

## Predicting Parent-Child Interaction Based on Perceived Social Support and Perceived Parenting Style in Mothers of Children with Specific Learning Disorders

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Learning disability is one of the issues that has long occupied the minds of researchers and experts in the field of educational issues. In this regard, the present study aimed to predict parent-child interaction based on perceived social support and perceived parenting style in mothers of children with specific learning disabilities.

**Research Method:** This study was a descriptive correlational study. The statistical sample of the study included 320 mothers of children with learning disabilities in Shiraz in the academic year 1402-1403, who were selected using purposive sampling. The data collection tools included the Domka self-efficacy questionnaire, Pianta parent-child interaction, and Wells metacognition. The data were analyzed using SPSS-24 software.

**Findings:** Regression coefficients showed that perceived social support and perceived parenting style can be direct predictors of parent-child interaction.

**Discussion and Conclusion:** Based on the results of the present study, it can be acknowledged that social support for parents, especially mothers of children with specific learning disabilities, and the use of appropriate parenting styles can help improve parent-child interaction.

**Keywords:** parent-child interaction, perceived social support, perceived parenting style, Specific learning disability

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## Introduction:

Specific learning disabilities are one of the largest and perhaps most controversial categories of special education. Iranian researchers have reported the prevalence of specific learning disabilities in different percentages. Also, the percentage of people who are considered students with specific learning disabilities is currently increasing for various reasons, so that in some educational systems, this group constitutes the largest special education category (1).

Various studies have shown three factors: child characteristics, family aspects, and social environment, as the main factors influencing the formation of children's disorders. Among these factors, family aspects and the attitude of parents and their perspective on the issue of specific learning disabilities are very important, because what most contributes to the side and marginal issues of this disorder is the family environment and the way family members deal with the child (2).

Perceived social support can be a newer and slightly different concept in the modern era. It means that a person thinks that the supportive people around him/her (including family, friends, and significant others) provide effective help in times of need. This concept is the opposite of the concept of perceived social support, which means receiving support from supportive people in times of need that is quite tangible (3). Research has shown that people with high levels of perceived social support experience many benefits, such as mental health, physical health, the ability to recover faster from short-term illness, and the ability to adapt to chronic and critical situations. Raglin Bignall (3) also showed in her research that parents of children with ADHD with higher perceptions of social support feel less pressure (3). In addition to perceived social support, another important factor that is considered an important framework in evaluating parent-child components and predicts intimate parent-child relationships is the individual's early experiences and attachment to parents and the type of emotional relationship he or she has with parents (4), which is referred to as perceived parenting.

Therefore, given that the psychological state of parents, especially mothers who are the primary caregivers of children with learning disabilities, has a significant direct and indirect impact on the formation of children's behavior and their social relationships, it is very important to determine what cognitive and emotional capabilities the mothers of these children have to provide more accurate data for the use of counseling, rehabilitation, and treatment methods and to provide the necessary grounds for specific and fundamental measures in the areas of counseling, parent-teacher associations, exceptional children, and family education (5). Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to predict parent-child interaction based on perceived social support and perceived parenting style in mothers of children with specific learning disabilities, and the present study examines the following two hypotheses: Hypothesis 1: The parent-child relationship is directly predicted based on perceived social support. Hypothesis 2: The parent-child relationship is directly predicted based on perceived parenting.

## Research Method:

The present study was applied in terms of purpose and quantitative in terms of data type. The study was descriptive-correlational in terms of data collection. The statistical sample of the study included 320 mothers of children with learning disabilities in Shiraz in the academic year

1402-1403, who were selected using purposive sampling. The sampling method in this study was purposive sampling (non-probability). The criteria for participants to enter the study included (having a child who meets the diagnostic criteria for specific learning disabilities based on DSM-5 and has been approved by a clinical psychologist at the relevant center based on available documents, playing a major role in caring for the child, having a minimum level of education at the reading and writing level, agreeing to participate in the study based on a written consent form) and the criteria for participants to exit the study included (failure to cooperate with the researcher, history of psychological problems in the child or mother based on diagnostic criteria). A questionnaire was used to collect information. Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 24 software in two sections: descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation coefficient and regression). The following questionnaires were also used to collect data: Parent-Child Questionnaire: Parent-Child Relationship Scale, Perceived Social Support Questionnaire.

