



CONTRIBUTION OF PARENTING BEHAVIOURS IN DETERMINING ADOLESCENTS' POSITIVE FUNCTIONING: THE CASE OF HAWASSA TABOUR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT:

Parents shape the lives of their children from birth through adulthood. The main purpose of the study is to assess the relative contribution of parenting behaviours in determining adolescents' positive functioning among students of Hawassa Tabour Secondary School. Parenting behaviors are measured by three dimensions: which are parental support, psychological control and behavioral control. Adolescent positive functioning was measured in two components: intrapersonal functioning (self-esteem and perspective taking) and interpersonal functioning (social initiative, communication with mother and father). To achieve this objective correlational research design with a quantitative approach of data analysis was conducted among 353 (182 males and 171 females) students. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select students based on sex and grade level and systematic random sampling technique was used to include respondents in the sample. A demographic questionnaire, parenting behavior scale and adolescent positive functioning scale were administered. Response of 29 respondents was found incomplete hence discarded from the final study and replaced by reserve participants. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviations and inferential statistics multiple regression were used to analyze the data. The result of multiple regression analysis revealed that parental support was the most contributing variable in predicting positive functioning of adolescent students followed by parental behavioral control and parental psychological control has negative contribution in predicting adolescent positive functioning. Finally, it was recommended that concerned bodies i.e. parents, schools, governments, and non-government organizations better work together to improve positive functioning of adolescent students as well as schools, mass-medias, GOs and NGOs should design effective intervention strategies to increase parent's awareness on the importance of appropriate parenting behaviors.

KEY WORDS: - Adolescent; Parenting behaviors; Positive functioning.

INTRODUCTION:

The parent-adolescent relationship has received considerable attention throughout the twentieth century because of developmental changes that occur in both children and parents during this period. Different interpretations of the nature of the parent-adolescent relationship have been offered. These range from the classic storm and stress characterizations to the currently popular, more modest estimates of "transformations" but all posit change (Barber, Maughan, & Olsen, 2005).

Parents shape the lives of their children from birth through adulthood. In adolescence, the influence of friends and peers take on greater importance, but research clearly demonstrates the continued significance of parents in shaping the behaviors and choices of teens as they face the challenges of growing up (Barber, 2005).

Adolescence is both an exciting and challenging period for young people and it is characterized by all-rounded transitions in the cognitive, biological and social domains (Gouws, Kruger, & Burger, 2008). Unlike with other developmental periods, adolescence is a critical time of change, which has multiple components that make it challenging for the individual to cope with. While not all researchers agree on a specific definition of adolescence, most concede that high-school-aged youth are experiencing adolescence and that adolescence is a transition phase from childhood into adulthood. Among the various social transition aspects, the change in parent-adolescent relationship is the most important transition during adolescence and this transition in parent-adolescent relationship provide opportunities for growth as well as problems (Gouws, et al., 2008).

A number of studies and review articles published during the past 50 years provide evidence of the important role that parental support and control play in the lives of children/adolescents (e.g., Gray & Steinberg; Peterson & Rollins; as cited in Lamborn & Felbab, 2003). Parental support is generally conceptualized as the level of acceptance or warmth that parents express toward their children. Support is consistently regarded as an essential feature in the normal development of children and adolescents, but there has been far less consensus regarding the concept of control and its relationship to child and adolescent behavior. Control has sometimes been examined as an aspect of effective parenting, and, at other times, it has been treated as an indication of negative, domineering parenting, according to Peterson and Rollins (as cited in Bean, Barber, & Crane, 2006). In accordance with this distinction, behavioral control refers to the provision of regulation or structure on the child's behavioral world, with higher levels being associated with better adolescent functioning. In contrast, psychological control is generally considered to have negative effects on child and adolescent well-being as it refers to intrusion and manipulation of the child's psychological world (e.g., constraining verbal interactions, invalidation of feelings) (Bean et al., 2006). On the other hand, adolescent positive functioning approach assumes that it is possible for individuals to obtain a sense of meaning for their lives and there by reflect hope and great fullness to their past and future. As a consequence, two-fold potential benefits could be derived that is: (a) enhancement of their well-being and (b) their resilience to life challenges is uplifted. Above all, positive functioning does not aim to remove only negative emotions, rather it gives a sense of worth to the individual's life which in turn helps to draw strength and tackle challenges of life. Ultimately, positive functioning could contribute a great deal for the desirable development of adolescent's self as well as social competence (Xia, 2011).

