



Perceived Parenting Styles and College Student's Psychosocial Adjustment

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Abstract

Extant literature has established the impact that parenting has on the development of children within specific domains of behavioral outcomes such as deviance, prone to depression among others. However, there are still unanswered questions regarding the role of parenting styles in the development of psychosocial skills of emerging adults. This study assessed retrospective information from college students ($n=138$) about their parents' parenting styles during their early years of life and how it has impacted the development of their perceived self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy. Results showed that the best optimal environment for parenting that is likely to yield positive psychosocial variables are parental responsiveness and involvement. This study further showed that, even though parents may show a higher level of involvement and responsiveness to their children, the co-occurring of these variables with higher level of parental demandingness tends to neutralize the positive effects of parental responsiveness and involvement.

Keywords: Parenting, Self-esteem, Self-efficacy, Academic Achievement, Self-concept,

Introduction

The invaluable role played by parents in the development of children across the lifespan has received much attention in family research [1-4]. Parenting encompasses all the processes of preparing children for productive lives as adults through nourishment, protection, and all other forms of responsible caregiving. Parent-child interaction comprises a bidirectional relationship where parents and children influence each other [5]. This bidirectional process gives parenting a very important role so much so that, when parents exhibit positive behaviors, it leads to positive child outcomes and thereby minimizes the likelihood of the child suffering any negative outcome which consequently can put the child at greater risk for negative behavioral outcomes [5].

Childrearing beliefs and behaviors exhibited by parents are created and understood within parents' historical and cultural contexts. These are organized along the two theoretical dimensions of parental warmth and control as posited by Maccoby and Martin [4].

Maccoby and Martin [4], defined parental warmth as the affection and acceptance that parents give to their children. Parental warmth has been known to be a universally positive esteemed dimension of parenting. Control on the other hand involves psychological, emotional, physical verbalizations, and even behaviors that are normally intended to modify the thoughts, behaviors, and emotions of the child [4]. Extant literature has ultimately shown that an optimal parenting environment should always consist of a balance between parental warmth and control to predict positive child outcomes.

Our sense of self as humans has been shown to be dependent upon our experiences in life which ultimately influences our perceptions and assessment of self. According to Vazire and Wilson [6] self-concept is the term used to describe domain specific evaluation of the self. The domain specific evaluation of the self is derived from self-esteem and self-efficacy. What this means is that positive self-esteem and self-efficacy is more likely to positively impact an individual's evaluation on his concept of self. That is, an individual with a positive self-esteem and self-efficacy is often able to recognize their limitations without a judgment attached and likely to have a better appraisal of his or her self-concept. Even though the extant literature has established the impact that parenting has on the development of the child within specific domains of behavioral outcomes such as deviance, prone to depression among others, there are still unanswered questions regarding the role that parenting styles play in the development of the self-concept of emerging adults.

Developmentally, emerging adults are at a stage where the prefrontal cortex of their brain hasn't fully developed which leads to impulsive behaviors among them. According to the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI, 2022) suicide is the second leading cause of death among people aged between 15-24 years. Buttressing the point that, some of the risk factors of suicidal behavior has to do with where these children stand socially and developmentally from a lifespan perspective.

In a study by Stormshak, Bierman, McMohon & Lengua [7], the authors looked at the combined effects of positive and negative dimensions of parenting and disruptive problem behaviors among

college students. Their study had a large sample size that tested parental influences and its effect on behavior problems for both European American children and African American children (boys and girls). Their findings, which were consistent with previous research showed that aggression, and other oppositional and adverse behavior problems were all related to higher levels of punitive discipline and spanking activities. Further providing an insight into the invaluable role parents play in putting children on the right positive developmental trajectory across the lifespan.

