

## **Lack of Adequate Parenting: A Potential Risk Factor for Aggression among Adolescents**

**Syeda Shahida Batool**

Government College University

Adolescence has been considered as a period of challenges and strains. Aggressive behavior usually escalates during this period due to multiple reasons (e.g., physiological changes, need for independence, establishment of new identity, and role conflict). Parents play vital role in managing and monitoring adolescents' social relationships and behavior (Parke & Burial, 1998). A lack of adequate parental role as a manager is a potential risk factor that is related to aggressiveness and juvenile delinquency (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984). The present study was carried out to investigate the role of demographic variables (viz., parents' education and parents' income) and parenting styles in aggression among late adolescents. The sample consisted of boys and girls from 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades, age ranged between 15 and 17 years. Sample was recruited from public and private schools of Punjab, Pakistan. Parents were approached through students at their homes. Data was collected by using Parenting Style Questionnaire (Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, & Hart, 1995) and Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992). Significant gender difference appeared on total aggression and its components except for hostility. A considerable amount of variance in total aggression was accounted for by authoritarian parenting, permissive parenting, and income of parents. Parenting styles predicted distinctively in four components of aggression.

*Keywords:* Adolescents, behavioral problems, parenting styles, aggression.

Adolescence is a period largely characterized as beginning and ending with teen age. No unanimous definition from all the disciplines is available. Experts like Brooks-Gunn (1988) argue that it makes sense to divide the years between 12 and 20 into subperiods: one

---

Syeda Shahida Batool, Department of Psychology, Government College University, Lahore, 54770, Pakistan.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Syeda Shahida Batool, Department of Psychology, Government College University, Lahore 54770, Pakistan. Pakistan. E-mail: drshahidabatool@gmail.com, shahidaphd@yahoo.com

beginning at 11 or 12 (early adolescence) and other perhaps at 16 or 17 (late adolescence). Early adolescence is a time of transition, of significant change in virtually almost every aspect of child's functioning; while late adolescence is more a time of consolidation, and establishing new identity and role commitments. Transition from childhood to adulthood is a long journey with many ups and downs. Adolescence period has its own strains. Hormonal changes may be directly implicated in the increase in confrontation between parents and children and in various kinds of aggressive and delinquent behaviors. Investigators support the role of estradiol at the beginning of puberty associated with verbal aggression and a loss of impulse control in girls, while in boys, increases in testosterone is associated with increase in irritability and impatience (Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1990). There is abrupt turn in the attitude and behavior of parents at this stage. When the child's body grows and seems more like that of adult, the parents start treating the child differently; on the other hand the child begins to see himself as an adult. The expectations of adolescents and their parents are usually violated by each other. Many parents see their child changing from a compliant being into someone who is non compliant, and oppositional to parental standards. Parents often restrict and put more pressure on the adolescent to conform to their standard. This leads to brief rise in parent adolescent confrontation. Rise of conflict between the parents and adolescents and the development of aggression among the latter is a commonly observed phenomenon. Parents play the role of manager in monitoring adolescents' social relationships and behavior (Parke & Burial, 1998). For adolescents to reach their full potential an important parental role is to be an effective manager; one who finds information, makes contacts, helps structure choice and provides guidance (Youniss & Ruth, 2002).

It has long been theorized that what children learn, and how they react in certain situation is affected by their relationships with parents, parenting styles, and parents' behavior (Collins & Laursen, 1999). Social learning theory (Bandura, 1973) supports the role of parenting in social behavior, particularly aggression among children by modeling and vicarious reinforcement. Children may imitate their parents through modeling their use of aggression in controlling them. Bandura (1989) rejected the misconception that modeling is just mimicry of other's act, rather children may learn through modeling that their parents' hostile and aggressive behavior is effective in winning the situation and controlling others, so these children may adopt physical and verbal aggressive strategies and other form of aggression in their social interaction to get control over the situation.

Vicarious reinforcement may also explain the development of aggression among adolescents. This reinforcement could be in the form of praise (positive reinforcement) or absence of punishment (negative reinforcement). For example, permissive parenting provides the form of negative reinforcement to their children's undesired or aggressive acts via negligence.

Authoritative parenting is believed to be an adequate parenting style, because it supports a balanced use of warmth and control. All other parenting styles, such as authoritarian, permissive-indulgent, and neglectful-uninvolved, are tagged as inadequate, because they either lack warmth but with too much control, as with the authoritarian style; or they lack control yet with excessive warmth, or they lack both warmth and control, as with the neglectful-uninvolved style (Anonymous, 2012; Iwaniec, 1997; Klerman, 1993; Silove, George, & Bhavani-sankaram, 1987).

Baumrind (1991) believes in adequate parenting that is parents should be neither punitive nor aloof from their adolescents; rather she emphasized on parents to develop rules and be affectionate with them (authoritative parenting). She emphasizes three classical parenting styles that are associated with different aspects of adolescents' behavior. Each parenting style is distinctive in terms of two dimensions (i.e., responsiveness, warmth, and control). Parents with authoritative parenting are warm and nurturant toward adolescent; they are high in control and high in responsiveness. The adolescents of authoritative parents are usually self reliant and socially competent and have impulse control skills and coping mechanisms, such as emotional regulation, prosocial behavior, and social competence; whereas authoritarian parenting results in antisocial behavior such as aggression and delinquency. The authoritarian parents place firm limits and control on adolescents and allows little verbal exchange, results in socially incompetent behavior, they are high in control and low in responsiveness. Children growing up with neglectful and non indulgent or permissive parents, who are low in control and high in responsiveness, are likely to be aggressive particularly if parents are permissive toward aggressive behavior. These parents are warm and caring, may have a lot of difficulty setting appropriate limits. They may also be confused by their child's active, sensation-seeking manner, and find it difficult to teach their child how to communicate his intentions and feelings. Permissive parenting may lead to development and maintenance of negative behavior such as aggression. Children with permissive parents may not fully develop the ability to control his/her negative emotions, for example anger, due to the reason that perhaps their parents neither monitor their

children behavior in an appropriate way, nor make them reflect on this behavior. These children lack the ability to regulate their aggressive impulses when facing conflicts, and disagreements, or when their goals are thwarted; as a result display excessive levels of aggression. These parents do not exercise control to stop their children's disruptive behavior (Nelson & Crick, 2002).