### Findings:

The mean value of the perceived social support variable is higher than its theoretical average. This issue has a different analysis for parenting styles; the mean value of the affection/rejection parenting style was higher than its theoretical average, which means that the members of the statistical sample of the study generally had higher perceived affection, and the mean value of the control/liberty parenting style was lower than its theoretical average, which means that the members of the statistical sample of the study generally had higher perceived freedom. The sum of these two results shows that the perceived parenting style of most of the sample members was affection combined with freedom. Also, considering that the skewness and kurtosis values of all variables are in the range (2+,2-), the distribution of the scores of the exogenous variables can be considered similar to the distribution of natural scores. As can be seen in the table above, the mean value of the mediating variable of the study is higher than its theoretical average (99). This means that the members of the research sample are at a high level of parent-child relationship. Also, considering that the values of skewness and elasticity of the variable are in the range (+2,-2), the distribution of the intermediary variable scores can be considered similar to the distribution of normal scores.

The results of the correlation coefficient showed that the correlation coefficient of the parent-child relationship with the loving/rejecting parenting style, the controlling/liberal parenting style and perceived social support were 0.788, -0.721 and 0.687 respectively, and the correlation coefficient of perceived social support with the loving/rejecting parenting style, the controlling/liberal parenting style were 0.728 and -0.720 respectively.

### Discussion and Conclusion:

Based on the results, the direct path of perceived support to the parent-child relationship was estimated to be significant ( $\beta=0.65$  and  $P<0.05$ ). This result indicates the predictability of the parent-child relationship by the variable of perceived social support. The value of the (C.R) T statistic is also within its desired range ( $T<1.96$ ). Also, the positive sign of the regression coefficients indicates the direct prediction of the criterion variable in the future. Considering the results obtained, the first hypothesis of the study was confirmed. This part of the results of

this study is in line with the research of Chen (6) and Pakdaman and Mortazavi (4). In explaining the results of this study, it can be said that, based on the family system theory, if a problem occurs in one of the family subgroups, it affects other units of the family system (such as parents). In families with children with learning disabilities, mothers usually have more responsibility for education and therefore bear more pressure.

Also, based on the analyses conducted, the direct path of the affectionate/rejecting parenting style to the parent-child relationship is estimated to be significant ( $\beta=0.56$  and  $P<0.05$ ). This result indicates the predictability of the parent-child relationship by the affectionate/rejecting parenting style variable. The value of the (C.R) T statistic is also within its desired range ( $T<1.96$ ). Also, the positive sign of the regression coefficients indicates the direct prediction of the criterion variable in the future. On the other hand, based on the results presented, the direct path of the controlling/liberal parenting style to the parent-child relationship is estimated to be significant ( $\beta=-0.63$  and  $P<0.05$ ). The value of the (C.R) T statistic is also within its desired range ( $T<1.96$ ). Also, the negative sign of the regression coefficients indicates the reverse prediction of the criterion variable in the future. In general, both paths are significant, which is why the sixth sub-hypothesis is confirmed. The results of this study are consistent with the studies of Chen (7), Gharehdaghi and Amani (8), and Turkladani and Agha Babaei (9). In explaining the results of this study, it can be said that specific learning disorder, in addition to the problems it creates for the child, also brings problems and difficulties for family members, and in the meantime, the mother is exposed to more problems due to her educational role. Therefore, one of the issues that should always be considered in the discussion of non-pharmacological treatments is improving the interaction between mother and child, which can ultimately lead to compromised behaviors in the family environment.

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