

Role Of Parenting Styles In Patients With Young Onset Substance Use Disorder

Dr Janani J & Sabari Sridhar

OT Department of Psychiatry, Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

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Abstract

Background: Substance use in adolescents is a public health concern. It is on the rise in both developing and developed countries and is associated with adverse health and social outcomes. Parenting style is one of the important factors influencing adolescent substance use. Based on responsiveness and demandingness, there are four parenting styles- authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful. Aim: This study aims to estimate the prevalence of each parenting style in the context of young onset substance use disorder among patients attending tertiary health centre in Tamilnadu, India. Materials and Methods: A cross sectional study was done on 115 patients with young onset substance use (onset less than 25 years). Socio-demographic proforma, ASSIST, Leeds dependency questionnaire and PSDQ were used. Results: The maximum prevalence was seen in permissive parenting style. Authoritarian and permissive parenting were significantly associated with earlier age of onset of substance use, duration of substance use and family history of substance use. Authoritative parenting was associated with less number of substances. Conclusion: Parenting programs incorporating specific desired behaviours will help train parents on better monitoring and to prevent adverse outcomes in adolescents having substance use disorder

Introduction

Drug abuse in adolescents

The prevalence of substance use among adolescents is in an increasing trend in both developing and developed nations. (1)It assumes greater importance in developing countries like India due to inadequate health care facilities. Adolescent substance use puts youth at risk of adverse health and social outcomes. Adolescents involve in substance use for various reasons ranging from experimentation, novelty-seeking as well as pre-existing psychiatric disorders like depression, anxiety etc. (2)Undesirable consequences like crime, delinquency, school exclusion, unprotected sex are also more associated with substance use. As per the National Survey on extent and pattern of substance use in India conducted by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in 2019, in the age group of 10-17 years, the prevalence of various substances were around 1.3% for alcohol, 0.9% for cannabis, 1.8% for opioids and 1.17% for inhalants. (3)Though there are many factors that determine substance use in young people such as personality traits, peer influence, environmental factors such as influence of media, advertising, the influence of family is considered one of the important factors.(4)

Parenting styles

Parenting style refers to the set of behaviours, attitudes and approaches a parent uses to raise their offspring. These practises are used consistently in various situations to manage their child's behaviour and have a direct effect on how the children are prepared to meet the society. Maccoby described family and parenting as one of the first elements in socialization of humans. Parenting practises influences the social and psychological functioning of the child. Some of the key components of parenting include warmth, responsiveness, control and punishment.(5) Studies show that mental health problems including substance use with onset in adolescence can be related to parenting styles. Determinants like granting of autonomy, monitoring including identifying change in behaviours,

encouraging disclosure, judging the influence of peers, setting safe boundaries on what is acceptable, permitting child to learn from mistakes, discussing outcomes, developing confidence can influence an adolescent's trajectory in the usage or avoidance of substances.(6)

Dimensions of parenting

Sigelman in 1999 described two dimensions in parenting namely warmth or responsiveness and control or demandingness. Baumrind described warmth or responsiveness based on how parents can bring out desirable behaviour by being supportive to the child's needs. Some key components of parental responsiveness are showing affection, comforting attitude and appreciation. Control or demandingness refers to parent's demands and disciplinary efforts to confront the child's misbehaviour. Some components are enforcing standards, active monitoring of child's activities and maintaining a routine in the child's daily life. Darling and Steinberg defined parenting style as "overall climate of parent child interaction." Baumrind classified parenting styles into three types namely authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. A fourth style of neglectful parenting was added by Macoby and Martin. Authoritarian parents usually have a one-way communication with little to no scope of negotiation and use punishment. They have high demandingness and low responsiveness. Authoritative parents set clear standards and expectations while ensuring adequate communication. They also have a nurturing relationship with their children. They have high demandingness as well as responsiveness. Permissive parents act like friends rather than parents to their children, where they have a nurturing relationship with minimal expectations rarely using disciplinary methods. They have low demandingness and high responsiveness. Uninvolved or neglectful parents are those who remain detached from a child's life and do not use disciplinary practises even when the child misbehaves. They have low demandingness as well as responsiveness.

