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Helicopter Parenting and Adolescent Development: From the Perspective of Mental Health

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Abstract

Helicopter parenting is a unique form of parenting style that is generally described as highly intensive and highly involved with the children. A particular parenting style influences all phases of development and life style of adolescent. Helicopter parents overly protect their children from the difficulties by setting some set of instructions without consideration of the uniqueness of their children. Recent literature has got huge attention on this parenting style and debating the pros and cons on the development of child. Higher life satisfaction and better psychological wellbeing have been found in the children of highly intrusive parents. When there are positive effects of helicopter parenting, there are negative outcome and impacts that have also been studied. The difficulties in emotional regulation, academic productivity, and social skills among children raised by helicopter parenting have been reported in the literature. Low self-efficacy, lack of trust on peers, and alienation from peers have also been associated with helicopter parenting. The chapter highlights the associated aspects of childhood and adolescence, raised by helicopter parenting. As parents have their own concern about raising their children in certain manner, it is important to understand the underlying mechanism of parenting style. Therefore, this chapter also describes the theoretical framework. The associated mental health issues and supportive psychological intervention to be also discussed.

Keywords: helicopter parenting, parenting style, psychological effects, mental health, intervention

1. Introduction

Parenting and parenting style are crucial determinants of an individual's upbringing and later functioning. Parenting style constitutes a myriad of attitudes and a pattern of behavior through which parental authority is conveyed to the child across a variety of settings and situations. This in turn helps to provide the emotional environment where the child learns and models how to perceive and act in the larger macrocosm of society [1]. Supportive and sensitive parenting contends healthy behavioral and emotional development of children [2]. The word parenting is derived from the Latin verb "parere," which means "to bring forth, develop, or educate." Hence, parenting has been defined as "purposive activities aimed at ensuring the survival and development of children." It is considered as an activity that nurtures a child and fosters the development of their overall personality. The influence

of parenting is everlasting and related to various aspects of the development of child [3]. Parental behavior influences the development of the child by demonstrating the patterns of rules, discipline, and other behaviors. According to Okpaka [4], parenting is an act of parenthood for the purpose of child upbringing and child education. Each parenting style affects the overall development of child. The present chapter highlights the associated aspects of helicopter parenting and related issues of adolescents, raised by helicopter parenting. The chapter also highlights the important psychological intervention for parents and adolescence.

2. Parenting style

To raise the children, parents adopt a set of strategy that has a lifelong impact on the development of child. Parental investment begins right from pregnancy and continues throughout the rest of parent's life without a break. The ultimate goal of parenting is to develop children into well adjusted, productive, caring, and happy member of society. Parenting style represents standard strategies, which are used in child rearing practices. These practices are varied, and parents adopt a myriad of strategies to socialize and control their children [5, 6].

Baumrind in her seminal study identified four major types of parenting styles, that is, authoritative, neglectful, permissive, and authoritarian. These were categorized along a continuum of responsiveness (parental warmth) and demand (parental control). Parental control belongs to set realistic rules for their children. Various factors influence the development of adolescence, but parenting style counted as the most influential one, compared to other socializing factors. Parental warmth is also known as parental responsiveness. This behavior encapsulates the acceptance of and being responsible toward the behavior of children than being rejected and unresponsive [7].

2.1 Authoritative style

This refers to a parenting style that is a combination of control, warmth, and autonomy. This is characterized by flexibility, rational discipline, exercising control only when required, and allowance of freedom to children so that they act responsibly and independently. Parents who adopt this style are rational in using the set rules while simultaneously explain the same to their children. Authoritative parents set high standards and clear expectations, as well as use discipline based on proper reasoning, and monitor their children's behavior. This parenting style also involves sharing the parent's experiences to encourage the children to take rational decision [8].

