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## Relationship between Perceived Parenting styles and Depressive Symptoms among Selected University Students

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**Abstract:** Parenting styles have crucial impacts on the psychological development of the adolescents and their future, such as health, mental well-being, academic achievement, self-esteem, and risk-taking behavior. The purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between perceived parenting style and depressive symptoms among college students. The Design of this study was a descriptive co-relational design. This study was conducted at two faculties in Menoufia University (faculty of art and faculty of nursing). A systematic random sample consisted of 527 students who were selected from the above mentioned setting. Two instruments were used for data gathering. Parental Authority Questionnaire and Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) depression scale. The results of this study indicated that the most common parenting styles used among the studied sample was moderate authoritative style. Also more than half of the students had mild depressive symptoms. Conclusion: this study concluded that there was a positive correlation between authoritarian parenting style and depressive symptoms. Therefore, it is recommended that, an educational program should be given for the parents' of adolescents to increase their awareness about their adolescences' needs, problems and how to satisfy their needs and adapt with their problems.

**Keywords:** *Perceived Parenting styles, Depressive Symptoms.*

### Introduction:

Adolescence is often conceptualized as a crucial period for youth in preparation for adulthood. Multiple systems are involved in this preparation and orientation, resulting in a complex process that influences adolescent's thinking and planning about adulthood and future goals (Iovu, 2014). Parenting styles are significant factors in human development studies and have been known as important causes of sociability in adolescents. Parenting styles include methods that parents apply for treating their children, and have profound impact on adolescent's growth, their character, personality and behavioral traits (Kumari and Khanna, 2016).

Parenting style has been defined as the manner in which parents treat, communicate with, discipline, monitor, and support their children (Elstad and Stefansen, 2014). Perceived parenting styles defined as an opinion of adolescences or children about styles of parental behaviors a positive relationship with primary caregivers is important for developing healthy behaviors and skills that lead to successful functioning as a college student. Relationships with parents and other attachment figures have long been identified as playing an important role in psychosocial development and functioning, the effects of which persist far into adulthood (Clark, 2015).

Adolescence is considered to be a period of more often manifestation of depressive mood, although depression is found more often in children before

puberties, especially in girls. The risk for depression increases in adolescence (Lasic et al., 2014).

Depression is defined according to the WHO as a common mental disorder, characterized by sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, feelings of tiredness, and poor concentration (Gogoi, 2016). Parenting styles in adolescence may result in levels of depressive symptoms that interfere with educational achievement. Depression has consistently been identified as a significant risk factor for suicide attempts in university students (Yu et al., 2015) The nurse should provide a comprehensive strategy that includes awareness and educational activities that highlight and encourage reduction of suicide risk factors; early identification of at-risk students; counseling services for students at varying levels of risk; and clear policies and procedures for handling student risk behaviors, supporting at-risk students. (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 2016).

### PURPOSE

The present study was carried out to assess the relationship between perceived parenting styles, depressive symptoms among college students.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the perceived parenting styles among college students?

2) Is there a relationship between the perceived parenting styles and depressive symptoms?

**Operational definition:**

In the present study perceived parenting styles are operationally defined as opinion of adolescences about parenting behaviors of parents according to mean score of parental Authority Questionnaire developed by Buri, 1991.

In the present study, depression is operationally defined as the existence of complaints such as loss of interest, loss of appetite and poor concentration that were assessed using patient health (PHQ-9) depression scale developed by Robert et al., 2005.

**METHODS**

- 1) **Research Design:** A descriptive co-relational design was used.
- 2) **Research Setting:** This study was conducted in faculty of art and faculty of nursing in Menoufia University.
- 3) **Sampling:** A convenience sample of 527 adolescents was selected from the previously mentioned settings .Sample size has been calculated using the following equation:  $n = (z^2 \times p \times q) / D^2$  at power 80% and CI 95%.A simple random sample was used to assign the students into study.

**Inclusion criteria:**

- 1) All students should range from 18-22 years.
- 2) All students should be in first and second year.

**Exclusion criteria:**

Students with Any chronic physical illness, history of psychiatric diseases, history of substance abuse and history of neurological problems. Such illnesses could cause depression.

**Instruments:**

Two instruments were used in this study:

**Instrument (1):** parental Authority Questionnaire. These instruments included two parts.

**Part one:** Social characteristics of the sample .It included age, sex, place of residence and information about family such as father and mother's occupation, educational level.

