

Parental Acceptance-Rejection in relation to Achievement Motivation

Juliet Lalremmawii Ralte*

H.K. Laldinpuii Fente**

Abstract

The main concern of the present study is to determine the contribution of specific factors of parental acceptance-rejection, viz. maternal and paternal Warmth/Affection, Hostility/Aggression, Indifference/Neglect, and Undifferentiated Rejection on the Achievement Motivation of off springs into their adulthood. 600 Indian Mizo young adults (300 male and 300 female) with their age ranging between 19 to 39 years (mean age = 25.43) participated in this study. Results revealed that for both males and females, achievement motivation was significantly negatively correlated with all the paternal and maternal acceptance-rejection subscales. Results further revealed significant 'gender' effect on paternal acceptance-rejection and achievement motivation, indicating more perceived paternal and maternal rejection in men than in women but poorer achievement motivation in women than in men. Men scored higher on paternal rejection than women, men perceived their fathers as less warm, more hostile-aggressive, indifferent-neglecting, undifferentiated rejecting, and overall rejecting than women. They also perceived their mothers as more hostile and also overall rejecting than women. Nevertheless, considering the levels of parental acceptance-rejection, both men and women in this study generally tended to perceive their mothers as quite loving (accepting).

Keywords: Parental acceptance-rejection, achievement motivation, Mizo, young adults.

Parents play a central role throughout a child's life, even through adulthood, and the maintenance of strong familial relationships is the key to success, particularly in education and quality of life (Kim & Park, 2004; Park & Kim, 2004b). According to Rohner's Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory, parental acceptance is defined in terms of "warmth, affection, care, comfort,

concern, nurturance, support, or simply love" that children receive from their parents. In contrast, parental rejection and hostility are defined as the "absence or significant withdrawal of these feelings and behaviors and by the presence of a variety of physically and psychologically hurtful behaviors and affects" (Rohner *et al.*, 2005, p. 5). More specifically, children and adults universally appear to organize

* Juliet Lalremmawii Ralte is Faculty, Department of Psychology, Govt. Hrangbana College, Mizoram

**Prof. H.K. Laldinpuii Fente is Professor, Department of Psychology, Mizoram University, Mizoram

their perceptions of acceptance-rejection around the same four classes of behavior: warmth/affection (or its opposite, coldness/lack of affection), hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect, and undifferentiated rejection. Undifferentiated rejection is a form of rejection which refers to individuals' beliefs that their parents do not love them or care for them, although there might not be clear behavioral indicators that parents are unaffectionate, neglecting or aggressive toward them (Rohner *et al.*, 2005).

The ability to handle life's issues and demands is based upon psychological foundations of early family experiences. Family factors and experiences have been found to be important predictors of children's achievement progress too (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). According to Newcomb (1964) achievement motivation is the acquired tendency and one of the most important social needs. It has been defined by McClelland *et al.*, (1953) as a disposition to strive for success in competition with others with some standard of excellence set by the individual.

Sex differences in achievement motivation have been studied widely (Meece, Glienke, & Burg, 2006). Elizur & Beck (1994) detected no special tendency for women to score higher than men on affective responses in achievement motive questionnaire (Elizur 1979, 1986; Shye 1978). Different socialization experiences are thought to

lead boys and girls, men and women, to hold different values and different value hierarchies.

The main concern of the present study is to determine the contribution of specific factors of parental acceptance-rejection, viz. maternal and paternal Warmth/Affection, Hostility/Aggression, Indifference/Neglect, and Undifferentiated Rejection on the Achievement Motivation of off springs into their adulthood. Therefore, it is an attempt to highlight the impact of parenting on achievement motivation of young Mizo adults.

Objectives and hypotheses

The first objective aimed to study achievement motivation (AchM) in relation to paternal acceptance-rejection (TTRF) and maternal acceptance-rejection (TTRM) separately with four subscales: Warmth-affection (WA), hostility-aggression (HA), indifference-neglect (IN), and undifferentiated rejection (UR) among Mizo male and female young adults.

