THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STYLES, ACCULTURATION, INDIVIDUATION, AND MENTAL HEALTH IN ARAB AMERICAN ADULTS

By

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ABSTRACT

Parents are among the important socialization agents that influence the persons we become. Previous research (Baumrind, 1967; 1972; 1991; 1987) has identified three primary parenting styles: permissive, authoritative, and authoritarian, and a large amount of research has investigated the long term implications of these styles. The current study aimed to investigate the universality of these parenting styles, in particular, among Arab American Adults (*N* =22). The study examined the relationships between overall mental health and parenting styles, acculturation, and individuation in this population. Unfortunately, a small sample size limited the analyses performed, and the findings did not show any significant correlations between parenting styles, individuation, or acculturation and overall mental health. Implications of findings are discussed as well as suggestions for implementing more culturally sensitive methods and measures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my Thesis Chair, Dr. Bernard Jensen, for supporting my research and his continuous guidance, and encouragement throughout this process. I also want to express my appreciation to Dr. Kimberly Renk for her invaluable knowledge and assistance, as well as, providing me with the opportunity to grow my interest in children and family research. Thank you, professor Mary Mann for helping me develop deeper perspectives and see beyond the numbers.

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the centuries old nature-nurture controversy, most contemporary research suggests that our childhoods help to shape the people we become later in life (Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein, 2001). During those critical years, parents, who are primary agents of socialization, instill in children norms and values of society and provide an arena, which is the home, in which children are to play out specific roles in that society. To develop a deeper understanding of such socializing patterns and parent-child relationships, developmental psychologist Diana Baumrind (1967, 1972, 1987, 1991) conducted multiple studies using children of different ages to identify and assess consistent parenting patterns or styles. Baumrind coined three styles of parenting, authoritative, permissive, and authoritarian parenting. Later, Maccoby and Martin (1983) identified a fourth style, uninvolved parenting. The parenting styles were based on two dimensions: control and warmth (also termed demandingness and responsiveness, respectively). Control referred to the degree of strictness and demandingness of the parents, whereas warmth referred to the degree of responsiveness and unconditional acceptance (Baumrind, 1967). It is important to keep in mind that control and warmth do not lie on the same spectrum, and thus an increase in one does not equate to a decrease in the other. Also, each of these parenting styles may manifest in different ways during each developmental stage; however, they remain grounded in the same basic principles (Baumrind, 1991).

Parent Typology

The first style of parenting describes parents who are high on both control and warmth (Baumrind, 1967). These parents follow the authoritative parenting style. Authoritative parents are involved in their children's lives and are encouraging of their growing autonomy and independence. They praise individuality, have frequent discussions with their children, and take their concerns into consideration. At the same time, authoritative parents demand maturity, exert supervision, and rate high on discipline. Many would say authoritative parents exert the right amount of control, and, while they value independence, they also expect compliance (Baumrind, 1991).

The second style of parenting, permissive parenting, is characterized by high levels of warmth and minimal control (Baumrind, 1967). Permissive parents, also called indulgent parents, provide a lot of support but make little to no demands. Permissive parents do not make or enforce household rules, such as a fixed bedtime or curfew or following a chores list. They are reluctant to say "no" to a child's wishes. Compared to authoritative parents, permissive parents are not as involved in their children's lives. They do not help make important decisions in their child's life, such as friendship choices. Permissive parents portray themselves as resources that the child may choose to make use of if she or he chooses. They do not play an active role in shaping the child's behavior but, rather, have a passive one using "reason and manipulation to do so" (Baumrind, 1996).

Opposite to permissive parenting is authoritarian parenting (Baumrind, 2013). This style of parenting is punitive, high on control, and low on warmth. Authoritarian parents are very strict

and demanding and provide little to no explanations for their numerous demands. They expect unquestioned obedience from their children. Authoritarian parents are more likely to use phrases such as "because I said so" or "I'm the parent and you're the child, you do as I say" and do not leave room for verbal give and take. These parents value obedience and conformity over individuality and independence. In addition, authoritarian parents are less likely to be responsive to their children's needs.

