Important Role of Parenting Style on College Students' Adjustment in Higher Education

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Abstract: This study explored the important role of parenting styles on college student adjustment. The purpose of the study was to scrutinize the direct and indirect effects of parenting styles on social, emotional, and academic adjustments, along with the potential mediating role of personal self-esteem. We collected data by convenience sampling of 300 undergraduate students from a major public university in a Southwestern city of the United States. Study results demonstrated that the authoritative parenting style had the strongest influence on college students' self-esteem, which improved overall college students' social, emotional, and academic adjustment. The findings of this study may help parents, administrators, and counselors at universities to better understand the importance of parenting styles.

Key Words: Parenting styles, college adjustment, students' success, self-esteem

The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2018) reported that approximately one-third of college students drop out of college permanently and more than half of the students who enroll in college take more than six years to graduate (Shapiro et al., 2018, December). A longitudinal study by Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (1994) indicated that poor emotional and social adjustment in college were predictors of college student dropout. Because of low graduation rates, colleges devote considerable time developing programs to help university students adjust and persist in college (Tinto, 2012). Understanding college student adjustment and making effort to increase student persistence is of vital importance to higher education institutions (Hicks & Heastie, 2008).

A large number of researchers indicate that parenting styles directly and indirectly influence college student adjustment (e.g., Hickman et al., 2000; Joshi et al., 2003; Love & Thomas, 2014). Adams et al. (2000) suggest that parents continue to play an important role in their children's lives as they transition to college. Research reveals that significant parental involvement with students from a young age continues to have an effect years later by improving students' social and emotional adjustments to college (Rathus, 2017). Furthermore, high levels of parental support were related to high levels of psychological adjustment in college students over a two-year

period (Mounts, 2004). Adams et al. (2000) report that the level of parenting support is related to self-esteem, depression, anxiety, loneliness, and other physical and psychological symptoms in students.

Many scholars believe positive social experiences and association with in-group members in college plays an important role in improving students' social, emotional, and academic adjustment by mediating the role of higher personal self-worth (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Walton & Cohen, 2011). While college students spend a large portion of time with their friends engaged in social interactions, the role of parents cannot be ignored. Parents shape the attachment styles and self-esteem of their children from a young age (Shankland et al., 2010).

Researchers suggest parenting style influences students' social interactions, self-esteem, well-being, and academic success in higher education (Turner et al., 2009). Parenting style was associated with students' positive and negative self-esteem (Hickman et al., 2000; Siegler et al., 2017), while self-esteem was related to students' academic, social, and emotional adjustments (Sung et al., 2017). Although self-esteem is regarded as one of the critical factors of college student adjustment, scant research has explored self-esteem as a mediator of parenting style and adjustment to college. This study will examine self-esteem as a potential mediator of the relationship between parenting style and adjustment to college.

PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

In this study, we explored the relationship between parenting styles and academic, social and emotional adjustment as well as the potential role of self-esteem may play in mediating these relationships. The purpose of this study was two-fold: 1) to examine the effects of parenting styles on personal self-esteem, and 2) to explore the direct and indirect effects of parenting styles on social, emotional, and academic adjustment in college, by mediating the role of personal self-esteem. The foregoing discussion leads to the following three research hypotheses (RH): first, RH1: authoritarian and permissive parenting styles negatively influence students' personal self-esteem. Second, RH2: authoritative parenting style positively influences students' personal self-esteem. Third, RH3: personal self-esteem derived from parenting styles has a positive impact on social, emotional, and academic adjustment. This study may provide conceptual evidence that parenting styles importantly influence college students' social, emotional, and academic college adjustments via a significant level of personal self-esteem. In addition, this study could help parents better understand the important role they play in helping students adjust to the complex college environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

PARENTING STYLES

Parents play an essential role in their children's learning and development. Their influence impacts young children and continues through adolescence, affecting college students' development and adjustment in a new environment (Baumrind, 1966, 1991; Buri, 1991; Hickman et al., 2000; Love & Thomas, 2014). Recent research suggests that authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative parenting styles differently affect college students' emotional well-being and their ability to cope effectively with the demands of the academic environment (Hickman et al., 2000; Love & Thomas, 2014).

