



To examine the role of Parenting Style in development and maintenance of Anxiety and its influence on Coping Styles

¹Zoya Majeed

Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Noida, India.

majeedzoya52@gmail.com

²Dr. Garima Joshi

Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Noida, India.

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the connection between the parenting style in development of anxiety and its influence on the coping style among individuals from (16-25 years old). A sample of 100 participants was analyzed using correlation coefficients. The findings supported the positive influence of authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and clear expectations. Children raised with this style exhibited significantly lower anxiety ($r=-0.626$) and developed more effective coping mechanisms ($r=0.519$). However, the results for authoritarian and permissive styles were more nuanced. Authoritarian parenting, with its rigid structure, was associated with higher anxiety ($r=0.505$) and less effective coping ($r=-0.406$). Interestingly, permissive parenting, despite the lack

of clear boundaries, was linked to lower anxiety ($r=-0.469$) and better coping skills ($r= 0.527$). These results emphasize the need for additional study to fully comprehend parenting styles, which go beyond binary classifications of positive or negative.

Key words: *Parenting Styles, Anxiety, Coping Mechanisms, Coping*

INTRODUCTION

In the intricate tapestry of human development, the emergence and persistence of anxiety represent a multifaceted and pervasive aspect of mental health. Anxiety disorders, which comprise a range of diseases marked by excessive anxiety, concern, and avoidance behaviors, provide substantial challenges to people of all ages. The dynamic interplay of genetic predispositions, environmental influences, and psychological factors contributes to the complexity of anxiety and etiology. Among the myriad environmental factors, parenting style has emerged as a focal point of exploration in understanding how early experiences within the familial context shape the trajectory of anxiety-related outcomes.

The current research embarks on a comprehensive examination of the nuanced relationship between parenting style and the development and maintenance of anxiety. Beyond mere recognition of parental influence, this exploration delves into the intricate mechanisms through which parenting practices contribute to the intricate tapestry of anxiety disorders. Furthermore, the investigation extends its purview to the realm of coping styles, aiming to elucidate how the foundations laid in childhood reverberate throughout an individual's life, influencing their ability to navigate and manage anxiety-inducing situations.

Anxiety disorders are a growing concern, impacting millions of children and adolescents worldwide. These conditions are characterized by excessive and persistent worry, fear, and

physical symptoms that interfere with daily life. Understanding the factors that contribute to the onset and maintenance of anxiety is crucial for both prevention and therapy. A significant influence on a child's emotional well-being comes from the early caregiving environment, particularly parenting styles. This dissertation delves into the intricate relationship between parenting styles, anxiety disorders, and the coping mechanisms children employ to manage their anxieties.

Theoretical Framework

Based on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory and John Bowlby's Attachment Theory, this exploration delves into how early caregiver-child relationships and observational learning contribute to the development of coping strategies and anxiety levels.

Attachment Theory

The mid-1900s saw the development of attachment theory by John Bowlby which serves as a cornerstone in understanding the significant effect on emotional development of early caregiver-child connections. According to Bowlby, attachment is a biologically ingrained behavior that ensures the infant's survival by establishing a secure bond with a primary caregiver. This early attachment influences the internal working model, shaping expectations about relationships and the world.

In the context of parenting styles, Attachment Theory posits that the quality of attachment formed during infancy plays a pivotal role in emotional well-being and coping mechanisms throughout life. The authoritative parenting style, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and reasonable expectations, aligns seamlessly with the principles of secure attachment.

Authoritative parents provide a safe and supportive environment, fostering a sense of security

and trust. Studies by Bauermeister (2007) and Steinberg et al. (1992) consistently highlight the positive correlation between authoritative parenting and lower anxiety levels in children.

Conversely, authoritarian, or permissive parenting styles may contribute to insecure attachment and maladaptive coping mechanisms. Authoritarian parenting, characterized by strictness and low responsiveness, may hinder the development of a secure attachment, resulting in heightened anxiety and emotional dysregulation (Chorpita & Barlow, 1998). Lack of clear expectations and boundaries in parenting might make a child more susceptible to anxiety-related problems by making it harder for them to regulate their behavior and solve problems. (Jones and Prinz, 2005).

Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura created the Social Learning Theory in the 1960s. It focuses on the acquisition of behaviors through observational learning and modeling. According to this theory, children learn by observing significant others in their environment, with parents serving as primary role models. The behaviors exhibited by parents are internalized by children, influencing their cognitive processes, attitudes, and coping strategies.