The second objective aimed to determine the predictability of achievement motivation from the parenting variables (Total Acceptance-Rejection, WA, HA, IN, UR from mothers and from fathers) among Mizo male and female young adults.

The third objective is to determine gender differences in the predictor and criterion variables of the study.

Thus, the following hypotheses were drawn given the nature of the observable behaviours of men and women in the population under study, and in line with given literature:

1. Achievement motivation is expected to be higher in males than in females and parental acceptance-rejection is expected to be higher in males than in females among Mizo young adults.
2. Achievement motivation will be substantially predicted from parental acceptance-rejection.
3. Parental Acceptance-Rejection and its sub-scales will show negative correlation with Achievement Motivation.

The psychological test instruments incorporated in the study are: (i) Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire-Short Form-Adult versions for Father and for Mother (PARQ-SF-ADULT; Rohner, R.P & Khaleque, A., 2005) and (ii) Deo-Mohan Achievement Motivation Scale (Deo, P & Mohan, S., 2002).

Sample

To achieve the objectives, 600 (300 male and 300 female) young Mizo adults with their age ranging between 19 to 39 years (mean age = 25.43) were randomly sampled from the different localities of Aizawl, with due consideration of suburban and central city areas.

Result & Discussion

Subject-wise scores on the specific items of the behavioural measures of

Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire-Short Form-Adult separately for Mother and Father (PARQ-Father and PARQ-Mother-SF-ADULT; Rohner & Khaleque, 2005) and Deo-Mohan Achievement Motivation Scale (Deo & Mohan, 2002), were separately prepared and analyzed in order to (i) check the psychometric adequacy of these behavioural measures for measurement purposes among Mizo young adult men and women, (ii) to study the contribution of Parental Acceptance-Rejection in Achievement Motivation and to specify the effects of the total levels of Rejection perceived from both parents on Achievement Motivation.

Psychometric properties of the behavioural measures

1. Psychometric adequacy of Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire – Father. The results of Item-total coefficient of correlation (and the relationship between the specific items as an index of internal consistency), reliability coefficients (Cronbach alpha), relationship between the scales, and Mean and *SD* values on PARQ-Father sub-scales (WAF-Warmth/Affection, HAF-Hostility/Aggression, INF-Indifference/Neglect, URF-Undifferentiated Rejection and TTRF-Total Rejection) over the levels of analyses (men and women) are given together in Table 1.

Table – 1: Item-total coefficients of correlation, interscale relationships, Cronbach’s Alphas and Mean and SD values for subscales and full scale of PARQ-Father for men(n=300) and women (n=300).

	Men					Women				
r	WAM	HAM	INM	URM	TTRM	WAM	HAM	INM	URM	TTRM
HAF	.248**	1				.371**	1			
INF	.547**	.516**	1			.497**	.588**	1		
URF	.397**	.657**	.596**	1		.435**	.677**	.648**	1	
TTRF	.761**	.737**	.845**	.788**	1	.775**	.796**	0.836	.805**	1
Mean	14.31	10.13	10.81	6.56	41.8	13.44	9.04	10.07	5.98	38.54
SD	4.41	3.42	3.34	2.29	10.51	4.06	3.16	3.03	2.07	9.85
alpha r	0.8	0.71	0.67	0.63	0.87	0.78	0.73	0.64	0.62	0.87

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

The predictive validity of the subscales (WAF, HAF, INF, URF) and full scale (TTRF) of PARQ-Father were highlighted by applying independent sample *t* test on ‘Sex’ (men and women). Results revealed that although men scored higher on paternal rejection than women, both Mizo men and women in general tended to perceive their fathers to be quite loving (accepting) supporting an orientation towards the recent conception of father as the genial playmate and co-parent (Pleck & Pleck, 1997), and as capable as the mother of being a

competent and nurturing caregiver (Bronstein & Cowan, 1988; Silverstein & Auerbach, 1999). 2. Psychometric adequacy of Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire – Mother. Results in table 2 revealed substantial item-total coefficient of correlation (and relationship between the items of the specific scales) for the sub-scales and full scale (WAM, HAM, INM, URM and TTRM), and adequate levels of reliability coefficient ranging from .65 to .90 Cronbach’s alpha over the levels of analysis: for men and for women.