2.2 Authoritarian style

It is characterized with strict discipline, punitive style. Authoritarian parents provide their children with restrictive and strict directives to prompt them to follow the set rules. The overall appearance of such parents is cold, not open to discuss with their children, rejectable and emphasizes on strict discipline and values over independent behavior. Such parenting style leaves children with feeling of unhappy, anxious, and low self-esteem along with rebellious attitude and dependent traits [8, 9].

2.3 Permissive style

It is characterized by less control and high warmth as well as a tendency to allow children to take the decision by themselves even if they are not capable enough of

doing so. The mindset that is reflected in such a parenting style is that love may be expressed solely by providing full freedom to their children and fulfilling whatever they wish for. Permissive parents love and are openly effective; however, they have no limit settings despite children's safety is at stake [10]. These parents are warm and passive but not demanding. They make very few demands from their children but allow the children's freedom to behave in any manner they please. Children of these parents develop a sense of insecurity, fear, aggression and anxiety.

2.4 Uninvolved parenting style

This involves parents displaying low responsiveness and little communication and may entail rejection and neglecting their children. These parents are not only uninvolved and disengaged but also unresponsive and do not put any demands on their offspring. The children of these parents become disobedient, low in self-control, demanding, low frustration tolerance, and difficulty in planning [8, 10].

3. Helicopter parenting

While parenting styles today are still understood largely in the context of the aforementioned styles, the turn of the century led to focusing on a new style of parent-child interaction that appeared to emerge. By the 1990s, American media identified a pattern of interaction and parenting practices that were based on a consistent pattern of "hovering" and hence that were dubbed as "helicopter parents" [11]. According to Hirsch and Goldberger [12], "helicopter parenting is a process of distinctive parent that never allowed their children to make mistakes and trapped in the cave of stress." Such parenting style involves behaviors wherein the parents constantly nurture their children, providing them with support and minimal space that may impede development of problem-solving skills and decision-making skills. These parents are overprotective and authoritative such that they decide the present and future steps of their children, without demonstrating and teaching their children the adequate skills so that they can be independent. The notion of helicopter parenting has received frequent controversial debates in western culture in between the psychologist, parents, and school teachers. Dr. Haim Ginott [13] first described helicopter parenting in his book "parent and teenagers." According to him, the parents hover like helicopter carefully and observe each and every movement of their children. This style of parenting is a type of "over-parenting in which parents apply overly involved and developmentally inappropriate tactics to their children".

The primary motivation for the parent's "hyperinvolvement" appears to stem from parental anxiety about negative outcomes that their child might face [14]. Such parenting practices have been found to lead to greater degree of internalizing disorders not only in young children but also in middle children [15, 16]. Within young adults, helicopter parenting was found to be related to greater degrees of neuroticism, lower openness to experience, and greater dependency as well as reduced psychological wellbeing [17]. While primarily believed to have long-term negative outcomes, there still exists a dearth of research with regard to the phenomenon [18].

3.1 Helicopter parenting and associated causal factors

Parenting styles and parenting behaviors do not develop in isolation. Each form of parenting has a base that strengthens and nurtures the style the parent adopts. Literature has implicated certain causal factors, such as parental regret, parental

anxiety, gender, and culture as contributing to the development of helicopter parenting. Furthermore, the consequences of this style of child rearing on various aspects that range from physical, social, and psychological wellbeing of emerging adults have been elucidated [7]. Parental traits of overparenting (i.e., utilization of parental assistance, directiveness, problem solving, and aid at a level that is developmentally inappropriate for the child) not only have been found to have strong consequences on the later behavior and development of the child but also have been seen as being derived from parental and child characteristics. This implies that there exists certain trait that may lead the latter to engage in overparenting practices.