All the above explains the fact that parenting and for that matter the style that parents adopt is key to the development of the child since parents serve as the first point of socialization for the child. Apart from the above effects that parenting tends to have on the developing child, extant literature has shown that parents contribute to the development of psychosocial skills like self-esteem and self-efficacy. It is therefore imperative to take a critical look at the effect of perceived parenting styles among emerging adults, specifically college age children on their self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Literature Review

Parenting Styles

Baumrind's [8] parenting styles provide a framework for family researchers and professionals to understand how parents and caregivers nurture and control their children. The process of parenting is multifaceted and encompasses many specific activities and behaviors for both parents and children. That is, while parents and primary caregivers focus on directing, nurturing and controlling their children, children actively respond to parenting style based on their different temperamental traits. For instance, a cooperative, responsible, and well-motivated child is more likely to have parents who exercise an authoritative parenting style, characterized by increased parental involvement and responsiveness. On the other hand, an immature, irresponsible and uncooperative child may be more likely to elicit a parenting style that is authoritarian [8] and thereby characterized by higher parental demandingness.

Four parenting styles based upon two parenting behaviors of warmth and control were identified by Baumrind [8]: Indulgent, authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved reflect a distinctive balance of warmth and control. Indulgent parents are responsive to the needs of their children but do not demand much from them. As a result, children growing up in such homes cannot control their behavior and, in most cases, always expect things to go their way. This makes children perform poorly in life, become very domineering, non-compliant, and have difficulties in peer relations [9]. Authoritarian parents are highly directive and demanding but not very responsive to their children. Children of authoritarian parents tend to stay out of trouble and do moderately well in school. One disadvantage with this parenting style is that, because children are treated in a manner that makes it appear as if their needs don't matter, their capacity for empathy is highly impaired which leads to the development of poor social skills, low self-esteem, and higher rates of depression [9].

Authoritative parents are both highly demanding and responsive. It is often asserted that this parenting style is associated with the best outcome, and it is also the best optimal parenting environment for the developing child [8]. Parents are seen as always keeping an eye on their children and pass on clear standards for their children. Parents respond to the needs of their children and hold them to higher standards of behavior. Children are also encouraged to hold their own opinion. The rationale for this parenting style is to make children socially responsible, cooperative, and self-regulated [8].

Parents who are low in warmth and control in relation to their parenting are often seen as using the uninvolved parenting style. They do not respond to or demand much from their children. Because of this, children who grow up in such homes end up lacking guidance

and are left to fend for themselves. They also resent any attempt to set limits on them. Consequently, they begin to fall into trouble early in life, perform poorly in school, and have low self-esteem among others [8].

Parenting and Self-esteem

Self-esteem encompasses the liking and respect for oneself. It plays a significant role in adolescent developmental outcomes [10]. Reflexivity, which is the ability to look at oneself and evaluate what one sees, is influenced by an individual's perceived self-esteem. Since adolescence is the time when an individual develops the competence of identity or role confusion according to Erikson's psychosocial stages, it is important for parents to prepare children early before they reach this stage. How well parents prepare children during the early stages of development determines their competence with this psychosocial skill during adulthood.

Extant literature has shown that processes such as positive reinforcement from parents, social comparison, reflected appraisals, and self-attributions are important to the development of an individual's self-esteem [10]. Reflected appraisal process states that, we come to think or evaluate ourselves based on what others see or evaluate us. The implication for this is that, whenever parents give children positive and constructive evaluation, it imprints on their mind and tends to influence how they also evaluate or see themselves across the lifespan. A sense of personal worth and value goes a long way to impact an individual's psychosocial development. When parents show love to their children as a parenting strategy such an interaction can positively impact the development of their social comparison, self-attribution, reflected appraisal, which will form the foundation for the development of their perceived self-esteem.

Parenting and Self-efficacy

Perceived self-efficacy explains the beliefs held by individuals in their capabilities to exercise control over their level of functioning and environmental demands [11]. The belief people have about a particular situation affects their actions and motivation to act. Studies have shown that efficacy beliefs exert considerable influence on human development [11]. For instance, the belief by children in their efficacy to regulate their own learning activities and to master difficult subject matters affects their academic motivation, interest, and educational achievement. The stronger the students' beliefs in their efficacy, the greater the interest they show in them.

Children's perceived self-efficacy cannot develop without the influence of parents. Parents and for that matter, the parenting style they adopt have some level of impact on the development of children perceived self-efficacy. Parental aspirations and perceived efficacy build children's sense of efficacy, self-esteem and even their academic aspirations [11]. Studies have also shown that parental academic efficacy would enhance children's sense of academic efficacy. Academically efficacious parents are most likely to promote not only educational activities but interpersonal and self-management skills conducive to learning, especially if they hold high academic aspirations for their children [11]. This helps raise children's beliefs in their social and self-regulatory efficacy.

