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## **Predicting Early Maladaptive Schemas by Young Parenting Styles**

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The present study has been done to predict Young early maladaptive schemas through parenting styles (root development). To this end, 357 undergraduate students were selected by random cluster sampling and two Young short forms inventory of Parenting Styles (YPI) and short form inventory of Schema (SQ-SF) were filled by subjects. Analysis of results, using regression analysis showed that parenting styles (roots development) are significant predictors for early maladaptive schemas

( $P < .001$ ).

**Keywords:** early maladaptive schemas, styles of parenting, schema

Families play an essential role in maintaining children's mental, social and physical health. The family provides first and most important social context for human development. During normal development of each child, we see a range of cognitive, emotional and social changes. Almost all children will have problems during their development and this, in compatibility with the changes, stress, and conflict accompanying it; can cause behavioral, emotional, and learning problems. Most behavioral problems in children reflect the complex individual situations between the family members, particularly the parents. In other words, the child behavioral problems are due to the damaged relationships of the family

members with each other and are associated with the incorrect training methods of parents and their defective interactions with their children. The term “parenting” is derived from the root "pario" which means "life". The purpose of the parenting styles is helping parents to educate their children and reflects the attitudes that they have toward their children and include the standards and rules that are enacted for their children. Family, as a primary context, provides necessary resources and opportunities for the healthy development of children (Wake, Nicholson, Hardy, & Smith, 2007). Each family uses specific methods for personal and social education of its children. These methods, called parenting styles, are affected by many factors; including cultural, social, political and economic ones (Hardy, Power, & Jeadicke, 1993). In fact, beliefs, attitudes, activities and actions of parents will be seen in familial patterns template or the parenting styles of parents and the one used by them is influenced by several factors resulting from the culture and society (Mussen, Conger & Kagan, 1974). The proper parenting skills are the key variables that predict more positive outcomes for children in the early and middle years of life (Wake, Nicholson, Hardy & Smith, 2007). The purpose of all the positive parenting styles is shaping the mental character and strengthening the child's competence. The importance of these issues has led researchers to discuss parenting styles, and offer a variety of patterns (Mussen, Conger & Kagan, 1974), among which we can refer to the theories of Erikson, Baumrind and Young. According to Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, the formation of character is implemented in accordance with some specific procedures and is based on the physical growth that determines the elasticity of the individual to the external world and his/her awareness of it.

Based on the eight stages of Erikson's psycho-social, goals and parenting styles may vary at different stages of growth. In the first stage of psycho-social growth where trust stands against mistrust, beginning from birth and lasts for 18 months, the main goal of parenting is to meet the

needs of children. In the second phase which is called autonomy versus shame and doubt and covers the 18 months to 3 years; the main goal is to control children's behavior. In the third stage, for children aged 3 to 5 years who live in the initiative stage versus guilt the main goal of parenting is to raise children's self-determination. In the fourth stage which is called by Erikson as performance against feelings of inferiority and covers 5 to 11 years, the main goal of parenting is promoting and development of child. In the fifth stage which actually covers the teen years and is called the stage of sense of identity against distribution of role, the main goal of parents is encouraging the independence and providing emotional support (quoting Bagherpour, 2006).

Also Baumrind based on two features a) Requesting: that refers to attributes of the control, monitoring, mature behavior expected of a child, b) being responding: including support, love and acceptance of the child; Proposed 3 styles of parenting (Baumrind, 1991; Lamborn & Mounts, 1991). Authoritative Style: In this style, parents meet characteristics at the high level of demands and respondents (Martinez & Garcia, 2007) but this demanding is reasonable (Kuhar, 2010). Parents let their children to comment, enjoy independence and freedom of thought, a warm and cordial relationship exists between the child and the parents at a high level (Mussen, Conger & Kagan, 1974). They take care of their child ideas, and provide the grounds for her/his future progress. This style of parenting can lead to increased self-regulation, compliance and obtain college education (Rhee, Lumeng & Appugliese, 2006).

### **Authoritarian Style**

The parents who have authoritarian style possess characteristics such as being heartless, lack of attention to the developmental needs of the child, low emotional support and strict discipline (Rhee et al., 2006). This style is associated with features such as reduced admission and high control that provide underlying problems such as low social competence, low self-

esteem, aggressiveness, and low academic education (Wake, Nicholson, Hardy & Smith, 2007).

