

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STYLES AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN SEGI COLLEGE SUBANG JAYA, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between parenting styles and alcohol consumption among 150 college students (males = 72, females = 78) in Segi College Subang Jaya, Malaysia. The participants' age is between 18 to 31. Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) were employed in this study. The data was treated as normally distributed and therefore the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to test the correlation between parenting style and alcohol consumption. A significant relationship was found between authoritarian ($r = 0.246, p < 0.05$) and permissive ($r = -0.426, p < 0.05$) parenting style and alcohol consumption among the participants. The results of this investigation indicated that if the parents are authoritarian, college students consume more alcohol, but if the parents are permissive, college students are less likely to consume alcohol. There was a negative non-significant relationship between authoritative ($r = -0.024, p < 0.05$) and alcohol consumption among college students found in this study. This indicated that the increase in authoritative parenting style do not significantly relate to the decrease in alcohol consumption among college students.

Keywords: parenting style, alcohol consumption, college students, SEGi College Subang Jaya

INTRODUCTION

When the college students step into their young adulthood right after their high school, it is a challenging and turbulent process for them (Carpenter & Dobkin, 2009). Several studies have shown that college students who failed to cope with the challenges will tend to suffer from emotional issues such as stress and depression, furthermore they were found using the wrong coping methods to deal with the stressors like involving in the risky behaviours, such as smoking, gambling, alcohol abuse and drug abuse (Drobles, Carter & Goldman, 2009). According to Reise and Riley (2000), alcohol consumption is the most commonly method used by the college students to release their stress.

Alcohol consumption can be defined as the total amount of alcohol consumed per occasion

and the frequency of its consumed (Caetano, 1992). According to Australian Alcohol Guidelines (2001), the amount of alcohol consumption can be identified by using the term "standard drinks". A standard drink refers to any beverages that contain at least 14 grams of intoxicating and ethyl alcohol. If consuming more than 5 standard drinks per occasion is considered as heavy drinker. The World Health Organization (WHO) (2013) had announced that alcohol consumption is the top 3 causes of death and diseases. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) (2009) found that college students are involved in high rate of drinking behaviour. A survey done by NIAAA (2010) in United States shown that 79 percent of young adults, especially college students are heavy drinkers which led them to have Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD), however in

Malaysia, a total of 45% college students are believed to have AUD especially non-Muslim.

There is a vast difference between alcohol consumption and AUD, where alcohol consumption is just the general intake of alcohol which can be high or low. However, AUD is a pattern of alcohol intake which involves trouble in controlling one's drinking and continuously consume alcohol although it harms their health. Moreover, AUD also involves emotion, in which one will be in a negative emotional state when they are not consuming alcohol.

Researchers have identified several factors that cause the college students to drink, such as pressure from peers, academic stress, parenting styles and so on. Among all these factors, parenting styles have a significant influence on college students' drinking behaviour (Azar, Springer, Meyer & Altice, 2010). Hence, parenting styles is defined as the approach that parents use to treat their children (Steinberg, 2001).

According to Baumrind (1991), there are three types of parenting styles; authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. Authoritarian parenting style refers to parents who always demand on their children, but less responsible. Authoritarian parents do give punishment to their children when they are not follow the rules that set by them. Authoritative parenting style refers to parents who are high demand on their children and also responsiveness. They treat their children with warmth and always supportive. Permissive parenting style refers to parents who are usually low in demandingness and high in responsiveness. They tend to maintain good relationship with their children and response to their children's needs immediately.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the literatures, students who have parents with authoritarian parenting style is significant correlated with substance abuse. They tend to be depressed and moody which has lead them to engage with alcohol consumption (Weiss and Schwarz, 1996). Similar study also found that students experience more depress, anxious and angry

due to they are overprotected by their parents. Authoritarian parents have mostly failed to provide emotional support and warmth to their children. Therefore, children may be more likely to seek emotional satisfaction and fulfilment from their peers which lead them to engage in drinking.