It is for the reasons above that the role of parents should not be taken for granted by family researchers. Despite the numerous literature that explains the role of parents in the development of some social, physical, and psychological competencies in children, not many studies have looked at the role parents play in the psychosocial adjustment of children and how this is manifested during early adulthood. Studies looking at how the various parenting styles (indulgent, authoritarian, authoritative and uninvolved) have been associated with emerging adults' self-efficacy, and self-esteem is something that have not been looked at in recent times [12, 13]. This focused on filling this gap by examining college students' perception

of their parents' parenting styles while growing up and how it has affected their self-concept of perceived self-efficacy, and self-esteem. The dimension of parenting styles the study looked at included parental demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement, and how these are associated with their reported self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Objective of Study

The overall objective of this study was to contribute to the existing knowledge on the relationship between perceived parenting styles and college students' report of their self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and self-esteem. The study assessed retrospective information from college students about their parents' parenting styles during their early years of life and how it has impacted the development of their perceived self-esteem and self-efficacy. This is important because parents play an important role in the socialization of children. Thereby making early parent-child interaction a likely predictor of adolescents' psychosocial achievement. In view of this, the study sought to answer the following question:

1. Is there a relationship between college students perceived parental responsiveness and involvement and their self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy?

It was hypothesized that, the combined effects of parental responsiveness and involvement will constitute the largest predictor variables in explaining the variance in college students' reported self-esteem, general self-esteem, and academic self-efficacy.

2. Does the combined effect of parental demandingness, involvement, and responsiveness explain the variance in students' reports of their self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy?

It was hypothesized that, the predictor variable of parental demandingness will not contribute to explaining the variance in students' perceived self-esteem, self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy. The study addressed some of the methodological limitations found in previous research by investigating samples of both

socioeconomically advantaged and disadvantaged students drawn from the general population of a southwestern university.

Methods

Participants

College students enrolled in multiple courses in the college of education at a southwestern university were recruited to participate in a survey with an option of earning extra credits. For the survey to remain anonymous, yet for students to receive their extra credit, students were directed to a separate page where they will print their students EUID which can serve as a means of identifying and assigning their extra credits to them. Study participants ranged from freshmen to senior students, most majoring in Human Development and Family Science.

Design

Survey design was utilized because of the established fact of it being an appropriate inquiry strategy that can be used to explain the attitude and behavior of any targeted population (Bryman, 2004). Even though this study is not meant to generalize from the sample to a population, some inferences were made about the characteristics, attitude, or behavior of the targeted population. Also, survey was the preferred type of data collection procedure for this study because of reasons such as the economy of the design and the rapid turnaround in data collection.

Ethics, which are moral codes that researchers are supposed to follow while carrying out their research work, were considered. The following ethical considerations were adhered to: Following Institutional Review Board's approval at the researcher's university, participants completed a consent form showing their willingness to participate in the study and not out of compulsion. Institutional review board of the principal investigator's institution approved of this study before data collection commenced. Table 1 below shows the demographic characteristics of the research participants.

Demographic Variable	n	%
Gender		
Male	27	19.57
Female	111	80.43
Age		
Under 18 years	17	12.32
19-23 years	102	73.91
24 years or Above	19	13.77
University Classification		
Freshman	29	21.01
Sophomore	58	42.03
Junior	34	24.64
Senior	17	12.32
Ethnicity		
White	77	55.80
African American	25	18.12
Hispanic	29	21.01
Asian	5	3.62
Other	2	1.45

Table 1: Sociodemographic Characteristics of Research Participants

Note. N=138. Participants were on average 22.1 years old

Measures

Paulson's [14] parenting style and parental involvement (PSPI) questionnaire was adapted for this study. The PSPI questionnaire has been used in several studies [15]. The development of this scale was originally based on the assessments of ninth grade boys ($n=96$) and girls ($n=144$) and their parents. The adolescents were public school students at one of five urban, suburban, or rural high schools in the southwest and Midwest. The average age was just under 15 years of age. All families participating in the study were from two-parent households, although one parent was sometimes a stepparent.

