

Role of Parenting Styles in Mental Health among Adolescents with Locomotor Disability

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Abstract

Adolescents with locomotor disability face multifaceted challenges that impact their daily lives and social interactions. These challenges profoundly influence their development and self-worth, underscoring the pivotal role of parenting styles. The present study is designed to examine the predictive role of parenting styles in mental health among adolescents with locomotor disability. Over 120 adolescents with locomotor disability within the age range from 15 to 18 years with a mean age of 16.17 years, studying in different government schools of Varanasi district, have been taken as the sample of the study. Parenting styles were assessed by the Parental Authority Questionnaire developed by Buri (1991), and mental health was measured using the Mental Health Inventory developed by Jagadish and Srivastava (2005). The finding of the study indicated a positive significant relationship between mental health with authoritative and permissive parenting styles. Conversely, there was a negative relationship between authoritarian parenting style and mental health. Regression analyses identify the father's authoritative and authoritarian, as well as the mother's permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles as significant predictors of mental health. These findings highlight the critical role of parenting styles in shaping the mental health of adolescents with locomotor disability.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents with locomotor disability encounter a multitude of physical, social, and psychological barriers that affect their daily lives and social interactions (Merabet&Horsler, 2018; Rintala *et al.*, 2021). These challenges can significantly shape their development and sense of self-worth, making the role of parenting styles particularly influential (Arbuckle *et al.*, 2015; Whittingham *et al.*, 2019). Locomotor disability is defined as a person's inability to execute distinctive activities associated with the movement of self and objects resulting from affliction of the musculoskeletal or nervous system or both (RPWD Act, 2016). The impact of parenting styles on adolescent mental health has been the subject of extensive research, highlighting their critical role in shaping emotional development and psychological well-being (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Baumrind, 1991). This relationship becomes particularly complex when considering ado-

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lescents with locomotor disability, who face unique challenges that can profoundly impact their mental health outcomes (Huang, 2019; Merabet & Horsler, 2018). Understanding how different parenting styles contribute to the mental health of these adolescents is critical to developing effective support strategies.

Mental health is a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being, affecting their daily thoughts, feelings, and behavior. It involves coping with stress, making decisions, and maintaining relationships. It is not merely the absence of mental disorders but also includes aspects of resilience, self-esteem, and overall life satisfaction. Parenting styles have been shown to impact various aspects of adolescent development, including their self-esteem, coping mechanisms, and overall mental health outcomes (Baumrind, 1991; Pinquart, 2017). Parenting as a method of child-rearing refers to the right or duty of the mother and father, either separately or together, to prepare the child for society and culture (Veenes, 1973). Parenting styles are typically categorized based on levels of responsiveness (warmth and supportiveness) and demandingness (control and expectations) exhibited by parents. Diana Baumrind's seminal work defines four main parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful (Baumrind, 1991).

Most of the studies indicated that mental health was positively associated with authoritative parenting (Dwairy & Menshar, 2006). A study by Shilpa (2014) on the relationship between perceived parenting styles and positive mental health in college students between the ages of 18 and 24 found that a father's authoritativeness was significantly associated with higher positive mental health scores in college students. Another similar study showed that the more authoritative the parents of senior high school students were, the more mental health they enjoyed (Bolghan-Abadi *et al.*, 2011). In a study, Dwairy (2004) reported that the authoritative parenting style has a significant correlation with both gifted and nongifted adolescents' mental health, but the authoritarian parenting style has a negative correlation with the mental health of gifted adolescents but not nongifted adolescents. Nguyen (2008) reported that adolescents who perceived their fathers as using the authoritarian parenting style reported lower levels of self-esteem and higher depression scores when

compared with those who perceived their fathers as using the authoritative parenting style. Gupta and Mehtani (2015) demonstrated that adolescents raised in authoritative households tend to exhibit higher levels of self-esteem, better social skills, and enhanced academic performance compared to those raised under other parenting styles, such as permissive and authoritarian.