Table – 2: Item-total coefficients of correlation, interscale relationships, Cronbach’s Alphas and Mean and SD values for subscales and full scale of PARQ-Mother for men (n=300) and women(n=300).

	Men					Women				
r	WAM	HAM	INM	URM	TTRM	WAM	HAM	INM	URM	TTRM
WAM	1					1				
HAM	.312**	1				.376**	1			
INM	.470**	.625**	1			.611**	.660**	1		
URM	.408**	.690**	.676**	1		.441**	.762**	.685**	1	
TTRM	.752**	.792**	.842**	.812**	1	.794**	.810**	.884**	.821**	1
Mean	13.03	9.79	9.84	6.1	38.76	12.62	8.93	9.55	5.75	36.85
SD	4.39	3.41	3.03	2.23	10.36	4.35	3.23	3.08	2.24	10.62
alpha r	0.79	0.72	0.66	0.65	0.88	0.82	0.76	0.67	0.7	0.9

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

The predictive validity of the subscales (WAM, HAM, INM, URM) and full scale (TTRM) of PARQ-Mother were highlighted by applying independent sample *t* test on ‘Sex’ (men and women). Results revealed that both men and women in general tended to perceive their mothers to be quite loving (accepting) conforming to the nurturing view of motherhood for both men and women, and the assumption of early parenting theories that women are naturally and importantly endowed for child-care (Lamb, 1975, 1981, 1986; Phares, 1992,1996), a point which should not be undermined even in studies that focus on men’s role in parenting.

3. Psychometric adequacy of Deo-Mohan Achievement Motivation Scale. Results in table 3. revealed the trustworthiness of the test scales for measurement purposes in the project population. The predictive validity of the AchM was separately highlighted by applying independent sample *t* test on ‘Sex’ (men and women) which indicated that the level of achievement motivation in men and women in the target population is significantly different (Meece, Glienke, & Burg, 2006)as supported by the findings of Ligon, 2006, with men scoring higher than women conforming to the study conducted by Liu & Zhu, 2009.

Table – 3: Item-total coefficients of correlations, Cronbach’s Alphas and Mean and SD values for subscales and full scale of AchM for men (n=300) and women (n=300).

	AchM (Men)	AchM (Women)
Mean	130.06	126.39
SD	19.05	20.24
alpha r	0.84	0.856

- ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level
- * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

In summary, it may be said that Significant ‘Sex’ effect on WAF, HAF, INF, URF, TTRF, HAM, TTRM and AchM were found which revealed that (i) men perceived their fathers as less warm, more hostile-aggressive, indifferent-neglecting, undifferentiatedly rejecting, and overall rejecting than women, (ii) men perceived their mothers as more hostile and also overall rejecting than women, (iii) men are more highly achievement motivated than women (vi) men and women were found not to differ significantly in their perception of warmth-affection, indifference-neglect and undifferentiated rejection from mothers. However, significant ‘Sex’ effects in majority of the variables of interest as

cited above led to the decision to continue to analyse the data further separately for men and women.

Prediction of achievement motivation from paternal and maternal acceptance-rejection in young Mizo adult men and women

To study the contributions of Parental Acceptance-Rejection in Achievement Motivation, several multiple regression models were envisaged for men and women separately (as gender differences were found in almost all the variables). The results of the relationships between the major variables for men and women can be seen in Table-4

Table – 4: Correlations coefficients between the measures of all the predictor and criterion variables for men (n=300) and women (n=300).(Women below the diagonal while men above the diagonal).

