



The Moderating Role of Marital Adjustment in Relationship Between Perceived Maternal Parenting Styles and Family Functioning among Fathers

Rabbia Ashraf, Umm Eman Syed, Anam Khan, and Neelam Bibi

Abstract

The present study investigated the moderating role of marital adjustment in the relationship between perceived maternal parenting styles and the family functioning of fathers. It was qualitative cross-sectional research comprised of fathers ($N = 200$). The measures used in exploring the relationship were the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991), the Family ICPS Scale (Intimacy, Conflict, and Parenting Styles) developed by Noller. et. al, 1992, and the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Crane, Bean, & Middleton, 2000). Following the analysis, correlation, t-test, ANOVA, and regression (through Hayes Process Macro) was run. The results emphasize the importance of marital adjustment and the marital relationship's quality influencing the effects of maternal parenting styles on family functioning and it acknowledges that perceptions play a crucial role in shaping family dynamics. It was found that with high marital adjustment, permissive and authoritative parenting styles influence the dynamics of family functioning, and with low marital adjustment, authoritarian parenting styles influence family functioning. The results provide insights into the dynamics of fatherhood within the context of Pakistani families, shedding light on the important factors that influence paternal experiences and overall family well-being. Further research and interventions in this area can potentially enhance family relationships and explore additional variables, such as children's involvement, cultural norms, and societal expectations, to deepen the understanding of the complex dynamics within families.

Keywords: perceived maternal parenting styles, family functioning, marital adjustment, Hayes process macro, fathers

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Introduction

Parenting has a significant impact on how well family relationships turn out. For instance, supportive parental and paternal parenting practices (such as behavioral regulation and acceptance) are linked to depictions of families that are happy and peaceful (Parke & Buriel, 2008). Even though parents typically advocate for loving all of their children equally in families with many children, doing that can be problematic (Myers, 2009). Negative outcomes for children and adolescents are related to parental differential treatment (Coldwell et al., 2008).

Every parent has their own unique parenting philosophy and methods, and these variations between parents might lead to arguments. Unimpressive methods of conflict settlement between parents and the expression of parents' agitated feelings are two characteristics of marital conflict (O'Leary & Vidair, 2005) and have an adverse influence on children's well-being.

A person's character development is mostly influenced by their family environment, which is the first and most valuable component of development. While the child does acquire some traits from the parents, the parent's involvement in a child's growth extends beyond only congenital features. A child's behavior and psychological well-being can be greatly influenced by parents' ideas and aspirations, their marital happiness level, and their child's adjustment style (Zargar, 2014). The child is influenced by a wide range of different factors that influence child development in addition to how the parents behave or are as individuals (Esfandiyari, 1996). There is a link between the wife and husband's contented relationships and their sympathetic children's adjustment since marital pleasure and supportive relationships facilitate the need for parents to accept their roles (Alayi, 2011).

Perceived Maternal Parenting Styles

Parenting is the process of fostering and assisting a child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development from birth until adulthood. Instead of referring to a biological connection, parenting describes the action of raising a child.

Given that they are frequently the primary carers and nurturers of their children, mothers play a key role in parenting. Mothers give their kids emotional support, which is crucial for their well-being. According to a 2016 study by Eisenberg et al., parental care was linked favorably to kids' emotional and social development. Also, mothers are very important in their children's cognitive development. Maternal education was found to be substantially correlated with children's cognitive development in a study by Bornstein and Bradley (2014).

Many specific parenting behaviors, which are all a part of the complex activity of parenting, can have an impact on the outcomes of children. Even though specific parenting techniques like the development of a child may be affected by spanking or reading aloud to children. Parental attentiveness and parental demandingness are two important aspects of parenting that are captured by parenting style (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental responsiveness, also known as parental warmth or supportiveness, refers to the extent to which parents actively promote individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being aware of, supportive of, and obedient to their children's unique needs and demands (Baumrind, 1991).

Parental demandingness, also known as behavioral control, is the belief that parents put pressure on their children to integrate into the family unit by demanding maturity, supervision, corrective measures, and a willingness to confront rebellious children.

Authoritative Parenting Styles

Parents who are in authority give their kids definite instructions. These parents place a high priority on consistency in discipline, but they temper it with verbal compromise and reasons for flexibility. While being in charge, authoritative parents also attentively and compassionately hear their children's views and promote their influence on family decisions (Baumrind, 1991). High demands (high standards for behavior and strict enforcing of regulations) and exceptional attentiveness are traits of authoritative parenting (courtesy, transparency, and consideration for the child's developmental needs).

When compared to other children, children of authoritative parents frequently demonstrate greater levels of social and cognitive ability, higher aspirations, better grades, better mental health, and better behavior. This is also true when adolescents are involved (Cohen and Rice, 1997). The authoritative parent exerts an effort to control their child's behavior in a sensible, problem-solving manner. Such a parent uses power as well as reason, molding their child through routine and reinforcement, and affirming the child's present characteristics while also establishing expectations for future conduct. He or she encourages verbal back-and-forth, explains the rationale behind the parental policy to the child, and elicits the child's objections (Baumrind, 1978).