Authoritarian parents use coercive control, which is "intrusive, manipulative, punitive, autonomy undermining, and restrictive," as a means to instill conformity in the child (Baumrind 2013). Baumrind calls this type of compliance dispositional compliance. Authoritative parents, however, use confrontive control to enforce boundaries related to a specific task.

Finally, uninvolved parents are low on both control as well as warmth (Maccoby et al., 1983). In severe cases, some would go as far as to say uninvolved parents are neglectful, and some refrain from including such behavior as a style of parenting, arguing that uninvolved parenting is in fact a lack of parenting. Uninvolved parents rarely communicate with their children and seem apathetic towards their children's needs.

It is important to note that parents are most likely to not adhere strictly to one parenting style. Rather, they may use combinations of these parenting styles. It also may be that, in a two parent household, each parent employs a different parenting style. In addition, cultural context influences these parenting styles in how they are enforced and perceived.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parenting Styles and Competence

Baumrind as well as other researchers conducted studies exploring the consequences and long-term effects of parenting styles and behavior. The majority of studies have produced results linking favorable outcomes to authoritative parenting. Pioneering work by Baumrind (1987) concluded that children of authoritative parents tend to be more "competent – agentic, communal, and cognitively competent" than children of parents employing different parenting styles. Communion and agency referred to involvement and connectedness and individuality, respectively; social status and love arise out of the two concepts (Baumrind, 1991).

One longitudinal study by Baumrind (1991) examined the relationship between parenting styles, child competence, and substance use in a middle class, Caucasian sample. When children were 4, 9, and 15 years old, data regarding substance use, physical, mental, and emotional health, and political, moral, and social views were collected from children and their parents. Researchers also rated parent-child interactions in lab and natural environments. The study classified parents into one of six subgroups of the four parenting styles mentioned above based on the ratio of control to warmth (demandingness to responsiveness) as well as type of control.

At the end of the study, adolescents of authoritative parents were "outstandingly competent …. [They] were individuated, mature, resilient, optimistic, and perceived their parents as loving and influential" (Baumrind, 1991). These adolescents also performed better academically, exhibited lower levels of internalizing and externalizing problems (such as drug

use), and were more conscientious than adolescents of authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parents. The study also revealed that authoritarian and permissive parenting were associated with internalizing problems, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and poor academic achievement. As expected, children of uninvolved parents fared the worst. Baumrind also found that children of parents using confrontive control fared better than those of parents using coercive control. Parents using coercive control attempted to manipulate behavior in a forceful and punitive manner. On the other hand, those using confrontive control were firm and directive but mindful of the child's autonomy.

Universality of Baumrind's Parent Typology: Cross-Cultural Studies

Numerous other studies have produced similar results (Barber, 2002; Baumrind & Black, 1967; Steinberg & Silk, 2002) linking authoritative parenting patterns to positive outcome and authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parenting to more undesirable behavior and traits. However, the strength of this relationship is affected by a few additional factors (see Chao & Aque, 2009), with a major contributor being cultural and ethnic background.

Baumrind (1972) studied the effects of parenting styles on African American children, for example. The small sample was predominantly female and from lower middle class families. Compared with their European American peers, African American female participants mostly came from authoritarian families. Intriguingly, African American girls with authoritarian parents were more self-assertive, mature, and independent. As mentioned above, other studies have linked these qualities to authoritative parenting in studies with European American samples.

African American girls from authoritarian homes fared better than their European American peers from authoritarian homes. Baumrind argued that authoritarian parenting in African American homes does not equate to that found in European American ones. It may be that authoritarian parenting in African America families is due to an effort to instill self-reliance and resilience, whereas the same behavior in European American parents is a result of negative elements such as "repressed anger, emotional coldness, and a sense of impotence" (Baumrind 1972, p. 265).

Other studies (Chao, 2002; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992) also have yielded dissimilarities in the type and extent of the effect that parenting typologies have on Caucasian versus non-Caucasian, specifically collectivistic, children and adolescents in areas such as school performance. Steinberg et al. (1987) found that parenting style was a poor predictor of school performance in non-European American samples. For example, although Asian parents rate high on authoritarian parenting, their adolescents had high academic achievement. They also found that Asian, Hispanic, and African American parents were least likely to be authoritative.

