

## Impact of Perceived Parental Acceptance and Rejection on Emotional Development among Abused and Non-Abused Children

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study is to explore the impact of parental acceptance-rejection on emotional development among abused and non-abused children. This study has used quantitative research technique and the questionnaire survey was used to collect the data. The sample of this study consists of total 400 respondents (200 boys and 200 girls) and data was randomly collected from the different government schools of Multan. The age range was restricted to 14 years. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data and three scales were used for the data collection. Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) Urdu version, constructed by Rohner, Saaverda and Granum (1980) separate for father and mother was used which consists of 60 items for each. The Child Abuses scale Urdu version designed by Haque (1981) was used which consists of 34 items. This scale includes further four categories Physical Abuse, Physical Neglect, Emotional Abuse and Emotional Neglect. The Urdu version of Emotional Development scale developed by Afzal (2002) was used with total 34 items of the scale. The results of the present study shows that there is a significant impact of parental acceptance-rejection on emotional development among children. The results also shows that emotional development of the abused children is disturbed as compared to non-abused children. The findings further revealed that there is a significant difference among abused and non-abused children on mother and father parental acceptance-rejection and there is also a significant differences among boys and girls on mother and father parental acceptance-rejection.

### Keywords

abused children, emotional development, non-abused children, perceived parental acceptance and rejection

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### Introduction

Interaction is main source of relationship among the children, parents and other family members. We are living in a community which have extended family system, based on family, neighborhood, community and broader society, these system have directly or indirectly significant effects on the children attitude, through parents and their rearing practices. A child-parental relationship development when they interact each other. The reflection of children attitudes, behavior and interaction style directly influence of their parental attitude and behavior (Natalucci et al., 2020). It includes the ability to react in certain actions by paying attention to what the other person says, and responding directly to it. Parents accept the child's emotional and developmental needs and usually are sensitive about them (Boudreault-Bouchard et al., 2013). This is the trait which pointed out the "Authoritarian Parenting Style" and it elaborates the controlling the child's behavior or demanding the maturity.

Restrictiveness is a trait of a father or mother in which they are over protective about the child and even do not allow the child to do anything by their own. Normally parents are less loving and more demanding in this situation (Bell, 2020). While in permissiveness, the condition is totally opposite and parents are normally less demanding and really responsible about their child. However, permissive parents tend to be very loving, yet provide few guidelines and rules. Moreover, the acceptance and rejection of parents is the symbolic factor of one's life. Acceptance-rejection of parents cannot be considered as the particular characteristic

of the child's personality but it believes which held in child's personality (Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2012). Accepting parents generally love their children, respect their personalities and boost up the level of confidence and feeling of security among their child, also give them physical warmth like hugs, kisses and narrates motivational and inspirational tales. Furthermore, they also appreciate their presence and the apparent looks of the child.

The child who receives the positive behavior from their parents is confident, having great self-esteem, and do not need protection. However, these kind of child feels free and confident while moving in the society (Jindal-Snape & Miller, 2008). Moreover, child increment their enthusiastic development and social fitness by associating with other child. Play enables children to rehearse their relational abilities as they arrange jobs and value others' emotions. They figure out how to share, stand by, and handle clashes while playing with others (Ginsburg, 2007). Play additionally enables child to express and adapt to their sentiments through imagine play, which enables them to contemplate their encounters and emotions (Hännikäinen & Munter, 2018).

Enthusiastic improvement includes a few interrelated zones of advancement which separately are: social connection centers on the connections we share with others and incorporating associations with grown-ups and peers (Lewin & Luckin, 2010). As child grow socially, they figure out how to alternate, help their companions, play together, and participate with others. Furthermore, enthusiastic mindfulness incorporates the capacity to perceive and comprehend our own emotions and activities and those of

other individuals, and how our very own sentiments and activities influence ourselves as well as other people (Dost, Hashemifardnya, & Jalali, 2017). Self-guideline is the capacity to express musings, sentiments, and practices in socially proper ways (Lal & Jayan, 2019). Figuring out how to quiet down when irate or energized and persevering at troublesome undertakings are instances of self-guideline.

