



Relationship of Parent Child Relationship with Anxiety and Self-esteem among Young Adults

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Abstract

The current study investigated closely at the anxiety levels, self-esteem, and parent-child relationships among 203 young adults between the ages of 18 and 30. Snowball and random sampling methods, both online and offline, were used to collect the data, and Pearson's correlation coefficients were employed. The findings indicate that there is a relatively positive correlation (r

= 0.407) between parent-child connections and self-esteem, suggesting that higher levels of self-esteem are associated with relationships that are supportive. Conversely, a smaller link was found between anxiety and self-esteem ($r = 0.159$), suggesting a slight positive correlation. Furthermore, a limited inverse association was suggested by the very little negative correlation ($r = -0.042$) discovered between reported anxiety levels and the quality of parent-child interactions. The study observed gender disparities in the way participants perceived parent-child interactions, utilizing a sample consisting of 36 male individuals. The study advances our knowledge of the intricate interactions among young people's anxiety levels, self-esteem, and parent-child relationships. To clarify underlying causes and guide focused treatments for fostering mental health and positive family dynamics, further study is required.

Keywords: *Parent-Child Relationship, Self-Esteem, Anxiety Levels, Young Adults, Gender Differences*

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between parents and children is crucial in determining how individuals develop in many areas, most notably in the areas of anxiety and self-worth. Anxiety is a condition marked by emotions of worry and anxiety that can impact behavioral, emotional, and cognitive functioning during various phases of life. Like this, perception, behavior, and self-image are greatly influenced by self-esteem, which reflects one's feeling of value and worth. Scholars underscore the significance of first parent-child interactions in shaping these notions, seeing them as fundamental to the process of psychological growth. A child's attachment, communication, and

emotional regulation patterns are established in the parent-child interaction, which plays a critical role in determining the direction of future psychological development.

It is critical to comprehend the complex relationships that exist between anxiety, self-worth, and parent-child dynamics to provide full knowledge and successful adult intervention. This dissertation explores the intricate relationships between adult self-esteem, anxiety, and parent-child interactions to close research gaps. By examining these connections, it hopes to advance knowledge of the ways that early experiences inside the family affect the formation of psychological health and provide guidance for future directions in support and intervention.

Parent-Child Relationship

A key component of human emotional development is the bond between a parent and child, which is formed from birth and changes dynamically over time. Through a complex web of contacts, feelings, and experiences, this link is developed until it eventually becomes a stable attachment characterized by emotional openness, trust, and responsiveness. Parent-child relationships change as children mature and develop to meet their evolving needs and skills. Parents take on new responsibilities as educators, carers, and role models. Children travel through the process of individuation while they seek independence and depend on their care giver for support and direction.

Parent-child relationships have a significant influence on psychological health, influencing aspects like emotional regulation, self-worth, and social relationships. Strong relationships give kids a safe base on which to explore the world and help them become resilient in the face of hardship. While parental discord can result in psychological problems including depression,

anxiety, or attachment disorders, positive parental support helps children develop self-efficacy and adaptive coping strategies. The long-lasting impact of early experiences endures into adult relationships, shaping emotional closeness, conflict resolution, and communication styles over the course of a person's life.

Alizadeh and Talib (2011) research titled “Relationship between Parenting Style and Children’s Behavior Problems” investigated the link between parenting styles (Authoritative, Permissive, and Authoritarian) and children's behavioral problems in Iran, an area with limited prior research on this topic. Using the Parent Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and Children's Behavior Checklist (CBCL), 681 mothers of primary school children in Tehran participated. The results reveal significant correlations between Authoritative parenting and lower levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms.

Effect of Parent-Child Relationship on Child Anxiety

The mental health and anxiety-resilience of a child are greatly influenced by the interaction between their parents and themselves. A stable bond between a parent and child, in accordance with attachment theory, lays the groundwork for emotional stability and promotes self-assurance and trust in care giver. Youngsters who have stable attachments are better able to handle stress and uncertainty because they are more likely to learn appropriate coping mechanisms, manage their emotions well, and ask for assistance when they need it.

The parent-child relationship fosters the development of emotional management abilities as well. Children are better able to recognize, express, and control their emotions when their parents provide stress-reduction strategies, validate their feelings, and provide a good example for

healthy emotional regulation. On the other hand, inconsistent or invalidating responses to emotions can impair emotional regulation, which may result in increased worry and unhealthy coping mechanisms.

A child's vulnerability to anxiety is further influenced by parental modelling and parenting style. Children who have parents who are kind, encouraging, and supportive of their autonomy tend to have lower anxiety levels, which helps them feel competent and self-sufficient. On the other hand, anxiety can be exacerbated by overbearing or critical parenting that damages a child's sense of independence and value. Youngsters also pick up skills from watching how their parents deal with stress and anxiety. While maladaptive behaviors can be internalized when parents exhibit nervous or avoidant reactions to stressors, adaptive coping strategies are more likely to be adopted when parents model resilience and effective problem-solving.

