



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STYLE AND EARLY MALADAPTIVE SCHEMAS IN IRAN AND INDIA: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF AVOIDANCE COPING STYLE

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ABSTRACT

Subject: Early maladaptive styles can have effects on the person's function. **Object:** Comparing the mediating role of avoidance coping style in the relationship between fathers and mothers' parenting style and early maladaptive schemas. **Method:** The population in Iran included 376 students of the universities of Tehran. In India, also, 101 students of the University of Pune participated in the study. **Findings:** Analysis of data indicated that avoidance coping style has a mediating role in the relationship between fathers and mothers' parenting style and early maladaptive schemas in Iran and India.

Keywords: Avoidance coping style, Parenting style, Early maladaptive schemas, schema approach, attachment

Introduction

It is more than a century (Makoubi, 1992, 2007) that psychologists have investigated a lot of parental behaviors and have explored their significant impact on the thoughts, behaviors and emotions of children. In terms of concept, research in this area is influenced by two theoretical frameworks: one framework is in relation to Balby's attachment theory (1980) and the works of Ainsworth et al. (1978). This theory suggests that the nature of children's relationships with the

important people in their lives causes social, emotional and cognitive development. In this regard, the method of "strange situation" is used to assess the quality of attachment. This method ends in a secure attachment pattern and three insecure attachment patterns. Another framework is the researches that examine the attitudes and actions of parents in the parenting process. This area is affected by Baumrind's examines (1991) that proposed three patterns of firm, easy-consuming and authoritarian in relations between parents and children (Baumrind, 1991; Buri, 1991). Darling and Steinberg (1993) showed that parenting styles are structures that reflect the nature of parent-child relationships.

Although, undoubtedly, there is an interaction between various aspects of parent-child system, independent analysis of some aspects of parental action is also possible. One of these aspects is parenting style schema that has a great effect on the parent-child relationships, and is proposed in Young's theory of Schema Therapy (1990). Following cognitive theories of psychological vulnerability, Young presented this theory, in which he also defined early maladaptive schemas. Young (1999) believes that early maladaptive schemas are in relation to parenting style schemas, contain pervasive and profound patterns or themes, include memories, emotions, cognitions, and body feelings, are formed in childhood or adolescence, are continuing on the path of life, are about the self and in relation to others, and are seriously fail (Young et al., 2003). With regard to parenting style, people try to use the reactions that can handle various situations and conditions. Because the extreme excitement can expose some people to frustration, some maladaptive coping styles and responses are originated in the person early in his life in order to adapt to his schemas; but, although coping styles help avoidance from the schemas, they will not improve them (Young et al., 2003). In schema therapy, behavior is not assumed as a part of schema, but a part of coping responses (Young et al., 2003). One of the recent studies has shown that safety behaviors can be divided into avoidance safety behaviors and contain low self-disclosure and avoidance from eye contact (Plasencia et al., 2011). People often use automated processes to avoid schemas coming up and then to avoid experiencing the emotion associated with these schemas. Schema avoidance has three sorts, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral avoidance. Cognitive avoidance refers to the automatic efforts to stop thoughts and mental pictures that may incite painful schemas. Emotional avoidance is automatic or voluntary efforts to block or numb the feelings. Behavioral avoidance is the patient's tendency for escape behaviors (1999).

Gonzalez Diez et al., (2012) found that avoidance coping style has a moderating role in the relationship between the maladaptive schemas of adherence and self-sacrifice. Khajoeinia and Savani (2014) in a study reported that there is a correlation between subscales of avoidance coping style and early maladaptive schemas. In an examination done by Can Gok and Gençöz (2012), it was found that the domains of rejection schema and impaired limitations have significant relation to avoidance coping style. On the other hand, coping styles had mediating role in the relationship between the domains of schema and life satisfaction and psychological damage. The findings show that people who get too little care and too much support get higher scores in schemes.