The PSPI was developed as three separate but related scales to measure aspects of parenting style believed to be related to adolescents' self-esteem and self-efficacy [15]. Parental demandingness and responsiveness are measured with 15 Likert-type items each. Parental involvement was assessed based on 22 items. Parental involvement is divided into subscales of achievement values (8 items), interest in schoolwork (9 items) and involvement in school functions (5 items). Items are stated as complete sentences, with each describing a different parental behavior. Responses are generated on a 5-point scale, with responses from adolescents ranging from very unlike my mother/father to very like my mother/father. Subscale scores from this instrument can be calculated by summing or averaging responses values within the subscales. Items stated in the negative direction are reverse scored so that higher subscale scores represent higher levels of the construct being evaluated. Some of the sample questions include: "*I would describe my mother/father as a strict parent*" (demandingness), "*my mother/ father expects me to tell her when I think a rule is unfair*" (responsiveness), "*my mother/father tries to get me to do my best on everything I do*" (values achievement), "*my mother/father makes sure that I have done my homework*" (interest in schoolwork), "*my mother/father usually goes to parent-teacher conferences*" (involvement in school functions) etc.

Total scores for each parenting dimension were obtained by averaging across all items within their respective scales with higher scores representing higher levels of parenting (demandingness, involvement, or responsiveness). Cronbach's alpha for adolescents' report of maternal and paternal demandingness of the Paulson's scale are .78 and .84 respectively. Cronbach's alphas for adolescents' report of maternal and paternal responsiveness are .84 and .87 respectively [14].

In addition to the above, the Rosenberg self-esteem scale and the General self-efficacy scale were used to measure the self-esteem and the self-efficacy of the study participants respectively. The Rosenberg self-esteem scale is a ten item Likert-scale with items answered on a four-point scale- from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The original sample for which the scale was developed consisted of 5,024 high school juniors and seniors from 10 randomly selected schools in New York State. When scoring using this scale, Strongly Agree (SA) is assigned a point of 3, Agree(A)=2, Disagree(D)=1 and Strongly Disagree (DA)=0. Items 2, 5, 8, and 9 on this scale are reversed scoreS as SA=0, A=1, D=2, SD=3 after which we sum the 10 items. Participants should have a higher score to record higher self-esteem on this scale [16].

The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) on the other hand is designed to assess a general sense of perceived self-efficacy with the aim of predicting coping with daily hassles as well as adaptation after experiencing all kinds of stressful life events. This scale is self-administered, and the responses are summed up to yield the final composite score with a range from 10 to 40. In samples from 23 nations, Cronbach's alpha α ranged from .76 to .90, with the majority in the .80's. This scale has been used internationally with success for two decades [17]. The General Self-Efficacy scale can be used to predict adaptation after life changes, but it is also suitable as an indicator of quality of life at any point in time.

Analysis

SPSS version 22 was used to analyze the quantitative data collected. A canonical correlational analysis, which, according to Sherry and

Henson [18], serves as a parent analysis for all the general linear models and subsumes both univariate and multivariate methods, was used to evaluate the relationships between the reported parenting variables of demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement on one hand and student variables of self-esteem and self-efficacy [18, 19]. The reason for the choice of this statistical analysis stems from the fact that this study is a better fit for a multivariate technique because of the three dependent variables. Running a multivariate analysis reduces the likelihood of increasing type one error rate. That is, rejecting a true null hypothesis.

The study sought to understand the association between college students' report of their perceived parental demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement on one hand and their reported self-esteem, general self-efficacy, and their academic efficacy on another hand. The parenting variables of responsiveness, and involvement were entered into one predictor set. Outcome variables of general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy and self-esteem were entered into the criterion set. The analysis yielded two functions with squared canonical correlations Rc^2 of .723 for Function 1 and .095 for Function 2. In CCA, this Rc^2 is directly analogous to the R^2 effect in multiple regression.

Collectively, the full model across all functions was statistically significant using the Wilk's $\lambda=.348$ criterion, $F(6,266) = 30.76, p < .001$. In CCA, because Wilks's λ represents the variance unexplained by the model, $1 - \lambda$ yields the full model effect size in an r^2 metric. Therefore, for the set of two canonical functions, the r^2 type effect size was .652, which indicated that the full model explained approximately 65% of the variance shared between the perceived parenting variables and students reported psychosocial variables of self-esteem, general self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy. This showed a very large effect size for the model. The dimension reduction analysis in multivariate studies enables researchers to test the hierarchical arrangement of functions for statistical significance.