The larger family context and outside variables have a big influence on emotional well-being in addition to the bond between parents and children. A child's feeling of security and coping skills can be influenced by their siblings, other family members, and the dynamics of the home. Furthermore, the tools accessible for controlling anxiety and connecting with support networks are shaped by socioeconomic level, cultural norms, and community support. Understanding how these elements are interrelated highlights the need of comprehensive strategies for fostering kids' emotional growth and resilience in the face of anxiety, highlighting the necessity of caring connections, skillful parenting, and a positive social environment.

Sahithya and Raman (2021) researched titled "Parenting Style, Parental Personality, and Child Temperament in Children with Anxiety Disorders—A Clinical Study from India", found significant differences between two groups in parenting style, parent personality, and child temperament, with anxiety disorder positively associated with father's permissiveness and

negatively with mother's authoritativeness and child's sociability. A combination of parenting styles and child temperament explained 69% of the variances in child anxiety disorders. Additionally, significant associations were observed between parental personality, child temperament, and parenting style, with parent and child characteristics explaining 14%–46% of the variances in parenting styles. Overall, these findings align with Western studies highlighting the influence of child temperament and parenting styles on child outcomes, emphasizing the importance of considering these factors in the clinical management of anxiety disorders.

Bradford et al. (2016) research titled “The Association between the Parent–Child Relationship and Symptoms of Anxiety and Depression: The Roles of Attachment and Perceived Spouse Attachment Behaviors” investigated at the moderating effect of perceived spouse attachment behavior’s as well as the association between the parent-child bond, attachment security, and adult symptoms of anxiety and depression. An analysis of data from 680 married couples showed that insecure attachment, a result of unsatisfactory parent-child interactions, had an indirect impact on symptoms of anxiety and depression. Furthermore, the influence of attachment insecurity on depressive symptoms in husbands was mitigated by perceived spouse attachment behavior’s, which were linked to depression in both couples. These results demonstrate the intricate interactions between marital bonds, attachment security, and parent-child relationships.

Effect of Parent-Child Relationship on Child's Self-Esteem

A child's self-esteem is mostly shaped by the nature of their relationship with their parents. A solid and caring bond between a parent and child establishes the foundation for a child’s healthy

sense of self-worth, according to attachment theory. Parents create a sense of security and self-worth in their children by providing them with constant love, care, and emotional support. This helps the youngsters develop good self-images and believe in their own potential.

The validation and acceptance of parents are crucial in forming a child's sense of self-worth. Positive self-concept is reinforced in children by positive feedback and affirmation from parents, which reinforces their sense of competence and value. On the other hand, parental disapproval, criticism, or invalidation can undermine a child's sense of self-worth and cause them to feel inadequate and self-conscious. A child's view of themselves and their skills is greatly influenced by the way their parents interact with and react to them.

Furthermore, a child's sense of themselves is greatly influenced by parental modelling of self-worth. Youngsters watch and take in their parents' attitudes, convictions, and actions towards their own value. Parents who are confident and respectful of themselves set a good example for their children, while parents who are self-critical or have low self-esteem might unintentionally give their kids a bad impression of themselves. A child's feeling of self-acceptance and belonging is mostly shaped by the emotional support and acceptance they receive from their parents, which serves as the foundation for a strong sense of self-worth. On the other hand, a child's sense of self-worth can be damaged by rejection, neglect, or conditional affection, which can result in feelings of inadequacy and insecurity.

Moreover, the influence of parents on a child's self-esteem encompasses not just the specific parent-child bond but also wider familial dynamics and external factors. Cultural norms, siblings, and extended family members all influence the messages and self-perceptions that kids absorb. Furthermore, children's conceptions of value, success, and attractiveness are shaped by media representations and societal standards, which affects their self-esteem. Understanding these

complex impacts emphasizes how crucial it is to provide supportive surroundings and encourage a good self-image both inside the family and in the broader societal milieu. Carers and society at large may help children to build resilient self-esteem and face life's problems with confidence and self-assurance by cultivating a culture of acceptance, encouragement, and validation.

Chauhan and Poonam (2023) researched on paper titled "Role of Parenting Style of Mothers of Rural India in Self Esteem of Children" "This research explores the relationship between parenting styles and self-esteem in children aged 8 to 15 years. Conducted in both rural and urban areas of Haryana, the study utilized the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and Parenting Style Four Factor Questionnaire. Findings indicate a positive correlation between authoritative and permissive parenting styles and children's self-esteem, while authoritarian and uninvolved parenting styles show a negative correlation. Most parents were found to follow an authoritative parenting style. Overall, the study highlights the importance of parenting styles in shaping children's self-esteem.

