

# Parental Acceptance - Rejection and Parental Control as Determinants of Substance Abuse: A Comparative Study of Drug Addicts and Non-drug Addicts

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## Abstract

*This research investigated the influence of perceived parental acceptance-rejection and parental control among drug addicts and non-addicts. A group of drug addicts (N = 50) and non-drug addicts (N = 50) was selected for the study. The sample of drug addicts was selected from drug Rehabilitation centers in Hyderabad and Sanghar districts of Sindh Province using Purposive sampling technique. Non-drug addicts were college students of Hyderabad. Age, gender, both parents alive and social class were kept same for both groups. Parental Acceptance- Rejection Control Questionnaire (child PARQ: Father & Mother), was administered for data collection. Results indicated drug addicts were higher on both mother and father rejection as compared to non-drug addicts. They also perceived their parents more neglecting and aggressive. Further the findings of the study have shown less scores of drug addicts on control subscale of PARQ-Control as compared to the scores of non-drug addicts. These findings are consistent with the universal postulates of IPAR Theory, specifically about importance of parental acceptance-rejection and parental control and their place in children's life. The implications of the study have discussed in terms of the influence and importance of perceived parenting style in drug addiction.*

**Keywords:** Parental acceptance-rejection, Parental control, Drug addicts, Non-drug addicts, Drug abuse

## Introduction

Parental attitudes, parenting styles and practices have significant influence on the behavior and personality development of children as well as adolescents. Parental acceptance or warmth and love and parental rejection or withdrawal or lack of love and care and parental control have been found to have major and universal effects on overall behavior patterns, adjustment and psychological development of children



(Rohner, 1975, 1986, 1960, 2012; Putnik et al, 2015). Acceptance and unconditional positive regard has been considered as source of psychological well-being and lack of parental love and care give rise to behavioral problems and Psychopathology (Roger, 1961; Coleman, 1956). Feelings of acceptance related with parents are critical to psychological adjustment and every human have evolutionary based need for acceptance, approval from people most important to them (Rohner, 1960). For children this need is reflected in parental warmth (Khaleque, 2017).

Parental rejection has also been identified as strong determinants of acting out and externalizing behaviour problems (Seema, 2004) including substance/drug abuse. Rohner and Britner (2002) found support for the worldwide correlation between parental rejection and drug addiction from different European countries. Findings of these researchers have clearly indicated the relationship between parental rejection and all type of drug addiction. Many studies pointed out direct relationship of perceived parental rejection with drug abuse behaviour among different cultural groups like African-Americans and Hispanics. This relationship of parental rejection and substance abuse has been found in many European American middle-class and working-class groups. The significant association between absence of parental warmth and use of illegal drugs among adolescents suggests that those youngsters who perceive lack of mother and father care and support have greater chances to be involved in drug addict behaviour (Rohner & Campo, 1999).

Considering the upsetting state of drug abuse in world and especially in Pakistan where a huge increase in substance/drug addicts reaches nearly six million and large number needed a long-term medical care (UNDP, 2018). The increasing cases of addiction making Pakistan severely-affected countries in the world (Sadia et al, 2017). Less research has been done and documented in Pakistan and especially in Sindh to understand level of parental attitude especially parental control and its effect on substance/drug abuse behavior. Present research is devised to understand perceived acceptance —rejection and its effect on drug abuse behavior and this research investigation will also explore the effect of mother and father control and its effect on drug abuse behaviour among adolescents.

### **Parental acceptance - rejection**

Parental Acceptance-Rejection are two ends of parental warmth and care from high to least (Rohner, 1975; 2004; 2013). PART theory which is now been changed as theory of Interpersonal acceptance-rejection (Rohner, 2016) postulates that children all over the world, need warmth and affection of both parents for healthy psychological development. Parents use variety of behaviors including physical, verbal and emotional, to show concern and love for their children. Positive pole of the parental warmth dimension is marked by parental acceptance and parental rejection is the contrary or negative end. Parental acceptance represents parental affection and concern which is shown physically by hugging, kissing, caressing showing expressions of love whereas parental rejection

