

Exploring Parental Control and its Impact on Secondary Level Students' Attitude Towards Studies

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Abstract

In the present study, we examined the relationship between parental control and secondary level students' attitude towards studies. The population of the study was the male and female Secondary level students and their parents of all the boys' and girls' government secondary schools of Tehsil Sargodha. A sample of 150 students of the 10th class and their parents were selected on an availability basis from the randomly selected 30 secondary schools including 10 Boys and 20 Girls schools. Two self-developed research instruments including one for parents' control and the other for students' attitude were used. To analyse the data, statistical calculations including frequency, percentage, mean score, standard deviation, t-test, one-way ANOVA and correlation were used. The findings showed that the parents with more public dealing professions tend towards the strict and highly strict level of parental control and there exist a positive and moderate relationship between parental control and students' attitude towards studies. The study recommends that parent teacher regular meetings may be organized for parents 'awareness to adopt better control strategy.

Keywords: Parental control, Attitude towards studies, Secondary level students

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Introduction

Parents ensure the good education of their children. So, they keep control of their children to abstain their deviation from education. Parental control may be referred to a managing the children lives towards the maturity of their children's life by demanding the ways in which they are connected (Agabrian, 2007). Parental control affects a lot on children learning (Denga & Denga, 2007). Similarly, according to Nye, et. al. (2006) parental control affects the children's performance in and outside the school. Parental control helps to manage the children's lives towards maturity of their children's life by demanding the ways in which they are connected (Agabrian, 2007).

When parental control is used as a supplementary tool with school activities, it increases children's involvement in studies and improvement in academic achievement. So, it can be said that parents play a central role in both the school and home environments. According to Bryan (2005), the learning environment at the higher secondary level may be more complex than in elementary schools, and academic expectations from students are increased.

The understanding between parents and children may be seen as: psychological, biological, historical, social, educational, and anthropological aspects. Gurland and Grolnick, (2005) described five indicators of parental control i.e., psychological control, emotional control, social control, motivational control and behavioural control.

Psychological control means parents control the child's adolescent behaviour, such as guilt induction, manipulation of love extraction, and restrictive approval (Hill & Craft, 2003; Ross et al. 2002) e. g. affection withdrawal, and/or the manipulation of the parent-child relationship (Barber, 2002). Emotional control is the capability to control own feelings e.g., deep breathing, producing some good emotions, etc. (Landau, Kay & Whitson, 2015). Social control is choosing the atmosphere for own advantage e.g., censorship, or bindings on political liberty and motivational control is the capacity to work on agreed behaviors to apply training activities for example, working harder on challenging tasks, control the flow of a conversation etc. (Robbins, Oh, Le & Button, 2009). Further behavior control is the use of methods such as therapeutic techniques, conditioning, etc. to direct behavior in a chosen direction, for example, uniform restriction (Heckhausen, 2015).

Emotions are physical or psychological changes in the results of feelings, which influence behaviour. Further according to Hill & Craft, (2003), emotional control is a kind of social intellect which involves the

ability to control the own and others' emotions and to use this information for guidance of the thinking and actions of a person. However, it refers mainly to attempts by a person to handle the generation, experience, or expression of emotion, and one's an emotional reaction (Ross et al., 2002). Academic emotions are emotions related to any achievement upshot e.g., anxiety, pride, shame linked to success and failure, etc. or activities of achievement e.g., enjoyment of learning, boredom experienced in reviewing online materials, anger at the task demands, etc. (Pekrun et al. 2007). Positive emotion can widen thought-action repertoires (Fredrickson, 2001).

