

The Comparison of Parental Childrearing Styles and Anxiety in Children with Stuttering and Normal Population

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Abstract—Family has a crucial role in maintaining the physical, social and mental health of the children. Most of the mental and anxiety problems of children reflect the complex interpersonal situations among family members, especially parents. In other words, anxiety problems of the children are correlated with deficit relationships of family members and improper childrearing styles. The parental child rearing styles leads to positive and negative consequences which affect the children's mental health. Therefore, the present research was aimed to compare the parental childrearing styles and anxiety of children with stuttering and normal population. It was also aimed to study the relationship between parental child rearing styles and anxiety of children. The research sample included 54 boys with stuttering and 54 normal boys who were selected from the children (boys) of Tehran, Iran in the age range of 5 to 8 years in 2013. In order to collect data, Baum-rind Childrearing Styles Inventory and Spence Parental Anxiety Inventory were used. Appropriate descriptive statistical methods and multivariate variance analysis and t test for independent groups were used to test the study hypotheses. Statistical data analyses demonstrated that there was a significant difference between stuttering boys and normal boys in anxiety ($t = 7.601$, $p < 0.01$); but there was no significant difference between stuttering boys and normal boys in parental childrearing styles ($F = 0.129$). There was also not found significant relationship between parental childrearing styles and children anxiety ($F = 0.135$, $p < 0.05$). It can be concluded that the influential factors of children's society are parents, school, teachers, peers and media. So, parental childrearing styles are not the only influential factors on anxiety of children, and other factors including genetic, environment and child experiences are effective in anxiety as well. Details are discussed.

Keywords—Anxiety, Childrearing Styles, Stuttering.

I. INTRODUCTION

FATHERS, mothers, and teachers generally believe that the children today are vastly different from the children of two generations ago. Today's children are physically healthier, friskier, and more active than their predecessor. Also, they are more curious and more independent. So, a question arises: "is the difference related to the nature of children, or is it caused by the development in the childrearing styles of the families?" Parenting is affected by the personality of the parents as well. As, disorganized parents with ineffective childrearing styles, are at greater risk of having disorganized children compared to others. Furthermore, parents' notion and understanding of their children's aspirations and potentials affects their disciplinary methods. Each method of parenting creates

unique characteristics and personality traits in children. Children of authoritative parents are self-reliant and tend to be less sexist. Authoritarian parents tend to have withdrawn, unhappy, anxious, and aggressive children who show no interest in discovering and challenging. Indulgent parents have dependent and demanding children who find controlling their impulses difficult [1].

In numerous studies which have been conducted on various types of families, researchers have discovered two major aspects that play crucial roles in shaping the children's behavior: The first aspect is permissiveness against resoluteness and the second aspect is acceptance against rejection [2].

Parents are the first people who generate anxiety in children. A great deal of their problems and difficulties might be the result of their mental image of themselves; this incorrect mental image generates anxiety and severely affects the children's behavior and personality [3]. In fields of education, unrealistic expectations and incorrect models of parents are emphasized as the source of anxiety; Parents who have incredible expectations of their children tend to provoke anxiety in them, and also as parents who anxiously overreact to insignificant situations teach their children to manifest the same type of reactions when faced with insignificant and minor issues [4].

Family plays a crucial role in mental, social, and physical health of children. Majority of mental and anxiety problems of children reflect interpersonal complicated situations amongst family members and parents in particular. Studies regarding the relation between methods of parenting and children's anxiety reveal that the parents' childrearing practices are correlated with anxious thoughts in children. Parenting styles have different types of positive and negative consequences which are important to children's mental health: among the negative consequences of ineffective parenting styles are the increased levels of anxious thoughts in children. In research carried out by Baum-rind regarding the parents' control, three parenting styles have been described which are:

1. Authoritarian or domineering method which consists of compulsory and inflexible rules and low tolerance.
2. Authoritative method which is a combination of control, protection, and logical enthusiasm along with enforcement of fixed rules and manifestation of tolerance.
3. Indulgent method which is associated with low levels of control.

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Research shows that among these three methods of parenting, parents with authoritative method have children with lowest levels of anxious thoughts. Parents with indulgent or authoritarian methods have children with high level anxious thoughts [5]. There is a strong relation between children's emotional state and stuttering. Stuttering is usually seen in irritated children. Some children only stutter when they are frightened or anxious, or when they are verbally engaged with a particular person. Anxiety and stuttering have a close relationship. Confirmed researches show that individuals who stutter are clearly fearful and anxious in sudden or urgent verbal situations.