A substantial body of literature demonstrates that dimensions of positive or adequate parenting and negative or inadequate (viz., authoritative, and authoritarian, permissive or neglecting) are differentially associated with children's prosocial and antisocial behavior (e.g., Alink et al., 2009; Romano, Tremblay, Boulerice, & Swisher, 2005). Later studies have established the role of adequate parenting in positive social behavior of children like more social competence, prosocial behavior, positive interaction with peers, and less aggression and delinquency (Collins & Steinberg, 2006; Pettit, Bates, & Dodge, 1997). Finzi-Dottan, Bilu, and Golubchik (2011) in a study concluded that positive parenting or adequate parenting accounted for 11% of variance in aggression reported by former soviet union immigrant adolescents, and native Israeli adolescents, age ranged between 14-18 years and 3% of variance in conduct disorder reported by instructors. Greater authoritative parenting is associated with less of an increase in internalizing behavior problems overtime (Williams et al., 2009).

Inadequate parenting based on harsh punishment and very little positive reinforcement (authoritarian parenting) has been linked with behavioral and conduct disorders (Barry, Frick, & Grafeman, 2008; De Clercq, Van Leeuwen, De Fruyt, Van Hiel, & Mervielde, 2008; Kim-Cohen et al., 2003; Patterson, De Baryshe, & Ramsey, 1989). McCord (1996) explained that violent offenders are less likely than non violent offenders to have experienced parental affection and supervision. McCord (1997) found that physical punishment predicted convictions for violence, especially when it was combined with low parental warmth and affection. Juvenile delinquency and heightened aggression in adolescents are most often preceded by inadequate parental control or inappropriate parenting style (Dishion, French, & Patterson 1995; Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984). Poor parental monitoring and hard punishment and physical abuse predict violent offending, especially in sons (Gorman-Smith, Tolan, Zelli, & Huesmann, 1996; Malinosky-Rummell, & Hanson, 1993). Authoritarian parenting is also associated with children negative social adjustment, such as hostility and low self esteem (Coie & Dodge, 1998). Children of parents who use punitive and coercive discipline, who restrict the autonomy of child, have absolute standards, and do

not explain their demands are prone to use of physical aggression and hostile behavior towards peers (e.g., Coie & Dodge, 1998; Ladd & Pettit, 2002). Permissive parents exert low control and high responsiveness; they do not set clear limits and boundaries. Literature has also suggested that permissive parenting is highly associated with physical aggression (e.g., Rubin, Stewart, & Chen, 1995). The link between maternal and paternal parenting styles and childhood aggressive behavior was also measured by Hart, Nelson, Robinson, Olsen, and McNeilly-Choque (1998) in an ethnic Russian sample of 207 families of nursery school aged children. Results supported the findings from Western samples. Maternal and paternal coercion, lack of responsiveness, and psychological control (for mothers only) were significantly correlated with children's overt aggression with peers. Aggressive disciplinary framework of parenting tactics employed by parents is a possible risk factor in developing aggression and antisocial behavior in children (Farrington, Jolliffe, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Kalb, 2001).

In addition to the empirical evidences which indicated that a major risk factor for aggression among children is parenting style (Georgiou, 2008), in particular inadequate (Finzi-Dottan et al., 2011; Scott, 2008). Aggressiveness of the children is also influenced by parents in multiple ways, i.e., by their genes determining aggressiveness later in life (Perusse & Gendreau, 2005), mothers' behavior during the period of prenatal development (Hujibregts, Se'guin, Zoccolillo, Boivin, & Tremblay 2007), and emotional family climate (Lau, Takeuchi, & Alegri'a, 2006). Demographic variables also define the groups at highest risk for aggression (Orpina, 1999). Role of demographic variables in aggression among children has been supported in subsequent studies (e.g., Baumeister & Boden 1998; Rahman & Huq, 2005). Scientific studies on direct forms of aggression have shown that men are more aggressive than women (e.g., Crick et al., 1999; Galen & Underwood, 1997; Hyde, 1984; Wahl & Metzner, 2012). Young people emerged as more aggressive than older people (Maguire & Pastore, 1997). Other factors that play role into this directly and indirectly include domestic violence, parental drug abuse, maternal depression, family poverty, parents with low education, stressed families and single parent status (Bloomquist & Schnell, 2005; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2008). Violence disproportionately affects the poor and the uneducated. Aggression is higher in low socioeconomic neighborhoods, and the risk of being the victim of crime increases for people of low socioeconomic status (Farrington, 1989; Maguire & Pastore, 1997). Indices of family socioeconomic status, including parent education as important

predictor of children's educational and behavioral outcomes have been supported over the years (e.g., Davis-Kean, 2005; Dearing, McCartney, & Taylor, 2001; Nagin & Tremblay, 2001). Empirical evidence has established that more affluent and more educated parents are more likely to show warmth, and read to their children than parents with low levels of education (Barker et al., 2008; Feinstein & Sabates, 2005; Sabates & Feinstein, 2005). Literature also demonstrates that children of working mothers involve more in aggressive acts as compared to those whose mother stay at home and give their children emotional support and sufficient time (e.g., Amin, 2011; Bossard as cited in Nye, 1963).