Social control is the patterns of pressure that society exerts to sustain order and established rules (Jason, 2012). On activity disruption in academics, parents' social control may help in students' activeness (Wilson, Spink, & Priebe, 2010) e.g., law, bindings on political liberty, etc. (Robbins, Oh, Le & Button. (2009)

According to Gurland & Grolnick, (2005) parents work to supports their children's motivation. Motivation is the attribute that moves a person for doing something or not (Broussard & Garrison (2004). Motivation is a key factor in the learning and achievements of student in all levels of School. Teachers' and parents' role is very important for motivating students to study. Teachers uses many techniques for students such as providing a learning environment, Sparking Interest, giving feedback and rewards etc. It is a very difficult task to motivate students to do something. It is time consuming and a lot of effort is required for motivating the students (Tuckerman, 2003). According to Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), motivation can be Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is an inner force or drive in human nature that motivates students to engage in academic activities independently, have an interest to face challenges, and enjoy the learning process while Extrinsic motivators include parental expectations, expectations of other trusted role models, earning potential grades and may be enhanced through rewards, praise, punishments, public recognition and phone calls to home (Adamma, Ekwutosim, Unamba, 2018).

Behaviour control is patterns of behaviour, which parents use for dealing with children's situations. Behavioural control is parental efforts to check and guide their children such as monitoring, discipline and rule-setting (Hill & Craft, 2003) Insufficient behavioural control is a risk factor for adolescent's because behavioural control refers to the regulation of children's behaviour (Barber & Harmon, 2002).

These patterns of parental control, broken down further, with respect to particular clusters like promoting conformity, enriching the child's home

environment, and encouraging independence, can enhance the attitude of students toward their studies. Students' attitude towards studies is taken as the mental activities of the students about their studies (Eshghinejad, 2016). Moreover, parental control increases the risk that youth have drug-using friends, and prevent antisocial associations and conduct problems (Watson, Sifers, & Houlihan, 2013).

In western areas of the world, researches have proved that parental control has a direct relationship with the students' attitude towards the studies (e.g., Wu, & Qi, 2006; Hart, Ganley, Purpura, 2016), and these have been supported in Pakistani contexts (e.g., Inam, Nomaan & Abiodullah, 2016). Parental control has been evidenced as related not only with children's higher achievements but also with better behaviour, better social skills and adaptation to school, better attendance, and lower drop-out rates. However, the cultural traditions of parental control and children's upbringing styles are different in Pakistani society. Hence keeping in view these facts this study was opted to determine the relationship between parental controls on secondary level students' attitudes towards studies in Pakistan.

Objectives of the Study

Objective of the study was to find out the relationship between reports of parental control and secondary level students' attitude towards studies.

Research Questions

Following were the research questions to direct the data collection:

1. What types of control do parents report using on their children?
2. What is the impact of the parents' education and occupation on their reported control over the children?
3. What are the differences in reported parental control on the basis of gender and locality?
4. What is the self-reported level of students' attitude towards their studies?
5. Is there any relationship between reported parental control and secondary level students' self-reported attitude towards their studies?

The research was to be significant as it would contribute to practical knowledge about the parental control on the children. In this way, the students' attitude towards studies may be improved. The study would provide a guideline for teachers to help parents of students about parental control on students' attitude towards studies.

Research Methodology

The study was correlational and data was collected through survey technique. According to the time, resources and financial constraints, the study was delimited to Government Secondary Schools in one Tehsil in one district.

The population of the study was all the male and female students studying in 10th class in 142 Boys and 160 Girls Government secondary schools (Total 302) and all their parents. Using multistage random sampling, from gender-based two groups of institutions (10) Boys secondary schools and 20 Girls secondary schools (Total 30) were selected randomly; Five (5) students of 10th class ages 13-14 (ASER-Pakistan, 2010), from each of Government Boys and Girls secondary schools were selected convenient sampling (on availability basis) to make the sample of 150 students and all the parents of the selected students.

Instruments of the study two bilingual questionnaires (in English and Urdu) were developed; one questionnaire for parents about their control over their children and second was attitude scale for students towards studies. The questionnaire for parental control had 27 items such that 4 statements for psychological control, 6 for emotional control, 6 for social control, 5 for behavioural control, and 6 statements for motivational control. Questionnaire for students' attitude toward studies comprised of 10 statements about study, learning environment, parents' pressure, thinking & classroom activities. Both the instruments validated through five experts of both languages i.e. English and Urdu to check the content as well as face validity. The questionnaires were administered to 100 students and their parents for pilot testing. The reliability coefficient Chronbach's alpha (α) was 0.7 for the questionnaire of parental control and 0.766 for the attitude scale which were acceptable. The questionnaires were administered to 150 students of Government secondary schools and their parents (150). Students were approached through self-visit and they were requested to get the questionnaire filled out from their parents and were collected the next day. The received filled questionnaires were 150 so the response rate was 100%. All the data were analysed using mean score, standard deviation, t-test, one-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation.

