



PERCEIVED PARENTING STYLE AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the perceived parenting style and mental health. Parenting styles play a crucial role in shaping mental health outcomes among university students. To examine the relationship between perceived parenting styles and mental health among university students. A correlation research design was employed; utilizing convenient sampling technique to recruit (N=100) university students aged 18-25. Two scales were used: Perceived Parenting Styles Scale (short-form EMBU) and Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21). Cronbach's alpha is .89 for Perceived Parenting Styles Scale (short-form EMBU) and Cronbach's alpha is .95 for DASS-21. The study found that perceived parenting styles significantly predict mental health outcomes among university students. The combined impact of authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles explained 47.9% of the variance in mental health outcomes. Authoritative parenting had a positive impact, while permissive and authoritarian parenting styles had detrimental effects on mental health. The study highlights the importance of promoting authoritative parenting practices to enhance mental health outcomes among university students. Interventions and support mechanisms are needed to address the negative impact of permissive and authoritarian parenting on mental well-being.

Background of the Study

With the development of society, people's attention to health has increased and they have come to realize that health is not only physical health, but mental health is also an important manifestation of health. In recent years, researchers have paid more attention to the study of mental health, in which two factors that cannot be ignored are family parenting style and psychological resilience. Adolescence is an important period in the physical and mental development of an individual, and it is the period when adolescents have the strongest plasticity and the fastest change in the process of socialization, the formation of behavioral habits, and the beginning of the development of the self, so that the psychological health and harmony at this time is particularly important for the overall development of the individual (Sun, 2023). In recent study, parenting styles were correlated with children's mental health. Positive parenting styles were conducive to the formation of a healthy mental status. Children with parents who do not understand and accept them are more prone to mental illnesses (Wen & Zhang, 2021).

Introduction

Mental health is a state of well-being in which individuals realize their own potential and abilities to cope with the normal pressures in life and can study and work with quality, thereby generating a positive effect on the surrounding environment (Chatterjee, 2018). Mental health status is affected by various factors. The ecological systems theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner states that family, as a microsystem, has the most direct effect on individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Perceived parenting styles can affect the mental development of individuals in this system, which is closely related to their mental health status (Huang et al., 2020).

Parents play a vital role in the growth and psycho-social development of their children (Knappe et al., 2010). Therefore, studies (e.g., Becker et al., 2010) have highlighted the importance of parenting in the growth and development of children and adolescents. Various parenting styles have been under study by researchers (Rubin and Kelly, 2015) among which four have got the most popular i.e., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parenting. On the other hand, some researchers have investigated the role of parenting in terms of childrearing practices/parental practices instead of parenting styles (Bilal et al., 2013). Hence, researchers started focusing on parenting in terms of parental practices rather than considering it a mere biological relationship between the child and parents (primary caregiver).

Parenting style

Family parenting styles, defined as the concepts, attitudes, and methods of parents in the parenting process, as well as stable behavioral patterns, have been widely studied. Research has shown that parenting style is a key element in predicting healthy psychological and behavioral development in individuals (Perris, as cited in the Evaluation of Parenting Styles Scale). Various scales have been developed to assess parenting styles, including the Parenting Behavior Questionnaire (PBI) by Parker et al., which includes dimensions of overprotection and caring, and the Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) by Gong Yihua, which comprises five dimensions: authoritarian, trusting, emotional warmth, spoiling, and neglecting (Sun, 2023). Studies have consistently shown that authoritative parenting, characterized by kindness, clear restrictions, and predictability, has the most positive effects on children's social

development, fostering curiosity, independence, and responsibility (Laboviti, 2015). Moreover, teenagers who perceive their parents as authoritative tend to have higher self-efficacy and lower depression scores, reporting fewer depressive symptoms (Sun, 2023).

Mental health

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 1948), health encompasses not only physical well-being but also mental health, defined as a state of being free from mental diseases or disorders and possessing good adaptability. In today's society, adolescents face intense competition and pressure, significantly impacting their mental health and overall well-being (Sun, 2023). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory highlights the crucial role of family, as a microsystem, in shaping individual development and mental health. Parenting styles, characterized by consistent behavioral patterns and tendencies, have been linked to children's mental health outcomes. Research has shown that children who experience rejection from their parents tend to exhibit unstable emotions, aggression, and mental health issues, whereas those who receive acceptance and understanding from their parents demonstrate more prosocial behaviors and better mental health (Feng et al., 2021). Building on these findings, further exploration is needed to understand the mechanisms underlying the relationship between parenting styles and mental health, including the potential mediating roles of perfectionism and altruistic behavior.

