





Parental Treatment Methods And Their Role In Predicting Children's Quality Of Life In Secondary School


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Abstract: In this study we discuss parental treatment methods (PTMs) and their role in predicting the quality of life (QoL) of children in general education and specifically secondary school in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. We used the descriptive approach and the World Health Organization's (WHO) abbreviated QoL measure as well as parental authority questionnaire PTMs (father's image, mother's image) on a sample of 182 male and female secondary school students. After ascertaining the psychometric characteristics of the study tools, we found three types of PTMs: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. We also found a high level of QoL across its different domains. They showed differences in the various components of QoL among secondary school students attributable to gender for the benefit of males. Furthermore, our findings demonstrated the predictability of QoL through PTMs and specifically the authoritative father's style across all domains of QoL except for physical health. Our findings also showed that the QoL of the student sample with the inclusion of information about gender is predictable across all domains except for environment. We recommend that parents' pay attention to cultivating their children's self-confidence, thereby contributing to improving their QoL.

Keywords: Parental Treatment, Quality of Life, Secondary School.

Introduction

Within a community the family is a unique social system that forms an emotional and behavioral connection among its members,

especially its children, and aims to create and sustain a satisfying life experience (Al-Amran & Osman, 1994). This process exposes children to problems that make

them feel unhappy, affect their enjoyment of life, and render them unable to deal with society's values and requirements and interact with others in their environment (Abdelhamid & Soliman, 2014). Therefore, parental treatment methods (PTMs) have received increased attention from researchers and scholars for their significant impact on the formation of adolescents' personalities. PTMs contribute to the identification of children's personalities and the quality of their behavior during social interaction (Bakir, 2013). PTMs vary according to the children's age group (Smetana, 1995).

Children's attitudes toward life reflect their mental health. Good mental health leads to their accepting life with love and satisfaction. Despite their struggles, they try to improve their lives through persistence and defiance without succumbing to external pressures. In contrast, children who suffer psychologically reject themselves and those around them (Khalil, 1990). Therefore, quality of life (QoL) is a prerequisite for children's mental health, especially when social and family changes may cause problems that hinder the realization of their aspirations (Ahmed, 2007). Positive relationships and good communication with their parents are important variables associated with children's QoL (Hee Geon et al., 2010). Moreover, their social behavior, interaction with others, and motivation for learning are predictable through a measure of their QoL (Ahmed et al., 2017; Al-Asoud, 2017). Therefore, we researched the prediction of children's QoL at the secondary school level through their parents' PTMs.

Research Problem

The family plays an essential role in the process of children's socialization. PTMs are crucial because of their impact on how children adapt to their society's values,

customs, and traditions. In the light of progress and modernity, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and artificial intelligence, many other institutions involve the family in the process of socialization. The media, including the internet and social media, as well as friends, clubs, and worship increase the family's burden of deciding which of these institutions provide the most benefit to their children.

The creation of artificial intelligence, by which a machine can think and act as well as a human, may add to this burden in the future. The effects may be profound for humanity, especially in the field of parenting (Croeser & Eckersley, 2019).

Tanshaa (upbringing) derives linguistically from the verb *nshaa* (to take care) (Ibn Manzor, 1997). In this study, we mean by *tanshaa* "the process of transforming an individual from a biological being into a social individual through social interaction, to acquire behavior, norms, values, and trends that interfere in the building of [their] personality to facilitate [their] integration into social life." Sanaani (2009) defined PTMs as "the methods, ways, or behaviors that are correct, wrong, positive or negative that parents practice with their children, with the aim of raising them and raising and upbringing them in different life situations" (p.37).

The different PTMs in children's upbringing are variables that influence the characteristics of their personalities and may be one of the determinants of their QoL. Farah (2021) concluded that the concept of self and QoL can be predicted through the PTMs that parent apply to their children. WHO defines Quality of Life as an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards, and

concerns. QoL measures the level of children's satisfaction and happiness, their ability to meet their needs through environmental, health, social, educational, and psychological services, and their effective use and management of time (Al-Qusayri, 2014). Children's QoL is a positive sense of well-being in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and their positive interaction with others (Abu Kif, 2016).

Researchers investigated PTMs according to their study orientation and theories such as psychoanalytic theory, social learning theory, and social role theory. Differences in families and schools as well as the mass media, social media, houses of worship, and friends all influence the forms of socialization (Al-Issawi, 1985). The integration of modern technology into education has helped to diversify children's upbringing and PTMs (Yang, 2012).