Data Analysis and Results

Table 1
Parents views about their control on HSSC Students

		Range	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Valid	Laissez faire	>2.5	3	2%	3.76	1.09
	Less control	2.5- 3	16	10.7%		
	Moderate	3.01 – 3.5	45	30%		
	Strict	3.51- 4	35	23.3%		
	Highly strict	4.01- 5	51	34%		
	Total		150	100%		

Table 1 shows that 34% parents with mean score 3.76 and SD= 1.09, responded that they had highly strict control over their children. 23.3% parents responded that they had strict control and 30% of the parents reported that they had a moderate level of control over their children. 11% of the parents responded that they had less control and only 2% of parents responded that they were Laissez faire for their children. The trend showed that majority of the parents used strict and highly strict levels of control on their children.

Table 2
Factor wise analysis of reported parental control

Statement	SA f(%)	A f(%)	UD f(%)	DA f(%)	SDA f(%)	Total f(%)	Mean	SD
Psychological control	166 27.6%	224 37.3%	56 9.3%	96 16%	58 9.6%	600 100%	3.57	1.1
Emotional control	279 31%	310 34.4%	108 12%	134 14.8%	69 7.6%	900 100%	3.66	1.9
Social Control	287 31.8	325 36.1	98 10.8%	104 11.5%	86 9.5%	900 100%	3.68	1.3
Behavioural control	216 28.8%	304 40.5%	80 10.6%	102 13.6%	48 6.4%	750 100%	3.71	1.6
Motivational control	318 35.3%	360 40%	105 11.6%	74 8.2%	43 4.7%	900 100%	3.92	1.0

Table 2 shows that 65% of parents agreed or strongly agreed in use of psychological control; 65.4% of parents agreed or strongly agreed in use of emotional control; 68% of parents agreed or strongly agreed in use of social control; 69% of parents agreed or strongly agreed in use of behavioural control and 75% of parents agreed or strongly agreed in use of motivational

control. Trend shows that majority of the parents mostly use motivational control and then all other types of control i.e. psychological, emotional, social and behavioural controls.

Table 3*Gender wise category of reported parental control*

Gender	Laissez faire	Less control	Moderate	Strict	highly strict	Total
Fathers	2 2.6%	11 14.5%	23 30.3%	15 19.7%	25 32.9%	76 100%
Mothers	1 1.4%	5 6.8%	22 29.7%	20 27%	26 35.1%	74 100%
Total	3 2%	16 10.7%	45 30%	35 23.3%	51 34%	150 100%

Table 3 shows that 52.6% of fathers and 62% of mothers of the students reported to have strict or highly strict control over their children whereas 30% of fathers and mothers reported to have moderate level control over their children. The overall trend showed that mothers have strict and highly strict control over their children as compared to fathers.

Table 4*Location wise categories of reported parental control*

Locality	Laissez faire	Less control	Moderate	Strict	highly strict	Total
Rural	3 7.1%	4 9.5%	15 35.7%	10 23.8%	10 23.8%	42 100%
Urban	0 0.0%	12 11.1%	30 27.8%	25 23.1%	41 38%	108 100%
Total	3 2%	16 10.7%	45 30%	35 23.3%	51 34%	150 100%

Table 4 shows that 47.6% of rural parent and 61% of urban parents reported to have strict or highly strict control over their children whereas 35.7% of rural and 27.8% of urban parents reported to have moderate level control over their parents. The trend showed that Parents of students living in urban areas tend to use strict and highly strict control as compared to parents of the students living in rural areas.

