

## **Parenting and Coping Styles: A research on Adolescent Well-Being**

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### **Abstract:**

Parenting is an indispensable and a constant aspect of life of almost every child. Parents implement a constellation of attitudes and strategies towards their children which could have both deleterious or fortunate effects on their well-being. Thus, to overcome the baleful aspects, children often deploy an array of approaches called coping strategies which are aimed at obliterating the problem itself. The present study aims to examine the relationship between Parenting and Coping styles and Psychological Well-Being among adolescents. The study was conducted on 50 adolescents who were administered with Scale of Parenting style (Gafoor& Kurakkan,2014); Coping Response Inventory (Moos, 1993) and Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff ,1996). Correlation design was employed. Correlational analysis revealed that Parental control and Seeking alternative rewards showed positive and negative significant relationship with Psychological Well-Being respectively. Further, regression analysis depicted that Parental control contributed the most to the criterion variable.

**Keywords:** *parenting styles, coping strategies, psychological well-being*

### **Introduction**

Adolescence is the age when an individual strives to become an integral part of society (identity establishment), an age of gradation from interdependence to intra-dependence, and an age that underscores a constant renegotiation with peers, relatives, community and especially with parents. Adolescence, as it is used today, has a much broader meaning than primitive definitions that attempted to describe it as the age of “puberty”. Now the meaning expands to mental, emotional and social maturity in addition to physical maturity. In describing a typical adolescent of today, Frank (1949) has posited that almost all adolescents suffer anxiety and insecurity, are confounded and uncertain of their roles, are constantly

looking for validation from peers, excluding those who are not the member of their 'clique' and are rebellious against family prohibitions and requirements. Effective coping can lead to a better psychological well-being which is a combination of feeling good and functioning effectively. Often adolescents are exerted with parental demands and aspiration which leads to considerable amount of stress. This stress exists because of a conceptual imbalance between parenting requests and child rearing practices and also affects other significant areas in life.

Hostility towards family members, especially parents is one of the conspicuous attitudes of adolescents. Here, parental influence also plays a pivotal role during this age of identity search and transition and these behaviours have powerful influences on successful trajectory of their children. The parent-child relation is in a state of constant flux. Both positive and negative influence can have a prolong effect on an adolescent's cognitive, emotional and physical development. A myriad empirical data substantiates this strong/robust parental influence on children. Adolescents whose parents criticize, nag, punish severely and controlled their outside activities, were found to be quarrelsome, troublemakers at school, quick-tempered, tense, nervous and disobedient (Anderson, 1990)

Adolescents gain and build upon values based on those of their parents. When parents are supportive listeners, caring and active in their adolescent's life then there is less home life stress, allowing the adolescent to have a positive and esteemed attitude (Schmuck, 2011). Another most imperative part of parenting is nurturance which is parents' responsiveness to their child's daily activities and interests, making age appropriate demands, granting autonomy, investing themselves emotionally, applying inductive discipline and providing an affectionate and secure ambience for stimulating interpersonal growth during adolescent years. (Huver, Otten, de Vries, & Engels, 2010) Parental nurturance has been shown to be related to positive child and adolescent behaviours, school readiness, academic advancement, idealised self-concept, and development that is beneficial to other and the surrounding environment. (Barnett, Kidwell, & Leung, 1998; Finkenauer, Engels, & Baumeister, 2005; Locke & Prinz, 2002; Mowder & Shamah, 2009; Chapman, 2012)

Parenting styles are the pool of strategies that parents employ in child rearing. A proposed topology divides parenting styles into four constructs. Authoritarian parents prioritize blind obedience, stern discipline and control children through punishments-which may include the withdrawal of parental affection. Inversely, permissive parenting is characterized

by high degree of warmth and freedom provided by parents to their children. These parents enforce rules miserly and are high on acceptance. Contrarily, authoritative parents impart clear standards, apply firm rules and provide autonomy accordingly. They often encourage independence and raise their children in a democratic environment. (Baumrind, 2005) While, Laxness and inattentiveness is a peculiar characteristic of negligent parenting. These parents are generally overwhelmed by their own ordeals and are emotionally distant from their children. (Maccoby & and Martin, 1983)

Parenting styles portray the efforts of parents to educate their children in variety of domains of life. But at the same time, it poses a challenging environment to adolescents as they have to make exhaustive efforts to overcome parental expectations. Further, adolescents most of the times find it difficult to comply to the objections and restrictions put forth by their parents. The behaviours that are condoned by adolescent children today are condemned by their parents, thus resulting in friction in parent- child relationship. Some adolescents consider these situations and changes as threatening while others see them as a challenge and then cope with them.

