

**The Effects of Empathic Parenting Style on Self-Esteem
and Social Anxiety**

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Abstract

Parenting styles have been suggested as significantly important for children's self-evaluations and feelings of self-worth (Cheng & Furnham, 2003). Furthermore, parenting styles have been assumed to have an important role in the development of social anxiety (Barber, Bolitho & Bertrand, 2001). This study attempted to examine the effects of perceived empathic parenting on self-esteem and social anxiety in the university students using a sample of 91 students whose age range between 18 and 31 from Anglia Ruskin University. Participants completed Social Anxiety questionnaire (SAQ-A30), Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale and Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire. Moreover, the effect of gender as a moderator was investigated on the effects of maternal, paternal empathy on self-esteem and social anxiety. Analysis of linear regression were used for all hypotheses. The results showed that perceived empathic parenting had a significant effect on social anxiety whereas there was a non-significant effect of perceived empathic parenting on self-esteem of all participants.

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“Overall, you want to present yourself to your child as an ally, empathetic to his feelings, and responsive to his needs - even when your needs are conflicting. If your goal is to enlist your child's cooperation in changing his behaviour, find ways to be as aligned with his emotionally as possible. By earning your child's trust, you are much more likely to reach him with your point of view than if you approach him in opposition.”

(Flower, 2005, p. 127).

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a widespread literature on different parenting styles and the effects of these parenting styles on children (Baumrind, 1971; Kohut, 1977). There is a parenting style which has recently appeared in the literature, namely empathic parenting style. Empathic parenting behaviours have been described as being emotionally available, supportive of child's ideas, sensitive and receptive to the child's cues and needs (Feshbach, 1987; Morse, 2010). Empathic parents trust and receive the child's emotional needs and responds to those needs (Grille, 2005). Parental empathy and associated parental attributes such as sympathy, understanding, caring, acceptance and sensitive parenting are assumed to have positive effects on child's emotional, social and cognitive development (Morse, 2010).

Studies have shown that parental empathy is predictive of children's psychological well-being and self-esteem (Morse, 2010; Elicker, Egelan, & Sroufe, 1992). Ornstein and Ornstein (1997) suggested that deficiency of a parent's empathy may cause poor self-esteem, lower academic achievement, and an increased chance of psychopathology. Kohut (1977) proposed that lack of empathic responses of parents can make the child suffer from emotional problems which avoid him or her from making development progress, and also cause fragmented self and different psychological disease in the child.

Social anxiety which includes excessive, persistent and disruptive fear of embarrassment and being evaluated by others have been found significantly associated parenting practices. (Richards, 2013). Many research have suggested that adolescents who perceive their parents being warm and supportive exhibiting less anxiety (Arrindell, Emmelkamp, Elsbrilman & Monsma, 1983; Barber, Bolitho and Bertrand, 2001; McGinn, Cukor, and Sanderson, 2005).

Research on empathic parenting has mostly concentrated on infancy or childhood. This study bring important contributions to the literature by exploring the effects of emphatic parenting on the sample of university students. To measure empathic parenting, a scale has been developed. This new scale has been provided for researchers who would like to do extensive research on emphatic parenting.

Firstly a review of the literature has been presented, including the importance of empathic parenting style, and the effects of parenting styles on self-esteem and social anxiety. The aims, hypotheses, method, results and discussion are then followed. Because there is a little research on empathic parenting, research on other parenting styles has been used within this research. Similar parental practices or opposite parenting practices with empathic parenting has been used in this literature review to support the hypotheses as an important factor.

1.1. Empathy

The nature of empathy, which is often deemed as an experience of another's feelings, have been long argued by different theorists (Felt, 2011). As a result, there is a growing agreement amongst theorists that empathy is a notion which comprises both cognitive and

affective components (Davis, 1983; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990). The affective component is generally indicated as sympathy or “empathic concern”, which is the ability to feel sympathy or compassion for other people (Davis & Oathout, 1987). Eisenberg and Fabes (1990) stated that affective evaluations for another person’s emotional state may help another person’s distress to reduce. As to the cognitive component, it is generally indicated as a “perspective taking”, which is the ability to recognize and understand other people’s internal state and cognitions (Feshbach, 1975). Empathy has been described as a crucial supporter for being sensitively attuned, responsive and supportive parents (Baker & Baker, 1987; Belsky et al., 1984; Elson, 1985; Feshbach, 1989).

1.2. Parenting Styles

Empathic parenting has newly become widespread in the literature and it has been described as being emotionally available, supportive of child’s ideas, sensitive and receptive to the child’s cues and needs (Feshbach, 1987; Morse, 2010). As stated by Grille (2005), empathic parenting style is based on different norms from other child rearing styles such as dominant punitive authoritarian parenting, and different again from the permissive parenting style. Baumrind (1966; 1977) conducted substantial research on parenting styles and she suggested that there are four factors that affect successful parenting such as; responsiveness, unresponsiveness, demanding and undemanding. Based on these factors Baumrind identified 3 parenting styles namely, authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive.

The authoritarian parenting style practices are based on to educate children for adapting cultural norms and to view the child through a moral practical which dichotomizes behavior into ‘good’ and ‘bad’ (Grille, 2005). The authoritarian parents try to control, shape and evaluate the child’s behavior consistent with a set standard of manner which formulated by a high authority. Authoritarian parents use punishment and shame to educate their children

and do not promote verbal give and take with their children (Baumrind, 1967). They also do not accept the child's own development of individuation and growing need for autonomy (Grille, 2005).

The opposite of authoritarian parenting is permissive parenting which the parents allow the child to control the parents, through their own compliance and indulgence. The permissive parents are described as being non-punitive, acquiescent and positive towards the child's wishes and actions (Paul, 2007). Baumrind (1966) suggested that permissive parents do not promote to use punishment with their children because they believe the punishment prevent the children's progress and to achieve self-actualisation. They generally accept what the child wants and do not give any responsibility to child.

The other parenting style which is identified by Baumrind (1967) is authoritative parenting style. Authoritative parents are defined as being non-punitive, responsive and warm to the child (Milevsky, Netter, Schlechter, & Keehn, 2007). They provide warm environment which children can feel to be loved and cared. These parents support and commend their children abilities and also put rules to direct child's future. Authoritative parents tend to give clear and firm route and they are elucidator about rules and punishments. In addition, they enforce their own perspective as an adult, but recognizes the child's individual interests and special ways (Baumrind, 1967).

As stated by Grille (2005) the result of both authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting are relationships not entirely based on love but operate more out of fear and he suggests that when there is little love in a relationship, there is little empathy. On the other hand, authoritative parenting style and empathic parenting style are more similar in terms of involving parental warmth, responsiveness, caring, and acceptance (Morse, 2010). In the literature, there are very few numbers of research which done on empathic parenting style

whereas there are countless studies on Baumrind's parenting style. Therefore, studies on parenting styles have been utilized to support the hypothesis of this study. Grille (2005) suggested that empathic parenting can be identified as the lysis of the two dominant child raising styles which are authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

1.3. Empathic Parenting Style

Empathic parenting style is based on the attention of parents on children's emotional needs. The parents trust the child's emotional needs and responds to those needs (Grille, 2005). Grille (2005) suggested that the aim of empathic parenting is to support and nurture the natural development of empathy in the children instead of supporting values-driven morality of authoritarianism. Grille (2005) clarified that *"rules of morality are an abstraction, which can be adhered to by rote without any emotional conviction... (On the other hand) Empathy is an internal and natural morality, it emerges spontaneously because it is fuelled by the heart. In this way children behave morally as a result of having been loved and respected."* (p. 219).

Researchers have been argued the demonstration of parental empathy in parent-child interactions in the literature and they assessed that the manifestation of parental empathy includes sensitivity and responsiveness (Ainsworth, 1985; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Biringen, 1990, 2000; Hoff, Munck, & Greisen, 2004; McElwain & Volling, 2004), parental warmth (Rogers, 1961), attunement (Dombrowski, Timmer, Blacker, & Urquiza, 2005; Emde, 1980), synchrony (Barber et al., 2001; Feldman, 2007), and emotional availability (Lum & Phares, 2005; Sorce & Emde, 1981). Even though these attitudes are not essentially describing criterion of empathy, they are considerable adhered to prenatal empathy and often used to characterize empathic parenting behaviours or attributes (Morse, 2010).

For better understanding of empathic parenting, it is important to grasp the meanings of these parental attitudes. Richter (2004) defined the parental sensitivity as the ability to properly interpret and respond child's signals. Parental responsiveness was defined by Baumrind (1988) as encompassing affective warmth, nurturance, affection, involvement, support and unconditional acceptance. Amato (1990) has described parental warmth as the demonstration of interest in child's activities and friends, involvement in child's activities, expression of enthusiasm and manifestation of affiliation and love. Attunement was described by Siegel (2007) as one person's attention on the internal world of another. Siegel explained that "*This focus on the mind of another person harnesses neural circuitry that enables two people to 'feel felt' by each other*" (p. 207). Differently Stern (1985) defined 'attunement' as 'the intersubjective sharing of affect'. Isabella, Belsky, & von Eye (1989) defined synchrony as the interaction of parent-child which are reciprocal and rewarding to both the parent and child. Emde and Easterbrooks (1985) stated that emotional availability denotes the expression of each person emotions and responses to the emotions of the other. Lum and Phares (2005) described parental emotional availability as parent's behaviour which includes responsiveness and sensitivity.