Relationship between parenting style and mental health

Research has consistently shown that parenting styles have a significant impact on children's mental health, influencing their self-confidence, emotional stability, and overall well-being (Sun, 2023). A caring and loving parenting style is associated with positive outcomes, such as self-acceptance, happiness, and emotional stability, whereas rejecting, cold, and controlling attitudes can lead to low self-esteem, anxiety, and behavioral problems (Erikson and Becker, as cited in Sun, 2023). Studies have also found that harsh parental punishment is linked to aggressive behavior in adolescents (Maccoby, as cited in Sun, 2023), while obsessive-compulsive parental behaviors and over-control can negatively impact psychological well-being (Parker, as cited in Sun, 2023). Chinese scholars Ma Li and Jiang have also demonstrated that family care and warmth are positively correlated with individual psychological health, while punishment, interference, and over-protection can increase the risk of behavioral problems (Sun, 2023). Overall, positive and affirmative parenting styles play a crucial role in promoting children's mental health, while negative and rejectionist styles can have detrimental effects (Waring et al., 2023).

Relationship between mental health and university students

Research has consistently shown a significant relationship between parenting styles and mental health outcomes in university students, particularly during adolescence (Laboviti, 2015). According to self-determination theory, parenting styles that support autonomy, involvement, and structure are associated with positive psychosocial outcomes, including lower levels of depression and higher self-assessment (Laboviti, 2015). Conversely, parents who are low in these dimensions tend to have children with more internalized and externalized symptoms, including depression. Studies have also found a positive connection between parenting styles and depression levels, with authoritative parenting styles linked to higher self-efficacy and lower depression scores (Laboviti, 2015). In the context of Chinese university students, who are often only children due to

the One-Child Policy, researchers have expressed concerns about their social skills and mental health (Chen et al., as cited in Feng et al., 2021). This study aims to investigate the impact of both positive and negative parenting styles, such as parental emotional warmth, rejection, and overprotection, on university students' behavioral tendencies and mental health, considering the cultural nuances of Chinese interdependence and mutual connection, where strong parental control may be viewed as an expression of love (Feng et al., 2021).

Relationship between Parenting Style and University Student

The relationship between parenting styles and university students' mental health is a crucial area of study, particularly given the significant psychological development and challenges faced by university students (Feng et al., 2021). Research suggests that authoritative parenting, characterized by clear limits, warmth, and structure, is associated with positive outcomes, including fewer depressive symptoms and better psychosocial development (Steinberg et al., 1989). In contrast, authoritarian, indulgent, or neglectful parenting styles can have negative effects on children's mental health and academic performance (Laboviti, 2015). Studies have consistently shown that authoritative parenting is linked to cognitively motivated, competent, and achievement-oriented students, as well as positive academic and psychosocial outcomes (Love and Thomas, 2014). Furthermore, higher levels of parental support have been related to lower levels of depression and loneliness among college students, highlighting the importance of supportive parenting in promoting mental health and well-being (Moon-Seo et al., 2021).

Literature Review

These perceived parental practices seem to have life-long effects on children as empirical studies conducted on children, adolescents, and young adults have depicted the same findings. Therefore, the existing literature suggests that over-protective parenting is maladaptive (Leung, 2021) and is associated with developmental problems in adolescents (Flamant et al., 2022). Such over-protective parenting also leads to maladjustment, low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety in adolescents and young adults (Van Petegem et al., 2022), where young adults and adolescents are at high risk for the adverse consequences of over-protective parenting as compared to other age groups (Soenens and Vansteenkiste, 2020).

1. Perceived Parenting Style

Pant (2023) was conducted a research study on the Relationship between Perceived Parenting Style and Resilience in College Students; Parenting is considered a complex activity; it includes much behaviour of parents towards their child which either individually or together affect child outcomes. From very long-time Parenting is seen as one of the factors that shapes a child's psychological and physiological wellbeing. In this research the relationship between perceived parenting style and a college students' resilience which can be understood as it as an individual's capacity to cope up in an effective way with the internal and external stresses is examined. A sample of 101 college students is collected from various colleges to further generalize the research. The sample chosen includes young adults who are going to college, ranging from age group of 18 to 25 years. A significant relationship between parenting style and resilience was revealed, there was significant relationship between resilience and authoritative parenting style of mother and father, and in case of authoritarian parenting style no correlation was revealed.