Most of the initial studies on aggression have been done on children. However, there is a lack of research on the role of parenting in behavioral problems of late adolescents, especially in Asian countries like Pakistan. Previous studies have explored the role of parenting in aggression among preschoolers, nursery children, pre adolescents and early adolescents (e.g., Alnik et al., 2009; Barker et al., 2008; Baumrind, 1991; Brown, Arnold, Dobbs, & Doctoroff, 2007; Casas et al., 2006; Hart et al., 1998; Hujibregls et al., 2007; Patterson, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984; Romano et al., 2005; William et al., 2009 ). Recently, trend has changed and studies on the issue have been done on both children and late adolescents (DeClercq, 2008; Kawabta et al., 2011; Wahl & Metzner, 2012).

Aggression among adolescents has drawn the attention of researchers due the fact that it can be considered pathological, when it is exaggerated, persistent and expressed out of context (Wahl, 2012). Magnusson (1989) advocates that adolescence is a period when a person is fully exposed to the society and his/her behavior, particularly violent acts are visible to community. However, there has been little research examining the role of parenting style in aggressiveness among late adolescents, especially in Asian societies.

The present study was planned to explore the relationship between parenting styles and aggression among adolescents in Pakistani cultural context, where adolescents' behavior is likely to be influenced by extended family members in addition to parental control due to joint family system. Documented studies suggest that parenting styles are perceived differently in eastern and western societies, like traditional Chinese believe that parents are responsible for training the child to be socially and morally responsible for the socialization of their children, and parents should be harsh on it; whereas Western belief is that parents should encourage and nurture children's self-esteem, independence, and expressions of opinions and feelings

(Lieber, Fung, & Leung, 2006). In Pakistani society obedience is valued as a virtue, both religiously and culturally. Parents usually believe in harsh disciplinary measure to reprimand children at points where their actions or beliefs are in conflict with parents' expectations and religious values. Keeping in view the work done in the West, the second purpose of the present study was to establish the validity of eastern and western belief in positive and negative parenting and to explore the role of demographic variables (viz., parents' education, income, working status of mothers, and child's gender) grouping together with parenting styles in aggression.

## Method

### Participants

The sample consisted of 109 late adolescents (52 boys and 57 girls) from 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades, age ranged between 15 and 17 years ( $M = 16.73$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ) from intact families, and their parents. Mothers' age ranged between 35 and 50 years ( $M = 43.75$ ,  $SD = 4.24$ ) and fathers' age ranged between 44 and 62 years ( $M = 51.70$ ,  $SD = 5.22$ ). Convenient sampling technique was used to recruit adolescents from four public and private schools of four cities of Punjab. Parents were approached through students at their homes.

Table 1

*Frequencies and Percentages of Demographic Variables*

Variables	<i>f</i>	%
Gender		
Boys	52	47.7
Girls	57	52.3
Adolescents' age in years		
15-16	56	51
16-17	53	49
Fathers' age in years		
44-52	57	52
53-62	52	48
Mothers' age in years		
35-42	59	54
43-50	50	46
Mothers' education		
Under graduates	62	57.4
Graduates	30	27.5
Masters	16	14.7

*Continued...*

Variables		<i>f</i>	%
Status of mothers		28	74.3
	Working	81	25.7
	Non Working		
Fathers' education			
	Under graduates	30	28.0
	Graduates	19	17.7
	Masters	57	53.2
Parents' monthly income (in Pakistani Rupees)	20-29 thousand	36	18.3
	30-39 thousand	10	33.1
	40-49 thousand	43	9.2
	Above 50 thousand	20	39.4

### Instruments

**Aggression Questionnaire.** Adolescents completed the Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992), consisted of 29 items to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale. It aimed at measuring attitudes toward aggressiveness and its expression in everyday circumstances. The questionnaire was designed to measure four dispositional dimensions of aggression (viz., physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility). Physical aggression subscale consisted of 9 items (e.g., *If somebody hits me, I hit back*). Verbal aggression subscale contained 5 items (e.g., *my friends say that I'm somewhat argumentative*), anger subscale contained 7 items (e.g., *I have trouble controlling my temper*), and hostility subscale comprised 8 items (*When people are especially nice, I wonder what they want*). Values of Cronbach's alpha in the current study were (.88, .88, .70, .60, & .71) consecutively for total scale, physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. High correlations were found between subscales and total scale range between (.59 - .82,  $p < .01$ ). Construct validity of the scale was supported to some extent by their relative associations with other self-report measures of personality traits (Buss & Perry, 1992; Harris, 1995; Harris & Knight-Bohnhoff, 1996). Gallo and Smith (1998) reported evidence for the discriminant validity of the scale. Concurrent validity of the scale in health related studies has also been reported (e.g., Giancola, 2002; Gidron, Davidson, & Ilia, 2001).

**Parenting Styles Questionnaire.** Parents completed three subscales of the Parenting Styles Questionnaire (Robinson et al., 1995). The scale consisted of 32 items and each item of the scale was evaluated on 5-point Likert described as, *never, once in a while, about half of the time, very often, and always*. The authoritative subscale

(e.g., *I take into account child's preferences in making plans for the family*) consisted of 13 items,  $\alpha = .90$  for mothers and  $\alpha = .95$  for fathers in this study. The authoritarian subscale (e.g., *I punish by taking privileges away from child with little if any explanations*) consisted of 13 items  $\alpha = .80$  for mothers and  $\alpha = .78$  for fathers in this study. The permissive parenting (e.g., *I ignore my child's bad behavior*) consisted of 4 items,  $\alpha = .81$  for mothers and  $\alpha = .65$  for fathers in this study. Inter subscales correlations were quite satisfactory between authoritative parenting and authoritarian parenting ( $r = -.60$ ;  $p < .01$ ); between authoritative parenting and permissive parenting ( $r = -.73$ ;  $p < .01$ ); and between authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting ( $r = .72$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Validity of the scale has been supported in number of studies (e.g., Ellis, 2007; Onder & Gulay, 2009; Robinson et al., 1995).