The results of studies on QoL of children in secondary school varied in their different components. Al-Shafie (2012) found that the differences between males and females favored males, meaning that they enjoyed a higher QoL than females, whereas Ahmed et al. (2017) concluded that these differences favored females. Alamri (2020) found no differences in QoL between males and females.

We can expect different effects on children's QoL in light of the varied results of PTM studies and the challenges of social media. Based on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 Quality of Life Program, which focuses primarily on the improvement of individuals' lives, our research team studied the predictability of children's QoL at secondary school through PTMs and gender as one of the demographic variables. We identified the research problem with the following question:

- What PTMs predict the QoL of secondary school students?

This primary question derives from the following secondary questions:

- What is the reality of PTMs for children in secondary school?
- What is the reality of QoL with its different components for children in secondary school?
- Are the differences in QoL in their different components for children in secondary school attributable to gender?
- What is the role of PTMs in predicting children's QoL in secondary school?

Literature Review

Several studies examined PTMs. Abulele (2002) aimed to identify PTMs as perceived by children and to determine their relationship and behavioral disorders in a sample of students and found that the most prevalent PTMs were moderation, tolerance, consistency, and protection. Al-Badarin and Gyth (2013) examined the relative contribution of PTMs, identity verification methods, and academic adjustment and their relationship to students' subjective competence, so the results indicated a predictive capacity for democratic PTMs to children's self-efficiency.

Al-Harbi (2007) studied the relationship between PTMs and personal intelligence and concluded that there was no significant correlation between the father's use of corporal punishment and the deprivation of love and the child's personal intelligence. There was, however, a positive and statistically significant relationship between the father's approach to guidance of children and personal intelligence. Aoun and Sandoq (2017) and Maqhot (2014) agreed and stated that PTMs influence children's intellectual, cognitive, and behavioral orientations and are responsible for determining their personality and future behavior. Al-

Ghamdi and Andijani (2018) addressed perceived PTMs and their relationship to girls' self-assurance and found that a positive relationship between better guidance and self-assurance. Baizid (2018) studied the relationship between PTMs and self-esteem in girls with learning disabilities and found that bullying and neglect were the most common methods, While democratic parenting and overprotection were the least common. Abu Qura et al. (2019) addressed PTMs and their relationship to future anxiety among female students and found a positive correlation between negative PTMs and future anxiety and a negative correlation between positive PTMs and future anxiety.

Abassah and Al-Qamsh (2020) examined PTMs and their impact on children's educational achievement and found that parental encouragement had the greatest impact on children's achievement. Aljali (2021) identified problems in children resulting from modern technological variables of PTMs and found that behavioral, educational, and social problems are the most important from the point of view of parents.

Farah (2021) focused on PTMs and children's self-understanding and QoL and showed a positive relationship between both parents' PTMs and the self-understanding of children, and the predictability of self-understanding and QoL through parental control of students. Razq (2013) showed a direct correlation between interest, encouragement, and democracy (father's image), interest and guidance (mother's image), and the psychological QoL grades of secondary school students. Razq also showed an inverse correlation between the degrees of differentiation in treatment, cruelty, and neglect (both parents' image), quality of psychological life, and predictability of psychological quality through PTMs (father's interest, encouragement, and

democracy and mother's interest and guidance). Abu Kif and Ali (2016) found no correlation between PTMs and QoL among talented children. Khokh (2016) found that the most important variable of a family's predicting the quality of children's lives is the quality of family life followed by family characteristics. Moses (2019) found a correlation between the dimensions of parental attitudes and the QoL of secondary school female students.

Al-Yubi et al. (2020) classified levels of PTMs (authoritarian–democratic–permissive) and of QoL dimensions (family–academic–services) and the relationship between them. The results showed a rise in QoL dimensions (family–academic–services) and no differences in PTMs attributable to the gender variable.

The results of studies on the differences in QoL between male and female secondary school students in their different components were varied. Al-Shafei (2012) found differences between males and females in QoL in favor of males in secondary school, whereas Ahmed et al. (2017) found differences in the QoL between males and females in favor of females. Alamri (2020) found that there were no differences in the QoL between males and females.

Researchers and scholars have examined the determinants of QoL of members of Saudi Arabian society and found that the QoL of secondary school children is predictable through PTMs.

