

PARENTAL ACCEPTANCE REJECTION AND SCHOOLING STATUS: CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO SELF-CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD[#]

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The present study was meant to investigate a child's assessment of personality and self-concept viz: schooling status and perceived parental behaviour. For this purpose three groups of subjects (N=106): Group A was chosen from a privileged school, (reflecting a privileged class); group B from a government school (a middle class status); and group C was from the un-privilege class i.e., the non school attending children. Child Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ), Child Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ), and the Self Concept Questionnaire were used for the present work. A significant difference was found between the three groups on the dependent variable: Child PARQ, Child PAQ, and the Self Concept.

The self-concept broadly defined, is a person's perception of himself or herself, formed through one's experience with an interpretations of one's environment. These perceptions being greatly influenced by the evaluations by significant others and one's own attributions for one's behavior.

Among the proponents of self theory are Argyal (1941), Maslow (1954), and Rogers (1959). Rogers' fundamental position is that the child will do almost anything to satisfy his need for positive regards from the significant people in his life. This results in a self-concept that is sometimes at variance with his own orgasmic experience.

Early in life the 'self is a non-entity. However, out of the general tendency toward differentiation, a child gradually begins to distinguish himself from the rest of the world. The child must come to consider his body and himself as a single, continuous event before a stable concept of the self can be developed. At the latest, by 10-12 years of age, children seem to have quite a stable image of themselves and can make value judgements about their own characteristics.

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It has been found that self-conception is vitally affected by social comparison and exposure to another person which is sufficient to produce a significant impact on a person's momentary self-concept.

Rohner's (1975) theory of parental acceptance/rejection assumes that all human beings have a generalized need for positive response from the people most important to them and that the withdrawal of this basic need is sufficient to produce negative consequences for emotions and personality functioning. A child's perception of his parents' attitude towards him may be formed not only by their overt attitude and behavior and non-verbal cues, but most importantly, by how he interprets them. Reality for any given individuals is what he perceives as real. Thus, it is the child's perception of parental attitudes and behavior that is of ultimate importance as far as the child's self-concept and self-perception is concerned. In circumstances where the individuality of a person is not accorded recognition by significant others, he eventually comes to believe that his existence is of no account.

Sufficient and well documented literature is available about the importance of socioeconomics status and its impact on various aspects of personality. Sudhir and Lalhirini (1989), also confirmed that socioeconomic status was definitely related to parent child interaction. Altherley (1991) also found that subjects of low academic ability and low socioeconomic status reported themselves to be less well behaved and less happy than subjects with high socioeconomic status. Further, students from low socioeconomic status had decreased academic performance and problems in family adjustment (Najman, Schultz, & Williams, 1992). There are a lot of studies conducted on socioeconomic status, personality, and self-concept. However, none of the studies, as reviewed by the author, had specifically manipulated schooling status as a variable. It is considered by the author, therefore, an important variable in the development and assessment of personality and self-concept. The present research therefore, aims at an exploration of the relationship between schooling status of children, perception of parental behavior, personality and self-concept of a child.

The following hypotheses were formulated in the present study:

1. Low self-concept and high rejection by the parents will be positively correlated.

2. The lower the self-concept the more negatively will the child assess his own personality.
3. Children studying in privileged school will perceive their parents behavior more positively as compared to children of government schools or non-school going children.
4. Personality assessment and self-concept of privileged child would relatively be higher than the non-school going children or children going to government schools.

METHOD

Sample

106 girls and boys residing in Peshawar, were randomly selected from following three groups:

- A. Privileged schools ($n = 40$)
- B. Government schools ($n = 40$)
- C. No formal schooling ($n = 26$) voluntary

Instruments

1. *Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire*

Translated (Urdu) version of Ronald Ronner's (1975) Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire with 60 items (child's PARQ) was used to evaluate the child's perception of his parents' attitude towards him at Psychology Department, University of Sindh.

2. *Personality Assessment Questionnaire*

The Child Urdu version of Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Child PAQ) with 42 items (Rohner, 1975) was used to evaluate the child's assessment of his own personality.