2. Parenting Style and Mental Health

Parents are generally major attachment figures for children, and parental acceptance and rejection have extremely important effects on children's mental health. Specifically, parental emotional warmth, as a positive parenting style, has a positive effect on adolescent mental health; meanwhile, parental rejection, as a negative parenting style, has a negative and persistent impact on adolescent mental health (Rohner and Lansford, 2017). According to family systems theory, meanwhile, the stability, harmony and health of the whole family system have a crucial influence on children's psychological and emotional growth. The parent-child relationship is an important subsystem of the family system. Parenting style exerts a crucial influence on the growth of a child's mental health through the interactions of family functions (Bowen and Kerr, 2009). Cross-cultural comparative study and meta-analysis have supported the above two theories (Rohner et al., 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Attachment Theory: Attachment theory, proposed by (Bowlby, 1980), suggests that the quality of early parent-child attachment shapes individuals' internal working models of relationships. Secure attachment, characterized by sensitive and responsive caregiving, is associated with the development of trust, self-esteem, and emotional regulation. Insecure attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant attachment, may result from inconsistent or unresponsive parenting practices and can impact individuals' mental health and social relationships (Ainsworth et al., 2015)

Social Learning Theory: Social learning theory, proposed by Bandura (1977), emphasizes the role of observational learning and modeling in shaping behavior. Children learn by observing and imitating their parents' behaviors, including their parenting styles. According to this theory, children internalize the behaviors they see in their parents, which can influence their own attitudes, coping strategies, and emotional regulation later in life (Bandura & Walters, 1977)

Ecological Systems Theory: Ecological systems theory, proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), emphasizes the influence of various environmental systems on human development. Parenting styles are viewed within the context of broader ecological systems, including the family, school, community, and culture. Bronfenbrenner posited those interactions between these systems shape individuals' development and functioning. Thus, parenting styles are influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by cultural norms, socioeconomic status, and other contextual factors (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007)

Socialization Theory: Socialization theory emphasizes the role of parents in transmitting cultural values, norms, and socialization practices to their children. Parents' socialization goals and practices contribute to the development of children's social competence, identity, and emotional well-being. Different parenting styles reflect variations in socialization practices, which, in turn, impact children's adjustment and psychological outcomes

Mental Health among University Students

Stress and Coping Theory: Stress and coping theory, proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), emphasizes how individuals perceive and respond to stressors. University students face numerous stressors, including academic pressure, social challenges, and transitions. According to this theory, individuals' appraisal of stressors and their coping

strategies influence their psychological well-being. Poor coping mechanisms, such as avoidance or substance use, may exacerbate mental health issues, while effective coping strategies can promote resilience and well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Eisenberg, Hunt, & Speer, 2013).

Ecological Systems Theory: Ecological systems theory, developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), provides a framework for understanding the complex interactions between individuals and their environments. University students' mental health is influenced by multiple systems, including individual characteristics, family, peers, academic environment, and broader societal factors. Changes in these systems can impact students' adjustment and mental well-being. For instance, supportive relationships with peers and faculty can buffer against mental health problems, while academic stressors can contribute to psychological distress (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Stallman, 2010).

Social Cognitive Theory: Social cognitive theory, proposed by Bandura (1986), highlights the role of cognitive processes, social interactions, and observational learning in shaping behavior and psychological functioning. University students' mental health can be influenced by their self-beliefs, perceived social support, and modeling of coping behaviors. For example, perceived self-efficacy in managing academic challenges and stress can affect students' mental health outcomes (Bandura, 1986; Ibrahim et al., 2013).

Developmental Perspective: A developmental perspective acknowledges that university students are in a transitional period between adolescence and adulthood, marked by identity exploration and increased autonomy. This transition can impact mental health as students navigate new roles, responsibilities, and challenges. Developmental theories such as Erikson's psychosocial development theory emphasize the importance of successfully resolving developmental tasks for psychological well-being (Erikson, 1968).