Methodology and Sample Study

In this study, we adopted the descriptive approach to learn about PTMs in bringing up children. We focused on the impact of PTMs on the QoL of children at different educational stages, specifically secondary school, and on what they predict about QoL. Our study sample consisted of 182 students (137 males and 45 females) in Dammam, Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia.

Data Collection

We collected our quantitative study data by using the World Health Organization's (WHO) abbreviated QoL measure, widely used in scientific studies. This assessment contains 26 items in the form of questions rated on a 5-point Likert scale (low score of 1 to high score of 5). Translated into many languages, the questionnaire has high psychometric characteristics, and the scale has been adapted to different cultures under the WHO's supervision. It measures four domains: physical health, mental health, social relationships, and context.

We applied the test to a sample of 182 male and female secondary school students after obtaining their approval. The correlation coefficient for verification of the test was 0.87, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was 0.84, and the subdimensions were 0.78, 0.89, 0.83, and 0.81, respectively.

We also collected quantitative data using Buri's (1991) parental authority questionnaire for PTMs to obtain scores for both the father and the mother. Buri cited

Baumrind's (1971) model of authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles. Alkharusi et al. (2011) developed an abbreviated version for students in middle and secondary schools in Oman. Their questionnaire contained 20 items, and they calculated its psychometric characteristics using the verification of the test. We applied the metric to the same sample and calculated the correlation coefficient between the sample grades on both measures. The value of the Pearson correlation coefficient (0.67) is a function value at the level of 0.01. We developed a stability scale using the same sample, with Cronbach's coefficient alpha at 0.86.

Results

The first question of the study focused on PTMs of children in secondary school in the city of Dammam. To answer this question, we calculated the percentages of PTMs (authoritative–authoritarian–permissive) for both the father and mother from the children's point of view by using arithmetic means, standard deviations, and percentages. Table 1 shows the results.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics on PTMs of Parents' Study Sample (Father and Mother)

PTMs	Arithmetic means	SD	Percentage	Level
Authoritative Father	3.71	.76	74.2	High
Authoritarian Father	3.43	.75	68.6	High
Permissive Father	2.99	.82	60	Medium
Authoritative Mother	3.84	.71	76.8	High
Authoritarian Mother	3.34	.77	66.8	High
Permissive Mother	2.97	.83	59.4	Medium
Less than 50% (low level); 50%: 65% (medium level); Above 65% (high level)				

It is clear from Table 1 that the PTMs of secondary school children in Dammam for both the father and mother indicate a pattern: 3.71, 3.43, and 2.99 for fathers, and 3.84, 3.43, and 2.97 for mothers, which reflected a level of medium to high PTMs. In rating PTMs in their families the majority of respondents placed

authoritative first, authoritarian second, and permissive third.

The second question focused on the different components of QoL (physical health, mental health, social relationships, and environment). We calculated the responses by using arithmetic means, standard deviations, and percentages. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics on QoL and Its Different Dimensions in the Study Sample

QoL Dimensions	Arithmetic Means	SD	Percentage	Level
Physical Health	3.71	.72	74.2	High
Mental Health	3.67	.80	73.4	High
Social Relationships	3.94	.89	78.8	High
Environment	3.60	.69	72	High
QoL	3.68	.67	73.6	High

Less than 50% (low level); 50%: 65% (medium level); Above 65% (high level)

Table 2 shows that the scores for the four domains are high (3.71, 3.67, 3.94, and 3.60), with an average of 3.68. Social relationships scored highest in the sample study, followed by physical health, mental health, and environment.

To determine whether there are differences in QoL in the four domains for

children in secondary school attributable to gender (male and female), we conducted a test (t) to reflect the differences between the average scores of two separate groups. Table 3 shows that the QoL of male students is higher than that of females.

Table 3 Differences Between Males and Females in QoL With Gender

	Male		Female		Df	t	Sig.
	M	SD	M	SD			
Physical Health	30.69	5.43	26.49	5.43	180	4.49	.000
Mental Health	30.19	6.36	26.78	5.90	180	3.18	.002
Social Relationships	8.17	1.66	7.00	1.87	180	3.99	.000
Environment	29.38	5.15	27.09	6.21	180	2.46	.015
QoL	98.43	16.61	87.36	16.88	180	3.87	.000

Using the multiple regression model, we also analyzed the predictability of QoL through variables (gender, authoritative father, authoritarian father, permissive father, authoritative mother, authoritarian mother, and permissive mother) to

determine to what extent these variables predict QoL for children in secondary school. The results showed that the ratio of variation was 19.8% of the total variation in overall QoL.

