

PERCEIVED PARENTAL CONFLICT, EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND WELLBEING IN YOUNG ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

Relationships play an indispensable role because they shape our behavior, emotion and thought and have profound effect on mental functioning and wellbeing. The aim of this study was to find the relationship between perceived parental conflict, emotional expression and wellbeing in young adults. This study also examined the gender difference of model variables. A random sample of 512 young adult (256 males and 256 females), age ranging from 18 to 24 years was taken. A self-developed demographic sheet along with Conflict Properties subscale of CPIC (Grych, Seid & Fincham, 1992), Berkley Expressivity Questionnaire (BEQ) (Gross & John, 1995) and Personal Wellbeing Index-Adult (PWI-A) (The International Wellbeing Group, 2013) were administered. For data analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis were used. Results shows significant positive relationship of perceived parental conflict with negative emotionality ($r = .637$, $**p < 0.01$) and impulse strength ($r = .499$, $**p < 0.01$) whereas perceived parental conflict has significant negative relationship with positive emotionality ($r = -.409$, $**p < 0.01$) and wellbeing ($r = -.609$, $**p < 0.01$). Further, wellbeing has significant negative relationship with negative emotionality ($r = -.567$, $**p < 0.01$) and impulse strength ($r = -.418$, $**p < 0.01$) whereas wellbeing has significant positive relationship with positive emotionality ($r = .549$, $**p < 0.01$). Results also indicate that males and females have no significant difference in terms of model variables ($p > 0.05$). Findings of this study have positive implication for adults, family researchers and physical and mental health care professionals while dealing with problems of interparental conflict.

Keywords: perceived parental conflict, emotional expression, wellbeing, young adults

INTRODUCTION

There are many factors that influence the atmosphere of family. Inter-parental conflict is one of them (Kamran & Shabbir, 2018). Conflict between parents is the risk factor for individuals' emotional, behavioral and social adverse outcomes. Individuals are affected by interparental conflict. Their reaction to conflict depends on how parents express and resolve their conflicts (Harold & Sellers 2018).

Interparental conflict is a disagreement or conflict between parents (Grych & Fincham, 1990). Conflicts arise when people who are in relationship have different interests, needs and they experience the interference of others in achieving them (Turtorean, 2015). It is expressed in terms of negative affect between parents (Cummings & Davies, 1994).

Interparental conflicts act as a stressor in the life of individuals in their childhood as well as in young adulthood (Ross & Fuertes, 2010). According to emotional security theory, children's reaction to interparental conflict depends on how they perceive it and in what extent they perceive the conflict as threatening or alarming, to emotional security of their family system (Davies and Cummings, 1994). The four main dimensions, frequency, intensity, content and resolution of conflict, are very important in evaluating the impact of conflict (Grych & Finchman, 1990). Frequency of conflict defined as how frequently conflicts occur between parents. (Kerig, 1996). Intensity represents a continuum that ranges from small disagreements to domestic violence (Laumakis et al., 1998).

Content refers to the topics of argument between parents such as disagreement regarding family or child issues which is another important factor in perceiving interparental conflict. Resolution is defined as how often marital conflicts end with a settlement of disputes. On the basis of these dimensions, individuals respond to cognitive reappraisal and express different emotions (Eldik et al., 2020).

Children who confront with parental conflicts are at higher risk of developing serious mental problems (Holmes, 2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) also included a diagnostic condition "child affected by parental relationship distress (CAPRD)" which highlights children's cognitive, emotional and behavioral problems due to conflict and discord between parents (Bernet et al., 2016).

Emotions are the distinct states that individual experiences physiologically and subjectively; and expresses in order to interact and communicate with others (Ekman et al., 2011). Emotional expression is the behavior that individuals display when they experience emotions (Barner-Barry, 1990). Previous researches found that children belonged to the harmonious families and less conflicted backgrounds have less fear, sense of harm and express positive emotions than those who lived in disturbed or conflicted families (Davis & Pearson, 2023).

There is strong association between parental disputes and maladjustment including internalizing and externalizing problems. Hostile behavior of parents anticipates emotional responses to conflict and leads

to externalizing behavior. Frequent and child-related conflicts elevate the negative emotional responses while disengaged and destructive conflicts also posed a risk to individual functioning (Eldik et al., 2020).