Permission to translate and use the scales was taken from the authors via email. Before data collection both questionnaires were translated into Urdu by five experts who were competent in both English and Urdu languages. Translations made by the experts were compared and best translated items were unanimously retained by three psychologists. Another expert who was competent in Urdu and English translated the scales back to English. The original and the Urdu translation of the scales were compared by the bilingual experts and the researcher and the final Urdu version of the scales was accomplished. Psychometrics of the scales were further strengthened by administering both Urdu and English versions of scales on 20 students and 25 parents and significant correlations appeared ( $r = .88$ ;  $p < .00$ ) between Urdu and English versions of Aggression Questionnaire and ( $r = .84$ ;  $p < .00$ ) between Urdu and English versions of Parenting Styles Questionnaire.

## **Procedure**

Permission for data collection was taken from two public and two private schools. Students of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> classes were approached in the classes and the purpose of research was explained to them. Students who showed their willingness were engaged in the study. Initially 180 students were willing to participate in the study, but final sample consisted of 109 adolescents due to the reason that 71 parents did not consented to participate in the study. Contact numbers of parents were gathered from students and time and date was fixed with them for data collection.

Adolescents filled up the aggression questionnaires at school after getting consent from their parents. Personal information form and Parenting Style Questionnaire were filled out by parents at their home. Fathers and mothers separately filled out the scale.

## Results

Group differences were analyzed across gender and working status of the mothers. In addition, predicting role of various factors on aggression was determined through regression analyses.

Table 2  
*Gender Differences on Aggression (N = 109)*

Variables	Boys (n = 52)	Girls (n = 57)	<i>t</i> (107)	Cohen's <i>d</i>	95% CI
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>			
Physical Aggression	36.71(15.15)	24.02 (7.45)	5.73**	.84	[8.20, 17.19]
Verbal Aggression	24.50 (5.81)	20.30 (6.33)	3.58**	.72	[1.89, 6.52]
Anger	31.32 (8.14)	26.83 (6.25)	3.03*	.55	[1.76, 7.20]
Hostility	24.72 (7.66)	23.76 (9.30)	.40	.12	[2.30, 4.19]
Total Aggression	117.26 (26.84)	94.92 (23.92)	4.52**	.83	[12.73, 31.93]

Note. CI= Confidence Interval.

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .00$

Table 2 showed results of independent sample *t*-test indicating that boys scored significantly higher than girls on total aggression and subscales of aggression except for hostility. Effect sizes range support the strength of relationship of gender and aggression.

Table 3  
Group Differences across Working Status of Mothers on Aggression among Adolescents (N= 109)

Variables	Non working Mothers (n = 81)	Working Mothers (n = 28)	t (107)	Cohen's	
	M (SD)	M (SD)		d	95% CI
Physical Aggression	29.30(13.77)	32.75(12.11)	1.17	.25	[-9.25, 2.37]
Verbal Aggression	21.28 (6.05)	25.43 (6.54)	3.06*	.68	[-6.83, -1.45]
Anger	28.20 (7.56)	31.39 (6.80)	1.97*	.42	[-6.40, .01]
Hostility	23.67 (8.30)	25.82 (9.11)	1.15	.25	[-5.84, 1.55]
Total Aggression	102.47 (27.21)	115.39 (26.68)	2.17*	.47	[-24.69, -1.15]

Note: CI = Confidence Interval

\*p < .05

Results of independent sample *t*-test revealed that children of working mothers showed significantly higher score on verbal aggression, anger, and total aggression with large effect sizes, while non significant difference appeared on physical aggression and hostility subscales (see Table 3).

Simple regression analyses were run to investigate the predictive strength of continuous demographic variables (e.g., adolescents' age, parental income, and parental education) and study variables (e.g., authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting, and permissive parenting) to predict four components of aggression that is, physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility (see Table 4).

Table 4  
Summary of Simple Regression Analyses for Variables Predicting Aggression among Adolescents

Var	Phy Agg			Ver Agg			Anger			Hostility		
	B	SEB	β	B	SEB	β	B	SEB	β	B	SEB	β
Autht	-.12	.05	-.23*	-.06	.03	-.23*	-.08	.03	-.30*	-.12	.04	-.13
Auth	.01	.06	.02	.12	.03	.51**	.22	.04	.66**	.02	.05	.07
Per	.63	.15	.48**	.14	.08	.18	.18	.09	.19	.12	.13	.14
PMI	.00	.00	-.27*	-.00	.00	-.32*	.00	.00	-.26*	-.00	.00	.10
R <sup>2</sup>	.47			.31			.42			.02		
F	22.79**			11.75**			14.85**			2.28		

Note. Var = Variables; Autht = Authoritative Parenting; Auth = Authoritarian Parenting; Per = Permissive Parenting; PMI = Parental Monthly Income; Phy Agg = Physical Aggression; Ver Agg = Verbal Aggression.

\*\*p < .00, \*p < .05

Table 4 illustrates that authoritative parenting; authoritarian parenting, submissive parenting, and parents' income appear as salient predictors in physical aggression, verbal aggression and anger, whereas hostility was not predicted by any of the demographics or study variables.

Table 5

*The Assortative Mating of Parents on Parenting Styles (N= 218)*

Parenting Styles	Father's Authoritative	Father's Authoritarian	Father's Permissive
Mother's Authoritative	.54**	-	-
Mother's Authoritarian	-	.48**	-
Mother's Permissive	-	-	.68**

\*\* $p < .00$

Table 5 showed Pearson's bi-variate correlation calculated to see the direction of correlation in parenting styles practiced by both parents. Results depicted that there was significant positive correlation or cohesiveness in practice of all three parenting styles practiced by parents in Pakistan (see Table 5). It means if father uses one parenting style, mother follows the same and vice versa.