means significant least or lack of parents' love and the presence of various psychologically and physically hurtful behaviors including hostile aggressive, neglecting and indifferent behaviour (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012). Rejection of parents can be displayed as (1) cold and unaffectionate parental attitude (2) hostile and aggressive parental attitude (3) indifferent and neglect and (4) undifferentiated rejection. These set of behaviors and attitudes develop feelings of parental rejection in children (Rohner, 2006; Rohner & Khaleque, 2005). For healthy and balanced personality development and psychological wellbeing, every human has need of

acceptance, approval, love and appreciation. In case of children, they depend on parents for emotional needs, if they do not meet these emotional needs; they are more prone to develop maladapted behaviors like; poor self-esteem, low self-adequacy, emotional detachment, lack of emotional control etc. (Rohner, 1986).

In case of absence of parental warmth and affection which is very much required condition for children to learn and follow societal norms and to be healthy member of society, children's chances of getting involved in antisocial and disruptive behavior increases as a result of parental rejection (Bushra, 2018). Higher perceived parental rejection was documented as strong predictor of increase in externalizing and internalizing behavior problems (Putnick et al., 2015). Psychologists believe in hazardous influence of negative parent-child relationship on the child's life and behavior towards others (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2003; Rohner & Britner, 2002). Parental neglect develops aggression, resentment, social conduct problems and substance-abuse issues among youngsters mostly (Davies & Beech, 2012). Psychosocial maladaptation occurs as a result of poor attachment relationship between parents and children because of parental rejection (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012). Whereas parental acceptance is cross—culturally found associated with psychological adjustment and less behavioral problems. Children who come from loving and accepting families possess positive behavior of feeling good about themselves, ability to manage hostility and aggression, have positive world view, feel competent, and less dependence and are more emotionally stable and emotionally responsive ((Kim & Rohner, 2002, 2003).

### **Parental control**

Parental warmth and lack of parental love or rejection together form one dimension of parenting, whereas another dimension is control, which is well documented in researches (Rohner & Petén gill, 1985; Rohner & Rohner, 1981; 2014; Manin, 1975; Rohner & Rohner, 1980). Control dimension is based on two poles: Permissiveness and Strictness. In explaining the concept of control various explanations have been given by researchers in the field of psychology.

Diana Baumrind (1991) theory of parenting emphasized on control dimension, suggest authoritarian versus authoritative and permissive ways of parental control on children. Maccoby and Martin (1983) emphasized two parenting dimensions which are

parental control and parental demandingness. In understanding the concept of control, it is very much important to be cautious whether control is behavioral control or psychological control. Several researches done on behavioral and psychological control (Barber, Joseph & Shobha, 1994). Behavioral control is documented as best for children to learn about and explore the world on his /her own within set standards (Barber, 1996). Psychological control on the other hand is use of guilt induction, withdrawal of love and shaming (Barber, 1996). Use of parental control is associated with many healthy and unhealthy behaviors including internalizing and externalizing behavior problems. In a study conducted on the risk and protective factors of substance use in Moroccan adolescents, the factors including poor parenting, lack of parental monitoring and supervision, exercise of too much parental control or lack of control were found as risk factors as reported by the participants (Hicham et al., 2018).

### **This study**

This study examined the impact of parental acceptance-rejection and parental control specifically on drug abuse behaviour among adolescents. It analyzed the differences of perceived parental acceptance —rejection and control between drug addicts and non-drug addicts. Findings will advance literature on mother and father warmth and control and its effects on the development of drug abuse behaviour in Sindh. Parental warmth, rejection and control are studied separately in present study.

### **Objectives of the study**

- 1- To measure the degree of perceived father and mother acceptance —rejection among drug addicts and non- drug addict adolescents.
- 2- To measure the degree of perceived father and mother control among drug addicts and non-drug addict adolescents.

### **Hypotheses**

- 1- Drug addicts would perceive their parents (Mother-father) as more rejecting as compared to non-drug addicts.
- 2- Drug addicts would perceive less parental control (Mother-fat her) as compared to non- drug addicts.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

A comparative between- subject research, designed to assess the degree of perceived parental acceptance-rejection and parental control of drug addicts and non-drug addict adolescents.