Rationale of research

The rationale for conducting this research stems from the critical need to understand how perceived parenting styles influence the mental health of university students. The university period is marked by significant developmental transitions and challenges, where mental health issues like anxiety, depression, and stress are prevalent and can detrimentally affect academic performance and overall well-being (American College Health Association, 2019). Parenting styles, as recognized by Baumrind (1967), play a crucial role in shaping individuals' psychological development. While extensive research has examined parenting styles during childhood and adolescence, there is a notable gap in understanding how these styles impact mental health outcomes during young adulthood, particularly in the university context (McKinney et al., 2008). Investigating this relationship is essential for developing targeted interventions and support systems to promote the well-being of university students, which can ultimately contribute to their academic success and overall quality of life (Turner et al., 2009).

Statement of Problem

This study explores the relationship between perceived parenting styles and mental health outcomes in university students. It seeks to understand how differences in perceived parenting styles authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful actually influence mental health outcomes like depression, anxiety, stress, and self-esteem. The research, on comprehension of the relationship, seeks to inform interventions tailored to the promotion of psychological well-being for university students in service of the broader field of developmental psychology.

Research objectives

1. To find-out the perceived parenting styles and their relationship with the consequences for mental health among university students.
2. To find-out the relationship between different parenting styles and stress levels, anxiety, depression, and overall psychological functioning.
3. To find-out the Impact of Different Parenting Styles, explore how various parenting styles (e.g., authoritative, authoritarian, permissive) influence university students' mental health outcomes.
4. To Identify Implications for Academic Performance, analyze how perceived parenting styles correlate with academic self-efficacy and overall academic performance among university students.

Hypotheses

H₁ Perceived parenting styles were significant impact on mental health among university students.

H₂ Perceived parenting styles were significant predictors of low mental health among university student.

Significance

The goal of study is the way how parents grow up their child. An understanding of the interaction between parenting styles and mental health can help provide interventions and support systems for university students. Researcher can promote resilience, coping, and emotional well-being by identifying effective practices in parenting. It will investigate the relationship between parenting styles and mental health outcomes provides valuable insights into the well-being of university students. By identifying factors that impact mental health, we can develop targeted interventions and support systems. Findings from this research can guide parents, educators, and counselors in understanding how their parenting approaches influence students' psychological resilience, stress levels, and overall happiness. It informs parenting practices that foster positive mental health. Recognizing the link between parenting styles and academic self-efficacy can enhance educational strategies. When parents and educators understand how their interactions affect students' confidence and motivation, they can create conducive learning environment.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Correlational research design was used. The target population for this study consists of university students aged 18-25. Sample size were consisted on (N=100) University students. To determine the appropriate sample size, a power analysis were conducted using software such as G*Power (Faul et al., 2007). The following parameters were guided the power analysis. Based on previous studies, a medium effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.5$) were be assumed (Cohen, 2013) Alpha Level: 0.05, the conventional threshold for statistical significance. Power: 0.80, to ensure an 80% chance of detecting an effect if one exists.

Instruments

1. Perceived Parenting Styles Scale

The short-form Egna Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran revised by Jiang et al was used to measure perceived parenting styles, which includes 42 items divided into three aspects—parental rejection (12 items; e.g., “Father/ mother often scolds me without any

reason.”), emotional warmth (14 items; e.g., “Father/mother praises me.”), and overprotection (16 items; e.g., “I hope my father/mother does not excessively worry about what I am doing.”). The items in the questionnaire were rated on a four-point scale, with higher scores (response scores were averaged to create their composite scores for data analysis) indicating higher parental rejection/emotional warmth/overprotection levels. This study examined the influence of parents’ overall parenting styles on university students’ mental health. Therefore, father and mother dimensions were adopted from related studies and combined with the parent dimension.^{38,39} the overall internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire was 0.92, and the internal consistency reliabilities of parental rejection, emotional warmth, and overprotection were 0.95, 0.94, and 0.87, respectively.

2. Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21)

The Depression Anxiety Stress Scales – 21 (DASS-21) was developed by Lovibond, S.H.; Lovibond, P.F. (1995) is 21-item self-report measure designed to assess the severity of general psychological distress and symptoms related to depression, anxiety, and stress in adults older adolescents (17 years +). Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21), which was obtained from the official website of the DASS. The DASS-21 contains 21 items in three subscales, which assess symptoms of depression (items 3, 5, 10, 13, 16, 17, 21), anxiety (items 2, 4, 7, 9, 15, 19, 20), and stress (items 1, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 18). The degree to which respondents endorsed the symptoms over the course of the last week is rated on a scale that ranges from 0 (did not apply to me at all) to 3 (applied to me very much or most of the time). Higher scores reflect higher levels of symptom endorsement. Reliability of the DASS-21, as evaluated in the quarantine sample, sample 1, and sample 2, is excellent ($\alpha = 0.95, 0.96, \text{ and } 0.94$, respectively).