Each parenting style describes different approaches to parenting. According to Baumrind (1966), there are three parenting styles: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Authoritarian parenting pertains to parents who are highly demanding and strict with their children and value unquestionable obedience (Baumrind, 1966; Buri, 1991). Parents attempt to evaluate the behavior and attitude of the child by an absolute standard of conduct. They also believe that the child should accept their word for what is right (Baumrind, 1966; Buri, 1991). The permissive parenting style is described as parents who are non-controlling and tend to use minimal punishment with their children (Hickman et al., 2000; Love & Thomas, 2014). These parents allow their children to regulate their own activities as much as possible, avoiding excessive control (Baumrind, 1966; Buri, 1991). Authoritative parenting represents parents who are both highly controlling and warm, encouraging their children's verbal communication and sharing the reasoning behind their rules (Hickman et al., 2000; Love & Thomas, 2014). With authoritative parenting, there is clear and firm direction for children but also a warm, flexible, and reasonable acceptance (Baumrind, 1966, Buri, 1991).

PARENTING STYLES AND COLLEGE ADJUSTMENT

Parenting styles play a vital role in the academic performance and adjustment of adolescents and college students (Love & Thomas, 2014). In general, the authoritative parenting style is related to cognitively motivated, competent, and achievement-oriented students (Baumrind, 1991). Also, authoritative parenting is connected with positive academic and psychosocial outcomes for adolescents and college students (Strage & Brandit, 1999). Research supports that authoritative parenting facilitates higher levels of psychosocial development and school competence by giving adolescents a sense of warm parental acceptance, psychological autonomy, and firm behavioral control (Steinberg et al., 1989). Higher levels of parental support were related to lower levels of depression and loneliness for both African American and White American college freshmen (Mounts, 2004).

Authoritarian parents are described as restrictors of the autonomy of the child because they directly instruct what behavior is appropriate for their child (Baumrind, 1966). According to Sartaj and Aslam's study (2010), authoritarian parenting style was negatively related to positive home, health, and emotional adjustments of college students (Sartaj & Aslam, 2010). In addition, the study also reported that this restrictive parenting style contributed to students' poor social skills, helplessness, and emotional problems such as loneliness, depression, and lower self-esteem (Alt, 2015; Sartaj & Aslam, 2010).

PARENTING STYLES AND PERSONAL SELF-ESTEEM

Hickman et al. (2000) reported that students who were raised by parents using authoritative parenting styles had high self-esteem and coped better with the challenges of adapting and transitioning to college (Hickman et al., 2000; Love & Thomas, 2014).

Parenting styles are related to children's self-esteem, and self-esteem has been positively associated with academic adjustment (Buri, 1989; Friedlander et al., 2007). In general, the authoritative parenting style has been reported as a significant predictor of children's high self-esteem, suggesting that children of parents using warm and supportive parenting style have significantly higher self-esteem (Moghaddam et al., 2017). Authoritative mothering was positively associated with higher self-esteem and life-satisfaction and with lower victimization, depression, alcohol-related problems, and delinquent behaviors such as smoking, fighting, or frequent drug use (Chan & Koo, 2011). Although authoritative paternal parenting styles were related to

psychological adjustment, the advantage was less significant than mothering, and only evident for lower depression (Milevsky et al., 2007). While authoritative parenting enhances students' personal self-esteem, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles were negatively associated with personal self-esteem (Zakeri & Karimpour, 2011; Siegler et al., 2017). Brodski and Huts (2012) found that the authoritarian parenting style is positively related to psychological impairment in self-esteem because of the strict and absolute standard of conduct. In addition, students who reported lower self-esteem tried to solve emotional problems such as depression symptoms by alcohol usage (Brodski & Huts, 2012).

Similar to the authoritarian parenting style, the permissive parenting style is also negatively affiliated with personal self-esteem (Siegler et al., 2017). The permissive parenting style gives children too much leniency, unlimited freedom and inflated praise that may cause students to be impulsive, low in self-regulation and low in school achievement. At school, this can result in more misconduct and drug or alcohol use than peers with authoritative parents (Siegler et al., 2017).

