

Perceived Parenting Styles and Its Impact on Imposter Phenomenon and Life Satisfaction in Youth

Amoli Kapur^{1,*} and Smriti Sethi²

Abstract

Parenting styles play an important role in forming an individual's perception of self, thinking process as well as their overall well-being. However, there is limited research on how different methods of parenting influences imposter feelings and life satisfaction. The aim of the study was the understand the relationship between perceived parenting styles and its impact on imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction among youth population. Data from a sample of 100 participants between the ages of 15 to 24 years was collected for this research and were asked to fill the Perceived Parenting Style Scale, Clance IP Scale and Satisfaction with Life Scale. Results showed that perceived parenting style significantly influences both the imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction of youth. Authoritative parenting showed to be negatively correlated with imposter feelings ($r = -0.468$) while being positively correlated with life satisfaction ($r = 0.427$). Authoritarian parenting, on the other hand, showed a positive relationship with imposter phenomenon ($r = 0.449$) and a negative relationship with life satisfaction ($r = -0.426$). Lastly for Permissive parenting style, correlation with imposter feelings showed to be positive ($r = 0.428$) and negative with life satisfaction ($r = -0.194$). Regression analysis further confirms that perceived parenting styles significantly predict both imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction of the individual with authoritative parenting showing the highest positive impact on both variables.

Keywords: Perceived Parenting Styles, Imposter Phenomenon, Life Satisfaction, Youth

INTRODUCTION

This research paper aims to explore the relationship between perceived parenting styles and the impact it has on imposter phenomenon as well as the life satisfaction of an individual. This study is meant to help explore and understand how an individual's perception of their parents'/caregivers' style of parenting affects imposter phenomenon as well as their overall satisfaction with life [1-11].

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Perceived parenting style can be defined as style of parenting as perceived or understood by the individual in accordance to their childhood and the way in which they have been raised and brought up. Perceived parenting style is characterized as a child's or adolescent's perception of parental behavior patterns during childhood (Stavroulaki *et al.*, [12]2021).

Parenting style refers to the behaviors, approaches, and attitudes parents use to raise their children. Each parent's style significantly impacts a child's development and well-being. Unlike specific parenting practices, which are individual behaviors used to raise children, parenting styles encompass broader patterns of behavior and

attitude that shape a child's environment. They also define how parents respond to their child's needs and make demands or requests (Baumrind, [2]1966). There are 4 styles of parenting identified which are explained as follows:

1. Authoritarian Parenting Style: Characterised by enforcing of high expectations with little nurturing or flexibility. Mistakes often lead to punishment, and communication is one-way (Baumrind, [3]1967).
2. Authoritative Parenting Style: Authoritative parents maintain a strong, supportive bond with their children while setting clear expectations and justify disciplinary actions with explanations (Baumrind, [4] 1991).
3. Permissive Parenting Style: Permissive parents are affectionate and nurturing but impose few demands or rules. Discipline is rare, and expectations are low (Maccoby & Martin, [9] 1983).
4. Uninvolved Parenting Style: Uninvolved parents provide for their child's basic needs but remain detached from their child's emotional and social development (Maccoby & Martin, [9] 1983).

Dr. Pauline Clance introduced the term "Imposter Phenomenon" to describe individuals who feel undeserving of their achievements and fear being exposed as frauds (Clance, [6] 1985). Imposter syndrome was first identified in 1978 by Suzanne Imes and Pauline Clance, originally describing feelings of inadequacy in high-achieving women and marginalized individuals (Clance & Imes, [6]1978). Imposter syndrome can lead individuals to overwork themselves in an attempt to prove their worth, resulting in chronic anxiety and potential depression. Self-doubt persists even with tangible proof of abilities.

