

IMPACT OF PARENTING STYLES ON PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF PESHAWAR

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Abstract

The current study investigated the gender differences in Pro-social Behavior and focused on the relationship between helping behavior and life satisfaction of the students. This study was also aimed to explore the dominant parenting style of parents and its influence on the helping behavior of their children. A sample of 100 students (50 males and 50 females) were selected from different universities of Peshawar. The Helping Attitude Scale, (Nickell, 1998) Scale of Parenting Styles (2014) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (1985) were administered to the participants to measure all the variables. The obtained data were statistically analyzed by Product Moment Correlation and t-test in SPSS. The results revealed that male students scored higher on the helping attitude scale as compared to the female students and there was a significant correlation between the Prosocial behavior and life satisfaction whereas there was no significant difference between parenting style on prosocial behavior of the students.

Keywords: *Prosocial behavior, Parenting style, Life satisfaction, Adolescents.*

Introduction

The development of a helping attitude in students is very important, not only for the formation of social responsibility and moral behavior, but also

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for the development of society and for its harmony and strength. (Yuan, 2017)

A behavior that intentionally make beneficial efforts for others in society is called prosocial behavior (Carlo, 2013). It refers to the activities of individuals that make purposeful efforts which results in the benefit of society. (Eisenberg *et al.*, 2006). Prosocial behavior is the component that assists people to live together, peacefully and effectively. In detail, prosocial behavior can be defined as “the voluntary or intentional behavior that results in the benefits of others.” (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987).

Helping behavior can be conducted by different practices, starting from slight acts of kindness, such as to let a person in a hurry to go ahead at the cashier, to more persistent acts, for example volunteering for a charitable organization. Even to things one might take for granted, such as looking after one’s grandchildren (Jennifer & Christiane 2015). There is a strong confirmation about the efficient changes in prosocial behavior across the lifespan, which suggests that older adults behave more prosocial than younger adults. (Midlarsky & Kahana, 2007)

Psychological factors of prosocial behavior are divided into three main groups which are intrinsic, extrinsic and reputational motivation (Benabou & Tirole, 2003)

1. ***Intrinsic motivation*** is defined as the helping behavior that an individual performs associated with his inner good feeling. Altruistic behavior is the type of prosocial behavior that is driven by an open desire to benefit another person, without expecting anything in return. (Eisenberg & Miller 1987).
2. ***Extrinsic motivation*** refers to any external or materialistic reward, such as an individual may receive some financial advantage, discounts or a tax reduction, that encourage prosocial behavior. (Benabou & Tirole, 2003).
3. ***Reputational motivation*** indicates the part of public appreciation or the credit on helping decision of people. This kind of helping is based on some credit, such as to improve social image in public, ashamed of being perceived selfish by others, or to expect something in return.(Akerlof & Kranton, 2000).

One of the most important and constant correlates of pro-social behavior is gender. It had been found that females are more pro-social than males across many studies. (Whiting & Whiting, 1975). Whereas peers and teachers described that preschool and early school girls are more pro-social than boys (Akerlof & Kranton, 2000). Strong consistent differences in

gender were found, with females showing greater empathy. (Eisenberg & Murphy, 2008).

Males are expected to be relatively more independent and concerned, based on gender stereotypic roles whereas females generally are likely to be more receptive empathic, and pro-social as compare to males. (Flynn, Slovic, & Mertz, 1994). Girls tends to be more helping and support giving than boys (Whiting *et al.*, 1975). Empathy and guilt was displayed more by women, and men are more likely to assist in an emergency (Eisenberg, 2006).

Males take a defensive role to evolve a 'fight or flight' response to a threatening situation which is called nurturing versus heroic altruism. In order to achieve the male stereotypes that have been developed through socialization, men may behave heroically (Batson & Powell, 2003).

Parents act as the primary socialization agents of their children. Especially for moral and social development and academic outcomes (Barry *et al.*, 2008). They play an influential role on children's cognitive, emotional, and social development (Hughes, Kroehler & Zanden, 1999). Some roles that are better performed by parents are likely to be accepted by children most willingly than any other person in their life. Parenting style has a massive impact on the attitude, academic achievement and career choice of their children (Maccoby & Martin 1983).

Parenting styles are general outlines of parenting values, practices, and behaviors. Parenting care influences the child's personality development and also influences the way of interaction with social and personal relations (Akhtar, 2012).

The way parents allow their children to develop autonomy and guide their own behavior is another factor that separates authoritarian and authoritative parenting. Authoritarian parents control their child by dominating most directive initiations and enforce compliance to the directives whereas parents with a strong authoritative tendency try to be assertive and help the child to be assertive as well (Baumrind, 1991).