Authoritarian Parenting Styles

Parents who exercise power frequently use a highly directive style. They encourage verbal give and take but prioritize obedience. They prefer using harsh punishment to discipline their kids. Without exception, the child must accept the parent's judgment regarding what is good and wrong. (Buri 1991) Authoritarian parents "consider compliance as a virtue and support punitive, aggressive means to suppress self-will." Authoritarian parenting is likewise characterized by high demands but coupled with inadequate responsiveness. (Baumrind, 1978 p. 244). When authoritarian parents force their discipline on their children, these kids are more likely to rely on outside restrictions than self-regulation (Hoffman, 1976).

This arbitrary imposition of authority can make it more likely for teenagers to revolt (Baumrind, 1978). Yet, adolescents with authoritarian parents typically exhibit low levels of social skills and self-esteem, negative behaviors, and drug usage (Baumrind, 1991; Lamborn et al., 1991; Slicker, 1998). Their academic goals and performance are comparable to but lower than, those of children raised by adults in authority (Babree, 1997). Authoritarian par-

enting philosophies are frequently used in Asian parenting practices (Jambunathan & Counselman, 2002). Yusuf (2008) identified a substantial positive association between parental punishment reported by the kid and behavior problems in school-aged children.

Permissive Parenting Styles

Parents that are permissive have no control over their children. As much as possible, children are allowed to control their own activities. Parents typically place fewer demands on their children and provide milder punishment (Buri, 1991). Studies have indicated that adolescents with permissive parents have higher rates of problem behaviors and drug use, lower achievement and school involvement, and relatively higher levels of social competence and self-esteem (Lamborn, 1991).

Parenting practices are seen as a representation of a specific civilization, culture, subculture, or family when it comes to raising children. These parental behavior styles are focused on how they discipline their children, show affection, and toilet-train them. All of these parent-child interactions and socialization techniques are thought to have a big impact on the child's physical and mental health. They have a significant influence on how the child's personality develops and how they interact with others (Fein, Parke & Sawin, as cited in Akhter, 2000). Parenting styles were characterized by Darling (1993) as a collection of attitudes towards the kid that convey to the child and, when combined, generate an emotional environment in which the parent's conduct may be seen. Both the precise, goal-directed family dynamics used by parents and non-goal-directed parenting behaviors including gestures, tones of voice, and emotional outbursts are included in this category. Parenting is a labor of love for authoritative, authoritarian, and lenient parents alike, despite their distinctions. On the other hand, indifferent-neglectful parenting involves little effort. These parents may show affection inconsistently, be emotionally unavailable, be uninformed of their child's developmental needs, or only occasionally utilize strong disciplinary measures (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Not unexpectedly, nearly all measures of social or cognitive ability, academic success, and psychological wellbeing showed the worst results for children of indifferent, neglectful parents, or behavioral behavior (Lamborn et al., 1991).

Family Functioning

The family is widely regarded as the most stable social structure that is essential to people's well-being and the health of society as a whole (Hochfeld, 2007). Families are the key place in which children first start developing the beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors that are considered in society (Ogwo, 2013).

In the past, "family" meant two married couples of either gender and their children. Murdock (1949), who argued that a family "is a social group consisting of a common place of residence, financial cooperation, and development," provided one of the earliest definitions. At

least two adults of each sex are involved, and they continue to have a sexual relationship that is acceptable in society, and one or more kids. However, this concept places restrictions on other kinds of families that have recently emerged.

Mental health and psychological well-being are two outcomes of family functioning, which suggests that a family with healthy and effective functioning has members with sufficient levels of psychological health (Lu et al., 2017). According to Cheung et al. (2019), family functioning significantly positively correlated with coping mechanisms and psychological well-being.

Marital Adjustment

The process by which couples adjust to and deal with the difficulties of married life, such as handling disagreements, successfully communicating, and sharing duties, is known as marital adjustment (Spanier, 1976). It consists of creating a relationship that is pleasant to both parties and enables them to keep their sense of individuality within the structure of the partnership.

Marital adjustment can be impacted by a number of variables, including communication, dispute resolution, emotional closeness, and sexual satisfaction. Couples that are capable of maintaining emotional and physical closeness, productive communication, healthy conflict resolution, and marital adjustment are more likely to succeed (Gottman & Silver, 1999).

Compromises that lead to a common perspective on marriage are the only means of achieving happiness, satisfaction, and expectation fulfillment. Many marital changes, according to Carl Rogers (1972), are founded on this concept of marriage. He talks about two different understandings of marriage: for some, it's a romantic box with a high fence, restricting freedom; for others, it's a roomy, convenient box with a magic box, trying to resolve the issues in their relationship; and for still others, it's an exciting investigation of new avenues where each is given freedom and encouragement to develop to their full potential. If both couples correctly perceive and understand their conceptions of marriage, things proceed well and there is a good understanding. When there are variations in their ideas and perspectives, problems are bound to develop. One of the main contributors to problems with marital adjustment is the significant role that values, attitudes, and beliefs play in couples' transition when they begin living together.

