

## PARENTING STYLES, LONELINESS AND EMOTIONAL EATING

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### ABSTRACT

Exploring the intricate connections between parenting style, loneliness, and eating patterns in adolescence was the objective of our study. We utilized a correlation research design, hypothesizing that there is a positive and negative relationship between the three variables: parenting style, loneliness, and emotional eating. The intention of the research is to delve into the effects of parenting style, specifically authoritative and permissive parenting, on the eating habits of adolescents, taking into account the influence of loneliness. To ensure the integrity of our research, we only included participants who are both parents were alive. Our sample consisted of adolescents aged between 18 and 34 years old, with approximately 200 participants selected from different universities in Karachi, Pakistan. We employed the UCLA 3-item loneliness scale, the Emotional Eater Questionnaire, and the Parenting Style Questionnaire to gather data for our study. The study's objective required the use of descriptive statistics such as mean, median, mode, frequency, and percentage, while inferential statistics, including correlation and t-test, were used to gain insights into the data. Research suggests that parenting style may play a role in the development of emotional eating, and that loneliness maybe an important factor to consider in understanding this relationship. Parenting styles showed characteristics such as a lack of attention and communication, which were not fulfilled, leading to the development of a lack of emotional control, psychological issues, and low self-esteem in later life as adults. The result appeared that there's a centrality positive relationship between authoritarian parenting fashion and permissive child rearing fashion with depression and emotional eating, and shows that there's a negative relationship between authoritative child rearing fashion with loneliness and emotional eating.

**Keyword:** Parenting style, Loneliness, Eating Pattern, Adolescence

### INTRODUCTION

Parenting style is a psychological construct which depicts the various strategies and behaviors adopted by parents to raise their children. Theory of parenting style is given by DIANA BAUMRIND which is later expanded by Macoby and Martin. Baumrind's theory focused on the behavior of preschool children that shows different behaviors related to specific parenting style (Li,2022). On the basis of extensive observations, interviews and after analysis she get to know that there are different types of parenting styles that lead to children development and different children behavior. There are 5 types of parenting

styles based on two factors which are demanding and responsiveness. Demanding is something in which parents want to control the behavior of their child and they want that child act like a mature individual. Responsiveness is something in which emotional and developmental needs of child is being accepted by their parents. 5 types are as follows 1) Authoritarian 2) Authoritative 3) Permissive 4) Neglectful 5) Overly involved parenting.

Guardians and their child rearing fashion is one of the foremost critical factor in forming and making the child's identity whereas puberty is characterized

by emotional changes in interpersonal connections because it is the basic time period of development of an individual (Rafiee & Chehreii, 2016). The study appeared that there's negative and significant relationship between authoritative child rearing fashion and loneliness whereas there's positive and significant relationship between permissive child rearing fashion and loneliness (Rafiee & Chehreii, 2016). Another study of basic condition modeling appeared that there's a positive affiliation between child rearing styles and pre-adult passionate eating behavior (Snoek, et.al. 2007).

The prior research was conducted to see correlation in order to construct general and specific parenting constructs and child emotional eating. The tendency of emotional eating is a response to negative emotions. This research participant includes 106 mother-child dyads. The child participant's age ranged between 8 to 12 years. The self-report degree completed by moms of their child's for emotional eating behavior as well as their claim hones of bolstering, and discouragement side effects and fling eating whereas other self-report degree completed by children regularly their mother's common child rearing fashion. Discoveries recommend that enthusiastic bolstering hones in guardians may be related to enthusiastic eating in children (Broaden, 2014).

The previous research was conducted with aim to investigate effect of parenting style and academic self-efficacy on emotional eating behavior. This research was conducted on 584 adolescent participants of age ranged between 12-17 years. Results appeared that emotional eating behaviors of young people were in connection with child rearing styles and scholarly self-efficacy (Ekim and Ocakci, 2020).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

As the essential socialization operators of the children's are guardians; it appears likely that perspective of behaviors of parent leads to emotional eating and loneliness in adult's people. Past inquire about confirmations appears that parenting fashion encompasses a powerful effect on individual's way of eating; additionally, they are the cause of generally individual's depression. Later investigates have emphasized the significance of analyzing parenting styles, depression and emotional eating.