Table 5
Qualification wise categories of reported parental control of father

Qualification of father	Laissez faire	Less control	Moderate	Strict	highly strict	total
Illiterate	0 0.0%	1 100%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 100%
Middle	1 7.7%	1 7.7%	3 23.1%	3 23.1%	5 38.5%	13 100%
Matric	0 0.0%	3 8.6%	16 45.7%	6 17.1%	10 28.6%	35 100%
Intermediate	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2 33.3%	2 33.3%	2 33.3%	6 100%
Bachelor	1 3.6%	3 10.7%	9 32.1%	8 28.6%	7 25%	28 100%
Master	0 0.0%	6 12.2%	10 20.4%	12 24.5%	21 42.9%	49 100%
Others (professional qualification)	1 5.6%	2 11.1%	5 27.8%	4 22.2%	6 33.3%	18 100%
Total	3 2.0%	16 10.7%	45 30%	35 23.3%	51 34%	150 100%

Table 5 shows that the majority of the fathers; (67%) of the fathers with master qualification; 66.6% fathers with intermediate (HSSC) qualifications; 53.6% of fathers with bachelor qualifications, and 55.5% of fathers of the students with other (professional qualification) reported strict and highly strict control over their children. While 45.7% fathers with matric (SSC) qualification and 61.6% of fathers with middle (8th class pass), all reported strict or highly strict control over their children but 45.7% of fathers with matric (SSC) and 23.1% of fathers with middle (8th pass) qualifications reported moderate level control over their children while illiterate fathers have less control. The trend was that as the level of education of fathers increases, they tend towards strict and highly strict control.

Table 6
Occupation wise categories of parental control of father

Occupation of any of parents	Laissez faire	Less control	Moderate	Strict	highly strict	Total
Teacher	0 0.0%	2 9.5%	3 14.3%	7 33.3%	9 42.9%	21 100%
Doctor	0 0.0%	2 18.2%	5 45.5%	1 9.1%	3 27.3%	11 100%
Engineer	0 0.0%	2 25%	2 25%	0 0.0%	4 50%	8 100%

Lawyer	0	1	0	0	3	4
	0.0%	25%	0.0%	0.0%	75%	100%
Labourer	0	1	3	1	5	10
	0.0%	10%	30%	10%	50%	100%
Business men	3	3	14	12	12	44
	6.8%	6.8%	31.8%	27.3%	27.3%	100%
Others (professions) e.g., employees like patwari, clerk, mechanic, plumber, driver etc.	0	5	18	14	15	52
	0.0%	9.6%	34.6%	26.9%	28.8%	100%
Total	3	16	45	35	51	150
	2%	10.7%	30%	23.3%	34%	100%

Table 6 shows that the majority of the parents (57.7%) reported to have strict or highly strict control over their parents. Among them 76% of fathers who were teachers, 75% of fathers who were lawyer, 60% of fathers who were labourer, 54.6% of fathers who were business men, 55.7% of fathers of other professions and 50% of fathers who were engineers, reported to have strict or highly strict control over their children. While 36.4% of fathers who were doctor reported to have moderate or strict control. The trend showed that teaches and engineers use strict and highly strict control while doctors used less strict control; mostly the parents who had more public dealing professions tend towards the strict and highly strict level of parental control over their children.

Students' reported level of Attitude towards studies

The students' reported attitude level of HSSC students towards studies was analysed on the basis of mean score according to the following criteria:

1= very low => 2.5, 2= low =2.5-3, 3= average = 3.01-3.5, 4= high = 3.51- 4, 5= very high=4.01-5

Table 7

Secondary level students' reported attitude towards studies

Attitude Levels	Range	Frequency	Percent	X	SD
Very low	>2.5	2	1.3%		
Low	2.5- 3	22	14.7%		
Average	3.01 – 3.5	45	30%	3.66	1.09
High	3.51- 4	37	24.7%		
Very high	4.01- 5	44	29.3%		
Total		150	100%		

Table 7 showed that 54% students with a favouring mean score of 3.66 and SD= 1.09 had very high and high level attitudes toward studies, whereas

30% of the students had average level attitudes toward studies, 15% students' had low-level attitudes toward studies, and 1.3% students had a very low level attitude towards studies. The trend showed that the majority of the students' possessed average, high, and very high levels of attitude towards their studies.