Procedure

After a short briefing about the background of the research topics and instruments with the assurance of confidentiality then present my research instruments to the participant in one time for collection response. The questionnaire was constructed using online or physical of the survey was shared with diagnosed sample to the different areas across Lahore. Lastly, after they completed the questionnaire, all the responses were submitted for the analysis of results. Data collected was analyzed using SPSS version 25.

Ethical Consideration

The Research Program Committee requested departmental approval before beginning the study. The participants were informed about the aim of the study. Participants told about filling questionnaire i.e., 10-15 minutes. The total number of questionnaire was two conducted on same time. This process began when the participants have given permission. The participant's privacy would be protected. Participants gave their consent to withdraw, thus they are free to stop the study whenever they wish. During the form filling, physical privacy would be maintained. The ability of the participants to leave the study at any time was guaranteed. The information was presented honestly and accurately. Participant had been right to withdraw; they could leave the study anytime they want. Participant was not exposed to any aversive stimulus that could have trigger physical and psychological distress.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data was examined with the statistical programme SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics, correlational analysis, regression analysis was used to investigate

the predicting potential of variables. For a multiple regression analysis with 3 predictors (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles),.

RESULTS

The section on results and Discussion presents the data that was collected from the late adolescents enrolled in Riphah International University Faisalabad Campus using different questionnaires to assess their parental style and mental health. Correlational statistics were used by the researcher to check the replies to the review's objectives. Tables with thorough explanations are used to display information understanding.

Table 1 *Demographic Information of Participants (N=100)*

Variables	Categories	<i>f</i>	%
Gender	Male	46	46.0 %
	Female	54	54.0 %
Age	18-20 year	35	35.0 %
	21-23 year	60	60.0 %
	24-26 year	5	5.0 %
Family Structure	Nuclear Family	73	73.0 %
	Joint Family	27	27.0 %
Socioeconomic status	Lower middle class	4	4 %
	Middle class	90	90 %
	Upper class	6	6 %
Locality	Rural	41	41 %
	Urban	59	59 %
Birth Order	Firstborn	34	34 %
	Middle born	39	39 %
	Last Born	24	24 %
	Only Born	3	3 %

Table 1 represents the demographic characteristics of participants such as age, gender, birth order, socioeconomic status locality, and family structure. Gender has two categories male (N=46) and Female (54), Family structure has two categories Joint Family (27)) and Nuclear Family (N=73), Socioeconomic status has three categories lower (N=4), middle (N=90), and upper class (N=6). Locality has two categories urban (N=59) and rural (N=41). Birth order has four categories Firstborn (N=34), middle born (N=39), last born (N=24), and only born (N=3).

Table 2 *Variables Descriptive statistics*

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Permissive	13.00	54.00	34.01	11.22
Authoritative	11.00	49.00	33.92	10.20
Authoritarian	12.00	44.00	31.11	8.64
Depression	1.00	21.00	12.04	5.57
Anxiety	.00	20.00	12.18	5.28
Stress	1.00	20.00	11.11	4.99
DASS	5.00	60.00	35.33	15.04

In Table 2 represent a comprehensive overview of variables permissive parenting, authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting, Depression, anxiety, stress and DASS. These variables were analyzed across a sample size of N=100 participants. The descriptive statistics revealed mean values for parenting styles as follows: permissive ($M = 34.01$, $SD = 11.23$), authoritative ($M = 33.92$, $SD = 10.20$), and authoritarian ($M = 31.10$, $SD = 8.64$). For mental health outcomes, the mean values were: depression ($M = 12.04$, $SD = 5.57$), anxiety ($M = 12.18$, $SD = 5.28$), and stress ($M = 11.11$, $SD = 5$ might be more reasonable given the mean but lets assume its 15.44 as you mentioned). The overall DASS score had a mean of 35.33 with a standard deviation of 15.44.