Theoretical Background

Attachment Theory

According to attachment theory, a child's connection to their parents is based on how well they are nourished and responsive to their needs as infants and toddlers. This quality of attachment is then carried over into the child's following interactions through strong internal perceptions. Because of this occurrence, Bowlby (1979) began to think about how crucial a

mother-child relationship is to a child's development on the social, emotional, and cognitive growth. In particular, it informed Bowlby's belief that early baby separations from the mother are related to later maladjustment.

Four essential stages of attachment development were outlined by Bowlby (1979). Beginning at birth and lasting until six weeks of age is pre-attachment. Infants are not yet able to differentiate between various persons at this point, but they are already wired to look for and react to nonverbal interactions like looks and voices. Between the ages of 6 weeks and 68 months is the second stage, also known as the attachment-in-the-making stage. Infants are still able to take comfort and attention from others throughout this stage, but they are starting to acquire a preference for familiar caretakers. From 6-8, months to 18-24 months of age is when the third stage, known as the clear-cut attachment stage, occurs. Infants go to their attachment figure more often for comfort and reassurance at this stage because they're becoming more aware of them. The final stage, the formation of a reciprocal relationship, occurs from 18-24 months of age and beyond. During this stage, instead of having a relationship with their carers that is primarily dependent on the caregiver's ability to provide comfort and security, children become more autonomous and create more equal standing with them.

In addition, Bowlby (1979) distinguished three main types of attachment: secure, insecure-avoidant, and insecure-resistant. Children that have stable attachment styles are able to use their caretakers as a safe base from which to explore their surroundings because they feel confident and comfortable in their relationships with them. Children with insecure-resistant attachment styles tend to be clinging and overly dependent on their caretakers and may feel angry when their caretakers leave, whereas children with insecure-avoidant attachment styles avoid their caretakers and may not seek comfort from them.

Parenting styles are the recurring patterns of parental actions and attitudes that parents employ to socialize their kids. Baumrind distinguished three basic parenting philosophies: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative (Baumrind, 1971). According to research, authoritative parenting is linked to optimal outcomes for children, including higher levels of attachment security (Baumrind, 1991; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Conversely, authoritative and permissive parenting practices have been associated with lower levels of attachment security (Baumrind, 1991).

The level of cooperation amongst family members to meet both individual and group objectives is referred to as family functioning. Children with insecure attachments are more likely to grow up in dysfunctional families, which are identified by poor communication, excessive conflict, and low support (Cummings & Davies, 2010).

The degree to which spouses are content in their marriage and feel connected to one another is referred to as marital adjustment. According to research, marital adjustment, and attachment security are positively correlated (Cox, Paley, & Harter, 2001; Rholes, Simpson, & Friedman, 2006). Adults with secure attachment styles are more likely to experience happy relationships, which include more satisfying marriages, stronger emotional intimacy, and more effective conflict-resolution techniques (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Literature Review

A research study aimed to investigate the idea of family resilience in the context of

parenting practises, with a special focus on four elements, family functioning, couple satisfaction, parental stress, and parenting style, that assist parents in managing a child with special needs. The focus of attention, experiential modality, regulation, and energy were the four aspects of parent-child interactions that were examined in the study. Exploring the differences between parents of children with intellectual disabilities and parents of typically developing children was the main goal of the study. 32 couples with disabled children and 32 couples with nondisabled children were participants in the study. In both types of families, the researchers looked at how parenting stress affects parenting style. Additionally, they investigated how family functioning and couple satisfaction differently impact parenting style (Cuzzocrea et al., 2011).

A study by Daniel T. L. Shek (2010) investigated the connections between dyadic relationships within families and family functioning in a sample of 378 Chinese families. Data was gathered twice for the study to look at longitudinal relationships. The following dyadic relationships were examined: (a) marital adjustment as reported by parents using questionnaire measures; and (b) characteristics of parent-child relationships as reported by adolescent children. The results demonstrated that both parents and child's perspectives on how the family functions were cross-sectionally linked to the dyadic relationships within the family. The father-adolescent relationship and fathers' reports of marital quality generally displayed a stronger connection with the perception of family functioning and its changes over time than did the mother-adolescent relationship and mothers' reports of marital quality.

A study involved conducting face-to-face interviews with 120 kin caregivers, primarily from African American backgrounds, who were taking care of children in the child welfare system. The goal was to investigate the relationship between family functioning and child behaviour issues. The findings revealed a significant link between positive parenting styles and better family functioning. Caregivers who used authoritative parenting techniques had better family functioning and their children had fewer behavioural issues. Furthermore, the study discovered that carers' ratings of their child's behavioural functioning matched their ratings of family functioning, implying a reciprocal relationship between the two variables. Parenting styles were related to family functioning but did not have a significant association with the caregiver's assessment of the child's behavioural functioning, according to the findings. (Richardson, Gleeson, 2012).