Resolve and unresolved conflicts are two main types of parental conflict. Unresolved conflicts are associated with negative effect as compared to resolved conflicts (El-Sheikh et al., 2008). All forms of distress is widely observed in those children who experience unresolved and destructive parental conflicts like hostility, withdraw, abuse than the resolved and constructive one like maintenance and resolution (Schudlich & Cummings, 2007).

Researches gave evidences that destructive and constructive conflicts between parents differ in emotional reactivity and responses of adolescents. A study conducted by López-Larrosa et al., (2019) concluded that constructive and destructive conflicts produce positive and negative emotions respectively. Unresolved conflicts have the similar effects of destructive conflicts. Destructive parental conflicts also have long term and severe effect on children's emotional experiences which disturbs social interaction mechanism in later adulthood (Yang & Meng, 2022).

Emotions are evoked by significant events that are related to the concerns of individual. Different emotions have different mode of activation and action tendencies. People inferred one's state of mind and ascribe their emotions through emotional expression (Frijda, 2001). In views of Gross (1999), emotional expression is defined as how a person shows his emotions by verbally and nonverbally expressing his behavior. Research indicated that children display negative emotions during conflict and these negative emotions decreased linearly after positive family conversation. On the other hand, positive affect also changes in such a way that just after following conflict and after positive conversation children's positive affect decreases and increases respectively (Weldon et al., 2019).

Parental disputes are significant factor of aggressive behavior among young generation. Previous studies pointed out direct relationship between aggressive behavior and all dimensions of interparental conflict including frequency, intensity, resolution, and self-blame. But frequent and intense conflicts cause more

aggression as compared to the other dimensions (Olatunji & Idemudia, 2021; Li et al., 2023).

Perception of interparental conflict and appraisals of threat and self-blame mediate the relationship between parental conflict and depressive symptoms (Alves et al., 2019). Conflict between parents also plays a vital role in developing anxiety. Anxiety increases as parents use more overt conflict style than cooperative conflict style (Ran et al., 2021).

Humans have adaptive tendency to be happy, content and committed in life. It is a natural tendency to experience positive emotions as well as feeling functionally well like a purpose of life, meaningful relationships; this tendency is termed as “wellbeing” (Huppert, 2009). Wellbeing is the coalescence of feeling good and functioning well that people thrive to achieve. It refers to overall realization that life is going well beyond the absence of mental illness or problems (Ruggeri, 2020).

According to Kahneman & Krueger (2006), wellbeing is the balance between positive and negative emotions. Other scholars define life satisfaction and happiness equivalent to wellbeing which is sometimes referred as ‘authentic happiness’ or ‘real happiness’ (Salzberg, 2010).

Wellbeing is usually discussed in two perspectives: hedonic and eudemonic wellbeing. According to hedonism, wellbeing is the name of pleasure seeking, desire fulfillment, increase in positive experiences and decrease in negative experiences majorly calculated by subjective interpretation of life satisfaction. On the other hand, Eudemonic wellbeing is the constant striving towards good spirits’ and divine state of being. Eudemonic view translates wellbeing as welfare, optimal growth, fulfillment and flourishing towards good life (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

There are some drivers that are positively correlated with wellbeing and satisfaction of life including education, health, income and basic rights (Bacon et al., 2010).

The most important determinant of wellbeing is the individual relationship with family. Children are highly reactive towards relationship distress. Includes intimate partner violation, divorce, unfair decay of partner or any form of abuse which evolved in behavioral, cognitive, physical or emotional disturbance in youth (Bernet et al., 2016).

There are numerous studies that attempted to find out how a child’s mental, emotional, behavioral and physical health could be affected from parental disharmony (Auersperg et al., 2019). It was found that interparental conflict is a well-established risk factor across child and adolescent’s development. When interparental conflict increased, adolescents perceived more threat and self-blame. In turn, their wellbeing and life satisfaction decreases (Tiwari & Verma, 2019).

The exposure of interparental conflict damages adolescent’s wellbeing. When adolescents experience parental disputes, they perceive them as threatening to themselves. In turn, there is an increased risk of developing problems with peer leading to social anxiety, decreased social involvement and decreased prosocial behavior thus impairs social wellbeing (Weymouth et al., 2019; Hess, 2021; Stephanie, 2022).

Chaotic families play mediated role of child adjustment problems. When interparental conflict is associated with poor parenting, adolescents lack need satisfaction which can cause depressive feelings and results in lower life satisfaction (Koçak et al., 2023; Noble et al., 2023).