In 2016, a relationship investigate was conducted on 200 understudies in Islamic Azad College to decide the relationship between seen parenting styles and depression. They come about of the believe uncovered that there's negative and noteworthy relationship between seen definitive child rearing fashion and loneliness and there's positive and critical relationship between seen lenient child rearing style and loneliness (Rafiee & Chehreii, 2016).

The relationship between parenting styles and depression in juvenile young lady's understudies was moreover investigated in one think about and it was found that the definitive parenting fashion particularly association and independence measurements and financial status diminish depression feeling in young lady's understudies. (Laali, 2008).

Parent's reaction to negative child emotions and family emotional expressiveness has also an impact on child emotional eating. A group of researchers conducted a research on mothers and their children in this regard. The study explored that the authoritative parenting style have negative relationship with emotional eating and family open expression of warmth and emotion, whereas parent minimizing reaction to child negative feeling have positive relationship with enthusiastic eating. (Topham, & et.al. 2011).

Stress also effect food choices of individuals. Number of children had customary mealtimes and unpredictable nibble times due to push. A cross-sectional ponder was conducted on the guardians of children 2-12 a long time to see into the impact of COVID-19 widespread push on nourishment. Discoveries of the think about found higher COVID-19 particular stretch was related with more prominent child admissions recurrence of sweet and savory snacks, with a few prove for intercession by nibble parenting hones. (Jansen, et.al. 2021)

Furthermore, one of the another research was conducted to explore the levels of loneliness and uneasiness in outwardly disabled children and teenagers, to analyze parenting fashion seen by outwardly impeded children and teenagers, to compare those with regularly controls. This investigation found more loneliness and characteristic anxiety levels in outwardly disabled children and young people as compared to the control

bunch. It was watched that the definitive child rearing fashion was the foremost visit type of parental demeanor within the outwardly impeded bunch. Children's bunch with visual disability that have definitive and permissive-indulgent child rearing fashion have tall forlornness level. Characteristic uneasiness level was too higher in definitive parenting style subgroup compared to the control bunch. (Hamurcu, et.al. 2016).

Besides loneliness; parenting styles also have a connection with the self-esteem. To investigate more the part of child rearing fashion; Nayak & Kochar find the affiliation between parenting styles, loneliness and self-esteem. They set up a positive relationship between parenting styles and loneliness and a negative relationship between parenting styles and self-regard. (Nayak & Kochar, 2016).

Mason in 2020 looks at the level to which parent and child loneliness foresee body mass record (BMI) and eating style in guardians and young people. He found that the higher parental loneliness was emphatically related with pre-adult passionate eating, and higher adolescent depression was emphatically related with parental emotional eating. (Mason, 2020)

On students, a study was conducted to find how loneliness affects eating behavior in 2019 by Alalwan. This study was conducted on 169 undergraduates, aged between 17 to 36 years. This study explore that the students increase their food intake during loneliness, majority of students also give boredom as a reason in loneliness for emotional eating. (Alalwan, 2019).

## HYPOTHESIS

**H1:** There is a significant positive relationship between authoritarian and permissive parenting styles with loneliness and emotional eating.

**H2:** There is a significant negative relationship between authoritative parenting style, loneliness and emotional eating.

## METHODOLOGY

This section includes the procedure required to test the hypothesis for variables parenting styles, loneliness and eating disorder. It is a correlation study. Correlation has been found between parenting style, eating patterns and loneliness using three questionnaires. The simple random technique was used to choose the participant. The sample comprised of 200 random participants. They were selected from different universities of Karachi, Pakistan.

## Inclusion criteria

For this study, the participants were selected based on following inclusion criteria:

The age ranges of the participants were adolescent age range that is from age 18 years to 34 years (Male and female).

Participants were the residents of Karachi, Pakistan. We included the participants with both the parents alive.

Measures:

**Inform consent form.** Participants were requested to fill an informed consent before administering the items. **Demographic form** A demographic form was developed in which personal and family related information was collected through items such as: participant's date of birth, age, gender, residential address, number of siblings, birth order, marital status, university, department and qualification.

**The Parenting Style Questionnaire:** Parenting style questionnaire is mainly constructed as a tool for measuring parenting styles in adolescence. The scale included 62 elements (Robinson, Mandelco, Olsen, & Hart, 1995). The extreme outline of the scale had 32 things on the introduce of the changes that were made in 2001. The scale comprises of three sorts of Child rearing Styles. It is a six-point scale. Where 1=Never and 6=Always. It consists total 32 items. Internal reliability of the scale of Parenting Styles & Estimations Study was attempted with the procedure of Cronbach Alpha (Cronbach Alpha: .63p<.01). Concurring to this result, the test-retest consistency of the scale was found to be tolerably tall.