PERSONAL SELF-ESTEEM ON SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Along with the benefits of parenting styles, students' positive self-concepts are considered a significant factor to drive higher levels of social, emotional, and academic adjustments (Pedrotti et al., 2008; Shankland et al., 2010). The concept of emotional adjustment is described as subjective well-being (Henton et al., 1980; Ryan & Deci, 2001), while social adjustment represents a combination of the social settings in a particular academic institution including satisfaction with the college life and student relationships (Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975).

In particular, personal self-worth influenced by the parents is positively related to social and emotional benefits in higher education (Shankland et al., 2010). For example, the instruction, rearing, and guidance provided by parents help students understand in-group members and interact with them. In addition, these positive social interactions create students' positive self-evaluation, which improves psychological well-being (Koo et al., 2015). According to previous studies, higher levels of personal self-esteem are positively related to happiness and life satisfaction and are inversely related to fear, anxiety, and depression (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Simek, 2013; Sung et al., 2017). These findings parallel a study by Sung et al. (2017) in which personal self-esteem directly and indirectly enhanced social and emotional college adjustment. In particular, personal self-esteem is directly related to social group interactions, which decreased levels of depression (Koo et al., 2015; Simek, 2013). These findings indicate that personal self-esteem can be influenced by parenting style and that caregiving is significantly related to social and emotional adjustment in the complex college environment (Koo et al., 2015; Shankland et al., 2010).

PERSONAL SELF-ESTEEM ON ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT

Academic adjustment in higher education represents students' academic motivation to study, goal achievement, and performance in studying and homework (Baker & Siryk, 1989; Walton & Cohen, 2011). Hickman et al. (2000) revealed that students' strong self-worth derived from parental support and that active involvement in students' endeavors assists students' academic success in higher education. This relationship is consistent with Prichard and Wilson's (2003) study that college students who have lower self-esteem have an increased chance of dropping out of college than those who have higher self-esteem.

In addition, students' experiences in the non-academic environment in college—such as social group affiliations and psychological well-being—have been introduced as significant factors for promoting academic success in higher education (Koo et al., 2015; Walton & Cohen, 2011).

For example, students who have higher levels of stress, loneliness, depression, and anxiety have difficulties in their academic motivation and performance (Koo et al., 2015; Walton & Cohen, 2011). In particular, depressed students had a .49 lower point or half a letter grade lower GPA than students with no depression (Hysenbegasi et al., 2005). Consistent with these results, positive feelings such as happiness and satisfaction with college life significantly improved their academic functions (Smerdon, 2002; Sanchez et al., 2005).

In a student's college life, social affiliation also positively influences scholastic competence (Arndt et al., 2002). Swenson et al. (2008) found that positive social relationships in college were associated with academic adjustment. In particular, students' experiences in college rely heavily on social relationships with other students, in which they share common interests (Koo et al., 2015). Likewise, Dennis et al. (2005) found that ethnic minority first-generation college students who did not have positive social relationships with their peers had lower grade point averages during the spring semester. Similarly, Swensen et al. (2010) studied the quantity and closeness of friendships of first-year college students and found that close friendship predicted academic performance and persistence.

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

The data was collected via convenience sampling of 675 undergraduate students from a major public university in a Southwestern city of the United States. A total of 300 surveys were returned, which equaled a response rate of 44%. Of the 300 students, 87 (29%) were male and 213 (71%) female. There were 42 freshmen (14.3%), 83 sophomores (27.6%), 115 juniors (38.2%), and 60 seniors (19.9%). In addition, the total sampled students include 169 White (56.3%), 17 Hispanic or Latino (5.6%), 41 American Indian or Alaska Native (13.7%), 9 Asian (3%), 57 African American (19%), and 7 Others (2.4%).

The majority of students (68%) were between 19 and 23 years old with a mean age of 21.36 years ($SD = 5.23$). Students from core courses (e.g., introduction to psychology, general biology, etc.) were sampled. Researchers asked permission from the instructors before sending a survey to the students. An email was sent to students inviting them to participate in the study. The study was included in a survey link designed using Google Forms.