It was found that parental conflict negatively affects the satisfaction with and quality of personal relationships. When emerging adults experience strife between parents, they show less commitment in their romantic relationships which lower their satisfaction with their relationships (Matoso, 2020). In addition to parental conflict, emotional expression also have profound effect on wellbeing and can be extremely beneficial for individual’s mental health by making sense of what he/she is feeling, sometimes our emotions are baseless, senseless and out of control so in this case emotional expression can give your insight about your negative feeling and helps to minimize them. The expression of emotions plays an integral part in adaptation of humans and maladaptive functioning of emotional expression leads different psychological problems (Dobbs et al., 2007).

In a study by Cutuk in 2021, it was revealed that the effective expression of feelings reduced the chances of social isolation, low self-esteem and despairing. There is a vicious cycle of positive emotional states and prosocial behavior. Positive feelings promote prosocial behavior and in turn this type of behavior

generates more positive emotional experience. When people have high sense of positivity, they participate more in those activities that are beneficial for others and enhance their wellbeing (Akinin et al., 2018).

It was also found that individuals who use more strategies to regulate their emotional negativity have less symptoms of depression, thus maintaining their positive emotions than those who don't practice such strategies. Moreover, depressed individual has positive and negative emotions at two opposite extremes (Chiu et al., 2020).

Differential Reactivity Model explains that all children get affected by parental incompatibility equally but males are more prone to express externalizing problems (aggression, suicide, smoking, substance abuse) and females express internalizing problems (anxiety, stress, depression, withdrawal) (Block, 1981; Laumakis, 1998).

A study by Hosokawa (2019) explored and demonstrated that constructive parental disagreements were negatively linked with internalizing and externalizing issues in girls and boys. On the other hand, destructive parental dealings had positive association with internalizing problem in girls and externalizing issues in male. When confronted with parental conflicts, girls experience more negative emotions and show greater interference in conflicts than boys (Lopez-Larrosa et al., 2019).

Objectives of the study

This study aims:

To investigate the relationship of perceived parental conflict with emotional expression in young adults.

To investigate the relationship of perceived parental conflict and wellbeing in young adults.

To investigate the relationship of emotional expression and wellbeing in young adults.

To explore gender differences in the relationship of perceived parental conflict with emotional expression and wellbeing in young adults.

Hypotheses

Following hypotheses of the current study were formulated:

There is likely to be a relationship between perceived parental conflict and emotional expression in young adults.

There is likely to be a relationship between perceived parental conflict and wellbeing in young adults.

There is likely to be a relationship between emotional expression and wellbeing in young adults.

Perceived parental conflict is likely to predict emotional expression and wellbeing in young adults.

There is likely to be gender difference on the variables of perceived parental conflict, emotional expression and wellbeing in young adults.

METHOD

Participants

A random sample of 512 young adults (256 males and 256 females) was taken from different private universities of Sialkot. Their age range was between 18-24 years. Their minimum education level was intermediate. They were belonging to lower, middle and upper socio-economic status with nuclear or joint family setups.

Research Design

A cross-sectional correlational study design was used in the present study.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria of the present study

The inclusion and exclusion criteria are as follows: Individuals between the age ranges of 18 to 24 were included.

Individuals who belonged to divorced or separated family were excluded.

Measures

Demographic Form

A demographic form was used to collect the general information of the participants. This includes age, gender, birth order, number of siblings, family system, education level, income level of the family and socio-economic status.

Conflict Properties Scale (Grych, Seid & Finchman, 1992)

Conflict properties scale is the subscale of Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict (CPIC). Permission was taken from author to use this subscale separately in order to assess the perceived parental conflict. It consists of 19-items and includes frequency (6-items), intensity (7-items), and resolution (6-items) subscales. It is a 3 point Likert

scale ranging from 0 (false) to 2 (true). The items 1, 2,13,20,27,28,36,39 are reverse scored. The conflict properties subscale has good reliability with 0.89 alpha coefficients.

Berkeley Expressivity Questionnaire (Gross & John, 1995)

Berkeley expressivity questionnaire was used to measure emotional expressivity. It consists of 16 items which measures positive expressivity, negative expressivity and impulse strength separately on a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Items 3, 8 and 9 are reverse scored. The scale has good reliability with 0.81 alpha values. The positive expressivity, negative expressivity and impulse strength domains have 0.82. 0.74 and 0.87 reliability respectively.