Parental acceptance and rejection together form the warmth dimension of parenting. Parental warmth is construed as a bipolar dimension where rejection, or the absence of parental warmth and affection, stands at one pole of the scale in opposition to acceptance at the other pole (Panić, 2013). Parental acceptance-rejection theory (PAR Theory) is an evidence-based theory of socialization and lifespan development that attempts to predict and explain major causes, consequences, and other correlates of interpersonal especially parental acceptance and rejection within the United States and worldwide (Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2012)). Improved prognosis for survival of very preterm infants has led to increasing concerns about their neurobehavioral and socio-emotional development during childhood and adolescence.

Previous findings highlighted preterm infants increased risk for behavioral and emotional problems as well as being less socially competent (McCormick, Workman-Daniels, & Brooks-Gunn, 1996). Parental influence and its crucial role in child development is widely acknowledged. Understanding the individual differences in the relationships between parents and children is key, because the quality of these relationships shapes the development of children (Deault, 2010).

### **Warmth Dimension of Parenting**

Parental acceptance and rejection together form the warmth dimension of parenting. This is a dimension or continuum on which all humans can be placed because everyone has experienced in childhood more or less love at the hands of major caregivers (Dwairy, 2010). Thus, the warmth dimension has to do with the quality of the affectional bond between parents and their children, and with the physical, verbal, and symbolic behaviors parents use to express these feelings (Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2012).

### **Parental Acceptance Rejection Theory's (Personality Sub Theory)**

PAR Theory (personality sub theory) attempts to predict and explain major personality or psychological especially mental health-related consequences of perceived parental acceptance and rejection (Rohner et al., 2012). The sub theory begins with the probably untestable assumption that over the course of evolution humans have developed the enduring, biologically based emotional need for positive response from the people most important to them.

### **Emotional Development**

Children start developing their emotions during the infancy stage, which lasts approximately from birth to the age of two years. During this stage, a great deal of initial learning

occurs for the child, about their general environment and the people that are in it (Denham et al., 2009). Much of this learning occurs through interactions with parents and observations of parental relations, who are the first and most prominent figures in a child's early life. Happiness, distress and disgust are amongst the initial emotions to appear in children just a few months after birth (Hoemann, Xu, & Barrett, 2019). Later on, social emotions appear followed by the emotion of fear between the ages of two and four years. Generally, emotions start to differ as a child begins to mature.

The expression of emotions during infancy promotes the transition from complete dependency to autonomy. The expression of interest promotes exploration and cognitive development. Social (intentional) smiles and other expressions of joy promote social interaction and healthy attachment relationships with primary caregivers (Greenberg et al., 2017). The expression of sadness encourages empathy and helping behavior, and the expression of anger signals protest and discomfort. Infants' unique tendency to experience and express particular emotions and the threshold for expressing those emotions is usually referred to as their temperament or characteristic emotionality (Saarni et al., 2007). The researchers generally agreed that neonatal (nonintentional) smiles are present at birth and that social smiling and emotional expressions of interest appear as early as six weeks of age. By four to five months of age, infants selectively smile at familiar faces and at other infants, and their caregivers begin to share positive emotional exchanges with them.

Parental acceptance and rejection theory is based on evidence that indicates that its main dimension (i.e., the acceptance–rejection axis) shapes certain aspects of parental behavior that are developed during the upbringing process (Rohner et al., 2012). Parental acceptance is associated with greater psychological adjustment, whereas parental rejection is associated with psychological disorders (Dwairy, 2010). Some studies conclude that the psychological and social adjustment of children and adolescents is different depending on whether the relationships with their parents are based on acceptance or rejection.

Previous evidence suggested that parenting and home environment are important modulators of the psycho-emotional development and the development of social competence of preterm children. Apart from acute distress, premature birth itself also causes chronic distress in parents because of their prolonged concerns about well-being and development of the child (Huhtala et al., 2014). In the 2000s, family-centered intervention programs have reduced maternal distress and improved parent–infant interactions in families with a preterm infant. Maternal distress in particular has been associated with later behavioral problems and recent studies have revealed parallel results in fathers of preterm children (Narayanan & Nærde, 2016). Still, there is a paucity of studies that have investigated paternal distress and resilience in the families of preterm infants.

Insecure parents are believed to interact with their children in ways which minimally challenge the parent's internal working model of attachment, and therefore the need to adapt attachment-relevant information to their current state of mind may result in an inability to accurately perceive,

interpret, and react to the attachment signals of their children (Pooravari et al., 2014). Secure parents may be more sensitive to signals of distress, fear or anxiety from their infants, because having work through their past attachment experiences or having have strong attachment experiences, they are supposed to be free to focus attention on their infant's needs (Barone & Lionetti, 2012).