MEASURES

The proposed model includes parenting styles, personal self-esteem, and college adjustment with five-point Likert scale items ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (5) *strongly agree*. First, the *Parental Authority Questionnaire* (PAQ; Buri, 1991) was used to measure the parenting styles. The PAQ contains three different parenting scales including authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. The authoritarian subscale includes eight items measuring levels of discipline and restrictions (e.g., "As I was growing up, my mother would get very upset if I tried to disagree with her"). The permissive subscale involves four items reflecting the parents' lack of demands and their minimal discipline (e.g., "My mother has always felt that what her children need is to be free to make up their own minds and to do what they want to do, even if this does not agree with what their parents might want"). Seven items on the scale that measure authoritative parenting styles contain the degree to which parents establish rules, structures, and maintain expectations (e.g., "As I was growing up, once family policy had been established, my mother discussed the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family"). Internal consistencies

of the three dimensions exceeded the acceptable level of .70, (authoritarian .72, permissive .82, and authoritative .73) (Buri, 1991; Love & Thomas, 2014; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Second, the *Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale* (RSES; Rosenberg, 1989) was adapted to measure college students' personal self-esteem. Personal self-esteem is described as students' psychological evaluation of their life values and worth, self-confidence and self-determination. It is important to measure how students evaluate themselves, their feelings, their attitudes, and satisfaction in life (Schacter et al., 2009). Students completed five items related to self-esteem (e.g., "I take a positive attitude toward myself"). The reliability of the RSES was .86 which exceeds the acceptable level suggested by Nunnally & Bernstein (1994) and Sung et al. (2017).

College adjustment is a term used to describe student's overall satisfaction with the complex nature of the academic institution (Henton et al., 1980). In addition, Baker and Siryk (1989) strongly suggested that college adjustment should be measured by three dimensions including social relationships, emotions, and academic success. Social adjustment is defined as social integration, such as number of social relationships and supportive networks in an academic institution. Emotional adjustment is manifested as a student's overall psychological health including items measuring stress, anxiety, and depression. In addition, academic adjustment is conceptualized as the degree to which students are positively affiliated with academic programs and success (Baker & Siryk, 1984; Henton et al., 1980; Spady, 1970; Tinto, 1975). College students' social, emotional, and academic adjustment were measured by the *Student Adaption to College Questionnaire* (SACQ; Baker & Siryk, 1989). Seven items of the social adjustment subscale measured social involvement in college life (e.g., "I have adequate social skills"), while three items measured emotional adjustment (e.g., "I have trouble coping with college stress"). Lastly, the academic adjustment subscale contained six items reflecting college students' academic motivation, environment, and performance (e.g., "I have well-defined academic goals"). The reliabilities of the three subscales in RSES were .87, .93, and .93 demonstrating an acceptable level (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

DATA ANALYSIS

The latent constructs in the survey were analyzed using SPSS 23.0 and AMOS 23.0. First, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to evaluate psychometric measurement and structural model by the covariance matrix and maximum likelihood estimation (Bentler & Wu, 2005). Second, the hypothesized model including parenting styles, personal self-esteem, and college adjustment was evaluated by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). In addition, SEM scrutinized the direct and indirect effects among the latent variables with the favorable model fit to the observed data.

RESULTS

PSYCHOMETRIC EVALUATION OF THE MEASURES

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to measure items' relations with each latent construct and distinction from the other constructs (Hair et al., 2006). The following fit indices: χ^2/df (<5.0), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (<.08), the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) (<.08), and the comparative fit index (CFI) (>.90; Hair et al., 2010) gauge the overall model fit. A bootstrapping procedure with 500 bootstrap samples and 95% confidence interval (CI) was conducted to test the proposed mediation effect of team identification (Zhao et al., 2010). Every first item in the latent construct was fixed with the

numeric value of 1, and the model fit was estimated by exact, absolute, parsimonious, and incremental fit indices recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999). $\chi2$ (710) = 1036.912, $p < .001$; Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = .0512; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .039; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .939.

Cronbach's alpha, greater than .70, represents the internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) while convergent validity was measured by construct reliability with a .70 threshold, and average variance extracted (AVE) with a cut-off value of .50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). As shown in Table 1, with .50 cutoff thresholds, average variance extracted (AVE) of all latent construct found the evidence of convergent validity, from .809 to .986 (Hair et al., 2006). In addition, the evidence of discriminant validity was provided by the comparison between AVE and the square of the correlations in each construct (Hair et al., 2006). Finally, each AVE scores were greater than squared phi correlations (ϕ^2), which met the acceptable levels of discriminant validity.