Personal Wellbeing Index-Adult (The International Wellbeing Group, 2013)

It is only multidimensional measure of satisfaction with life, consists of 8 items based on 11 point Likert type scale ranging from 0 (no satisfaction at all) to 10 (completely satisfied). The eighth item on spirituality and religion is optional. Each item is related to a quality of life domain as: standard of living, health, achieving in life, relationships, safety, community-connectedness, and future security. The reliability of this scale lies from 0.70 to 0.85.

Procedure

All ethical guidelines were followed throughout the research process and progression. At first the synopsis of the study was approved by DERC (Departmental Ethical Research Committee) of Psychology Department, GC Women University,

Sialkot. For research conduction and data collection, the approval was taken from university authorities. Then permission was taken from the authors of scales for measuring variables. For data collection, first the approval was taken from different private universities of Sialkot. Then participants were approached. Consent form was given to participants to clear out the purpose of study and participants were not forced to participate and withdraw at any point of the study. They were assured that their information would keep confidential and used only for academic purposes. Then self-developed demographic sheet along with study scales were administered on them. Further, scoring of each scale was done as per its scoring procedure.

Statistical Analysis

For data analysis, descriptive statistics was used to calculate mean and frequencies of demographic variables and characteristics. Correlational analysis was done to determine relationship between variables. Regression was used for predictive analysis.

RESULTS

This part presents the statistical findings of the current study. Analysis was done through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 25). Means, standard deviation, frequency and percentages of demographic variables were calculated through descriptive analysis. Relationship between variables was calculated using Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation. Regression analysis was used to explore the predictive relationship between variables.

Table 1

Summary of Demographic Characteristics and Variables of the Entire Sample

Variables	N	%
Age		
18-19	108	21.1
20-21	218	42.6
22-24	186	36.3
Gender		
Male	256	50
Female	256	50
Birth Order		
0-3	254	88.1

4-6	258	11.9
Siblings		
1-3	254	49.6
4-6	258	50.4
Variables	N	%
Family System		
Nuclear	335	65.4
Joint	177	34.6
Education		
BS	457	89.3
MS/M Phil	55	10.7
Income		
30,000-50,000	86	16.8
51,000-70,000	114	22.3
71,000-100,000	118	23
101,000-150,000	77	15
151,000-200,000	117	22.9
Socio-economic Status		
Lower class	86	16.8
Middle class	309	60.3
Upper class	117	22.9

Note. N = 512

Figure 1

Percentage of Demographic Characteristics and Variables of the Entire Sample

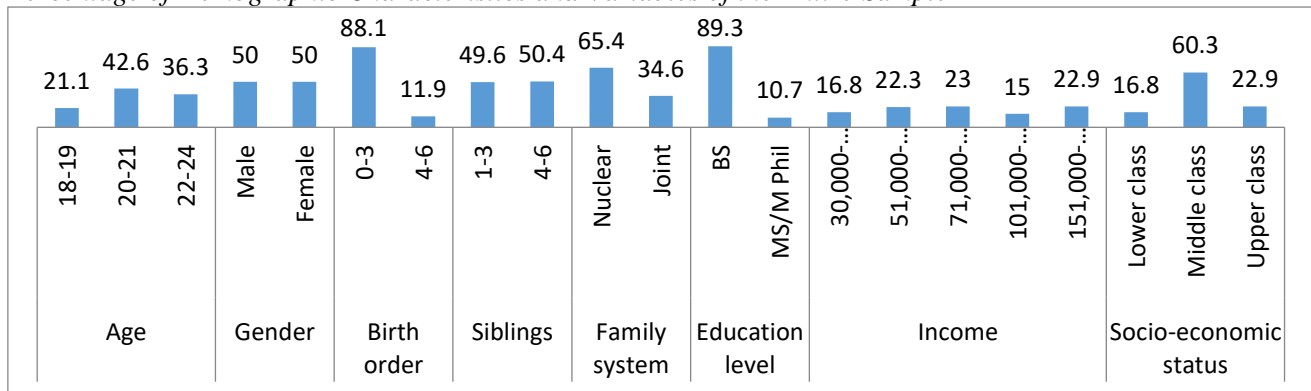


Table 2

Cronbach's alpha and Descriptive Statistics of all Scales and Subscales of the Study

