

# Helicopter Parenting and Narcissistic traits in Young Adults of Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This cross-sectional study examined the perception of helicopter parenting of mothers and narcissistic traits. 350 undergraduate students were randomly selected from Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta. Pautler's (2017) helicopter parenting and Pincus et al. (2009) pathological narcissism formed the questionnaire to elicit responses from the participants. Data collected were analysed for univariate and bivariate findings. The findings revealed 15.8% of the participants had a high perception of their mothers as a helicopter parent. Demographic characteristics of participants such as age, number of siblings, living arrangements and educational status of mothers had a significant relationship ( $p < 0.05$ ) with perceived helicopter mothers. However, there was a significant relationship between vulnerable narcissism and the perceived helicopter parenting of mothers. The perception of youth on mothers' helicopter parenting style was associated with age, number of siblings living arrangements and mother's occupation respectively. Thus, there is a need for further study on fathers' helicopter parenting style and how this can influence narcissism among young adults.

**Keywords:** hovering, narcissism, grandiose, parenting styles, youth, young adults

## INTRODUCTION

Parenting can take a different shape in different contexts. Helicopter is a new construct of parenting style otherwise referred to as overparenting, hovercrafts or hummingbirds existing between parents and their children as style of care (LeMonye & Buchanan, 2011; Segrin, et al., 2013). It is a parenting style involving hyper-involved, risk-adverse parents who offer developmentally inappropriate degrees of problem-solving (social, financial, academics, emotional problems) especially if the child can survive without that level of support (Fingerman et al., 2012; Pautler, 2017). Helicopter parenting is linked with both upsides and downsides of the

parent-child bond (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012). Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012) discovered that helicopter parenting is linked to both harmful and beneficial aspects of the parent-child bond. Research has linked helicopter parenting with behavioural and psychological control, but not to the extent that it could be considered a separate type of parental control (Ballash, 2006). Schiffrin et al. (2013) described psychological control as instilling guilt and withholding affection in trying to control a child. In the developmental research, moderate degrees of behavioural control in children are typically linked with more good results; on the other hand, psychological control is regularly correlated with poor consequences.

When parents use helicopter methods on adolescents, developing appropriately may become challenging for youth. The adolescence phase is a phase when youth take on new duties and have less parental assistance. Individuals' success in society depends on their ability to successfully transit towards feeling like a true adult (Nelson, 2005 as cited by Hivick, 2019). Though the concept of "finding oneself" is often linked with adolescence, it is really emerging adulthood when true identity accomplishment is most likely (Arnett, 2000). Autonomy is an important part of identity discovery as well as mental and social maturity, which is why a parenting style such as helicopter parenting may be problematic for emerging adults.

This style of parenting in a child's life, especially during college years, has been shown to have negative impacts on development as this is a period known as young adulthood and is linked with adaptive traits in young adults i.e., narcissism, poor coping skills, anxiety and stress (Hivick, 2019; Segrin, 2013). Despite the fact that grandiosity is definitely a key component of narcissistic traits, it is becoming increasingly evident that pathological narcissism has two faces. One exudes grandiosity, while the other exudes vulnerability (Cain et al., 2008; Jauk & Kaufman, 2018). Young people's narcissistic traits can be adaptive, but they can also lead to sadness, stress, and poor self when they become pathological (Barry et al., 2014). Narcissistic grandiosity can be characterized by privileged attitudes, a delusional self, a lack of requisite accomplishments and competencies, and participation in regulatory fantasies of infinite power, dominance, and perfectionism (Wright et al., 2010); exhibitionism, admiration seeking, boldness and dominance (Jauk & Kaufman, 2018). Vulnerable features of pathological narcissism, on the other hand, include feelings of helplessness, emptiness, poor self, and shame, which may be connected to avoiding personal relationships (Miller et al., 2011). This is as a result of a great desire for admiration and acknowledgment which causes extreme sensitivity to rejections and criticism (Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Kohut & Wolf, 1978 as cited by Wright et al. 2010). Entitlement is an important element of both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Schie et al., 2020). As a result, these

traits create seemingly different personality phenotypes: people with high grandiose narcissism are extroverted, socially bold, and charming, whereas individuals with highly vulnerable narcissism are socially anxious, nervous, and emotionally distant (Hart et al. 2017; Jauk et al. 2016; Jauk & Kaufman, 2018; Miller et al., 2012). Although, helicopter parents want to make sure their children succeed in life, their over-involvement has been shown to have a negative impact on young adults (18–25 years old), when they should really be experiencing autonomy from their parents (Arnett, 2000; Schiffrin, 2019).

