Relationship between Child Rearing Styles and Anxiety in Parents of 4 to 12 Years Children

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was study of relationship between child rearing styles and anxiety rate in parents. The method was correlation and the statistical population was parents who have 4 to 12 years old children in west Tehran and Karaj. The sample of this research was 161 mothers that selected by multistage cluster sampling method. To achieving the purpose, used of Baumrind parenting styles and Cattell’s IPAT anxiety questionnaires. The results showed that there is significant negative relation between authoritarian parenting style and self-sentiment development subscale, and between permissive parenting style and ergic tension subscale. Also there is significant positive relation between authoritative parenting style and ego strength subscale. Therefore, it is very important to consider child rearing styles to reduce parents and children anxiety.

Keywords: Child rearing, Anxiety, Authoritative, Permissive, Authoritarian;

1. Introduction

Parenting is a new area drawn the attention of researches since 1970s and, from then on, a variety of approaches have been developed for preventing and resolving the problems of parent, child, and family with an emphasis on treatment and prevention (Stambor, 2006).

The most considerable model concerning the conceptualization of adolescent-parents relationship is developed by Bamrind (2005) and in the framework of parental control. Parenting behaviors are based on response and application, in the model. Response or reaction implies the ability of parents in paying attention to the needs of adolescent through support and warmth. When these conditions are provided, the adolescent is nurtured with a sense of independency, individuality and personality. A person developing and growing up in such environment learns how to adapt himself with social rules and limits.

Researchers done have shown the relationship between high stress of parents and current problems in child-parents functions and recently evidences have been presented regarding the negative effects of high stress of parents on children's behavior (Davise & Carter, 2008). In a study by Cnnic, Gaze, & Hoffman(2005) anticipated again highly stressful events of life as well as the distress of parenting in pre-school children for a biennial period. The
outbreak of stress disorders is almost twice further in children with highly stressful parents. Results of Mcclure,Brennan, Hammen, & Le Brocque’s study (2001) approved the findings of previous studies concerning the high rate of anxiety disorders in highly stressful parents only about mothers. Kaitz&Maytal(2005) also showed that children of highly stressful mothers are subjected to evolution difficulties including anxiety disorders, anxious parenting behavior, and disruption in child-parent interaction. Results of Whaley,Pinto, &Sigman’s studies (1999) showed that anxious mothers had lower warmth toward their children comparing to control group and less encouraged their autonomy. Study of Farzadfard&Houman (2008) approved the above results regarding the relationship between the parenting style and anxiety of mothers and also found out that parenting skills training led to the significant decrease of mothers’ tension.. Van Gastel,Legerstee, & Ferdinand(2009) also showed that high stress level and current anxiety of parents during life are related to the anxiety of children. But only the two factors were capable of anticipating anxiety of children. In addition, overprotective parenting is negatively related to the anxiety of children.

And, results of several studies again demonstrate the effect of Authoritarian (Taheri, 1994; FarziGolfazani, Mohammad Esmaeil, Raoufian, &Asgari, 2003; Zahrakar, 2008; Seyfi, Kalantari, &Fath, 2009) and Permissive (Zahrakar, 2008; Seyfi, Kalantari, &Fath, 2009) parenting styles on the anxiety of children. Also, overprotective attitude of parents especially mothers increase the anxiety of children (Rorka&Morrisa, 2008; Van Gastel, Legerstee, & Ferdinand, 2009; Verhoeven, Bögers, & van der Bruggen, 2011). Application of severe and ineffective disciplinary methods by mothers again increases their anxiety (Robinona& Cartwright-Hatton, 2008; Gallagher& Cartwright-Hatton, 2008). Sadoughi,Vafayi, &Rasoulzadeh(2007) found out that the susceptibility of sensory processing in interaction with inappropriate parenting methods lead the individual to levels of anxiety.

Researches indicate that inappropriate parenting styles bring about various consequences for children and parents; for instance, SayyedMousavi,NaadAli, &Ghanbari(2008) found out that the children of parents with Permissive parenting style have significantly aggressive and law breaking behaviors. Also, Yousefi (2007) gained similar results with respect to Authoritarian style. Rahmani,SayyedFatemi,Rezaiy, Sedaghat, &FathiAzar(2005) found out that the students with parents of non-Authoritative parenting style had different behavioral problems.