Scales and Subscales	M	SD	Ranges	Cronbach's α
CPS	14.08	8.25	0-38	0.91
Frequency subscale	5.96	3.22	0-12	0.83
Intensity subscale	4.77	3.41	0-14	0.80
Resolution subscale	3.71	2.75	0-12	0.78
BEQ	69.25	12.35	1-112	0.78
Negative emotionality	24.53	7.63	1-42	0.86
Positive emotionality	17.84	4.64	1-24	0.66

Impulse strength	26.87	7.13	1-36	0.86
PWIA	44.15	13.6	0-80	0.90
Living standard	5.63	2.14	0-10	0.88
Health	5.30	2.25	0-10	0.89
Life achievements	5.24	2.03	0-10	0.88
Personal relationships	5.19	2.54	0-10	0.88
Safety	5.51	2.21	0-10	0.88
Community	5.32	2.18	0-10	0.89
Future security	5.25	2.12	0-10	0.89
Spirituality	6.69	2.06	0-10	0.89

Note. N= 512

Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation of Perceived Parental Conflict (PPC), Emotional Expression (EE) and Wellbeing (WB) in the current sample (N=512)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1.PPC	14.0	8.25	-	.637**	-.409**	.499**	-.609**
2.NE	24.5	7.63		-	-.540**	.770**	-.567**
3. PE	17.4	4.63			-	-.361**	.549**
4.IS	26.8	7.13				-	-.418**
5.WB	38.6	11.8					-

Note. M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, PPC = Perceived Parental Conflict, NE = Negative Emotionality, PE = Positive Emotionality, IS = Impulse Strength, WB = Wellbeing

**p < 0.01

It was found that there was statistically significant positive relationship between PPC and NE (r= .637,

p<0.01), PPC and IS (r= .499, p<0.01), whereas PPC had significant negative relationship with PE (r= .409, p<0.01) and PPC had negative relationship with WB (r=-.609, p<0.01).

Table 4

Linear Regression Analysis of Negative Emotionality, Positive Emotionality, Impulse Strength and Wellbeing on Perceived Parental Conflict (N=512)

Variable	B	SE	B	T	p	95% CI
Constant	16.23	.51		31.50	.000	[15.21, 17.24]
NE	.59	.03	.63**	18.67	.000	[.52, .65]
Constant	21.08	.37		56.88	.000	[20.35, 21.80]
PE	-.23	.02	-.40**	-10.12	.000	[-.27, -.18]
Constant	20.79	.54		19.73	.000	[19.73, 21.85]
IS	.43	.03	.49**	13.01	.000	[.36, .49]
Constant	51.00	.82		61.78	.000	[49.38, 52.62]
WB	-.87	.05	-.60**	-17.34	.000	[-.97, -.77]

Note. N=512, CI= Confidence Interval, NE= Negative Emotionality, PE= Positive Emotionality, IS= Impulse Strength, WB= Wellbeing

a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Parental Conflict

**P<0.01

Results revealed that NE contributes 40% to be significant predictor of PPC ($\Delta R^2 = .40$, p<0.01), PE contributes 16% to be significant predictor of PPC ($\Delta R^2 = .16$, p<0.01) and IS contributes 24% to be

significant predictor of PPC ($\Delta R^2 = .24, p < 0.01$). WB also 37% predicted PPC ($\Delta R^2 = .37, p < 0.01$).

Table 5

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation of Emotional Expression (EE) and Wellbeing (WB) in the current sample (N=512)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1.WB	38.6	11.8	-	-.567**	.549**	-.418**
2.NE	24.5	7.6		-	-.540**	.770**
3. PE	17.8	4.6			-	-.361**
4.IS	26.8	7.13				-

Note. M= Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, WB = Wellbeing, NE = Negative Emotionality, PE = Positive Emotionality, IS = Impulse Strength
** p < 0.01

It was found that wellbeing had significant negative relationship with NE ($r = -.567, p < 0.01$) and IS ($r = -.418, p < 0.01$) whereas wellbeing had significant positive relationship with PE ($r = .549, p < 0.01$).