Research has also proved that there is a negative significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and heavy episodic drinking, where participants with authoritative parents were associated with low episodic drinking behavior. Besides, studies also mentioned that authoritative parents who openly discuss about the facts, consequences and also further important information about alcohol use with their children are more likely to produce children who are either non-drinkers or occasional drinkers only. Other researchers explained that authoritative parents create a nurturing and encouraging environment to prepare their children to think in a rationale and responsible way which help them to make their own decision on drinking (Foster & Gigi, 2006).

Permissive parenting style has found to have a positive correlation with students' alcohol consumption. Researchers further explained that permissive parents will either set few rules or do not set any rules for their children, because these parents usually consider themselves as a friend to their child, rather than a parent. According to Jacob and Johnson (1997), permissive parents were found to have heavy drinking behavior compared to the other parenting styles. Therefore, it was concluded that chances are high for the parents with drinking behavior to influence their children (Vander Der Vorst et al., 2006).

This study was guided by Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) which proposed by Ajzen (1991). This is a model that has been applied to predict human health related behaviours such as alcohol consumption. According to TPB, the most fundamental element of human behaviour is individual's intention of performing the behaviour which including attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control.

Attitude is the positive or negative evaluation of an individual makes in order to perform a

particular behaviour. Subjective norm is perceived social pressure which lead to perform a behaviour and perceived behavioural control refers to an individual's own perceptions of their ability to perform a behaviour. Therefore, TPB suggests that students with higher intention to involve in heavy drinking behavior are more likely to struggle from lack of control, in which they also believe that such act is socially acceptable or they are either trying to conform in order to fit in a group.

Given the literatures were mainly done in western countries, but not in Malaysian context. In order to fill in the knowledge gaps, this study is aimed to identify the relationship between parenting styles and alcohol consumption among college students in Segi College Subang Jaya, Malaysia. Based on this, three hypotheses were formulated:

- H1: There is a significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and alcohol consumption among college students.
- H2: There is a significant positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and alcohol consumption among college students.
- H3: There is a significant positive relationship between permissive parenting style and alcohol consumption among college students.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

One hundred and fifty college students from Segi College Subang Jaya, Malaysia were recruited in this study. Their age ranged from 18 to 31 years old (males = 72 students, females = 78 students) and they were from 4 different ethnic groups, Chinese (n = 52), Indian (n = 87), Sikh (n = 4) and Others (n = 7). Purposive sampling method was used to recruit participants, as only Chinese (n = 52), Indian (n = 87), Sikh (n = 4) and Others (n = 7) students were approached for this study. Malay students were purposely not approached as drinking is against their Islamic law.

Procedure

This study was carried out once an ethics approval letter was received from the ethics committee, York St. John University. Participants were approached in SEGi College Subang Jaya and they were given an informed consent form once they agreed to take part in the study together with a set of questionnaire.

Measures

Baumrind's Parental style was assessed with the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) (Buri, 1991) and the alcohol consumption was assessed with the Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT) (World Health Organization, 2001). In PAQ, 30 items of five Likert-scale measure the participants' opinion on their parents' parenting style which are authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. The internal consistency of PAQ appeared to have good values that ranged from 0.74 to 0.87 and the Cronbach's alpha for each subscale of parenting style were Authoritarian = 0.88, Authoritative = 0.92, Permissive = 0.77. However, AUDIT consists 10 items. The first 8 items were scored on a five-point scale and the last 2 items were three-point scale. AUDIT was found to have good and high internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha $\alpha = 0.86$). Data collection was done in SEGi College Subang Jaya campus area. Participants were assured that their answers will be kept confidential.

RESULTS

The relationship between parenting styles and alcohol consumption was tested by using Pearson Correlation. The results (Table 1) showed that the strength of association between authoritarian and alcohol consumption among college students was weak but had significant positive relationship ($r = 0.246$, $n = 150$, $p = 0.002$). However, there was a weak but significant negative correlation between authoritative parenting style and alcohol consumption among college students ($r = -0.026$, $n = 150$, $p = 0.749$). Similarly, the relationship between permissive parenting style and alcohol consumption among college students was significant negative correlation ($r = -0.426$, $n = 150$, $p = 0.000$).