## Discussion

Violence is a prevalent phenomenon in Pakistan (World Report, 2012). A substantial portion of daily newspapers reports violence, terrorism, and rape taking place in the country. This human anguish due to violence is alarming; and if we do not pay heed to risk factors for aggression among adolescents, we will not be in a position to deal with this problem, and it will become a dilemma for the future generation. Adolescence is a time of heightened violence and the frequency of engaging in violent behaviors are greater for adolescents than for all other age groups (Polk, 2013). The present study is an empirical investigation aimed at exploring the phenomenon of aggression in late adolescent boys and girls, related to demographic variables and parenting styles.

The study was based on the assumption that positive / adequate parenting (authoritative) would have negative association with aggression, and negative/inadequate parenting (authoritarian and permissive) would have positive association with aggression among late adolescents in Pakistani cultural context. Simple regression

analyses illustrated that parenting styles had an impact on the aggression level of late adolescents, as significant amounts of variance in physical aggression, verbal aggression, and anger were accounted for by all three parenting styles. Results corroborate and extend findings from Western and Russian American samples (Barker et al., 2008; Finzi-Dottan et al., 2011). Permissive parenting appeared as significantly associated with physical aggression. The results match with the findings by Rubin et al. (1995). One possible explanation for this association might be that permissive parents neither monitor their children's behavior in an appropriate way, nor make them to reflect on their behavior; as a result children lack the ability to regulate their aggressive impulse when face disagreement or clash. Since highest correlation was found between authoritarian parenting and verbal aggression; and authoritarian parenting and anger in the present study consecutively. One possible reason might be that when children see their parents being argumentative in controlling them, they learn that they may control the situation through verbal aggression. Role of authoritarian parenting in aggression is supported from number of studies (e.g., Coi & Dodge, 1998; Ladd & Pettit, 2002). Authoritative parenting had significant negative association with physical aggression and anger, and the results coincide with work done by other researchers (e.g., Alink et al., 2009; Finzi-Dottan et al., 2011; Romano et al., 2005).

Moreover studies have established the role of adequate parenting in positive social behavior of children instead of aggressive behavior (Collins & Steinberg, 2006). The rationale of this relationship might be that authoritative parents not only set disciplinary limits for their children and exert reasonable control over them, but also give space to their children to express their opinion and take their decisions. Indeed when authoritative parents and children are emotionally close, they can assert more mutual influence. Parents are in a position to be tough when toughness is required. Parents are not afraid to set limits, because they have emotional bond with their children and their words matter (Gottman & Declaire, 1997). Hostility was not predicted by any of the variables entered in the regression analyses.

Parent's income appeared as negatively associated with aggression and the only demographic predictor in the present study. The result coincides with Wahl and Metzner (2012) study, in which low family income negatively correlated with higher aggressiveness. This might be due to the reason that parents from high income families have lesser complexes; they may easily fulfill the needs and desires of their children as compared to parents from low income

families. Low income and low education of parents imply knowledge deficits and may lead to negative patterns of parenting according to the frustration-aggression theory (Dollard & Miller, 1939). It is perhaps important to note that socioeconomic status (SES) may be regarded as functionally distinct domains of self-esteem (Twenge & Campbell, 2002). Social superiority and social exclusion due to low SES may emerge as reliable and positive predictor of hostile aggression (Baumeister & Boden 1998). The results do not coincide with the findings of Rahman and Huq (2005) in Bangladesh, in which respondents with high SES expressed more aggression than the middle and low SES. Guo and Harris (2000) dismissed the role of SES in parenting. Hence the role of SES in aggression in different cultural contexts still needs to be studied).

Boys scored significantly higher than girls on physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and on total aggression. The results match with the study by Wahl and Metzner (2012), in which fathers and children themselves described the boys as aggressive with significantly greater frequency than girls. Physical aggression or intentional harm caused to others through deliberate physical acts (e.g., hitting, kicking) or verbal threat of such acts is thought to be largely the venue of boys (Crick et al., 1999). On the other hand, Owens, Shute, and Slee (2000) for example, showed that girls' aggressive tactics included gossip, ostracism, breaking confidences, and criticism (relational aggression). Non significant sex differences on hostility (non overt form of aggression) found in the present study is also supported by earlier studies (e.g., Bjorkqvist & Niemela, 1992; Galen & Underwood, 1997; Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, & Peltonen, 1998). Results do not match with a study by Rahman and Haq (2005) in which girls showed more aggression than boys in age group 14-16 years.

The results in the present study also demonstrated that adolescents of working mothers scored significantly higher on verbal aggression and total aggression as compared to non working mothers. The results coincide with the findings (Amin, 2011). The evidence also supports the validity of Bossard's conception (cited in Nye, 1963) that employed mothers induce maladjustment in child, because they presumably experience more difficulty in exercising direct control and supervision of children and children of employed mothers showed aggressive behavior due to certain conditions provoked by the working status of the mother (e.g., the child feels neglected and rationalizes his/her antisocial behavior, the child exploits lack of

maternal control, mother is exhausted and neglects supervision and training of the child).

In order to see whether parents play harmonizing role in parenting practices in Pakistan, assortative mating among both of the parents was measured by calculating correlation among all three parenting styles practiced by mothers and fathers of the adolescents' sample. Analyses show that there is significant positive correlation on all three parenting styles measured in the study. This shows that couples in Pakistan have cohesiveness in parenting style practices. There is significant harmony in their parenting styles. No previous document was found to compare this phenomenon.

### **Limitations**

The findings of the study should be interpreted with caution as it contains certain limitation. The study has limited generalizability as the sample was recruited from cities of Punjab only, so more representative sample from all over the country should be selected for future study. In future study both early and late adolescent groups should be included. It is a correlational study, so we cannot establish the direction of causality of the relationships studied, as in some cases hyperactive children provoke negative parenting practices, which in turn makes the children aggressive (Thomas & Chess, 1977). The present study explains the social and cultural dimensions of contributing factors in aggression. However literature illustrates that social, cultural, and biological factors work together to influence the aggressiveness of children and adolescents. Interdisciplinary work illuminating the complexed interplay of biological, social and cultural factors needs to be initiated in Asian societies.