While existing literature has explored the effects of parenting styles on general adolescent populations, there is a gap in understanding these dynamics, specifically for adolescents with disabilities. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles affect mental health in adolescents with locomotor disability. By focusing on these specific parenting styles and their impact, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into how parental behaviors can either support or hinder the mental health of these adolescents.

Objectives

- To explore the relationship between parenting styles and mental health among adolescents with locomotor disability.
- To examine the contribution of parenting styles in the prediction of mental health among adolescents with locomotor disability.

Hypotheses

- Parenting styles and mental health among adolescents with locomotor disability would be correlated.
- Parenting styles would predict the mental health among adolescents with locomotor disability.

METHODS

Participants

The sample of the study consisted of 120 adolescents with locomotor disability studying in various government schools in Varanasi district. The participants included 60 girls and 60 boys in the age group of 15-18 years with a mean age of 16.17 years. A purposive random sampling technique was used to select the participants.

MEASURES

Parental Authority Questionnaire

The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) developed by Buri (1991) was used to measure parenting styles. Hindi adoption of this scale was done by Jaiswal and Byadwal (2018). The questionnaire has a total of 30 items, including 10 items each for authoritative authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. It is a five-point Likert format measure ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There are separate forms for mother and father, respectively, but the questions are the same and in the same order.

Mental Health Inventory

Mental health inventory (MHI) was used to measure the mental health of adolescents which was developed by Jagadish and Srivastava (2005). This inventory consists of 56 items, of which 25 items were true and 31 were false items. The scale assigns four alternative responses to each statement: always, often, rarely, and never. The inventory covers six dimensions such as positive self-evaluation, perception of reality, integration of personality, autonomy, group-oriented attitudes and environmental mastery.

Procedure

Data collection began with obtaining a list of students with locomotor disability from the DIOS office in the Varanasi district and obtaining written

permission from the school principal. Participants were personally contacted and consent was obtained. Participants were instructed to take their time, answer questions honestly, and maintain confidentiality. The researcher was present to provide clarifications and ensure participants completed the questionnaires. The questionnaires were collected and scored using the standard scoring method of the respective inventories.

RESULTS

In order to see the relationship between parenting styles and mental health, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was employed and results are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The results of this study have shown a positive and significant correlation between mental health and its dimensions with a father's authoritative parenting style and a father's permissive parenting style. Similarly, mental health and its dimensions were significantly and positively correlated with the mother's authoritative parenting style and the mother's permissive parenting, except environmental mastery, which was not significantly associated with mothers' authoritative parenting styles. Further, the mother's authoritarian parenting style and the father's authoritarian parenting style were negatively and significantly correlated with mental health and most of its dimensions.

The results of stepwise regression analysis are shown in Table 3. Results revealed that the father's authoritative parenting style positively predicted

Table 1: Correlation of father's parenting styles with mental health and its dimensions

<i>Mental Health</i>	<i>Father's authoritative parenting style</i>	<i>Father's authoritarian parenting style</i>	<i>Father's permissive parenting style</i>
Positive self-evaluation	.365***	-.186*	.271**
Perception of reality	.323***	-.270*	.315***
Integration of personality	.389***	-.275**	.395***
Autonomy	.448***	-.216**	.394***
Group orientated attitude	.533**	-.085	.267**
Environmental mastery	.255**	-.157	.212*
Mental health	.494***	-.274**	.389***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2: Correlation of mother's parenting styles with mental health and its dimensions

<i>Mental Health</i>	<i>Mother's Authoritative parenting style</i>	<i>Mother's Authoritarian parenting style</i>	<i>Mother's Permissive Parenting style</i>
Positive self-evaluation	.281**	-.207*	.222*
Perception of reality	.343***	-.262*	.281**
Integration of personality	.332***	-.300***	.349***
Autonomy	.368***	-.133	.391***
Group orientated attitude	.405***	-.116	.307***
Environmental mastery	.142	-.219*	.289***
Mental health	.402***	-.301***	.451***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3: Results of stepwise regression analysis using dimensions of father's parenting styles as predictor variables and mental health and its dimensions as outcome variables