Table 6

Regression Coefficients of Negative Emotionality, Positive Emotionality and Impulse Strength on Wellbeing

Variables	β	SE	T	p	95%CI
Constant		3.07	12.20	.000	[31.513,43.605]
Negative Emotionality (NE)	-.38	.09	-6.35	.000	[-.776,-.409]
Positive Emotionality (PE)	.34	.10	8.38	.000	[.637,1.085]
Impulse Strength (IS)	-.001	.09	-.02	.979	[-.179,.174]

Note. N= 512, CI= Confidence Interval
a. Dependent Variable: Wellbeing
The R square value of .40 explained revealed that predictors explained 40% variance in the outcome variable with F (115.038), p < .001. The findings

revealed that NE ($B = -.380, p < 0.01$) negatively predicted WB while PE ($B = .343, p < .001$) positively predicted wellbeing whereas IS has non-significant effect on wellbeing ($B = -.001, p > 0.05$).

Table 7

Mean, SD and T-test of Males and Females on Model Variables

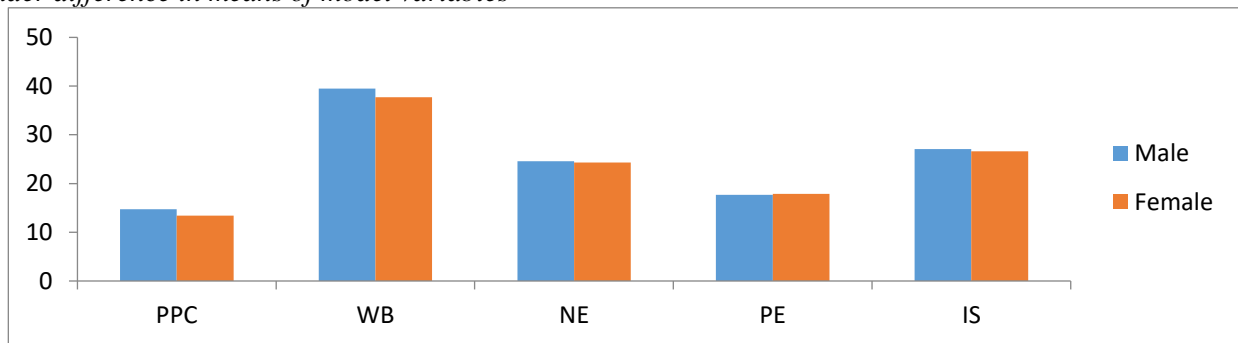
Variables	Male		Female		t(510)	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
PPC	14.7	7.8	13.4	8.57	1.85	.064	0.15
WB	39.5	11.1	37.7	12.5	1.64	.100	0.14
NE	24.6	7.5	24.3	7.6	0.47	.635	0.04
PE	17.7	4.4	17.9	4.7	-0.48	.627	0.04
IS	27.1	6.9	26.6	7.2	0.72	.469	0.06

Note. PPC = Perceived Parental Conflict, NE = Negative Emotionality, PE = Positive Emotionality, IS = Impulse Strength, WB = Wellbeing
Results indicates that there is no significant difference between males (n= 256) and females (n= 256) in terms of model variables. However, males

have slightly high mean scores on PPC, WB, NE and IS than females whereas mean score of PE is slightly higher in females than males. Overall, the effect size of all variables is small for males and females.

Figure 2

Gender difference in means of model variables



Additional Findings

Table 8

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation of Perceived Parental Conflict (PPC) and Subdomains of Wellbeing (N=512)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.PPC	14.08	8.25	-	-.473**	-.484**	-.493**	-.566**	-.502**	-.402**	-.428**	-.436**
2.LS	5.63	2.14		-	.606**	.581**	.595**	.571**	.509**	.518**	.499**
3.HE	5.30	2.25			-	.583**	.578**	.555**	.507**	.521**	.484**
4.LA	5.24	2.03				-	.619**	.557**	.479**	.573**	.468**
5.PR	5.19	2.54					-	.594**	.538**	.496**	.506**
6.SA	5.51	2.21						-	.604**	.568**	.530**
7.COM	5.32	2.18							-	.543**	.476**
8.FS	5.25	2.12								-	.446**
9.SP	6.69	2.06									-

Note. M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, PPC= Perceived Parental Conflict, LS = Living Standard, HE= Health, LA= Life Achievements, PR= Personal Relationships, SA= Safety, COM= Community, FS= Future Security, SP= Spirituality

** p< 0.01

It was found that PPC has negative relationship with LA (r= -.473, p<0.01), HE (r=.484, p<0.01), LA (r=.492, p<0.01) and PR (r= -.566, p<0.01). Similarly, significant negative relationship of PPC was found with SA (r= -.502, p<0.01), COM (r= -.402, p<0.01), FS (r= -.428, p<0.01) and SP (r= -.446, p<0.01) domains of wellbeing.

