

Investigating the Relevance of Religion Orientation and Parents' Educational Styles

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ABSTRACT: The aim of the present research is to investigate the relationship between the religion orientation and the parents' educational styles. The statistical population in the present research involves all the couples between 20-55 years of age, residing in the city of Qeshm. From this population, 150 couples were chosen through the sampling method available, and were tested by the questionnaires of religion orientation and educational styles. Data of the research were analysed using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The research indicated that in the fathers' group, higher scores in religion-orientation were in line with greater possibility of using the authoritarian style, while higher scores of enjoyment were found to be correlated with using the aggressive or permissive style. In the mothers' group, results revealed that higher levels of religion orientation in different dimensions were found to be correlated with using the authoritarian style while lower and medium levels of religion orientation were in line with using the aggressive and permissive styles.

Key words: Religion orientation, Educational styles, Couples

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INTRODUCTION

Family as an institution is among the most popular social institutions that exists in all societies and is considered to be the pivot of the social life. In fact, man is born in the family, lives inside its structure, resorting to the family on necessary conditions while finds support and comfort in the light of it. Therefore, family as an institution has in all times and in all societies (religious and non religious) been accepted and developed. Family is the first base for conveying cultural elements (opinions, etiquette, and traditions ...) to a new generation including effective factors in creating civilization and human culture as well as developing and flourishing man's abilities [1]. One of the areas of research in this regard, is maintaining and promoting the mental health of the family. The psychological perspective of the mental health believes the major objective of man's life is to reach new horizons and to cross limitations and shortcomings. These goals are not achieved unless in the light of developing and growing the spiritual aspect of man that is assumed to be playing a major and underlying part in determining the mental health. This approach is based on this belief that man is not "biological, mental and social" but rather he is "biological, mental, social and spiritual" and every sort of psychological intervention must involve all these people. Also, according to Gorsuch [2] awareness of the religion is as much valuable as other psychological characteristics and there is no need to show the importance of religion in peoples' lives. In fact, today most of theorists pay more attention to the spiritual dimension of man more than ever before. The first major structure within the modern psychology is related with the religion orientation. For Alport [3], the religion orientation is divided into two internal and external forms. He believes that the most acceptable way to distinguish these two extremes is to say that a person with his external religion, applies his religion while a person having an internal religion lives with his religion. Based on the theories of Alport, the internal religion is an encompassing religion that involves organized and internalized principles that is in itself an end, not a tool for achieving a purpose. A person having internal religion orientation lives with his religion and hence, his religion is unified with his personality. This approach to religion, for Alport, is very healthy and results in the mental health [3]. Whereas a person having an external religion orientation, his religion is not modulated with his personality and life. For him religion is a tool satisfies personal needs including gaining support and security [4, 5]. With regards to the role of religion in different issues, some researchers have suggested that membership in religion communities reflect and consolidates the value of life [6]. One of the issues that always matters is the parenting the children and the way they are raised. The widespread typology of educational behaviors used in the west was developed by [7]. Parents' educational styles are considered to be strong structures in the socialization of the children and are often described as personal differences in nurturing the children. Baumrind identified three educational styles: Authoritarian, permissive and authoritative styles. Parents that apply the authoritarian educational style, concentrate more on controlling their children. They restrict their children autonomy, making decisions as to what behaviors are suitable for them [7]. Parents applying the permissivestyle, enhance their children autonomy, enabling them to decide for themselves and to adjust their

activities. The authoritative style is an in-between style. Parents that apply this style possess good educational skills, imposing medium educational control so as to allow the child to be more independent [8]. Children that are raised in line with this style, are not totally confined, rather a rational level of freedom of action in their behaviors is given to them. These parents apply their limitations in different ways of reasoning and verbal interchange. Investigations indicate that various factors affect the parents' educational goals and actions among which is the religion orientation [9]. However, up to now no research on the issue of the role of religion orientation on parenting the children has been conducted in Iran. A review of the past literature indicate that studies have been performed outside the country that are mentioned in the following. For example, empirical researches are in line with this perspective that educational goals and objectives of the parents could through religious teachings they receive be affected while authoritarianism of the parents are related to their religion beliefs [10]. Also, modern researches in the area of the effect of Christianity on the parents' educational styles reaffirm the point that the Holy book demands pure obedience of the parents by the children [11, 12]. Wiehe in another research indicated that Christian parents that considered themselves to be religious, used authoritative style in raising their children. Grasmick et al. [13] concluded that more religious people compared to less religious people apply authoritative educational styles. Based on an investigation, people who believe in Christianity, demand children to be more obedient to them. Also, these people consider the least level of autonomy for their own children, maintain that bodily punishment is an appropriate way to raise and nurture the children [14]. In this regard, Alison and Sherkat. [15] showed that Protestants extremists in relation to less religious people believe that children should be docile and obedient to their parents. Given the fact that the importance and role of educational styles developed by Baumrind are proven in different researches, it looks investigating the role of the parents' religion orientation in educational styles [16] is one of the important issues that should be raised and studied frequently. With the results obtained, guidelines to raise and educate children can be presented to the families in order that they can with better understandings deal with this important matter, because the importance of this issue is widely known. In sum raising children better leads to a healthy society.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The statistical population in the present research involves all the couples between 20-55 years of age, residing in the city of Qeshm. From this population, 150 couples were chosen through the sampling method available.