Majority of helicopter parenting research focuses on college-aged students since this is a developmental phase in which parents generally exercise less control over their children's lives and grant them greater autonomy and independence (LeMonye & Buchanan, 2011; Padilla-Walker, 2012; Pautler, 2017; Schiffrin, 2019). Critics claim that the over-involvement of these youngsters begins when they are very young and continues through college and work (Carroll, 2007; Graves, 2007; LeMonye & Buchanan, 2011). Recent studies have associated helicopter parenting with several negative consequences including the development of narcissistic traits in young adulthood (Darlow et al. 2017; LeMonye & Buchanan, 2011; Segrin et al. 2012; Schie et al. 2020; Winner and Nicholson, 2018; Winner, 2019). Schie et al. (2020) study showed that over-protection may make young people less independent and is linked to greater degrees of narcissism. Also, findings from Winner (2019), suggests that the need for parents to stay visible and active in their children's life might lead to narcissistic characteristics being developed.

Generally, narcissistic traits are considered pathological and have been associated with depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and low-quality relationships, antisocial traits and behaviours (Book et al., 2015; Lapsley & Aalsma 2006; Schie et al., 2020; Winner 2019). Everyone possesses narcissistic traits to certain degrees (Cain et al., 2008; Miller, 2011). Narcissism is conceived as two opposite concepts composed of grandiose and vulnerable narcissistic traits (Diskson & Pincus, 2003; Miller & Campbell, 2008). Narcissistic grandiosity is characterized by

exhibitionism, boldness, admiration-seeking, and domination. On the other hand, narcissistic vulnerability is characterized by introversion, detachment, hypersensitivity and anxiety (Jauk and Kaufman 2018). It is described as an interpersonal pattern identified by a feeling of superiority and excessive desire for admiration and a lack of empathy (Pincus, 2009; Winner, 2019). Narcissistic traits in young people can be adaptive or pathological.

Emerging research has begun associating helicopter parenting and narcissistic traits among young adults. In the past ten years, studies have linked helicopter parenting with narcissistic traits in young adults with the majority focused on parents, while helicopter parenting in mothers and fathers have not been largely examined individually (Winner and Nicholson, 2018; Winner, 2019; Segrin et al., 2013). One of the key issues is that moderators in this relationship have generally been unexplored. It is a known phenomenon that young adults gaining admission into the university find it difficult to withstand the stress associated with learning in tertiary schools. For instance, some mothers have refused to allow their children travel to down to school even when it is a week to their exams to get them acquainted with the school environment. This type of overprotection may make young people less autonomous and is related to higher levels of narcissism (Schie et al., 2020). Majority of helicopter parenting research in general focused on parents, some focused-on mothers precisely. When studies inquired about "a parent", there are suggestions that they were asking about their mothers (Hays, 1998; Schiffrin et al., 2014; Schiffrin, 2019). However, few studies have examined helicopter parenting in mothers and fathers individually, and there are indications that mothers are more disposed to be over-involved (Fingerman et al., 2012). This is evident, in the involvement of mothers in the invasion of living space and privacy, financial independence, visiting, communication, assisting, intruding in the career of their young adults (Pautler, 2017).

LeMonye and Buchanan (2011) conducted a study among 414 university students under the age of 25 from general education classes at a university to see how much they believed their parents were

controlling and transactional in their overall treatment. Data was collected using convenience sampling to avoid overcrowding of samples with students from a specific discipline. Because the goal was to highlight the importance of a parenting issue neglected in the social science literature rather than making broad advances in measurement. It was found that students from low levels of well-being may view their parents as more intrusive regardless of the parenting they received. The more they perceived their parents as helicopter parents, the lower the well-being of the students. However, measuring helicopter parenting against socio-economic characteristics including age, grade point and single-parent household yielded no significant results. In another study, Pautler (2017) investigated on how common "helicopter parenting" is among college students. A total of 92 people from Eastern Illinois University's introductory psychology class filled out questionnaires for the study. The mean prevalence rate for the overall helicopter parenting was 18.4%, although the frequency table technique yielded a score of 12.6%. Mothers do not engage in more helicopter parenting behaviours with sons than with daughters.