**The UCLA 3-Item Loneliness Scale:** UCLA 3-item loneliness scale covers 3 questions that measures three measurements of loneliness. It is drawn from two more seasoned scales and 20 items were chosen out of numerous. Loneliness Scale shows up to be a really dependable coefficient Alpha extending from 0.89 to 0.94 over the samples. Developed in 1970s and reexamined within the 1990s, the scale uses the cognitive disparity theory of loneliness (i.e., that's depression happens when there's a crevice between the amount and quality of association we have and need). It is drawn from two more seasoned scales, counting a 75-item scale based on explanations depicting depression from 20 clinicians. At long last, 20 items were chosen, which pointed to degree both loneliness and social separation. In our elderly test, The UCLA Loneliness scale was studied served 12

months afterward, with a test-retest relationship of .73. A Matched t-test demonstrated that Loneliness scores did not alter altogether over this 1-year period,  $t(283) = 1.23$ . In brief, the reliability of UCLA Loneliness scale (adaptation 3) shows up to be very comparable to comes about for the 2 prior adaptations of the scales. Merged legitimacy for the UCLA Loneliness scale adaptation 3 is given by relationships with the other measures of loneliness included within the study. Scores of versions 3 of the loneliness scale were found to be emphatically related to scores on the NYU loneliness scale and the differential loneliness scale.

**Emotional Eater Questionnaire (EEQ):** Emotional Eater Survey is a ten-item survey which was created to survey to what degree emotions influence eating behavior. This survey was called the Emotional Eater Questionnaire (EEQ). This is a 4-point scale. Where 1 is break even with to Never and 4 is break even with to Always. Each answer was given a score of 1 to 4, the lower the score, the more advantageous the behavior. For the clinical hone subjects were classified in four bunches going to the score gotten. Score between 0-5: non-emotional eater. Score between 6-10: low emotional eater. Score between

11-20: emotional eater. Score between 21- 30: very emotional eater. Test-retest reliability and merged legitimacy Lineal relationships illustrated great understanding between the primary and moment organizations of the EEQ (test- retest reliability) ( $r=0.702$ ;  $P<0.0001$ ). EEQ was compared with MEQ for testing convergent validity. Information appeared that the rate of understanding between the EEQ and the MEQ was around 70% with a Kappa file of 0.40;  $p < 0.0001$ .

**PROCEDURE**

Survey that we conduct was conducted physically. We approached our participants and we provided them with an informed consent form to specify their agreement to participate in the study. When the participant agreed to participate, we also asked them to first provide their demographic information and then complete the entire items mentioned in the questionnaire. After the participants were done with the questionnaire, we collected the data and process it further for research findings. Obtained results were scored after collecting the data according to the descriptive statistical criteria.

**RESULTS**

**TABLE 1**

Percentages and frequencies of participant’s demographics (N= 200)

Variables	f	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	49	24.4
Female	150	74.6
<b>Age</b>		
18-22	95	47.3
23-27	41	20.4
28-32	25	12.4
33-37	21	10.4
38-40	17	8.5
<b>Education</b>		
1	14	7.0
2	41	20.4
3	102	50.7
4	40	19.9
5	2	1.0
<b>Are you parent</b>		
1	199	99.0
<b>Whom you live with</b>		
3	199	99.0
<b>Is your family</b>		
1	141	70.1
2	57	28.4
3	1	5

**Table 2**

Correlation between Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles.

	MEAN	SD	AUTHORITATIVE	AUTHORITARIAN	PERMISSIVE	LONELINESS	EMOTIONAL EATING
<i>AUTHORITATIVE</i>	105.6	743.52	-	.999	.999	.999	.999
<i>AUTHORITARIAN</i>	86.6	609.63		-	1.000	-1.000	-.999
<i>PERMISSIVE</i>	23.8	167.58			-	.999	.999

Note: SD=Standard Deviation, EE=Emotional eating, UCLA=loneliness and PAQ+ parenting style questionnaire. This show that there is a significance positive relationship between authoritarian parenting

style and permissive parenting style with loneliness and emotional eating, and shows that there is a negative relationship between authoritative parenting style with loneliness and emotional eating.