According to the Ethiopian Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture (2004) a large number of adolescents has been exposed to juvenile delinquency, addiction to dangerous narcotics, prostitution, beggary, HIV/AIDS, street life and to similar other social problems. The family is one of the major institutions within which adolescents assimilate cultural values. The objective conditions nonetheless indicate that adolescents in Ethiopia are, at present, not getting the required support from their families. These days a considerable number of adolescents do not have full knowledge of their cultural values; instead they are entangled in a foreign degenerating culture and various adjustment problems (Ministry of Youth, Sports & Culture, 2004).

Therefore, what motivated the researcher to conduct this research is that, in order to fill the mentioned gaps as well as address the present situation of Ethiopian adolescents, which is a large number of adolescents are exposed to various adjustment problem and maladaptive behaviors, beside this adolescent are not getting the required support from their family. As a result, by studying the relationship between parenting behavior and adolescent positive functioning, the researcher tried to study the impact of parenting behaviors on adolescents positive functioning and recommended to the concerned body on how to improve the positive functioning of adolescents, in order to reduce adolescents' adjustment problem and promote family support.

This study also aims to bridge the research gap in Ethiopia context by exploring the relative and unique influence of parental support, behavioral control and psychological control on critical aspects of adolescents' positive functioning that are measure of interpersonal and intrapersonal functioning.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptualization of Parenting Behaviors

According to Steinberg, Dornbusch, and Brown (1992) one recent trend in the study of parenting behaviours has been to revive and refine a tripartite classification of child and parent-reported parenting behaviour which was first popularized by Schaefer (1965): acceptance or rejection, psychological control/psychological autonomy, and firm control/lax control. This tripartite organization of key parenting behaviours is also consistent with the basic components of classic parenting typologies (e.g. Baumrind, 1991; Steinberg & Mories, 2001).

Parental Support

The label of parental support is used because Schaefer's acceptance construct appears to be just one of several parallel conceptualizations (for example, nurturance, warmth, affection) of a broader construct of perceived parental behaviours that, individually and collectively, support child and adolescent psychosocial development, according to Rollins and Thomas (as cited in Barber, et al., 2005).

According to Connell (as cited in Studsrød & Bru, 2009) Parental support is communication of interest to the individual and enjoyment of the individual by parents. As of Bowlby (as cited in Studsrød & Bru, 2009) attachment theory suggests that parental support develops a sense of security in children that facilitates independence from the family and exploration of new social environments. Supportive relationships are suggested to promote feelings of affective ties, relatedness and belongingness in students and play an important role in the transmission and internalization of values thus reduces the risk of norm-breaking behaviour. Previous research has shown that adolescents who report relatively close relations with their parents score higher than their peers on measures of responsible independence, psychosocial well-being and behavioural competence in school, according to Steinberg (as cited in Studsrød & Bru, 2009).

As Maccoby and Martin (1983) described Parental support was found to be related with internal locus of control, creativity, cognitive development and self-esteem even when other parenting variables controlled. According to Maccoby and Martin study on parental support yielded that supported children have fewer psychological and physical symptoms in adolescence. Additionally, lack of parental support in early years predicted later internalized distress, substance use and abuse (Wills & Cleary, 1996).

Parental Behavioural Control and Psychological Control

Parental monitoring is the second parental dimension of interest. *Monitoring or behavioral control* is usually understood as adequate behavioral regulation and measured in terms of supervision, monitoring, keeping an eye on things, rule-setting and other forms of behavioral control. Clear and consistent expectations and limit-setting are believed to foster internalization of rules and the development of self efficacy (Flammer, 1995). Without adequate regulation that originates in their social environment, young people do not learn to self-regulate and consequently tend to be impulsive, prone to risk taking, and otherwise more likely to engage in various forms of antisocial behavior (Barber, 1997).

According to Barber (as cited in Studsrød & Bru, 2009) one way to advance the understanding of the processes of parental control is to make the distinction between psychological control and behavioral control. Parental psychological control, or overprotection, concerns socialization processes that intrude the child's development of his/her own sense of identity, efficacy, and worth (Barber, 1997). Over-management may therefore promote rather than prevent adjustment problems. Overprotection is defined as exaggerated contact, over-involvement and obstruction of independent behaviour. Psychological control has been consistently, and positively associated with increased levels of internalizing problems (Barber, Olsen, & Shagle, 1994).

Conceptualization of Adolescent Positive Functioning

According to Barber (2003) developmental theory suggests that adolescent is characterized by at least two fundamental domains of adolescent functioning: the intrapersonal and interpersonal. Competent functioning in both of these domains is used as a marker of successful development & preparation for advancement to the challenges yet to come in the adult years.