Mulyadi et al. (2016) researched on paper titled "The Role of Parent-child Relationship, Self-esteem, Academic Self-efficacy to Academic Stress." The study looked at the connections between academic stress, academic self-efficacy, self-esteem, and parent-child relationships among homeschooling children. It was discovered that although the parent-child bond had an indirect effect on academic stress via self-esteem, it had no direct effect on academic stress through academic self-efficacy. Academic stress experienced by homeschooling students was significantly predicted by self-esteem, the parent-child bond, and academic self-efficacy. The discovery that the parent-child connection, rather than academic self-efficacy, predominantly affected self-esteem was especially significant in respect to academic stress. This emphasizes the critical role parents

play in helping homeschooling kids develop positive self-esteem, which in turn influences how stressed out they are about their academics.

Methodology

Aim

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between parent-child relationship quality, anxiety levels, and self-esteem among young adults.

Hypothesis

- There will be a negative correlation between parent-child relationship quality and anxiety levels among young adults.
- There will be a positive correlation between parent-child relationship quality and self-esteem among young adults.

Sample

A total of 203 individuals from across Delhi in the study, aged from 18-30 years.

Measures

- ***The Parent Adult-Child Relationship Questionnaire (PACQ)***

A self-report tool called the PACQ was created to gauge how well adult children see their relationships with their parents as adults. The PACQ has a strong internal consistency reliability, according to studies, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.66 to 0.91. This suggests that the questionnaire's questions measure the same underlying concept.

- ***Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI)***

The 21-item Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) is a self-report tool used to gauge the intensity of anxiety symptoms. The internal consistency dependability of the BAI has been demonstrated, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha values that are usually more than 0.90. A great degree of internal consistency is indicated by this.

- ***Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)***

A 10-item self-report questionnaire called the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is used to gauge overall self-esteem. Research has demonstrated that the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale has a high degree of internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values usually surpassing 0.80. A great degree of internal consistency is indicated by this.

Procedure

Each participant was appreciated for their assistance after learning about the goal of the study and filling out the questionnaire using Google Forms. The subjects took standardized psychological examinations.

RESULT**Table 1***Correlation coefficient between PACQ and RSES and BAI, and BAI and PACQ*

Correlation Matrix							
		Parent Adult-Child Relationship		ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM		Beck Anxiety Inventory	
Parent Adult-Child Relationship	Pearson's r	—					
	df	—					
	p-value	—					
	N	—					
ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM	Pearson's r	0.407		—			
	df	200		—			
	p-value	< .001		—			
	N	202		—			
Beck Anxiety Inventory	Pearson's r	0.159		-0.042		—	
	df	200		200		—	
	p-value	0.023		0.556		—	

		N		202		202		—	
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The correlation coefficients (Pearson's r) between the scores on the Beck Anxiety Inventory, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Parent-Child Relationship are displayed in the table. The direction and degree of these associations are shown by the correlations. The quality of the parent-child connection and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale have a somewhat favorable association ($r = 0.407$), indicating that an individual's self-esteem increases with the improvement of the parent-child relationship. Its dependability is demonstrated by the statistical significance of this association ($p < 0.001$).

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Beck Anxiety Inventory, on the other hand, show a small positive connection ($r = 0.159$), suggesting that higher self-esteem may be linked to somewhat higher anxiety level. Finally, there is a minimally inverse association between reported anxiety levels and the quality of the parent-child relationship, as seen by the very weak negative correlation ($r = -0.042$) between the parent-child relationship and the Beck Anxiety Inventory score. These results shed important information on the complex relationships between anxiety, self-esteem, and parent-child interactions and how these relationships affect psychological well-being.

Table 2*Shows the results of Independent Samples T-Tests Comparing Females and Males on Psychological Variables**PACQ, BAI, and RSES*

<i>Independent Samples T-Test</i>										
			Statistic	df	P	N	Mean difference		SE difference	
Pacq		Student's t	-2.511	201	0.013	—	-6.397		2.548	
RSES		Student's t	-0.215	201	0.830	202	-0.123		0.572	
BAI		Student's t	-0.713	201	0.477	202	-1.365		1.916	

Note. $H_a \mu_{\text{Female}} \neq \mu_{\text{Male}}$

Perceptive results were obtained from the independent samples t-tests comparing the variables PACQ, BAI, and RSES between males and females. Notably, a significant difference was found on the PACQ variable, with females scoring lower than males ($t = -6.397$, $p = 0.013$), showing that there may be differences in how parents and children are seen based on gender. The BAI and RSE variables, on the other hand, did not show any significant differences ($t = -1.365$, $p = 0.177$; $t = -0.215$, $p = 0.830$, respectively), suggesting that gender may not have a major impact on anxiety levels or self-esteem in this situation. These findings emphasize the significance of taking gender variations in psychological factors into account and point out possible areas where males and females vary from one another. Insights into gender-related variations in psychological traits and behaviors might be gained via more study examining these differences, which would help in the creation of focused therapies to address possible gender inequalities in mental health and wellbeing.