<i>Model</i>	<i>Predictors</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Adj. R²</i>	<i>R² Change</i>	<i>F Change</i>	<i>Sig of F change</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Criterion: Positive Self-Evaluation										
1,	Authoritative	.365	.133	.126	.133	18.081	.000	.365	4.252	.000
2.	Authoritarian	.412	.170	.156	.037	5.202	.024	-.192	-2.281	.024
Criterion: Perception of Reality										
1.	Authoritative	.323	.104	.096	.104	13.705	.000	.323	3.702	.000
Criterion: Integration of Personality										
1.	Permissive	.395	.156	.149	.156	21.819	.000	.395	4.671	.000
2.	Authoritarian	.491	.241	.228	.085	13.142	.000	-.292	-3.625	.000
3.	Authoritative	.518	.269	.250	.027	4.335	.040	.221	2.082	.040
Criterion Variables- Autonomy										
1.	Authoritative	.448	.200	.194	.200	29.553	.000	.448	5.436	.000
Criterion: Group Orientated Attitude										
1.	Authoritative	.533	.284	.278	.284	46.900	.000	.533	6.848	.000
Criterion: Environmental Mastery										
1.	Authoritative	.255	.065	.057	.065	8.214	.005	.255	2.866	.005
Criterion: Overall Mental Health										
1.	Authoritative	.494	.244	.238	.244	38.095	.000	.494	6.172	.000
2.	Authoritarian	.569	.323	.312	.080	13.761	.000	-.282	-3.710	.000

positive self-evaluation, perception of reality, integration of personality, autonomy, group-oriented attitude, and overall mental health, while the father's authoritarian parenting style negatively predicted positive self-evaluation, integration of personality,

and overall mental health. Additionally, the father's permissive parenting style positively predicted the integration of personality. Each parenting style had varying contributions across different dimensions of mental health.

Table 4: Results of stepwise regression analysis using dimensions of mother's parenting styles as predictor variables and mental health and its dimensions as outcome variables

Model	Predictors	R	R2	Adj. R2	R2 Change	F Change	Sig of F change	Beta	t	Sig
Criterion: Positive Self-Evaluation										
1.	Authoritative	.281	.079	.071	.079	10.145	.002	.281	3.185	.002
2.	Authoritarian	.364	.132	.117	.053	7.165	.009	-.231	-2.677	.009
Criterion: Perception of Reality										
1.	Authoritative	.343	.118	.110	.118	15.757	.000	.343	3.970	.000
2.	Authoritarian	.392	.154	.140	.036	5.009	.027	-.191	-2.238	.027
Criterion: Integration of Personality										
1.	Permissive	.349	.122	.114	.122	16.369	.000	.349	4.046	.000
2.	Authoritarian	.471	.222	.208	.100	15.006	.000	-.316	-3.874	.000
3.	Authoritative	.501	.251	.232	.029	4.554	.035	.217	2.134	.035
Criterion Variables- Autonomy										
1.	Permissive	.391	.153	.145	.153	21.254	.000	.391	4.610	.000
Criterion: Group Orientated Attitude										
1.	Authoritative	.405	.164	.157	.164	23.154	.000	.405	4.812	.000
Criterion: Environmental Mastery										
1.	Permissive	.289	.084	.076	.084	10.772	.001	.289	3.282	.001
2.	Authoritarian	.371	.137	.123	.054	7.297	.008	-.232	-2.701	.008
Criterion: Overall mental health										
1.	Permissive	.451	.203	.197	.203	30.114	.000	.451	5.488	.000
2.	Authoritarian	.554	.307	.295	.103	17.425	.000	-.322	-4.174	.000
3.	Authoritative	.583	.340	.323	.033	5.802	.018	.230	2.409	.018