Rationale of the Study

The present study holds great significance in terms of culture. In South Asian cultures, the concerns of the family and society are prioritized over those of the individual. Also, parents have all responsibility for raising and instructing their children. Religion, in addition to social and cultural influences, has a significant impact on parenting strategies; parents are given the status of being "second only to God," encouraging submission, respect, and obedience to authority.

Prior researches have largely focused on mothers when it comes to marital life and family functioning. One of the key aspects of assessing the quality of the family environment is family functioning, which includes the division of roles, communication, emotional reaction, capacity for problem-solving, and behavior control by fathers (Zaider et al., 2020). The family

function seeks to integrate different family traits, think of the family as a system, and look at how the family system works as a whole. It is a crucial measure of how well a person's family structure is functioning and is intimately linked to adolescents' mental health (Shek, 2002).

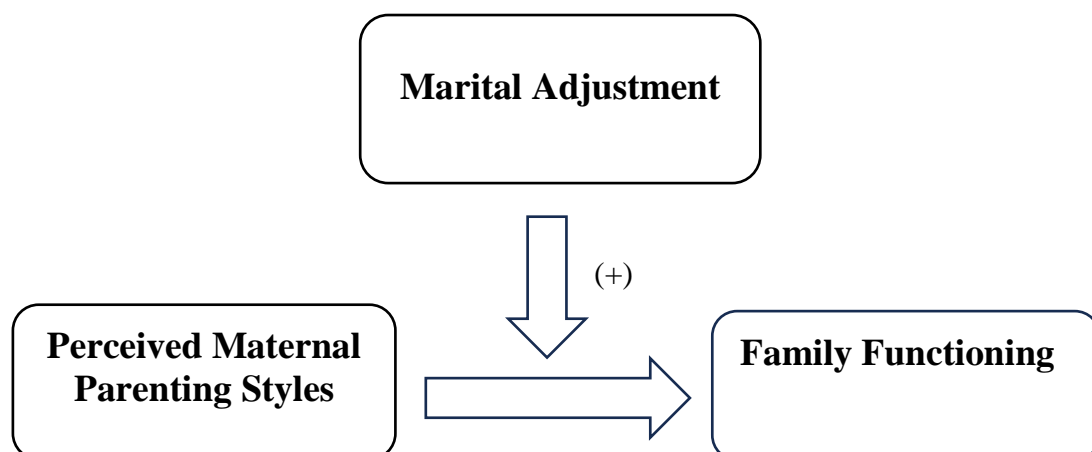
Paternal contribution and marital satisfaction have primarily been shown to be strictly related to family ties among the different components that can influence parental functioning (Belsky, 1984). This study concentrated on the analysis of the male child's dyadic satisfaction, interpreting it as dimensions related to the nature and growth of family interactions through the maternal parenting styles which they have perceived, While previous research has highlighted the positive influence of paternal involvement on family dynamics, there is limited understanding of how perceived maternal parenting styles interact with fathers' roles and their impact on family functioning and marital adjustment.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of perceived maternal parenting styles on family functioning and marital adjustment among Fathers. By examining the perceived influence of maternal parenting styles on fathers' involvement within the family unit, this study seeks to address this gap in the literature and provide insights into the complex interplay of fathers in their family functioning and marital adjustment. This research examines the intergenerational effects of parenting styles, family functioning, and marital adjustment. The present study is helpful for conceptual understanding of the association between emotional maturity, family support, and marital quality.

The findings of the study help to comprehend how emotionally matured individuals with the help and support of their families can enhance the adjustment of their marital life and family functioning.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between independent variable, Perceived Maternal Parenting Styles (permissive, flexible and authoritarian styles) and dependent variable, Family Functioning is moderated by Marital Adjustment (dyadic adjustment, dyadic cohesion, dyadic satisfaction) which is assumed to have an influence on the dependent variable (family intimacy, conflict and parenting styles).



Method

Research Design

The cross-sectional and correlated research methods are used to collect data. The process of collecting data and receiving answers from fathers is through a tool consisting of a series of questionnaires.

Objective

- To identify the relationship between perceived maternal parenting styles, family functioning and marital adjustment.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a positive relationship between a permissive style of parenting and family functioning.

H2: There is a negative relationship between the authoritarian style of parenting and family functioning

H3: There is a positive relationship between flexible style of parenting and family functioning.

H4: Marital adjustment acts as a positive moderator in the relationship between family functioning and perceived maternal parenting styles.

Instruments

The following instruments used in this study are the:

Demographics Information Sheet

The demographic information sheet is developed to collect information from the participants of the study. It included information about name, age, gender, education, and other questions related to the family of the study participants.

Family ICPS Scale

The Family ICPS Functioning Scale (Noller, 1992) is a 30-item instrument used to measure the interactional styles within families. It includes three subscales.