One study done by Rudy and Grusec (2006) explored the attitudes and cognition of collectivist mothers living in Canada of Egyptian, Iranian, Indian, and Pakistani ancestry and compared them to those of Anglo-Canadian mothers. The researchers found that collectivist mothers tended to be authoritarian; however, authoritarianism was linked to a deficit in warmth and negative attitudes only for the individualist parents and not the collectivist ones. Also, authoritarianism of collectivist mothers was not associated negatively with children's self-

esteem. An earlier study by Duane and Grusec (2001) used Egyptian Canadian as well as Anglo-Canadian parents and their children and found that Egyptian Canadians were angrier with noncompliant children. Nonetheless, authoritarianism was correlated negatively with warmth for the Anglo-Canadian parents but not for the Egyptian Canadian ones.

An explanation for such discrepancies is offered by Sorkhabi and Mandara (2012), who elaborate on Baumrind's differentiation between types of control used by parents. As mentioned above, Baumrind, in her longitudinal study and later work (1991, 2010), distinguished between coercive and confrontive control and found that, even with low levels of parental warmth, children fared better when their parents used confrontive rather than coercive control. After reviewing tens of studies in support and opposition of the universality of Baumrind's parenting typology, Sorkhabi (2013) attributes findings linking positive effects and minor negative ones with authoritarian parenting in non-European American to the use of directive (confrontive) control rather than coercive control. She explained that directive parents are not as high on responsiveness as authoritative parents are, but they share –relatively- the same degree and *type* of control they exert. Both authoritative and directive parents do not use coercive control, which has been linked to lack of competence. Therefore, proponents of the universality of Baumrind's typology argue that authoritarian parenting of non-Anglo American parents does not equate to Anglo American parents' authoritarianism, despite both being low on responsiveness and high on demandingness.

Researchers such as Steinberg and Darling (1993) attribute such discrepancies in part to the different goals and values of parents of different cultural background. They argue that goal-

inspired methods that parents use are also a variable in the equation. For example, two adolescents can each come from two equally authoritative (same degree of demandingness and responsiveness) homes, where one set of parents would stress the value of school achievement, and the other would not. The result would be different school performances for each of the two adolescents. This means that one set of authoritarian parents can stress the importance of academic achievement and another would not, yielding such dissimilarities.

Because most parents work toward raising their youngsters to learn and follow basic norms and values of society, parents' goals for their children are affected by the society they inhabit. Building on this concept and the one mentioned above by Steinberg et al. (1993), it may be that a parenting style (for example, authoritarian parenting) in non-Western cultures serves different goals than it does in Western society.

Parenting Styles and Culture

Unlike collectivist cultures, individualist cultures, as the term suggests, value the individual's uniqueness and independence; collectivist cultures, on the other hand, value the group and the interdependency of individuals (Hofstede, 1980). Blos (1979) explains the separation-individuation journey undertaken by the child in which he or she progressively grows into an independency with a unique and "personalized" set of values rather than internalized parental ones. There have been extensive studies linking individuation to positive outcomes and competency in adolescents in Western societies (Hoffman, 1984; Lapsley, Rice, & Shadid, 1989;

Papini & Roggman, 1992). In contrast, there have been studies (Hattab & Makki, 1978) to suggest children of Arab parents are satisfied with their enmeshed families.

Arabs in parenting literature.

One group underrepresented in studies of parenting styles as they relate to individuation and mental health is Arab Americans. One reason may be that Arabs identify themselves as "White" in demographic data and, thus, become harder to separate from the Caucasian White population.

Compared to the U.S., Arab countries have a strongly collectivistic culture. Hofstede (2010) published his data collected from more than 70 countries and indexed them based on how much they valued the individual over the group; scores ranged from 0 to 100. In this Index, the U.S. had a score of 91, whereas the Arab world had a much lower score of 38 (Hofstede, 2010).