As already noted, the full model (functions 1 to 2) was statistically significant. Function 2, although tested separately, did explain a statistically significant amount of shared variance between the variable set, $F(2,134) = 5.43, p < .005$. However, given the Rc^2 effects for each function, only Function 1 was considered noteworthy in the context of this study with a significant amount (62%) of the explained variance between the variable sets. The Rc^2 effect for Function 2 which was 7.5% of the remaining variance in the variable sets after the extraction of the prior functions were too small to be considered noteworthy in the context of this study. Therefore, only Function 1 was considered. The standardized canonical function coefficients (analogous to beta weights in multiple regression) for both functions 1 and 2 are presented in Table 2.

The squared structure coefficients and communalities (h^2) across the two functions for each variable are also given. Based on the communalities across the two functions for the criterion variables, 100% of the variance in the outcome variable of academic self-efficacy could be reproduced by both functions. In addition, 73% of the variance in general self-efficacy could be reproduced by both functions while 84% of the variance in self-esteem could be reproduced by functions 1 and 2. This indicated that all the dependent variables were useful in determining the associations within the entire model. Similarly, the predictor variables showed 100% of the variance in parental involvement could be reproduced by both functions together with 99% of the variance in responsiveness reproduced by Function 1 and 2. The coefficients for Function 1 on academic self-efficacy and self-esteem (most especially), made noteworthy contributions to the synthetic criterion variable.

This conclusion was supported by the squared structure coefficients of 83% and 67%, respectively. General self-esteem tended to have a relatively large canonical function coefficient (beta weight) followed by academic self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy had a modest function coefficient but large structure coefficient. Furthermore, all these variables' structure coefficients had the same sign, indicating that they were all positively related.

Variable	Function 1			Function 2			h ² (%)
	Coef	rs	rs ² (%)	Coef	rs	rs ² (%)	
General SE	-.407	-.609	37	.594	.596	36	73
Acad SE	-.313	-.819	67	-1.27	-.574	33	100
Self Esteem	-.545	-.910	83	.749	-.115	1	84
Rc ²			62			7.5	
Involvement	.414	.932	87	1.69	.361	13	100
Responsiveness	.631	.972	94	-1.63	-.236	5	99

Table 2: Canonical Solution for Parenting Styles Predicting Psychosocial Variables for Function 1 and 2

Note. Structure coefficients (rs) greater than |.45| are in bold. Community coefficients (h²) greater than 45% are in bold. Coef = standardized canonical function coefficient; rs = structure coefficient; rs² = squared structure coefficient; h² = communality coefficient.

Regarding the predictor variable set in Function 1, perceived parenting variables of involvement and responsiveness made an almost equal noteworthy contribution to the predictor synthetic variable based on coefficients. This conclusion was supported by the squared structure coefficients of 87% and 94% respectively. These parenting variables of involvement and responsiveness also tended to have a larger canonical function coefficient (beta weights)-87% and 94% respectively. In addition, the structure coefficients of the parenting variables of involvement and responsiveness had the same sign, indicating that they were all positively related. The parenting variables (involvement and responsiveness) were, however, inversely related to perceived sense of general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and self-esteem. The implication for this inverse relationship was that with the presence of higher levels of involvement and responsiveness in reported perceived parenting variables, there would be a lower level of general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and self-esteem. This result was generally supportive of the theoretically expected relationships between parenting and these psychosocial variables.

Research Question 2

In answering the second research question, outcome variables of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy were entered into the criterion set. The analysis yielded three functions with squared canonical correlations Rc² of .465, .0301 and .002 for each successive function. Collectively, the full model across all functions was statistically significant using the Wilk's $\lambda = .518$ criterion, $F(9,321) = 11.08, p < .001$. Because Wilks's λ represents the variance unexplained by the model, $1 - \lambda$ yields the full model effect size in an r² metric. Thus, for the set of three canonical functions, the r² type effect size was .482, which indicated that the full model explained a substantial portion of about 48% of the variance shared between perceived parental demandingness, involvement, and responsiveness.