### **Permissive Style**

In this style parents have low expectations from their children (Rhee, et al., 2006). Acceptance and high responsiveness; relaxation of social attitudes, discipline and customs (Steinberg, 1996) and less control from parents provide underlying problems such as aggression, low self-control, negligence, emotional problems, school dropout, attitudes toward drug and crime, but on the other hand, lead to high confidence (Wake, Nicholson, Hardy & Smith, 2007). In this style of parenting, too much love substitutes the punishment by parents, both of which, in turn, may be devastating (Cannor, 1998).

Young refers to 9 styles of parenting in 2 dimensions about relation between parents and child: Emotionally depriving style refers to parents' behaviors that provide proper emotional pedagogy for child or the child shall be deprived of emotional pedagogy. Overprotective parenting style refers to the too much support of child, extreme concern about her/him, and being too attentive to her needs. Belittling style refers to degrading treatment, leaving the child with a sense of failure and shame or children admiration. Perfectionist style in which parents expect from their children as much as they expect from themselves or refer to convenient and easy criteria's that they consider for their children. Pessimistic/fearful style refers to the presence or absence of anxiety and fear behavior in the parents. Controlling style refers to the parents who allow their children to be independent and make decisions or through over controlling, take away their independence. Emotionally inhibited style refers to the ability or inability of parents to share their feelings with their children. Punitive style refers to a range of punishment to not punishment of children for their mistakes. Conditional/narcissistic style refers to parents' conditional and unconditional positive regard for the child and depends on the child's

success (Sheffield, Waller & et al, 2005). Young (1995) suggests a subset of schemas that are called primary dysfunctional schemas. Schema-focused approach, rather than focus on automatic thoughts and underlying assumptions, puts the main emphasis on understanding the deepest levels which are the primary dysfunctional schemas. The model that is focused on schemes; defines primary dysfunctional schemas as inclusive and extensive subjects with regard to person and individual relationships with others that are created in childhood and lasts throughout a person's life may be extended with a degree of inefficiency. Primary dysfunctional schemas; fundamentally are implicit and unconscious contexts that are retained by the individual. Primary dysfunctional schemas are used as a model for processing experiences and subsequently spread throughout the life and set behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and relationships with other people. In contrast to the underlying assumptions, primary dysfunctional schemas often are unconditional and therefore very inflexible. Essentially, primary dysfunctional schemas are authentic representations of childhood unpleasant experiences. According to him, one of the main causes of pathology is Primary Dysfunctional schemas, which are generated through interpersonal experiences with close people such as parents, peers and is also affected by deprivation of basic needs. These schemas represent the child's sense of herself/himself. Primary dysfunctional schemas are associated with levels of psychological distress and personality disorders.

When primary dysfunctional schemas are activated due to events, levels of emotion are created directly and indirectly which lead to various forms of psychological distress including depression, anxiety, loneliness, anorexia nervosa, conflicts and problems in interpersonal relationships (Norda, Holthe & Haugum, 2005). Jeffrey Young, a psychologist and the head of research in schemes; identified 18 negative schemas that grow in early life (young, Klasko & vishar, 2012). He stated that these 18 schemas are divided according to 5 not satisfied emotional needs that he called schema areas (young et al., 2012).

### **First Area: Disconnection and Rejection**

People, whose schemas take place in this area, cannot interact in secure and satisfying attachment with others. The schema of this area includes: abandonment/instability, people with this schema believe that their relationships with important people in their lives is not stable; mistrust/abuse, people with this schema believe that others have exploited them with the smallest opportunity; emotional/deprivation, people with this schema believe that their emotional needs will not be satisfied in establishment of emotional relationships with others; defectiveness/shame, people with this schema believe that bad people are imperfect and worthless and if they expose themselves to the others view, they will be rejected; social isolation/alienation, people with this schema feel they are different from others and are an inappropriate patch of society.