The Table 4 revealed that different parenting styles had distinct impacts on various dimensions of adolescent mental health. Mother's authoritative parenting positively predicted self-evaluation, perception of reality, integration of personality, group-oriented attitude and overall mental health. Conversely, mother's authoritarian parenting style negatively predicted positive self-evaluation, perception of reality, integration of personality, environmental mastery and overall mental health. Mother's permissive parenting style positively predicted autonomy, integration of personality, environmental mastery, and overall mental health. Overall, mother's permissive and authoritative parenting styles were linked to better mental health outcomes, whereas authoritarian parenting was generally associated with more negative effects.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to investigate the relationships between mental health and parenting styles, as well as to predict mental health through parenting styles in adolescents with locomotor disability. The findings of this research support the formulated hypothesis. The results showed that mental health and its dimensions were positively related to the authoritative and permissive parenting styles of both fathers and mothers. This means that with an increase in authoritative and permissive parenting styles, mental health is also increasing. Further, there was a negative correlation of mental health and most of its dimensions with authoritarian parenting styles of both fathers and mothers. This means that with an increase in authoritarian parenting

styles, mental health is decreasing. So can be said that these variables are related to each other and a change in one of the variables will be accompanied by a change in another variable. This result is consistent with the findings of Park *et al.* (2021), who showed that authoritative parenting was positively connected with mental health and its dimensions. Another research demonstrated that the more authoritative the parents of students were, the more mental health they enjoyed (Bolghan-Abadi *et al.*, 2011). The findings of Liu *et al.* (2020) are also in accordance with the present finding, which revealed a positive correlation between permissive parenting and various dimensions of mental health. Pinquart (2017) found that authoritarian parenting was negatively correlated with mental health. Based on these findings, it can be said that adolescents who perceive their parents as authoritative and permissive are more likely to experience better mental health.

Further, present results showed that the father's authoritative parenting style emerged as a positive predictor of mental health. This parenting style fosters an environment where children feel emotionally secure, valued, and capable, which in turn promotes their psychological well-being. Research by Baumrind (1991) highlights that authoritative parenting encourages children to develop autonomy and independence while providing guidance and structure, which are essential components for positive mental health outcomes. Moreover, authoritative parenting is associated with higher levels of emotional regulation, self-esteem, and social competence among children (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Results also indicate that the father's authoritarian parenting style was a strong negative predictor for mental health. An authoritarian parenting style's rigid structure and emphasis on obedience compared to nurturing relationships may hinder children's emotional development, making it more difficult for them to form secure attachments and successfully regulate their emotions. As a result, these children may struggle with social skills, academic success, and general well-being throughout their lives. Moreover, mothers' permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles were significant predictors of mental health, with mothers'

permissive parenting styles being the best predictor of mental health. The present study's findings are in line with previous studies, which show that mental health is predictable by parenting styles (Khodabakhsh *et al.*, 2014). A meta-analytic review found that authoritative parenting predicts better academic achievement, fewer behavioral problems, and higher overall well-being among children and adolescents compared to other parenting styles (Pinquart, 2017). The findings highlight the importance of parenting styles in predicting the mental health of adolescents with locomotor disability.

CONCLUSION

This empirical research underscores the profound influence of parenting styles on the mental health of adolescents with locomotor disability. The findings of this study help in spreading awareness among parents regarding their parenting style, as there is a relationship between mental health and different parenting styles. The findings suggest that the father's authoritative parenting emerged as a positive predictor of mental health outcomes among adolescents with locomotor disability. Additionally, the study identified a mother's permissive parenting style as the most robust predictor of mental health. In contrast, authoritarian parenting has a negative relationship with mental health and causes permanent damage and should be prevented. These insights emphasize the critical role of parenting practices in shaping the psychological well-being of adolescents with locomotor disability, suggesting avenues for targeted interventions and support strategies to enhance their overall mental health and resilience. Future research should further explore these dynamics across diverse cultural and socio-economic contexts to inform comprehensive and inclusive approaches to support adolescents with disability.

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