In the context of parenting styles and anxiety, Social Learning Theory emphasizes the role of parents as influential models for their children. Authoritative parents, through modeling effective and adaptive coping mechanisms, contribute to the development of positive strategies in their children. This may include demonstrating problem-solving skills, emotional regulation, and effective communication. Studies by McLeod et al. (2016) and Bandura (1977) highlight the impact of parental behaviors on the acquisition and persistence of anxiety-related behaviors in children. Positive reinforcement of adaptive coping mechanisms within the family context

contributes to their continued use, while maladaptive strategies may persist if reinforced. Understanding how Attachment Theory and Social Learning Theory intersect with various parenting styles provides a comprehensive framework for exploring the intricate dynamics that shape anxiety development and coping strategies across the lifespan. The framework of theory serves as the platform for empirical studies examining the connections among parenting practices, attachment types, and anxiety consequences in children and adolescents.

Parenting Styles

Authoritative Parenting

Authoritative parenting, marked by high levels of warmth, responsiveness, and support, coupled with clear and reasonable expectations, represents a nurturing approach that fosters emotional security and self-regulation. Parents adopting this style provide a balance between structure and autonomy, allowing children to develop a sense of competence and confidence in handling challenges. Studies consistently highlight the positive impact of authoritative parenting on anxiety outcomes. For instance, Bauermeister's study (2007) explored the impact of parenting styles on anxiety development, revealing a strong correlation between authoritative parenting and lower anxiety levels in children. The secure attachment and adaptive coping strategies that flourish in authoritative households contribute to emotional resilience and overall well-being.

Authoritarian Parenting

In contrast, authoritarian parenting is characterized by high demand and low responsiveness. Parents adhering to this style tend to be strict, controlling, and directive in enforcing rules. Chorpita and Barlow's study (1998) delved into the relationship between parenting styles and anxiety, uncovering a significant association between authoritarian

parenting and elevated anxiety levels in children. The rigid nature of this parenting style may hinder the development of secure attachment, fostering an environment that contributes to heightened anxiety and emotional dysregulation. Children raised in authoritarian households may experience increased stress due to the lack of emotional warmth and flexibility in parental expectations.

Permissive Parenting

Permissive parenting, characterized by high warmth and low demands, represents a lenient and indulgent approach. Parents adopting this style are reluctant to enforce rules, allowing children considerable freedom. Jones and Prinz's study (2005) explored the impact of permissive parenting on coping strategies, revealing challenges in the development of effective coping mechanisms. The absence of clear boundaries and expectations in permissive households may contribute to difficulties in self-regulation and problem-solving, potentially increasing vulnerability to anxiety-related issues. While permissive parents offer emotional support, the lack of structure may hinder the development of crucial coping skills, leaving children ill-equipped to navigate stressors.

Integration and Implications

Integrating these parenting styles within the broader theoretical framework, it becomes evident that the quality of attachment formed during infancy, influenced by parenting practices, significantly shapes anxiety outcomes and coping strategies. Authoritative parenting aligns with secure attachment and fosters adaptive coping, while authoritarian and permissive parenting may contribute to insecure attachment and maladaptive coping. Understanding the implications of these parenting styles on anxiety is crucial for developing targeted interventions. Recognizing

the potential long-term effects of parenting styles and considering individual differences, cultural influences, and intergenerational patterns are essential for crafting comprehensive strategies. By doing so, researchers and practitioners can contribute to the creation of effective interventions that support individuals in developing adaptive coping mechanisms and mitigating the impact of anxiety-related difficulties.

Coping Styles and Anxiety

Understanding coping styles is crucial for comprehending how individuals navigate and manage anxiety. Adaptive coping strategies, as observed in authoritative parenting, contribute to resilience, self-efficacy, and a proactive approach to challenges (Jones and Smith, 2009).

Children raised in authoritative households are more likely to approach difficulties with adaptability, reducing the likelihood of anxiety-related difficulties. Conversely, maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance, emotional suppression, and negative rumination, are prevalent in individuals raised in less supportive environments.

Adaptive Coping Strategies

Research by Jones and Smith (2009) with a sample size of 350 adolescents aged 13-17 highlighted the positive impact of authoritative parenting on the development of adaptive coping strategies. Children raised in authoritative households were more likely to approach challenges with self-efficacy, adaptability, and resilience, reducing the likelihood of anxiety-related difficulties.

Maladaptive Coping Strategies

Maladaptive coping mechanisms offer a false sense of control or escape in the short term but create more problems overall. These unhealthy coping mechanisms can include substance abuse, where people use drugs, alcohol, or other substances to numb their emotions, avoidance,

where people put off solving problems by delaying or withdrawing from situations, and self-harm, where people hurt themselves physically or psychologically. Acknowledging the influence of cultural factors, long-term effects, individual differences, and intergenerational patterns is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics shaping anxiety development and coping styles.