Table 1.
Psychometric Evaluation of the Measures

Latent Construct	Items	Factor Loading	Reliability	AVE	$\phi2$
Authoritarian	AUTARIAN_01	.611	.97	.855	.001-.150
	AUTARIAN_02	.671			
	AUTARIAN_03	.729			
	AUTARIAN_04	.672			
	AUTARIAN_05	.656			
	AUTARAIN_06	.673			
	AUTARAIN_07	.637			
	AUTARAIN_08	.555			
Permissive	PERMI_01	.614	.86	.809	.001-.150
	PERMI_02	.575			
	PERMI_03	.684			
	PERMI_04	.566			
Authoritative	AUTATIVE_01	.698	.98	.873	.020-.150
	AUTATIVE_02	.788			
	AUTATIVE_03	.831			
	AUTATIVE_04	.649			
	AUTATIVE_05	.809			
	AUTATIVE_06	.614			
	AUTATIVE_07	.570			

Table 1
Psychometric Evaluation of the Measures (Cont.)

Personal Self-Esteem	PSE_01	.814	.93	.986	.001-.304
	PSE_02	.895			
	PSE_03	.755			
	PSE_04	.770			
	PSE_05	.703			
Academic Adjustment	ACA_01	.751	.98	.863	.001-.203
	ACA_02	.726			
	ACA_03	.716			
	ACA_04	.846			
	ACA_05	.529			
	ACA_06	.577			
Emotional Adjustment	EMO_01	.734	.95	.864	.001-.207
	EMO_02	.856			
	EMO_03	.557			
Social Adjustment	SOC_01	.627	.98	.875	.001-.304
	SOC_02	.669			
	SOC_03	.676			
	SOC_04	.632			
	SOC_05	.629			
	SOC_06	.535			
	SOC_07	.791			

EFFECTS OF PARENTING STYLES, PERSONAL SELF-ESTEEM ON COLLEGE ADJUSTMENT

The SEM resulted that the model fit indices have a favorable model fit; χ^2 (719) = 1043.418, $p < .001$, SRMR = .0525, RMSEA = .039, CFI = .940, and all parameters were significantly estimated. No additional path was allowed into the structural model because the modification suggested by LM test was not supported by the theory.

From decomposition of the relationships from the SEM, the research hypotheses related to effects parenting styles (H1, H2, and H3) are partially supported. First, authoritarian ($t = -.687$, $p = .492$) and permissive ($t = -1.323$, $p = .186$) styles did not significantly influence students' personal self-esteem. Authoritative parenting style significantly improved students' personal self-esteem ($t = 5.874$, $p < .001$). This relationship resulted that when authoritative parenting style increases by 1 standard deviation, .425 standard deviation of personal self-esteem.

Second, personal self-esteem influenced by parenting style had direct impacts on social ($t = 8.706$, $p < .001$), emotional ($t = 2.804$, $p = .005$), and academic ($t = 2.061$, $p = .039$) adjustments. These results indicate that when personal self-esteem influenced by their parenting style increases by 1 standard deviation, .184 standard deviation of academic, .694 social, and .409 emotional adjustments are increased.

Table 2
Decomposition of Effects with Standardized Values

Outcome	Predictor	Effects		
		Direct	Indirect	Total
Personal Self-Esteem	Authoritative	.452		.452
Social Adjustment	Personal Self-esteem	.694		.694
	Authoritative		.314	.314
Emotional Adjustment	Personal Self-esteem	.409	.326	.735
	Social Adjustment	.469		
	Authoritative		.333	.333
Academic Adjustment	Personal Self-esteem	.184	.276	.460
	Social Adjustment	.397		.397
	Authoritative		.208	.208