Table 3 *Scale's Reliability Analysis (N=100)*

Variables	No. of Items	α
Permissive	11	.87
Authoritative	10	.83
Authoritarian	9	.89
Depression	7	.88
Anxiety	7	.85
Stress	7	.86
DASS	21	.95

Note: DASS: Depression Anxiety Stress Scale

Table 3 shows the reliability of the three subscales of Parental Authority (permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian) and DASS three subscale (Depression, anxiety, and stress) and DASS. Permissive has 11 items and Cronbach's alpha is .87, authoritative has items and Cronbach's alpha is .83. Authoritarian has 9 items, and Cronbach's alpha is .89. Depression has 7 items and Cronbach's alpha is .88. Anxiety has 7 items and Cronbach's alpha is .85. Stress has 7 items and Cronbach's alpha is .86 and DASS complete scale has 21 items and Cronbach's alpha is .95 scales and subscales have good reliability.

Table 4 Correlation between perceived parenting style and mental health among university students (N=100).

Variables	Permissive	Authoritative	Authoritarian	DASS
Permissive	1	.297	-.364**	-.270**
Authoritative	-	1	.117	.653**
Authoritarian	-	-	1	-.151
DASS	-	-	-	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

In Table 4 the correlation coefficient value (r) between permissive parenting and mental health is -.270** which shows a negative association between permissive parenting and mental health. It means as permissive parenting increases mental health decreases. The correlation coefficient for authoritative parenting and mental health is .653** which shows a strong positive association between these two variables. It means that if authoritative parenting increases mental health increases. A correlation between Authoritarian parenting and mental health is -.151 which shows a slightly significant negative association between these two variables.

Table 5 Summary of linear regression analysis with perceived parenting style and mental health among university students.

Model summary	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	.692 ^a	.47	.46	11.02

a. Predictors: (Constant), Authoritarian, Authoritative, Permissive

As indicated in Table. 5, we can see that R Square .479 which means that the independent variable (predictor: Authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive) causes a 47.9 % impact on the dependent variable (i.e. Mental health).

Table 6 Summary of ANOVA regression analysis with Perceived parenting style and mental health among university students

Model	Sum of squares	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	10735.74	3	3578.58	29.43	.000 ^b
Residual	11670.36	96	121.56		
Total	22406.11	99			

a. Dependent Variable: DASS

b. Predictors: (Constant), Authoritarian, Authoritative, Permissive

Table 6 ANOVA shows that the p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 which means that there is a significant correlation between the independent variable i.e. Authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting, and the dependent variable i.e. Mental health (DASS).

Table 7 Coefficient summary of linear regression analysis with the perceived parenting style and mental health among university students

Unstandardized coefficient			Std. coefficient		
Model	B	Std. error	Beta	t	Sig

1 (Constant)	43.85	6.77		2.193	.031
Permissive	-.029	.11	.022	-.255	.800
Authoritative	1.01	.11	.687	8.621	.000
Authoritarian	-.41	.14	-.239	-2.919	.004

a. Dependent Variable: DASS

Table 7 shows the coefficient results. The beta values indicate that permissive parenting has a negative relationship with mental health ($\beta = -0.029$), suggesting that an increase in permissive parenting is associated with a decrease in mental health. In contrast, authoritative parenting has a positive association with mental health ($\beta = 1.014$), indicating that an increase in authoritative parenting is linked to an improvement in mental health. Authoritarian parenting, on the other hand, has a negative association with mental health ($\beta = -0.415$), implying that an increase in authoritarian parenting is associated with a decline in mental health.

Discussion

This study examined the relationships between two variables perceived parenting style and mental health among students and the parenting style on mental health. Examining the relationships between these two variables was the primary objective, along with identifying any gender differences in these associations. According to hypothesis 1, perceived parenting style has a significant impact on mental health among university students. The correlation coefficient value ($r = -.270^{**}$) between permissive parenting and mental health indicates a negative association, meaning that as permissive parenting increases, mental health decreases. This is consistent with Leung, Lau, and Lam (1998), who found that permissive parenting fosters low self-regulation and higher psychological distress among adolescents. Similarly, Racz and McMahon (2011) highlighted that children of permissive parents often report greater emotional and behavioral difficulties due to a lack of boundaries and parental monitoring.

The correlation coefficient for authoritative parenting and mental health ($r = .653^{**}$) shows a strong positive association, suggesting that as authoritative parenting increases, mental health improves. Prior studies strongly support this finding. Uji et al. (2014) found that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and consistent discipline, predicts fewer mental health problems and greater life satisfaction. Likewise, Singh (2017) emphasized that authoritative parenting enhances resilience, coping, and positive emotional well-being among university students.

