Numerous studies have shown that authoritative parenting style is associated with high levels of adaptability, psychosocial maturity, psychosocial competence, self-esteem and academic achievement in the children [12]. Zuo et al. [13] also believed that there is a direct relationship between parental warmth and empathy of the teenagers. To explain this finding of the former research according to theoretical basis, it can be stated that the parent - child relationship affect the psychological status of children. As a result, the relationship between parents and the children is the key factors in mental - social development of the children. It also helps the children to meet their inherent abilities. If the quality of relationship increases, the mental health of children may improve as well.

Arguably the most important factors that affect the quality of the parent - child relationship is the parenting style used by the parent. Since a significant proportion of the daily lives of teenagers are spent in the family environment (since teens are with parents most of the times during a day), the impacts resulted from the time spent in family environment and the relationship with parent plays an important role in mental states of the children, including psychopathological symptoms, such as depression. Significant finding of the present study refers to imperative role of the authoritative parenting style in prevention of adolescent depression. Authoritative parents value both self-autonomous and disciplinary attitudes because they believe that reasonable control and determined freedom cause adolescents to achieve the best levels of growth. It also helps them to internalize the rules and principles of correct behavior. It also gives them the opportunity to take responsibility for their own behavior and actions. This style of training likely leads to self-reliance, self-esteem in the children. It also creates sense of social responsibility in the children [14].

In contrast, authoritarian parents have children who are dependent on either their parents or others [15]. These kind of parents less often respond to both thoughts and feelings of their children. These parents give their children less freedom. Children of authoritarian parents are less happy, they have less academic achievement and their relationships with their peers is too weak [6].

Different levels anxiety in the girls raised by four different parenting styles was also statistically significant. Given these findings, it can be stated that each one of the parenting styles can lead to different levels of anxiety in the children. Scheffe's ad hoc test showed that authoritarian group showed the maximum rate of anxiety while the uninvolved group showed the least level of anxiety. These results are in line with those obtained by Becker. He suggested that limitations set by parents might lead to controlled and appropriate social behavior. However, it might also result in fear, lack of independence, confusion, repressed hostility. It might also lead to numbness in intelligence activities to some extent [16]. The findings of this research are also consistent with those obtained by Mehrabi [17]. He found out that the authoritarian parents set restrictions, rules, and regulations without any justification. They taught the children that they should accept some matters without any reason and deliberation. This kind of behavior in authoritarian parents underlies the occurrence of fear in the children. In contrast, negligent and indifferent parents are less responsive and demanding [4]. They do not get involved in their children's education. It seems that they do not care about their children. Even, it is probable that they do not ever accept their children. These parents are often immersed in their problems; therefore, they cannot devote their time and energy to the task of categorization or establishment of certain rules [18].

Given the above findings and the important role of adolescence on the fate of each individual, it is noteworthy that many severe mental disorders begin in adolescence.

This is a high-risk period in human life. The adolescents are vulnerable to mental disorders. Educating the parents in this regard and making them aware of these issues in this field is essential. The appropriate measures to deal with the children should be taught to the parents. The importance of awareness and education of the parents in proper raising of children should be focused on as well. The parents should have reasonable expectations from their children. They also should demand their children to do what they are able to do. This creates high level of self-esteem and self-concept in the children. The researcher hopes that to some extent she has identified the factors relevant to family environment, which cause problem for the adolescents. She hopes that this research will help to identify behavior problems in adolescents.

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