References [6]-[8] concluded that there is a significant difference between the anxiety of children with authoritarian parents and the anxiety of children with authoritative parents. Also, there was a significant difference between the anxiety of children with indulgent parents and the anxiety level of children with authoritative parents.

In another research [9] is studied the level of anxiety of stuttering children in comparison to normal children. The obtained results showed that level of anxiety of stuttering children was significantly more than of normal children. Reference [10] in his research, studied the relation between stuttering and level of anxiety in children. Results revealed that there was a significant difference between the level of anxiety of stuttering children and normal children.

In some studies, [5], [11] examined the effects of parenting styles on children's anxiety. The findings suggest that having at least one authoritative parent or parents who are both indulgent has better outcome for children. Consequently, lower anxiety is the result of tolerance or obvious contrast between parents.

In other researches carried out [12]-[15], it was revealed that there is a significant relationship between anxiety and stuttering. Although, anxiety is not the cause of verbal dysfluency, however, it exacerbates stuttering. Research shows that stuttering individuals experience more anxiety compared with normal individuals.

On the other hands, in some studies [16]-[21], it was revealed that the negative correlation between the anxiety and the Indulgent parenting and tolerating children. Critical parents and parents with high expectation of their children may develop anxiety in their children during the preschool years. Also, children of incompatible parents experience more anxiety in comparison to the children of protective parents.

This is at this juncture that the significance of research becomes evident. With regard to the important role of parents in increased and decreased levels of anxiety, this study seems due, so that the parents can be reminded that which disciplinary method they should employ so that they can raise children with the least amount of anxiety. With regard to that which has been previously mentioned, the study was aimed to examine the relationship between parenting styles and the level of anxiety in their stuttering children.

Therefore, the main goal of the present research was to compare the anxiety and parenting styles in stuttering and

normal children. Also, the research was aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Is there any relationship between anxiety and parenting styles of children?
2. Is there any significant difference between the anxiety levels of stuttering and normal children?
3. Is there any significant difference between parenting styles of stuttering and normal children?

II. METHOD

A. Statistical Population, Sample and Sampling Method

Statistical population consisted of children boys of 5 to 8 years who were referred to speech therapy centers of Tehran in 2013. Among them, 54 children (using sample size formula) were selected by purposive sampling method. Also, a group of 54 normal children were selected from schools as a comparative group which was matched to the main group with regards to age, gender, and social-economic status.

B. Tests and Tools

To collect the data, following questionnaires were used:

(a) *Bum-Rind Parenting Styles Questionnaire*

This questionnaire is constructed by Diana Bum-rind from California University in 1973 on the basis of patterns of styles of parenting and is known by her name. It has 30 items; 10 for indulgent parenting, 10 for authoritative parenting, and 10 for authoritarian parenting. Scoring is done according to a 5 point scale from absolutely agree (4) to absolutely disagree (0). Sum of scores of each style gives a separate score for it. It is reported the reliability of the questionnaire on 2 groups of mothers by test-retest method, as: 0.81 for indulgent parenting, 0.86 for authoritarian parenting, and 0.78 for authoritative parenting styles. In fathers also the reliability was 0.77 for indulgent parenting, 0.85 for authoritarian parenting, and 0.92 for authoritative parenting styles. Using convergence differential validity, he observed that there was authoritarian parenting in mothers has negative relationship with indulgent parenting (-0.38) and authoritative parenting (-0.48). Also, authoritarian parenting in fathers has negative relationship with indulgent parenting (-.050) and authoritative parenting (-0.52). In a research, which has studied the possibility of changing parenting style to behavioral disorder, he has found a proper content validity. To find out the reliability of the questionnaire by test-retest method on 12 mothers in one weak interval, he found 0.67 for indulgent, 0.77 for authoritarian, and 0.73 for authoritative parenting styles.

(b) *Spence Children Anxiety Scale*

This scale consists of 38 items which will be scored and an open question which will not be scored. It has 6 subscales viz. panic attacks and agoraphobia; separation anxiety; fear of physical hurt; social phobia; obsessive-compulsive disorder; and generalized anxiety. The total score of the scale is obtained by the summation of subscales. Scoring would be as 0= never, 1= sometimes, 2= often, and 3= always, so the maximum score will be 111. The convergence validity of the Spence children anxiety scale with revised version of children

manifest scale were significantly correlated ($r = 0.71$). Differential validity of the scale with children depression questionnaire was of low correlation. Internal contingency validity of the scale was Chronbach alpha of 0.92 and retest reliability of the scale in 6 weeks interval was 0.60.