Acculturation

Acculturation plays a role in Arabs' lives after immigration to the U.S. Acculturation "comprehends those phenomena that result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both cultures" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p.149). Earlier researchers (Gordon, 1964) viewed acculturation as a linear process leading to assimilation; however, contemporary views identify it as a multilinear one based on two factors: how much the individual identifies with his or her own culture and how much he or she identifies with other

cultures, such as the host one (Berry, 2008). Berry (2008) identifies four strategies that may be adopted by immigrants based on the preceding two factors. These are assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Assimilation refers to abandoning one's original culture while identifying with the greater host culture. Separation describes individuals who maintain their original cultural while rejecting the host culture. Integration is the valuing of both cultures, original and host. Finally, marginalization refers to the exclusion of both original and host cultures.

Because culture affects the values and paradigms that an individual holds, what may be the norm in one culture is unacceptable in another. For example, authoritarianism may be unfavored in Western societies, but acceptable, perhaps preferred, in collectivist ones. Chao (1994, 2001) argues that what children in the West may perceive to be "harsh" and "hostile", maybe viewed as "concern" by collectivists. Thus, the culture with which one identifies and one's acculturation strategy will influence the outlook on parenting and, therefore, mental health.

Current Study

With today's growing number of Arab Americans in the U.S., more research is needed to explore parenting styles and mental health trends in this population. Studies mentioned above using culturally diverse samples have yielded inconsistent results and have paid little attention to acculturation. This study investigated parenting style, acculturation, and individuation as they relate to the mental health of Arab American adults. Since there have been conflicting findings

with Western samples versus non-Anglo samples, no specific hypothesis were made, and the study was undertaken as an exploratory one.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study used purposive sampling to recruit 40 Arab American adults. The response rate was 55% (N = 22) and included 12 males and 10 females between the ages 18 to 35 (M = 26.5, SD = 5.1). This age group was chosen because with today's changing culture, marriage and parenthood occur at a later age, and more adults are likely to rely on their parents for support (financial and otherwise) past the age of 18 (Arnett, 2000; Nelson, Padilla-Walker, Christensen, Evans, & Carroll 2011). In addition, because collectivist families do not encourage independency, Arab American adults were likely to be living with their parents until marriage (Hofstede, 1980). Thus, by exploring parenting in this age group, this study focused on the trends and effects of parenting during a later developmental stage. Participants reported the following countries as their place of birth: Egypt, (11), Iraq (3), Lebanon (3), Syria (3), Jordan (1), and some other Arab country (1).

Procedure

Participants were recruited from Arabic places of worship (churches and mosques), food markets, restaurants and cafes, and on-campus clubs for Arabic speaking populations. Participants were asked to complete anonymous questionnaires regarding their demographic background, parenting styles, individuation, acculturation, and mental health.

<u>Measures</u>

Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)

The PAQ (Appendix B) was developed by to Buri (1991) to measure parenting styles according to Baumrind's typology. The questionnaire consists of 30 total items, 10 for each of the three parenting styles, authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. The PAQ has demonstrated respectable test-retest reliability as well as high internal validity (Buri, 1991). Questions are answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) yielding scores ranging from 10 to 50 for each of the three subsections.

Multigenerational Interconnectedness Scale (MIS)

The MIS (Appendix C; Gavazzi & Sabatelli, 1987; Gavazzi, Sabatelli, & Reese-Weber, 1999) consists of three subscales designed to measure, financial (8 questions), functional (8 questions), and psychological (15 questions) connectedness between young adults and their parents. The financial connectedness subscale explores financial reliance on family members, for example "Family members help me pay for major life expenses." The Functional Connectedness subscale examines the sharing of family routines (e.g. "I share meals with my family"). Finally, the Psychological Connectedness subscale refers to emotional reliance on family members (e.g. "I rely on my family members' approval to let me know when I am doing things right"). The questions are answered on a scale of 1 to 7 based on the frequency of the event's or experience's occurrence. Reported alpha coefficients for Financial, Functional, and Psychological Connectedness subscales were .86, .82, and .84, respectively. For the purposes of this study, the Psychological Connectedness subscale was chosen. Since participants were at a later

developmental stage -- early adulthood -- we focused on Psychological Connectedness rather than financial and functional.