Several studies indicate destructive effects of Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles and positive effects of Authoritative style on children. Among these studies is the study of Khouynejad,Rajayi, &Mohebrad(2006) they found out that Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles led to the feeling of loneliness in girls. Sadrosadat,Shams,&Emameipour(2005) also showed that families with Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles have low familial function. Bagherpour,Bahrami, FathiAshtiani, Ahmadi, &Ahmadi(2007) showed that mental health and educational achievement is more among the children nurtured by Authoritative style comparing to children nurtured by Authoritarian or Permissive styles.

2. Method

2.1. Statistical population, Sample and sampling method

Regarding the examination of relationship between variables, method of this study is of correlation type. Statistical population of the study comprised parents having 4 to 12yr children living in Karaj and West Tehran. In this study, 200 parents were selected among the parents living in Karaj and West Tehran using multistage cluster sampling method. Questionnaires were distributed at schools and kindergartens among the parents and after being filled out and scored, incomplete ones were discarded and a number of 161 questionnaires were reviewed. In the end, data was analyzed using SPSS software and descriptive statistics methods as well as Pearson correlation coefficient.

2.1.1. Instruments

Cattle’s IPAT Anxiety Scale: To measure anxiety, Cattle’s IPAT Anxiety Scale (Dadsetan& Mansour, 1989) was applied with 40 questions and two sub-scales including situational anxiety (overt) and personal anxiety (covert).
Also, the above questionnaire included 5 sub-scales as self-sentiment development, protension, ergic tension; guilt proneness and ego strength which, in sum, measure anxiety. In Spielberger's study (1970) reliability of the scale is reported as 0.91 and 0.90 for personal anxiety sub-scale and 0.93 and 0.91 for situational anxiety sub-scale, and reliability of retest is reported as 0.86 and 0.73 for personal anxiety and 0.63 and 0.16 for situational anxiety based on Cronbach’s Alpha (Fekri, ShafiAbadi, SanayiZaker, &Harirchi, 2007). Falahi (2002) used a copy of the scale in Iran and reported a Cronbach’s Alpha 0.86 for it. Also, reliability of the scale was gained as 0.88 and 0.84 for Cronbach’s Alpha and split-half, respectively (Darvishi, 2009).

Baumrind parenting styles Questionnaire: The scale was used for Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive parenting styles. Using mothers' inter-group retest method, Bori reported the reliability of the scale as 0.81, 0.86 and 0.87 respectively for Permissive, Authoritarian, and Authoritative parenting styles. Furthermore, using retest method, Esfandiari (1995) also reported reliability of a 12-mother sample as 0.69, 0.77 and 0.73 respectively for Permissive, Authoritarian, and Authoritative parenting styles. Content validity of the test was also approved by 10 experts of psychology and psychiatry.

3. Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive indices of parenting styles as well as anxiety of mothers. Based on the table, highest mean is related to Authoritative parenting. Also, Permissive parenting style is about 1 grade higher than Authoritarian style.

Table 1: Mean & standard deviant of parenting styles and anxiety of mothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian Style</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>30.459</td>
<td>4.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative Style</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>13.403</td>
<td>5.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive Style</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>14.360</td>
<td>4.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s Anxiety</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>35.453</td>
<td>10.077</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using Pearson correlation coefficient, the relationship between parenting and anxiety of mothers was studied. Accordingly, there was negative significant relationship between Authoritarian parenting style and the subscale self-sentiment development (p=0.05). The sub-scale ergic tension had negative significant relationship with Permissive style (p=0.05), and there was also positive and significant relationship between Authoritarian style and the subscale ego strength (p=0.05). No significant relationship was gained between other subscales and parenting styles. Results of the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson correlation coefficient between parenting style and anxiety of mothers subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Authoritarian</th>
<th>Permissive</th>
<th>Authoritative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>self-sentiment</td>
<td>-0.180*</td>
<td>-0.060</td>
<td>0.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protension</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ergic tension</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>-0.198*</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guilt proneness</td>
<td>-0.029</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ego strength</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>-0.016</td>
<td>0.190*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P<0.05*