1.4. Kilpatrick's Model of Parental Empathy

Kilpatrick (2005) defined parental empathy and she emphasised that parental empathy includes both affective (sharing of another's emotion) and cognitive components (perspective-taking approach, in which empathy is described as a non-emotional course of understanding the other's emotions and thoughts) of empathy. Parents' reactions such as compassion, sympathy, urge to nurture, and love have been deemed as a positive-child-focused emotions and these reactions of parents have been well established as important in healthy parent-child relationships (e.g., Brody & Shaffer, 1982; Kurdek & Fine, 1994;

Tomison & Tucci, 1997). On the other hand the negative child-focused parent emotions such as hostility, anger, dislike, and rejection have been associated to damaging child outcomes for instance, impaired social, cognitive and motor development and insecure attachment and with abusive and bullying parenting (Killen- Heap, 1991; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Baumrind, 1991) Therefore, Kilpatrick (2005) suggested that a description of parental empathy required the presence of these positive child-focused emotions (compassion, sympathy, urge to nurture, and love) whereas negative sensations such as hostility, anger, and rejection are opposite of the description of parental empathy. There are many studies about the importance of positive child-focus emotions on children which are presented following (Rogers, 1951; Barber, Bolitho, & Bertrand, 2001; Wiehe, 1997; Steinberg et al., 1994b; Hetherington et al., 1999; Reiss et al., 2000).

Kilpatrick (2005) proposed that a model of parental empathy must comprise attention and attending to the child's signals or emotional cues, and judging the reason behind these signals as making precise attributions about why the child is feeling that way, and experiencing child-focused positive emotions. Moreover, she added that being a successful empathic parent requires implementing child-focused helpful behaviours. Kilpatrick (2005) proposed the following parental empathy model:

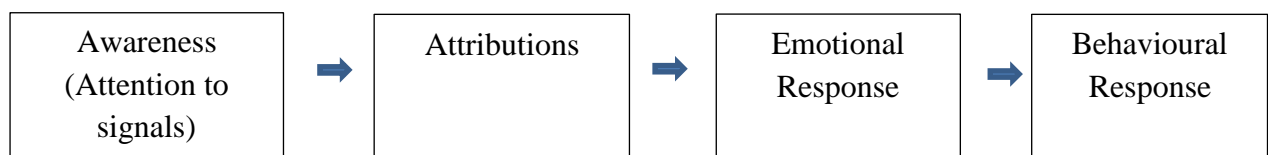


Figure 1: Parental empathy model of Kilpatrick

These elements which take part in Kilpatrick's parental empathy model have independently been ascertained as crucial to child development and as disjunctive between maltreating and "good-enough" parenting. For instance, while for a parent having a skill to

perceive the child's emotional cues and needs refer to as "maternal sensitivity" or "psychologically available parenting" has been emphasized in the attachment literature (Ainsworth, 1985; Egeland & Erickson, 1987), the deficits of a parent to respond to child's signals and cues have been associated pervasive psychological problems (Egeland & Erickson, 1987). According to Egeland and Erickson not having the ability to attend to and interpret the children's needs and behaviours apart from concerning their own desires and needs was a mainly leading feature of maltreating mothers. Although abusive and neglectful mothers express their insensitivity in different ways, they have been reported as equal in the level of insensitivity about their children's signals and needs (Crittenden & Bonvillian, 1984). Being empathic parents firstly requires sensitivity for children's needs and responsiveness to those needs (Morse, 2010).

1.5. The Importance of Empathic Parenting

The convenience and significance of parental empathy as a substantial aspect of positive parenting is obtaining increasing conspicuousness in clinical and developmental psychology literature (Goldstein & Michaels, 1985). Parental empathy and associated parental attributes such as sympathy, understanding, caring, acceptance and sensitive parenting are assumed to have positive effects on the child.

Kohut (1977) expressed that "*The child that is to survive psychologically is born into an empathic-responsive human milieu just as he is born into an atmosphere that contains an optimal amount of oxygen if he is to survive physically*" (p.85). The importance of parental empathy for healthy psychological development of a child can be understood from Kohut's comparison of empathy with the child's oxygen implies. Similarly, Rogers (1939) stated that affectional response from others, especially from parents is most essential needs for people.

Sroufe (1996) has also highlighted the importance of both parents' empathy to establish a secure attachment bond between parent and child, and a security of attachment in the parent-child relationship has been ascertained as having important effects for children to establish later close relationships (Elicker, Egeland, & Sroufe, 1992; Kerns, Klepac, & Cole, 1996). In addition, it is also emphasized positive contribution of this secure attachment to children's self-confidence and self-acceptance (Morse, 2010). That is, empathically attuned parenting behaviours supports child's self-acceptance and provide child evaluation of emotional experiences as helpful guides to action and achievements, establishes the stage for empathy towards others and prosocial behaviour, and thus it is contributing to children's growth as emotional, intellectual, physical, social, spiritual, and creative (Bavolek & Keene, 2001; Borduin, Schaeffer, & Heiblum, 1999; Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989; Paivio & Laurent, 2001; Rogers, 1961).

On the other hand, it was proposed that the absence of a parent's empathic responses to the child's needs may have negative influences on the parent-child relationship and the development of the child. Ornstein and Ornstein (1997) suggested that deficiency of a parent's empathy may cause poor self-esteem, lower academic achievement, and an increased chance of psychopathology. Kohut (1977) proposed that lack of empathic responses of parents can make the child suffer from emotional problems which avoid him or her from making development progress, which may affect the child later in life.

Empathy plays an important role in responsive and sensitive parenting (Warren, 2003). Ainsworth, Bell, and Stayton (1971) proposed that the major thing for a being sensitive parents is to perceive things from the child's point of view. Especially, it is suggested that empathy can be assistant for parents to orientate towards their child's wellbeing, and it may decrease the influence that challenging stresses have upon the parent.

On the other hand, the deficits of parents' empathy can retain the parents to be sensitive to their child's cues and cause parents being less responsive and warm (Warren, 2003). Moreover, the level of perception of parent's love has an intense influence on the child's behaviour. For example, a child who may feel parental rejection is more likely to develop behavioural problems (Rogers, 1939). To demonstrate the vital effect of parental attitudes on child's behaviour, Rogers (1939) stated, "*if we were to gamble on the outcome of treatment in the case of a problem or delinquent child and had to base our gamble on one item alone, we would do best to disregard the child entirely and investigate simply the way in which the parents behave toward the youngster and the attitudes which they hold toward him*" (p.182).

It is suggested that empathic parenting relates to positive outcomes for adolescent populations as well. Research has shown that parent-child synchrony was significantly predictive of adolescent emotional adjustment aspects, including less anxiety, hyperactivity, emotionality (Barber, Bolitho, & Bertrand, 2001; Snow, 1995). Barber et al. (2001) proposed that warm, supportive family climates with the existence of at least one parent able to take the child's point of view are most likely to adjust adolescent development.

Wiehe (1997) proposed that there was a positive relationship between prosocial behaviours of children and empathy that parenting necessitates, such as being supportive, understanding another's point of view, being capable of giving ease, perceiving another's needs, and exhibiting sensitivity to those needs. It is crucial for children's emotional growth to have parents who always in tune with the offspring's needs. (Campbell, 1977; Kohut, 1977). Campbell (1977) termed these needs as an "*emotional tank*" which is needed to fill consistently by the parent's empathy, love, understanding and discipline (p.37). Moreover, Campbell stated that the only way for children to achieve their highest potential is having an emotional tank which is full, and if parents are not capable to provide empathy, it may

influence proper development of the child's sense of self and severe psychological trauma. One of the important needs of children is emotional sharing with their parents and if the parents are not available as physically and emotionally, children feels extreme stress (Landreth, 1991).

1.6. Self-Esteem

There are several definitions of self-esteem in the literature. Lewis (1988) stated that the most used description of self-esteem is one's evaluation of him/herself in the sense of the level of self-satisfaction. Even if it is the most common description, there are a number of descriptions of self-esteem. Similarly, Silber and Tippett (1965) described self-esteem as one's feelings of satisfaction about him/herself which display the relationship between the self-image and the ideal self-image as negative or positive evaluation of the self. According to Rosenberg (1965), self-esteem refers to people's behaviours toward themselves as either positive or negative, and it can be indicated as self-judgments of personal worth and global feelings of competence and self-acceptance.

Lastly, Emler (2002) stated that self-esteem is mainly an emotional response which is a general feeling about the self that is relatively positive or it is mainly the accretive result of a group of judgements. These judgements can be made by according to his/her capability about various dimensions such as physical appearance and condition, academic competence and social skills. There are two aspects about how self-esteem is formed; first aspect suggests that it is significantly influenced -indeed biased- by the generalised feeling people have towards themselves and second aspect suggests the generalised feeling is a clear effect of these more specific judgements.