Intimacy is assessed using twelve items (1, 4, 6, 10, 13, 15, 18, 20, 23, 26, 27, and 29). Ten items investigated the level of conflict (3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14, 17, 19, 22, and 24) Parenting styles are assessed using eight items (2, 7, 11, 16, 21, 25, 28, and 30). It has a reliability Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.91 - 0.94$. The items are measured on a 6-point, scale ranging from 1 = totally disagree, to 6 = totally agree. The scale has a moderate to strong validity for the three constructs.

Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)

For the present study, the revised dyadic adjustment scale (Crane, Bean, & Middleton, 2000) is used. A 14-item scale designed to measure relationship adjustment. The RDAS is a revised version of the original Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). RDAS is a self-report questionnaire. Overall scale reliability of .80 is reported by Crane, Bean, and Middleton (2000). The revised version is shorter, has better psychometric qualities, and only retains 3 of the original 4 subscales., with 14 items:

Dyadic Consensus. The extent to which partners agree. The items are related to decision-making, values, and affection. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 are included in this subscale.

Dyadic Satisfaction. The extent to which partners are satisfied with each other. Items comprise stability and conflict. It includes 7, 8, 9, & 10 items.

Dyadic Cohesion. The extent to which partners engage in activities together. Items of discussion and activities are included in this subscale. 11, 12, 13, & 14 explain dyadic cohesion.

For item number 1-6 "always agree" was assigned a score of 5 and "always disagree" assigned a score of 0. Item numbers 7, 8, 9, and 10 were negatively scored with "never" assigned a score of 5 and "all the time" assigned a score of 0. For item number 11, "never" is assigned a score of 0, and "every day" is assigned 4. Item numbers 12, 13, and 14; the response category "more often" assigned a score of 5, and "never" assigned a score of 0. High scores indicate more depressed individuals.

The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)

The Parental Authority Questionnaire (Buri, 1991) was created to assess parental authority from the perspective of the child. It was developed for the purpose of measuring Baumrind's (1971) permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian parenting styles. The PAQ consisted of 30 items scale. The PAQ is scored simply adding together the results from each subscale. Each subscale has a score range of 10 to 50. It has a strong reliability of 0.75 - 0.83.

The three subscales of PAQ are: *permissive* (1, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24, and 28), *authoritarian* (2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 25, 26 and 29), and *flexible* (4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22, 23, 27, and 30).

Sample

A convenient sample technique of 200 fathers was estimated for the purpose of this study. The data was collected from the fathers to detect their marital adjustment and their ability in family functioning. Participants with at least one kid are included in the study. Participants who understand English and Urdu are included in the study. Participants either any type of physical or cognitive disability are excluded from the study. Participants who are unable to understand English and Urdu are excluded from the study.

Procedure

The surveys were conducted in main cities of Pakistan. The participants were asked if they wanted to participate in a survey about Family Functioning that would help with the thesis project. If they agreed to participate, they signed an informed consent form, received the survey to complete, they were debriefed about the research hypothesis.

Results

To see the psychometric properties and descriptive statistics of the scales and subscales of perceived maternal parenting styles, family functioning and marital adjustment, the Cronbach's Alpha, reliabilities, mean, standard deviation and skewness and kurtosis were computed. Correlation analysis, t-test, ANOVA and Hayes Process Macro was also run to examine the relationship between the variables and coordinating hypotheses to test the significant.

Table 1: Psychometric Properties of the Scales and Subscales (N=200)

Variable	No. of items	α	M	SD
Permissive	10	.52	33.3	4.0
Authoritarian	10	.54	33.3	4.1
Flexible	10	.71	35	4.7
Intimacy	12	.88	55.8	8.85
Conflict	10	.74	40.8	7.06
PS	8	.82	35.9	6.05
Dyd Adj	14	.60	43.3	6.6

Note: PS= Parenting Styles; Dyd Adj= Dyadic Adjustment.

Above table illustrates the psychometric properties and descriptive statistics for Parental Authority Questionnaire and its subscales, Family intimacy, conflict, parenting styles, and Dyadic Adjustment Scale.

The Permissive variable consists of 10 items. It has a reliability coefficient (α) of 0.52, indicating moderate internal consistency. The Authoritarian variable also contains 10 items. It has a reliability coefficient α of 0.54, indicating moderate internal consistency. The Flexible variable comprises 10 items. It has a reliability coefficient α of 0.71, indicating relatively high internal consistency. The Intimacy variable contains 12 items. It has a reliability coefficient (α) of .88, indicating moderate internal consistency. The Conflict variable contains 10 items. It has a reliability coefficient (α) of .74, indicating moderate internal consistency. The Parenting styles variable contains 8 items. It has a reliability coefficient (α) of .82, indicating good internal consistency. The total Dyadic variable contains 14 items. It has a reliability coefficient (α) of 0.60, indicating moderate internal consistency.