Youth's prosocially behaviors have also been associated to parenting styles. Parents with a high level of response and demands (i.e., authoritative) are related to self-regulating skills, sympathy, beliefs and reasoning because they make models for good self-regulating behavior, prosocially behaviors, and academic achievements (Grusec & Sherman, 2011).

One of the most essential factors that affect the social relationships and mental health of people is life satisfaction. Life satisfaction refers to satisfaction from the whole life, not just of a specific situation (Diener 1984).

Life satisfaction can be described as facing positive emotions more frequently and estimate a person's life according to a standard (Pavot & Diener 1993).

Different factors like friendship, family, (Suldo & Huebner, 2006), income (Oishi, 1999), and positive parental relations represents life

satisfaction of children and adolescents. It had been thought that helping behavior is increased by life satisfaction because it motivates people to contribute to other individual's life and to increase the sense of fulfillment without looking for personal benefits. It is an outcome of comparing what people expect and what they possess. (Neugarten, 1961)

Seligman and Mather (2002) investigated a joint determination between altruism and life satisfaction. Their studies explore that whether life satisfaction is influenced by altruism, or whether happiness encouraged one to think about others. Interviews of some students stated that they feel more happiness after helping, and some indicated that displaying helping behaviors depends on how happy they feel.

Hunter and Lin (1981) found that people who were more prosocial over the age of 65 remained more satisfied with their lives and they were less depressed and had low anxiety. Similarly, Martin and Huebner (2007) found a link between high prosocial interaction and life satisfaction for middle school students.

Literature Review

Hafshan Jan (2017) conducted a study on 200 college students in order to find and compare the helping attitude of male/female and professional and non-professional students. Purposive sampling technique was used for selecting sample from professional colleges and a non-professional college known as Degree College Ganderbal. The researcher used Gary S. Nickell helping attitude scale (HAS). The results of the study revealed that female students have better helping attitude than male. It was also found that professional and non-professional females have better helping attitude as compared to males.

Caroline Durfeld, Robert Martin, Ashley Washburn, and Amy Wilson (2013) examined the values, personality, religion and gender that are related with prosocial behavior in college students. A sample of 80 students were selected and data was gathered through surveys consisting, The Traditional Values Measure, Generalized Expectancy for Success Scale and the Honest Humility subscale of the HEXACO were used. It was assumed that helping behavior would be positively correlated with religious association, traditional values and humble personalities. Furthermore, there were no expected differences between the levels of prosocial behavior in both genders.

Maria Paz Espinosa and Jaromir Kovarik (2015) conducted a study to re-examine public behavior in economic games explored by different experimental data sets and to uncover that there are many treatment effects that are gender-specific. The findings suggested that each gender responds differently to the aspects of the social context. It was also found that the social behavior of both sexes is workable.

Alemayehu Belay Emagnaw and Jian-Zhong Hong (2018) investigated prosocial behavior, parenting styles, and student's school performance. They examined the effect of parenting styles on performance of the children in school. Data was collected through questionnaires. Results showed that parenting styles highly influence the child's school performance and prosocial behavior of adolescents.

A research was conducted by Mensah, Monica, Kuranchie and Alfred (2013) to explore the effect of dominant parenting style on children's social development. A group of 480 students was selected as a sample. Data collection was done by structured interview and a questionnaire. The results revealed that majority of the parents adopted authoritative parenting style and thus resulted in pro-social behavior of their children whereas authoritarian parenting lead to in antisocial behavior in their children.

Aysen Gure and Fatma Basak Atlay (2012) studied the relation of prosocial behavior and social competence of children that were attending state or private preschools and its association with mother's view of parenting styles. Sample contained 344 children going to preschools located in Ankara, teachers and mothers; Prosocial Behavior Scale, Parenting Styles and Dimension Scales were used to assess mothers, Teachers respond on Prosocial Behavior Scale and Teacher Rating Scales for Social Competence. Results showed positive interaction of girls to their teachers and peers more as compare to boys. Ratings of mothers and teachers on prosocial behavior scale showed that girls act more prosocial than boys. Whereas Authoritative mothers exhibit more prosocial behaviors than those showing permissive styles.