**Part two:** parental Authority likert scale, It was developed by Buri, 1991. It was used to assess adolescents' perception of parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive). It

- 2) All the instruments were tested for its content validity by 5 experts in the field of psychiatric nursing to ascertain the relevance and completeness of the instruments.
- 3) Test-retest was used to assess the reliability of instrument one (r=0.89)and two(r=0.84)

consisted of 30-item.Ten items were equally used to assess each type of parenting style.

**Scoring system for each item**

Score	Scoring items
5	Strongly agree
4	Agree
3	Neither agree nor disagree
2	Disagree
1	Strongly disagree

Total scoring system for each style (authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive)

None	< 30
Mild	30-36
Moderate	37-43
High	44-50

**Instrument (2):** Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) depression scale. It was developed by Robert et al., (2005). It was used to assess depressive symptoms .It was translated into Arabic by the researcher and consisted of nine items.

**Scoring system for each item**

Score	Scoring items
3	nearly every day
2	more than half the days
1	several days
0	not at all

Total scoring system for depression scale

Mild	5-9
moderate	10-14
moderately severe	15-19
severe	20-27

**Procedure:**

- 1) Before data collection an official letter explaining the purpose and methods of data collection was submitted from the dean of faculty of nursing to the dean of faculty of art .two other official letters were submitted from the dean of faculty of nursing to the heads of departments of the first and second year in faculty of art and faculty of nursing .Data collection was done through distributed questionnaires between students after explaining the purpose , methods of data collection and how to fill the utilized sheets. .Each students spent 20-30 minutes to fill the two instruments. Data was collected from two to three days/week. Data collection lasted between march 2016 to may 2016.
- 4) A Pilot study was carried out on 10% of total sample (53students) after the instruments were developed and before starting data collection to test the applicability, clarity and the feasibility of the study tools and to estimate the needed time to fill the tool.

5) For ethical consideration an oral acceptance was obtained from each student after explaining the purpose of the study and methods of data collection .They were assured about the confidentiality of their data .They were told that participation was voluntary and they had the right to refuse to participate at any time .

**DATA ANALYSIS:-**

The collected data were organized, tabulated and statistically analyzed using SPSS software (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 20, SPSS Inc. Chicago, IL, USA). Descriptive statistics: quantitative data were presented in the form of mean ( $\bar{X}$ ), standard deviation (SD) and qualitative data were presented in the form of numbers (No) and percentages (%). Analytical statistics: Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) was used to study relationship between two qualitative variables. Spearman correlation (r) test was used to measure the association between two qualitative variables. Significance was adopted at  $p < 0.05$  for interpretation of results of tests of significance. P value of  $< 0.001$  y (17.80%) had severe symptoms

was considered statistically highly significant. P value of  $> 0.05$  was considered statistically non-significant.

**RESULTS:**

**Table 1** showed that majority of students (80.3%) were females and the mean age was  $19.6 \pm 0.74$ . More than two thirds of the students (68.0%) were from rural residence. More than one third of fathers (36.6%) had higher education. More than one third of mothers (40.4%) had secondary education. the majority of the fathers (89.9%) were employee while more than half (68.1%) of the mothers were housewives.

**Table 2** showed that there was a negative significance correlation coefficient between authoritative parenting style and depressive symptoms while there was a positive correlation coefficient between authoritarian parenting style and depressive symptoms.

**Figure 1** revealed that the most common parenting styles used was moderate authoritative style (36, 10%) for father and (38 %) for mother.

**Figure 2** revealed that more than half of the students (53 %) had mild depressive symptoms while onl

**Table (1): Social characteristics of studied sample (N=527):**

Social Characteristics	No.	%
Age / years ( $\bar{X} \pm SD$ )	19.6±0.74	
Range	18 – 22	
<b>Gender</b>		
- Male	104	19.7
- Female	423	80.3
<b>Residence:</b>		
- Urban	166	31.0
- Rural	361	68.0
<b>Father education :</b>		
- Illiterate	25	4.7
- Read and write	35	6.6
- Basic education	89	16.9
- Secondary education	185	35.1
- University	193	36.6
<b>Mother education :</b>		
- Illiterate	72	13.7
- Read and write	48	9.1
- Basic education	71	13.5
- Secondary education	213	40.4
- University	123	23.3
<b>Father job:</b>		
- Working	474	89.9
- Not working	52	10.1
<b>Mother job:</b>		
- Working	168	31.9
- Not working	359	68.1

Table (2): Correlation between mean score of depressive symptoms and different parenting styles.