Third, social adjustment improved by personal self-esteem significantly enhance the levels of emotional ($t = 4.871$, $p < .001$) and academic ($t = 4.509$, $p < .001$) adjustments. For example, 1 standard deviation increases in social adjustment, .397 standard deviation in academic and .409 standard deviation in emotional adjustments increases. Finally, Figure 1 describes the standardized estimates of the significant components from the structural equation model.
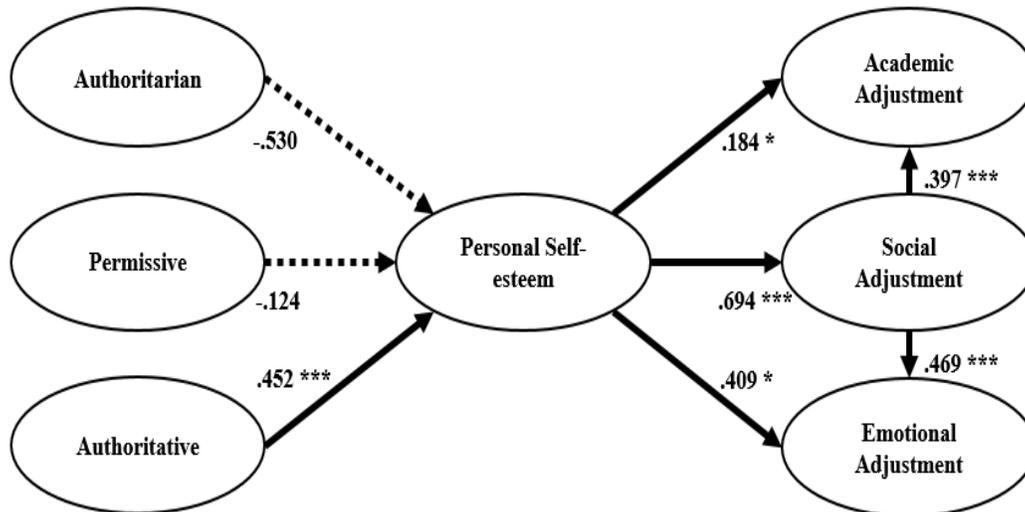

Figure 1. The Full SEM Model Labeled with the Significant Standardized Effects
Note. Solid lines indicate significant paths at p < .05. Values shown next to the solid lines are standardized regression coefficients.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A number of psychologists and social scientists suggest that the important role of parenting style provides the first influence in a student's life and in the future by facilitating a student's personal self-esteem and social, emotional, and academic performance (Baumrind, 1966; Buri, 1991; Love & Thomas, 2014; Rathus, 2017). By investigating whether personal self-esteem mediates direct and indirect relationships among the latent constructs, this study may provide evidence of how parenting styles are associated with students' college adjustment.

One of the findings from data analysis was that the authoritative parenting style significantly improved students' personal self-esteem, while the authoritarian and permissive parenting styles did not have any effect on personal self-esteem. This result parallels previous studies that found authoritative parenting had a positive impact on college student adjustment (Hickman et al., 2000; Love & Thomas, 2014). In addition, according to Moghaddam et. al (2017), authoritative parenting style was the most significant predictor of high personal self-esteem because of the clear and firm directions parents gave their children as well as their warm, flexible, and reasonable acceptance (Baumrind, 1966, Buri, 1991). Furthermore, results indicate that college students whose parents provide highly structured environments and who communicate the importance of sharing emotions with their parents have tend to evaluate themselves positively.

The second finding derived from the current study was that personal self-esteem, which was enhanced by the authoritative parenting style, functioned to significantly improve college students' social, emotional, and academic adjustment. Personal self-esteem played a significant role in mediating the relationship between parenting style and students' college adjustment. These findings were consistent with previous studies (Abdul-Adil & Farmer, 2006; Love & Thomas, 2014). For example, the Love and Thomas (2014) study found that self-esteem and emotional well-being derived from authoritative parenting were significantly associated with higher levels of academic performance because the authoritative parenting style helped students become competent, motivated and goal-oriented (Love & Thomas, 2014).

Supporting the result of Love and Thomas's study (2014), our findings uniquely emphasized that authoritative parenting style mediated by personal self-esteem influenced college students' social adjustment, and the level of college students' social adjustment improved by personal self-esteem directly assisted college students' emotional and academic adjustment. This result demonstrated the important role of college students' social relationships within the complex nature of the college environment. Positive social interactions within the college environment created significantly higher levels of students' social and psychological well-being, which, in turn, bolstered students' academic success. For example, Murray-Harvey and Slee (2007) suggested that non-academic components of the college environment, such as social experiences and relationships in college, reduced the levels of students' depression and loneliness, and enhanced the level of college satisfaction. The explanation for this was due to the fact that student's life in college was highly related to their relationship with college friends. The college experience encouraged students to participate in social activities, such as meeting or making friends and sharing rooms with roommates. As a result, they spent a large amount of time with their friends in college and tended to look to their friends to discuss problems (Baker & Siryk, 1989). Because of the significant role of the social environment in college life, our findings support previous findings that students' psychological adjustment, such as feeling tense, stressed and moody, and having trouble coping are directly influenced by the quality of their social relationships (Murray-Harvey & Slee, 2007).