Furthermore, Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012) investigated whether helicopter parenting is a separate category of parental control from behavioural and psychological control, as well as the connection between the two during the years of emerging adulthood. The authors used 438 undergraduates from four universities in the west, south, and east of the United States. The findings revealed that helicopter parenting was linked to psychological and behavioural control, but not to the point of being labelled a separate category of parental control. Results demonstrate a favourable relationship with guidance, transparency, and emotional support. On the other hand, it was inversely connected to the provision of autonomy. Schiffrin (2013) conducted a study on the differences in the perceptions of helicopter parenting activities among children and their mothers. 192 undergraduates and their mothers were surveyed at a local public university. On nearly half of the specified items, mother and child reports were determined to be unrelated. Surprisingly, on practically every problem, mothers reported more helicopter parenting than

children. This contrasts Padilla-Walker and Nelson (2012) findings, which indicated no variance between helicopter parenting as described by mothers and their children. In a similar vein, Winner (2019) investigated psychological control as a mediating role between over-parenting on grandiose and vulnerable narcissistic traits, as well as the connection between these variables using 476 young adults recruited from a mid-sized institution in the southern United States. When parenting and psychological control (PPC) were examined independently, the results indicated that they were strong predictors of narcissistic traits. Furthermore, PPC mediated a substantial link between over-parenting on grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, but not between over-parenting and vulnerable narcissistic trait. This highlights the importance of additional study into the processes through which over-parenting might result in narcissistic traits in young people.

Wright (2010) study aimed to provide scoring techniques for assessing levels of narcissistic grandiosity and narcissistic vulnerability for researchers. With an average age of 18.5 years, there were 2801 young adult college students recruited for this study. The findings show that the Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI) has a higher order factor structure that conforms to the theorized structure of pathological narcissism, with one component expressing narcissistic grandiosity and the other suggesting narcissistic vulnerability, as suggested by the study's findings. These findings establish the PNI as the only test capable of distinguishing between the two phenotypic themes of pathological narcissism. Schie et al. (2020) performed research to investigate parenting styles and their link to vulnerable and grandiose narcissistic traits. In addition, the function of parenting by mother and father figures in the development of narcissistic traits is investigated. Participants were 328 young individuals between the ages of 17 and 25 who were recruited using a snowball approach from high school graduates. Overprotection from both mothers and fathers has been related to narcissistic traits that are grandiose and vulnerable and are generally increased narcissistic tendencies. Similarly, Segrin (2013), who discovered a link between over-parenting and adult child claims of

greater narcissism. Also, findings from Winner (2019) suggest the possibility for parents to go the extra length to remain a prominent figure and active in their children's lives can be linked to the development of narcissistic traits.

Although there have been few studies in develop context that specifically look at helicopter parenting in mothers and fathers, but there is evidence that mothers are more prone than fathers to be overly involved in all aspects of their children's lives (Fingerman et al., 2012). Pautler (2017) believes that examining helicopter mothers and helicopter fathers individually is necessary since the child's understanding of the parent's conduct based on societal standards may differ. Researchers revealed that child reports of helicopter parenting both from mother and father were so tightly connected that the evidence was blended into a combined parent score (Willoughby et al. 2015).

However, in the Nigerian context, studies on helicopter parenting are lacking. The inclination in Nigerian culture is to criticize mothers and this issue may be exacerbated by the fact that fathers are typically held to lower parenting expectations than mothers (Schiffrin, 2013; Tummala-Narra, 2009; Wall & Arnold, 2007). Because the few studies that are now accessible concentrate exclusively on emotional and social health, additional research is needed to assess the influence of helicopter parenting on mothers and fathers and the outcomes on emerging adults (Schiffrin, 2019).