Acculturation Rating Scale for Arabic Americans (ARSAA-II)

The Acculturation Rating Scale for Arabic Americans-II (ARSMAA-II; Appendix D) was translated and adapted from the Acculturation Rating Scale of Mexican-Americans II (ARSMA-II; Jadalla & Lee, 2013). The ARSAA-II consists of 30 questions divided into two scales resulting in two scores for each participant. The first scale, made up of 13 items, measures attraction to American culture (AAmC), and the second consists of 17 items and measures attraction to Arabic culture (AArC). All questions are answered on a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The two scores are combined by subtracting the AArC score from AAmC to give one score along a continuum from very Arab oriented to very Anglo oriented. Originally, the ARSMAA-II was created to measure the following four dimensions: 1. language use and preference, 2. ethnic identity and classification, 3. cultural heritage and ethnic behavior, and 4.ethnic interaction. The Arabic and English versions were validated among Arab American samples (Jadalla & Lee 2013), and the Cronbach's alphas of the AAmC and AArC scales were .89 and .85, respectively.

Symptom Checklist 90-Revised (SCL-90)

The SCL-90 (Derogatis, 1975; Appendix E) is a questionnaire assessing mental health in the areas of: Somatization, Obsessive-Compulsive, Interpersonal Sensitivity, Depression, Anxiety, Hostility, Phobic Anxiety, Paranoid Ideation, and Psychoticism. The SCL-90R has been used widely in mental health settings. The questionnaire is comprised of 90 items and is answered

using a 5-point scale where 0 is equivalent to “not at all” and 4 is equivalent to “extremely.” The Cronbach alpha for the entire questionnaire was 0.98 (Hoffman & Overall, 1978).

RESULTS

The main focus of this study was to explore whether parenting styles, acculturation, and individuation predicted overall mental health as measured by the SCL-90. It was anticipated that data would be analyzed through multiple regression analyses using parenting styles, acculturation, and individuation as predictors of overall mental health. However, due to the small sample size of the study and the associated low statistical power, we were unable to do so. Thus, the primary analyses instead involved Pearson zero-order correlation coefficients among these variables. Table 1 lists the means and standard deviations for the measures used in the study.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations

Means and Standard Deviations for all measures

Measure (range of measure)	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	22	26.54	5.13
Permissiveness (10-50)	22	26.86	5.70
Authoritarianism (10-50)	22	31.45	7.21
Authoritativeness (10-50)	22	32.54	6.62
AArC (1-5)	22	3.48	.80
AAmC (1-5)	22	3.25	.60
ARSAA.II (-4-4)	22	-.23	.78
MIS (1-7)	22	3.12	0.95
SCL-90 Total Score (0-360)	22	75.95	61.20

Participants had mean scores of 3.48 and 3.25 on the AArC and AAmC measures, respectively. Because both of these questionnaires are answered on a 5-point scale, it may seem that participants had a medium level of attraction to both cultures. However, data for both of these questionnaires show right skewness, indicating a high level of attraction to both cultures for most participants. In a previous study (Jadallah & Lee, 2013), 174 participants who completed the ARSAA-II in English had mean scores of 3.94 (*SD* =.62) and 3.54 (*SD* = .63) on the AArC and AAmC, respectively.

Emotional connectedness as indicated by the MIS-Psychological Connectedness subscale was not correlated significantly with any other variable. However, it should be noted that participants showed less emotional connectedness to their parents than Arab and American samples in an earlier cross-regional study (Dwairy, Achoui, Abouserie, & Farah, 2006). The study reported emotional connectedness levels of 4.53 and 3.8 for Arabs and Americans, respectively.

Table 2 presents the Pearson correlations between the SCL-90 total score and the rest of the measures. None of the questionnaires were correlated significantly with the overall mental health as indicated by the total score of the SCL-90.

Table 2: Correlations between SCL-90 and the rest of the measures.

Correlations

		Permissive Parenting	Authoritarian Parenting	Authoritative Parenting	ARSAA-II	MIS
SCL-90 Total Score	Pearson Correlation	-.240	.110	-.265	-.174	-.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.283	.625	.233	.438	.722

Correlations among the types of parenting showed that permissiveness was correlated negatively with authoritarianism, $r = -.53$, $p < .05$, and correlated positively with authoritativeness, $r = .44$ $p < .05$. In addition, authoritarianism was correlated negatively with authoritativeness, $r = -.60$, $p < .01$. These correlations more closely resemble findings among

American samples (Buri, 1989; Hill, 1995; Smetana, 1995) than they do findings among Arab samples (Dwairy, Achoui, Abouserie, & Farah, 2006).