Table 8*Gender wise analysis of students' attitude towards studies*

Gender	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high	Total
Male	2 2.6%	9 11.8%	20 26.3%	21 27.6%	24 31.6%	76 100%
Female	0 0.0%	13 17.6%	25 33.8%	16 21.6%	20 27%	74 100%
Total	2 1.3%	22 14.7%	45 30%	37 24.7%	44 29.3%	150 100%

Table 8 showed that 48.6% of female and 59.2% of male students had very high-level attitude towards studies, 33.8% female and 26.3% male students had moderate-level attitude towards studies whereas 22% of female and 28% male students had high level attitude towards studies. 18% female and 12% male students had very low-level attitude towards studies. The trend showed that male students had a high and very high-level attitude towards studies as compare to female.

Table 9*Locality wise analysis of students' attitude towards studies*

Locality	Very low	Low	Moderate	High	Very high	total
Rural	0 0.0%	12 28.6%	11 26.2%	12 28.6%	7 16.7%	42 100%
Urban	2 1.9%	10 9.3%	34 31.5%	25 23.1%	37 34.3%	108 100%
Total	2 1.3%	22 14.7%	45 30%	37 24.7%	44 29.3%	150 100%

Table 9 showed that 57.4% students in urban areas and 45.3% students of rural areas have high and very high-level attitude towards studies whereas 31.5% students of urban areas and 26.2% students of rural areas, had moderate level attitude towards studies; 11.2% students, of urban areas and 28.6% students of rural areas have low level and very low-level attitude

towards studies. The trend showed that the level of students' attitude towards the studies tend towards high and very high level in urban areas as compared to students of rural areas.

The data analysis through ANOVA for students' attitudes towards studies with respect to parental control levels is as follows:

Table 10

ANOVA among parents' parental control levels and students' attitude towards studies

Parental control	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	df	p-value
Laissez Fair	32.00	12.28			
Less control	33.31	6.17			
Moderate	35.31	5.30	5.360	149	.000
Strict	35.22	6.70			
Highly strict	39.50	6.01			

The table 10 shows the comparison of all the levels of parental control with students' attitude towards studies. F value = 5.360 is significant at p-value was $.000 < 0.05$, showed that there was significant difference among parents having different level of attitude with respect to parental control level. To find out the difference of parental control levels and attitude towards studies post hoc test was applied and significant results are presented in the next table.

Table 11

Post hoc test

(I) Status parent	(J)Levels of parental control	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Less control	highly strict	-6.19730*	1.75577	.005
Moderate	highly strict	-4.19869*	1.25320	.009
Strict	highly strict	-4.28123*	1.34495	.015

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

This table 11 shows that the attitude towards studies of students of parents having highly strict control was better than students of parents having less control. Similarly, attitude of students of parents having highly strict control were better than students of parents having moderate control. Attitude of students of parents having highly strict control were better than students of parents having strict control. This showed the trend that as the level of parental control increases towards highly strict; the level of the attitude of the students also increases.

Table 12

Relationship between parental control and students' attitude towards studies

S#	Statement	Mean	SD	N	Pearson correlation 'r'	Sig. p-value
1	Parental control	100.58	16.15			
2	Students' attitude towards studies	36.44	6.47	150	0.352	.000

Table 12 shows that Pearson correlation 'r' value was 0.352, and p- value $0.000 < 0.05$, it shows that there was a significant positive and moderate relationship between parental control and students' attitude towards studies.

Table 13

Factor wise relationship between parental control and students' attitude towards studies

S#	Statement	Mean	SD	N	Pearson 'r'	Sig. p-value
1	Parents' Psychological control	14.29	4.07			
	Students' attitude towards studies	36.44	6.47	150	0.363	.000
2	Parents' emotional control	21.97	4.71			
	Students' attitude towards studies	36.44	6.47	150	0.334	.000
3	Parents' social control	22.15	4.29			
	Students' attitude towards studies	36.44	6.47	150	0.199	0.015
4	Parents' behavioural control	18.58	4.00			
	Students' attitude towards studies	36.44	6.47	150	0.202	0.013
5	Parents' motivational control	23.57	4.13			
	Students' attitude towards studies	36.44	6.47	150	0.326	0.000

