

Parental Acceptance-Rejection and Paternal Authoritarianism among Abused Children in Pakistan

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This study assessed the relationship of the patterns of parental acceptance-rejection and paternal authoritarianism with child abuse and neglect with in Pakistani families. The degree and type of abuse and fathers' authoritarian attitude towards their children was assessed with the help of two indigenously developed scales, the Child Abuse Scale (CAS) and the Paternal Authoritarianism Scale (PAS). Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ father and mother forms) was used to measure children's perception of parents' accepting-rejecting attitude. A sample of 200 children (100 boys; 100 girls) ages from 8 through 13 years old, and their fathers aged from 25 through 50 years old was drawn from five cities in Punjab, Pakistan. Children were administered CAS and PARQ; fathers were administered the PAS. Abused children overall perceived their parents (both fathers and mothers) to be rejecting; severely abused children perceived more rejection. The results also revealed a high authoritarian attitude of fathers, depicting a vital aspect typical of the Pakistani familial context. Fathers with high educational levels tended to be less authoritarian, although fathers belonging to different SES, family sizes, and family types were equally authoritarian. Contrary to the assumption, children scored higher on emotional/psychological abuse than on physical abuse. No gender differences with reference to level of abuse or type of abuse were evident.

Key Words: child abuse, parental acceptance-rejection, paternal authoritarianism, CAS