Nelishan Saltali and Hatice Imir (2018) conducted studies to explore children's social behavior including children's prosocial and aggressive behavior and parenting styles and its dimensions including warmth, obedience-demanding, inductive-reasoning and punitive. 276 children attending to preschools in Konya were selected as a sample, with an age range of 4-5 years. To assess parenting styles, Child Rearing Questionnaire was used. It has four subscales, namely, warmth, punishment, obedience demanding behavior and inductive reasoning. Mothers completed the questionnaires. Teacher Assessment of Social Behavior Scale developed by Cassidy and Asher was applied on the teachers to assess child's social behavior. Results showed that children's social behavior can be predicted significantly by parenting styles towards them. It was also found that boys scored higher on aggression while girls scored higher on shyness.

Antonio Zuffiano. Manuel Marti-Vilar and Belen Lopez-Perez (2017) investigated the positive effect of prosocial behavior on life satisfaction. 56 Spanish undergraduate students were selected as sample. Life satisfaction, pro-sociality, self-esteem, and physical appearance of these students were rated by themselves for 5 consecutive days. Results indicated significant association between prosocial behavior and life satisfaction. Physical

appearance and self-esteem were also predictive of life satisfaction. Students who were satisfied from their physical appearance showed positive effect of pro-sociality on life satisfaction.

Lara B. Aknin *et al* (2013) conducted a number of studies on prosocial payments and well-being. Survey data from 136 countries in study 1 showed found that prosocial spending brings greater joy around the world both in rich and poor countries. Studies 2 demonstrated that remembering a past occasion of prosocial spending also influence happiness in different countries. In study 3 participants were requested to buy items for donations and some were asked to buy items for themselves. Results showed that randomly assigned participants from Canada and South Africa bought more items for charity and reported high level of positive affect than others. Their findings also suggest that the reward experienced from serving others is deeply rooted in human nature which emerge in different social and economic settings.

Olukayode Ayooluwa Afolabi (2014) explored prosocial behavior in undergraduates and investigated the effect of psychosocial factors such as religiosity, life satisfaction, family, residency, and cultural differences on prosocial behavior. A well-designed questionnaire with 5 sections was used to collect data from 440 students of two Nigerian Universities with an age range of 19-27 years with a cross sectional survey design. Results indicated a significant relationship between all the variables. The relationship between life satisfaction and prosocial behavior was mediated by religiosity. It was also found that people living in a city were less prosocial than those in a village. Prosocial behavior was also influenced by cultural differences.

Vidhi Khanna, Ekant Sharma, Shashwat Chauhan and Pragyendu (2017) conduct studies to explore the effect of prosocial behavior on well-being and happiness. Data was collected from the 250 undergraduate students from Delhi University. The prosocial behavior, happiness and well-being of students were measured. Results showed that prosocial behavior is directly related to well-being and happiness. It was also found that well-being happiness and socio economic status are all associated.

Mustafa Otrar, DurmusUmmet and HalilEksi (2015) conducted a study to investigate the effects of Ego States, Transactional Analysis (TA) and life satisfaction on altruistic behavior of the students. Sample was selected from different faculties of Marmara University in which 299 were females and 237 were males. For data collection Ego States Scale, Altruistic Behavior Scale and The Satisfaction with Life Scale were used. Results showed that life satisfaction can predict altruistic behavior of the students. It was also found that only the Nurturing Parent Ego State can accurately predict the altruism of the students, not others.

Objectives

1. To investigate prosocial behavior among university students of Peshawar.

2. To explore the effects of parenting styles on prosocial behavior.
3. To find out relationship of prosocial behavior and life satisfaction.

Hypotheses

1. Prosocial behavior would be high among male university students as compared to the female university students.
2. Students having authoritative parents are more prosocial than students having authoritarian parents.
3. There is a positive correlation between prosocial behavior and life satisfaction of the students.

Methodology

Sample

Sample for this study was selected from students of different universities of Peshawar. Data was collected from sample size of 100 students (N=100) including 50 male and 50 female students. A convenient sampling technique was used to select participants. The age range of participants was 19-26 years.

Instruments

Demographic sheet

Demographic sheet was used to obtain relevant information about their name, age, gender, educational level, university and department.

Helping Attitude Scale

The Helping Attitude Scale was developed by Gary S. Nickell (1998). This scale consist 20 items which assess the feelings, beliefs and behaviors that are associated with helping. Each item is responded with a 5-point Likert scale. The responses ranges from 1-5 which are strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, and strongly agree. The scale has a test-retest reliability of .85 and its internal consistency is .87

Scale of Parenting Style

The scale of parenting style was developed by Abdul Gafoor and Abidha Kurukkan (2014). This scale consist 38 items. Half of the items measure the responsiveness and half items measure the parenting control. On the basis of which, four parenting styles; authoritarian, permissive, authoritative and negligent can be studied.