Rosenberg (1979) stated that individuals who are identified as having low self-esteem generally feel unworthy, inadequate and deficient as a person. On the other hand, people who

considered as having high self-esteem feel worthy as a person and have self-respect towards themselves. Those individuals who have high self-esteem generally clarify their success with their personal skills while those people who have low self-esteem tend to explain their failures in terms of external or unplanned factors. As stated by Rosenberg (1979), these both conditions protect the individual's self-esteem and support self-consistency. He also indicated that individuals with low self-esteem or individuals who have negative feelings about themselves and negative self-concept thoughts may decline to receive information which can improve their self-esteem.

1.7. The Effects of Parenting on Self-Esteem

There are a substantial number of research suggests that parenting attitudes contribute significantly to self-evaluations and self-worth of children (e.g. Cheng & Furnham, 2003; Klein & Hopkins, 1995). According to the attachment theory, toddlers form primary models of the self in return of the warmth and availability of parents and these models are reworked throughout the lifetime (Bowlby, 1982; Bretherton, 1991). Therefore, when parents are warm and available for the child, the child will form a model for the self as a lovable and worthy person. On the contrary, if parents do not show warmth and accessible, the child will form a model vice versa as unlovable and unworthy (Laiblea, Carlo, & Roesch, 2004). Fering and Taska (1996) have suggested that when the interaction between parents and children have been warm and positive, children have positive representations of the self in both family and global self-evaluation contexts. Studies have shown that positive attachment between child and parents in infancy, childhood and adolescence have positive outcomes in the individuals such as high self-esteem and self-efficacy (Arbona & Power, 2003; Thompson, 1999, for review) and Sroufe (1996) stated that to establish a secure attachment between child and parents, both parents must have empathic attitudes towards their child. Likewise, research

which have been conducted on outside the subject of attachment also support the strong relationship between having warm and caring parents and having high self-esteem in adolescence and early adulthood (Harter, 1990; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991).

It has been argued that there are several aspects within the family contexts which seems having a significant effect on self-esteem of children (Philpot, 1990). The study of Loeb et al. (1980) showed that when the interaction has been positive and there has been reciprocal respect within the family, children have high self-esteem. However, this result is inconsistent with Bohrnstedt and Fisher's (1986) study. They found that there was no effect of the quality of the relationship between parents and children during childhood and adolescence on self-esteem of adults. Philpot (1990) suggested that these studies were conducted with different ages of the participants and the different results between studies may have risen because of different ages. Whereas Loeb et al. (1980) conducted the study with fourth and fifth grade, Bohrnstedt and Fisher (1986) conducted the study with college students.

Rogers (1951) proposed that children develop view of self, and the self in connection with the environment when they interact with their environment. According to this proposal it can be indicated that the child's self-concept is mostly affected by parent- child communication as children spend most of their time interacting with their parents (Warren, 2003). In addition, Rogers (1951) suggested that one of the most important factors of the child's self-experience is the love that the child perceives from his or her parents. Love and affection from parents make children feel and perceive themselves as acceptable and worthy of love. Besides from being loved, being accepted and valued as an individual without any expectations in return, he also indicated that parental empathy is an important helper to create an encouraging emotional environment where the child will feel secure to discover his or her

surroundings. The result of feeling loved will make children more accepting and acquire positive attitudes toward themselves, as well as developing positive self-concept. Therefore, empathy and acceptance will encourage psychological development and the growth of emotional security within oneself (Rogers, 1961). Similarly, Motley (1986) proposed that adolescents' self-esteem is significantly affected by their perception of affection from the parents and, he suggested that the affection perceived from parents is crucial for adolescents in decision of their self-worth.

In literature, empathic parenting has been described as a child-centered parenting in a way that the parent is attending to the child's point of view and feelings and is able to recognize and share these feelings (Feshback, 1987). By this way, parents present warmth and acceptance to the child and parents are suitably attentive and responsive to the child's needs and behavioural cues. At the same time, parents are emotionally available and attuned without enforcing their desire, and they are physically supportive and protective of the child's initiative and developing sense of self (Borduin et al., 1999; Steinberg & Silk, 2002; Morse, 2010). On the other hand, Baker and Baker (1987) in their overview of Kohut's self-psychology stated that a constant absence of parental empathy cause the child's failure to develop intrapsychic structures that regulate self-esteem and control negative affect, particularly absence of mother empathy is assumed to be in charge for the destroyed self and other forms of psychopathology in the child (Goldberg, 1978; Kohut, 1971).

Cheng and Furnham (2003) claimed that sense of young people on self-worth is directly associated with outcomes of the child internalising parental criticism. Klein and Hopkins (1995) proposed that there is a significant relationship between women's global self-worth and parental nurturance score. Klein and associates (1995) study has been conducted on Baumrind's parenting style demonstrating the authoritative parenting styles. This can be

assumed the closest parenting style to empathic parenting style is largely related to positive self-perceptions, and authoritarian parenting styles were largely related to negative self-perceptions in late adolescent. Authoritarian parenting practices, especially in the mother, appeared to positively correlate with low self-worth, whereas authoritative parenting practices appeared mainly positively correlate with children feeling good about themselves. Warren (2003) conducted a study with ADHD and non-ADHD children to investigate the relationship between parental empathy and self-esteem. The result showed that there was a relationship between parental empathy and children's self-esteem. The higher parental empathy predicted higher self-esteem scores in both ADHD and non-ADHD population.

A substantial number of research have demonstrated that children who feel warm, supportive, non-conflicted relationships report more positive self-concept in the fields of academics, social relationships, romantic relationships.(Steinberg et al., 1994b; Hetherington et al., 1999; Reiss et al., 2000). Positive self-view has long been examined as an important developmental task (Erickson, 1968). However research on this subject is inadequate, there is an ongoing studies about the definition and measurement of self-esteem and related concepts (Emler, 2001). Nonetheless, it can be stated that the view of self of a child seems to be consistently related to the quality of parent-child relationships. (e.g. Grotevant and Cooper, 1985).

1.8. The Effects of Maternal and Paternal Parenting on Self-Esteem and Offspring's Outcomes

The effects of parenting practices on children may show differences according to both parents' and children's gender (Ohenessian, Lerner, Lerner, & Von Eye, 1998). However there has not been a research on how empathic parenting practices affects daughters and sons

differently. Barton and Kirtley (2012) emphasized the importance of gender differences among children and parents in understanding effect of parenting on children.

According to the study of Loeb et al. (1980) whereas authoritative mother's linked to high self-esteem in both daughters and sons, authoritative fathers surprisingly linked to high self-esteem in daughters and low self-esteem in sons. Hoeve et al. (2009) investigated the relationship between delinquent behaviour and parenting practices and found that the effect of father's poor support was greater than mother's poor support, especially in sons. Even if mother spends more time for looking after their children, parenting practices of both maternal and paternal have effects on children's psychological development (Hoeve et al., 2011). According to Videon (2005) the type of maternal and paternal parenting is different in terms of quantity of time and parental involvement; while mothers gives more often emotional care, fathers usually give instrumental care.

Some studies have shown that maternal parenting practices has more effect on daughter's outcomes than son's outcomes in early adolescents and college students (Baumrind, 1991; Patock-Peckham & Morgan-Lopez, 2006; Watson, Little, & Biderman, 1992). Baumrind (1991) suggested that mother's support of individuality is more effective in reducing daughters' problem behaviours than boys'. In addition, it was found that authoritarian and permissive mother's practices were significantly and positively associated with impulsiveness and ensuing problematic drinking behaviours for daughters but not for sons (Baumrind, 1991). On the other hand, it was found that son's outcomes were more regulated by paternal parenting practices. While permissive fathers' behaviours was found as positively connected sons' impulsiveness and drinking problems, authoritative fathers behaviours was negatively connected these outcomes for their sons (Patock-Peckham & Morgan-Lopez, 2006).

Barber & Thomas (1986) and Starrels (1994) proposed that adolescents perceive more friendship and have more communication from their same-sex parent than from their opposite-sex parent. Starrels (1994) examined the parent-child relationship by using nationally representative longitudinal data from the National Survey of Children (1976 and 1981). The results showed that fathers were much more involved with sons and tend to focus on more instrumental aspects of support while mothers tend to be more supportive across genders in emotional view. Ohannessian et al. (1998) also found some consistent result with studies of Barber & Thomas (1986) and Starrels (1994). Ohanessian et al. (1998) investigated the relationship between perceived parental acceptance and adolescent self-worth and self competence in 214 sixth and seventh grade students by both adolescent and parental gender. It was found that parental acceptance was significantly and positively related to self-competence for daughters and sons. In addition, they proposed that self-worth was significantly predicted by both maternal and paternal acceptance for daughters and sons. The result demonstrated that adolescents who feel higher acceptance from their parents, had higher levels of self-competence and self-worth than others who does not. Moreover, paternal acceptance were more important on self-competence and self-worth of sons than daughters and maternal acceptance were more important on self-competence and self-worth of daughters than sons.