3.1.1 Parental anxiety

The overprotectiveness and enmeshment that are seen in the course of helicopter parenting are often believed to have evolved as a result of parental anxiety. The parental characteristic of anxiety predisposes the parent to view their offspring as more vulnerable and unlikely to be able to cope with the demands of daily life. Child's vulnerability toward the outside world makes the parents worried and therefore results in behaviors such as overinvolvement in their child's life to assuage their own anxiety [14, 15]. Due to parental anxiety, there are more restrictions for participating in outdoor play activities, walking alone to school, staying till late evening at friend's place, and also not allowing for night outs. These types of restriction hamper healthy physical and social development of the child [16–19]. Due to projection by the parent of their worries on to their child and the consequent solution, overprotection occurs [20]. However, it must be noted that overprotection is not the sole element that constitutes overparenting. Rather, a primary motivation that is seen as determining overparenting practices is that of harm reduction.

Parental anxiety can occur due to social factors such as child abuse, addiction, and bullying; therefore, parents are more concerned about their child's safety and hence unknowingly become overprotective. In an analysis by Nelson [21], greater degree control in parenting was observed in those parents who showed greater preoccupation with environmental dangers. For instance, if child hurt himself while playing, parent can become conscious toward their child's safety and would accompany next time child goes out to play. As children grow and proceed for college, the parents experience separation anxiety. They sense feeling of insecurity and nondetachability, which turn into greater psychological control on child despite knowing that their child has grown-up. Parent's reaction and intensity of emotions can heighten the anxiety in children as well [22].

3.1.2 Parental regret

Apart from parental anxiety, another determining factor in the phenomenon of overparenting is that of parental regret. Meta-analytic reviews [23] have identified regret in the domain of parenting as the fourth most commonly experienced regret. The occurrence of parental regret is further compounded by what is known as the principle of lost opportunity. This principle proposes that an individual faces a greater degree of regret when presented with an opportunity to correct the same. In the context of parenting, as the child grows older, the opportunities for direct control over his/her life reduce and the child finds himself veering toward psychological separation and individuation. A reaction to this separation from the family of origin may result in a reaction on part of the parents wherein they find themselves becoming increasingly involved and responsible for the child's wellbeing, expressing lament over perceived failure in fostering the child's development as well as regret about the time lost. Furthermore, parents experiencing greater degrees of regret

might find themselves vicariously trying to obtain fulfillment and self-actualization by way of the child [24]. Additionally, parental projection of their own goals on to the growing child further may promote helicopter parenting. This regret operates indirectly, by augmenting parental anxiety and thereby leading to greater degrees of overcontrol. For example, lack of opportunities to fulfill own personal goals (e.g., parent's unfulfilled desire to become a surgeon) as well as realization of lost opportunities to fulfill parenting goals (e.g., the realization that the child going off to college will leave the parent with less time to interact with him/her) leads to an increase in personal anxiety. Furthermore, the personal goals of the parent become enmeshed with his/her goals for his child, and to manage their own anxiety, it becomes projected on the child, and hyperinvolvement is chosen as the way for them to manage and control their own anxiety [25].

People generally realize the lack of satisfaction in their job around at the age of 40. No matter how much they want to fulfill their dreams in the middle age, the abundance of responsibilities makes it difficult to do so. Therefore, parents treat their children as an individual they drive to fulfill their dreams through their child. To ensure the accomplishment of their unfulfilled dreams, parents participate in every decision-making step of their child's life, whether it be academic pursuits, such as school or university as well as every little thing that makes them more anxious. Parental regret makes parents anxious that makes them more involved in their children's life [26]. Other than the past unfulfilled desires of parents, the phase of transition is also a contributing factor of helicopter parenting. In post-adolescent phase when child move out to live independently, parents experience the guilt. No matter how much involved they are with their children, the realization of not spending more time bothers them a lot; hence, they regret of not spending more quality time with their children. Thus, parental regret is indirectly related to helicopter parenting.

3.1.3 Culture

Culture drives the formation and sharing of beliefs across individuals. People belonging to similar cultures share similar belief system and display similar behavioral tendencies. The individual's sociocultural context also guides their personal and social lives [27]. The cultural heritage of country and family may also be viewed as a causal influence in the development of the parenting style practiced by parents.