Table 2: Summary of Intercorrelations for Scores of the Study Variables (N=200)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Permissive	-	.19**	.42**	.23**	.07	.29**	.02	-.06	-.03	-.03
2 Authoritarian		-	.24**	.11	.31**	.04	.01	.01	.01	.05
3 Flexible			-	.34**	-.10	-.36**	.28**	.26**	.05	.33**
4 Intimacy				-	.04	.85**	.53**	.31**	-.09	.47**
5 Conflict					-	.02	-.05	-.22**	.14	-.01
6 PS						-	.42**	.36**	-.11	.42**
7 Dyd con							-	.28**	-.03	.77**
8 Dyd sat								-	-.06	.7**
9 Dyd coh									-	.35**
10 MA										-

Note: PS= Parenting Styles; Dyd con= Dyadic consensus; Dyd sat= Dyadic satisfaction; Dyd coh= Dyadic cohesion; and MA= Marital Adjustment. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

To see the correlation between study variables i.e., permissive authoritarian, flexible, intimacy, conflict, parenting styles, total family intimacy, conflict, and parenting styles, dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, and marital adjustment; Bivariate Correlation analysis was computed as shown in the above table.

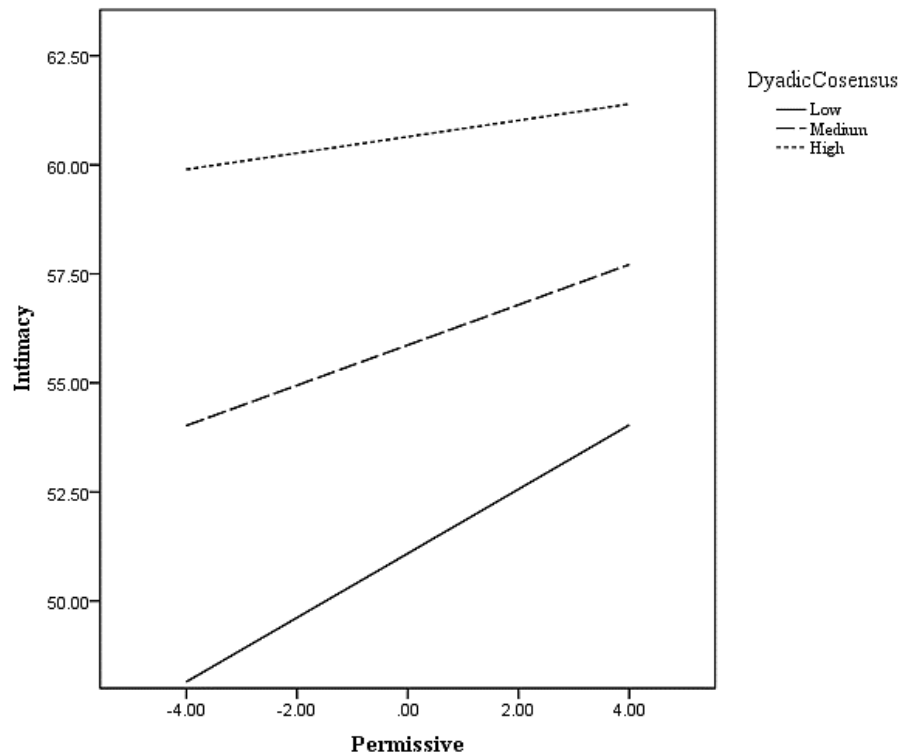
Table 3 (below) presents moderator Dyadic Consensus in the relationship between Permissive Parenting Styles and Family Intimacy. Dyadic Consensus ($p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$) appears to moderate the effect of Permissive Parenting Styles and Family Intimacy and added 2% additional variance in the model. The Modgraph further clarifies the moderating effect.

Table 3: Moderating effect of Dyadic Consensus on the Relationship between Permissive Parenting Styles and Family Intimacy (N = 200)

Predictors	Intimacy			
	Model 1 <i>B</i>	β	Model 2	
			95% CI	
			LL	UL
Constant	17.18***	55.90***	54.84	56.90
Permissive	.48***	.46**	.14	.78
Consensus	1.12***	1.16***	.88	1.43
Permissive * Consensus		.06*	.13	.00
R^2	.32	.34		
ΔR^2		.02*		
F	23.03	26.86		
ΔF		3.83		

Note. CI = Confidence interval, LL = Lower limit, UL = Upper limit

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

**Figure 1: The Moderating Effect of Dyadic Consensus on the Relationship between Permissive Parenting Styles and Family Intimacy**

The modgraph shows that with high dyadic consensus, as permissive parenting styles increases, family intimacy also increases. Fathers with low level of permissiveness shows decrease in family intimacy.

Table 4: The Moderating Effect of Dyadic Consensus on the Relationship between Flexible Parenting Styles and Family Conflict (N = 200)

Predictors	Conflict			
	Model 1 <i>B</i>	β	Model 2	
			95% CI	
			LL	UL
Constant	46.59***	41.23***	40.28	42.16
Flexible	.14	.17	.44	.08
Dyadic Consensus	.05	.02	.29	.24
Flexible * Dyadic Consensus		.07***	.13	.02
R^2	.01	.07		
ΔR^2		.06***		
F	5.79	3.29		
ΔF		9.08		

Note. CI = Confidence interval, LL = Lower limit, UL = Upper limit

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4 (above) presents Dyadic Consensus as a moderator in the relationship between Flexible Parenting Styles and Family Conflict. Dyadic Consensus ($p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .06$) appears to moderate the effect of Flexible Parenting Styles and Family Conflict and added 6% additional variance in the model. The Modgraph further clarifies the moderating effect.