1.9.Social Anxiety

Social anxiety which is also known as social phobia, comprises excessive, unreasonable, persistent and disruptive fear of embarrassment, mortification and being evaluated by others (Akinsola & Udokan, 2013). People with social anxiety feel uncomfortable and desire to avoid social situations (Richards, 2013). Schlenker and Leary (1982) suggested that social anxiety is different from other anxieties in terms of rising from

the prospect or presence of interpersonal evaluation in real or imagined social situations. Social anxiety occurs when people become concerned about how they are being perceived and judged by others (Leary & Kowalski, 1997).

To understand the nature of social anxiety Russell, Cutrona, and Jones (1986) explored the social situations which cause individuals feel nervous. Russell et al. examined the interpersonal situations which causes the university students feel shy. Responses from the university students revealed that strangers and authority figures were most likely to cause feelings such as worry and anxiousness. Moreover, it has been suggested that anxiety appears in situations such as giving speeches in front of people, meeting new people, heterosexual risks (such as asking for a date), evaluations (oral exams, interviews). When social anxiety begin to be very disturbing and damage individual's work-school life or other activities, it becomes social anxiety disorder. Social anxiety disorder involves overwhelming anxiety and excessive self consciousness in everyday social situations (Bruce & Saeed, 1999). The definition of social anxiety disorder in DSM-V is characterized by excessive and unreasonable fear which causes distress or impairment his or her ordinary routine in social settings, at work or school, or during other everyday activities (American Psychiatric Association , 2013). Social anxiety disorder is different from shyness and performance anxiety in terms of its pervasiveness, severity, and ensuing distress and impairment (Heckelman, & Schneier, 1995). Individuals who have social anxiety disorder tend to avoid social situations and important activities such as attending classes and meetings, or avoid being an active participant in this events (Katzelnick, Kobak, & DeLeire, 2001).

1.10. The Effects of Parenting on Social Anxiety

According to studies both heredity and environmental factors can cause to the development of social anxiety (Kendler et al., 1992). Genetic precision, a biological

predisposition, and a family history of anxiety can increase the risk of anxiety for individuals. (e.g., Hayward, Killen, Kraemer, & Taylor, 1998). It is suggested that stressful situations such as, peer-related difficulties, tense family relations can particularly cause anxiety disorder in people (Greco & Morris, 2002). Moreover, parent-child interaction and parenting styles have been increasingly gained an attention as a reason of social anxiety in children and may be mainly salient in the development of social anxiety (e.g., Bruch & Heimberg, 1994). McLeod et al. (2007) claimed that negative parenting contributes to the emotional disorders, particularly anxiety in youth.

Parenting behaviors that are characterized by rejection, hostility, criticism and low level of warmth found to be significantly related to social anxiety in the offspring (Knappe, Beesdo, Fehm, Lieb, et al., 2009b; Rapee & Spence, 2004). Especially, authoritarian parenting which involves low warmth and high control observed to be associated with social anxiety (Klonsky, Dutton, & Liebel, 1990). Parental rejection which is situated opposite parental acceptance, described as inattentive critical and disapproving parental behaviour (Dumas & LaFreniere, 1995; Hibbs, Hamburger, Lenane, & Rapoport, 1991; Lieb et al., 2000). These parental rejection behaviours are also closely associated with child social anxiety (Knappe, Beesdo, Fehm, Hofler, et al., 2009a; Knappe, Beesdo, Fehm, Lieb, & et al., 2009b). Because the main feature of social anxiety is being sensitive towards negative evaluation from others, critical parenting can be specifically related the aetiology of social anxiety (Rapee & Spence, 2004). Individuals who experience permanently critical (rejecting) parenting from early life may develop sensitivity to negative evaluation, which may contribute to social anxiety (Gulley, Oppenheimer, & Hankin, 2013).

Empathic parenting which includes parental warmth and acceptance support children to develop positive self-concept and positive attitudes towards themselves. The help of

parental empathy toward children will aid them to become more accepting of themselves (Rogers, 1961) than parents who do criticize their children. By becoming more accepting of themselves, they may judge themselves less and tend to develop relatively less anxiety. Therefore, in this study it was wondered whether if perceived empathic parenting would affect children's level of anxiety.

According to the study of Snow (1995) adolescents who perceived their parents as highly empathic parents and who felt understood by their parents, had noticeably healthier self-concepts, than adolescents with lower levels of anxiety whose parents were low in empathy and who did not perceive their parents as understanding them (Snow, 1995). Similarly, Dukes et al. (2003) investigated the association between parents' empathy, and their children's social anxiety with 21 mothers, 12 fathers and 24 children aged between 7 and 12 years. They found a significant relationship between parental empathy and child social anxiety levels.

Parker (1979) and Arrindell, Emmelkamp, Elsbrilman and Monsma (1983) investigated social phobics' perception of parental behaviours and attitudes. Both studies' results showed that social phobics reported lower level of emotional care and more overprotection from their parents compared to healthy controls. Parker suggested that when a child is exposed to low care and overprotection from the parents, the development of child-parent bond might be weak and the child might experience greater difficulty in interpersonal situations, and experience anxiety in social situations. Similarly, the study of Barber, Bolitho and Bertrand (2001) revealed that adolescents who perceive their families as being warm and supportive exhibiting less anxiety. McGinn, Cukor, and Sanderson (2005) suggested that people who were brought up within uncaring family were more anxious than other people who were brought up with other parenting style. Lastly, Klonsky et al. (1990) claimed that

compared to females with low social anxiety, socially anxious female college students reported that their fathers were more rejecting, and more likely to use authority discipline, and that their mothers were more neglecting and overprotective.

1.11. The Effects of Maternal and Paternal Parenting on Social Anxiety

Many studies have shown that there has been a relationship between parental rearing practices and social anxiety (e.g. Eastburg and Johnson, 1990; McGinn, Cukor, and Sanderson, 2005) Bogels, Oosten, Muris & Smulders (1999) examined whether if children with social anxiety perceive their fathers and mothers as rejecting, overprotective and lacking warmth and acceptance. Results of the gender-specific analyses demonstrated that maternal behaviours were more associated with children's social anxiety. While children's perception of mothers' overprotection significantly predicted children's social anxiety, it was not significant for fathers' overprotection.

Most of the research have been focused on the relationship between mothers' behaviour and children anxiety. Recent studies which included fathers, have revealed divergent results (e.g Greco & Morris, 2002; Hudson & Rapee, 2002). For example; Brakel, Muris, Bögels, and Thomassen (2006) conducted a study with 11–15 year old children and found that child-perceived rearing behaviours of fathers were more predictive of children's anxiety symptoms, rather than mothers. However, in other studies it has been found that there was no relationship between paternal parenting and children's anxiety (e.g. Bögels & van Melick, 2004; Hudson & Rapee, 2002). Bögels and Brechman-Toussaint (2006) suggested that these different results of studies may have arisen from the different instruments which used to assess the relationships between parenting concepts and child anxiety and different populations of children (e.g. mixed anxiety disorders, high trait anxious; socially anxious and shy children). Finally, Eastburg and Johnson (1990) conducted a study and the results

presented that the degree of shyness of female college students and fathers' authoritarian, strong control practices were significantly and positively correlated.

1.12. Perceived Parenting or Parent's Report?

Parents' reports are assumed as an important source to indicate young people's feeling about their family life. However, recent research have shown that young people and their parents' perception of parenting can be different (Smetana, 1995). Studies have demonstrated that a child's perceptions on parenting are better predictors on a child's psychosocial development rather than reports of parents on parenting (Buri, 1989). Aunola, Stattin and Nurmi (2000) suggested that parental attitudes can influence children mainly through the way in which these behaviours are perceived by children. In the same way, Demo et al. (1987) proposed that children can be affected by perceptions of parental behaviours rather than real parental behaviours or those reported by their parents. These findings emphasize the necessity of more research on young people's perception of parenting rather than parent's report (Endicott & Liopsis, 2005).

Paulson (1994) conducted a study to examine the associations both adolescents' and their parents' perceptions of parenting, and to compare the effect that the different perceptions have on adolescents' achievement with 247 ninth-grade boys and girls and their parents. Results showed that while adolescents' reports significantly predicted their achievement outcome, parents' reports of parenting did not predict adolescents' achievement outcome. Consequently, Sternberg et al., (1994) indicated that children's feelings, interpretation and evaluation of parental attitudes can give further awareness into the associations between children's perceptions of parenting and children's psychological development.

1.13. Aims and Hypotheses

The aim of this study is to see whether there is a significant effect of empathic parenting on self-esteem and social anxiety. Much attention has been paid in other parenting styles rather than empathic parenting style in research heretofore. The research on parental empathy also has mainly been conducted on infants and children but it is also equally important to understand the role of empathic parenting in youth to help prevent or reduce behaviour problems of youth, even it is important to provide the best potential outcomes for individuals such as, high self-esteem. Empathic parenting which includes love, understanding, and acceptance may be the one of the best parenting styles for new generation which may facilitate them the best outcomes (Campbell, 1977; Rogers, 1951; 1961).