Barber (2003) also suggested that competent intrapersonal functioning emerges with the development of two interrelated components of identity formation: the consolidation of self and the self's increasing awareness of others. Therefore, one way to examine positive adolescent functioning is to assess adolescent feelings or satisfaction with self and the degree to which adolescents have the capacity to focus outside of self on to others. In the present study, this domain is labeled as Intrapersonal Functioning, and is assessed specifically by measures of self-esteem and perspective taking.

As Barber (2003) further elaborated beyond development on the self-other dynamic described above, adolescents are faced with increasing opportunity and requirement to interact with peers and adults in various contexts. This opportunity comes first because of longer hours spent away from the home – either at school or in the labor force – and it is augmented by required or desired interaction with peers, dating partners, teachers, and other adults in the community (e.g. coaches, religious leaders, employers, community leaders, etc.). This domain is referred to as Interpersonal Functioning, and for the purpose of this study, it is assessed specifically with indexes of social initiative, communication with mother, and communication with father.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed correlational research design with quantitative approach of data analysis. A correlational design is concerned with assessing relationships between two or more phenomena or variables. As a result, the researcher is interested to know the impact of parenting behavior (i.e. parental support, psychological control and behavioral control) in determining positive functioning (i.e. intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning) among adolescent students of Hawassa Tabour secondary school.

Population of the Study

The population from which the sample of this study was obtained is Tabour Secondary School students. Therefore, the target population from which the sample participants was selected is all sections of grade nine students (24 sections), and grade ten students (26 section), with total population of 2993 (1547 males and 1446 females).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Due to time and financial limitations the sample size of this research was determined by a simplified formula proposed by Yamane (as cited in Israel, 2013) the formula is given by equation $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$

Where, n = sample size

N = population and

e = 0.05 which is level of precision with 95% confidence interval.

Hence using this formula with significance level p = 0.05 and population size N = 2993 yields

$$n = \frac{2993}{1+2993(0.05)^2} = 352.84 \approx 353$$

Therefore, out of total population (2993) students, the selected sample size was 353 students who were participated in this particular study.

To select participants, stratified random sampling technique was served as the basis for selecting samples from the target population. This sampling technique is important to select both males and females equally based on their proportion as compared to others. Firstly, 10 sections (5 section from grade nine and 5 section from grade ten) were selected using simple random sampling (lottery method) from the existing 50 sections, and then the selected sections was divided by sex and grade levels (preexisting stratus). Following this, to include respondents in the sample, Systematic random sampling technique was implemented and the K^{th} interval was fixed from the ratio of the population size of 10 section (i.e. $N = 650$) to the sample size (i.e. $n = 353$), where

$$K = \frac{N}{n} = \frac{650}{353} = 1.84 \approx 2$$

Therefore, the researcher used a class list of 10 section students as a sample frame by putting male and female students separately and every 2nd name on the class list of each section was selected followed by beginning from the 1st participant, until the expected numbers of students were obtained from each grade level. Finally, 353 (182 male and 171 female) students were included in the sample as shown in Table-1.

Table 1: Number of Participants Selected by Grade level and Sex

Grade	9 th	10 th
No of students in each grade level	1600 F = 871 M = 729	1393 F = 575 M = 818
Sample drawn by PSST based on grade level	Expected sample by each grade level = $\frac{\text{Number of students in each grade level}}{\text{total number of students(9-10)of the shcool}} \times \text{total sample size}$	
Sample size of students by grade level	189	164
Sample drawn by PSST based on sex	Expected sample in each grade level by sex = $\frac{\text{Number of female students in each grade level}}{\text{Total number of students in each grade level}} \times \text{sample size of each grade level}$	
Sample size by sex	F = 103 M = 86	F = 68 M = 96

PSST = Proportionate stratified sampling technique

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section gives the demographic information of three hundred fifty three students from Tabour Secondary Schools participated in the study. The demographic characteristics of respondents are analyzed based on sex, age, grade level and currently living condition and presented below in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Option	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	182	51.6
	Female	171	48.4
Age	14	21	5.9
	15	117	33.1
	16	134	38.0
	17	75	21.2
	18	6	1.7
	Total	353	100
Grade level	9 Male	86	45.5
	Female	103	54.5
	Total	189	53.5
	10 Male	96	58.5
	Female	68	41.5
	Total	164	46.5
Current living condition	With both father and mother	223	63.2
	With father only	9	2.5
	With mother only	11	3.1
	With mother and stepfather	36	10.2
	With father and stepmother	26	7.4
	With relatives	42	11.9
	With non relatives	6	1.7
	Total	553	100

Table 2, contained that sex, age, grade levels and current living condition of the respondents. It indicated that out of the total respondents male students were 182 (51.6 %) and female students were 171 (48.4%). The difference between the percentages of the two sexes was only 3.2%, reflected almost equal representation of the views of both boys and girls.