Guntyand Buri(2008) in an examination of the parent's function on three components of kindness, control, and authority and formation of maladaptive schemas expressed that parent's function is a significant predictor for some domains of schemas such as disconnection / rejection and impaired autonomy. Harris and Curtin (2002) in a study on the relationship among recognition of parenting styles, early maladaptive schemas, and symptoms of depression in young adults found that symptoms of depression and recognized parenting styles (in relation to the components of kindness, control, and authority) have relations to each other through the mediating role of Young's schemas. The four schemes that most of the variance was accounted for were: defectiveness / shame, low self-control, vulnerability and dependence / incompetence. Wright et al. (2009) reported that the formation of the schemas can be influenced by parenting styles and these formed schemas will be one of the reasons for psychological damage in the future. According to Sheffield, Waller, Emanuelli et al. (2005) negative parenting style has relationship with the formation of early maladaptive schemas.

The relations of parenting style, avoidance coping style, and early maladaptive schemas are shown in figure 1. Given the fact that the processes among these three variables have great influence on the person's function, it is necessary to study the relations among them. On the other hand, the schemas and coping styles are highly related to any society's culture. Therefore, the present study aims at comparing the relation of father and mother's parenting style and early maladaptive schemas to the mediating role of avoidance coping style in two counties of Iran and India.

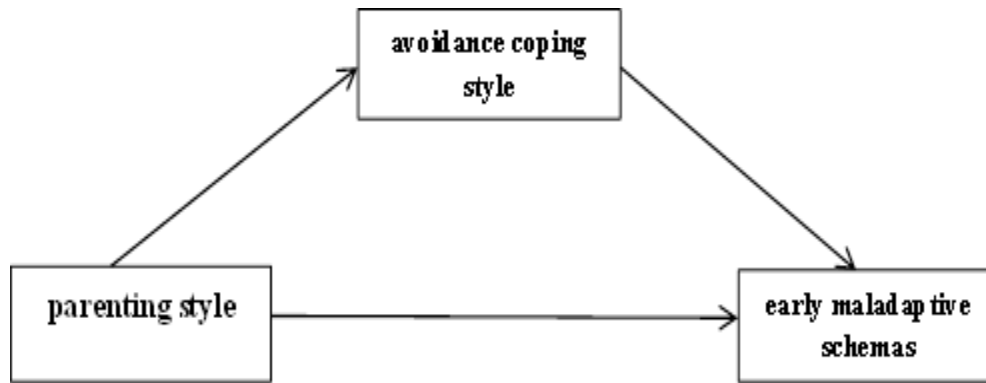


Figure 1: Mediating role of avoidance coping style in the relationship between parenting style and early maladaptive schemas

Materials and Methods

The selected society for Iran consisted of students from universities in Tehran. In this regard, the universities of Shahid Beheshti, Shahed, Kharazmi, and the University of Applied Science and Technology, unit 31, were selected. The sample size included 376 students aged 18 to 56 years (mean = 24.32, SD = 6.77). Sampling was carried out using multi-stage cluster sampling. In order to do the study in India, University of Pune was selected from the universities of Pune. The sample size included 101 students aged 20 to 40 years (mean= 22.13, SD= 4.34). Multi-stage cluster sampling was used for sampling.

Young Parenting Inventory (YPI): Young Parenting Inventory (1994) is an instrument to recognize the roots of schemas in childhood, and reflects childhood environment that shaped the schemas. This questionnaire has 72 items, in which the respondents respond to the questions based on his parent's treatment to him. 6-degree Likert scale was assumed for Young's parenting inventory. If in childhood, stepfather, stepmother, grandfather, grandmother or someone else as a substitute for the respondents' parents in their home, the questions should be answered according to their treatments. Sheffield et al. (2005) reported Cronbach's alpha to be 0.70 – 0.92 through factor analysis. Also, the results of retest indicated high reliability and the structure's validity was achieved at an acceptable level. Yazdandoost et al. (2007), through split-half method, reported reliability coefficient of 0.69 and 0.80 for the mother's form and the father's form respectively.