Cultural Factors

Recognizing that parenting styles and their impact on anxiety can vary across cultures is essential. Cultural norms, values, and societal expectations play a role in shaping parenting practices and subsequently influence the development of anxiety and coping styles.

Long-term Effects

While the presented studies provide insights into the immediate impact of parenting styles on anxiety and coping, exploring the long-term effects is crucial. Following individuals over extended periods allows researchers to observe how coping styles evolve and adapt, providing a more nuanced understanding of the enduring influence of early caregiving experiences.

Individual Differences

Acknowledging that not all individuals respond similarly to parenting styles is imperative. Examining individual differences, such as temperament and personality traits, can enhance our understanding of why some individuals may be more resilient or vulnerable to anxiety despite similar parenting experiences.

Intergenerational Patterns

Investigating intergenerational patterns of parenting styles and their impact on anxiety can uncover cycles that perpetuate across generations. Understanding how parental experiences

influence their own parenting practices contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the familial transmission of anxiety-related tendencies.

Intergenerational Patterns and Cultural Influences

Understanding intergenerational patterns of parenting styles and their influence on anxiety outcomes provides a holistic perspective on how familial experiences perpetuate across generations. Parents often draw from their own childhood experiences when shaping their parenting practices, creating a potential cycle of parenting styles within families. Investigating how these patterns unfold over time helps uncover the mechanisms through which anxiety-related tendencies may be transmitted across generations. Furthermore, cultural influences play a pivotal role in shaping parenting practices and, consequently, the development of anxiety in children. Cultural norms, values, and societal expectations shape the context within which parenting occurs. Different cultures may prioritize distinct parenting styles, influencing the balance between warmth and strictness. Studying how cultural factors interact with parenting styles to impact anxiety outcomes is essential for developing culturally sensitive interventions.

Incorporating these considerations into research and practice allows for a more nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics at play. Cultural variations in parenting styles may influence the prevalence and manifestation of anxiety in diverse populations. Additionally, recognizing the role of intergenerational patterns helps identify opportunities for breaking cycles of maladaptive parenting and anxiety transmission.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Khosravi et al. (2023) investigated the associations among 102 patients with feeding and eating disorders (FED) in Zahedan, Iran, between parental practices, maladaptive coping mechanisms, and disordered eating attitudes and behaviors (EAB). The study found correlations between an authoritarian parenting style, female gender with disordered EAB, and overcompensation and avoidance coping methods using Hayes' PROCESS macro. The results validated the hypothesis that the authoritarian parenting styles of mothers and fathers on disturbed EAB are mediated by avoidance and overcompensation coping methods. The study calls for more research on additional risk factors and highlights the significance of evaluating parenting philosophies and coping strategies as critical risk factors in the emergence and maintenance of higher levels of disturbance in eating attitudes and behaviors among people with feeding and eating disorders.

Ayodele and Abegunde (2023) examined how adolescent university students' coping strategies were affected by their perceptions of gender, parenting approaches, and peer pressure. Conducted at the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria, the survey research included 200 undergraduate students aged 15-25 years. Results revealed that gender and parenting styles did not significantly influence coping behavior, and there was no joint influence of parenting styles and peer pressure on coping behavior. The study highlighted the importance of maintaining a good and balanced relationship with school stakeholders for coping behavior, emphasizing the inbuilt coping mechanisms within adolescents. While acknowledging the minimal influence of peer groups, gender, and parenting styles on coping behavior in school, the study emphasized the significance of good parenting for overall success in academic settings.

Liu et al. (2021) investigated the impact of positive parenting styles on coping strategies among 3784 middle school students. The study found that positive parenting correlated with the

development of positive coping styles but showed no association with negative coping styles. Social support and self-efficacy were identified as partial mediators, with subjective support positively predicting self-efficacy. This positive self-efficacy, in turn, further predicted positive coping styles, forming a multi-chain mediated model. The research contributes valuable insights into how positive parenting styles influence middle school students' coping mechanisms through the mediating factors of social support and self-efficacy.

Nur Ay and Maçkali (2021) investigated the mediation function of avoidance and compensatory coping strategies in the adult population's link between emotional eating and perceived parenting styles. They collected data using the Young-Rygh Avoidance Inventory, Young Compensatory Inventory, Emotional Eating Scale, and Young Parenting Inventory on 301 individuals. Age, BMI, counter dependency and rebellion as overcompensating coping strategies, and avoidance behavior as a diversion were all significant predictors of emotional eating. Coping strategies did not, however, appear to have a mediation effect on emotional eating behavior according to the built variable model. To fully understand the psychological processes underlying emotional eating, the study emphasized the significance of taking early maladaptive schemas into account. This could lead to the development of behavioral and emotional therapies.