Based on the findings of children's perceptions about parenting are better predictors on children's psychological development than reports of parents (Buri, 1989; Aunola, Stattin & Nurmi, 2000; Paulson, 1994), the effects of perceived parenting have been investigated in this study. Based on the assumptions of Sroufe (1996) about the importance of parental empathy to establish secure attachment between child and parents and the contribution of this attachment to children's self-confidence and self-acceptance, and the findings of Snow (1995), Ornstein & Ornstein (1997), Cheng & Furnham (2003), Campbell (1977), Loeb et al. (1980), Rogers (1951, 1961), Baker & Baker (1987), Klein & Hopkins (1995), It was hypothesized;

Hypothesis 1. Higher levels of perceived empathic parenting would report higher levels of self-esteem.

As stated in the literature review, many research have showed that parental rejection, criticism, low level of warmth, high control cause children to develop sensitivity to negative evaluation by others and this contribute to social anxiety of children (Knappe, Beesdo, Fehm,

Lieb, et al., 2009b; Rapee & Spence, 2004; Klonsky, Dutton, & Liebel, 1990; Knappe, Beesdo, Fehm, Hofler, et al., 2009a; Knappe, Beesdo, Fehm, Lieb, & et al., 2009b; Gulley, Oppenheimer, & Hankin, 2013). Empathic parenting which includes parental warmth and acceptance support children to develop positive self-concept and positive attitudes towards themselves, than the parents who criticize their children. The help of parental empathy will aid children become more accepting of themselves (Rogers, 1951; 1961; Sroufe, 1996) and become less sensitive to negative evaluation. In addition, based on the findings of McLeod et al. (2007), Snow (1995), Dukes et al. (2003), Parker et al. (1983), Barber, Bolitho & Bertrand (2001), McGinn, Cukor & Sanderson (2005) it was hypothesized;

Hypothesis 2. Higher levels of perceived empathic parenting would report lower levels of social anxiety.

Ohenessian et al. (1998) and Barton & Kirtley (2012) highlighted that the effects of parenting practices on children may show differences according to both parents' and children's gender. However, relatively little research has done on the type and quality of mothers' and fathers' parenting in relation to their sons' and daughters' well-being. In this study, the effects of both maternal and paternal empathy on daughters and sons have been examined. There are two research questions in this study; does gender moderate the effect of maternal empathy on self-esteem and on social anxiety? ; Does gender moderate the effect of paternal empathy on self-esteem and on social anxiety?

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Model and Variables

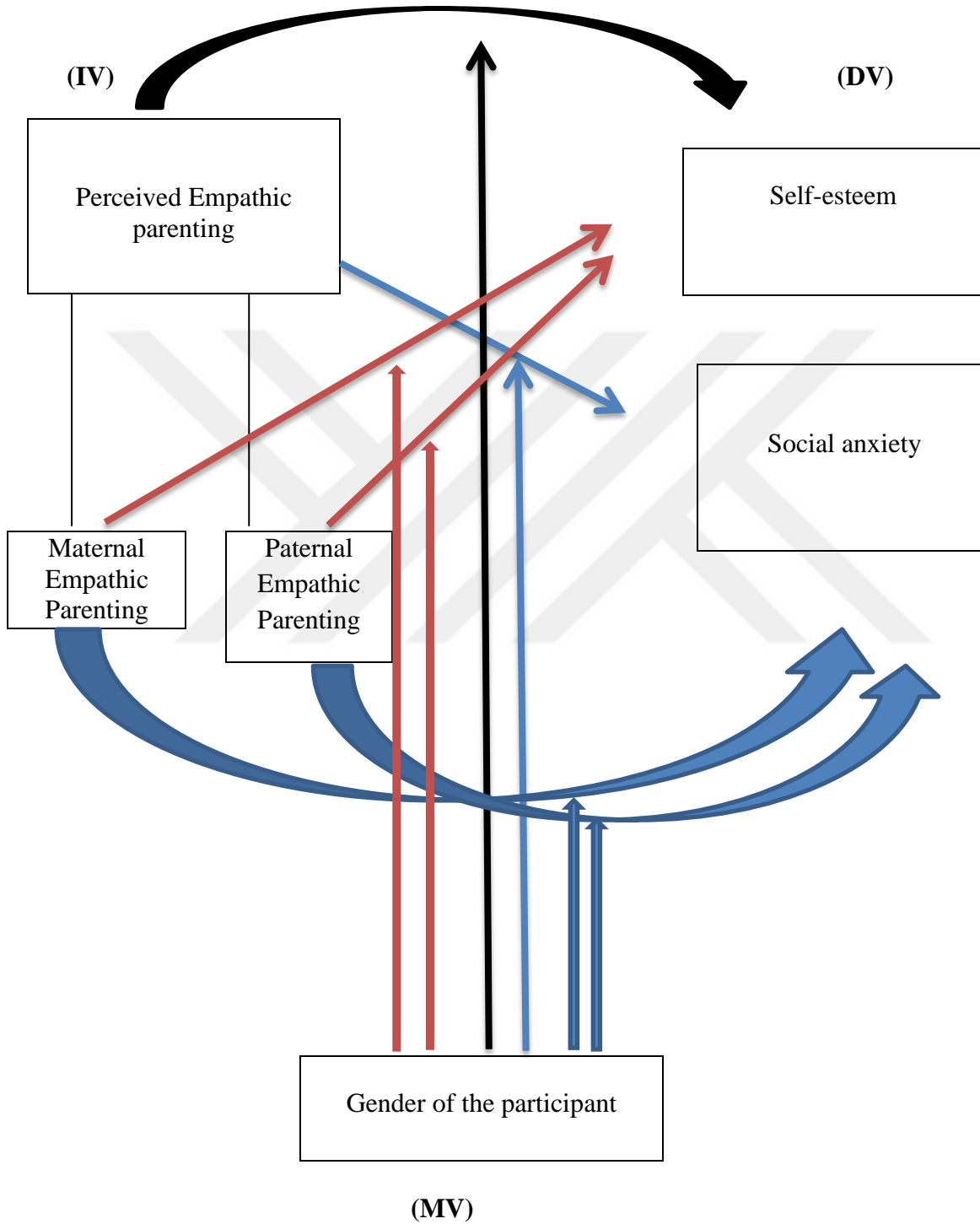


Figure 2: Research Model

Independent variables (IV): Perceived Empathic Parenting

Maternal Empathic Parenting

Paternal Empathic Parenting

Dependent variables (DV): Social anxiety

Self-esteem

Moderator variable (MV): Gender of the participant

2.2 Participants and Procedure

In this study, participants included 51 female and 39 male students who were recruited from Anglia Ruskin University. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 31 but the mean age was 23.83 ($SD= 2.69$). See Table 4 for a description of the participants' age.

Participants were recruited voluntarily through an electronic recruitment system run by Anglia Ruskin University's Department of Psychology. This system lists all presently available studies, from which participants can select those of most interest or value to them. The rest of the participants were contacted from social network groups of the university societies. All participants were asked to complete three questionnaires on the online system Qaltirics which is a software enables users to do online data collection. 5 of participants completed the questionnaires on the paper with a consent form in the library environment. All participants enter the system with their student ID number and were assigned a participant number by the researcher and the datas were entered with the assigned numbers. The survey took approximately 25 minutes to complete. The purpose of the study was offered after questionnaires were completed. All participants were provided instructions to each questionnaire as stated by the researcher.

2.3. Ethical Issues

2.3.1. Ethical Approval

The study has been approved by Anglia Ruskin University Departmental Research Ethics Panel (DREP).

2.3.2. Confidentiality

All participants were given a study number on data documents. These numbers and the participants' identifying information were kept in a separate location.

2.3.3. Data Storage

All data were anonymized to ensure confidentiality by identifying participants with a study number only and all data have been kept on password protected university computers.

2.4. Measures

Three measures were used in this study; Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, Social Anxiety Questionnaire, and Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire.

2.4.1. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale was designed to measure adolescents' global feelings of self-worth. The scale consist of 10 items that were rated on 4-point Likert scale from *strongly agree* (1) to *strongly disagree* (4). It has claimed a test -retest reliability (over six months) of 0.85. It is one of the most well used measures to assess self-esteem because of the proven construct, concurrent and predictive validity (Blascovich and Tomaka, 1991).

2.4.2. *Social Anxiety Questionnaire (SAQ-A30)*

Social Anxiety Questionnaire (SAQ-A30; Caballo, Salazar, Arias, Iurria, & Calderero, 2010) was used to measure specific or generalized social phobia/anxiety in adults. It comprises 30 items which are answered on a 5-point Likert scale to indicate the level of unease, stress or nervousness in response to each social situation: 1 = Not at all or very slight, 2 = Slight, 3 = Moderate, 4 = High, and 5 = Very high or extremely high. It has five subscales which are; (1) Speaking in public/Talking with people in authority, (2) Interactions with the opposite sex, (3) Assertive expression of annoyance, disgust or displeasure, (4) Criticism and embarrassment, and (5) Interactions with strangers. Each subscale contains 6 items dispersed randomly throughout the questionnaire. There is a score for each subscale and an overall score for the questionnaire as a whole. Previous research has shown that this questionnaire has good internal consistency and validity in university student samples (Caballo et al., 2010). The reliability of the questionnaire (Guttman split-half reliability) is high (from .90 to .93).