	WAF	HAF	INF	URF	TTRF	WAM	HAM	INM	URM	TTRM	AchM
WAF	1	.248**	0.547	.397**	.761**	.408**	0.025	.134*	0.092	.240**	-.204**
HAF	.371**	1	.516**	.657**	.737**	.134*	.579**	.413**	.476**	.470**	-.129*
INF	.497**	.588**	1	.596**	.845**	.263**	.349**	.425**	.390**	.435**	-.144*

Parental Acceptance-Rejection in relation to Achievement Motivation

	WAF	HAF	INF	URF	TTRF	WAM	HAM	INM	URM	TTRM	AchM
URF	.435**	.677**	.648**	1	.788**	.286**	.505**	.511**	.592**	.564**	-.208**
TTRF	.775**	.796**	.836**	.805**	1	.361**	.420**	.437**	.447**	.515**	-.219**
WAM	.533**	.196**	.323**	.277**	.440**	1	.312**	.470**	.408**	.752**	-.221**
HAM	.339**	.668**	.531**	.602**	.643**	.376**	1	.625**	.690**	.792**	-.172**
INM	.416**	.457**	.508**	.527**	.584**	.611**	.660**	1	.676**	.842**	-.268**
URM	.286**	.518**	.478**	.625**	.562**	.441**	.762**	.685**	1	.812**	-.148*
TTRM	.502**	.525**	.541**	.581**	.663**	.794**	.810**	.884**	.821**	1	-.260**
AchM	-.316**	-.164**	-.198**	-.257**	-.297**	-.219**	-.147*	-.204**	-.149**	-.225**	1

** correlations is significant at 0.01 level

*correlations is significant at 0.05 level

The overall results of multiple regression analyses to highlight the contribution of Parental Acceptance-Rejection in Achievement Motivation revealed that, as hypothesized, a substantial proportion of variance in achievement motivation were explained by parental acceptance-rejection. Specifically, it was found that for men (i)paternal and maternal acceptance-rejection explained approximately 8 % of the variance in Achievement Motivation in men, with Maternal Rejection more salient than Paternal Rejection. Of the sub-factors of parental acceptance-rejection, WAF and INM were f Parental acceptance-Rejection the lower the Achievement Motivation.

For women (i) paternal and maternal acceptance-rejection explained approximately 9% of the variance in Achievement Motivation in women, with TTRF more salient than maternal Rejection. Of the sub-factors of parental acceptance-rejection, WAF and URF were found to be the significant predictors. The

inverse relationships revealed that the higher the Parental acceptance-Rejection the lower the Achievement Motivation.

These observations provided corroborative evidences supporting the view that parental acceptance-rejection plays a significant role in the development of offsprings, even into adulthood in terms of achievement motivation (Bornstein, 2006; Bornstein, *et al.*, 2002; Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein, 2000; McClelland & Pilon, 1983; Park, 2004; Parke & Buriel, 2006;Rohner, 1986; Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, in press; Winterbottom, 1958).

In conclusion, the results highlights and supports literature that the quality of parent– child relationships during the developmental period constitute a significant factor in later personality (Dozier, Stovall, & Albus, 1999; Green & Goldwyn, 2002; Greenberg, 1999; Weinfield, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004), and echoing fervently that either in culture specific or cross-cultural perspective, parenting is a challenging process made

complicated by the interaction of individual characteristics and perceptions of parents with the behavior and development of the child into adulthood (Baumrind, 1991a & b; Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington & Bornstein, 2000; Crnic and Booth, 1991; Grusec & Lytton, 1988; Perris, Jacobsson, Lindstrom, von Knorring & Perris, 1980; Rohner & Khaleque, 2005; Fente & Chawngmingliana, 2011; Steinberg, 2001; Vandell, 2000). It is suggested that the measurements of the psychological constructs, especially the components of achievement motivation are desirable to be evolved and replicated with more psycho-social variables in a effort to bring about a deeper understanding of the mechanisms by which parenting can positively affect the making of the individual into a wholesome being, from childhood to adulthood with far-reaching consequences on the society as a whole.