### **Second Area: Impaired Autonomy and Performance**

In this area the person's expectation from himself/herself and environment interact with her/his tangible abilities for separation, survival and function independently, or to perform work successfully. The schema of this area includes: dependence/incompetence, it is believed that a person cannot perform everyday responsibilities without the help of others at an acceptable level; vulnerability to harm or illness, extreme fear that disaster is near and every time there is a probability of its happening and one cannot avoid it; enmeshment/undeveloped self, intense emotional connection and getting too close with one of the most important people in life at the cost of loss of individuality or natural social development; failure, the belief that a person has failed or will fail in the future, and that failure is inevitable.

### **Third Area: Impaired Limits**

The internal constraints of these people have not grown enough on mutual respect and restraint. This schema includes: entitlement/grandiosity, the one with such a schema believes that he/she has special rights compared to others; insufficient self-control/discipline, these people cannot achieve their goals to show restraint and cannot tolerate failure sufficiently.

### **Fourth Area: Other-Direction**

These individuals give priority to satisfy the needs of others and do it to receive emotional support and ongoing relationship and avoid revenge. The schema of this area includes: subjugation, feeling forced to extreme submission of their control to others takes place to avoid anger, retaliation, and denial; self-sacrifice, extreme focus on satisfying the needs of others in everyday life at the cost of not satisfying their own needs; approval-seeking/recognition-seeking, extreme emphasis on the confirmation of attention and acceptance from others which prevents the semantic formation of confidence and reality from itself.

### **Fifth Area: Over Vigilance/Inhibition**

Extreme emphasis on rejection of the feelings and impulses to act according to their inflexible and internal rules even at the cost of losing the joy and peace of mind. This schema includes: (negativity/pessimism, deep and constant focus on the negative aspects of life with underestimating positive and optimistic aspects of life; emotional inhibition/radical inhibition of actions, feelings and spontaneous communication that usually are developed in order to avoid the exclusion of others, a sense of shame and loss of self-control over impulses; unrelenting standards/hyper criticalness) The person believes that in order to achieve ambitious standards of behavior and performance he/she needs to spend a lot of effort and this is usually done to avoid criticism; punitiveness, it's believed

that people should be punished severely for their mistakes (Young, Klasko & Vishar, 2012).

Young (1990), Young & Brown (1999), Young, Klasko & Vishar (2012) argued that an individual's unique experiences in childhood contribute to and influence the development of a distinct set of core beliefs about themselves and others, which he called early maladaptive schemas (Dozvis & Martin, 2009). He believes any childhood experience can have an impact on the formation of early maladaptive schemas (Tomas, 2008).

Young (Young & Brown, 1999; young, Klasko & vishar, 2012) has suggested a model based on mental schemas to describe the relationship between parental and psychopathology. Young's model uses some underlying concepts and research of the attachment theory that show potential mediator effects on the relationship between parents and psychopathology, development of early maladaptive cognitive patterns or negative core beliefs especially in Axis 2 and associated pathology. Negative core beliefs are unconditional beliefs in the intellectual schema level related to themselves and others and the world around which Young commented that are often developed in childhood. So likely, placed under parenting is an etiology key factor (Sheffield & Waller et al., 2005).

In a study by Thomas (2002, it was found that negative parenting styles are predictors of early maladaptive schemas and positive parenting styles reduces early maladaptive schemas (Tomas, 2008).

One of the most important tools to identify the schemas evolutionary roots, which are probably related to early maladaptive schemas, is Young Parenting Styles inventories. The items of this inventory reflect the childhood environment. However, it is possible that the child experienced an environment associated with a particular schema, but the particular schema never is conceived in the mind of the child. This may be due to reasons such as his/her temper which prevents the formation of a specific schema or otherwise, one of parents or one of the most important people in



one's life, compensate the defect of the environment (Young, Klasko & Vishar, 2012).

### **Research Hypotheses**

Parenting styles (evolutionary root) of Young are predictors of early maladaptive schemas.

### **Method**

This study is a correlational type.

#### **Sample and Sampling Method**

In this study, the sample was selected based on a cluster random sampling method and according to Morgan Table; 357 undergraduate students were selected from Islamic Azad University of Urmia. We used cluster method because large a community does not provide a complete list of people to select individuals randomly.

#### **Research Tools**

Due to the purpose of the research and its nature, the best way to gather the needed information is to use inventories, so three inventories were used in this study as follows.

