

# Relationship between Parenting Styles and Depression among Secondary School Adolescents

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Received: 11/06/2023; Accepted: 02/11/2023 , Published 06/12/2023

**Abstract :** The study aims to investigate the nature of the relationship between parenting styles and the depression of secondary school adolescents. The research question guiding the study was formulated as follows: Is there a relationship between parenting styles and depression among secondary school adolescents? The study sample included 100 male and female secondary school students. The Parenting Styles Questionnaire and the Aaron Beck Depression Inventory were administered. The study adopted a descriptive-correlational approach, and Pearson's correlation coefficient was used for data analysis. After applying the instruments and extracting the results, the following findings were obtained: There is no statistically significant relationship between parenting styles and depression among secondary school adolescents. There is a relationship between parenting styles characterized by parental acceptance and depression among secondary school adolescents. There is a relationship between parenting styles characterized by parental rejection and depression among secondary school adolescents.

**Keywords:** Parental treatment. The teenager. The student

**Tob Regul Sci. <sup>TM</sup> 2023 ;9(2): 2433-2441**

**DOI: doi.org/10.18001/TRS.9.2.158**

## 1. Statement of the Problem:

Family is considered the primary building block and fundamental pillar in a child's life. It is one of the most critical social institutions established by humans to ensure the continuity of life. Families employ various parenting styles, and these styles vary from one family to another. Some families are characterized by strictness and discipline, while others grant their children freedom, understanding, and acceptance. These parenting approaches have a particularly profound impact on the personalities of adolescents who are going through a critical phase in their lives due to the changes they are experiencing.

Adolescents go through an identity crisis and self-actualization during this phase, leading to the emergence of traits marked by eccentricity and irritability. Therefore, parents must be vigilant in their interactions with their children and employ appropriate and effective parenting methods. The

family is the first and most influential agent in the socialization process, where the adolescent's identity and social position are determined. Additionally, the family shapes the adolescent's future personality traits. As Shaker Mohammed (2008) posits, "The influence of parental practices on child rearing is a crucial factor in the development of the child's personality in all its aspects" (Shaker, 2008, p. 30).

Furthermore, socialization methods vary from one society to another and evolve over time. They also differ within the same society based on social strata. What may be considered a desirable standard in one community may be deemed deviant in another. Several social changes have contributed to alterations in these parenting styles, including women entering the workforce and the increased economic well-being of families.

Families must be cohesive, with both fathers and mothers playing their roles effectively. Fathers are often associated with authority, while mothers, due to work-related time constraints, may exhibit less involvement in their children's lives. This situation may push adolescents to achieve independence at an early age, often due to unfulfilled emotional needs. Therefore, family stability and unity are essential, and maintaining a consistent and close relationship between mothers and adolescents is fundamental to psychological well-being.

Numerous studies emphasize that an adolescent's growth is closely linked to the manner in which they are treated. If their treatment is characterized by inconsistency and imbalance, adolescents become more susceptible to various psychological disorders. Psychologists emphasize that negative treatment instils feelings of hopelessness in adolescents, fosters emotional contradictions, and cultivates feelings of inadequacy, hindering their ability to confront life's challenges (Al-Ghamdi, 1993, p. 47).

Furthermore, according to Beck, rejection and neglect contribute to the formation of a negative self-concept, causing the child to focus on their failures. This perspective extends to their perception of the world around them, making them feel insecure and exaggerating the impact of events while diminishing their ability to cope with them. This increased sense of helplessness and reduced self-worth often leads to depression.

This highlights that the healthy development of children, whether typical or atypical, is closely associated with the parenting styles employed by their parents. If parents utilize positive approaches, such as nurturing warmth, instilling trust, and employing a democratic parenting style that fosters freedom, encourages open discussion, and enables them to make appropriate decisions in various situations, it positively impacts their psychological well-being. Conversely, if parenting is characterized by authoritarianism, psychological and physical punishment, it can lead to various problems for the children, making them more susceptible to conditions like depression.

This rationale led to our current study, which investigates parenting styles and their correlation with adolescent depression. Adolescent depression causes psychological distress, resulting in a relative decrease in an individual's overall level of functioning. Given that this stage represents a critical psychological and social crisis, it requires special attention and care from families, particularly parents. From this perspective, the research problem can be formulated as follows: Is

there a statistically significant correlational relationship between parenting styles and depression among high school adolescents?

## **2. Study Hypotheses:**

- There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between parenting styles and depression among high school adolescents.
- There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between parental acceptance and depression among high school adolescents.
- There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between parental rejection and depression among high school adolescents.

## **3. Objectives:**

Every scientific study, regardless of its type, aims to achieve a specific goal and a set of objectives. This study primarily seeks to answer the questions posed in the problem statement and verify the validity of the hypotheses. In other words, it aims to understand the extent of the influence of parenting styles on adolescents and their relationship with the onset of depression. To identify the most contributing parenting styles to depression among the sample population. To investigate the nature of depression among the sample of high school students.