Outcomes of parenting on children

Research and studies so far shows authoritative as the best type of parenting where children are seen to grow up with good self-esteem and high achievement. Children of authoritarian parents are usually well-behaved and adhere to rules. However, they can also show high levels of aggression later on or be shy and incapable of making important decisions. Children of permissive parents tend to have unhealthy eating habits, impulsivity and may lack self-regulation. Children of uninvolved or neglectful parents may be self-sufficient than others however they may have difficulty maintaining relationships, academic difficulties.

Parenting styles and substance use in adolescents

Various studies have explained the relationship between parenting style and overall psychological well-being of a child including substance use practises. Broadly, authoritative style is considered protective against substance use and neglectful parenting is considered as a risk factor and mixed results have been observed for authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

Aim of the study

This study thus aims to add to the existing literature to study the role of parenting styles in adolescent substance use.

Materials and methods

Study design, setting and criteria

We conducted a cross-sectional study in psychiatry department of Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (SRIHER), Chennai. A sample size of 115 was arrived at. Inclusion criteria were patients who had onset of substance use and using substance in dependence pattern before 25 years of age and who were willing to participate in the study. Patients needed to be accompanied by parents. Exclusion criteria were patients with severe mental illness prior to diagnosis of substance dependence and patients with intellectual deficits. Ethics clearance was obtained from the Institutional ethics committee IEC, SRIHER. Patients were recruited from both inpatient and outpatient setting.

Assessment tools

The tools used were semi-structured proforma to get the socio-demographic and clinical details of the patient, (ASSIST) Alcohol smoking and substance involvement screening test was used as a screening tool for substance use, DSM-5th edition was used to make a diagnosis of dependence to substance, Leeds dependency questionnaire to get the severity of dependence to substance, (PSDQ) Parenting styles dimensions questionnaire to get the type of parenting from the 3 styles- authoritative, authoritarian and permissive

(ASSIST) Alcohol smoking and substance involvement screening test

This tool was developed by World Health Organization to assist with early identification of substance use related

health risks and substance use disorders in primary health care and general medical care. It consists of 8 questions.

Leeds dependency questionnaire

It is 10- item self-administered questionnaire designed to measure severity of dependence- mild, moderate or severe. Each item is scored 0 to 3.

Parenting styles dimensions questionnaire

This scale contains 62 items for 3 parenting styles- authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. Neglectful parenting was not included in the questionnaire

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis used were SPSS version 27, descriptive statistics- frequency and percentage analysis for categorical variables and mean and SD for continuous variables. For multivariate analysis one way ANOVA, chi square test, Tukey's post hoc test were used.

TABLE 1 SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

Socio demographic variable		Frequency	Percentage
Age	<20	8	7
	20-30	73	63.5
	31-40	29	25.2
	>40	5	4.3
Gender	Male	112	97.4
	Female	3	2.6
Education	Middle school	14	12.2
	High school	39	34
	Diploma	29	25.2
	Undergraduate	33	28.7
Geographic location	Rural	20	17.4
	Urban	95	82.6
Occupation	Employed	56	48.7
	Unemployed	59	51.3
Marital status	Married	51	44.3
	Single	64	55.7
Type of family	Nuclear	66	42.6
	Joint	49	57.4
Socio economic status	Upper	3	2.6
	Upper middle	13	11.3
	Lower middle	66	57.4
	Upper lower	30	26.1
	Lower	3	2.6

Socio-demographic characteristics

Majority of them belonged to an age group of 20-30 with 97% males, urban background. 51 per cent were unemployed during the time of study. 55% were single and 57% belonged to joint families. 57% belonged to lower middle class.