*Early maladaptive schema inventory-short form (SQ-SF).* The Early Maladaptive Schema Inventory by Young and Brown (1994) was designed to measure early maladaptive schemas. Early Maladaptive Schema Inventory -Short Form was created because of its shortness, however, it is used as an instrument to measure primary maladaptive schemas. Early Schema Inventory-Short Form; includes 75 items of the 205 items from the original form. These 75 items, measure 15 early maladaptive schemas (Young 1998): Emotional Deprivation (items 1 to 5), Abandonment (items 6 to 10), Mistrust/Abuse (items 11 to 15), Social Isolation (items 16 to 20), Defectiveness/Shame (Sentences 21 to 25), Failure(Sentences 26 to 30), Dependence/Incompetence (items 31 to 35), Vulnerability to harm or

illness (items 36 to 40), Enmeshment (items 41 to 45), Subjugation (items 46 to 50), Self - sacrifice (items 51 to 55), Emotional Inhibition (items 56 to 60), Unrelenting Standards (items 61 to 65), Entitlement (items 66 to 70), Insufficient self-control/discipline (items 71 to 75) (Young, 1998). Each one of these 78 items of the inventory-short form, measures with a 6-point scale: 1. totally wrong about me, 2. almost wrong about me, 3. slightly more true to false, 4. Almost True, 5. truer about me, 6. fully describes me. High scores items indicate the wide range presence of early maladaptive schemas in the respondents (welburn, Coristine, Dagg, Pontefract & Jodan, 2002).

*Validity and reliability of early maladaptive schemas inventory.* The reliability and validity of this instrument has been demonstrated in several studies (Baranov voei, 2007). Standardization of this inventory was conducted by Ahi (2006) at Tehran University. So that the internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha is 0.97 in the female population, and 0.98 in the male population (Esmali, 2012).

*Young Parenting Inventory (YPI).* One of the most important tools to identify the schemas evolutionary roots which are probably related to early maladaptive schemas is Young Parenting styles inventories. (Young, Klasko & Vishar, 2012). Young Parenting Inventory (YPI, Young, 1999 b) is considered to identify the origins of 17 potential negative core beliefs. This self-report inventory is composed of 72 items that people may use to describe their parents (e.g., "I am highly criticized"). Any statement that reflects parenting behaviors is associated with one of the 17 negative core beliefs (early maladaptive schemas): 1- Emotional Deprivation (This means that a person's emotional needs are not met by others), 2- Abandonment (Close relationships will always end), 3- Mistrust/Abuse (It is believed that the person is being abused or mistreated by others), 4- Vulnerability (means an individual doesn't have control on threat, disease or disaster), 5- Defectiveness/Shame (This is a reference to the belief that

the person is intrinsically flawed), 6- Failure to achieve the target (A person who does not have the ability to succeed), 7- Subjugation (views, wishes and feelings of a person are not as important as those of the others), 8- Self – sacrifice (A person who should always give priority to others), 9- Dependence/Incompetence (A person who is not independent and cannot afford to cope with everyday tasks), 10- Unrelenting Standards (a person who should achieve high impossible standards), 11- Entitlement (a person who, regardless of the others, entitles himself/herself to deserve anything), 12- Insufficient self–control/discipline (a person who cannot control his/her impulse or emotions), 13- Enmeshment (Means a loss of identity and therefore emotional engagement with others), 14- Negativity/Pessimism (nothing is ever going in such a way that the person wants), 15- Emotional Inhibition (a person must hide his/her feelings), 16- Punitiveness (a person always will be punished), 17- Approval–Seeking (Constant desire for approval from others).

Each of the 72 items ranged along a six-point Likert scale (the parent) (1- totally false, 2- mostly false, 3. slightly false, 4. almost true, 5. mostly true, 6- totally true); it reflects how each statement describes the quality of participants' parent. Except emotional deprivation scale that is rated inversely, they show 1: "totally false" and 6: "absolutely true". Higher scores indicate this principle that the parent has acted in ways that are likely to make the core beliefs (Sheffield & Waller et al, 2005).

Standardization of this inventory was conducted by Salavati (2007). The mother form and the father form reliability coefficients are 0.69 and 0.80, respectively.

### **Data Analysis Method**

Data analysis was done using regression analysis.