Table 13 shows Factor wise relationship between parental control and students' attitude towards studies. Here Pearson correlation 'r' value was 0.321, and p-value $0.000 < 0.05$, it shows that there was a significant positive and moderate relationship between parents' psychological control and students' attitude towards studies. Similarly, Pearson correlation 'r' value 0.334, and p-value $0.000 < 0.05$, shows that there was a significant positive and moderate relationship between parents' emotional control and students' attitude towards studies. Moreover, Pearson correlation 'r' value 0.326, and p-value $0.000 < 0.05$, shows that there was a significant positive and moderate relationship between parents' motivational control and students' attitude towards studies. But Pearson correlation 'r' value 0.199, and p-value $0.015 < 0.05$, shows that there was a significant positive and weak relationship between parents' social control and students' attitude towards studies. Likewise, Pearson correlation 'r' value was 0.202, and p-value $0.013 < 0.05$, shows that there was a significant positive and weak relationship between parents' behavioural control and students' attitude towards studies.

Conclusions and Discussion

The conclusion drawn from the findings was as follow:

1. The majority (57.3%) of parents of the secondary level students of public sector schools reported that they had strict control over their children in the aspects of parental control such as: psychological, emotional, social, behavioral, and motivational controls. Parents of the students living in urban areas reported using strict and highly strict control as compared with the parents of the students living in rural areas. Both fathers and mothers reported use of strict and highly strict control on their children but mothers use stricter and highly strict control over their children as compared to fathers. Similarly, Gugliandolo, et al., (2019) found that mothers are more authoritative than fathers which means mothers are stricter to their children. Similarly, according to Shek, (2005) that in Hong Kong there are strict mother, kind father" in contemporary practices.
2. As the level of education of the father increases, they tend towards strict and highly strict control. Similar findings are of Shek, (2005) that a parental educational level is positively related to perceived parental control processes. Mostly, the parents who have more public dealing professions (such as teachers and engineers) tend towards the strict and highly strict level of parental control over their children while doctors reported using less strict control over their children.
3. The majority of the students (84%) possess average, high, and very high level of attitude towards their studies. Students of urban areas have

better high and very high level attitude towards the studies as compared to students of rural areas. In particular, 59% male students reported having high and very high level attitude towards studies as compared to female students (48.6%). This conclusion is in line with findings of Verešová, and Malá, (2016) about study, learning environment, parents' pressure, thinking & classroom activities that girls have better attitude towards school learning possibly due to the less outside activities like boys.

4. There was a significant difference among students having different level of attitude towards studies with respect to parental control level; as the level of parental control incases towards highly strict; the level of the attitude of the students towards studies also increases. Moreover, attitude of students of parents having highly strict control were better than students of parents having strict control and attitude towards studies of students of parents having highly strict control was better than students of parents having moderate and less control. It is in line with the description of Ceka, and Murati (2016) that parenting is reflected in children through his/ her attitudes and thoughts.
5. There was a significant positive and moderate relationship between parental control and students' attitude towards studies. When we see factor-wise relationship, a significant positive and moderate relationship was found between the factors i.e., parents' psychological control, emotional control and motivational control and students' attitude towards studies. But the factors i.e., parents' social and behavioural controls have significant positive and weak relationships with students' attitude towards studies. Desforges and Abouchar (2003) study favors this result; according to them if the parents are fully involved in their children's studies, then they may be able to lead the attitude of their children towards studies.

Recommendations

It is recommended that regular parent teacher meetings may be organized with the Head teacher so that parents may become aware of their children's attitude towards studies and may be able to advise on control strategies.

In contrast to the situation in Pakistan Rudy, and Grusec, (2006) described that, from a USA perspective, the authoritative style (strict control) of parents migrated from Muslim countries was harmful to the children's self-esteem and instead of favouring the use of authoritative parenting style, parents should be moderate; further Park, Kim, Chiang and Ju, (2010) described that to become autonomous children should be made achievement oriented and self-controlled.

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