The literature suggests the existence of different types of parenting style in eastern and western culture as people have different set patterns of behavior according to their cultural norms. Studies suggest that parents who belong to eastern culture prefer interdependence while raising their children, whereas on the other side, the parents of western culture follow independence in their parenting style [28]. Therefore, the values, belief, and ethnicity of parents affect the parenting style.

The comparative studies on parents belong to deferent origin but staying in another country concluded of following the parenting practices that were followed in their native country. Comparative cultural studies on Asian-American and Caucasian-American parenting style suggest the ill effects of Asian parenting style on psychological wellbeing of the child [29]. Asian-American parents focus on obedience, reliable, family-oriented, well-manners, and social obligation by following the cultural style control. Similar to helicopter parenting, the Asian parents also practice the authoritarian parenting. In western culture, Asian parenting and helicopter parenting are considered harmful for the growth of child. Studies on Korean-American parents suggest the higher academic expectations from their children [28]. Hence, the belonging and root of parents lead them toward a particular style of parenting that later affects the development of the

child. However, cultural difference in helicopter parenting style is controversial [28] and requires more research work.

3.1.4 Gender

Evidence from gender-based studies talks about the different individual traits and sets the behavior of raising child. Parenting by mothers and fathers is experienced differently by children [30, 40]. The literature suggests the use of empathy, warmth, and kindness, while rearing girls is more common, whereas with boys, more of aggressive, physical punishment, and dominance is used [44]. Mother's over parenting is perceived caring and with freedom than father by boys; however, the daughters perceive it as controlling and over involved [31, 42]. The perception of parenting also varies in different genders. Generally, young adults prefer to communicate with their mothers and also more connected than father. Due to high inclination toward their mother, there are higher chances of absorbing the traits of becoming a helicopter parent in future [17, 19].

As society has set different roles and responsibilities for both genders, the scenario is changing but not completely [41]. The children also tend to perceive the same. The general thinking is that raising a child is female's responsibility; hence, there are more expectations from mother. Therefore, mostly father's hovering can be seen as protective and involved, whereas the over parenting of mother can be perceived, overwhelming, and suffocating [30].

4. Psychological effects of helicopter parenting

Every parent wants to raise their child with love, support, and care. While taking care of their children, they use different kinds of approaches. This used approach invokes a range of responses and reactions in children and later impacts the psychological, emotional, social, and interpersonal development. The helicopter parenting can influence child in a negative, positive, or mixed manner. Children of helicopter parenting have been found with higher life satisfaction and better psychological wellbeing [28]. On the other hand, the children raised with helicopter parenting style have been observed to display a difficulty in decision making [19].

4.1 Positive impact

Theoretically, greater degree of parental involvement, help, and directiveness leads the child to develop the belief that they are worthy of intensive care and attention from others and impede the development of age appropriate coping skills. As evidenced by Kohut [31], explication of the role of parenting in the development of narcissism, the enmeshed boundaries, and overinvolvement on part of the parent leads to preventing the child from experiencing failures and preventing development of a self that is independent and self-reliant, leading to the child's constant reassurance and approval seeking. These include the experiencing of higher satisfaction by the young adults during college life. Children also end up with better psychological wellbeing and higher life satisfaction. The research studies suggest positive correlation with psychological and behavioral control with parental involvement and, however, negatively associated with school engagement and parental autonomy [32]. Children of helicopter parenting have been found with educational gains and satisfaction in academics with the help of parental engagement [33].

4.2 Negative impact

Majorly, children coming from a background of parental overprotectiveness display a greater tendency to utilize dysfunctional emotion focused on coping strategies (such as fantasizing and greater self-preoccupation). Thus, due to overabundance of intervention and problem solving on part of the parent, the child does not face the developmentally appropriate challenges that aid the building of necessary coping skills. However, there exist several factors that further mediate the relationship between parental overcontrol and consequent childhood anxiety. This is further corroborated by reports evidencing higher degree of neuroticism among children whose parents display helicopter parenting [34]. These factors primarily constitute the competencies within the child, such as maladaptive cognitive beliefs regarding their own sense of autonomy and ability to perform tasks. Parental overcontrol is linked to reduce self-perceived confidence and psychological wellbeing that influence the development of adequate coping skills [35]. Longitudinal studies concluded difficulty in emotional regulation at the age of 2, difficulty in inhibitory control at the age of 5, and more emotional and school problems at the age of 10. Parenting style even during toddlerhood impacts self-regulatory skills that later affect the adjustment of child into adolescence [29].