## **4. Significance of the Study:**

The significance of this study lies in uncovering the relationship between parenting styles and depression among high school adolescents. Revealing parenting styles and their connection to depression in high school adolescents can help parents and educators deepen their understanding of the importance of employing positive and constructive parenting styles to nurture psychologically healthy generations. This study also paves the way for further research and investigations into parenting styles and their relationship with depression among high school adolescents.

## **5. Procedural Definitions:**

### **5.1 Parenting Styles:**

Parenting styles are the approaches employed by parents in their interactions with their children, whether positive and constructive to ensure the child's healthy development and prevent deviance, or negative and detrimental, hindering their growth toward a healthy and proper direction. The latter can lead to deviant behaviours in various aspects of their lives, preventing them from achieving personal and social harmony.

### **5.2 Procedural Definition of Depression:**

Depression is a state of profound and continuous sadness where the affected individual appears to be in perpetual mourning. Their despondency is evident in their facial expressions due to distressing and painful circumstances. The depressed individual may not be aware of the true

source of their sadness, possibly believing they suffer from incurable diseases or that they have committed unforgivable sins.

## 6. Procedural Definition of Parenting Styles:

Various researchers have provided multiple definitions of parenting styles. Some of these definitions are outlined as follows:

**6.1 Hamshk (1971):** The optimal parenting style involves a balance of control, determination, understanding the motives behind a child's behaviour, recognizing their psychological, social, and emotional needs, and fulfilling the requirements for achieving psychological health and harmony (Yousef Abdel Fattah, 1990, p. 28).

**6.2 Imam (1987):** Parenting styles refer to the parents' attitudes towards their children and the parenting approach employed throughout various biological and social life situations. This is perceived by the children concerning the following substyles: acceptance-rejection, equality-discrimination, consistency-inconsistency, and independence-dependence (Imam, 1987, p. 52)

**6.3 Jabril (1989):** Parenting styles are the methods that distinguish parental treatment of their children, conscious or unconscious responses that characterize parental treatment during ongoing interactions (Jabril, 1989, p. 16).

**6.4 Taher (1989):** Parenting styles are the techniques that distinguish parental treatment of their children and are also conscious or unconscious reactions that characterize parental treatment during continuous interactions (Taher, 1991, p. 64).

**6.5 Abdullah (1991):** Parenting styles are the methods used by parents to instil various types of behaviour, values, customs, and traditions in their children (Abdullah, 1991, p. 96).

## 7. Definitions of Depression:

From a psychological and scientific perspective, the concept of depression has been defined in various ways by psychologists and psychiatric professionals. We have selected some definitions from among them:

According to Abdel-Moneim Al-Hafny (1994, 2006), depression is characterized by difficulties in thinking, causing a decline in physical and emotional energy, a drop in functional activity, and may present symptoms like hypochondria, delusions, self-blame, persecution delusions, hallucinations, and excitement.

According to Lotfi El-Sharbeeni (2001), depression is a mood disorder characterized by a decline in both psychological and physical well-being.

El-Sharbeeni's description of someone afflicted with depression is an individual deprived of enjoying the pleasures of life and immersed in deep feelings of self-deprecation and unwarranted guilt, resulting in an aversion to actively fulfilling their duties toward their families, communities, and even themselves. In severe cases, the patient may be driven to suicidal tendencies (El-Sharbeeni, 2001, p. 08).

## 8. Research Methodology:

Methodology is defined as the "art of correctly organizing a series of numerous ideas to uncover the truth when we are ignorant of it, or to prove it when we already know it" (Bahoush, 2002, p. 36).

In our current study, as we aim to examine the relationship between parenting styles and depression among high school students, the most appropriate methodology is the descriptive-correlational approach. This method is highly suitable for studying human-related issues and is widely used in psychological, social, and educational research. Descriptive methodology focuses on studying reality and providing a detailed description of the phenomenon (Bahoush & Al-Dinibat, 1995, p. 129).

## 9. Research Instruments:

### 9.1 Parenting Styles Scale:

This scale consists of 30 items divided into two parts:

**Part 1:** Introduction and initial information.

**Part 2:** Measures parenting styles and consists of 30 items divided into two axes:

**Axis 1:** It includes phrases from (01 to 15) that revolve around parental acceptance.

**Axis 2:** It includes phrases from (16 to 30) related to parental rejection.

The scoring key for the scale:

The scale provides a scoring key with ratings ranging from 1 to 3, as follows:

Alternatives	Yes	Sometimes	No
Rating	3	2	1

### 9.2 Beck Depression Inventory:

The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) is a tool used to assess depression, determine its type, and measure its severity. Developed by renowned American psychiatrist and cognitive-behavioural therapy pioneer Aaron Beck, the BDI was an early and successful attempt to measure the degree and quality of depression within an individual.