Table 1: Correlation between Authoritarian, Authoritative, Permissive Parenting Style and Alcohol Consumption

		Authoritarian	Authoritative	Permissive
Alcohol Consumption	Correlation Coefficient	0.246**	-0.026	-0.426**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0.749	0.000
	N	150	150	150

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Multiple Linear Regression was used to predict which parenting style among authoritarian, authoritative and permissive has more contributes on alcohol consumption among college students. A significant regression equation was found ($F(3,146) = 11.159, p < 0.000$), with an R^2 of 0.187. Based on Table 2, the results showed that authoritarian parenting style was not

significantly predict alcohol consumption ($\beta = 0.072, t(150) = 0.824, p > 0.05$). Authoritative parenting style also was not significantly predict alcohol consumption ($\beta = 0.048, t(150) = 0.618, p > 0.05$). However, permissive parenting style was found to have a negative coefficient which significant predict alcohol consumption ($\beta = -0.399, t(149) = -4.714, p < 0.05$).

Table 2: Regression Predicting the Contribution of Parenting Styles in Alcohol Consumption

Parenting Styles	B	β	Sig.
Authoritarian	0.058	0.072	0.411
Authoritative	0.038	0.048	0.538
Permissive	-0.361	-0.399	0.000

Note: $R^2 = 0.187 (N = 150, p < 0.001); F(3, 146) = 11.159, p < .001$

DISCUSSION

The findings suggested that there is a significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and alcohol consumption among college students. These findings are consistent with previous reports that students with authoritarian parents are more likely to engage in heavy alcohol consumption (Abikoye et al, 2014; Varma & Dang, 1980; Kasse et al, 2006). The reasons could be these students are frequently stressed and conflicted with their parents due to their irresponsible and rejecting parents style. Authoritarian parenting style can be linked to insecure-avoidant attachment which indirectly nurtured children with low in self-esteem and aggressive behaviors. Hence, in order for them to get rid of these, they will involve in drinking.

Authoritative parenting style has no significant relationship to alcohol consumption among college students. This finding is contradicted to the previous findings. However, majority of the previous studies were not from Asian context, hence it could be culture differences

that influenced the findings in this study. Also, have research shown that only around 25% of Asian parents are authoritative (Chao and Tseng, 2002). During the data collection, it was found that students with authoritative parents have never consumed alcohol until they went to college. Different instruments might influence the outcomes as previous studies were used other instruments like Parental Interaction Questionnaire, Parenting Style Questionnaire and Parental Support Questionnaire.

Students with permissive parents were less likely to engage in alcohol consumption. This finding is similar with previous reports on Asian permissive parents tend to allowed their children to consume alcohol within the expectation of the parents (Prinz et al, 2004; Chao, 2001). Therefore, they will not overly consume alcohol because they are aware of their parents' expectation. Another possible explanation for this finding is that consumption of alcohol in Malaysia is still perceived as a unacceptable activity especially for college students. Due to this perceived social pressure on alcohol consumption, some

college students are not preferred to engage with it.

There were several limitations of the current study. The age range of the participants were found to have more between 24 to 26 years old which is not the initial intention. This study intended to have more young adults aged 18 to 23 years old as they are just entered their adulthood phase. Whereby 24 to 26 years old are considered late adults which they might not be influenced that much by their parents anymore.

Another potential limitation was that self-report from the participants might not accurate because it depends on their own perception towards their parents. If the participants had an argument with their parents in the morning, they might give incorrect information due to their anger or disappointment on their parents. Another limitation would be 80% of the participants reported that their parents are authoritative. This phenomenon had skewed the results.

The strength of this study is the participants are from diverse background and the sample

size of 150 participants could represent the population. For future research, it could be good to include age differences as a variable to examine the alcohol consumption. Furthermore, the parenting styles for both mother and father should be separated to check the relationship between both parents' parenting alcohol consumption. Furthermore, the parenting styles for both mother and father should be separated to check the relationship between both parents' parenting styles on their children alcohol consumption.

Alcohol consumption among college students has been widely documented. However, parenting style was found to have less significant with this issue. Perhaps peer pressure or personality traits should be considered when identifying the variables for alcohol consumption among college students.

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