## Sample

Participants (N = 100) of the study comprised of two groups i.e. male drug addicts (n= 50) and male non-drug addict (n=50). Age of the participants ranges from 13 to 18 years (Mean age non-addicts = 17.02 years, Sd = 1.72; Mean age addicts =16.57 years, Sd =1.47). The male drug addicts were recruited from Rehabilitation centers in Hyderabad and Sanghar Districts of Sindh Province. Participants belonged to different socio-economic classes, 38% of them were from middle socio-economic class, 55% belonged to lower socio-economic class and 02% of the drug addicts belonged to upper socio- economic class. Comparison group of non-drug addicts was selected from different colleges of Hyderabad using random sampling technique. Among the sample of Non-drug addict adolescents, 56% belonged to middle social class, 41% belonged to lower class and 03% belonged to upper socio-economic class. The different variables including age, gender, social status, education and both parents ( mother –father) alive were constant for both groups of participants.

## Instruments

### a. Parental Acceptance-Rejection Control Questionnaire (Mother-Father Referrent)

Parental acceptance-rejection control questionnaire (PARQ/C) was developed by Rohner (1975). It has two versions which measure the perception of participants about their mother and father. Both versions were used in the present study. In the present study Urdu (Imam, 1999) and Sindhi (Shah, 2009) adapted version of parental acceptance/rejection control questionnaire were used. These were administered according the language of the participants which was easily understood by them. The scale assesses the way of adolescent's perception of their mothers and fathers during childhood. It consists of five sub- scales, which are (a) parental warmth and parental affection (20 items), (b) parental hostility and aggression (15 items), (c) Parental neglect and indifference (15 items), and (d) parental undifferentiated rejection (10 items). Parental control scale has 13 items. High score on control scale indicates high perceived control. High score on warmth questionnaire indicate less parental warmth and more rejection. The response category is set at 4—point Likert-like scale, ranging from 'Almost Always True' was assigned a score of 4, to 'Almost Never True' assigned a score of 1. Some items are scored in the opposite direction, to deny response set bias.

### b. Personal Information Questionnaire

This scale was devised by the researcher to gather information about demographic variables of the participants, namely, age, both parents alive, socioeconomic status, educational background and types of the drugs used.

### Procedure

Permission from the higher authorities of Rehabilitation centers and college was taken and purpose of the research was explained to them. Then informed consent was taken from those who want to participate in the study. Before administering the scales, rapport was developed, afterwards data were gathered. Questionnaires were administered individually and questions were read out for drug addict because of their low level of education. In case of non-addicts, questionnaires were administered in their respective colleges, and they filled in questionnaires by themselves.

### Analysis of Results

For hypotheses testing t-test, and descriptive measures of mean and standard deviation were used. Following tables are displaying the findings of the study.

**H1:** Drug addicts perceived more paternal rejecting as compared to non-drug addicts

**H2:** Drug addicts perceived more maternal rejection as compared to non-drug addicts.

**Table 1:** Means, SDs, and t values of drug addicts (n=50) and non-drug addicts (n=50) on Father PARQ-Control

Variables	drug addict			No drug addict			t	p	LL	UL	df
	M	SD	SET	M	SD	SET					
Warmth / affection	53.4	7.33	1.03	31.76	7.38	1.04	14.7	.000	18.7	24.5	98
Hostility / aggression	42.4	5.70	.80	27.30	5.83	.82	13.12	.000	12.8	17.4	98
Indifference / Neglect	40.9	3.52	.51	28.40	5.12	.72	14.12	.000	10.7	14.3	98
Undifferentiated rejection	30.14	4.76	.67	19.46	5.58	.79	10.2	.000	8.6	12.7	98
Total PARQ	33.5	4.5	2.5	20.92	8.08	2.5	16.3	.000	52.7	67.2	98

Table I is presenting t-values of the scores of drug addicts and non-drug addicts on the father perceived acceptance-rejection (father PARQ). Results indicated significant differences between drug addict participants and non addicts in perceived father aggression ( $t = 13.12, p < .001$ ), neglect ( $t = 14.12, p < .001$ ), rejection ( $t = 10.2, p < .001$ ), and less warmth ( $t = 14.7, p < .001$ ). The mean values show that drug addicts perceived their fathers more aggressive (drug addicts  $M = 42.4, Sd = 5.70$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 27.30, Sd = 5.83$ ), more neglected (drug addicts  $M = 40.9, Sd = 3.62$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 28.40, Sd = 5.12$ ), more rejected (drug addicts  $M = 30.14, Sd = 4.76$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 19.46, Sd = 5.58$ ) and less warm (drug addicts  $M = 53.44, Sd = 7.33$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 31.76, Sd = 7.38$ ) as compared to non-drug addicts. Thus, the hypothesis one that drug addicts would perceive their fathers as more rejected than non addicts has confirmed.