The application of the BDI does not have a specific time limit, as it may take a variable amount of time, depending on the respondents' responses. It involves placing scores for each answer in each category.

This scale consists of 21 sets of questions, with each set describing a different clinical symptom of depression. The person is asked to read all the statements within each set, and these statements describe various feelings. The statements are grouped in sets, and the person is instructed to read each set individually and select the statement that best matches their current feelings, marking an "X" next to the chosen statement. The respondent is advised to read the entire set before selecting the appropriate statement.

### 10. Primary Study Sample:

The study sample included 100 male and female students from the third year of high school. A simple random sampling method was used.

The following table illustrates the distribution of the primary study population by gender:

Table No. (01): Distribution of the Primary Study Population by Gender

Indicator Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Males	50	% 50
Females	50	% 50
Total	100	% 100

As shown in Table No. (01), the primary study population consists of 100 male and female students from the third year of high school, divided into 50 males, representing 50%, and 50 females, also representing 50%.

### 11. Statistical Methods:

After entering the data into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to verify the psychometric properties of the data collection tools and test the study hypotheses, we used the following statistical methods:

- Pearson Correlation Coefficient

### 12. Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of Results:

#### 1. Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the General Hypothesis:

The general hypothesis suggests the existence of a statistically significant correlation between parenting styles and depression among high school students. We applied the Pearson correlation coefficient and obtained the results as shown in Table No. (02).

Table No. (02): Shows the correlation coefficient between parenting styles and depression among high school students.

	Correlation Coefficient	Level of Significance
Parenting Styles	-0.04	Not significant
Depression		

From Table No. (02), it is evident that the correlation coefficient equals 0.04, which is statistically non-significant. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is rejected, and the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating no relationship between parenting styles and depression among high school students.

The lack of a correlation can be explained by the clear absence of parental care, which significantly affects the absence of depression among teenagers. The absence of a correlation suggests that teenagers require normal treatment.

The result of this hypothesis indicates that the depression of teenagers is not related to parenting styles.

## 2. Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results for the First Sub-Hypothesis:

This sub-hypothesis suggests the presence of a statistically significant correlation between parental acceptance and depression among high school students. We applied the Pearson correlation coefficient and obtained the results as shown in Table No. (03).

**Table No. (03):** Illustrates the correlation coefficient between parental acceptance and depression among high school students.

	Correlation Coefficient	Level of Significance
Acceptance Styles	-0.32	0.01
Depression		

Table No. (03) indicates that the correlation coefficient is estimated at 0.32, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a relationship between parental acceptance styles and depression among high school students.

This implies that parental acceptance involves a father's awareness of his child's positive qualities, understanding the child's concerns, and enjoying spending time together. Parents think about things that will make their child happy and act on them, dedicating time to care for and support their child. As a result, the child feels proud of their achievements and is encouraged to make decisions, which is why the child's need for warmth is significant. Feeling loved and accepted as they are is a basic need for teenagers. When teenagers feel accepted by their parents, they feel secure, learn to love themselves and others, and easily fit into society, respecting its values, attitudes, and boundaries. This makes them psychologically and socially balanced.

## 3. Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Results for the Second Sub-Hypothesis:

This sub-hypothesis suggests the presence of a statistically significant correlation between parental rejection and depression among high school students. We applied the Pearson correlation coefficient and obtained the results as shown in Table No. (04).

**Table No. (04):** Illustrates the correlation coefficient between parental rejection styles and depression among high school students.

	Pearson Correlation	Coefficient Level of
Rejection Styles	0.42	0.01
Depression		

Table No. (04) indicates that the correlation coefficient is estimated at 0.42, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant relationship between parental rejection styles and depression among high school students.

This suggests that the child who feels parental rejection is characterized by non-adaptation and lack of reassurance toward anyone, as they believe that their parents see their thoughts and actions as continually reprehensible. Such a child avoids interaction with the parents and may react with anger or punishment, refraining from complaining about anything they do. The teenager believes that their thoughts are wrong.

Teenagers who feel parental rejection show a lack of adaptation and insecurity toward anyone. These teenagers believe that they are constantly criticized by their parents, causing them to feel alienated and judged, which can lead to depression.

### **Recommendations:**

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be formulated to enhance the way parents raise their children. These recommendations aim to:

- Satisfy the psychological needs of teenagers and fulfil their desires, such as acceptance, stability, and a sense of familial warmth.
- Grant adolescents freedom and encourage them to express their opinions in order to boost their self-esteem and establish their presence.
- Make parents aware that both positive and negative parenting methods have an impact on teenage behaviour.
- Emphasize the importance of continuous communication and dialogue between parents and their children to build solid relationships founded on mutual love and respect.
- Consider the developmental demands of each stage and how to interact with teenagers during these crucial periods to shape their personalities.
- Guide children and support them in making educational decisions.
- Involve teenagers in activities they prefer, encouraging them to reduce conflicts, expand areas of agreement, and build bridges of understanding.

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