Data collection tool

1. Religion orientation questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by Bahrami [17]. The main framework of this questionnaire was to make the human relations and relationship structure as a basis within all of its dimensions in the light of the relations between God and man. This questionnaire includes four subscales that follow "

a. Religion orientation parameter, b. Religion unorganized parameter that is not established, c. Parameter of making religion worthwhile and practice-oriented, d. Enjoyment. The reliability coefficient of this questionnaire has been reported between 0.91 and 0.85. Answering this questionnaire is based on a five degree Likert scale [17].

2. Parenting styles questionnaire: This tool was developed based on a theory by Baumrind [7] and was adopted on the basis of permissive, authoritarian and authoritative behavior patterns so as to investigate the models of influence and ways of parenting the children. This questionnaire includes 30 items where each of the three behavior patterns mentioned contains 10 items. In this research subjects (mothers and fathers), studying each item, specifies his or her viewpoint based on a five degree Likert scale. This questionnaire was already used by Esfandyari, Rezaee and Begham and they reported a substantial reliability and credibility of it. In a research done by Esfandyari, he showed that the questionnaire has a formal credibility. The reliability degree for the permissive, authoritarian and authoritative methods were 0.69, 0.77 and 0.73 respectively [17].

Method of administering: While an intimate condition is provided for the couples to answer the questionnaire, explanations and points concerning the information being confidential were offered to them and they were required as to how to complete it.

RESULTS

This part deals with the descriptive indices of the research variables. Later through using the diagnostic analysis, the possibilities of distinguishing educational styles using the religion orientation scores are investigated. Table 1 shows the as it is seen that only in the dimension of enjoyment, mothers have higher means and in the rest as well as the total score, the mean of fathers is higher

Based on table 2, the frequency distribution of the three educational styles are equal in the two groups of fathers and mothers. In the table, the highest number exists in the authoritarian group while the least numbers are in the permissive group. The frequency of the aggressive group is slightly more than the permissive group.

In the table 3, the first diagnostic function is significant ($P=0.000<0.01$), while the second diagnostic function is not ($P=0.197>0.05$). Here, it can be concluded that through scores of religion orientation, one can guess comfortably fathers' educational styles. Since, the second function is not significant the continuation of the analyses will be performed only for the first function.

In table 4 the diagnostic function of is presented in each group. It is observed the mean of the aggressive and permissive styles are close to each other, while the mean pertaining to the authoritarian style is significantly more than those two. Hence, it can be concluded that, in the fathers' group, through the religion orientation scores, one can distinguish the authoritarian style from the other two styles while distinguishing the two styles of aggressive and permissive is quite difficult.

According to the fact that the religion orientation has the highest weight and charge, it can be said that this variable contributes most to distinguishing the authoritarian style from the other two styles. According to the coefficients of the charges and centroids of groups of (table4), higher scores of religion orientation are in line correlated with high possibility of using the authoritarian style. The weight of unorganized in the diagnostic function is very low. Hence, one can attribute its substantial correlation with the diagnostic variable to other semi tests (pieces of test) of the religion orientation.

Religion worthwhile is clear with its negative weight in the diagnostic function. Since, the correlation of this variable is positive with the variable of diagnosis, it can be said that the religion worthwhile has a deterrent role in the diagnostic function. In other words, the presence of this variable leads to a reduction of variance which is not valid pertaining to the religion orientation and in the end to an improvement of the prediction.

Enjoyment has a low but negative and substantial weight and charge. According to centroids of table 4. Higher scores in enjoyment mean a greater possibility of facing with permissive and aggressive styles.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of fathers and mothers' with regards to religion orientation dimensions

Group	Religion orientation		Unorganized		Making religion worthwhile		Enjoyment		Total score	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Fathers	4.44	2.824	5.48	1.793	5.30	2.055	5.17	1.615	5.29	1.748
Mothers	4.31	2.715	5.33	1.738	5.21	1.923	5.63	1.632	5.16	1.597

Table 2. The frequency distribution of educational styles distinguishing mothers and fathers

	Aggressive	Permissive	Authoritarian
Fathers	25 (14.9%)	16 (9.5%)	127 (75.6%)
Mothers	20 (12.2%)	15 (9.1%)	129 (78.7%)

Table 3. The result of a diagnostic analysis for predicting the educational styles based on the fathers' religion orientation scores

Diagnostic function	Special value	Variance percentage	Lambd A. Wilkes	Squared K	Freedom degree	Significance level
1	0.451	94	0.670	65.564	8	0.000
2	0.029	6	0.972	4.680	3	0.197

Table 4. Groups centroid in the diagnostic function pertaining to fathers

Educational style	Centroid
Aggressive	-1.140
Permissive	-1.220
Authoritarian	0.378