Table 9

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation of Emotional Expression (EE) and Subdomains of Wellbeing (WB) in the current study (N=512)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. NE	24.53	7.63	-	-.540**	.770**	-.448**	-.478**	-.466**	-.539**	-.478**	-.324**	-.382**	-.413**
2. PE	17.84	4.64		-	-.361**	.435**	.424**	.463**	.395**	.446**	.411**	.411**	.443**
3. IS	26.87	7.13			-	-.326**	-.371**	-.333**	-.383**	-.341**	-.226**	-.319**	-.296**
4. LS	5.63	2.14				-	.606**	.581**	.595**	.571**	.509**	.518**	.499**
5. HE	5.30	2.25					-	.583**	.578**	.555**	.507**	.521**	.484**
6. LA	5.24	2.03						-	.619**	.557**	.479**	.573**	.468**
7. PR	5.19	2.54							-	.594**	.538**	.496**	.506**
8. SA	5.51	2.21								-	.604**	.568**	.530**
9. COM	5.32	2.18									-	.543**	.476**
10. FS	5.25	2.12										-	.446**
11. SP	6.69	2.06											-

Note. M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, NE= Negative Emotionality, PE= Positive Emotionality, IS= Impulse Strength, LS = Living Standard, HE= Health, LA= Life Achievements, PR= Personal Relationships, SA= Safety, COM= Community, FS= Future Security, SP= Spirituality

** $p < 0.01$

Findings indicated that NE and IS has significant negative relationship with living standard ($r = -.448$, $p < 0.01$), health ($r = -.478$, $p < 0.01$), life achievements ($r = -.466$, $p < 0.01$), personal relationships ($r = -.539$, $p < 0.01$), safety ($r = -.478$, $p < 0.01$), community ($r = -.324$, $p < 0.01$), future security ($r = -.382$, $p < 0.01$) and spirituality ($r = -.413$, $p < 0.01$) subdomains of wellbeing. Further, results revealed that PE has significant positive relationship with LS ($r = .435$, $p < 0.01$), HE ($r = .424$, $p < 0.01$), LA ($r = .463$, $p < 0.01$), PR ($r = .395$, $p < 0.01$), SA ($r = .446$, $p < 0.01$), COM ($r = .411$, $p < 0.01$), FS ($r = .411$, $p < 0.01$) and SP ($r = .443$, $p < 0.01$) subdomains of wellbeing.

Discussion

Relationship between parents plays an important role in maintaining family atmosphere. In our family system, conflicting interrelationship style cause many disagreements between partners in which both partners want to dominate and take the power of decisions. When parents feel exhausted in meeting the demands of life, they release their stress on their offspring in the form of negative emotionality and poor functionality which exacerbate many conflicts. In our study, it is revealed that perceived parental conflict has been positively related to the negative emotionality and impulse strength whereas negatively related to positive emotionality (as mentioned in Table 3). Because when parents show disagreements and engage in hostile behavior in their marital relationship, children imitate their behavior. If parents face stressors in life, this also affects their marital bonding. When parents feel exhausted in meeting the demands of life, they release their stress in the form of negative emotionality on family members especially on their partners which exacerbate many conflicts. Children learn this unhealthy type of emotional expression strategy and display hostility in everyday stressful situations. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1997) has strengthened this point as it posits that individuals learn from surrounding environment. Also the

emotional security theory (Cummings & Davies, 1996) also explained that individuals perceives the parental conflicts as threatening and engage in displaying different negative emotions. Recent researches also predicted the association of parental conflicts with negative emotionality as studies conducted by (Weldon et al., 2019 & Li et al., 2023). In second hypothesis, the negative association between perceived parental conflict and wellbeing was found in young adults (as mentioned in table 3). It has been observed that young adulthood is the age in which individuals make connection with others and evaluate their life on the basis of their relationships. They imitate parents' marital behavior when they make personal relationships with others. They feel uncertainty in relationships due to interparental conflicts that leads to decreased life satisfaction and wellbeing. Interparental conflicts also a source of anxiety and depressive symptoms among young adults as it cause future insecurity among young adults. According to PERMA theory of wellbeing by Seligman (2018), positive emotions and healthy relationships promote the wellbeing and life satisfaction but parental conflicts are the source of negative emotions among children and young adults which in turn decline wellbeing and life satisfaction. A study also explored the connection between disputes between parents and their unsatisfied romantic relationships (Motoso, 2020). Recent researches (Tam & Wong, 2021 & Kocak et al., 2023) also revealed the connection of conflicts between parents with decreased wellbeing and lower life satisfaction.

