



The Relationship Between Maternal Overprotectiveness in Iranian Cultural and Anxious Beliefs with Child Anxiety: Mediating Role of Positive and Negative Affect

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to study the relationships between maternal over-protection in Iranian culture, mother's anxious beliefs and child anxiety via mediating role of mother positive and negative affect. The statistical population included all mothers of two to four years old child inhabitants in Urmia and Tabriz in 2021-22 who referred to "Aramesh Andisheshe" and "Aramesh" consultant centers in Urmia and Tabriz respectively. The research sample embraced 225 mothers with their children whom were selected by convenient sampling process. The research method was correlational of path analysis procedure. To collect data Roth Manual of Mother-Child Relationship Evaluation (1961), Spence et al Preschool Anxiety Scale (2001), Francis and Chorpita Parental Beliefs about Anxiety (2010) and Watson et al Positive and Negative Affect Scale (1988) were implemented. Pearson coefficient and path analysis with SPSS and Amos was applied as main statistical procedure to analyze data. The results revealed that there was significant relationship between maternal anxious beliefs, positive and negative affect with child anxiety. Maternal over-protection and anxious beliefs with child anxiety via mediating role of positive and negative affect were also significantly correlated ($p < 0.001$). The model also had optimal goodness of fit. Concerning the findings, the mothers' psychological characteristics in Iranian culture and culture oriented parenting styles was effective on child anxiety.



Extended abstract

Introduction: Anxiety is a prevalent disorder in childhood and is affected by several components. The behavioral, cognitive, emotional and educational culture characteristics of the mother are among the influential components. Child anxiety, as one of internalizing disorders, is a common psychiatric disorder in childhood. (studied) showed that the prevalence of anxiety disorders in first-grade children is 22.1%. Various theoretical models suggest that parental behavior is an important factor in predicting a child's anxiety. It also seems that with regard to the concepts of cultural psychology, cultural factors influence human behavior, intercultural psychology is the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes, including their variability and immutability, under culturally diverse conditions. The anxiety and irrational beliefs of Iranian mothers can negatively affect their children's mental health and behavior. On the other hand, some explanatory models of children's anxiety emphasize the role of parental control and over-protection. Cultural factors play a prominent role in parenting, for example, in Iranian culture, mothers may be encouraged to take more care of the child, and children who have high anxiety in Iranian culture are more likely to have overprotective mothers. It also seems that parents' emotions and how they regulate their emotions can trigger anxious responses. Considering the high prevalence of anxiety disorders in children and the impact of environmental, cultural and parental factors, the main purpose of this study was to study the relationships between maternal over-protection in Iranian culture, mother's anxious beliefs and child anxiety via mediating role of mother positive and negative affect.

Method: The statistical population included all mothers of two to four years old child inhabitants in Urmia and Tabriz in 2021-2022 who referred to "Aramesh Andisheshe" and "Aramesh" consultant centers in Urmia and Tabriz respectively. The research sample embraced 225 mothers with their children whom were selected by convenient sampling process. The research method was correlational of path analysis procedure. To collect data Roth Manual of Mother-Child Relationship Evaluation (1961), Spence et al Preschool Anxiety Scale (2001), Francis and Chorpita Parental Beliefs about Anxiety (2010) and Watson et al Positive and Negative Affect Scale (1988) were implemented. Pearson coefficient and path analysis with SPSS and Amos was applied as main statistical procedure to analyze data.

Results: The results of the study showed that there was a positive relationship between maternal anxiety beliefs and negative affect with child anxiety and positive affect had negative relationship with child anxiety, but there was no significant relationship between over protection and child anxiety. Over protection has indirect effect on children's anxiety through positive and negative affect. Maternal' anxiety beliefs affected the child's anxiety both directly and indirectly through positive and negative affect.

Conclusions: This model determines that mother psychological component and educational styles based on culture affected child anxiety and these elements should be taken into consideration in dealing with the causes and treating child anxiety. According to the emotional development model of the child, negative behaviors of parents increase the child's anxiety by influencing the child's beliefs and attributions, for example, the child may see the world as a threat and have a negative view of himself. Iranian



mothers have more supportive characteristics and an emotional-based educational style in interaction with their children compared to western mothers. Parenting styles of Iranian parents are widely associated with anxiety and depression in Iranian adolescents, and the way of controlling and discipline of Iranian parents can affect the mental health of their children. Mothers with anxiety beliefs predict potentially ambiguous situations as a risk and perceive these situations as a threat to themselves and their children. Different cultures emphasize values such as independence versus interdependence, which shape parenting goals. Concerning the findings, the mothers' psychological characteristics in Iranian culture and culture oriented parenting styles was effective on child anxiety.

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