Regarding on their age, students age ranged between 14 and 18 with ($M = 15.80$, $SD = 0.90$). Therefore, majority of the students were found between the ages of 15 to 17 years, forming 326 (92.3%) of the total students. Regarding with grade levels of the students 189 (53.5%) were grade nine students and 164 (46.5%) were grade ten students.

Finally, in relation to students current living condition, 223 (63.2%) of students live with their both father and mother and 9 (2.5%) of them live with their father only and 11 (3.1%) students live with their mother only, the other 36 (10.2%) live with their mother and stepfather, 26 (7.4%) students live with their father and stepmother, 42 (11.9%) of them live with their relatives and the rest 6 (1.7%) students live with their non relative guardians. Therefore, majority of students were living with their both mother and father.

Descriptive Summary of Parenting Behaviours and Positive Functioning

Firstly, a descriptive analysis of minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation scores are calculated in order to identify the most commonly observed mean scores for the overall and subscales of

parenting behaviours and adolescent positive functioning components in the study. The results are presented as shown in Table – 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Summaries of Parenting Behaviours and Adolescent Positive Functioning

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PAR-SUP	353	1.01	2.91	2.34	0.43
PAR-PC	353	1.00	2.81	1.69	0.39
PAR-BC	353	1.00	3.00	2.39	0.50
INTRA-PER	353	1.93	4.93	3.73	0.64
SE	353	1.70	5.00	3.84	0.73
PT	353	1.00	5.00	3.45	0.77
INTER-PER	353	1.09	4.82	3.15	0.81
SOC-INIT	353	1.00	5.00	2.77	0.83
PAR-COM	353	1.00	5.00	3.46	1.05
POSIT-FUN	353	1.88	4.81	3.48	0.67

*PAR-SUP = Parental Support, PAR-PC = Parental psychological control, PAR-BC= Parental behavioural control, INTRA-PER = Intrapersonal, SE= Self-esteem, PT= Perspective Taking, INTER-PER = Interpersonal, SOC-INIT = Social initiative, PAR-COM = Parental Communication, POSIT_FUN = Positive Functioning.

Table 3, depicts that regarding parenting behavior, the highest mean scores are in the sub scale of parental behavioural control (PAR-BC) which is ($M = 2.39$) and followed by parental support (PAR-SUP) ($M = 2.34$). Whereas the lowest mean score is in the sub scale of parental psychological control (PAR-PC) which is ($M = 1.69$). Therefore, parental behavioural control is the most commonly practiced parenting behaviour followed by parental support.

Regarding positive functioning of adolescent students, domain of intrapersonal (INTRA-PER) functioning has highest mean score ($M = 3.73$) than interpersonal (INTER-PER) functioning ($M = 3.15$). In particular, the sub scale of self-esteem (SE) has highest mean score ($M = 3.86$) than parental communication (PAR-COM) sub scales which is ($M = 3.46$) and the sub scale of parental communication has highest mean score than perspective taking (PT) sub scales which is ($M = 3.45$). Whereas the lowest mean score is in the sub scale of social initiative (SOC-INIT) which is ($M = 2.77$). Therefore, majority of students are good in their ability to place value or worth on themselves and their behaviours but their tendency to initiate positive interaction with peers, adults and teachers are low.

Relative Contribution of Parenting Behaviors in Predicting Adolescent Positive Functioning

Multiple regression analysis was conducted in order to examine the relative contribution of parental support, parental psychological control and parental behavioural control for the prediction of adolescent positive functioning. Assumptions regarding normality, linear relationship between dependent and independent variables, homoscedasticity, absence of multicollinearity between independent variables and model fit were checked using appropriate statistical techniques.

Table 4: ANOVA Table of Goodness of Fit Statistics for the Prediction of Positive Functioning.

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	103.007	3	34.336	216.915	.000 ^b
	Residual	55.243	349	.158		
	Total	158.250	352			

a. Dependent variable: positive functioning

b. Predictors: (constant), Parental Behavioural Control, Parental Psychological Control, parental Support

- Parents who pressure their children to behave and think in accordance with parental goals through internally controlling and manipulative means, most likely result in adolescents low level of positive functioning.
- Parents who manage their adolescents' behaviour or activities and provide them with appropriate social behaviour and conduct, are more likely to make their adolescents to experience high level of positive functioning

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