The dimension reduction analysis in multivariate studies enabled testing the hierarchical arrangement of functions for statistical significance. Functions 2 and 3, although tested separately, did not

explain a statistical significance amount of shared variance between the variable set, $F(4,266) = .968, p < .05$ and $F(1,134) = .998, p < .05$, respectively. Given the Rc² effects for each function, and altogether given the fact that only the first function yielded a statistically significant amount of variance shared, only Function 1 was considered noteworthy in the context of this study with a significant amount (47%) of explained variance between the variable sets. Functions 2 and 3 explained 3% and .2%, respectively, of the remaining variance in the variable sets after the extraction of the prior functions.

The standardized canonical function coefficients for both functions 1 and 2 are presented in Table 3. The squared structure coefficients and communalities (h²) across the two functions for each variable are also given. Based on the communalities across the two functions for the criterion variables, 100% of the variance in the outcome variable of self-esteem could be reproduced by both functions together, whereas 79% of the variance in general self-efficacy and 72% of the variance in academic self-efficacy could be reproduced by functions 1 and 2. These larger communalities indicated that all the psychosocial variables of self-esteem, self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy were useful in explaining the relationships. For the predictor variables, about 95% of the variance in parental demandingness could be reproduced by both functions together with 36% of the variance in responsiveness and about 64% of the variance in involvement could be reproduced by Functions 1 and 2. This also indicated the usefulness of parental demandingness and involvement in explaining relationships because of their large communality coefficient. The coefficients for Function 1 on self-esteem and academic self-efficacy made noteworthy contributions to the synthetic criterion variable, which were also supported by the squared structure coefficients of 84% and 71%, respectively. These variables also tended to have the larger canonical function coefficients (beta weights). In addition, structure coefficients of academic self-efficacy and self-esteem had positive correlation, indicating that academic self-efficacy and self-esteem were positively related to the perceived parenting variables of involvement, responsiveness, and demandingness.

Variable	Function 1			Function 2			h ² (%)
	Coef	rs	rs ² (%)	Coef	rs	rs ² (%)	
General SE	-.379	-.582	34	.896	.673	45	79
Acad SE	-.358	-.841	71	.713	-.129	1	72
Self Esteem	-.521	-.916	84	-1.22	-.399	16	100
Rc ²	47			3			
Involvement	-.186	-.261	7	.866	.757	57	64
Responsiveness	-.139	-.292	9	-.658	-.519	27	36
Demandingness	.940	.969	94	.035	.073	1	95

Table 3: Canonical Solution for Parenting Predicting Psychosocial Variables for Function 1 and 2

Note. Structure coefficients (rs) greater than |.45| are in bold. Community coefficients (h²) greater than 45% are in bold. Coef = standardized canonical function coefficient; rs = structure coefficient; r² = squared structure coefficient; h² = communality coefficient.

Regarding the predictor variable set in Function 1, the parental demandingness (94%) was the only contributor to the predictor synthetic variable based on coefficients. Parental involvement (7%) and responsiveness (9%) did not make any noteworthy contribution to the entire model. This was supported by the communality coefficients for these variables. Parental demandingness tended to have a larger canonical function coefficient. In addition, the structure coefficients of parental involvement and responsiveness had the same sign, indicating that they were all positively related. Parental demandingness, however, was inversely related to psychosocial variables general self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and self-esteem. The implication for this inverse relationship is that higher levels of parental demandingness is associated with lower self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, and self-esteem.

Discussion and Implication

Parenting's impact on the development of children across the lifespan cannot be left unaddressed by family researchers [1-4]. Extant literature has shown that, being the first agent of socialization, parents directly and indirectly contribute to the development of psychosocial skills like self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic achievement. The goal of this study was to understand the relationships between perceived parenting styles of college students and their self-report of academic self-efficacy, self-esteem, and general self-efficacy. The findings of this study will contribute to the literature on parenting and parent-child relationship by establishing that: a) there is an overall relationship between perceived parenting styles of demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement and the psychosocial variables of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy; b) the extent of the relationships between parenting styles of demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement and the psychosocial variables of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy varies.