2.4.3. *Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire (PPEQ)*

Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire which comprises 39 items was used to measure individuals' perceived parental empathy. Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire consists of 2 subscales which are maternal empathy scale and paternal empathy scale. Each Subscales comprises 19 items. While the items are same in each subscales, one of them was filled out for the perceived maternal empathy and the other one for the perceived paternal empathy. Perceived empathic parenting scores were reached as summing up the maternal and paternal empathy subscales scores of participants. There are some questions in the scale such as; "Encourages me to talk about my feelings and to talk about her feelings", "Whether I am

excited or happy, sad or anger, fearful or anxious she is welcoming of my feelings”, “Even if he’s in the right, he listens my point of view”.

Questions in this questionnaire have been adapted from Parental Empathy Measure (PEM), Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) and Measure of Parental Style (MOPS). To create the rest of the questions, 5 participants from Anglia Ruskin University were asked “what kind of behaviours of your parents’ make you feel accepted and feel empathy”. Some of the responses were “When my parents listen me, when they respect my thoughts, when they do not judge me and when they help me” based on these responses, Kilpatrick’s model of parental empathy and the features of parental empathy such as; acceptance, emotional behavioural responsivity, the rest of the questions were created.

Responses were made on 4-point Likert scale; (1) always almost true, (2) sometimes true, (3) true rarely, (4) almost never true. The Cronbach alpha for the Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire (38 items) was .88 in this study ($\alpha = .88$).

Table 1. *The process of developing PPEQ*

This questionnaire was developed by Kilpatrick, K. L.	Parental Empathy Measure	Questions 7, 9,13,15,17,18 in the Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire have been adapted from PEM.
Rohner, R. P	Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire	Questions 1, 8, 12, 10, 16 have been adapted from PARQ.
Parker, G., Roussos, J., Mitchell, P., Wilhelm, K., Austin, M. P.	Measure of Parental Style	Questions 11, 14 have been adapted from MOPS.
Emic Questions		Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 19 have been created based on pilot study and components of parental empathy.

Parental Empathy Measure (PEM)

The PEM was developed to assess parenting awareness and empathic responding of parents. It is a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions measuring parental attention to signals, attributes, emotional/behavioural responses to, and perceptions of their children. The studies have shown that this instrument has good high internal consistency, inter-rater reliability, and high construct reliability (Kilpatrick, 2005).

Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ)

The PARQ which was used to develop PPEQ includes 29 items, each concerning to father and mother acceptance or rejection (Rohner, & Khaleque, 2005). This questionnaire was developed to measure perceptions of parental behaviour of the child in terms of four dimensions, a) parental warmth and affection, b) parental hostility and aggression, c) parental indifference and neglect, and c) parental undifferentiated rejection. The four PARQ scales comprise the warmth (acceptance-rejection) dimension of parenting. Responses are made on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from almost always true to almost never true. The items on the version about mothers contain “my mother says nice things about me” (Acceptance), and “my mother sees me as a big nuisance” (Rejection) (Lila & Garcia, 2007).

Measure of Parental Style (MOPS)

The MOPS which was used to develop PPEQ is a self-rated questionnaire obtained from Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI). The MOPS measures fundamental parenting styles of indifference, overprotection and abuse and it has shown high construct validity, besides convergent validity with the PBI (Parker, 1989). The MOPS comprises 15 statements relating the perceived negative behaviours of parents during the respondents first 16 years. Responses

are made on a 4-point Likert scale varying from not true at all to extremely true, resulting in scores from 0 to 3 (Parker et al., 1987).

3. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

In this study, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 (SPSS, Chicago, IL) was used for statistical analysis. For all hypotheses linear regression analysis was performed and reliability analysis was used in order to assess internal consistency reliability of Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire.

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Reliability

Table 2. *The Reliability Statistics table that provides the actual value for Cronbach's alpha of Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.886	38

Total Cronbach's alpha is .89, which indicates a high level of internal consistency for the scale with this specific sample. Cronbach's alpha of paternal empathy subscale was found as .885 whereas Cronbach's alpha of maternal empathy subscale was found as .889.

Table 3. *Item- total statistic table which provides scale mean if item deleted, scale variance if item deleted, corrected item-total correlation, and Cronbach's alpha if item deleted*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
14. She tells me it is an unacceptable feeling if I'm furious about something.	72.07	251.77	.11	.888
17. If I do something which she does not appreciate, she raises her voice and yells at me.	72.00	247.96	.22	.887
7. I believe that he thinks that being a father is the most difficult work with little satisfaction.	71.69	246.44	.24	.887
10. He gets easily angry with me if I have a problem to be solved	71.86	248.57	.19	.887
14. He tells me it is an unacceptable feeling if I'm furious about something.	71.93	247.73	.21	.887

This table presents the value Cronbach's alpha would be if that particular item was deleted from the scale. The removal of questions 14 and 17 from maternal empathy subscale and questions 7, 10, 14 from paternal empathy subscale would result in same Cronbach alpha value and the removal of other items would result in a lower Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, neither of the questions was removed.

3.1.2. Descriptive Statistics

The means of age of participants, perceived maternal empathy, perceived paternal empathy, social anxiety, and self-esteem scores by gender are presented in Table 4, and Figure 3 shows the means comparison of perceived paternal and maternal empathy by gender.

Table 4. Means (*M*) and Standard deviations (*SD*) of maternal empathy, paternal empathy, empathic parenting, social anxiety, and self-esteem by participant's gender.

	Females		Males	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Age of participants	23.63	2.60	24.10	2.81
Maternal Empathy	39.45	9.90	40.95	9.88
Paternal Empathy	32.43	11.32	34.79	10.67
Empathic Parenting Total	71.88	15.37	75.74	16.71
Social anxiety	85.12	19.28	73.05	18.68
Self- Esteem	19.94	5.40	21.21	4.97

Note. *M*= Means; *SD*= Standard deviations

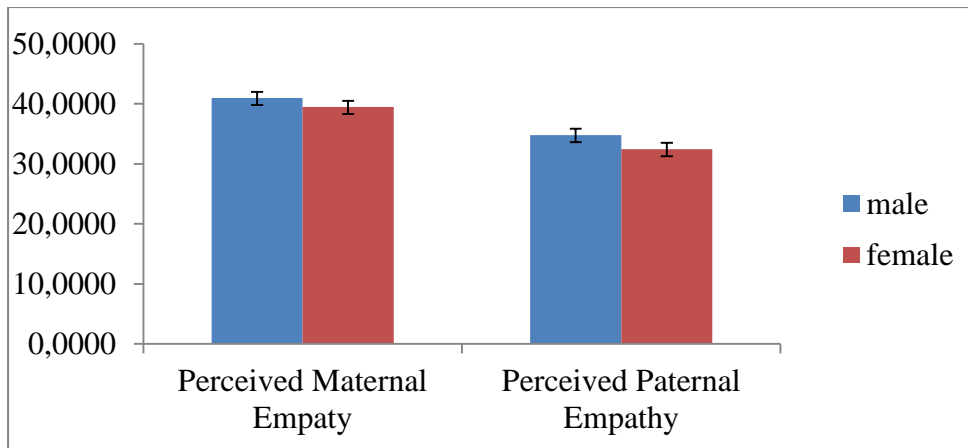


Figure 3: The means comparison of perceived maternal empathy and paternal empathy by gender.

Females perceived their mothers ($M= 39.45$, $SD= 9.90$) more empathic than their fathers ($M= 32.43$, $SD= 11.32$). Males perceived their mothers ($M= 40.95$, $SD= 9.88$) more empathic than their fathers ($M= 34.79$, $SD= 10.67$). As shown in figure 5, both daughters (females) and sons (males) perceive their mothers more empathic than their fathers, and sons tend to perceive their parents slightly more empathic than daughters do.

3.1.3. Linear Regression Analysis

In order to test hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 linear regression analysis was conducted. Perceived empathic parenting score of participants were acquired summing up the scores of paternal and maternal empathy subscales scores.

The results showed that .03% of self-esteem can be explained by empathic parenting, $R^2= .03$, $p=.11$, $F(1, 88) = 2.56$, $p =.11$. There was a non-significant effect of empathic parenting on self-esteem of the participants, [$\beta= .17$, $p=. 11$].

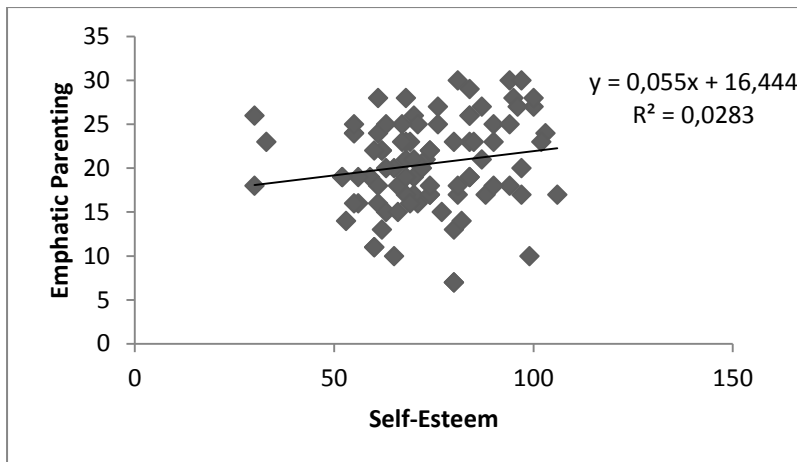


Figure 4: The association between empathic parenting and self-esteem score of the sample

However, A Linear regression indicated that .07 % of social anxiety can be explained by empathic parenting, $R^2 = .07$, $p = .01$, $F(1, 88) = 6.50$, $p = .01$. There was a significant effect of empathic parenting on social anxiety, the effect was $-.26$ [$\beta = -.26$, $p = .01$], so that higher levels of empathic parenting reported lower levels of social anxiety. This result support Hypothesis 2.