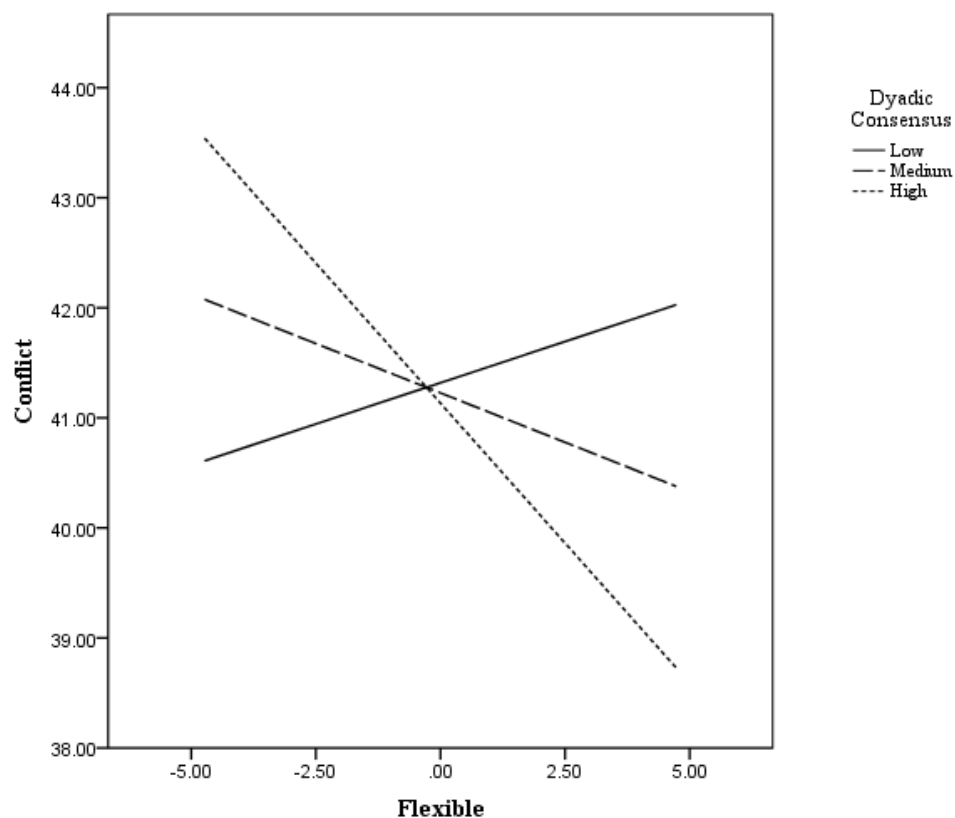


Figure 2: The Moderating Effect of Dyadic Consensus on the Relationship Between Flexible Parenting Styles and Family Conflict

The modgraph shows that with a high level of dyadic consensus, as the flexible parenting styles increases, family conflict decreases. Contrary to this, as dyadic consensus is low, the flexible parenting styles increases, the family conflict also increases. As far as the fan effect in the Modgraph is concerned, there is a clear-cut difference between different levels of dyadic consensus.

Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the role of fathers perceived maternal parenting styles in relationship between family functioning, and marital adjustment. The marital adjustment is acting as a moderator between perceived maternal parenting styles and family functioning. The results of this study highlight the significance of perceived maternal parenting

styles in influencing both family functioning and marital adjustment among fathers. Specifically, authoritative maternal parenting was associated with better family functioning and higher marital satisfaction. For this purpose, self-reported measures were utilized, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) for marital adjustment, Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) to measure perceived maternal parenting styles, and Family ICPS (Intimacy, Conflict, and Parenting Styles) to measure family functioning. The reliabilities of all the variables were moderate to high determined through psychometric properties (Table 1).

The main study was carried out on a sample of 200 fathers. Analysis was performed through SPSS-26 and Hayes Process Macro. Alpha coefficients of all the scales and their subscales were computed. Family ICPS was used to measure family intimacy, conflict, and parenting styles. The reliabilities of family ICPS computed in the present study are .88, .72, and .82 which are considered good reliabilities. In one study, test-retest coefficients for the 3 subscales were good; Intimacy = .77, Conflict = .79, Parenting Style = .81, and internal consistency (Cronbach α = .92, .68, and .82, respectively) (Olson, Sprenkle & Russell, 1979) which indicates that in the present study, the reliabilities are satisfactory. The alpha coefficient of subscales of the parental authority questionnaire (PAQ) ranges from .52 to .71 which is a moderate to high level of reliability. The alpha coefficient of the revised dyadic adjustment scale (RDAS) is .60 which is considered moderate reliability (Table 1).