Coping refers to the application of cognitive and behavioural efforts in an attempt to eradicate, abate the intensity, mask the negative effects of the stressors or demands that are appraised as devitalizing or taxing. Two main conceptual approaches have been used to classify coping resources. One approach emphasizes the focus of coping (problem-focused or emotional-focused) and the other approach emphasizes the method of coping (cognitive or behavioural). (Moos, 1993) Coping strategies that are aim at extirpating the problem itself, with behaviours that are directed to gather knowledge about the crux of the problem, alter commitments and beliefs and increase individual's awareness are problem focused. While, strategies that call for psychological changes designed to primarily limit the degree of emotional disruption caused by an event are emotional focused. (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)

Coping productively with the challenges posed by parents and other stressors in the environment can contribute fairly in an adolescent's psychological well-being. Often such stress exists because of a conceptual imbalance between parenting requests and child rearing and affects other significant areas in life. When coped up with these stressors, an adolescent excel in domains like independence and self-determination, manages one's life, becomes open to new experiences, starts believing that one's life is meaningful, a positive attitude towards oneself and one's past life, and retains high quality relationships. There's been a plethora of

research on it, where in relationship among dispositional resilience, the dimensions of psychological well-being and coping strategies on a sample of 183 adolescents was studied and a positive correlation was found between high level of positive attitude and strategies directed towards problem solving, while it was negatively related to avoidance coping. Conversely, high level of helplessness/ alienation was related positively to avoidance. Furthermore, majority of the six dimensions of psychological well-being showed a negative correlation with avoidance coping and positive correlation with problem solving coping. Moreover, personal growth was positively correlated with reinterpretation. (De, Maria, & Sagone, 2016)

A previous study examined the role of emotion regulation and mindfulness as modulators between parenting stress and parenting styles and coping strategies on 400 adolescents. The results showed through the application mindfulness and emotion regulation skills on adolescent could evade the harmful effects of parenting stress and inept parenting styles. Hence proving that mindfulness and emotion regulators work as modulators between coping styles, parenting stress and parenting styles. (Kheradmand & Ghahhari, 2018)

A recent study revealed the few parenting styles (reasonable and decent) positively and (pampering and autocrat) negatively were negatively correlated to psychological well-being. Furthermore, it was also inferred that academic achievement partially and significantly mediated between parenting styles and psychological well-being. (Yerdaw, 2019)

### **Rationale**

The present research aims to examine the relationship between Parenting and Coping styles and Well-Being among adolescents. Parenting and coping styles play an imperative role and devote a lot to well-being of an individual. Parenting styles has been associated with a number of developmental outcomes, of social adjustment, school achievements, self-efficacy, which can be either positive or negative depending upon the style exhibited. Likewise, assuming that coping strategies are important for people's well-being, a plethora of researches have focused on studying whether some coping mechanisms are more adaptive than others. Thus, the present research aims to fill this lacuna/ address the gap in the eastern literature by examining the relationship between Parenting styles and Coping strategies and Well Being among adolescents.