Table 5. Weight and charge of predicting variables on the diagnostic function in the fathers' group

Predicting variables	Weight	Charge
Religion orientation	1.167	0.935
Unorganized	-0.021	-0.690
Religion worthwhile	-0.308	0.530
Enjoyment	-0.263	-0.242

Table 6. The result of a diagnostic analysis for predicting the educational styles based on the mothers' religion orientation scores

Diagnostic function	Special value	Variance percentage	Lambd A. Wilkes	Squared K	Freedom degree	Significance level
1	0.467	93.5	0.660	66.282	8	0
2	0.033	6.5	0.968	5.128	3	0.163

The first diagnostic function is significant ($P=0.000<0.01$), while the second diagnostic function is not ($P=0.163>0.05$). Here, it can be concluded that through scores of religion orientation, one can guess comfortably mothers' educational styles. Since, the second function is not significant the continuation of the analyses will be performed only for the first function.

Table 7. Group's centroid in the diagnostic function pertaining to mothers

Educational style	Centroid
Aggressive	1.097
Permissive	1.538
Authoritarian	-0.349

According to these means, the authoritarian style is located in one part of the diagnostic pivot while the permissive style is situated in another part of the pivot. This matter indicates that in mothers' group, based on religion orientation scores, the three educational styles can be clearly distinguished.

Table 8. Weight and charge of predicting variables on the diagnostic function in the fathers' group

Predicting variables	Weight	Charge
Religion orientation	-0.356	0.858
Unorganized	0.537	-0.814
Religion worthwhile	-0.235	-0.595
Enjoyment	0.303	0.361

Religion orientation and making religion worthwhile have a negative charge and unorganized and enjoyment have a positive charge. This means that an increase in the scores of religion orientation or religion worthwhile, will lead to a decrease in the scores of the diagnostic variable and greater possibility of applying the authoritarian style. On the other hand, an increase in the scores of the unorganized and enjoyment will lead to an increase in the diagnostic score and greater possibility of the presence of the aggressive style and with the increase of these scores, we face with a greater possibility of the permissive style.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the two questionnaires suggested that in the fathers' group, higher scores in religion orientation are in line with greater possibility of using the authoritarian style and higher score of enjoyment corresponds with greater possibility of using the aggressive or permissive style. In the mothers' group, results showed that a higher level of religion orientation in different dimensions are correlated with greater possibility of using the authoritarian style and lower levels of are correlated with the aggressive and medium scores are in line with the permissive styles. These findings answer the question as to what educational styles people with higher religion orientation use. The findings reaffirm the previous results on the existence of a direct relation between the religion orientation and the parents' educational styles, indicating that the obtained results of this research are in conflict with the results of the other results. For example, Wiehe [9] showed that Christian parents that considered they to be religious used authoritative style in raising their children. Grasmick et al. [13] concluded that more religious people compared to less religious people apply authoritative educational styles. Based on an investigation, people who believe in Christianity, demand children to be more obedient to them. Also, these people consider the least level of autonomy for their own children, maintain that bodily punishment is an appropriate way to raise and nurture the children [14]. In this regard, Alison et al. [15] showed that Protestants extremists in relation to less religious people believe that children should be docile and obedient to their parents. Whereas in the present research results indicated that as the religion scores go higher, the possibility of using the authoritarian style will increase and as the same scores come lower, the possibility of a greater use of the permissive and aggressive style will increase. In explaining these results, one can refer to different approaches of different religions on how to raise children. For example, [18] in researches he has performed on the old testament books showed that one of the perspectives that exists with regards to nurturing the child is to believe in his evil fate. Because in all these books, this belief dominates that the child is born with an evil fate and it is the duty of the parents to contain this evil behavior of their children by punishing them with sticks. Also, these people consider the least level of autonomy for their own children, maintain that bodily punishment is an appropriate way to raise and nurture the children [14]. In this regard, Alison et al. [15], showed that Protestants extremists in relation to less religious people believe that children should be docile and obedient to their parents. Also the holy book demands bodily punishment against the children in case they disobey the orders of their parents.

However in Islam, although in the holy book [19], various verses emphasize the obedience of children towards their parents, parents have been urged to consult and to respect their children. Thus, it is clear that investigating the results of these two variables lead to such findings. Therefore, it can be said that obtaining such conflicting results could be related to different questionnaires on evaluating the religion orientation that were used in these researches. In other words, it is possible that the application of a different questionnaire in line with the culture and religion of our society will lead to obtaining paradoxical results with other results. On the other hand, in various researches the relation of the religion orientation with psychological variables have been investigated that based on their results, an internal religion orientation predicts a higher level of healthy elements of autonomy, sympathy, constructive thought, feeling of having identity, and self-efficacy and the mental health [20]. While the external religion orientation has an inverse relation with these healthy elements. Furthermore, studies on the relationship between the parenting styles and such variables as childhood anxiety, drug use among adolescents, depression in adulthood and neurosis among youngsters have been performed. In the end researches like this one will lead to an increase of our information with regards to different style of parenting and choosing the best one (s) to raise ones' children.

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