### **Recommendations**

Future studies should continue to explore the relationship between parenting styles and aggression. No earlier documented study has examined these relationships in adolescents in Pakistan. Future studies should include larger sample. The current study provides some support for the importance of parenting practices in aggression of children. Although aggression is often peer-directed and gender specific, children may learn aggressive strategies from their interactions with their parents. Therefore, future research should focus

on developing parenting interventions to reduce aggressive behavior in children. Since interventions targeting parenting practices could be designed for children high in aggression. The current study also illustrates the importance of considering gender, parents' socio economic status, parents' education level in the relationship between parenting and aggression, so we hope that such research will eventually help in the development of effective aggression prevention and intervention strategies. It underlines the fact that there is an opportunity to improve children's life chances through directly intervening with programs that are effective in changing parenting styles. Considerable data has established that parenting programs are effective in England in helping parents reduce coercive parenting and improve child behavior, be it in clinical samples, or selected from a school screen (Scott, 2008).

### **Conclusion**

Despite all the limitations the present study suggests that parents differ in their capacity for parenting, and different parenting styles may lead to difference in the levels of aggression. It may be assumed that parents need to adopt authoritative parenting styles as a safeguard against the behavioral problems of their children. While dealing with the aggressiveness of a child, parenting practices should be kept into consideration on high priority. Present study was an attempt to develop insight into the early prevention of aggression and the worth of involving parents in preventive program. This knowledge may be used to inform family based interventions aimed at preventing the perpetration of different forms of aggression.

### **References**

- Alink, L. R. A., Mesman, J., Van Zeijl, J., Stolk, M. N., Juffer, F., & Koot, H. M. (2009). Maternal sensitivity moderates the relation between negative discipline and aggression in early childhood. *Social Development, 18*, 99-120.
- Amin, F. M. (2011). Prevalence and factors associated with aggression among preschool age children. *Life Science Journal, 8*(4), 929-938.
- Anonymous. (2012). *Authoritative parenting*. Retrieved from <http://parentsandparenting.blogspot.com/2012/05/inadequate-parenting-styles.html>
- Bandura, A. (1973). *Aggression: A social learning analysis*. Engle-woods Cliff, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Bandura, A. (1989). Social cognitive theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.), *Annals of child development: Six theories of child development* (Vol. 6, pp. 1-60). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Barker, E. D., Boivin, M., Brendgen, M., Fontaine, N., Arseneault, L., Vitaro, F. (2008). Predictive validity and early predictors of peer-victimization trajectories in preschool. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, *65*, 1185-1192.
- Barry, C. T., Frick, P. J., & Grafeman, S. J. (2008). Child versus parent reports of parenting practices: Implications for the conceptualization of child behavioral and emotional problems. *Assessment*, *15*, 294-303. doi:10.1177/1073191107312212.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Boden, J. M. (1998). Aggression and the self: High self-esteem, low self-control, and ego threat. In R. Geen, & E. Donnerstein (Eds.), *Human aggression: Theories, research, and implications for social policy* (pp. 111-137). CA: Academic, San Diego.
- Baumrind, D. (1991). Effective parenting during early adolescent transition. In P. A. Cowan & E. M. Hetherington (Eds.), *Advances in family research* (vol. 2, pp. 111-163). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.
- Bjorkqvist, K., & Niemela, P. (1992). *Of mice and women: Aspects of female aggression*. San Diego: Academic Press, Inc.
- Bloomquist, M., & Schnell, S. (2005). *Helping children with aggression and antisocial behaviour*. New York: The Guildford Press.
- Brooks-Gunn, J. (1988). Antecedents and consequences of variations in girls' maturational timing. In M. D. Levine & E. R. McAnarney (Eds.), *Early adolescent transition* (pp. 101-121). Lexington, M. A: Lexington Books.
- Buss, A. H., & Perry, M. (1992). The Aggression Questionnaire. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *63*, 452-459. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.63.3.452
- Casas, J. F., Weigel, S. M., Crick, N. R., Ostrov, J. M., Woods, K. E., Elizabeth, A., Huddleston-Casas, C. A. (2006). Early parenting and children's relational and physical aggression in the preschool and home contexts. *Applied Developmental Psychology*, *27*, 209-227.
- Coie, J. D., & Dodge, K. A. (1998). Aggression and antisocial behavior. In W. Damon & N. Eisenberg (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Vol. 3, pp. 779-862). New York: Wiley.
- Collins, W. A., & Laursen, B. (1999). *The Minnesota symposia on child psychology: Relationships as developmental contexts* (Vol. 30). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Collins, W. A., & Steinberg, L. (2006). Adolescent development in interpersonal context. In W. Damon & N. Eisenberg (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Vol. 4, pp. 1003-1067). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Crick, N. R., Werner, N. E., Casas, J. F., O'Brien, K. M., Nelson, D. A., Grotzger, J. K., & Markon, K. (1999). Childhood aggression and gender:

- A new look at an old problem. In D. Bernstein (Ed.), *Nebraska symposium on motivation* (vol. 45, pp. 75-141). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Davis-Kean, P. E. (2005). The influence of parent education and family income on child achievement: The indirect role of parental expectations and the home environment. *Journal of Family Psychology, 19*(2), 294-304.
- Dearing E., McCartney, K., & Taylor, B. A. (2001). Change in family income matters more for children with less. *Child Development, 72*, 1779-1793
- DeClercq, B., Van Leeuwen, K., De Fruyt, F., Van Hiel, A., & Mervielde, I. (2008). Maladaptive personality traits and psychopathology in childhood and adolescence: The moderating effect of parenting. *Journal of Personality, 76*, 357-383. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6494.2007.00489.x.
- Dishion, T. J., French, D. C., & Patterson, G. R. (1995). The development and ecology of antisocial behavior. In D. Cicchetti & D. J. Cohen (Eds.), *Developmental psychopathology: Risk, disorder, and adaptation* (pp. 421-471). New York: Wiley.
- Dollard, J., & Miller, N. E. (1939). The hypothesis suggests that the failure to obtain a desired or expected goal leads to aggressive behavior. *Frustration and aggression*. New Haven, USA: Yale University Press.
- Ellis, R. M. (2007). Relationship between parenting styles and children's motivational style: The development of learned helplessness (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://soar.wichita.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10057/1117/t07013.pdf?sequence=1>
- Farrington, D. P. (1989). Early predictors of adolescent aggression and adult violence. *Violence and Victims, 4*, 79-100.
- Farrington, D. P., Jolliffe, D., Loeber, R., Stouthamer-Loeber, M., & Kalb, L. M. (2001). The concentration of offenders in families, and family criminality in the prediction of boys' delinquency. *Journal of Adolescence, 24*, 579-596.
- Feinstein, L., & Sabates, R. (2005). Education and youth crime: Effects of introducing the education maintenance allowance programme. *Wider Benefits of Learning Research Report, 14*, 1-28.
- Finzi-Dottan, R., Bilu, R., & Golubchik, P. (2011). Aggression and conduct disorder in former Soviet Union immigrant adolescents: The role of parenting style and ego identity. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*, 918-926.
- Galen, B. R., & Underwood, M. K. (1997). A developmental investigation of social aggression among children. *Developmental Psychology, 33*, 589-600.
- Gallo, L. C., & Smith, T. W. (1998). Construct validation of health-relevant personality traits: Interpersonal circumplex and five-factor model analyses of the Aggression Questionnaire. *International Journal of Behavior Medicine, 5*, 129-147.

- Georgiou, S. N. (2008). Bullying and victimization at school: The role of mothers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 78*, 109-125.
- Giancola, P. R. (2002). Alcohol-related aggression in men and women: The influence of dispositional aggressiveness. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 63*, 696-708.
- Gidron, Y., Davidson, K., & Ilia, R. (2001). Development and cross-cultural and clinical validation of a brief comprehensive scale for assessing hostility in medical settings. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 24*, 1-15.
- Gorman-Smith, D., Tolan, P. H., Zelli, A., & Huesmann, L. R. (1996). The relation of family functioning to violence among inner-city minority youth. *Journal of Family Psychology, 10*, 101-116.
- Gottman, J. M., & Declaire, J. (1997). *The heart of parenting: Raising an emotionally intelligent child*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Guo, G., & Harris, K. M. (2000). The mechanisms mediating the effects of poverty on children's intellectual development. *Demography, 37* (4), 431-447.
- Harris, J. A. (1995). Confirmatory factor analysis of the Aggression Questionnaire. *Behavior Research and Therapy, 33*, 991-993.
- Harris, M. B. (1996). Aggressive experiences and aggressiveness: Relationship to ethnicity, gender, and age. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 26*, 843-870.
- Harris, M. B., & Knight-Bohnhoff, K. (1996). Gender and aggression: Personal aggressiveness. *Sex Roles, 35*, 27-42.
- Hart, C. H., Nelson, D. A., Robinson, C. C., Olsen, S. F., & McNeilly-Choque, M. K. (1998). Overt and relational aggression in Russian nursery-school-age children: Parenting style and marital linkages. *Developmental Psychology, 34*(4), 687-697.
- Huijbregts, S., Se'guin, J., Zoccolillo, M., Boivin, M., & Tremblay, R. (2007). Associations of maternal prenatal smoking with early childhood physical aggression, hyperactivity-impulsivity, and their co-occurrence. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 35*, 203-215.
- Hyde, J. S. (1984). How large are gender differences in aggression? A developmental meta-analysis. *Developmental Psychology, 20*, 722-736.
- Iwaniec, D. (1997). Meeting children's needs adequate and inadequate parenting style. *Child Care in Practice, 3*, 49-57. doi: 10.1080/13575279708412884
- Kawabata, Y., Alink, L. R. A., Tseng, W., Van I. J., Zendoorn, M. H., & Crick, N. R. (2011). Maternal and paternal parenting styles associated with relational aggression in children and adolescents: A conceptual analysis and meta-analytic review. *Developmental Review, 31*, 240-278.
- Kim-Cohen, J., Caspi, A., Moffitt, T. E., Harrington, H., Milne, B. J., & Poulton, R. (2003). Prior juvenile diagnoses in adults with mental disorder: Developmental follow back of a prospective-longitudinal