Thus, this present study examined young adult's demographic characteristics, their narcissistic traits and perceptions of helicopter parenting in mothers.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### **Participants**

The cross-sectional study was carried out among undergraduates of Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB). The sample consisted of 350-year undergraduates, randomly selected across the ten colleges in FUNAAB. Second years students were purposively selected

for the study since the majority of the 100-level had virtual class. The females were 63.4% and mean of all participants was 20.1,  $SD = 2.08$ . Also, 78.9% were Christians. The proportion of the participants that were Yoruba was higher at 86%. During the semester, the majority 86.3% stayed off-campus. 91.9% of the participants had between 1-5 siblings.

### Measures

The instrument for data collection was a well-structured questionnaire consisting of 58 items, sub-divided into three sections. The demographic characteristics of the participants, five-point Likert-scale of Pautler (2017) helicopter parenting scale with 30 items was adopted to address the perception of young adults of mothers' helicopter parenting style and Pathological Narcissism Inventory of Pincus et al. (2009) was adopted to explore the narcissistic traits in participants. The reliability of the instrument revealed 0.82, 0.84 and 0.71 for Helicopter parenting, vulnerable and

grandiose narcissism scales respectively. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency count, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse distribution of socio-economic characteristics, mothers' helicopter parenting style and narcissistic traits of participants. Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) tested the relationships between socio-economic characteristics and respondent's perception of helicopter parenting in mothers.

### Ethical approval

The study got verbal consent from participants before data collection. Authorisation for the study was given by the University and the Department of Home Science and Management.

### RESULTS

Table 1: Participants Perception of Helicopter Parenting in Mothers

Statements	Never Freq. (%)	Rarely Freq. (%)	Sometimes Freq. (%)	Most of the time Freq. (%)	Always Freq. (%)	M	SD
<b>Invasion of Living space and Privacy items</b>							
My mother searches through my drawers, closets, or other personal space	99 28.3	120 34.3	100 28.6	17 4.9	14 4.0	2.22	1.04
My mother requires I give her a copy of my result.	142 40.7	69 19.8	60 17.2	27 7.7	51 14.6	2.36	1.44
My mother monitors me on social media (i.e. whatsapp, instagram).	224 64.0	50 14.3	50 14.3	13 3.7	13 3.7	1.69	1.08
My mother calls my friends to find out how I am doing.	169 48.9	66 18.9	79 22.6	17 4.9	18 5.2	1.99	1.17
<b>Financial Independence items</b>							
My mother likes to monitor what I spend my money on.	117 33.5	91 26.1	97 27.8	26 7.4	18 5.2	2.25	1.15
My mother knows where all my money comes from.	61 17.4	69 19.7	74 21.1	70 20.0	76 21.7	3.09	1.40

My mother pays my school fees and other university costs (e.g. books, pocket money, hostel rent).	69 19.7	65 18.6	105 30.0	32 9.1	79 22.6	2.96	1.41
I depend on my mother financially.	66 18.9	74 21.1	115 32.9	40 11.4	55 15.7	2.84	1.30
<b>Visit items</b>							
My mother visits me in the university.	157 44.9	106 30.3	76 21.7	9 2.6	2 0.6	1.84	.89
My mother visits me unannounced	279 79.9	34 9.7	26 7.4	4 1.1	6 1.7	1.35	.81
My mother requires I come home for weekends.	231 66.2	46 13.2	51 14.6	10 2.9	11 3.2	1.64	1.01
My mother comes to pick me up to make it easier for me to come home.	292 83.7	29 8.3	14 4.0	13 3.7	1 0.3	1.29	.74
<b>Communication items</b>							
My mother calls me on the phone	2 0.6	12 3.4	66 18.9	110 31.4	160 15.7	4.18	.90
My mother requires I call her.	44 12.6	79 22.6	131 37.4	46 13.1	50 14.3	2.94	1.20
My mother texts me via social media (e.g. whatsapp)	83 23.7	62 17.7	119 34.0	42 12.0	44 12.6	2.72	1.29
My mother calls me more, compared to how my friend's brother calls them.	44 12.7	58 16.8	84 24.3	71 20.5	89 25.7	3.30	1.35
<b>Assisting items</b>							
My mother collects my exam timetable to remind me of my exam dates.	264 75.4	49 14.0	20 5.7	10 2.9	7 2.0	1.42	.88
My mother calls me to wake me up in time for class.	248 71.1	40 11.5	49 14.0	7 2.0	5 1.4	1.51	.91
My mother does my laundry.	205 58.6	46 13.1	88 25.1	9 2.6	2 0.6	1.73	.96
My mother buys my clothing items.	60 17.1	64 18.3	152 43.4	50 14.3	24 6.9	2.75	1.11
<b>Parental control items</b>							
I usually ask my mother for permission to go on a trip with my friends.	52 14.9	30 8.6	103 29.4	73 20.9	92 26.3	3.35	1.35
If I'm going to be out late, I have to let my mother know when I get home.	48 13.7	31 8.9	66 18.9	62 17.7	143 40.9	3.63	1.43
My mother tells me not to drink/smoke/keep bad company.	13 3.7	10 2.9	38 10.9	33 9.5	255 73.1	4.45	1.04
My mother tells me who to keep as friends.	63 18.0	51 14.6	86 24.6	41 11.7	109 31.1	3.23	1.46