As children develop through primary school, they are increasingly able to identify emotions and to interpret them within specific social contexts. This enables them to express their own emotions competently in their social environment. Children's developing skills in emotional understanding, including recognition and appraisal alongside the development of competent emotional expression – permit them to navigate the complex social and academic school environment successfully and to develop prosocial behaviors (Maguire, et al., 2016). The classroom can be a confusing and disorientating place for children who are unable to accurately identify emotions or interpret the impact of specific contexts on other people's emotions, and this may result in children displaying externalizing behaviors that disrupt classroom learning (Hammer, Melhuish, & Howard, 2017).

Emotional understanding, which incorporates the ability to recognize and appraise emotions, is a fundamental social task (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Emotional recognition depends on the ability to identify facial expressions that contain a significant amount of emotional information. The ability to discriminate this information emerges in the first year of life and continues to develop into adulthood (Maguire et al., 2016). Furthermore, some research has tried to analyze the role of maternal/paternal acceptance–rejection separately on the psychological adjustment of children. Their conclusions suggest that both types of acceptance–rejection are equally important in all cultures, and that it is associated in similar terms to children of both sexes (Ali, Khaleque, & Rohner, 2015).

## Research Methodology

### Research Design

Quantitative research design was used to conduct this study.

### Sample and Population

The sample consists of 400 children (200 boys and 200 girls). The data was collected from the different government schools of Multan and the age range was of 14 years. The simple random sampling technique was used to the collect data along with the demographic variables (gender, parent's education, parent's occupation, birth order, number of siblings and school), and study instruments.

### Research Instruments

#### 1. Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire

The Urdu version of this scale was developed by the Rohner (1980) to measure the mode of acceptance and rejection of parents. This questionnaire based on two portions; first

portion measures the attitude of father towards their children and second portion measure the attitude of mother towards their children. Each part of questionnaire is based on 60 questions statements. These sixty questions statements were further divided into four parts (a) affect and warmth, (b) hostility and aggression, (c) indifference and neglect, and (d) rejection. To measure the intensity of each statement, four-point Likert scale was used and the maximum score is 240 and minimum score is 60. However, minimum score shows parental acceptance and maximum score shows parental rejection. This questionnaire is fit for 7-14 years of age group.

#### 2. Scale for Emotional Development

The Urdu version of this scale was developed by Afzal (2002) to measure the level of emotional development among the children. This scale based on 34 questions statements and these statements are furthermore categorized into six parts (a) joy, (b) sadness, (c) anger, (d) jealousy, (e) curiosity, and (f) fear. To measure the intensity of each question statement, 5 Point-Likert scale was used (5=Always, 4=Most of the time, 3=Seldom, 2=Rarely and 1=Least). Maximum score shows the maximum intensity of emotional development and minimum score shows the minimum intensity of emotional development.

#### 3. Child Abuse Scales (CAS)

The Urdu version of this scale was used to measure the child abused. This scale was based on 34 questions statements and these question statements were further divided into five domains, (a) physical abuse, (b) emotional abuse, (c) physical neglect, (d) emotional neglect, and (e) emotional care. To measure the intensity of each question statement, 4 Point-Likert scale was used (1=Never, 2=Sometimes, 3=Frequently, 4=Always).

### Research Procedure

This research was conducted with the permission taken from HOD of Psychology Department, Institute of Southern Punjab Multan Pakistan and from the heads of the government schools in Multan region. The collected data from the students and authorities of government schools were really cooperative and they support at every step of data collection. Instructions were given to the school staff and they further delivered to the students. While receiving the scales, it was keenly checked that (whether) all the requirements are fulfilled for the statistical analysis of the data.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1:** Simple Liner Regression Analysis for Perceived Acceptance-rejection of parents on Emotional Development.

Predictors	B	S.E	$\beta$	F-value	P-value
Constant	93.4	7.2		83.76	0.000
FAR	0.31	0.050	0.273	0.05	0.000

MAR 0.26 0.21 0.537 0.05 0.000

**Note:** Acceptance-rejection of parents and emotional development, FAR = Father Acceptance-Rejection, MAR = Mother Acceptance-Rejection,  $R^2 = 0.293$ ,  $R = 0.541$ ,  $F = 83.76$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ,  $P < 0.05$

The results of the table 1 shows that there is a significant impact of acceptance and rejection of parents on children emotional development.