## **METHODOLOGY**

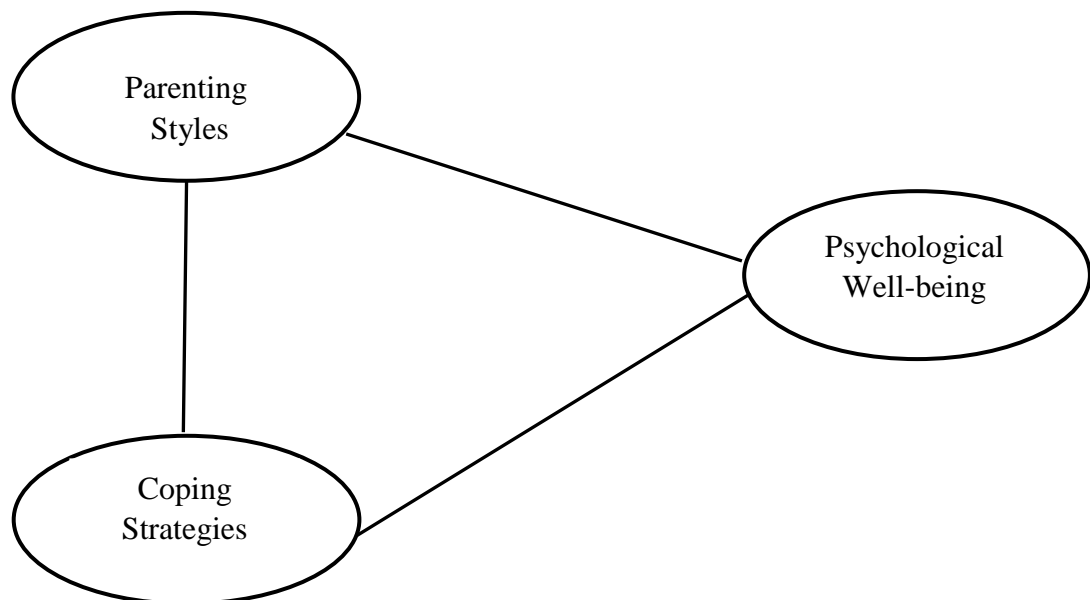
### **Objectives of the research**

- To examine the parenting styles and psychological well-being among adolescents.
- To investigate the coping strategies and parenting styles of adolescents.
- To explore the effects of predictor variables (parenting styles, coping strategies) on psychological well-being.

### **Hypotheses of the research**

- There will be no significant relationship between Parenting styles and Psychological Well-Being.
- There will be no significant relationship between Coping styles and Psychological Well-Being.
- There will be no significant contribution of predictor variables (Parenting Styles, Coping Strategies) on criterion variable (Psychological Well-being).

### **Research Design**



### **Sample**

The total sample consisted of 50 adolescents pursuing under graduation. Locale of the present study were Delhi- NCR and Jaipur, Rajasthan.

- **Inclusion Criteria**

- Adolescents between the age range of 18-22.
- Adolescents pursuing under-graduation.

- **Exclusion Criteria**

- Adolescents having single parents.
- Adolescents below the age of 18 or above the age of 22.
- Adolescents with any psychological disorders.
- School going adolescents and adolescents pursuing post-graduation.

**Tools**

- Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff et al., 2007)
- Scale of Parenting Styles (Gafoor & Kurakkan, 2014)
- Coping Response Inventory (Moos, 1993)

**Results**

**Table 1: Descriptive Statics**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<b>PR</b>	50	121.4400	28.33485
<b>PC</b>	50	143.1000	24.72151
<b>PWB</b>	50	173.1600	25.99636
<b>LA</b>	50	10.9600	4.08062
<b>PRC</b>	50	11.8600	3.56863
<b>SG</b>	50	8.1200	4.80493
<b>PS</b>	50	11.7000	3.17033
<b>CA</b>	50	11.0400	4.08561
<b>SR</b>	50	9.6200	3.68610
<b>AR</b>	50	9.9200	3.88529
<b>ED</b>	50	9.4200	3.40522

<sup>1</sup> PR: Parental Responsiveness; PC: Parental Control; PWB: Psychological Well-being; LA: Logical Analysis; PRC: Positive Reappraisal; SG: Seeking Guidance; PS: Problem Solving; CA: Cognitive Avoidance; SR: Seeking Alternative Rewards; AR: Acceptance of Resignation; ED: Emotional Discharge.

		PR	PC	PWB	LA	PRC	SG	PS	CA	SR	AR	ED
<b>PR</b>	Pearson Correlation	1										
<b>PC</b>	Pearson Correlation	.800**	1									
<b>PWB</b>	Pearson Correlation	.137	.301*	1								
<b>LA</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.073	-.020	.045	1							
<b>PRC</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.140	.049	.250	.431**	1						
<b>SG</b>	Pearson Correlation	.228	.258	-.072	.069	.190	1					
<b>PS</b>	Pearson Correlation	.063	.023	.263	.278	.561**	.169	1				
<b>CA</b>	Pearson Correlation	.143	.118	-.137	.176	.237	.141	.029	1			
<b>SR</b>	Pearson Correlation	.042	-.053	-.369**	.243	.170	.240	.020	.319*	1		
<b>AR</b>	Pearson Correlation	.038	-.072	.112	.176	.090	.514**	.150	.417**	.249	1	
<b>ED</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.028	-.012	.024	.392**	.384**	.376**	.367**	.148	.359*	.419**	1