Based on the findings of the study, perceived parental demandingness, which measured the extent to which parent's monitor, set limits and rules, enforcing rules and the use of harsh discipline in the process of parenting was inversely related to self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy of the research participants. Parental demandingness is characterized by excessive parental control and gives children no room to think or operate from an independent point of view. Some studies have shown that parenting demandingness has been linked to positive outcomes across the lifespan especially among African American and Hispanic families [20, 21]. On the contrary, parental demandingness has been linked to children becoming less socially adept, less confident, and less committed to achievement according to Dalimonte-Merckling & Williams [22]. The Dalimonte-Merckling & Williams [22] finding was supported by this study as reflected in the inverse relationship between parental demandingness and the psychosocial variable. High parental demandingness is mostly associated with authoritarian parenting style which exerts high parental control. Authoritarian parents exert greater parental control and are not responsive to their children. Even though parents may show a higher level of involvement and responsiveness to their children, the co-occurring of these variables with higher level of parental demandingness has the tendency of neutralizing the positive effects of parental responsiveness and involvement.

Extant literature on how parental demandingness and responsiveness moderated the impact corporal punishment has on adolescent psychosocial adjustment showed that parental responsiveness was found to be ineffective because of its association with parental demandingness. Parental responsiveness was found to only exert a minimal effect in explaining the relationship between corporal punishment and psychosocial adjustment when co-occurring with parental demandingness [20,21]. There by showing the greater effect parental demandingness has on psychosocial adjustment when it co-occurs with parental responsiveness.

It is therefore important for parents to strike a balance between demandingness, responsiveness to their children and being involved in their activities. This healthy balance is important and likely to yield better psychosocial outcomes for their children. Furthermore, this study has shown that the best optimal environment for parenting that is likely to yield positive psychosocial variables are parental responsiveness and involvement. These 2 parenting variables of responsiveness and involvement contributed quite a great deal in explaining the variance in the psychosocial variables of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy. A study by Zhang et al [23] on the relationships between parental responsiveness and creativity among college students showed that parental responsiveness and teaching responsiveness was positivity related to students' creativity. The findings from Zhang et al's [23] study, corroborates this current study that, not only does parental responsiveness contribute to the development of creative minds but also has a statistically significant relationship with self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy across the lifespan.

Finally, parental demandingness has been shown to have mixed (both negative and positive) effects on child development. The extent of its effect is dependent on a few factors. For instance, when there is balance between the parenting variables of demandingness, responsiveness, and involvement, the effect of this on the development of the child is overwhelmingly positive as shown not only in this study but also the literature on parenting and parent-child interaction. However, it becomes a problem when the parenting variable of demandingness becomes extremely higher and supersedes the level of involvement and responsiveness. That situation is what leads to negative outcomes for the developing child. However, the ethnic and racial background of the parents can influence the outcome of the parenting style. While high levels of parental demandingness co-occurring with involvement and responsiveness have been shown to produce positive outcomes among African Americans, Hispanic and Asian families, this has not been the case for most Caucasian families characterized by lower levels of demandingness and higher responsiveness and involvement.

Limitation

The following are some of the limitations of the study. First, the study looked at only associations between college students' perceived parenting styles and their psychosocial variables of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy without establishing any form of causality. Because of the correlational nature of the analysis utilized for this study, it would be wrong to conclude that a higher level of parental demandingness can lead to lower self-esteem, self-efficacy, or lower academic self-efficacy. Future experimental studies can investigate whether there is a causal relationship between perceived parenting styles and their respective psychosocial variables of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and academic self-efficacy.

About half of the participants in this study identified as white. This may likely have influenced the outcome of this study because of how extant studies have shown a positive correlation between lower parental demandingness and other psychosocial outcomes. Parenting among whites has been characterized by higher responsiveness, involvement and lower demandingness. A balance in the demographic characteristics of the sample may have resulted in a different outcome. Future studies can investigate this important phenomenon.

Finally, the sample size for this study was relatively small. Larger sample sizes have been known to lead to stronger and more reliable results in quantitative studies because they can reduce error margins and be more closely aligned with the population [24]. A large sample size has the potential of increasing the confidence level and easier to generalize to the population. Future studies should put this into consideration and vary the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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