Table 4 Multiple Regression Analysis to Predict Independent Variables (Gender, Authoritative Father, Authoritarian Father, Permissive Father, Authoritative Mother, Authoritarian Mother, Permissive Mother) With QoL Variable for Children in Secondary School (n = 182)

Domain	Items	B	T	Sig.	F	P	R ² Adjusted
Physical Health	Gender	0.29	4.16	0.00	6.16	0.00	.165
Mental Health	Authoritative Father	0.27	2.39	0.02	8.63	0.00	.228
	Gender	0.17	2.50	0.01			
Social Relationships	Authoritative Father	0.25	2.08	0.04	5.52	0.00	.149
	Gender	0.24	3.46	0.00			
Environment	Authoritative Father	0.32	2.61	0.01	3.66	0.00	.093

Overall Score of QoL	Authoritative Father	0.29	2.49	0.01	07.39	0.00	.198
	Gender	0.23	3.33	0.00			

Table 4 shows that the predictors of gender and authoritative father interpreted 16.5% of the disparity in physical health as a component of QoL. The multiple regression model shows that R^2 is a function [F (2, 182) = 06.16, $p < .0001$]. The β results showed that 23% of the disparity is attributable solely to gender (i.e., gender is the only variable to foretold by achieving the physical health for children in secondary school). Table 4 shows that the predictors of gender and an authoritative father interpreted 22.8% of the disparity in mental health as a component of QoL. The multiple regression model shows that the R^2 function [F (2, 182) = 8.63, $p < .0001$], and the most contributing variable is the authoritative father. The β results showed that 27% of the disparity was solely attributable to the authoritative father. This variable talks about what matters to children in secondary school to achieve mental health. The other variable, gender, was the second most important variable in this domain, contributing 17% of the disparity.

Table 4 shows that only two variables of prediction (authoritative father, gender) explained 14.9% of the disparity in social relationships as a component of QoL. The multiple regression model shows that R^2 is a function [F (2, 182) = 5.52, $p < .0001$] and the most contributing variable is an authoritative father. The β results showed that 25% of the disparity was solely attributable to the authoritative father. This variable talks about what matters to children in secondary school to achieve social relationships. The other variable, gender, was the second most important variable in this domain, contributing 24% of the disparity.

Table 4 shows that only one predictive variable (authoritative father)

explained 9.3% of the variability in the domain of environment as a component of QoL. The multiple regression model shows that R^2 is a function [F (1, 182) = 3.66, $p < .0001$], and the only contributing variable was an authoritative father. The β results showed that 32% of the disparity was solely attributable to the authoritative father. This variable talks about what matters to secondary school students in the domain of environment.

As Table 4 shows, predictive variables (authoritative father, gender) interpreted 19.8% of the variation in the overall grade of QoL. The multiple regression model shows that the R^2 function [F (2, 182) = 7.39, $p < .0001$] and the most contributing variable is the authoritative father. The β results showed that 0.29% of the variation was solely attributable to the authoritative father. This variable talks about what matters to children in secondary school to achieve QoL in general. The other variable, gender, was the second most important variable for QoL, contributing 23% of the disparity.

The results also showed the inability of variables (authoritarian father, permissive father, authoritative mother, authoritarian mother, and permissive mother) to predict the QoL and its components for children in secondary school.

Discussion and Interpretation of Results

The purpose of this study is to discuss PTMs and their role in predicting the QoL of children at secondary school in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. The results showed that males and females in secondary school had different perceptions of PTMs ranging from high to medium. Each parent's PTMs were authoritative,

authoritarian, and permissive. The children's perceptions therefore reflected positively in them.

These results demonstrate the importance of continuing to support the family relationship between parents and children in four ways. First, the Saudi Arabian environment gives parents full confidence in interacting with their children and giving them the freedom to grow, which affects their behavior and QoL. A large proportion of the sample children indicated that the authoritarian PTM was second in importance, which shows that parents of children in secondary school intervene firmly in their upbringing and even discourage the expression of independent opinions and interests. The majority of the sample children considered the permissive PTM as unsatisfactory. This is consistent with Crockett et al. (2007) who found that, while positive parent-child relationships had a good impact on healthy adolescent development, hostile and uninvolved parenting was linked to adolescent internalizing and externalizing problems. It also agrees with Abulele (2002), who found that the most widespread PTMs are moderation, tolerance, consistency, and protection.