Clinical characteristics

The age of onset of substance use was between 13-25, mean age was 19. Mean duration of substance use was 8 months. 52% participants had permissive parenting style followed by 26% authoritarian and 22% authoritative. Family history of substance use was present in 57% of participants. Emotional dysregulation scores were significant in 77.8%. On observing the mean age of onset of substance use, significant association was found with authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Similar association was found for duration of substance use. A negative association was found between authoritative parenting and number of substances used.

TABLE 2- COMPARISON OF CLINICAL CORRELATES WITH PARENTING STYLE

	Parenting style	N	Mean	S.D
Age of onset of substance use	Authoritarian	30	19.13	2.67
	Authoritative	25	21.24	2.62
	Permissive	60	18.68	2.30
Duration of substance use	Authoritarian	30	11.47	6.88
	Authoritative	25	9.68	6.74
	Permissive	60	7.14	5.42
Number of substances	Authoritarian	30	2.40	0.62
	Authoritative	25	2.28	0.61
	Permissive	60	2.83	0.99

Discussion

Substance abusing youth are subject to various long term adverse outcomes in physical and mental health, inter-personal relationships, academics etc. Recent research has also shown substance users have abnormalities in brain functioning which translates to cognitive deficits. (7) This study aims to estimate the prevalence of different parenting styles and their role in young onset substance use and dependence. Of our study population, most of them were males, unemployed and belonged to lower middle class. The parenting style with maximum prevalence was the permissive type..

We found that authoritarian and permissive styles had higher prevalence of substance use in family (70%,

65%). This is consistent with findings of other studies where parental substance use was a risk factor for adolescent substance use and dependence. This could be because of modeling behavior as postulated by social learning theory.(8)

We found that both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles had significant association with earlier onset of substance use as well as duration of substance use than authoritative. We also found that authoritative style was significantly associated with lesser number of substances. These findings are supported by a number of studies. McLaughlin et al conducted a qualitative study on adolescent substance use in the context of family and concluded that positive parent child interactions, parental monitoring can prevent young people from substance use.(9) A study on the mediating role of parenting styles on early onset substance use by Krohn et al concluded that monitoring, supervision and attachment was protective against early use of substance. (10) A Brazilian prospective study done by Benchaya et al on 99 adolescents reported that children of indulgent and neglectful parents found it difficult to avoid alcohol and other substances.(11) Active monitoring of their children directly correlated with lower likelihood of using substances. Authoritative mothers were found to be a positive influence on reducing or stopping alcohol whereas indulgent mothers had more prevalence of children finding it difficult to limit their substance use due to their increased tolerance. A review on parental styles and drug use by Becona et al concluded that authoritative style is related to lower use of both legal and illegal drugs in their children and neglectful had the maximum association and inconclusive for the other two styles.(12) A Swedish longitudinal cohort study done on 1268 students of 12-13 years by Berge et al(13) and a longitudinal study done by Sigrun et al(14) showed similar results of authoritative parenting being associated with less frequent drinking and neglectful parenting was associated with worse outcomes. There are some studies that support authoritarian parenting. A cross sectional study done on 3172 Argentinean youth concluded that maternal demandingness to be protective and that strict rule setting was important to prevent substance use disorders.(15) A study done by Loreda et al concluded the same where high control was considered as a protective factor.(16) As far as permissive parenting is concerned, some studies like Calafat et al consider it as protective as parental responsiveness was considered important for certain behaviours.(17) But studies by Cerezo et al,(18) Sigrun et al and Lamborn et al (19) prove contrary. Studies by Loreda et al, Ickick et al,(20) and Berge et al all conclude that neglectful parenting style to be associated with worst outcomes in adolescent substance use.

Conclusion

This study thus seeks to understand the role of parenting styles in young onset substance use disorder. Early identification of problematic parenting styles like authoritarian and permissive parenting can help mental health professionals understanding its role in young adolescents developing substance use disorder. Appropriate interventions and counselling can help formulate family interventions to prevent long term physical, psychological and social consequences of substance use disorder in young adolescents.(21)

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest

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