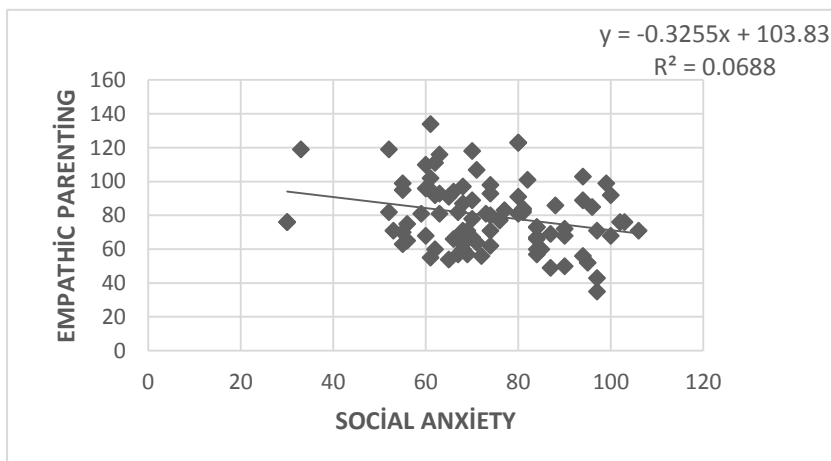


Figure 5: The association between empathic parenting and social anxiety score of the sample

3.1.4. Moderating Role of the Gender

In order to see if gender of participants change the effects of empathic parenting depends on a particular parent's empathy, perceived maternal and paternal empathy were separated and the effect of maternal and paternal empathy on self-esteem and social anxiety were investigated along with the moderation of gender of participants.

The effects of perceived maternal empathy on self-esteem and social anxiety

A linear regression indicated that .01% of self-esteem can be explained by maternal empathy, $R^2 = .01$, $p = .25$, $F(1, 88) = 1.32$, $p = .25$. There was a non-significant effect of maternal empathy on self-esteem, $[\beta = .12, p = .25]$. It was also investigated using regression analysis if gender moderate the effect of maternal empathy on self-esteem. Firstly, in model 1 the effect of maternal empathy and gender was found on self-esteem, then in model 2 the interaction between maternal empathy and gender was investigated. The results showed that .03% of self-esteem can be explained by gender and maternal empathy (Model1), $R^2 = .03$, $p = .30$, $F(2, 87) = 1.22$, $p = .30$ and .05 % of self-esteem can be explained by the interaction between maternal empathy and gender (Model 2). R^2 change between models was .02 and the interaction between maternal empathy and gender was non-significant, $[\beta = -.51, p = .15]$. So that, it can be stated participant's gender did not moderate the effect of maternal empathy on self-esteem.

A linear regression indicated .04% of social anxiety can be explained by maternal empathy, $R^2 = .04$, $p = .07$, $F(1, 88) = 3.38$, $p = .07$. There was a non-significant effect of maternal empathy on social anxiety, $[\beta = -.19, p = .07]$. In order to assess a moderating variable a linear regression was used and it revealed that 12% of social anxiety can be explained by gender and maternal empathy (Model1), $R^2 = .12$, $p = .004$, $F(2, 87) = 5.97$, $p = .004$ and again 12% of social anxiety can be explained by the interaction between maternal

empathy and gender (Model2), $R^2 = .12$, $p = .69$, $F(3, 86) = 3.99$, $p = .01$. There is no R^2 change between models, indicating that gender did not moderate the effect of maternal empathy on social anxiety. So that, maternal empathy was found as non-effective on both daughters' and sons' social anxiety.

The effects of perceived paternal empathy on self-esteem and social anxiety

A linear regression indicated .02% of self-esteem can be explained by paternal empathy, $R^2 = .02$, $p = .21$, $F(1, 88) = 1.63$, $p = .21$. There was a non-significant effect of paternal empathy on self-esteem, [$\beta = .14$, $p = .21$]. To assess a moderating variable a linear regression was used again. The analysis revealed that 03% of self-esteem can be explained by gender and paternal empathy (Model 1), $R^2 = .03$, $p = .27$, $F(2, 87) = 1.32$, $p = .27$ and 09% of self-esteem can be explained by the interaction between paternal empathy and gender (Model2), $R^2 = .09$, $p = .02$, $F(3, 86) = 2.90$, $p = .02$. Model 2 with the interaction between paternal empathy and gender accounted for significantly more variance than just paternal empathy and gender, R^2 change = 0.06, $p = .02$, indicating that the interaction between paternal empathy and gender was significant in predicting self-esteem, so that gender moderated the effect of paternal empathy on self-esteem. The interaction between paternal empathy and gender had -.92 effects on self-esteem [$\beta = -.92$, $p = .02$].

A further analysis was conducted to see the effect of paternal empathy in males and females separately. A regression analysis explained that 19% of self-esteem can be explained by paternal empathy in males ($R^2 = .19$, $p = .006$), $F(1, 37) = 8.67$, $p = .006$ and paternal empathy had .44 effect on self-esteem in males, [$\beta = .44$, $p = .006$]. However, it was found that 01% of self-esteem can be explained by paternal empathy in females, ($R^2 = .01$, $p = .57$), $F(1, 49) = 0.34$, $p = .57$, and paternal empathy had -.08 effect on self-esteem in females but it was

non-significant [$\beta = -.08, p = .57$]. It is obvious that paternal empathy have significantly more effect on self-esteem in males than in females.

The results showed that 04% of social anxiety can be explained by paternal empathy, $R^2 = .04, p = .05, F(1, 88) = 3.98, p = .05$. There was a significant effect of paternal empathy on social anxiety, [$\beta = -.21, p = .05$], so that higher levels of paternal empathy reported the lower levels of social anxiety. A linear regression revealed that 12% of social anxiety can be explained by gender and paternal empathy (Model 1), $R^2 = .12, p = .003, F(2, 87) = 6.10, p = .003$ and 15% of social anxiety can be explained by the interaction between paternal empathy and gender (Model 2), $R^2 = .15, p = .13, F(3, 86) = 4.40, p = .003$. By adding the interaction between gender and parental empathy in Model 2, R^2 did not explained social anxiety significantly more than model 1 R^2 change = 0.03, $p = .13$ indicating that the interaction between paternal empathy and gender was not significant in predicting social anxiety, so that gender did not moderate the effect of paternal empathy on social anxiety. The interaction between paternal empathy and gender had .52 effects on social anxiety [$\beta = .52, p = .13$]. However it is not significant.

Although it is not significant further analysis was conducted too see how paternal empathy affects daughters and sons differently in terms of level of social anxiety. The results of linear regression explained that 14% of social anxiety can be explained by paternal empathy in males ($R^2 = .14, p = .02$), $F(1, 37) = 5.98, p = .02$ and paternal empathy had -.37 effect on social anxiety in males, [$\beta = -.37, p = .02$]. However, a linear regression indicated that 01% of social anxiety can be explained by parental empathy in females, ($R^2 = .01, p = .71$), $F(1, 49) = 56.29, p = .71$, and paternal empathy had -.06 effect on social anxiety in females but it is not significant [$\beta = -.08, p = .71$].

4. DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to investigate the effects of empathic parenting on self-esteem and social anxiety. It was hypothesized that perceived empathic parenting would significantly affect individuals' self-esteem and social anxiety. In addition, based on previous research it is assumed maternal and paternal empathy may affect children differently and therefore, the effects of maternal and paternal empathy examined separately on daughters and sons.

The first hypothesis stated that higher levels of perceived empathic parenting would report higher levels of self-esteem of the participants. However, in this study results indicated that there was a non-significant effect of perceived empathic parenting on individual's self-esteem. Although this finding is consistent with Bohrnstedt and Fisher's (1986) study which suggested that the quality of relationships with parents during childhood and adolescence had no effect on self-esteem of adults, this finding is inconsistent with the studies of Loeb et al., (1980); Snow (1995); Klein & Hopkins (1995); and Cheng & Furnham (2003) which asserted parenting and parental empathy was associated with children's self-esteem. The difference between studies may have resulted because of two reasons; the difference between sample sizes and the ages of participants. While Klein & Hopkins (1995), and Cheng & Furnham (2003) conducted the study with 207 and 365 college students respectively, this study was conducted with 90 university students. And also Loeb et al. (1980) conducted the study with fourth and fifth grade, and Snow (1995) conducted the study with adolescents whose ages range 13-17 whereas this study was conducted with the university students whose ages range 18-31. The results of the present study can be more reliable compared to these studies which were conducted with individuals whose age are under 18 because the reports of participants can be assumed more reliable when their ages are above 18. According to studies, adolescents

are less capable than adults to perceive, understand and think independently instead of having influence of older friends and acquaintances, and to manage their emotions and act reasonably instead of impulsively. All of these predispositions affect a child's ability to make rational decisions (Cauffman & Steinberg, 2000; Lewis, 1981).