	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Very little</b>	<b>Somehow</b>	<b>Moderate amount</b>	<b>Very large</b>		
<b>Intruding on Major/Career issues items</b>							
My mother influenced my selection of FUNAAB.	174 50.0	26 7.5	58 16.7	41 11.8	49 14.1	2.32	1.52
My mother influenced the course I am studying	270 77.4	22 6.3	28 8.0	18 5.2	11 3.2	1.50	1.05
My mother tries to pressure me to select a different career path.	246 70.3	30 8.6	43 12.3	14 4.0	17 4.9	1.65	1.14
<b>Parental Attitude items</b>							
My mother expresses worry to me about campus safety	26 7.4	30 8.6	97 27.8	72 20.6	124 35.5	3.68	1.25
My mother's level of involvement now compared to before I got into the university is?	70 20.2	82 23.6	92 26.5	56 16.1	47 13.5	2.79	1.31
My mother expresses worry to me about how I am doing academically.	45 12.1	71 20.4	92 26.4	56 16.1	84 24.1	3.18	1.35

Source: Field Survey 2021

Table 1 above shows the ranking of the 8 domains of perceived helicopter mothers. Hereby, revealing the statement that was peculiar to most respondent's mothers. The statement 'my mother tells me not to drink/smoke/keep bad company' ranked 1st. Followed by 'my mother calls me on the phone' ranking 2nd on the table. My mother expresses worry to me about campus safety ranked

3rd while 'if I'm going to be out late, I have to let my mother know when I get home' and 'I usually ask my mother for permission to go on a trip with my friends' ranked 4th and 5th on the table respectively. The other items on the table ranked from 6th to 30th.

Table 2: Mean Distribution of Vulnerable Narcissistic Traits in Participants

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>Self-esteem items</b>			
It's hard for me to feel good about myself unless I know other people like me.	2.47	1.26	9 <sup>th</sup>
When people don't notice me, I start to feel bad about myself.	2.49	1.27	8 <sup>th</sup>
I am preoccupied with thoughts and concerns that most people are not interested in me.	2.57	1.33	7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Hiding self-items</b>			
I often hide my needs for fear that others will see me as needy and dependent.	3.34	1.37	3 <sup>rd</sup>
It's hard to show others the weakness I feel inside of me.	3.69	1.28	1 <sup>st</sup>
When others get a glimpse of my need, I begin to feel anxious and ashamed.	3.25	1.33	4 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Devaluing items</b>			
Sometimes I avoid people because I am concerned they won't acknowledge what I do for them.	2.93	1.26	6 <sup>th</sup>

Sometimes I avoid people because I am concerned that they will disappoint me.	3.53	1.22	2 <sup>nd</sup>
When others don't meet my expectations, I often feel ashamed about what I want.	3.12	1.27	5 <sup>th</sup>

Table 2 shows the ranking of vulnerable narcissism scale items. Hereby, revealing the statement that was peculiar to most participants. The statement ‘it's hard to show others the weakness I feel inside of me’ ranked 1st. Sometimes I avoid people because I am concerned that they will disappoint me ranked 2nd on the table. Furthermore, I often hide my needs for fear

that others will see me as needy and dependent ranked 3rd. When others get a glimpse of my need, I begin to feel anxious and ashamed and when others don't meet my expectations, I often feel ashamed about what I wanted ranked 4th and 5th respectively. However, other items on the scale ranked from 6th - 9th.