C. Procedure

In any of the speech therapy centers, at first, Bumrind parenting styles questionnaire and then Spence children anxiety scale (parents form) were performed on the parents of stuttering children; the same questionnaires were given to the parents of normal children as well. Then, data obtained were analyzed using the appropriate statistical analyses.

III. RESULTS

This research was a comparative study in which the effects of two variables viz. parenting styles and children anxiety were studied on stuttering and normal children. To analyses of data and to test the study hypotheses, descriptive statistical indexes (mean, standard deviation, etc.) and multiple variance analysis and t-test for independent samples were used.

TABLE I

SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVE INDEXES OF SCORES OF STUTTERING AND NORMAL CHILDREN ON ANXIETY AND PARENTING STYLES SCALES

Variable	Mean	SD	Kurtosis	Skew	p
Anxiety (N)	6.66	4.75	0.61	-0.52	0.262
Anxiety (S)	18.40	10.30	0.83	0.34	0.745
Indulgent (N)	14.65	0.31	0.26	-0.52	0.359
Authoritarian (N)	12.40	5.42	0.23	-1.02	0.085
Authoritative (N)	33.07	4.44	-0.08	-1.10	0.038
Indulgent (S)	14.21	5.97	0.22	-1.01	0.050
Authoritarian (S)	12.50	5.03	0.14	-0.74	0.237
Authoritative (S)	33.06	4.35	-0.17	-0.40	0.063

According to Table I, distribution of scores of the two groups in anxiety test, and results of normality test of Kolmogorov - Smirnov show that the distribution of sample scores in measured variable tends to normal and the parametric tests (multiple analysis of variance and t-test for independent samples) can be used.

First hypothesis: There are significant differences between the anxiety of stuttering children and normal children.

TABLE II

SUMMARY OF T-TEST SCORES FOR INDEPENDENT SAMPLES ON ANXIETY

Group	No.	Mean	SD	t	p
Normal	54	6.66	4.75	-7.601	0.01
Stuttering	54	18.40	10.30		

According to calculated t (7.601) in Table II, null hypothesis can be rejected with 99 percent confidence ($p < 0.01$). In other words, the difference of anxiety mean scores in stuttering and normal children is significant. So, the evidence to accept the first hypothesis is sufficient.

Second hypothesis: There are significant differences between the parenting styles of stuttering children and normal children.

TABLE III

SUMMARY OF EFFECT TESTS IN SUBJECTS

Variable	SS	df 1	df 2	MS	F	Eta Square
Indulgent	10.67	1	214	10.67	0.28	0.001
Authoritarian	0.46	1	214	0.46	0.02	0.000
Authoritative	0.01	1	214	0.01	0.00	0.000

Noting the results of the effect tests in subjects and calculated indexes, the following results could be presented: regarding the three dependent variables of parenting styles of stuttering and normal children, calculated F with the df (1, 214) show that the mean scores of parenting styles have not significant differences. So, the evidence to accept the second hypothesis is not sufficient.

Third hypothesis: Anxiety levels of children can be predicted on the basis of parenting styles.

TABLE IV

SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSES TO PREDICTION OF CHILDREN ANXIETY ON THE BASIS OF PARENTING STYLES

R	R ²	Modified R ²	F	Sig.
0.051	0.003	-0.016	0.135	0.874

As it is seen on the above table, obtained R² (0.003) means that 3 percent of variance can be explained by styles of parenting (Indulgent, Authoritarian, and Authoritative). Calculate F ratio (0.135) on the confidence level of 95 percent is not significant. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation between styles of parenting and children anxiety. So, the evidence to accept the third hypothesis is not sufficient.

IV. DISCUSSION

The present research attempted to determine the role of anxiety and parenting styles on stuttering children. The three hypotheses proposed by this research were:

First hypothesis: There are significant differences between the anxiety of stuttering children and normal children.