Young Schema Questionnaire (YSQ- S3) (short form 3): Young Schema Questionnaire (short form 3) assesses the schemas and has 90 items and evaluates all 18 schemas assumed by Young. This questionnaire is according to 6 degrees of Likert scale (Young, 2005). The reliability of the 75-item questionnaire (1998) was reported to be from 0.60 to 0.96 in the studies of Sadooghi et al. (2008); Ahi et al. (2006); Welburn et al. (2002); Waller et al. (2001); Baranoff et al. (2006); Rijkeboer et al. (2005); Cecero et al. (2004); Retin Meyer (1997); Rijkeboer, Van Den Berg (2006); Li et al. (1999); and Glaser et al. (2002). Ghiasi et al. (2009) reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.94 for 90-item version. Schmidt et al. (1995) calculated the Dysfunctional Attitude Scale correlation with long-form of this questionnaire to be 0.60 and in the study of Rijkeboer et al. (2005) the discrimination was reported to be 87%.

Young-Rygh Avoidance Inventory (YRAI): Young-Rygh Avoidance Inventory has 41 items and is designed in 6 degrees to assess avoidance coping styles. Avoidance coping style is often a universal trait that can be used to avoid any schema. According to this questionnaire, avoidance coping styles are: deliberately not to think about unpleasant things, substance abuse, denial of illness, extreme control and reasonability, suppression of anger, physical and psychological symptoms, withdrawal and alienation from the people, denying memories, avoidance by sleeping / lack of energy, distraction by engaging in various activities, self-relax (eating, shopping, etc.), passive avoidance from unpleasant emotions, passive distraction – dream, ..., and avoidance from unpleasant situations (2005). Yazdandoost et al. (2007) calculated the reliability of 0.79 for this questionnaire.

Demographic Characteristics Inventory: Demographic Characteristics Inventory contains gender, age, marital status, education.

Findings

Descriptive statistics and hierarchical regression methods were used to analyze data. First, normality and linearity of data was evaluated by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and linear correlation test; and desirability of these two assumptions was attained. The outlier data was omitted from total data.

In relation to demographic information, as seen in table 1, in Iran and India respectively 72.30% and 66.30% of the sample consisted of women and 27.60% and 33.70% of the sample were men. Education had mean and standard deviation values of 14.27 and 1.4 in Iran, and 16.71

and 1.44 in India. Marital status in Iran and India respectively consisted of 67% and 84.20% single and 27.90% and 15.80% married.

Table 1: demographic information of the sample in Iran and India

	<u>sex</u>		<u>marital status</u>		<u>education</u>	
	Female (%)	Male (%)	Married (%)	Single (%)	Mean	SD
Iran	72/30%	27/60%	27/90%	67%	14/27	1/41
India	66/30%	33/70%	15/80%	84/20%	16/71	1/44

As seen in table 2, three steps of regression are significant both in Iran and in India. Besides, reduction of beta coefficient in Iran is observed from the first step (0.50) to the third step (0.35). In India, also, beta coefficient shows a significant reduction in the third step (0.48) compared to the first step (0.59) ($P < 0.05$). These results indicate that avoidance coping style has mediatory role in the relation between the mother's parenting style and early maladaptive schemas in both Iran and India.

Table 2: Hierarchical regression analysis to examine mediating role of avoidance coping style in the relationship between the mother's parenting style and early maladaptive schemas in Iran and India

	Predictor Variable	Criterion variable	R	R ²	B	S. E.	Beta	t	Sig.
Iran									
	Step 1								
	parenting style	maladaptive schemas	0/50	0/25	0/91	0/08	0/50	11/40	0/00*
	Step 2								
	parenting style	avoidance coping style	0/29	0/08	0/17	0/02	0/29	6/01	0/00*

Step										
3	parenting style				0/64	0/06	0/35	9/24	0/00*	
	avoidance coping style	maladaptive schemas	0/70	0/49	1/53	0/11	0/50	13/05	0/00*	
India										
Step										
1	parenting style	maladaptive schemas	0/59	0/35	1/01	0/13	0/59	7/30	0/00*	
Step										
2	parenting style	avoidance coping style	0/43	0/18	0/30	0/06	0/43	4/80	0/00*	
Step										
3	parenting style	maladaptive schemas	0/63	0/39	0/59	0/21	0/24	2/80	0/00*	