For authoritarian parenting, the correlation ($r = -.151$) indicates a slightly negative relationship with mental health. This result aligns with Tahir and Jabeen (2022), who reported that authoritarian parenting styles are linked with higher levels of stress, depression, and anxiety among young adults due to their rigid and controlling nature. Additionally, Aunola et al. (2000) observed that authoritarian parenting leads to negative emotional outcomes, including low self-esteem and higher internalizing problems.

According to hypothesis 2, perceived parenting styles are significant predictors of low mental health. As indicated in Table 5, the R Square value of .479 shows that the independent variables (authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles) explain 47.9% of the variance in the dependent variable (mental health), which confirms

the hypothesis. This finding is consistent with previous literature, which has shown that parenting styles play a crucial role in shaping psychological outcomes among young adults. For instance, Uji et al. (2014) found that authoritarian and permissive parenting were associated with poor mental health, while authoritative parenting was linked to higher well-being and fewer psychological difficulties. Similarly, Singh (2017) highlighted that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and structure, significantly contributes to positive emotional regulation and reduced psychological distress in university students. On the other hand, Tahir and Jabeen (2022) reported that authoritarian parenting predicts anxiety and depressive symptoms, as its rigid and controlling nature limits emotional expression and autonomy. Moreover, Leung et al., (1998) emphasized that permissive parenting, though less restrictive, often fosters emotional instability and low self-control, contributing to increased vulnerability to stress. Taken together, these findings align with the current study's results, showing that permissive and authoritarian parenting styles negatively impact mental health, whereas authoritative parenting exerts a protective and positive influence on students' psychological well-being.

Permissive Parenting: The negative correlation coefficient of ($r=-.270^{**}$) between permissive parenting and mental health indicates a detrimental impact of permissive parenting on mental well-being. As permissive parenting increases, mental health decreases, suggesting that a lack of structure and boundaries in parenting may lead to adverse mental health outcomes among university students (Uji et al., 2014).

Authoritative Parenting: The strong positive correlation coefficient of ($r=.653^{**}$) between authoritative parenting and mental health signifies a beneficial impact of authoritative parenting on mental well-being. This association implies that as authoritative parenting increases, mental health improves. Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, support, and reasonable boundaries, fosters positive mental health outcomes among university students (Singh, 2017).

Authoritarian Parenting: The slightly significant negative correlation coefficient of ($r=-.151$) between authoritarian parenting and mental health indicates a negative relationship between these variables. An increase in authoritarian parenting is associated with a decrease in mental health, suggesting that overly strict and controlling parenting styles may have adverse effects on the mental well-being of university students (Tahir & Jabeen, 2022).

Limitations

1. The study relied on self-report measures, which may be subject to response biases such as social desirability or inaccurate self-perceptions.
2. The sample was limited to university students, which restricts generalizability to other populations such as adolescents or working adults.
3. The cross-sectional design does not allow causal conclusions about the relationship between parenting styles and mental health.
4. Potential confounding factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural differences, or peer relationships were not controlled for in this study.
5. Parenting styles were measured as perceived by students, which may differ from actual parental behaviors.

Suggestions

1. Future research should adopt a longitudinal design to better establish causal links between parenting styles and mental health outcomes.
2. Expanding the sample to include diverse populations (e.g., adolescents, working professionals, and different cultural backgrounds) will enhance generalizability.
3. Incorporating multi-informant approaches (e.g., parent reports, observational methods) can provide a more accurate assessment of parenting styles.
4. Interventions aimed at parental education and awareness should emphasize the benefits of authoritative parenting and the risks associated with permissive and authoritarian approaches.
5. Counseling and university wellbeing services should consider students' family background and parenting experiences as important factors when addressing mental health concerns.
6. Future studies may also examine the mediating or moderating roles of resilience, coping strategies, or social support in the link between parenting styles and mental health.

Conclusion

The present study investigated the relationship between perceived parenting styles and mental health among university students, providing evidence that different parenting styles significantly influence psychological wellbeing. Findings revealed that authoritative parenting has a strong positive association with better mental health outcomes, reflecting the benefits of warmth, support, and appropriate boundaries in parenting. Conversely, permissive and authoritarian parenting styles were found to negatively affect students' mental health, with permissive parenting linked to lack of structure and authoritarian parenting associated with excessive control. Collectively, parenting styles explained nearly half of the variance in mental health outcomes ($R^2 = .479$), highlighting their substantial role in shaping students' psychological wellbeing. These results reinforce the importance of authoritative parenting in fostering resilience and positive mental health during the critical developmental stage of emerging adulthood.

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