Kheradmand and Ghahhari (2018) investigated the impact of examining the moderating effects of emotion control and mindfulness on the coping mechanisms of adolescents raised in stressful and demanding environments. The study, which included a sample of 400 teenagers from Tehran, showed that parental stress and coping methods, parenting styles, and coping techniques were strongly mediated by mindfulness and emotion regulation. The results highlighted the possibility for enhanced emotion regulation and mindfulness activities to lessen the negative consequences of bad parenting techniques. This research contributes valuable insights into the nuanced interplay between parenting dynamics, emotion regulation,

mindfulness, and adolescents' coping strategies.

Tani et al. (2018) explored the relationship between childhood perceptions of parenting approaches and adult capacity for emotion regulation. The study comprised 100 individuals and used the Parental Bonding Instruments, Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, and Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale. Perceived parental care, as opposed to perceived parental overprotection, had a stronger correlation with the ability to regulate emotions, according to the results of hierarchical multiple regression analyses. Notably, perceived mother care was associated with less maladaptive emotion regulation techniques and a particular dimension—a lack of emotional awareness—while perceived paternal care was associated with a variety of issues in emotion regulation. The long-term effects of parenting practices on adults' capacity to control their emotions are highlighted by this study.

METHODOLOGY

AIM

To examine the role of parenting style in development and maintenance of anxiety and its influence on coping styles

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- a) To identify a relationship between parenting styles and anxiety
- b) To identify a relationship between parenting styles and coping styles

HYPOTHESIS

H1. There is a relationship between parenting styles and coping styles.

H2. There is a negative correlation between parenting styles and anxiety.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sampling technique employed will be convenience sampling, allowing for the recruitment of participants from various clinical settings and online forums to investigate into how parenting affects the emergence and maintenance of anxiety as well as how it affects coping mechanisms in early adulthood.

SAMPLE SIZE

The study will recruit about 100 individuals aged 16 to 25 years to investigate the relationship between parenting style in development and maintenance of anxiety and its influence on coping styles within this specific age group.

TOOLS

The respective are the tools used in the conduction of the research:

- ***Coping Scale***

In 2013, a test was administered by Hamby, Grych, and Banyard to evaluate behavioral, emotional, and cognitive problem-solving strategies. The 13 coping items in the questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "Not true about me" and 4 denoting "Mostly true about me." y. Strong correlations between the main sample's measures of well-being, such Subjective Well-being ($r = .53$) and Posttraumatic Growth ($r = .65$), and other measures of regulatory strengths, like Anger Management ($r = .57$) and Endurance ($r = .63$), demonstrated the validity of the findings.

- ***Parental Authority Questionnaire***

Buri's (1991) thirty-item Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) was shortened by Hussain Al Kharusi, Said Aldhafri, Ali Mahdi Kazem, and Abdulqawi Alzubaidi. It was a two-form questionnaire with five Likert-type points, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to rate the mother's and father's parental authority. There were ten items on each form for each parenting style. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between the second sample's PAQ-Short Version scores and their PAQ-Long Version scores were computed independently for the father and mother to assess the concurrent validity of the PAQ-Short Version scores.

- ***Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A)***

As developed in 1959 the initial scale used to gauge how severe anxiety symptoms are. The 14-item scale has a total score range of 0–56, with the items ranging from Not present (0) to Severe (4). A score of less than 17 denotes mild severity, 18–24 mild to moderate severity, and 25–30 moderate to severe. The scale's internal consistency was (0.921).

RESULT

Table 1

Correlation

		Anxiety	Coping Styles
Authoritative	Pearson Correlation	-.626**	.519**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001
	N	100	100

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This correlation analysis shows a strong negative relationship between **authoritative parenting**

and **anxiety levels**, while indicating a positive association with **adaptive coping styles**.

Table 2

Correlations

		Anxiety	Coping Styles
Authoritarian	Pearson Correlation	.505**	-.406**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001
	N	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This correlation analysis indicates a significant positive relationship between **authoritarian parenting** and **anxiety levels**, coupled with a negative association with **adaptive coping styles**.

Table 3

Correlations

		Anxiety	Coping styles
Permissive	Pearson Correlation	-.469**	.527**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001
	N	100	100

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This correlation analysis reveals a significant negative correlation between **permissive parenting**

and **anxiety levels**, alongside a significant positive correlation with **coping styles**.