P<0.05**

As seen in table 3, regression analysis in all three steps is significant in both Iran and India. Beta coefficient reduced in the sample of Iran in the third step (0.35) compared to the first step (0.48). In India, also, beta coefficient reduced from the first step (0.55) to the third step (0.44) (P<0/05). Therefore, avoidance coping style has mediatory role in the relation between the father's parenting style and early maladaptive schemas in both Iran and India.

Table 3: Hierarchical regression analysis to examine mediating role of avoidance coping style in the relationship between the father's parenting style and early maladaptive schemas in Iran and India

	Predictor Variable	Criterion variable	R	R ²	B	S. E.	Beta	t	Sig.
Iran									
Step 1	parenting style	maladaptive schemas	0/48	0/23	0/86	0/07	0/48	10/84	0/00*
Step 2	parenting style	avoidance coping style	0/26	0/07	0/15	0/02	0/26	5/40	0/00*
Step 3	parenting style	maladaptive schemas	0/69	0/48	0/61	0/06	0/35	9/08	0/00*
	avoidance coping style				1/57	0/11	0/51	13/43	0/00*
India									
Step 1	parenting style	maladaptive schemas	0/55	0/31	0/90	0/13	0/55	6/67	0/00*
Step 2	parenting style	avoidance coping style	0/41	0/17	0/27	0/06	0/41	4/55	0/00*
Step 3									

parenting				0/72	0/14	0/44	5/04	0/00*
style	maladaptive							
avoidance	schemas	0/60	0/37	0/65	0/21	0/27	3/06	0/00*
coping style								

P<0.05**

Conclusion

The objective of the present study was to compare the mediating role of avoidance coping style in the relationship between father and mother's parenting style and early maladaptive schemas in Iran and India.

Data analysis resulted in the significant mediating role of avoidance coping style in the relationship between the father and mother's parenting style and early maladaptive schemas in Iran and India. The findings of this study was compatible with the findings by Sheffield et al. (2005), Wright, et al. (2009), Guntyand Buri(2008), Khajooeinia and Savani (2014), Baranoffand Tian (2006), Harris and Curtin (2002), Cangog and Gankaz (2012), and Gonzalez Diezet al. (2012).

Bowlby(1980) believes that the disorders that occur in the early stages of growth are effective in subsequent periods and makes the person vulnerable against threats. Insecure attachment and formation of schemas that are resulted from parent-child relationship are assumed as one of the results of the created vulnerability. Because in these circumstances, bothersome emotions and cognitions are formed, the person tends to avoidance coping strategy to avoid them (Salavati and Yekeyazdan doost, 2010). This getaway is effective in the short term but in the long run it will lead to staying and strengthening of sustainable and stable themes, such as early maladaptive schemas. The more of this strategy, the early maladaptive schemas become more durable, and even it is possible that conditioned schemas (Young et al., 2003) that are associated with the unconditioned schemas be created.

In some families in Iran, from the early childhood, emphasis is placed on maintaining interpersonal relationships especially with close people and also on emotional inhibition. The child internalizes the issue that he should block his emotions and expressing his real wills. In these environments, the people are possible to tent to maladaptive strategies such as avoidance coping strategy. In India, also, since in many families, the husband and wife live with their relatives, they are under great pressure to maintain the relationships. To escape from the high

expectations that govern such relationships and to maintain restraint, some may use this strategy. But in the long run, this strategy strengthens their schemas.

In the present study, the experimental evaluation of the relationships among the variables was impossible. Besides, because some of the students of the universities of Tehran were from other cities of Iran, the influence of culture could not be controlled. It is suggested that in further studies the effect of schema mentality along with other variables in this study. Moreover, it is useful to study the model of the variables of the schema therapy theory.

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