Second, the results also show that children in secondary school have high perceptions of their QoL and its different components (social relationships, physical health, mental health, and environment) as well as of the overall degree of QoL, perceptions that reflect positively on them. This is because of the nature of the parents' family interaction and their granting of freedom to their children form social relationships according to religious doctrine within the Saudi environment, which includes the cultural diversity of different nationalities. Physical health also plays an important role, with good availability of sports facilities to encourage children to exercise and to undergo periodic

assessments, which contributes to the maintenance of the health of the Saudi family in accordance with the Saudi Vision 2030.

Third, mental health scored high, reflecting the children's perception of it through positive family engagement with parents, the availability of student mentors at school, and their positive, confidence-boosting engagement with fellow students. Fourth, environment scored high because of the children's awareness of the realities of the social interest provided by the state to different groups of society, especially to students at the secondary school age.

These findings are consistent with Mohammadi (2017), who noted the high QoL of high-performing students in secondary school, and with Ahmed et al. (2017), who found that the children assessed their QoL as "medium" and their level of parental guidance as "good." The results also showed differences in QoL physical health, mental health, social relationships, and the environment. The overall QoL for students in secondary school favored males, meaning that they enjoyed a higher QoL than females. This is because males enjoy more freedom than females at this age in the Saudi environment, and parents depend more on males than females to meet household needs. In addition, males participate more than females in sports activities and establish social relationships more successfully than females inside and outside the family environment. While Saudi parents encourage males in these pursuits, they protect females out of fear for their safety. Gender differences also reflect more positively on males' overall QoL than females' in the secondary school social environment. These findings are consistent with Al-Shafei (2012), who concluded that the differences in QoL between males and females favored males, but inconsistent with Al-Omari (2020) who concluded that

there were no differences in overall QoL between males and females, and with Ahmed et al. (2017) who concluded that the differences in QoL between males and females favored females.

The results also showed that the father's authoritative PTM predicts the QoL and its components (mental and physical health, social relationships, environment, and overall). Researchers concluded that these results reflected the role of the father as the core figure in family parenting, caring, and financial support, with the mother expressing full confidence in the father's role. This finding is consistent with Razq (2013), who showed the predictability of psychological QoL through PTMs (father's interest, encouragement, and democracy and mother's interest and guidance). Abulele (2002) concluded that the most prevalent PTMs were moderation, tolerance, consistency, and protection. Al-Badarin and Gyth (2013) indicated a predictive capacity for democratic PTMs to children's self-efficiency.

Farah (2021) concluded that QoL can be predicted through the PTMs used with children. Khokh (2016) concluded that the most important family variable in children's QoL is the quality of family life, followed by family characteristics. While our findings differed from those of Baizid (2018) that bullying and neglect PTMs were the most common, whereas democratic, overprotective PTMs were the least common, Abu Kif and Ali (2016) concluded that there was no correlation between PTMs and children's QoL.

The results also showed that gender predicts the individual components of QoL (physical health, mental health, social relationships, and environment) and overall. Researchers concluded that this is because the family's interests are paramount and, in particular, because fathers involve male children in family responsibilities, relying on them to receive

guests, attend to family needs, and participate in social events. Excluding female children from these roles, which may go against their nature, could justify differences in QoL between males and females that favor males. This finding is consistent with Al-Shafei (2012) in that differences in QoL between males and females in secondary school favor males but is inconsistent with Ahmed et al. (2017) that differences in QoL between males and females in secondary school favor females. It also differs from Al-Omari (2020), who concluded that there were no differences in QoL between males and females.

Conclusion

In using the prescriptive approach to study the role of PTMs in predicting the QoL of children in secondary school in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, we found three types of PTMs: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. We also found a high QoL in the different domains among the sample of students in secondary school and significant differences in QoL attributable to gender, specifically in favor of males. Our findings indicated that QoL can be predicted through PTMs and specifically through the father's authoritative style. In light of the overall QoL across all domains except for physical health, we can also predict QoL with the inclusion of information about gender across all domains except for environment.

In light of these findings, we recommend that parents pay attention to cultivating self-confidence in their adolescent children in secondary school, guiding them in managing their emotional development and helping them to enjoy life, avoid stresses, challenges, and problems, and aim for an ideal QoL.

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