Parenting styles	Depressive symptoms	
	R	%
Authoritative style	-0.355	0.001**
Authoritarian style	0.332	0.001**
Permissive style	0.030	0.496

Figure (1): Parenting styles of fathers and mothers of studied sample.

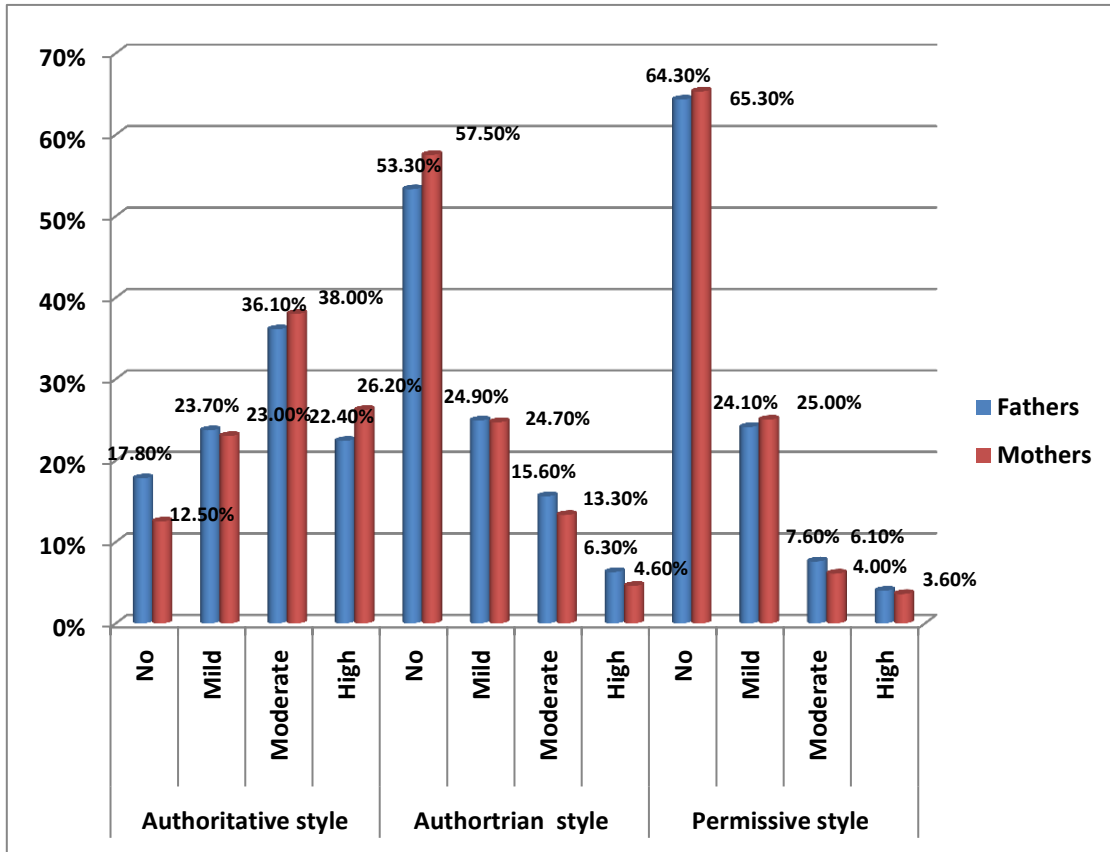
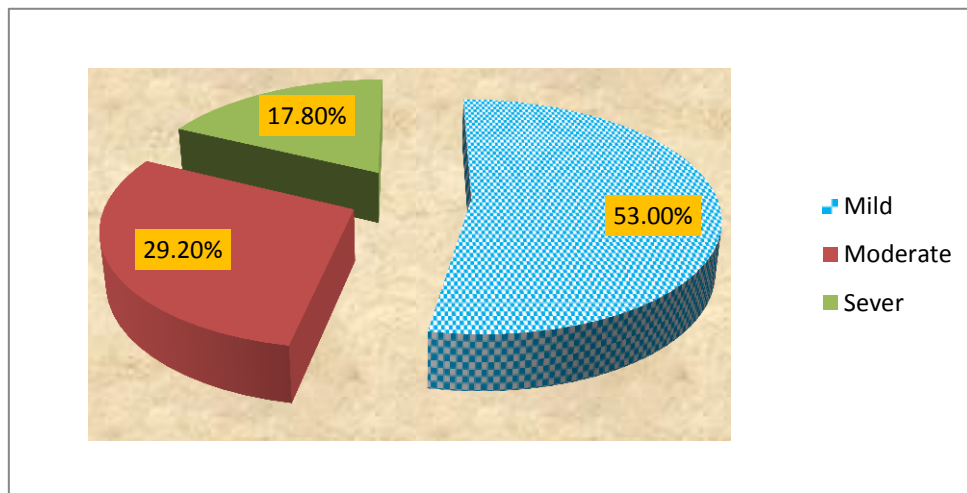