Finally, as may be seen in Table 3, overall acculturation was correlated negatively with AArC, $r = -.841$, $p < .01$, but not correlated significantly with AAmC ($r = .16$, $p =$ n.s.). Also, because time lived in a culture has been shown to influence acculturation (Schwartz, Pantin, Sullivan, Prado, & Szapocznik, 2006), this demographic variable also was evaluated in relation to the measures of interest in the above analyses. However, the number of years lived in the United States was not correlated significantly with overall acculturation, AAmc, or AArC.

Table 3: Correlations between the number of years lived in the U.S., ARSAA-II, AAmc, AArC.

Correlations

		Years	ARSAA-II	AAmC	AArC
Years	Pearson Correlation	--	--	--	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)		--	--	--
ARSAA-II	Pearson Correlation	.205	--	--	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.360		--	--
AAmC	Pearson Correlation	.335	.158	--	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.128	.481		--
AArC	Pearson Correlation	-.007	-.838**	.404	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.976	.000	.062	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of parenting styles on mental health in Arab American populations. The findings did not show a significant correlation between any of the three parenting styles (authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative) and overall mental health. The results also did not indicate that parent-child psychological connectedness was associated with mental health. Similar studies (Dwairy, 2004; Dwairy & Menshar, 2006) using Arab samples in Israel and Egypt showed no correlation between authoritarian parenting and mental health. However, these studies revealed a relationship between authoritative parenting and mental health as well as parent-child connectedness. It may be that the sample in the current investigation was more homogenous and not a true representation of this population in that mental health data showed right skewness. Having a small sample size may have also hindered our ability to detect a relationship between these two variables. This may also be due to participants' tendency to report favorable information or in this case omitting psychopathology. Yet another possibility is that this sample lacked an accurate representation of authoritativeness. The average authoritativeness level reported for this study was 32.54, much lower than the 37.11 reported for a study done using Arab adolescents in eight Arab countries (Dwairy, Achoui, Abouserie, & Farah, 2006).

The high correlation between permissiveness and authoritativeness points to the fact that parents rarely adhere strictly to one parenting style. Also, the negative correlation between authoritativeness and authoritarianism further supports the idea that these two styles of parenting

make use of different types of control, confrontive control in authoritativeness, and coercive control in authoritarianism. Overall, the relationships among the three parenting styles resembled findings among American samples (Buri, 1989; Hill, 1995; Smetana, 1995) and could suggest an aspect of universality to Baumrind's parenting styles.

Moreover, participants reported lower emotional connectedness to their parents than Arab adolescents living with their parents in their native countries and even more than that found in previous research using American participants (Dwairy, Achoui, Abouserie, & Farah, 2006). This also may be explained by participant bias. Young adults with a high attraction to American culture (as in this sample) may view individuation as an essential and favorable characteristic, thus reporting a lower than usual emotional connectedness level. This may also be a result of all participants not living at home, and so not being as connected, psychologically or otherwise, to their parents as would young adults living at home.

The number of years lived in the U.S. did not correlate with the level of overall acculturation nor with attraction to American culture. It may be that those who choose to leave their native countries and migrate to the U.S. already were attracted to American culture and so reported higher scores on the AAmC scale regardless of number of years spent in the U.S. This is indicated by the left skewness and the restricted range of the distribution of attraction to American culture data. In addition, the overall acculturation score (linear acculturation) was correlated with attraction to Arabic culture, but not with Attraction to American culture.

Limitations

Some of the limiting factors of this study include: a small sample size and a low participation rate, the use of convenience sampling, possible participant bias, the administration of parenting questionnaires to the children rather than the parents, and having a sample of participants who no longer lived at home with their parents. The small sample size and low participation rate may have been due to limiting the recruiting to only local Arab communities, and future research might sample more broadly across Florida or the United States generally. In addition, the time required to complete the surveys was extensive, and many participants expressed a concern about this factor. Many participants also expressed discomfort with answering the questions in the survey despite being reassured of anonymity. Such discomfort renders the possibility of participant bias leading to homogeneity in underreporting of psychopathology.