The third hypothesis revealed from the current findings that wellbeing has significant negative relationship with negative emotionality (NE) and impulse strength (IS) whereas wellbeing has significant positive relationship with positive emotionality (PE) (as mentioned in table 5). When individual confronts an event they experience different emotions both negative and positive. Positive emotions involves happiness, gratitude, love, joy, pride, and interest etc. while in negative we experience hate, anger, jealousy, sadness etc. Different people express their emotions differently some express them in healthy and positive manner by accepting their feelings rather than denying them and do positive self-talk, talk to someone else, do yoga, breathing exercises, or mediate while some express

emotions in unhealthy and negative way by denying the event, withdrawal, self-harm and substance use etc. It has been notified that positive emotions improves ones physical and mental health, enhance work productivity, improves spiritual connection and build coping strategies towards stressors etc. The reason behind this is also quite evident from a perspective of broaden and build theory of positive emotions developed by Fredericksons in 1998, that explains positive emotions can be powerful in strengthening wellbeing while negative emotions narrow thought process (Campus et al., 1994). Findings of the current researches are consistent with the study which explained that positive emotions help to attain healthy subjective wellbeing and long lasting relationships (Tania & Matious, 2020 & Harris, 2017).

In the current study it is also explored that parental conflict is likely to predict and bring change in all domains of emotional expression and well-being (as mentioned in table 4). The reason behind this is quite evident as we all have observed in our surroundings that adults from those families where parents are often involved in conflicts express more negative emotions like aggression, frustration, sadness, unable to hide feelings and also show increase impulsive strength. Severe, frequent and unresolved issues may leads them towards mental health issues, congenial relationships, behavioral problems, issues in socialization in community and academic places. In the light of family system theory by Bowen (1950) our finding are accurate, which highlighted that family members are interconnected and changes in one individual within a family can impact the entire system and potentially lead to change in other members. As parents are the role models for their children, the continuous exposure to disputes of parents affects the psychological wellbeing and home environment. A previous research by Holmes et al. (2015) is also consistent with our current study evaluated that conflicts of parents caused decline in well-being, decrease social skills, increased aggressive behavior, less self-control, less cooperative behavior and loneliness in offspring. A previous research conducted by Kopp also validates our findings that parental conflicts impacted adolescents and adults negatively and they become insecure emotionally (Kopp, 2002). Another study by Hess (2021) indicated that more conflicts faced by

children results in reduced social wellbeing which ultimately affects them later in adulthood.

Last hypothesis has highlighted that there will be a gender difference in the influence of parental conflict, emotional expression and wellbeing. This alternative hypothesis is rejected in current study as there is no significant difference in how male and female perceived conflict between parents and exhibit response. From the study it has also been resulted that males have slightly higher mean value in variables like (PPC, NE, IS and WB) and females exhibit comparatively higher score in PE (Table 07). Our current study findings are consistent with the research of Davies & Lindsay (2004), who found out no significant gender difference in perceiving and behaving in response to interparental conflict.

Conclusion

Findings of the present study revealed the negative impact of parental conflict on individual's emotional and behavioral management. It has been concluded that witnessing parental conflict directly or indirectly is closely related to poor functionality of life like emotional dysregulation, poor physical and mental health, and lack of balance in personal relationships, insecurity and low life satisfaction. There is immense need for stakeholders to devise effective strategies, and Psychoeducational programs that may enhance effective parenting skills which will be helpful in maintaining healthy family environment. Further, effective counseling strategies for adolescents and adults are needed to develop that may alleviate emotional distress and enhance their physical, social, and emotional well-being.

Limitations and Recommendations

In the current study, data was collected from educational institutions and only limited to Sialkot city so it is not possible to generalize these findings on youngster who are not enrolled in the educational system or uneducated individuals or belong to other cultural setups. For future research it is recommended that uneducated population may also be included. Current study is quantitative so further studies can be conducted as qualitative to find out link more extensively between parental conflict, emotional expression and the overall wellbeing of young adults.. In future research perceived parental

conflict can also be explored with other variables i.e., attachment styles, parental bonding, etc.

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