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Present study indicates that there was negative significant relationship between self-sentiment development and Authoritative parenting. The subscale ergic tension had negative significant relationship with Authoritarian style and subscale ego strength. The findings are consistent with the results of researches Farzadfard&Houman, 2008; Kaitz&Maytal, 2005; Moore, Whaley,&Sigman, 2004; Whaley, Pinto, &Sigman, 1999; Hirshfeld, Biederman, Brody, Faroanae, & Rosenbaum, 1997, regarding the relationship between parenting styles and anxiety of parents especially mothers. Concerning the results gained, destructive effects of inefficient parenting styles on children can
be implied; the effects which themselves lead to the increase of tension and anxiety in the atmosphere of family and finally to the creation of a deficient cycle in the relationship between parent and child.

Based on the results of this study, there is positive and significant relationship between Authoritarian style and the sub-scale ego strength. Accordingly, it can be said that attributes of tension, excited-ness, excitability and impatience are predictors for using controlling and authoritarian styles.

Based on Baumrind pattern, parents with Authoritarian parenting styles usually focus on their own needs rather than the child's. These parents emphasize on subordination, forbid discussions, and authorize order with severe punishment. Relationship between parents and child (from parents to child) is one-sided. According to the observations of Baumrind, children of Authoritarian parents are usually disagreeable, withdrawn, and distrustful. The children are also described as inactive, isolated, depressed, individuals prone to stress and conservative (Van der senden, 2011).

Among these families, mostly children experience high levels of anxiety and parents impose pressures on the children to remove their own restlessness and excitability and achieve internal peace. Now, restlessness and excitability of parents and impatience in inducing the formation of some of the experiences in children impel them to use controlling methods.

Also, results indicate that there is negative significant relationship between sub-scale ergic tension and Permissive parenting style. In this regard, it can be argued that the more the person has the feeling of insecurity and the less he trusts the surrounding and people around, the less he uses Permissive style.

Permissive parents are at the lowest level of control and rational control. The family of Permissive parents is relatively chaotic, activity of the family is disorganized and execution of regulations is neglectful. They try to create a non-obligatory, easygoing and correct ambient where child controls his behaviors as far as possible without being pushed. The child is consulted in family behavior and decision making. Parents expect less regarding house chores or behaviors at home. Children of Permissive parents act weakly regarding autonomy, curiosity and self-confidence; they have lower independency and tend to withdraw at the time of facing adversity (Van der senden, 2011).

To describe the indirect relationship between the method and ergic tension, it can be said that children's needs are satisfied absolutely and in excessively, in these families. Children have full freedom and even when their needs are regarded as irrational and even illegal, they are satisfied by parents after little persistence. Accordingly, concerning the pessimistic view of the person toward society and that he always feels insecure, it is natural that he cannot let the child free and treat him with lenience and laxity. Also, results showed that there is negative significant relationship between Authoritative parenting and sub-scale self-sentiment development. That is, individuals with lower cohesion and integration of personality and ability to completely control his emotions and behaviors use Authoritative parenting style less.

Authoritative parents lead the set of activities of their own child, yet they consider freedoms within the rational limits, as well. In fact, these parents pay attention to their child's needs. Their control is not inflexible, mandatory, in vein, disrupting and confining, they explain the reason for imposing the rules, and discuss their child and respond to his desire and needs in a proper and rational way. According to Bamirand these parents are usually Authoritative, self-confident, curious, and contented. The children have high independency, realistic and competent (Mussen, Kagen, Huston, & conger, 2012).

Accordingly, use of Authoritative parenting style which is a developed style requires emotional maturity and removal of internal conflicts and reaching a unity and integration in parents. Parents can undertake correct and proper guidance of their own children only when they have recognized their own problems and issue and taken action to resolve them.

With respect to the result of this study, it is proposed that an emphasis be put on correct and efficient parenting not only in children but also in parents themselves. Also, it is suggested that therapists, consulters and instructors be consider parenting skills training to decrease anxiety level of parents and children and improve the atmosphere of family.

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