References

- Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1989). Attachment beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, 44, 709-716.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Arrindell, W. A., Perris, C., Eisemann, M., Perris, H., Van der Ende, J., Ross, M., Benjaminsen, S., Gaszner, P., & Del Vecchio, M. (1986b). Cross national generalizability of patterns of parental rearing behaviour: Invariance of EMBU dimensional representations of healthy subjects from Australia, Denmark, Hungary, Italy and the Netherlands. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 7, 103-112.
- Aunola, K., Stattin, H., & Nurmi, J. E. (2000). Parenting styles and adolescents' achievement strategies. *Journal of Adolescence*, 23, 205-222.
- Baumrind, D. (1978). Parental disciplinary practices and social competence in children. *Youth and Society*, 9, 239-276.
- Baumrind, D. (1991a). *Parenting styles and adolescent development*. In J. Brooks-Gunn, R. Lerner, and A. C. Peterson (Eds.). *The encyclopedia of adolescence*. New York: Garland (pp. 746-758).
- Deo, P., & Mohan, S. (2002). *A Manual for Achievement Motivation Scale*
- Fente, H.K.L & Chawngmingliana, C (2011). Psychological adjustment of children of "both-working" and "single-working" parents. *Contemporary Social Scientist*, 1 (2), 77 – 85.
- Flouri, E. (2004) Psychological outcomes in mid adulthood associated with mother's child-rearing attitudes in early childhood. Evidence from the 1970 British birth cohort. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 13, 35-41

Parental Acceptance-Rejection in relation to Achievement Motivation

- Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (2002). Culture and parenting. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Harris, K. M., & Morgan, S. P. (1991). Fathers, sons, and daughters: Differential paternal involvement in parenting. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *53*, 531–544.
- Khaleque, A., & Rohner, R. P. (2002a). Perceived parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment: A meta-analysis of cross cultural and intracultural studies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *64*, 54-64.
- Kim, K., & Rohner, R. P. (2002). Parental warmth, control, and involvement in schooling: Predicting academic achievement among Korean American adolescents. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *33*, 127-140.
- Lamborn, S. D., Mounts, N. S., Steinberg, L., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1991). Patterns of competence and adjustment among adolescents from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and neglectful families. *Child Development*, *62*, 1049-1065.
- Lao, R. C. (1980). Differential factors affecting male and female academic performance in high school. *Journal of Psychology*, *104*, 119-127.
- Lytton, H., & Romney, D. M. (1991). Parents' differential socialization of boys and girls: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *109*, 267-296.
- McClelland, D. C. (1985). *Human motivation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- McClelland, D. C., & Pilon, D. A. (1983). Sources of adult motives in patterns of parent behavior in early childhood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *44*, 564-574.
- McClelland, D. C., Atkinson, J. W., Clark, R. A., & Lowell, E. L. (1953). *The achievement motive*. New York, NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Meece, J. L., Glienke, B. B., & Burg, S. (2006). Gender and motivation. *Journal of School Psychology*, *44* (5), 351-373.
- Muola, J. M. (2010). A Study of the Relationship Between Achievement Motivation and Home Environment Among Standard Eight Pupils. *Educational Research and Reviews*, *5*, 5, 213-217.
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Network (NICHD). (2008). Mothers' and Fathers' Support for Child Autonomy and Early School Achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, *44* (4), 895–907.
- Rohner, R. P. (1986). *The warmth dimension: Foundations of parental acceptance-rejection theory*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. (Available from Rohner Research Publications).

- Rohner, R. P. (2004). The “parental acceptance-rejection syndrome”: Universal correlates of perceived rejection. *American Psychologist*, *59*, 830-840
- Rohner, R. P., Khaleque, A., & Cournoyer, D. A. (2005). *Handbook for the study of parental acceptance and rejection*. Storrs, CT: Rohner Research Publications.
- Rohner, R. P., Khaleque, A., & Cournoyer, D. E. (in press). Parental acceptance–rejection: Theory, methods, cross-cultural evidence, and implications. *Ethos*.
- Wigfield, A., & Eccles, J. (2002). The development of competence beliefs, expectancies for success, and achievement values from childhood through adolescence. In A. Wigfield & J. Eccles (Eds.), *Development of achievement motivation* (pp. 91–120). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Wigfield, A., & Eccles, J. S. (2002). *Development of achievement motivation*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.