5. Mental health of children and helicopter parenting

5.1 Anxiety

Young adults reared with helicopter parenting style have been observed to be more prone to developing separation anxiety and panic attacks. The separation anxiety leads by parents and by the child often leads to homesickness at the campus during night [36, 37]. Studies have also acknowledged the chances of social anxiety among young adults as a result of hover parents over protectiveness. During college life, parental intrusion and control affect the autonomy of young adults leading to a sense of lack of autonomy and control over their life. Over and above affect the child psychologically and increase the chances of anxiety disorder [28]. The incapability of solving day-to-day problems can also lead adolescents toward anxiety. Maladaptive cognitive schema and impaired autonomy were resulted through over controlling nature of mother [14]. The constant efforts and investing quality time of helicopter mother for updating the child's intelligence may lead to high anxiety in the child [19]. The study by Schiffrin et al. [29] suggests that insisting by parents on perfectionism in children heightens the certainty of anxiety disorders among young adults and adolescents.

5.2 Maladaptive perfectionism

Parents having higher expectations regarding academic performance from their children often lead to behaviors that convey that whatever their child is doing is never good enough. Therefore, children of such parents often experience greater emotional distress when they make some mistakes and also tend to be more anxious, more self-critical, and depressed. This tendency of getting afraid while making a mistake and blaming themselves for not being perfect termed as "maladaptive perfectionism" [41]. Research highlights that the anxiety can be triggered among the kids who already facing some social issues by helicopter parenting. In a research (done on parents and their children), the children were given 10-minute time period to complete as many puzzles as possible. Parents were given freedom to help their

children; however, at the same time, they were not encouraged to do. It was noticed that the children with social issues were helped by their parents often than the other parents did. Even when the children did not ask the parents to step in, they were not negative or critical. The findings suggested that parents of children with social issues perceive challenging situation more threatening than children. Moreover, it diminishes the ability of a child to succeed on their own and increases the anxiety [29, 38].

5.3 Acting out behavior

Studies focusing on maternal involvement suggested the same as being an important factor in developing healthy behavior among children at the adolescent stage. The positive effects of increased autonomy by mother on self-worth, reading grades, and control understanding in children have been reported in the literature. More school involvement by mothers was associated with increased acting-out behaviors and learning problems. Hence, parental involvement has been found associated with the mental health (externalizing behavioral problems) of children entering into adolescence [39]. Children of helicopter parents describe their parents as emotionally supportive and involved although they also report of having a feeling that they were not given sufficient autonomy support by their parents [40]. The wellbeing of children of autonomy supportive parents is high as autonomy is considered one of the basic psychological need that helps children in problem-solving and decision-making processes [41, 42].

5.4 Poor self-regulation

Low self-efficacy, lack of trust among peers, and alienation from peers were associated with helicopter parenting. Helicopter parenting was also found to be associated with low self-esteem that made children dependent on family members. Children of helicopter parenting are prone to depression in adulthood [43–46]. Helicopter parenting is found to have lower quality of parent-child communication and lower family satisfaction [22]. Poor self-regulation was seen as another outcome of helicopter parenting.

A study investigating the role of helicopter parenting and parental involvement concluded that children of helicopter parents were dependent on their parents to solve the problems due to having habit of getting help by their parents in every minor task. On the contrary, the normal parenting style found to be associated with adjustment and competence. Helicopter parenting affects child's learning and development that result into poor self-regulation and childhood anxiety. Higher anxiety, depression, stress, and poorer academic adjustment were reported by children of authoritarian and permissive parents. Higher level of depression was reported by the children whose parents are controlling and do not provide tee privacy [47, 48].