Life satisfaction, a concept originally explored by Ed Diener, refers to the evaluation of one's own life. Life satisfaction is an overall assessment of feelings and attitudes about one's life at a particular point in time ranging from negative to positive (Buetell, [5] 2006). It has also been defined as the degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as a whole (Veenhoven, [13] 1996).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ajmani [1] (2024) performed a study to investigate the connection between the imposter phenomenon, self-esteem, and social anxiety in young adults, while also looking into gender variations. The research involved a sample of 76 young adults, consisting of 38 men and 38 women. Statistical analysis included determining the mean, standard deviation, correlation, and t-ratio test. The results revealed a significant inverse relationship between the imposter phenomenon and self-esteem, as well as marked gender differences in these factors.

Mukhtar *et al.*, [11] (2024) investigated the relationship between parentification and the impostor phenomenon in young adults. The research proposed that both parent-centered and sibling-centered parentification would lead to feelings of impostorism. The sample consisted of 157 university students in Karachi (ages 18–25). Regression analysis indicated that both parent-oriented and sibling-oriented parentification significantly forecasted impostor feelings.

Lee, Rinn and Mun [16] (2024) investigated the connection between gender, participation in honors programs, perfectionism, and the imposter phenomenon in undergraduate students. The research indicated that students with academic talent in honors programs are more susceptible to feelings of imposture because of perfectionism and specialized academic settings. Hierarchical regression analysis indicated that socially prescribed perfectionism and involvement in honors programs significantly enhance feelings of being an imposter.

Đuricová, and Ladnová [7] (2024) examined the connection between parenting factors and self-concept in adolescents, considering gender variations in these views. The research, employing a

correlation-comparative approach, comprised 119 subjects aged 11–15. Results showed a notable relationship between perceived parenting and self-image. Gender distinctions appeared in maternal caregiving, as girls had higher scores in negative emotional aspects and requirements, whereas boys demonstrated a greater overall self-concept [8]

Mishra [10] (2024) investigated the connection between perceived parenting approaches, resilience, and life satisfaction among young people. Findings indicated that males demonstrated greater resilience, potentially due to coping strategies unique to their gender. Authoritative parenting showed a positive correlation with resilience and life satisfaction, yet no differences by gender were observed in reported parenting styles or life satisfaction.

Mukhtar and Mahmood [11] (2018) conducted a study to examine the moderating influence of perceived social support on the connection between parenting styles and relational aggression (RA) in a sample of 400 adolescents (200 males, 200 females). Findings indicated that social support influenced these relationships. It diminished the connection between a father's overprotection and RA, while amplifying the relationships between a father's anxious parenting, a mother's rejection, and RA.

METHOD

Aim

The present research was aimed at investigating the impact of perceived parenting style on imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction in the youth population.

Objectives

1. To examine the difference between two age groups of youth ie, 15 to 19 years and 20 to 24 years in perceived parenting style, imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction.
2. To assess the relationship between (authoritative) perceived parenting style and imposter phenomenon in youth.
3. To assess the relationship between (authoritarian) perceived parenting style and imposter phenomenon in youth.
4. To assess the relationship between (permissive) perceived parenting style and imposter phenomenon in youth.
5. To assess the relationship between (authoritative) perceived parenting style and life satisfaction in youth.
6. To assess the relationship between (authoritarian) perceived parenting style and life satisfaction in youth.
7. To assess the relationship between (permissive) perceived parenting style and life satisfaction in youth.
8. Dimensions of perceived parenting style will predict imposter phenomenon in youth.
9. Dimensions of perceived parenting style will predict life satisfaction in youth.

Hypothesis

H01: There will be no significant age difference in perceived parenting styles, imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction between teens and young adults.

H02: There will be no significant relationship between authoritative perceived parenting style and imposter phenomenon in youth.

H03: There will be no significant relationship between (authoritarian) perceived parenting style and imposter phenomenon in youth.

H04: There will be no significant relationship between (permissive) perceived parenting style and imposter phenomenon in youth.

H05: There will be no significant relationship between (authoritative) perceived parenting style and life satisfaction in youth.

H06: There will be no significant relationship between (authoritarian) perceived parenting style and life satisfaction in youth.

H07: There will be no significant relationship between (permissive) perceived parenting style and life satisfaction in youth.

H08: Dimensions of perceived parenting style will not significantly predict imposter phenomenon in youth.