Figure (2): Level of depressive symptoms among studied sample



## DISCUSSION

Perceived parenting styles are opinions of adolescence about styles of parental behaviors during their childhood, assessment of parental behaviors is important. Parenting styles had crucial impacts on the psychological development of the adolescents and their future. This study raised two questions, first question was: What were the perceived parenting style among college students?

The current study revealed that the most common parenting style used by fathers and mothers was moderate authoritative style. This might be due to the effect of educational level of parents that helped them to deal correctly with their children. More than two thirds of mothers and approximately three quarter of fathers had secondary school or university education. This result was consistent with the study done by Chiew (2011) who studied the relationship between parenting styles and self-esteem of students. It was found that authoritative was the most practiced parenting style by parents of undergraduates' students in University Tunku Abdul Rahman. It was also consistent with a study done by Mintesinot (2014) who studied The Relationship of Parenting Style with Depression among Adolescent Patients of a Manuel Mental Specialized Hospital. He reported that authoritative parenting showed a higher proportion and exceeded the authoritarian parenting style to some extent. This result was in contrast with Smitha and Moore (2013) who studied Parenting style and psychosocial outcomes in a sample of Jamaican adolescent's. They reported that authoritarian is the most practiced parenting style.

The present study showed that more than half of the studied sample had mild depressive symptoms. This might be due to University students are a special group of people that are enduring a critical transitory period and can be one of the most stressful times in a person's life a reaction to this stress some students get depressed and attributed to parenting style. This result consistent with the study done by Abdallah and Gabr (2014) who studied Depression, anxiety and stress among first year medical students in an Egyptian public university. He found that nearly two thirds of students had depression among 1st year medical students at Menoufiya University. Also was consistent with Elmalky, Othman, Eita and Eldemerdash (2015) who studied The Effect of Birth Order and Socio Demographic Characteristics on Anxiety and Depression among Adolescents. They found that slightly

more than half of the students had mild depression. This result was in contrast with Abdel Wahed and Hassan (2016) who studied Prevalence and associated factors of stress, anxiety and depression among medical Fayoum University students. They reported that more than one third of student had mild to moderate depression.

Second question: Is there a relationship between the perceived parenting styles and depressive symptoms?

The current study showed that there was a negative significant correlation between authoritative parenting style and depressive symptoms. This clarified that parental warmth and support of adolescence increased their skills to adjust their behavior, provided higher adaptation for their environment, increased their motivation and decreased their emotional problems. This study was consistent with a study which done by Laboviti (2015) who studied Perceived Parenting Styles and their Impact on Depressive Symptoms in Adolescent 15-18 Years Old. He reported that more perceived authoritative parent, as mother and father, less depressive symptoms among adolescents.

The current study showed that there was positive correlation coefficient between authoritarian parent style and depressive symptoms. This might be due to over control, decreased warmth and support from parents. This study was consistent with a study which done by Hearne (2015) who studied The Effect of Parenting Styles and Depressive Symptoms on Young Adult's Educational Attainment. He found that authoritarian parenting were positively associated with depressive symptoms compared to authoritative parenting.

## CONCLUSION

It was concluded that the most common parenting style used was moderate authoritative style and there was positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and depressive symptoms

## RECOMMENDATIONS

An educational program should be given for the parents of adolescents to increase their awareness about needs and problems of adolescents and how to satisfy their needs and adapt with their problems.

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