**Table 3: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.715 <sup>a</sup>	.512	.386	20.36302

a. Predictors: (Constant), LA, PC, AR, PS, SR, CA, ED, SG, PRC, PR

**Table 4: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16943.270	10	1694.327	4.086	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	16171.450	39	414.653		
	Total	33114.720	49			

a. Dependent Variable: PWB

b. Predictors: (Constant), LA, PC, AR, PS, SR, CA, ED, SG, PRC, PR

**Table 5: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	95.398	23.977		3.979	.000
	PR	-.140	.198	-.152	-.707	.484
	SR	-2.094	.932	-.297	-2.247	.030
	ED	-.348	1.126	-.046	-.310	.759
	AR	3.831	1.079	.573	3.552	.001
	SG	-2.290	.807	-.423	-2.839	.007
	CA	-2.135	.888	-.335	-2.404	.021
	PS	.811	1.237	.099	.656	.516
	PC	.607	.226	.577	2.683	.011
	PRC	2.509	1.238	.344	2.027	.050
	LA	-.341	.838	-.054	-.407	.686

a. Dependent Variable: PWB

### Discussion

The present research was undertaken with the aim to examine the relationship between Parenting and Coping Styles and Psychological Well-Being. Firstly, it was hypothesized that there will be no significant relationship between parenting styles (parental responsiveness, parental control) and psychological well-being. The correlation analysis revealed that parental control dimension ( $r=.301$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) is significantly and positively correlated with psychological well-being, which clearly indicates that when parental control is perceived high, i.e. stern affirmative behaviour towards children, then it will help in better perception of psychological well – being (Table 2). This can be further supported by pervious researches



that cited that authoritarian parenting style is more widespread and popular among non-Western or Asian cultures and had protective effects. (Smetana, 2017)

Secondly, it was hypothesized that there will be no significant relationship between coping styles and psychological well-being. On analysing the correlation, it was found that seeking alternative rewards dimension ( $r = -.369$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) was negatively and significantly correlated with psychological well-being (Table 2). Thus, from the results it could be inferred that when an adolescent will attempt to create an alternative source of satisfaction by indulging in a substitute activity, then psychological well-being will be perceived low. A study done on undergraduates further support these findings, wherein, avoidance strategies (seeking alternative rewards) showed a negative impact on psychological well-being. (Gustems-Carnicer & Calderón, 2013)

The last hypothesis tentatively predicted that there will be no significant contribution of predictor variables (Parenting Styles, Coping Strategies) on criterion variable (Psychological Well-being). The regression analysis showed that the predictor variables showed a significant contribution of 51.2 percent (Table 3) to the criterion variable, but out of all the predictor variables, parental control contributed most to the well-being of an adolescent (Table 5). This indicates that monitoring and rule setting behaviours that are directed towards increasing a goal-oriented and independent self, (Alfonso, Marta, & Charo, 2019) served better to psychological well-being of adolescents. This further could be supported by a recent empirical work that Indian parents give more weightage to higher obedience. This behaviour is perceived as protective and is further witnessed with pronounced proximity. (Albert et al., 2007; (Varalakshmi, et al., 2017). A research done on Indian families supported that parental control is an expression of indulgence and proximity (Sondhi, 2017)

The present paper is not fully congruent with previous studies in terms of the idea of Parental control as a positive contributor to psychological well-being, but at the same time is a pioneering work in a sense that it sends out useful implications of control dimension.

Adolescence is the age of experimentation and with the given dilemma that adolescents face, parents should provide them with a firm and consistent, age appropriate structure of rules.

Also, contrary to the ideas of parental control, a research done on Chinese undergraduates substantiates the fact that adolescents whose parents portrayed higher control, reported having better social well-being and relations with peers and family members. (Tseng, 2015)

Moreover, with the rapid emergence of digital world, many behaviours and of adolescent population needs to be modified and guided to a better understanding. A longitudinal study

found that control was considered of paramount importance in causing decrement of internet addiction in young adolescents. (Shek, Zhu, & Ma, 2018)

### **Implications**

- Parents could employ strategies like monitoring and rule setting behaviours and inculcate approached focused coping in children using strategies like scaffolding (*i.e.*, assistance during problem solving) for a better Psychological Well-Being.
- Findings were based on how adolescents perceive the parenting styles of their parents. Hence, the research provides a further ground for carrying out a study on parental perception of their child rearing strategies.
- While the researcher studied Psychological Well-Being of adolescents reared by both parents, an attempt by subsequent researchers could be made to study the Psychological Well-Being of adolescents reared by single parents.

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