**Table 3:**

Independent sample t-test Result Comparing loneliness and emotional eating

	Gender	N	Mean	Std deviation	Std Error	Mean
<b>Loneliness</b>	Male	49	5.67	2.495		356
	Female	150	5.85	1.686		138
<b>Emotional Eating</b>	Male	49	13.66	5.534		791
	Female	150	12.64	6.240		510

NOTE: N= number of participant’s, SD= standard deviation, t=t test, df= degree of freedom.

Table3; shows that there is no much difference of loneliness and emotional eating between male and female participants.

**DISCUSSION**

The aim of this research was to speculate the relationship of three parenting style with loneliness and emotional eating. Our result accordance with our hypothesis generated as that there is positively significant relationship of authoritarian and permissive parenting style with emotional eating and loneliness while there is a negative relationship of authoritative parenting style with emotional eating and loneliness.

The demographic information in table 1 shows that the study involves 24.4% males and female is 74.6%. The study includes participants of age 18-40 years, that shows 47.3% of age 18-22, 20.4% participants of age 23-27, 12.4 % of age 28-32, 10.4% age range of 33-37 and 8.5% participants age range of 38-40. The education grades we include are from matric to master’s level. Other important information also included that every participants parent were alive shows 99.0%, they lived with both parents shows 99.9% and family being nuclear (70.1%), joint (28.4) and others (5%).

The relationship between three variables revealed in table 2, in which we used standard deviation and mean. The result shows that authoritarian and permissive have positive relationship with loneliness and emotional while authoritative have negative relationship with emotional eating and loneliness.

Lastly in table 3, independent t test sample was used to compare loneliness and emotional eating among male and female participants. The result reveal there is no differences find between male and female participants in relation to emotional eating and loneliness.

In relation to Pakistan one of the researches related to our result that’s showed the impact of mother over protectiveness and emotional deregulation on emotional eating of children’s. The result of the study revealed that mother over protectiveness and emotional deregulation was positively related to emotional eating. (Iqbal et.al 2023).

Another research in Pakistan speculated effect of one of the parenting style i.e. authoritative on children personality traits. The respondents involve teachers, students and parents. The result of the study revealed that healthy personality developed through authoritative parenting style. Therefore, four traits of personality i.e. conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness and extraversion showed positive relationship with authoritative style of parenting and neuroticism showed relationship significantly negative with authoritative parenting style. (Akhter, Noor & Iqbal, 2019)

The study conducted on relationship between loneliness, suicidal behavior and parenting styles among university students. The participants involved were 150. The findings revealed that there was significantly positive relationship between loneliness and suicidal behavior that increases in loneliness lead to increase in suicidal behavior. The positive relationship of loneliness with permissive parenting style and authoritarian parenting style and that lead to suicidal behavior. (Mohd. Shakir & Ramasenteram, 2020)

The study conducted on young population based on relationship between parenting style with emotional disorder and substance abuse speculated that permissive and authoritarian parenting style is primary determinant of various disorders and intricately linked to substance abuse among young age individual while authoritative parenting style shows positive effect on child growth. (Ramsewak, Moty, Putteeraj, Somanah & Nirmala, 2022)

One of the studies that were conducted in arrange to decide perceived child rearing fashion and loneliness relationship among understudies that age between 18 to 40 a long time. It was a correlation study and 200 members were conducted for the consider. The discoveries uncovered that there was a positive relationship between definitive and tolerant child rearing fashion with loneliness. Whereas there was relationship that's adversely appeared between perceived authoritarian parenting fashion and loneliness. (Rafiee & Chehreii, 2016).

## CONCLUSION

The three variables that are part of our study showed significantly positive and negative relationship. As different parenting styles tend to be impactful in various and constructive manner in individual life. In accordance to our findings there was no difference

found between female and male in relation to our variables. Hence, it is concluded that permissive and authoritarian parenting style is positively in relationship with loneliness and emotional eating because of strict rules, lack of emotional support, over dependency on parents etc while authoritarian is negative correlated due to stability in emotional support, developing creativity and emotional support towards children. Our finding shows that how different parenting styles are important to be focused in both parents and child life that bad choice will make individual life negatively influences and better choice make their life positively influences in various situation and events in life.

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