Table 3: Mean Distribution of Grandiose Narcissistic Traits in Participants.

Statements	Mean	SD	Rank
<b>Exhibitionism items</b>			
I would do almost anything on a dare.	2.30	1.21	9 <sup>th</sup>
I usually show off if I get the chance to.	2.50	1.22	8 <sup>th</sup>
I really like to be the center of attention.	2.60	1.31	7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Exploitativeness items</b>			
I can usually talk my way out of anything	3.37	1.17	4 <sup>th</sup>
I can make anyone believe anything I want them to believe	3.17	1.22	5 <sup>th</sup>
I find it easy to manipulate people	2.71	1.31	6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Grandiose fantasy items</b>			
I often fantasize about being rewarded for my efforts.	3.62	1.18	1 <sup>st</sup>
I often fantasize about being rewarded for my accomplishment.	3.62	1.14	2 <sup>nd</sup>
I often fantasize about performing heroic deeds.	3.54	1.24	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Table 3 shows the ranking of grandiose narcissism scale items. Hereby, revealing the statement that was peculiar to most participants. The statement ‘I often fantasize about being rewarded for my efforts’ ranked 1st. I often fantasize about being rewarded for my accomplishment ranked 2nd on the table. Furthermore, I often fantasize about

performing heroic deeds ranked 3rd. I can usually talk my way out of anything, I can make anyone believe anything I want them to believe 4th and 5th respectively. I find it easy to manipulate people ranked 6th. However, other items on the scale ranked from 7th -9th and were found on the exploitative scale.

Table 4: Test for Relationship between Demographic Characteristics and Participants Perception of Helicopter Parenting in Mothers.

Variable	r-value	p	Remark
Gender	.02	.73	NS
Age	-.30**	.00	S
Tribe	.01	.91	NS
Religion	-.11*	.04	S
Marital status	-.17**	.00	S
Living arrangement	-.14**	.01	S
Number of siblings	-.15**	.01	S



Mother's marriage	.06	.27	NS
Mother's Occupational Status	-.16**	.00	S
Respondent's employment status	.08	.14	NS

Decision criteria: \*Sig when  $p < 0.05$ ; S – Significant, NS- Not significant

Table 5: Test for Relationship between Participants' Perception of Helicopter Parenting in Mothers and Narcissistic Traits in Participants

Variable	r-value	p	Remark
Relationship between helicopter parenting and vulnerable narcissistic traits	.05	.31	Not significant
Relationship between helicopter parenting and grandiose narcissistic traits	.17**	.00	Significant

Decision criteria: \*Sig when  $p < 0.5$

Tables 4 and 5 above show the relationship between demographic characteristics and helicopter parenting in mothers and narcissism traits in young adults. The results a significant negative relationship between the age ( $r = -.295^{**}$ ,  $p = .000$ ), their marital status ( $r = -.165^{**}$ ,  $p = .002$ ), mother's occupational status ( $r = -.157^{**}$ ,  $p = .003$ ) with perceived helicopter mothers among the participants. Living arrangements and number of siblings with ( $r = -.144^{**}$ ,  $p = .007$ ) and ( $r = -.146^{**}$ ,  $p = .006$ ) respectively, showing that they were negatively significant as their p values were less 0.05. On the flip side, there was no significant relationship between gender, tribe, religion, mother's kind of marriage, and the employment status of the participants with perceived helicopter mothers. For the relationship between helicopter parenting in mothers and vulnerable narcissistic traits of participants, the results show a significant positive relationship between helicopter mothers and vulnerable narcissism ( $r = .174^{**}$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis stated was rejected. Table 5 above reveals no significant relationship between the perception of helicopter parenting in mothers and grandiose narcissism ( $r = .054$ ,  $p = .314$ ). The results accept the null hypothesis stated.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between the perception of young adults of mother's helicopter parenting and narcissism trait. It was found that most of the participants reported their mothers were overly involved. This corroborates the findings of Schiffrin (2013) who found that parents were most likely to be overly involved in the lives of their adolescents. Although, the findings revealed a low perception of helicopter mothers among participants. There is every tendency that this may not be the result if the participants were to be in their first year at the University. However, this cannot be taken for granted. The low perception of participants could be due to the fact that most of the participants were in their second year and had overcome the influence of their mothers' control over them. Also, there is a tendency for the students to have been affected positively by Home Science and Management course discipline during 200 level in the University, which exposed students to the different parenting styles and the impact on their self-development. Furthermore, the findings corroborated that of Pautler (2017) who estimated helicopter mothers yielded a low rate among college students. We further analysed narcissistic traits, and participants who exhibited vulnerable narcissism agreed on self-esteem,