**Table 2:** Mean, S.D. T and P-value, t-test in abused and non-abused on the scale of emotional development

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value	Cohen's d
Emotional Development	Abused	116	103.5	11.8	3.24	.001	0.38
	Non-Abused	284	98.0	16.7			

**Table 3:** Mean, S.D. T and P-value, t-test on groups of abused and non-abused children on the scale of Perceived Acceptance-rejection of parents

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	S.D	T-value	P-value	Cohen's d
FAR	Abused	193	162.0	10.7	.997	.000	2.47
	Non-Abused	215	134.9	11.23			
MAR	Abused	225	150.4	42.4	.416	.000	0.60
	Non-Abused	183	127.4	33.6			

**Note:** FAR= Father's Acceptance-Rejection; MAR= Mother's Acceptance-Rejection

Results shows that significant mean score difference among abused and non-abused on scale of acceptance-rejection of parents. The results indicated that abused children (M=162.0) show higher mean score as compare to non-abuse children on the scale of Father Acceptance-Rejection Scale. On the other hand abused children (M=162.0) shows higher mean score as compare to non-abuse children on the scale of mother acceptance-rejection Scale. P-value is lower than 0.05 which shows significant variance in acceptance and rejection of parents among abused and non-abused.

**Table 4:** Mean, S.D. T and P-value, t-test on the groups of boys and girl's children on the scale of Perceived Acceptance-rejection of parents

Variables	Groups	N	Mean	S.D	T-value	P-value	Cohen's d
FAR	Boy	200	153.5	15.9	7.201	.000	0.71
	Girl	200	141.7	16.9			
MAR	Boy	200	154.4	14.8	5.583	.000	0.55
	Girl	200	144.5	20.3			

This study shows that there is significant impact of perceived acceptance-rejection of parents on emotional development among abused and non-abused children and the parental acceptance and rejection have significant impact on the emotional development of abused and non-abused children. According to Azreen & Hassan (2012) and Malik (2010), children emotional, mental state and behavioral development can be affected due to their acceptance-rejection of parental attitude. Perceived acceptance and rejection of parents vary in term of emotional development among abused and non-abused children. The results of the present study indicated that there is significant effect on emotional development among the abused children as compare to non-abused children. As earlier studied

conducted by Azreen and Hassan (2012), Repinsiki and Shonk (2002), Jahangir and Tahir (1999) found that emotional state of abused children is more affected due to their acceptance-rejection of parents. Perceived acceptance-rejection of parents is lower among abused children as compared to non-abused children.

The results further indicated that the parental acceptance and rejection is higher among the abused children as compare to non-abused children. According to Malik, (2010) and Rubin (2004), acceptance and rejection of parents varies among the abused and non-abused children. Perceived acceptance and rejection of parents vary in term of gender among abused and non-abused children. The results indicate that the boy face higher level of parental acceptance and rejection as compare to the girls. According Khan (2014), Erkman (2010), Dumka (2009) found there is significantly difference between the boys and girl's emotional development due to their acceptance-rejection of parents. Emotional Development does not vary in terms of gender. The results indicate that the there is no significant effects on boy's emotional development as compare to girls, the p-value also shows that there is no significant difference among boys and girls emotional development among abused and non-abused children. Hussain (2013), Malik (2012), Imam (2004) found that there is no significant difference between boys and girls emotional development.

## Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine the impact of perceived acceptance-rejection of parents on emotional development among abused and non-abused children. Parents are considered as the first school of nurturing for the child and the behavior of the parents matters a lot in the grooming of a child's parenting styles and parenting behaviors both play the dominant role in the development of a child. Emotions are the major part of an individual's personality, and help a person to understand human behaviors and supports in interaction with other people through emotions one can recognize the feel of sympathy and empathy for others. This study concluded that acceptance-rejection of parents have significant effects on the children emotional development among abused and non-abused children. Abused children suffer in higher level of emotional disturbance as compare to non-abused children. Acceptance-rejection of parent level is higher among the abused children. This study found that acceptance-rejection of parents is higher among boys as compare to girls. Furthermore, the results of this study revealed that boy's emotional development is more disturbed as compared to girls and the acceptance-rejection of parents have significant effects on both boys and girl's emotional development.

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