Findings

Descriptive findings consisting of means and standard deviations of the research variables of the 357 participants are as follows:

**Table 1**  
**Means and standard deviations of Parenting Style and Areas of Early Maladaptive Schemas**

Variables	S. D.	Mean
Age	10.17	20.14
Disconnection and Rejection Area of Parenting	4.30	15.43
Impaired Autonomy and Performance Area of Parenting	7,52	16.61
Impaired Limits Area of Parenting	3.88	7.05
Other-Direction Area of Parenting	5.68	14.37
Over Vigilance/Inhibition Area of Parenting	8.2346	19.06
Disconnection and Rejection Area of Early Maladaptive Schemas	20.45	48.91
Impaired Autonomy and Performance Area of Early Maladaptive Schemas	18.92	37.52
Impaired Limits Area of Early Maladaptive Schemas	11.56	25.96
Other-Direction Area of Early Maladaptive Schemas	10.75	24.49
Over Vigilance/Inhibition Area of Early Maladaptive Schemas	10.81	27.60

**Table 2**  
**Regression Analysis of Disconnection and Rejection Parenting with Areas of Disconnection and Rejection Schemas**

sig	B	$\beta$	$R^2$	R	F	Variable
.00	24.14	.38	.14	.38	61.71	Evolutionary Roots' Disconnection and Rejection

The findings of the current study show that Young’s Disconnection and Rejection Parenting style is a predictor of early maladaptive schemas in

the area of Disconnection and Rejection, taking place in participants' schemas in the area of Disconnection and Rejection (Especially the first four schemas) often, suffered from the most injuries. Many of them have had shocking childhood and in adulthood tend to take refuge of a harmful relationship to another relation in an indigested and hasty way or avoid interpersonal relationships (Young & Brown, 1999).

We can say that parents with depriving and humiliating parenting styles, in terms of emotional attitudes in childhood, who humiliated their children and left them, are good predictors of maladaptive schemas in the area of Disconnection and Rejection. Also the parents who are disconnected, cold, rejecter, secluded, explosive, abusing and abandoner are unable to meet the needs of these areas foreseeable (Disconnection and Rejection) as the need for security, stability, sympathy and acceptance (Sheffield & Waller et al, 2005).

These results showed that there is a relationship between maladaptive schemas in the Young Schema inventory and evolutionary roots of these schemes in Young parenting style inventory. This means that according to the views of Young, parenting style inventory in the area of Disconnection and Rejection can predict the schemas of Disconnection and Rejection in the Young parenting style inventory. This finding is not only in agreement with Lubna Alfasfos, (2009) and Sheffield & Waller et al., (2005) research done abroad but with the results of Esmali (2012), Jalili et al., (2011) research done in Iran as well. Esmali also found that over vigilance/Inhibition evolutionary roots, hampered constraints, disconnection and rejection have a significant effect on creating maladaptive schemas in the Disconnection and Rejection area.

**Table 3**  
**Regression Analysis of Impaired Autonomy and Performance**  
**Parenting with the Area of Impaired Autonomy and Performance**  
**Schemas**

Sig	B	$\beta$	$R^2$	R	F	Variable
.00	26.75	.22	.04	.22	18.35	Evolutionary Roots' Impaired Autonomy and Performance

The results of this study also show that Impaired autonomy and Performance parenting style (revolutionary root) and disturbed operation are predictors of early maladaptive schemas in the area of Impaired Autonomy and Performance. In explaining this result we can state that according to Young's view, revolutionary roots Impaired Autonomy and Performance has a direct impact on creating early maladaptive schemas, but it is not in agreement with the research that has been done by Esmali (2012). He revealed that revolutionary roots of Impaired Autonomy and Performance don't have a direct impact on creating the schemas of autonomy area. But, he specified that over vigilance/Inhibition evolutionary roots and inhibition, disturbed limitations and disconnection and rejection have a significant effect on creating maladaptive schemas of Impaired Autonomy and Performance area. Therefore, it can be seen in the results that controller, degrading, more supportive parents in the views of Young can predict the schemas of Impaired Autonomy and Performance (Sheffield & Waller et al, 2005).

This finding is in agreement with Lubna Alfasfos, (2009) and Sheffield & Waller et al, 2005 (2005) research done abroad as well as with the results of Jalili et al., (2011) research done in Iran.