It is a Likert scale, the options of which ranges from 5 (very right) to 1 (very wrong). Scores for each parent are taken separately. The reliability of the scale is .81 for the responsiveness variables and .83 for control variables which is established by a test-retest method with an interval of 1 week.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale

The Satisfaction with Life Scale was developed by E.D. Diener and William Pavot (1985). It is a short 5 item scale aimed to measure the life satisfaction of people as a whole. It is a 7-point Likert scale and its responses ranges from 7 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). The test-retest reliability of the scale for one month interval is .84 and .80. This scale has a high internal consistency, its coefficient alpha ranges from .79 to .89.

Procedure

Formal permission was taken from authorities of universities. Participants were selected from University of Peshawar, Abasyn University and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto women University Peshawar. Before collecting the data, students were given consent form to know their willingness to participate in the study, in which the aim of the study was explained and all the members were assured that the information they provide will remain confidential and will be used only for research purpose. Demographic form was also used to gather the relevant information of the participants including name, age, gender, educational level, university and department. The Helping Attitude Scale, Scale of Parenting Style and The Satisfaction with Life Scale, were administered to measure the helping behavior, parenting styles and life satisfaction of the students. The responses were recorded and scored. They were thanked for their participation.

Results

For the analysis of data, t-test was used, with the help of SPSS (statistical package of social sciences) for statistical analysis.

Table 1: Means, Standard deviation and t-values of scores of participants on the Helping attitude scale. (N=100)

Groups	M	SD	t(df)	P	95% CI UL	LL	Cohen's d
Males (n=50)	82.84	6.24	5.13(9.8)	.000	3.77	8.54	1.034
Females (n=50)	76.68	5.74					

Note CI = confidence interval

The result in table 1 indicates that there is a significant difference among male and female in relation of prosocial behavior. There results suggests that male students are more prosocial than female students hence out hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2: Means, Standard deviation, and *t*-values of scores of participants on the scale of parenting styles (N=100)

<i>Groups</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t(df)</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>95% CI</i> <i>UL</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>Cohen's d</i>
Authoritative (n=37)	80.67	7.96	.613(52)	.542	-3.00	5.67	0.189
Authoritarian (n=17)	79.35	5.76					

Note: CI = confidence interval

Results in table 2 shows no difference between prosocial attitude and parenting styles (authoritative and authoritarian) of the students. Which means there is no influence of parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian) on prosocial behavior of the students.

Table 3: Correlation analysis of Prosocial Behavior and Life Satisfaction

<i>Correlation</i>	
Prosocial behavior	.374**
Life Satisfaction	

Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

Table 3 indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between prosocial behavior and life satisfaction of the students. Those who are more prosocial are more satisfied from their lives hence out hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

The current study investigating “The impact of parenting styles on Prosocial Behavior and life satisfaction among university students of Peshawar” is aimed to determine the helping behavior of the students. The formation of prosocial behavior in students is important not only as a moral behavior but it also provide progress and stability to the society.

It has been suggested by social psychologists that the society, in which we live and the features of modern life determine our behaviors because a behavior results from an interaction between physiological arousal (how conscious or emotional we are) and cognitive processing (how we assess a situation). Pro-sociality simply can be defined as giving assistance to other people such as helping, sharing, guiding, defending, comforting and

cooperating. There are a lot of factors that influence our prosocial or anti-social behavior e-g inheritance, parenting styles, culture, life satisfaction, religion, media and personality etc.

The first hypothesis investigated the gender differences in helping, which stated that “prosocial behavior will be high among male university students as compare to the female students”.

One of the important indicators of prosocial behavior is gender. As the mechanisms motivating or inspiring social behavior seems different in males and females because their social roles vary across situations, different behaviors are expected from them.

Helping can also be viewed as based on the roles that gender plays in a society, therefore gender roles are important in this analysis. In stereo type studies (Bern 1974, Spence and Helmreich 1978, Ruble 1983) women are rated as more prosocial not only in helpfulness but in kindness and ability to devote themselves to others especially to their close relations like family and friends.

Male gender role prescribe the idea that they are more helpful because of their heroic nature and dominance in the society. They are expected to help more in circumstances like a medical emergency or accidents. On the other hand, females in this society may not take the risk to provide help in situations in which the helping is directed towards a male stranger or when there is a risk of physical injury.