DISCUSSION

The study explored the relationships between parenting styles, anxiety levels, and adaptive coping styles in a sample of 100 participants. The analysis utilized correlation coefficients to explore these connections.

Authoritative Parenting and Emotional Well-being

The findings revealed a strong negative correlation ($r = -.626$) between authoritative parenting and anxiety levels, which supports the hypothesis 2 suggesting that children raised with this parenting style tend to experience lower anxiety. Authoritative parents strike a balance between warmth and clear expectations. This warm and structured environment fosters a sense of security and predictability, potentially reducing vulnerability to anxiety-provoking situations. Additionally, open communication encouraged by authoritative parents may allow children to express their anxieties and receive support, further promoting emotional well-being.

The analysis also revealed a positive correlation ($r = .519$) between authoritative parenting and adaptive coping styles supporting hypothesis 1. This indicates that children raised in authoritative households are more likely to develop healthy strategies for managing challenges. Authoritative parents often model effective coping mechanisms themselves and encourage open communication, which allows children to express anxieties and develop their own coping repertoires.

Contrasting Parenting Styles

The correlations for authoritarian and permissive parenting styles paint a contrasting

picture. A significant positive correlation ($r=.505$) emerged between authoritarian parenting and anxiety levels, suggesting that children raised with this style tend to experience higher anxiety. Authoritarian parents enforce strict rules with little explanation or open communication. This rigid environment may create feelings of insecurity and hinder the development of problem-solving skills, potentially contributing to higher anxiety levels. Additionally, the lack of open communication might prevent children from expressing their anxieties and seeking support.

Conversely, a negative correlation ($r=-.406$) emerged between authoritarian parenting and adaptive coping styles. This indicates that children raised with this style are less likely to develop healthy coping mechanisms. The lack of autonomy and rigid structure may limit opportunities for children to learn and practice effective coping skills. Interestingly, the analysis revealed a significant negative correlation ($r=-.469$) between permissive parenting and anxiety levels, and a positive correlation ($r=.527$) with coping styles. This might seem counterintuitive, as permissive parenting often lacks clear expectations and boundaries. However, this style may allow children more autonomy and freedom to explore coping mechanisms on their own. It is critical to understand that helpful parenting is not the same as lenient parenting. While children may develop some coping skills independently, the lack of guidance and support from permissive parents might hinder the development of truly effective coping mechanisms.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study explored the connections between parenting styles and children's emotional well-being in a sample of 100 participants. The analysis revealed interesting patterns, that children raised with authoritative parents, known for warmth and clear expectations, showed significantly lower anxiety ($r=-0.626$) and developed more effective coping mechanisms ($r=0.519$). This supports the positive influence of authoritative parenting on emotional well-

being. The findings for authoritarian and permissive styles deviated from initial expectations. Authoritarian parenting, with its rigid rules, was linked to higher anxiety ($r = 0.505$) and less effective coping ($r = -0.406$). Permissive parenting, despite the lack of clear boundaries, was associated with lower anxiety ($r = -0.469$) and better coping skills ($r = 0.527$).

REFERENCES

- Ay, Fatma Nur, and Zeynep Maçkali. "Perceived parenting styles and emotional eating: The mediating role of coping styles." *Dusunen Adam The Journal of Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences* (2021).
- Ayodele, Israel O., et al. "Coping Behaviour Among Adolescent University Students: Examining the Influence of Perceived Parenting Styles, Gender and Peer Pressure." *Gender and Behaviour*.
- Kheradmand, Mahdi, et al. "Relationship between parents' child rearing style and emotion-regulation skills in adolescents: moderating role of parenting stresses." *Social Determinants of Health* 4.2 (2018): 93-99.
- Khosravi, M., Asl, S. T. S., Anamag, A. N., Langaroudi, M. S., Moharami, J., Ahmadi, S., ... & Kasaeiyan, R. (2023). Parenting styles, maladaptive coping styles, and disturbed eating attitudes and behaviors: a multiple mediation analysis in patients with feeding and eating disorders. *PeerJ*, 11, e14880.
- Tani, Franca, Debora Pascuzzi, and Rosalba Raffagnino. "The relationship between perceived parenting style and emotion regulation abilities in adulthood." *Journal of adult development* 25 (2018): 1-12.
- Tuo, L. I. U., et al. "The influence of positive parenting style on coping style of middle school students: the mediating role of social support and self-efficacy." *Studies of Psychology and Behavior* 19.4 (2021): 507.