- cohort. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 60, 709-717. doi: 10.1001/archpsyc.60.7.709
- Klerman, L. V. (1993). The relationship between adolescent parenthood and inadequate parenting. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 15, 309-320.
- Ladd, G. W., & Pettit, G. S. (2002). Parenting and the development of children's peer relationships. In M. H. Borenstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (2nd ed.) (Vol. 5, pp. 377-409). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate.
- Lagerspetz, K., Bjorkqvist, K., & Peltonen, T. (1988). Is indirect aggression typical of females? Gender differences in aggressiveness in 11- to 12-year-old children. *Aggressive Behavior*, 14, 403-414.
- Lau, A. S., Takeuchi, D. T., & Alegria, M. (2006). Parent-to-child aggression among Asian-American parents: Culture, context, and vulnerability. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 68, 1261-1275.
- Lieber, E., Fung, H., & Leung, P. W. (2006). Chinese child rearing beliefs: Key dimensions and contributions to the development culture appropriate assessment. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 9, 140-147.
- Maguire K., & Pastore, A. L. (1997). *Source book of criminal justice statistics, 1996*. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics Overview Report NCJ-165361).
- Malinosky-Rummell, R., & Hansen, D. J. (1993). Long-term consequences of childhood physical abuse. *Psychological Bulletin*, 114, 68-79.
- McCord, J. (1996). Unintended consequences of punishment. *Pediatrics*, 98, 832-834.
- McCord, J. (1997). On discipline. *Psychological Inquiry*, 8(3), 215-217.
- Nagin, D. S., & Tremblay, R. E. (2001). Parental and early childhood predictors of persistent physical aggression in boys from kindergarten to High School. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 58, 389-394.
- Nelson, D. A., & Crick, N. R. (2002). Parental psychological control: Implications for childhood physical and relational aggression. In B. K. Barber (Ed.), *Intrusive parenting: How psychological control affects children and adolescents* (pp.168-189). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Nye, F. I. (1963). The adjustment of adolescent children. In F.I. Nye, & L. N. W. Hoffman. (Eds.), *The employed mothers in America* (pp. 133-141). Chicago: Rand Mc Nally & Company.
- Onder, A., & Gulay, H. (2009). Reliability and validity of parenting styles and dimension questionnaire. *Procedia social and behavioral sciences*, 1, 508-514.
- Orpina, P. (1999). Who is violent?: factors associated with aggressive behaviors in Latin America and Spain. *Pan American Journal of Public Health*, 5, 4-5.

- Owens, L., Shute, R., & Slee, P. (2000). I'm in and you're out...Q: Explanations for teenage girls' indirect aggression. *Psychology, Evolution, and Gender*, 2, 19-46.
- Paikoff, R. L., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1990). Physiological processes: What role do they play during the transition to adolescence? In R. Montemayor, G. Adams, & T. Gullotta (Eds.), *Advances in adolescent development: The transition from childhood to adolescence* (vol. 2, pp. 63-81). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Parke, R. D., & Buriel, R. (1998). Socialization in the family: Ethnic and ecological perspectives. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology* (pp. 463-552). New York: Wiley.
- Patterson, G. R., De Baryshe, B. D., & Ramsey, E. (1989). A developmental perspective on antisocial behavior. *American Psychologist*, 44, 329-335. doi:10.1037/0003 066X. 44.2.329.
- Patterson, G. R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (1984). The correlation of family management practices and delinquency. *Child Development*, 55, 1299-1307.
- Pe'russe, D., & Gendreau, P. L. (2005). Genetics and the development of aggression. In R. Tremblay, W. W. Hartup, & J. Archer (Eds.), *Developmental origins of aggression* (pp. 223-241). New York: Guilford.
- Pettit, G. S., Bates, J. E., & Dodge, K. A. (1997). Supportive parenting, ecological context, and children's adjustment: A seven-year longitudinal study. *Child Development*, 68, 908-923.
- Polk, R. K. (2013). *Adolescent violence*. Article retrieved from <http://ag.arizona.edu/sfcs/cyfernet/nowg/ythadolvio.html>
- Rahman, A. K. M. R., & Huq, M. M. (2005). Aggression in adolescent boys and girls as related to socio-economic status and residential background. *Journal of Life Earth Science*, 1(1), 5-9.
- Robinson, C., Mandlco, B., Olsen, S. F., & Hart, C. H. (1995). Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting practices: Development of a new measure. *Psychological Reports*, 77, 819-830.
- Romano, E., Tremblay, R., Boulerice, B., & Swisher, R. R. (2005). Multilevel correlates of childhood physical aggression and prosocial behavior. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 33, 565-578.
- Rubin, K. H., Stewart, S. L., & Chen, X. (1995). Parents of aggressive and withdrawn children. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Children and parenting* (Vol. 1, pp. 225-284). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Sabates, R., & Feinstein, L. (2005). *Effects of education on parenting: Evidence using the NCDS*. Article retrieved from [http://www.learningbenefits.net/Publications/SeminarPresentations/Education\\_and\\_parenting.pdf](http://www.learningbenefits.net/Publications/SeminarPresentations/Education_and_parenting.pdf)
- Scott, S. (2008). Parenting programmes for attachment and antisocial behaviour. *Psychiatry*, 7, 367-370.

- Silove, D., George, G., Bhavani-sankaram, V. (1987). Para-suicide: Interaction between inadequate parenting and recent interpersonal stress. *The Australian and New Zealand journal of psychiatry*, 21, 221-228
- Stattin, H., & Magnusson, D. (1989). The role of early aggressive behavior in the frequency, seriousness, and types of later crime. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 57(6), 710-718.
- Thomas, A., & Chess, S. (1977). *Temperament and development*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, W. K. (2002). Self-Esteem and socioeconomic status: A meta-analytic review. *Personality and Social Psychological Review*, 6, 59-71.
- Wahl, K. (2012). Parental influences on the prevalence and development of child aggressiveness. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 21(2), 344-355.
- Wahl, K., & Metzner, C. (2012). Parental influences on the prevalence and development of child aggressiveness. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 21, 344-355.
- Webster-Stratton, C., & Reid, J. (2008). *A school-family partnership: Addressing multiple risk factors to improve school readiness and prevent antisocial behavior in young children*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.
- Williams, L. R., Degnan, K. A., Perez-Edgar, K. E., Henderson, H. A., Rubin, K. H., Pine, D. S. & Fox, N. A. (2009). Impact of behavioral inhibition and parenting style on internalizing and externalizing problems from early childhood through adolescence. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 37(8), 1063-1075.
- World Report. (2012). *Human Rights Watch*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2012/world-report-2012-Pakistan>.
- Youniss, J., & Ruth, A. J. (2002). Approaching policy for adolescent development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In J. J. Mortimer & R. W. Larson (Eds.), *The changing adolescent experience, societal trends, and the transition to adulthood* (pp. 250-271). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Received December 27, 2012

Revision received November 7, 2013