**Table 4**  
**Regression Analysis of Impaired limits Parenting Area with the Area of Disturbed Limitations Schemas**

sig	B	$\beta$	$R^2$	R	F	Variable
.00	21.72	.26	.06	.26	26.31	Evolutionary Roots' Impaired Limits

The results of this study show that evolutionary roots of disturbed limitations are predictors of early maladaptive schemas in the area of disturbed limitations. In explaining this result we can state that individuals with maladaptive schemas in the area of disturbed limitations, Show weakness and inability in determining inner boundary, responsible function or coherent activity to achieve long-term goals. Therefore, according to these schemes, the parents of individuals with this schema were so lenient, in educational model related to these people and have fulfilled their needs in an extreme way and didn't have a clear boundary related to these individuals. Therefore, because of this model of parenting, one may believe that the person is superior to others and should have special rights and has difficulty in controlling impulses (Bossman, Brett, Velir Berg and Wen, 2010). These results are in agreement with the findings of Esmali's research (2012).

**Table 5**  
**Regression Analysis of Other Directed Parenting Area with Other Directed Schemas Area**

Sig	B	$\beta$	$R^2$	R	F	Variable
.00	18.90	.30	.09	.30	36.72	Evolutionary Roots' other Directed

The results of this study show that evolutionary roots of other directed are predictors of early maladaptive schemas in the area of other directed. In explaining this result we can state that individuals with maladaptive

schemas in the area of other directed have parents who have adopted children with reservation and the child in order to receive parental love, has to ignore important aspects of his/her personality. Also, their parents are always degrading and have tried to have control over the child (Young, Klasko & Vishar, 2012)

This finding is in agreement with Lubna Alfasfos, (2009) and Sheffield (2006) research done abroad as well as with the results of Esmali (2012), Jalili et al, (2011) research done in Iran. He revealed that over vigilance/Inhibition evolutionary roots and inhibition, disturbed limitations and other directed have a significant effect on creating maladaptive schemas of other directed area.

**Table 6**  
**Regression Analysis of Over Vigilance/Inhibition Parenting Area with Other over Vigilance/Inhibition Schemas Area**

sig	B	$\beta$	$R^2$	R	F	Variable
.00	21.35	.27	.07	.27	29.36	Evolutionary Roots' Over Vigilance /Inhibition

The results of this study show that evolutionary roots over vigilance/Inhibition and inhibition have a significant effect on schemas of over vigilance/Inhibition area. In explaining this result we can state that individuals who have maladaptive schemas in the area of over vigilance/Inhibition, have excessive emphasis on inhibition or rejection of feelings, impulses, spontaneous choices and fulfilling their inner expectations or rules and are rigid about performance and ethical behavior that leads to a loss of happiness, peace of mind, self-assertiveness, close relationships and health. Evolutionary roots and early conventional dynamics in the families of such people include strict and controller and demanding parenting. People with such schemas have had a punisher



parent; this means that with the smallest mistake they have been punished by their parents. Their parents, as well; have shown strict criteria towards these people that is due to their perfectionism. The parent of people with such schema are unable to express their emotions towards their children and the child is not comfortable with them (Sheffield, 2006). This finding is in agreement with Lubna Alfasfos, (2009) and Sheffield (2006) research done abroad and with the results of Esmali (2012), Jalili et al., (2001) research done in Iran.

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

This result of this study suggests that research hypothesis about predicting early maladaptive schemas can be verified through parenting styles. Also, the parents who have cold, heartless, rejecter parenting style, are predictors of disconnection and rejection schemas, but more supportive parents, who let their children not to function independently, underlie the emergence of impaired autonomy and performance schemas. Parents who are not strict and fulfill the needs too much; are predictors of impaired limits schemas. Parents who are looking to satisfy their needs and their social status are the cause of schemas in the area of other directed. However, parents who have characteristics such as violence, rejection and rigor create the schemas of vigilance area. This finding is in agreement with Lubna Alfasfos, (2009) and Sheffield (2005) research done abroad and with the results of Esmali (2012), Jalili et al, (2001) research done in Iran.

At the end, it is suggested that a research be conducted on the people who have different educational levels, live in other geographic areas and cultural environments of the country.

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