3. *Self-Concept Questionnaire*

The Self-Concept Questionnaire (Urdu), with 24 adjectives developed at the National Institute of Psychology was used to evaluate the self-concept of the children (Durrani, 1989).

Procedure

After instructions, the subjects were administered the instruments one at a time, for three consecutive days, in order to safeguard the fatigue affects upon the respondents. They were to attempt the test with the first thought that came to their mind concerning their own self and the family members.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1, 2, and 3 give the means and standard deviations of all the variables on child PARQ and child PAQ and Self-concept.

Table 1

Means and standard deviations of groups A, B, and C on PARQ (Mother)

PARQ	Group A (n= 40)	Group B (n= 40)	Group C (n= 26)
Low warmth (LW)	29.95 (7.85)	30.32 (7.34)	37.34 (7.90)
Aggression (AGR)	24.13 (7.40)	23.47 (4.45)	33.73 (7.06)
Neglect (NEG)	23.25 (5.49)	21.1 (6.26)	32.73 (6.61)
Rejection (NDIF)	19.27	17.77	23.46
Total PARQ	97.05 (22.63)	93.42 (23.18)	127.26 (22.59)

Standard deviations are given in the parentheses.

Table 2

Means and standard deviations of groups A, B, and C on PAQ

PAQ	Group A (n= 40)	Group B (n= 40)	Group C (n= 26)
Hostility	9.70 (3.55)	10.77 (3.28)	13.57 (4.00)
Dependence	16.67 (3.09)	16.77 (4.45)	17.53 (2.21)
Negative self-esteem	10.62 (3.01)	11.32 (3.49)	11.76 (3.20)
Negative self-adequacy	10.40 (2.34)	11.00 (3.06)	12.92 (4.62)
Emotional unresponsiveness	11.95 (3.14)	12.40 (3.20)	13.88 (2.94)
Emotional Instability	13.67 (2.79)	15.25 (3.89)	17.34 (2.51)
Negative world view	9.32 (2.84)	9.05 (2.31)	12.46 (4.52)
Total PAQ	82.35 (10.21)	86.5742 (11.66)	99.50 (16.17)

Standard deviations are given in the parentheses.

Table 3

Means and standard deviations of groups A, B, and C on SC

Self concept	Group A (n= 40)	Group B (n= 40)	Group C (n= 26)
Total SC	97.22	89.07	53.57
	(910.550)	(10.200)	(6.03)

Standard deviations are given in the parentheses.

The data demonstrates that on the child PARQ, group C perceived their parents as less affectionate, most neglecting, aggressive, and rejecting, while group B view their parents as most accepting, although they found them to be less affectionate than group A. On the Child PAQ group A rate themselves as less hostile and dependent, with a more positive self-esteem, and self adequacy, emotionally more responsive and stable, with a more positive view of the world than the other group. While group C holds the most negative view of their personality.

Table 4

Intercorrelation among PAQ, PARQ, and SC

Variables	PAQ	PARQ	SC
PAQ	-	.494*	.456*
PARQ		-	.659*
SC			-

* $p < .001$

The correlational analysis (Table 4) shows that there is a significant correlation between the groups, on all variables (PARQ, PAQ, and SC). The ANOVA scores of all three groups are seen to be significantly different on all variables of PAQ, ($p < .001$), with non-

significant difference on the undifferentiated rejection variable on PARQ (Table, 5,6, & 7).

Table 5

Analysis of Variance on PAQ

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between	2	4794.210	2397.105	15.511	0.000
Within	103	15917.414	154.538		
Total	105	20711.624			

Table 6

Analysis of Variance on PARQ

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between	2	20396.266	10198.133	19.566	0.000
Within	103	53684.790	521.212		
Total	105	74081.057			

Table 7

Analysis of Variance on SC

	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between	2	32058.096	16029.032	177.295	0.000
Within	103	9312.096	90.409		
Total	105	41370.160			

Tables 8, 9, and 10 reveal that there are high inter-correlations correlation among the different variables of PAQ and PARQ which supports our hypothesis 1, except for PARQ, for group B, while group

C supports the hypothesis in general. Our hypotheses 2, is supported by the results of the data between the total PAQ and SC scores ($p < .0001$).