Lastly, social relationships had a direct impact on students' academic success in higher education. This finding paralleled Walton and Cohen's (2011) study that college satisfaction, defined by positive social affiliations and experiences, enhanced academic factors such as final grade point average (GPA) and motivation. In addition, social relationships had a direct impact on students' academic success in higher education. Likewise, Swenson et al. also (2008) found that positive social relationships in college were associated with academic adjustment. Swenson et al. (2008) suggested that perhaps peers concentrated on their academic work because they had established relationships. Several studies (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) stressed that the peer relationship is of critical importance in academic performance, social development, and experiences in college. One explanation for this was that peers in college set standards for success and became one's reference group (Astin, 1993; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969). As students adjusted socially to college, overall one's social relationships would influence academic adjustment and performance as well.

LIMITATION AND IMPLICATION

There are several limitations to this study regarding the generalizability of the findings. One of the limitations was that the study included students from one institution where the majority of students were White. Ethnic diversity, culture, and socioeconomic status may influence the results of the study. Although many scholars agree that authoritative parenting style positively related to social and academic performance (Baumrind, 1991; Turner et al., 2009), there were inconsistent associations between authoritarian, or permissive parenting style and students' social, emotional and academic adjustment.

As an example, a British longitudinal study indicated that the authoritarian parenting style, expressed by the mother, significantly influences students' conduct problems, and this parenting style was negatively associated with social and academic adjustments (Baumrind, 1991; Strage & Brandit, 1999; Thompson et al., 2003). However, Chao (2001) stated that the authoritarian parenting style was positively associated with students' perceptions of parental caring and involvement for Asian-American ethnic minority groups in the U.S. The authoritarian parenting style could possibly have a different cultural meaning for ethnic minorities in terms of self-esteem, self-reliance, and interpersonal relationship (Ang & Goh, 2006; Chao, 2001). Researchers also found that academic achievement (GPA) was significantly correlated to the maternal strictness and the paternal involvement for the European American college students, but no significant correlations were found for Asian and Hispanic college students (Joshi, et al., 2003)

Lastly, the sample was predominantly female (71%). Although female college students are the new majority on most college and university campuses (Pryor et al., 2007), having an equal number of female and male participants in the study might change the relationships among parents, parenting styles, and personal self-esteem influencing college students' social, emotional, and academic adjustments. In addition, the sample was a convenience sample where a researcher selects subjects that are easily accessible. Accordingly, there may not be an equal opportunity to participate in this study for all qualified individuals in the target population (Etikan et al., 2016).

The results of the current study had several implications for practice. The study suggests that parenting style continued to have an effect well into college. Authoritative parenting improved student self-esteem. Personal self-esteem, influenced by the authoritative parenting style, had direct impacts on social, emotional, and academic adjustments in college. This was an important finding for colleges and universities because it demonstrated that a portion of a student's

adjustment in college was due to factors that are rooted in the student's childhood and family dynamic, which were beyond a college's control. Positive family role including effective parenting style and parental education should be encouraged from an early age. Because of this and the state and federal economic implications of college dropout rates, it should become a greater priority for governmental programs and early childhood agencies to partner with elementary schools to provide parental education of effective parenting styles while considering family dynamics.

At the college and university level, universities might consider administering an instrument such as the *Parental Authority Questionnaire* (Buri, 1991) and *Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale* (Rosenberg, 1989) to identify students who might need additional support in their adjustment to the college environment. These students can then be monitored for adjustment challenges by faculty, residence life staff, and student affairs personnel. In addition, because adjustment challenges can stem from parenting received in childhood, university counselors may need to take more active role in helping students make sense of their lived experiences. Universities should consider these dynamics of parenting styles to help students adjust to their new environment and to evaluate early signs of distress.

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