hiding and devaluing. However, they did not respond to grandiose narcissistic traits of the exhibitionism and grandiose fantasy. These findings reflect those of Miller et al. (2011) that the two distinct forms of narcissism can be extracted. Also, with supporting evidence from Jauk & Kaufman (2018) findings that grandiose and vulnerable narcissistic traits are two distinct faces of narcissism. Furthermore, it was found that there was no significant relationship between gender and perceived helicopter mothers which is in support of the findings of Pautler (2017) and Winner (2019) suggesting that mothers may not engage in more helicopter parenting behaviours for sons rather than their daughters. Respondent's mother's type of marriage yielded no significant relationship with respondent's perception of their mother as a helicopter parent. This is in support with LeMonye & Buchanan (2011) study in which a single-parent household did not yield any significant result with helicopter parenting. However, a significant negative relationship was found between the respondent's age and perception of helicopter mothers. This implies the lower the age, the greater the tendency to have helicopter mothers among participants. Similarly, Pautler (2017) thought it would also be interesting to assess whether a parent that hovers over one child, hovers over all the children in the family. The findings revealed that helicopter mother's were common among participants who had fewer siblings and lived at home; the fewer the number of siblings, the higher their perception of their mother as a helicopter parent, supporting the findings of Bradley-Geist and Olson-Buchanan (2014).

Considering the living arrangements of participants, those who lived in their parent's house are more likely to view their mother as a helicopter parent. These findings are in support of (Hong et al. 2020) study where living arrangements were a moderation in examining the relationship between helicopter parenting and psychological maladjustment of college students. Those living with their parents showed a stronger relationship compared to those living away from their parents. The relationship between respondent's perception of helicopter parenting in mothers and narcissistic traits in participants revealed a significant relationship with vulnerable

narcissism. This result is in support of the findings of Winner & Nicholson (2018) in which show that a slightly stronger relation was found between over-parenting and vulnerable narcissism rather than grandiose. In addition, the work of Winner (2019) supports the findings of the study, in which overparenting was related to vulnerable narcissism using psychological control and interpersonal dependency as mediators of the relationship. On the flip side, there was no significant relationship between perceived helicopter mothers and grandiose narcissism. This is in contrast with Schie et al. (2020) study that claimed over-parenting was associated with grandiose narcissism.

## LIMITATIONS

The study was limited to university students in their second year who might have overcome the impact of parenting style of mothers.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study is an eye-opener to the existence of the fifth form of parenting styles among young adults in Nigerian context. Helicopter parenting can be predicted by the demographic characteristics of a young adult. A significant relationship was found between perceived helicopter mothers and participants exhibiting vulnerable narcissistic traits.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, this study recommends that parenting styles, capturing the effects of helicopter parenting should be included as a pre-class for all first-year undergraduates students. University counsellors should make use of insights provided in this study in highlighting the foundational problems associated with being dependent as young adults resulting from helicopter parenting. Also, public awareness of healthy and unhealthy parenting styles and its effects on young adults should be emphasized in our society. Future researcher should examine which of these narcissistic traits is prevalent among young adults.

Lastly, more research should be carried out examining helicopter fathers and if gender is a significant moderator.

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