6. Theories that explains the helicopter parenting

Three theories of developmental psychology explain the process of helicopter parenting and relation with offspring [49].

6.1 Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory highlights three needs that are innate and necessary for the healthy development and functioning of human being. These needs are the need for autonomy, the need for competence, and the need for relatedness (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1.
The negative effects on psychological wellbeing according to self-determination theory.

There is sense of greater satisfaction when all these psychological needs are met. Helicopter parenting may reduce child's sense of autonomy and competence and also undermine their relationship with their children. The theory suggests the violation of these psychological needs, which is associated with the negative outcome of controlling parenting style [50].

6.2 The circumplex model of family system

Three family dynamics, that is, cohesion, flexibility, and communication, are used in this model. According to this model, the family members share emotional bonding [49]. Model highlights the four levels of cohesion, that is, disengaged, separated, connected, and enmeshed. There are four levels of flexibility, that is, flexibility, rigid, structured, and chaotic, which have an important share in parenting style.

According to the model, problems emerge when the cohesion of family or the boundaries of family members are either enmeshed (extremely close) or detached (disengaged). With helicopter parenting style, the family cohesion is likely to be at the extremely high-cohesion level (enmeshed) because the little independence is granted and boundaries are thin. Four levels of flexibility of circumplex model of family systems suggest the balance in family functioning. Extreme levels of flexibility either extremely high or extremely low usually have problems with helicopter parenting rigid level of flexibility, or extreme inflexibility exists. Therefore, helicopter parenting is an unbalanced family system wherein the imbalance hampers children.

6.3 Family differentiation theory

According to family differentiation theory, the balance of family interaction is important for healthy development of child. When the interpersonal boundaries are blurred, the sense of autonomy and individuality does not build up. With helicopter parenting, the boundaries are blurred; hence, it affects behavioral, cognitive, and emotional development and psychosocial adjustment during adolescence [49].

7. Assessment and intervention

The phenomenon of helicopter parenting is one, which is still under developing study and research. Research regarding intervention strategies to help ease and reduce the over-involvement practices is still in its nascent stage. Before providing the intervention, the several domains of parenting associated with children should be assessed. Hence, a detailed assessment helps therapist to deal with the parental behavior and children's as well. The assessments can include as follows:

1. family dysfunctions
2. communication pattern
3. personality assessment
4. helicopter parenting assessment [17, 51, 52].

7.1 Psychotherapeutic intervention with helicopter parenting can be conceptualized as teaching them how to

- a. Allow the child to participate independently in age-appropriate activities offering support and “can-do” encouragement.
- b. Allow the child to learn from mistakes and react with empathy and support when the consequences are experienced.
- c. Encourage the child to solve problems alone or with minimal guidance only when requested.
- d. Utilize the techniques of positive discipline to facilitate responsible behavior and independent thinking.
- e. Offer the unconditional love for the child that is not based on behavior or accomplishments.
- f. Encourage the child to plan for the future by setting long- and short-term personal goals.

7.2 Parental behavior, rational, and useful psychotherapeutic strategies

- i. **Identifying inappropriate and expensive fears regarding the child's welfare and the development of more realistic expectations:** Therapist needs to understand parent's behavior and role as a parent along with the set boundaries as well. Therapist also needs to have a contextual understanding

of the roots of parental-over involvement. Strategies to be followed:
(a) Reviewing the parent's histories and their concerns about their child's needs and definition of their role in the parent-child dyad. This helps identifying further strategies to be employed (e.g., parental regret would be addressed in a manner different from anxiety, at a cognitive level) [11, 53].
(b) Psychoeducation about "positive" parenting versus overprotective parenting and how they may play a role in child pathology.

ii. Hyperinvolvement and over protectiveness of parents toward the child:

The rationale of this target behavior is to help parents identify behaviors that maybe contribute to maintenance of dependency in child and build an insight into the parenting practice. Psychotherapeutic strategy for such behavior is monitoring and identifying behaviors that constitute "overparenting" and thoughts surrounding the situation.

iii. Discuss the benefits of allowing the child to gain wisdom from the experience of making mistakes:

Targeting this behavior works on bringing an insight into parents regarding their overinvolvement in child's life. Therapist assists the parents in creating a list of the benefits to both the parent and the child, allowing the child to learn from mistakes (e.g., child learns to accept responsibility for the outcome of both good and bad decisions). Therapy sessions also target on teaching parents to express empathy and understanding when the child struggles with the result of poor judgment or irresponsible behavior without interfering to prevent the teaching value of the consequence.

iv. Outline circumstances in which the child can safely learn from the consequences of a mistake or poor decision:

The rationale of targeting this behavior is to allow the client to gain a gradual confidence in his/her ability to handle problems independently. The strategies are to be used. (a) Barnstorming with the parents help children to learn from the consequences of a poor decision without creating significant danger, destruction, or distress. (b) Assign the parents to identify the circumstances in which they have allowed their child to struggle with the consequences of a personal mistake or poor judgment.

v. Implement strategies at home designed to foster responsible behavior:

The rationale here is to allow the child to develop gradual independence and foster beliefs in the self-reliance of the child. Sessions aim on instructing the parents to facilitate responsibility in the child by: (a) giving the child a manageable task; (b) allowing any mistake to become a learning opportunity; (c) using consequences to teach appropriate behavior; and (d) giving the same task again to check for learning.

vi. Parental anxiety prompting overprotective behaviors:

The goal is to help parents target and alter potential contributing cognitions that may lead to the parental overinvolvement. The useful psychotherapeutic strategies to target parental anxiety and overprotective behaviors are cognitive reframing and reattribution.

Besides the aforementioned description, there is another therapeutic model that can also be utilized to improve dysfunctional parenting practices.

7.3 Positive parenting program

Positive parenting program (PPP) was developed by Sanders [1, 54]. This triple P is a multilevel parenting and family support system. The main goal of this intervention is to increase knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents. The program conceptualized five developmental periods from infancy to adolescence, and at each period, range of program either can be broad and target the entire population or can be specific and target only at risk children.

The primary principles of this therapy are as follows:

- a. ensuring a safe, engaging environment;
- b. taking care of oneself as a parent;
- c. creating a positive learning environment;
- d. using assertive discipline; and
- e. having realistic expectations.

The specific goals of the therapy are as follows:

- 1. promoting self-sufficiency of parents;
- 2. increase parental self-efficacy;
- 3. using self-management tools such that parents may change parenting practices for the better (self-assessment, setting goals, and choosing child management techniques);
- 4. promoting personal agency; and
- 5. promoting problem solving.

Figure 2.
The levels of positive parenting program module.

Levels of modules: The module covers five levels that have been developed to extend across a variety of specific situations (**Figure 2**).

The module works on specific situation differently by using the suitable therapeutic technique. Overall, the psychoeducation, parental behavior, emotional resilience, mental gym, cognitive restructuring, promoting constructive coping, and so on all included in the module that works differently in every therapy session according to the problem [50, 51].