Table 8

Intercorrelation amongst different variables of PAQ and PARQ for group A (n= 40)

	PAQ	LW	AGR	NEG	NDIF	PARQ
Hostility	.78**	.12	.35*	.01	.31*	.24
Dependence	.29	.14	.15	.12	.16	.18
Negative self-esteem	.43**	.39*	.26	.25	.00	.27
Negative self-adequacy	.32*	.12	.23	.19	.09	.19
Emotional						
Unresponsiveness	.51**	.13	.28	.29	.11	.30*
Emotional Instability	.45**	.05	.18	.03	.31*	.17
Negative world view	.57**	.26	.39*	.22	.20	.30

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 9

Intercorrelation amongst different variable of PAQ and PARQ for group B (n= 40)

	PAQ	LW	AGR	NEG	NDIF	PARQ
Hostility	.60**	.52**	.59**	.41**	.52**	.60**
Dependence	.21	-.23	.23	.04	.12	.04
Negative self-esteem	.54**	.20	.01	.25	.00	.14
Negative self-adequacy	.62**	.25	.01	.25	.00	.14
Emotional						
Unresponsiveness	.41**	-.04	.08	.06	.15	.08
Negative world view	.40**	.17	.08	.21	.23	.20

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 10

Intercorrelation amongst different variables of PAQ and PARQ for group C (n= 40)

	PAQ	LW	AGR	NEG	NDIF	PARQ
Hostility	.70**	.37	.53**	.35	.42**	.51
Dependence	.21	.06	.12	.19	.03	.12
Negative self-esteem	.73**	.64**	.68**	.34**	.43**	.65**
Negative self-adequacy	.85**	.62**	.56*	.44**	.29	.60**
Emotional						
Unresponsiveness	.34	.11	.37	.45**	.23	.35
Negative world view	.82**	.48**	.59**	.46**	.37*	.58**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Hypothesis 3 is also supported by the results, as a significant difference was found between the three groups representing the privileged, middle, and working class.

Although group B found their parents most accepting, group A had highest self-concept and the most positive view of their own personalities. The results also show that group A found their parents to be more affectionate than the other groups (Table 10).

As regards, the perception of the groups towards the differing styles of parenting and parental control, group A and B perceives their parents as more authoritarian (low warmth, high control).

Parents of group A prefer physical form of punishment over withdrawal of love, while group B parents use a more psychological form of control, *viz.* withdrawal of love. It is of interest to note that the lower the socioeconomic status, the lower is the level of warmth and higher is the degree of control demonstrated by the parents. With group C parents displaying the highest degree of authoritarian attitude clearly reflects on the self-concept and personality of the child. This contention of the author is supported by results of the study conducted by Haque (1978) who also found a marked difference in middle and working class groups pertaining to the perceived parental acceptance/rejection and personality organization in Pakistani children.

The present study further shows that schooling status influenced parental acceptance/rejection, personality assessment, and self-concept. An interesting finding in this study was that there was nonsignificant difference on the undifferentiated rejection score of the PARQ which

leads to the assumption that perhaps parents are authoritarian in their rearing style irrespective of the specific cultural boundaries of a particular province or area in Pakistan.

The results of group A (privileged class) rejects the hypothesis that "rejecting parents will have a negative effect on the personality and self-concept of the child". It may be argued that, parental warmth is the most important factor in the parent/child relationship, raising the child's self-concept; or for that matter the socioeconomic status in a materialistic society like ours has a very important and vital role in strengthening and bolstering one's self-concept.

CONCLUSION

It may be thus concluded that self-concept is of prime importance in an individual's life because in circumstances where the individuality of a person is not accorded recognition by significant others, he eventually comes to believe that his existence is of no account. Such, an unresponsive or impervious attitude, 'other' induces a sense of emptiness, futility and importance in the 'self'. Hence, for the psychological well-being of an individual, a healthy self concept is required.

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