H09: Dimensions of perceived parenting style will not significantly predict life satisfaction in youth.

Variables of the Study

Independent Variable- Perceived Parenting styles

Dependent Variables- Imposter Phenomenon, Life Satisfaction

Description of the Tools Used

a. *Perceived Parenting Style Scale:* The Perceived Parenting Style Scale, developed by Divya and Manikandan [14] (2013), is used to measure the child's perception of their parents'/caregivers' method of parenting and their behaviour. It measures the parenting style as perceived by the individual in three dimensions that are, Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive. It consists of a total of 30 items with 10 items for each dimension.

Reliability: The scale has an acceptable internal consistency across its three dimensions: authoritative (0.79), authoritarian (0.81) and permissive (0.86).

Validity: The scale measures the construct it is intended to measure.

b. *Clance IP Scale:* The Clance Imposter Phenomenon Scale or CIPS is a self-report instrument consisting of 20 items used to measure the extent to which an individual experiences imposter phenomenon or holds a belief about being a fraud or a fake even after being successful.

Reliability: The CIPS has shown high internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.85 to 0.96 across different studies.

Validity: CIPS has demonstrated satisfactory validity across various studies.

c. *Satisfaction with Life Scale:* The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) is a 5 item self-report questionnaire developed by Diener *et al.* [15] (1985) that assesses the individual's satisfaction with their life in a general sense. It is a scale designed for global use and works on the principle of subjective cognitive judgement as done by the individual about their life and circumstances.

Reliability: The SWLS exhibits a high internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.80 across various studies.

Validity: The scale has demonstrated strong convergent and discriminant validity.

Sample

A total sample of 100 young adults between the ages of 15 to 24 years was collected using the method of random sampling.

Inclusion Criteria

Individuals between the ages of 15 to 24 years were selected for the study. Participants who gave their consent.

Exclusion Criteria

Individuals who did not fall under the age range of 15 to 24 years. Participants who did not consent.

Procedure

The current study utilized survey design for collecting the data as required for the research variables. A self-report method was adopted where randomly selected individuals falling under the required age group were asked to fill the questionnaires which were distributed online as well as in a physical setting. Participant confidentiality was maintained at all steps while the explicit consent of the individual as well as guardian was taken before proceeding with the assessment. Instructions were specified in a clear and simple language to make the process easier and accessible.

Statistical Analysis

The data was first analysed for separate age groups ie, 15 to 19 years and 20 to 24 years by the means of t-test for all three variables. Correlation analysis was done afterwards using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient among the three variable for finding the relationship between the dimensions of perceived parenting styles, imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction. Linear regression analysis was done to find out if perceived parenting style dimensions predicted imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction. The Jamovi software was utilized for doing the necessary statistical calculations.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The style of parenting that the individual has been raised by, is likely a contributor to the development of imposter feelings which can, in turn, affect life satisfaction as well. Previous studies explore the impact that perceived parenting styles have on imposter phenomenon as well as on life satisfaction but much is left to be explored in the context of Indian youth.

With this study, the main aim is to understand the perception of the youth individual of their parents'/caregivers' style of parenting and how it has contributed towards the developing of imposter feelings and its overall impact on the life satisfaction.

RESULTS

From the table, we can see differences in the mean and standard deviation of imposter phenomenon (mean = 76.7, SD = 14.96 for 15-19; mean = 69.7, SD = 13.64 for 20-24) and life satisfaction (mean = 16.2, SD = 6.92 for 15-19; mean = 19.5, SD = 8.44 for 20-24). However, not much difference is seen in perceived parenting styles. The t-value was found to be significant for imposter phenomenon ($p = 0.004$) and life satisfaction ($p = 0.011$) but not for parenting styles. (Table 1)

Table 1. N, Mean, Standard Deviation, SDE, t-test and p value of Perceived parenting styles, imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction.