To expand the investigation of the effects of perceived empathic parenting on self-esteem, perceived maternal empathy and paternal empathy were separated and the effects were examined on sons and daughters (Research question). Gender (participants' gender) was found as moderator on the effect of perceived paternal empathy on self-esteem. While paternal empathy had a significant effect on sons' self-esteem, it had a non-significant effect on daughter's self-esteem. This illustrated that higher paternal empathy scores revealed higher self-esteem in the sons. Findings were consistent with the study of Ohannessian et al. (1998), which suggested paternal acceptance were more important on self-worth of sons than daughters. Furthermore, these findings can also be explained by the studies of Barber & Thomas (1986) and Starrels (1994). They suggested that adolescents perceive more friendship and have more communication from their same-sex parent rather than their opposite-sex parent, and also fathers are much more involved with their sons and tend to be more supportive for their sons. In addition, Patock-Peckham & Morgan-Lopez (2006) suggested that son's outcomes were more regulated by paternal parenting practices. Therefore the perceived empathy from fathers may be more important for sons' self-esteem than mother's empathy. However, it was surprisingly found that the effect of maternal empathy was non-significant both on sons' and daughters' self-esteem. It is inconsistent with the idea of same-sex and Ohannessian's study, which also suggested maternal acceptance were more important on self-worth of daughters than sons. The number of participants who reported high scores on their mothers' empathy was greater compared to the number of participants who reported low scores on their mothers' empathy. Therefore, as the mothers have been

perceived as empathic by the most of participants, the self-esteem and social anxiety levels could not be investigated thoroughly.

The second hypothesis stated that higher levels of perceived empathic parenting would report lower level of social anxiety of the participants. The findings supported the hypothesis 2. Perceived empathic parenting had a significant effect on social anxiety score of individuals. This finding is in line with the literature suggesting that parental practices were significantly associated with children's social anxiety (Barber, Bolitho, & Bertrand, 2001; McGinn, Cukor, and Sanderson, 2005; Emmelkamp, Elsbrilman and Monsma, 1983; Mcleod et al., 2007; Parker et al. 1983; Dukes et al, 2003). Also, this result is in accordance with Snow's (1995) study which suggested that adolescents who perceive their parents as highly empathic parenting exhibiting less anxiety than those who do not perceive their parents as empathic. Together, these findings highlight the importance of parental empathy on social anxiety of individuals.

Moreover, it was found that paternal empathy had a significant effect on sons' social anxiety. So that higher paternal empathic parenting scores revealed lower level of social anxiety in the sons. This result can also be explained the stronger effect of same-sex parent on children (Barber & Thomas, 1986; Starrels, 1994; Patock-Peckham & Morgan-Lopez, 2006). This finding is also consistent with the study of Brakel, Muris, Bögels, and Thomassen (2006). They suggested that fathers were more predictive of children's anxiety symptoms rather than mothers. However in this study, it was not found a significant effect of paternal empathy on daughter's social anxiety. It can be also explained that fathers did not affect daughter's social anxiety score because the same-sex parents were more predictive on their children's behaviours (Barber & Thomas, 1986; Starrels, 1994).

There are several limitations of the present study. Firstly the validity of the questionnaire, which measure empathic parenting style, is not known as it was a questionnaire prepared by myself. Using a more detailed questionnaire with proven validity would possible give more reliable results. Moreover, only one variable effect which is empathic parenting effect was measured in this study on self-esteem and social anxiety but there may be many factors which affects self-esteem and social anxiety of the participants. For example, although Emler (2002) stated that the most important effects on self-esteem is related to parents' attributes towards their children, he also stated that there are several factors, expect parenting styles, which affect individuals' self-esteem levels. Emler (2002) suggested that social class position in adulthood and adolescents is excessively related to self-esteem. Success and failures are another factors that affect self-esteem of individuals. It is also suggested that family history of anxiety can cause to the development of social anxiety in children (Kendler et al., 1992). It is proposed that traumatic experiences and stressful situations such as, peer-related difficulties, tense family relations can particularly cause anxiety disorder in people (Greco & Morris, 2002). In this study, these other factors which affect social anxiety and self-esteem could be confounding factors.

Moreover, the sample sizes were smaller compared to similar studies which were obtained significant results from. (Arrindell, Emmelkamp, Monsma, & Brilman, 1983; Barber, Bolitho and Bertrand, 2001; Ohannessian, Lerner, Lerner, and Von Eye, 1998). In this study a cause and effect relationship cannot be suggested because empathic parenting may not be the sole effect for social anxiety and self-esteem scores. There may be confounding variables as stated above. Additional studies, including a longitudinal component, will be necessary in order to assess change and continuity in individual's self-esteem and social anxiety. Despite the limitations, the study contributes to a greater understanding of the new area such as empathic parenting and the effects of it on individuals.

APPENDIX

Perceived Parental Empathy Questionnaire

The following pages contain a number of statements describing the relationship with the child and the parents. I want you to think about how each one of these fits the relationship with your parents. You should answer the same questions separately for your mother and father.

Four boxes are drawn after each sentence. If the statement is *basically* true about the way your mother/ father treats you then ask yourself, “Is it almost *always* true?” or “Is it only *sometimes* true?” If you think your mother/ father almost always treats you that way, put an X in the box **ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE**; if the statement is sometimes true about the way your mother treats you then mark **SOMETIMES TRUE**. If you feel the statement is basically *untrue* about the way your mother treats you then ask yourself, “Is it *rarely* true?” or “Is it almost *never* true?” If it is rarely true about the way your mother treats you put an X in the box **RARELY TRUE**; if you feel the statement is almost never true then mark **ALMOST NEVER TRUE**.

MY MOTHER	TRUE OF MY MOTHER		NOT TRUE OF MY MOTHER	
	<i>Almost Always True</i>	<i>Sometimes True</i>	<i>True Rarely</i>	<i>Almost Never True</i>
1. If I have a problem she looks lovingly in my eyes and gives me her full attention.				
2. She accepts me as a unique individual and respects my thoughts.				

3. She is flexible and willing to admit her mistakes.				
4. Whether I am excited or happy, sad or anger, fearful or anxious she is welcoming of my feelings.				
5. When she doesn't want me to do what I want, she encourages and suggest some solutions for me.				
6. When I show that I need help from her, she leaves everything and focuses on me.				
7. I believe that she thinks that being a mother is the most difficult work with little satisfaction.				
8. When I hug and kiss her, she always responds to me with the same way.				
9. She encourages me to talk about my feelings and to talk about her feelings.				
10. She gets easily angry with me if I have a problem to be solved.				
11. She easily understands when my feelings get hurt.				
12. She makes me relax when I try to tell things that are important to me.				
13. Even if she's in the right, she listens to my point of view.				
14. She tells me it is an unacceptable feeling if I'm furious about something.				
15. If I do something which she does not appreciate, she gets into a long argument with me.				
16. It is hard to understand for her why I'm upset.				

17. If I do something which she does not appreciate, she raises her voice and yells at me.				
18. When I'm happy, she will be suspicious as to why I'm happy.				
19. If she tired after a hard day's work, she doesn't want to talk about my problems.				

MY FATHER	TRUE OF MY FATHER		NOT TRUE OF MY FATHER	
	<i>Almost Always True</i>	<i>Sometimes True</i>	<i>True Rarely</i>	<i>Almost Never True</i>
1. If I have a problem he looks lovingly in my eyes and gives me his full attention.				
2. He accepts me as a unique individual and respects my thoughts.				
3. He is flexible and willing to admit his mistakes.				
4. Whether I am excited or happy, sad or anger, fearful or anxious he is welcoming of my feelings.				
5. When he doesn't want me to do what I want, he				

encourages and suggest some solutions for me.				
6. When I show that I need help from him, he leaves everything and focuses on me.				
7. I believe that he thinks that being a father is the most difficult work with little satisfaction.				
8. When I hug and kiss him, he always responds to me with the same way.				
9. He encourages me to talk about my feelings and to talk about his feelings.				
10. He gets easily angry with me if I have a problem to be solved.				
11. He easily understands when my feelings get hurt.				
12. He makes me relax when I try to tell things that are important to me.				
13. Even if he's in the right, he listens to my point of view.				
14. He tells me it is an unacceptable feeling if I'm furious about something.				
15. If I do something which he does not appreciate, he gets into a long argument with me.				
16. It is hard to understand for him why I'm upset.				

17. If I do something which he does not appreciate, he raises his voice and yells at me.				
18. When I'm happy, he will be suspicious as to why I'm happy.				
19. If he tired after a hard day's work, he doesn't talk about my problems.				



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