**Table 2:** Means, SDs, and t values of drug addicts (n=50) and non-drug addicts (n=50) on Mother PARQ

Variables	@ Nt	Drug addict			Non-drug addict						
		SO	SET	NI	SO	SEM	T	P	LL	HL	df
Warmth / affection	50.80	6.33	.89	30.46	6.83	.96	15.4	.000	17.7	22.9	98
Hostility / aggression	40.54	5.28	.74	27. g	s.en	.79	11.5	.000	10.3	14.7	98
Indifference / Neglect	40.90	3.89	.SS	28.60	4.40	.62	14.7	.000	10.6	13.9	98
Undifferentiated rejection	2g+o	3.78	.S3	20.22	4.g7	.68	9.7	.000	6.7	10.1	98
Total PARQ	160.92	15.49	2.1	107.26	15.01	2.1	17.5	.000	47.6	59.7	98

Table 2 is presenting t-values of the scores of drug addicts and non-drug addicts on the perceived mother acceptance-rejection. Results indicated significant differences between drug addicts and non-addicts on perceived mother aggression ( $t = 11.5$ ,  $p < .001$ ), neglect ( $t = 14.7$ ,  $p < .001$ ), rejection ( $t = 9.7$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and less warmth ( $t = 15.4$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The mean values revealing that drug addicts perceived their mothers more aggressive (drug addicts  $M = 40.54$ ,  $SD = 5.28$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 27.98$ ,  $SD = 5.60$ ), more neglected (drug addicts  $M = 40.90$ ,  $SD = 3.89$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 28.60$ ,  $SD = 4.40$ ), more rejected (drug addicts  $M = 28.60$ ,  $SD = 3.78$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 20.22$ ,  $SD = 4.87$ ) and less warm (drug addicts  $M = 50.80$ ,  $SD = 6.33$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 30.46$ ,  $SD = 6.83$ ) as compared to non-drug addicts. Thus, second hypothesis that drug addicts would perceive their mothers as more rejected than non addicts is confirmed.

**H3:** Drug addicts would perceive less Father Control as compared to non-drug addicts.

**H4:** Drug addicts would perceive less Mother Control as compared to non-drug addicts.

**Table 3:** Means, SDs, and t values of drug addicts (n=50) and non-drug addicts (n=50) on the Father Control of PARQ

Variables	Drug addict				Non-drug addict						
	M	SD	SET	M	SD	SET	T	P	LL	UL	df
Father Control	29.88	3.65	.517	40.94	4.50	.573	14.32	.000	.95	.125	98

Table 3 is presenting t-values of the scores of drug addicts and non-drug addicts on the perceived control of father. Results indicated significant differences between drug addicts and non addicts in perceived paternal control ( $t = 14.32$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The mean values are revealing that drug addicts perceived their fathers' less controlling (drug add  $M = 29.88$ ,  $SD = 3.65$ ; non drug addicts  $M = 40.94$ ,  $SD = 4.50$ ) as compared to drug addicts. Thus, third hypothesis that drug addicts would perceive their fathers less controlling is also accepted.

**Table 4:** Means, SDs, and t values of drug addicts (n =50) and non-drug addicts (n=50) on Mother Control scale of PA RQ

Variable	Drug addict			Non-drug addict							
	M	SD	SET	M	SD	SET	T	P	LL	UL	df
Mother Control	29.54	2.92	.413	35.92	4.61	.65	8.26	.000	7.91	4.84	98

Table 4 is presenting t-values of addicts and non-drug addicts on perceived maternal control. Results indicated significant differences between drug addicts and non addicts on perceived maternal control ( $t = 8.26, p < .001$ ). The mean values are revealing that non-drug addicts perceived their mothers higher on control (drug add  $M = 35.92, SD = 4.61$ ; drug addicts  $M = 29.54, SD = 2.92$ ) as compared to non- drug addicts. Thus, fourth hypothesis that drug addicts would perceive their mother less controlling is also accepted.