8. Case studies

“Sarah was a 24 year graduate of a BTech program from a reputed public college. She recently moved towns to pursue a job at an IT company. Sarah was worried about the impact of her decision to move on her mother, who having divorced her father when Sarah was just 7 years old, was close to retirement. Sarah’s mother was a middle-school teacher, who had dedicated her entire life to raising her daughter post her divorce. Sarah described herself as being a shy child, who would often get bullied at school for her stutter. Although sessions with a speech therapist had reduced her speech impediment and growing up, she gained a greater deal of self-confidence, she often grappled with anxiety attacks. Sarah described her mother, saying that although she was extremely caring and patient towards her, she felt that her mother would often be excessively cautious and would limit Sarah from going out and enjoying with her friends. This often led to disagreements between the two, and Sarah reported often times feeling guilty post the arguments as she felt that her mother was only trying to look out for her. When Sarah began college, she noticed the disagreements between her mother and herself began to increase. She recalled being extremely annoyed with her mother for questioning her every time she wanted to hang out with her friends, and when she would go on to check her phone. Sarah described being mortified when once her mother went to speak to her teacher about a missed assignment, and recalled worrying about her classmates thinking of her as incompetent at dealing with something as talking to a professor. She gradually began feeling resentful towards her mother, especially when the latter involved herself in Sarah’s break up. This prompted Sarah to take up the job in the other city, stating that she wanted some time away from her mother’s ‘constant nagging.’ However, she also felt guilty and was worried whether she would be able to independently handle things. Although at the start of her new job, Sarah felt optimistic, she found herself being increasingly walked over at office, and began taking on more work than necessary. This made her feel burdened and stressed and she began feeling an increase in her anxiety levels. Furthermore, she began to feel that people at her office did not treat her as nicely as they should and she began feeling that perhaps they did not think highly of her. Because of an increased work load, Sarah found it difficult to handle her domestic affairs as well. When she shared these difficulties at work with her mother, she was shocked to see her mom deciding to come to live with her so as to help her out with her problems. Sarah found herself feeling increasing apprehensive about her mother’s arrival and upon recurrent anxiety attacks at the thought of her mother going to talk to her boss, Sarah decided to seek out professional help.”

“John was a 36 year old single-father of a 16 year old boy. Having had a child at the young age of twenty and being cut off by his family, John was forced to quit medical school and seek out a job to support his family. John had worked several odd jobs and finally found a stable job as a car salesperson. When his son was

4 years old, he had lost his wife in an accident and was forced to raise his son on his own. John described his son as having had a weak immune system as a child, and would fall ill often. As a result, John would constantly worry about his son falling severely ill and hence growing up would stop his child from playing outdoors as often as his peers. This resulted in his son often reacting angrily and asserting that John did not care about him like other parents. John's son was academically above average and won several accolades from school. John found himself hoping that his son would become a surgeon and make a name and a comfortable living for himself. However, John's son stated he was not particularly interested in medicine. John stated that since early childhood he would try to fulfill all the desires of his son. He reported that he would not reprimand his son in case he caused mischief, often times defending his son and blaming the school authorities for mismanagement. Lately, John reported noticing that his son has become increasingly arrogant towards others and would even talk back to John if he does not fulfill his demands."

9. Conclusion

Parenting and parenting style are an intricate and complex phenomenon that is determined by a number of factors, both individual and contextual. Furthermore, parenting choices not only yield a here-and-now result but also have long-lasting implications on the psychophysiological health of the child. From the original conceptualization of parenting style as constituting only four typologies, that is, authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and negligent, the terrain of parenting styles has greatly evolved. The turn of the twentieth century demonstrated the phenomenon of another approach to parenting, dubbed "overinvolved or helicopter" parenting. Helicopter parenting not only was seen as evolving from the parent's own anxiety but was also mediated by their regrets and factors within the child (such as his or her vulnerabilities). These anxieties, shaped by sociocultural beliefs about parenting practices and the parent's gender, prompt the parent to engage in practices that involve hyperinvolvement, problem solving, and directiveness toward the child. Such behaviors yield several potential consequences on the development of the child. Research has been mixed in the determination of the impact of helicopter parenting. While certain studies have evidenced a greater deal of satisfaction by young adults during their college life, there has also been a great deal of studies implicating an increase in mental health difficulties (such as anxiety, depression, and malignant narcissism) as well as poorer self-regulatory and coping skills in the individual. Mediated and understood through the lens of theories such as self-determination and circumplex model, the helicopter parenting is a phenomenon that provides several avenues of research and early intervention strategies to mitigate potential negative consequences.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Note

All the figures are originals. To make the content impressive, these are prepared by author in smart art format word document.

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