		Group	N	Mean	SD	t-test	P value
Perceived Parenting Style	Authoritative	15-19	50	32.7	8.14	-1.639	0.105
		20-24	50	35.2	6.95		
	Authoritarian	15-19	50	30.7	8.85	1.445	0.152
		20-24	50	28.2	8.72		
	Permissive	15-19	50	26.8	6.91	0.566	0.572
		20-24	50	25.9	8.54		
Imposter Phenomenon		15-19	50	76.7	14.96	2.452	0.016
		20-24	50	69.7	13.64		
Life Satisfaction		15-19	50	16.2	6.92	-2.113	0.037
		20-24	50	19.5	8.44		

Table 2 illustrates the correlation between perceived parenting styles, imposter phenomenon, and life satisfaction. The data show a significant negative correlation between authoritative parenting and imposter phenomenon ($r = -0.468^{***}$) and a positive correlation with life satisfaction ($r = 0.427^{***}$). Authoritarian parenting is positively correlated with imposter phenomenon ($r = 0.449^{***}$) and negatively with life satisfaction ($r = -0.426^{***}$). Permissive parenting shows a weak positive correlation with imposter phenomenon ($r = 0.428^{**}$) and a weak negative correlation with life satisfaction ($r = -0.194$). (Table 2)

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Table for perceived parenting styles, imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction.

			Perceived Parenting Style			Imposter Phenomenon	Life Satisfaction
			<i>Authoritative</i>	<i>Authoritarian</i>	<i>Permissive</i>		
Perceived Parenting Style	Authoritative	Pearson's r	—				
	Authoritarian	Pearson's r	-0.710***	—			
	Permissive	Pearson's r	-0.595***	0.472***	—		
Imposter Phenomenon		Pearson's r	-0.468***	0.449***	0.428***	—	
Life Satisfaction		Pearson's r	0.427***	-0.426***	-0.194	-0.404***	—

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The R^2 values for authoritative (0.219), authoritarian (0.202), and permissive (0.183) parenting styles indicate the extent to which each parenting style explains the variance in the imposter phenomenon. (Table 3) Among the three, authoritative parenting has the highest explanatory power (21.9%), suggesting a stronger relationship between this parenting style and imposter feelings. Authoritarian parenting follows closely at 20.2%, while permissive parenting has the lowest explanatory power at 18.3%. (Table 4) These results imply that while all three parenting styles are linked to imposter syndrome, authoritative parenting may have the most notable impact, potentially in a protective manner, whereas authoritarian and permissive styles contribute to imposter feelings to a slightly lesser degree. (Table 5)

Table 3. Authoritative Parenting and Imposter Phenomenon

Model Fit Measures					
	<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	
	1	0.468	0.219	0.211	
Omnibus ANOVA Test					

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Authoritative Parenting	4674	1	4674	27.5	<.001
Residuals	16643	98	170		
Model Coefficients—Imposter Phenomenon					
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
Intercept	103.785	5.975	17.37	<.001	
Authoritative Parenting	-0.900	0.172	-5.25	<.001	

Table 4. Authoritarian Parenting and Imposter Phenomenon

Model Fit Measures					
	<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>		
	1	0.449	0.202		
Omnibus ANOVA Test					
	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Authoritarian Parenting	4300	1	4300	24.8	<.001
Residuals	17017	98	174		
Model Coefficients—Imposter Phenomenon					
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
Intercept	51.240	4.603	11.13	<.001	
Authoritarian Parenting	0.746	0.150	4.98	<.001	

Table 5. Permissive Parenting and Imposter Phenomenon

Model Fit Measures					
	<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	
	1	0.428	0.183	0.175	
Omnibus ANOVA Test					
	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Permissive Parenting	3899	1	3899	21.9	<.001
Residuals	17419	98	178		
Model Coefficients—Imposter Phenomenon					
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
Intercept	51.803	4.757	10.89	<.001	
Permissive Parenting	0.811	0.173	4.68	<.001	