Results in (table 1) showed that male students scored higher on the scale of helping attitude as compare to the females which indicate that they are more helpful than female students. Our findings are similar to the findings of William James (1902/1929), who found that males are more helpful in order to satisfy their urge of heroism. Feinman, (1978) also found males as more helpful than females. Eagly (2009) suggested that men are more prosocial than women because of their assertive nature and compliance. Reporting more prosocial public behavior was related to higher extraversion only in males, in the presence of others, males are more prosocial as compare to the females. Another study is also in line with the idea that extraverts were more willing to perform the heroic prosocial acts that are often more common for men. (Graziano & Habashi, 2015)

The second hypothesis investigated the impact of parenting styles on prosocial behavior of the student which stated that authoritative style of parenting would be more effective in developing the helping behavior of the individuals. Parenting plays an influential role in shaping or molding the activities of adolescents, not only the prosocial behaviors but anti-social as well. Many researchers found a direct and strong effect of parenting on pro-sociality for example, Carlo; et al. (2009) found a significant relation between prosocial behavior and authoritative parenting style as compare to other styles.

Results in table 2 displays no difference between the authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles on prosocial behavior. In consistent with the findings of Gagne (2003), no difference between parenting and adolescent's prosocial behavior was found. Similarly, Berni et al (2011) also found not any significant relation between parenting and prosocial behavior of adolescents. He argued that adolescents develops their own identity and are involved in exploring their autonomy, which indicate that they want to decide for themselves that whether to be helpful or not.

A possible explanation of our results is that there are other mechanisms as well which are responsible for the prosocial behavior besides parenting styles, which were not taken into account. A study by Miller, Bersoff and Harwood, (1990) found that the influence of cultural norms (eastern or western) also effects helping behavior, i-e people in US as having individualistic culture were less likely to assist others as compare to the people of India because of its collectivistic culture. Morgan, (1983) suggests that religious acts play an important role in cultivating prosocial behavior. He found that people who prayed more were more prosocial. Penner; et al (1995) suggest that some people are more helpful than others because of their specific altruistic personalities. Ratner and Miller, (2001) argued that self-interest plays a major role in helping. Based on these findings it can be argued that the influence of peer groups, cultural norms, skills, religious acts, self-interest and personality traits may also increase the individual's prosocial behavior.

Another explanation of our findings is that there may be the response bias created by of the length of questionnaire used which directly affected the response rates and data quality. Clearly, more research will be needed with an increased sample to understand the role of particular parenting style on prosocial behavior by using some other methods.

The third hypothesis stated that "There is significant positive correlation between prosocial behaviors on life satisfaction of the students". Behaving pro-socially involves many benefits not only for the target but also for the actor. Helping may enhance meaning in life and construct positive relationship through which the individual may feel valued and supported and increase their life satisfaction.

Emotional rewards are experienced by human beings around the world by using their resources to benefit others. The emotional consequences of Pro-social spending (spending money on others) shows only one type of generous behavior. Therefore, other kinds of helping, such as caring for the ill, volunteering within one's community, or performing random acts of kindness may possibly promote satisfaction and wellbeing.

Results in (table 3) indicate a significant positive relation between prosocial behavior and life satisfaction. Those who scored higher on the helping attitude scale were more satisfied from their lives. Tilly and Tilly, (1994) has defined volunteering as helping others without expecting any

compensation in return. It is also shown by correlation that emotional benefits are associated with volunteering to help others.

Analysis of 37 correlational researches by Wheeler, Gorey & Greenblatt, (1998) with a sample size of 15-2,100 volunteers scored significantly higher as compare to non-volunteers on quality of life measures.

Hunter and Lin (1981) explored a significant correlation between life satisfaction and prosocial behavior. He also found that those individuals experienced less depression and low anxiety and were more satisfied from their lives, who volunteered to assist others. Similarly Martin & Huebner, (2007) also concluded that for middle school students, a higher level of helping was linked to the greater influence on life satisfaction and prosocial acts.

Conclusion

This study was aimed to discover the impact of parenting styles on prosocial behavior and the relation between prosocial behavior and life satisfaction in university students of Peshawar.

It is concluded from the findings that male students are more prosocial and helpful as compared to the female students and they are more satisfied from their lives. It is also concluded that parenting styles does not affect the helping behavior of the students.

Limitations

Sample size was limited

- Sample was selected only from Peshawar city
- The participants included in the study were university students, additional research is needed to focus on students from different institutions such as schools and colleges etc.

Recommendations

- Sample should be increased in order to generalize the results on all the students.
- Sample was selected only from Peshawar, it is suggested that other universities of different areas should also be approached.
- In the present study university students were participated. It is also recommended for new studies to include and compare both literate and illiterate sample.

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