Correlation analysis (Table 2) revealed that there is a positive relationship between permissive parenting styles and family functioning as hypothesized (H1). Though permissive parenting style has been associated with some negative outcomes, such as higher levels of behavioral problems in children, there are also studies that suggest a positive relationship between permissive parenting and family functioning. Some researchers argue that permissive parenting can promote warmth, acceptance, and open communication within the family, leading to positive family relationships (Baumrind, 1991; Lamborn et al., 1991).

As shown by a correlation analysis, there is a negative relationship between authoritarian parenting style and family functioning, hence hypothesis two is accepted. The correlation results (Table 2) indicates that the authoritarian parenting style is positively correlated with conflict ($r = .31, p < 0.01$). The negative effects of authoritarian parenting on family functioning are well-documented in the literature. Authoritarian parenting, characterized by high control and low warmth, has been associated with lower levels of family communication, autonomy, and positive parent-child relationships (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Lamborn et al., 1991).

Hypothesis 3 is also accepted as correlation analysis revealed that there is a positive relationship between flexible parenting style and family functioning. This parenting style has been linked to better family relationships, higher levels of child well-being, and lower levels of problem behavior (Baumrind, 1991).

The moderating Effects of Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, and Total Dyadic were computed on the Relationship between Permissive, Authoritarian, and Flexible Parenting Styles and Family Functioning (Intimacy, Conflict, and Parenting Styles ICPS). Hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to study the moderating effect of study variables.

Marital adjustment i.e., dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, and total dyadic acting as a moderator of the relationship between perceived maternal parenting styles and family functioning.

Collectivist cultures often prioritize obedience, respect for authority, and conformity to societal norms. As a result, authoritarian parenting styles, which emphasize strict rules, discipline, and parental control, may be more prevalent and considered appropriate in these cultures (Triandis, 1995). Parenting practices promoting emotional regulation are associated with higher social competence and better adjustment in collectivist cultures (Haslam et al., 2020). Marital adjustment in collectivist cultures is associated with factors such as the support of extended family members, fulfillment of familial obligations, and adherence to cultural norms (Farver, and Bhadha, 2002). In collectivist cultures, family functioning tends to prioritize the needs of the family unit over individual autonomy. Strong intergenerational ties, mutual support, and cooperation are valued.

It is hypothesized that moderating role of marital adjustment increases the effect of parenting styles on family functioning. Findings illustrate that dyadic consensus moderates the effect of permissive parenting styles and family intimacy. 2% added variance is revealed in figure no. 1, that with high dyadic consensus, as permissive parenting styles increases, family intimacy also increases. Fathers with low level of permissiveness shows decrease in family intimacy.

Figure 2 revealed that with a high level moderator i.e., dyadic consensus, flexible parenting styles increases and family conflict decreases and with a low level of dyadic consensus, family conflict increases with an increment in flexible parenting styles. The marital adjustment has a significant impact on children's psychological well-being. Marital conflict and dissatisfaction can lead to increased levels of internalizing and externalizing behavior problems in children (Conger et al.,1990).

Conclusion

Present study is set to explore marital adjustment in the relationship between perceived maternal parenting styles and family functioning. The findings are related to the previous literature to some extent. New findings reside with the fact that the sample is from a collectivistic culture where parenting style, family functioning, and marital adjustment are interconnected elements that significantly impact the overall well-being and dynamics within a family unit. Positive parenting practices, healthy family dynamics, and strong marital relationships contribute to healthy child development, the transmission of societal values, and the reduction of social issues. These factors also shape individuals' interpersonal relationship skills and serve as models for societal norms and expectations. The cumulative findings from various researchers support the crucial role of perceived maternal parenting styles, family functioning, and marital adjustment in shaping individual well-being and societal outcomes. In the present study, findings revealed that fathers play a crucial role, their involvement and support contribute to positive child outcomes, healthier family dynamics, and improved relationship satisfaction.

Limitations and Suggestions

The study has a small sample size, which limits the generalizability of the findings, so

in future, this should include a larger and more diverse sample to enhance representativeness.

In the present study, the data collected from the fathers may be subject to self-reporting bias, as participants may have provided socially desirable responses or exaggerated certain aspects. In future, using multiple methods of data collection, such as observations or interviews with other family members, could provide a more comprehensive view.

The study focuses solely on the perceptions of fathers regarding maternal parenting styles, in the future, the study should focus on more family dynamics including the perspective of children and mothers.

Implications

The present study on fathers' role in family functioning and marital adjustment, as influenced by maternal parenting styles, emphasizes the significance of fathers' involvement and perception within the family. The research on fathers' role can guide future research by addressing a research gap, providing methodological considerations, and informing the development of interventions and policies aimed at supporting fathers and improving family dynamics. It emphasizes the need for a more comprehensive understanding of family dynamics and the inclusion of multiple perspectives in future investigations. The findings of the study help to comprehend how emotionally matured individuals with the help and support of their families can enhance the adjustment of their marital life and family functioning.

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