Based on the R^2 values from the regression analysis, authoritative parenting showed the highest explanatory power for both the imposter phenomenon ($R^2 = 0.219$) and life satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.213$), indicating that this parenting style has a notable impact on these psychological outcomes.(Table 6&7) Authoritarian parenting demonstrated a moderate influence, with R^2 values of 0.202 for the imposter phenomenon and 0.218 for life satisfaction. Meanwhile, permissive parenting exhibited the weakest predictive power, with R^2 values of 0.183 for the imposter phenomenon and 0.077 for life satisfaction, suggesting a comparatively lower association with these factors. (Table 8)

Table 6. Authoritative Parenting and Life Satisfaction

Model Fit Measures					
	<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	
	1	0.427	0.183	0.174	
Omnibus ANOVA Test					
	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Authoritative Parenting	1114	1	1114.3	21.9	<.001
Residuals	4985	98	50.9		
Model Coefficients—Life Satisfaction					
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
Intercept	28.996	2.4939	11.63	<.001	
Authoritarian Parenting	-0.378	0.0812	-4.66	<.001	

Table 7. Authoritarian Parenting and Life Satisfaction

Model Fit Measures					
	<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	
	1	0.426	0.181	0.173	
Omnibus ANOVA Test					
	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Authoritarian Parenting	1105	1	1104.8	21.7	<.001
Residuals	4995	98	51.0		
Model Coefficients—Life Satisfaction					
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
Intercept	28.996	2.4939	11.63	<.001	
Authoritarian Parenting	-0.378	0.0812	-4.66	<.001	

Table 8. Permissive Parenting and Life Satisfaction

Model Fit Measures					
	<i>Model</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Adjusted R²</i>	
	1	0.194	0.0377	0.0279	
Omnibus ANOVA Test					
	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Permissive Parenting	230	1	230.0	3.84	0.053
Residuals	5869	98	59.9		
Model Coefficients—Life Satisfaction					
<i>Predictor</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	
Intercept	23.065	2.761	8.35	<.001	
Permissive Parenting	-0.197	0.100	-1.96	0.053	

DISCUSSION

Interpretation

In table 1, the independent t-test showed significant age differences in imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction, with adolescents (15–19) reporting more imposter feelings and lower life satisfaction than young adults (20–24). No significant differences were found in perceived parenting styles across age groups, indicating consistency in parenting perception but age- related psychological shifts.

Pearson correlation values in Table 2 show that authoritative parenting is significantly linked to lower imposter phenomenon ($r = -0.468^{***}$) and higher life satisfaction ($r = 0.427^{***}$).

Conversely, authoritarian parenting correlates positively with imposter phenomenon ($r = 0.449^{***}$) and negatively with life satisfaction ($r = -0.426^{***}$). Permissive parenting shows a weaker yet significant positive link with imposter phenomenon ($r = 0.428^{***}$) and a mild negative association with life satisfaction ($r = -0.194$).

Regression analyses show authoritative parenting explains 21.9% of variance in imposter phenomenon ($\beta = -0.900$, $p < .001$) and 18.3% in life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.440$, $p < .001$). Authoritarian and permissive parenting styles also significantly predict both outcomes but with slightly lower R^2 values. This suggests authoritative parenting serves a protective role, while the other two styles are associated with poorer psychological outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Individuals aged 15–19 showed significantly higher imposter phenomenon ($t = 2.452$, $p = 0.016$) and lower life satisfaction ($t = -2.113$, $p = 0.037$) than those aged 20–24, with no significant age differences in perceived parenting styles. Authoritative parenting negatively correlated with imposter phenomenon ($r = -0.468^{***}$) and positively with life satisfaction ($r = 0.427^{***}$), while authoritarian and permissive styles showed the opposite pattern.

Regression analyses confirmed authoritative parenting as the strongest predictor of both outcomes.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to a youth demographic, reducing its generalizability. Using self-reported surveys may have introduced bias or inaccuracies. The small sample size ($N=100$) limits the strength and applicability of results. Additionally, limited existing research on these variables across cultures makes broader interpretation challenging.

Recommendations

Future studies should examine these relationships across different age groups and cultures.

Including other parenting factors and variables like self-esteem or peer influence could offer deeper insights into imposter phenomenon and life satisfaction.

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