## Discussion

Large number of researches in the field of psychology has supported the importance of child rearing patterns, and its influence on the full conduct of an individual (Rohner, 2001; Baumrind 1991; Steinber,2000). Present research aimed to assess the effects of parental acceptance -rejection on drug abuse among adolescents. Over all findings of the study indicated positive support to the PART theory that parental acceptance and rejection is of crucial importance in the development of overall behavior of an individual (Rohner,2001).

Results of the present study (Table 1 & 2) indicated significant differences in perceived acceptance and rejection among drug addicts and non-drug addicts. Addicts perceived their both parents (mother - father), as more rejecting than non-drug addicts, with significant difference on all sub-scales of PARQ-Control questionnaire. These findings are consistent with earlier reaches (Sobiamassod & Najamsahar, 2014; Khaleque &Rohner,2002; Jenifer, 2004; Rohner, 1986;).

Children must learn to inhibit destructive and problem behavior and to remain engage in prosocial behavior. It is responsibility of parents to help them by providing structured and contingency framework for self-control and self-regulatory mechanisms (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Another result of the present research is about importance of parental control in the development of child behavior. As it was also focus of the study to investigate parental control and its effect on the development of drug abuse. Findings about perceived mother and father control (Table 3 & 4), indicate less parental control in a group of drug addicts as compared to non-drug addicts. The results are in accordance with other researches (Rohner & Campo, 1992; Elisardo Becona, et al, 2013).

Findings of this research are supporting parental acceptance-rejection theory of socialization (Rohner, 1975), which emphasizes that experiences of parental acceptance-rejection during childhood significantly influence behavior of individuals. Researches on warmth and control dimension of parenting emphasize parental limit, behavioral control,



parental affection, care and concern, and parents' involvement as important factors behind children's behavioral and psychological adjustment (Nancy et al., 2007, Putnick, 2015; Dairy, 2010; Khaleque & Rohner, 2002; Khaleque, 2007; Bushra, 2016).

### **Strengths**

Mothers' and fathers' acceptance—rejection is studied separately in terms of its effect on drug abuse behavior, as both parents' attitude is assumed to be equally important. Present research increases understanding about control parenting in association with drug abuse behavior among adolescents in Sindh. This study has increased understanding about negative influence of rejection and permissive parenting for child behavior. Results of the present research have opened opportunity for mental health professionals and parents specially to make their parental attitude based on positive parenting including acceptance in place of rejection and firm control rather than psychological control or permissive control.

### **Limitations**

This research with several strengths has some limitations, including small sample size, because of special population of drug addicts, then because of age limit and other demographic variable of the sample it was even difficult to have a large sample. Another limitation is only inclusion of male sample of drug addict's population, it could provide extensive results if girls sample was included in the research.

### **Conclusion**

This study provided an understanding of the effects of parental (mother & father) acceptance and their rejection and control on drug abuse among adolescents in Sindh, Pakistan. Parental Rejection was found influential in case of drug abuse. It was found that less other and father control is determinant of drug abuse behavior, having equivalent influence of mother and father. Most of the researches on parental acceptance—rejection and specifically parental control focus only on mother acceptance and rejection this study has taken into consideration both parents parenting practices, including warmth and control dimension. The importance of the role of father highlighted, as perceived less father control reported by participants. So, it would bring awareness that within family father perception also influence the behaviour and moral conduct of children and especially of boys.

### **Recommendations**

Following recommendations suggested:

1. Father must be aware of the importance of their role on children, which is not only limited to economic facilities provider. Fathers must know about the need of their strong relationship with their children especially with their sons to turn them into healthy individuals.

2. To aware parents about better parenting skills scicial and print media must be used.
3. Information regarding drug use behaviour and symptoms of using it must be spread to increase understanding of youth and parents.
4. Information about health hazards related to drugs must be spread in colleges, schools and at comrnunit y level.

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