The results of this research showed that there is a significant relationship between the anxiety of stuttering and normal children. In a research by Blood and Blood [13], stuttering individuals manifested higher levels of anxiety compared with those with normal verbal capability. Anxiety and emotional and mental stress constantly exacerbate stuttering. Therefore, in treatment of stuttering, it is suggested that the anxiety and stress of the children should be minimized as much as possible. In some situations, emotions which are the combination of fear and anxiety lead the individual to feel incompetent [22].

In [12], it was stated that stuttering individuals experience more anxiety compared with normal children. In another study [23], it was shown that there is difference between the anxiety levels of stuttering children and normal children.

The explanation for this inconsistency between these studies is the insufficiency of subjects in the later study (30 subjects). Therefore, the results cannot be extended with assurance. Secondly, if instead of the MMPI test a more efficient test had been performed; different results would have

been attained. Thus, based on the above-mentioned reasons, it can be concluded that the stuttering individuals experience more anxiety compared with normal individuals.

Second hypothesis: There are significant differences between the parenting styles of stuttering children and normal children.

The results of this research showed that there is no significant relationship between the parenting styles of stuttering children compared with those of normal children; and stuttering and normal children cannot be distinguished based on the styles of parenting. Consequently, sufficient evidence could not be attained to support the second hypothesis. In [24] it was revealed that in children who face fear, tension, and insecurity and confronts stresses that supersedes the threshold of a child's tolerance, these stresses may manifest themselves in form of stuttering.

It can be concluded that parenting does not cause stuttering, but stuttering can be attributed to other factors. If problems of parenting styles were the cause of stuttering, then all children who have faced these problems were to develop stuttering, a fallacy which indeed is inaccurate.

Third hypothesis: Anxiety levels of children can be predicted on the basis of parenting styles.

The results of this research show that there is no significant relationship between parenting methods and anxiety of children.

In some studies [17]-[19], [21] it was revealed that in addition to parenting styles, cultural factors are also involved in children's anxiety. During their development, children influence their parents. It was previously believed that it is only the parents who influence children; however, Baumrind observed the socialization process of children as an active process. In addition, Baumrind maintained that the parenting styles used by parents depend of the tolerance of children [23].

Parenting behaviors encompass a large assortment of behaviors; therefore, the effect of a single behavior manifested by parents cannot be easily examined. A child might receive punishment for a particular action and still be affectionate towards his or her parents; or parents can be technically correct in their action, yet the child might experience distance and coldness due to parents' failure in manifesting affection [25].

These results contradict with that of [7], [20] which show that parenting styles affect the children's anxiety. The reason for discrepancy between these results is that no individual factor can be considered as the cause of anxiety. In the two later research, the role of parents and styles of parenting have been the sole point of focus and other factors such as environment and the nature of children have been overlooked. Anxiety is shaped from a combination of various factors. Bad parenting of children cannot be the cause of this issue. Sufficient attention to children cannot eliminate anxiety as well. Possibly, it can be concluded that today parents are among the elements of the environment; such as nursery school, school, teachers, classmates, and the media which are all influential in a child's life. Mere parenting style is not the cause of children's anxiety; various factors such as genes,

environment, and the experience of the child can play a role in anxiety.

V. CONCLUSION

On the basis of findings of the present research, it could be concluded that: (1) There is significant difference between stuttering boys and normal boys in anxiety; (2) There is no significant difference between stuttering boys and normal boys on parenting styles; and (3) There is not significant relationship between parenting styles and children anxiety.

The importance and the role of the family as the primary social standing and the major determiner of the child's behavior are generally understood. Therefore, it is crucial that parents as the most important members of this institution who are in constant contact with the child and shape his or her cosmos should have sufficient understanding of the methods of parenting. One of the major problems usually faced by parents is their unawareness of how to employ the proper disciplinary methods in raising their children. Parents usually fail to receive feedbacks from engaging their children and attribute the failures and misconducts of their children to social factors. Nonetheless, in most instances, the behavior manifested by children, their failures, and their misconducts are the direct result of the treatment they have received from their parents. Due to the influence it exerts on children and their development, through centuries, parenting has always attracted the interest of researchers [4], [26].

Although the parents have the most crucial effect on children mental health and psychological problems viz. anxiety, but there are some other factors which could be effective.

Like any other researches in human science, this study had some limitations. Therefore, it is recommended that researches use larger sample size in different populations with regard to gender and cultural differences. Also, it is recommended to control the other factors which affect anxiety and stuttering in children viz. socio-economic status, parental psychological status, perceived family environment, etc.

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