DISCUSSION

In a cohort of 203 young adults, ages 18 to 30, the study looked at the connections between anxiety levels, self-esteem, and parent-child interactions. Data were collected using both online and offline snowball and random sampling techniques, and Pearson's correlation coefficients were used for analysis.

The results showed a significant positive association ($r = 0.407$) between self-esteem and the quality of parent-child relationships, suggesting that supportive parent interactions are linked to greater levels of self-esteem. Additionally, but very weakly ($r = -0.042$), a small inverse connection was found between reported anxiety levels and the quality of parent-child interactions.

In conclusion, this study advances our knowledge of the intricate interactions that young people's anxiety levels, self-esteem, and parent-child relationships have. The results highlight the value of positive parent-child interactions in promoting greater levels of self-worth, which may reduce anxiety. To clarify underlying causative mechanisms and guide specific treatments meant to support young people's mental health and healthy family dynamics, more research is necessary.

McLeod et al. (2007) researched on paper titled "Examining the association between parenting and childhood anxiety: A meta-analysis." The combined analysis of multiple studies revealed that parenting explains only a small 4% of the variance in child anxiety. Methodological differences in how child anxiety and parenting were conceptualized and assessed were found to contribute to inconsistent findings in the literature. Parental control was identified as having a stronger impact on child anxiety than parental rejection, with specific aspects such as autonomy-granting showing significant influence. However, the overall modest association between parenting and child anxiety suggests that other factors beyond parenting play a more substantial

role in explaining children's anxiety. Therefore, understanding the origins of child anxiety requires identifying additional influential factors.

Friederike and Ulrich (2013) researched on the paper titled “Does low self-esteem predict depression and anxiety? A meta-analysis of longitudinal studies.” The study found out the correlation between low self-esteem and depression is well-established, yet there remains inconsistency in understanding its nature. One theory, the vulnerability model, suggests that low self-esteem precedes and contributes to the development of depression. In contrast, the scar model posits that depression leads to a decline in self-esteem. Additionally, it's unclear whether these models apply exclusively to depression or extend to anxiety as well. To address these questions, we conducted a meta-analysis of longitudinal data from 77 studies on depression and 18 studies on anxiety, spanning diverse age groups from childhood to old age.

Conclusion

The study's findings shed light on the complex relationships that exist between adult anxiety, self-esteem, and parent-child relationships. Important details on the strength and direction of these associations may be found in the correlations that are evaluated using Pearson's r coefficients. First, there was a slight positive correlation ($r = 0.407$) between the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Parent Adult-Child Relationship, indicating that higher levels of self-esteem are associated with supportive parent-child interactions. However, additional research only revealed weak positive correlations ($r = 0.159$) between the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Beck Anxiety Inventory scores. This suggests that, despite initial speculation, there may not be a strong correlation between higher anxiety levels and higher self-esteem. Additionally, a very weak

negative correlation ($r = -0.042$) was identified between the parent-child relationship and the Beck Anxiety Inventory score, indicating a marginally inverse link between the reported anxiety levels and the quality of the parent-child relationship.

All things considered, these findings provide some evidence in favor of the vulnerability model with regard to anxiety, self-worth, and relationships between parents and children. While anxiety and self-esteem are clearly correlated, as is the strong parent-child bond, it is less obvious how self-esteem and anxiety levels are related. The gender disparities in psychological characteristics that exist between males and females are more evidence of the need of accounting for these differences. This suggests that gender dynamics may have an impact on psychological experiences and perceptions.

In brief, this research contributes to our understanding of the intricate linkages that exist between adult anxiety, self-esteem, and parent-child dynamics. More study analyzing these connections in a variety of groups and situations is required to elucidate the underlying mechanisms and direct targeted therapies intended to enhance mental health and healthy family dynamics.

The study's conclusions, which suggested a negative link between young adults' anxiety levels and self-esteem and a positive association between young adults' self-esteem and the quality of parent-child relationships, partially verified the study's assumptions. The quality of the parent-child connection was shown to have a more complex association with anxiety levels, suggesting that variables other than parenting may play a significant role in explaining anxiety levels in adulthood. This runs counter to the theory that self-esteem and the quality of parent-child relationships are positively correlated.

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