Another important factor is obtaining parenting information through the children rather than the parents themselves. This may have affected the accuracy of the data reported regarding parenting styles. In addition, this study included adults who no longer lived with their parents, and it is likely that those who continue to live in the same parenting environment during early adulthood exhibit different levels of individuation and mental health.

Future research should strive to get a representative sample and address the apprehensions of Arab American participants regarding participating in research about personal life matters. It also should investigate parenting behaviors through the parents' perspective.

Future studies also should investigate the role of socioeconomic status and explore whether adults who live at home yield different data than those who do not.

Implications

Although there are major limitations to the current study, there also are implications useful to clinicians as well as for future research. The low participation rate and discomfort expressed by participants and those who were not willing to participate suggests that different methods should be employed in studying and serving Arab Americans and perhaps similar collectivist populations. The findings as well as feedback received from participants point to the private nature of this population and the possibility of participant bias. Researchers as well as clinicians need to be aware of this phenomenon when dealing with this population, striving to reassure them of anonymity and providing a supportive and accepting environment. Also, it is important for researchers and clinicians to be understanding of the cultural preference of authoritarianism in this population.

APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501 Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: **Kimberly D. Renk** and Co-PI: **Mira Atia**

Date: **February 25, 2014**

Dear Researcher:
On 2/25/2014, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Exempt Determination
Project Title:	The Relationship Between Parenting Style, Acculturation, Individuation, and Mental Health in Arab American Emerging Adults
Investigator:	Kimberly D Renk
IRB Number:	SBE-14-10011
Funding Agency:	
Grant Title:	
Research ID:	N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.
In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.
On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:
Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 02/25/2014 02:45:57 PM EST

Joanne Muratori

IRB Coordinator

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APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographics

Age:

Gender:

1. In which country were you born? ____.

    a. If not the U.S., how long have you been living in the U.S.?___ years.

2. Father's country of birth: ____.

3. Mother's country of birth: ____.

4. Do you currently live with your parent(s)? ___ Yes. ___ No.

APPENDIX C: PARENTAL AUTHORITY QUESTIONNAIRE

PAQ

Instructions: For each of the following statements, circle the number on the 5-point scale (1= *Strongly Disagree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*) that best describes how that statement applies to you and your parents. Try to read and thing about each statement as it applies to you and your parents during your years of growing up at home. There are no right or wrong answers, so don't spend a lot of time on any one item. We are looking for your overall impression regarding each statement. Be sure not to omit any items.

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree Nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1. While I was growing up my parents felt that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Even if their children didn't agree with them, my parents felt that it was for our own good if we were forced to conform to what they thought was right.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Whenever my parents told me to do something as I was growing up, they expected me to do it immediately without asking any questions.	1	2	3	4	5

4. As I was growing up, once family policy had been established, my parents discussed the reasoning behind the police with the children in the family.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My parents have always encouraged verbal give-and-take whenever I felt that family rules and restrictions were unreasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My parents have always felt that what 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.	1	2	3	4	5
7. As I was growing up my parents did not allow me to question any decision they had made.	1	2	3	4	5
8. As I was growing up my parents directed the activities and decisions of the children in the family through reasoning and discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My parents have always felt that more force should be used by parents in order to get their children to behave the way they are supposed to.	1	2	3	4	5
10. As I was growing up my parents did not feel that I needed to obey rules and regulations of behavior simply because someone in authority had established them.	1	2	3	4	5
11. As I was growing up I knew what my parents expected of me in my family, but I also felt free to discuss those expectations with my parents when I felt that they were unreasonable.	1	2	3	4	5

12. My parents felt that wise parents should teach their children early just who is boss in the family.	1	2	3	4	5
13. As I was growing up, my parents seldom gave me expectations and guidance for my behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Most of the time as I was growing up my parents did what the children in the family wanted when making family decisions	1	2	3	4	5
15. As the children in my family were growing up, my parents consistently gave us direction and guidance in rational and objective ways.	1	2	3	4	5
16. As I was growing up my parents would get very upset if I tried to disagree with her.	1	2	3	4	5
17. My parents feel that most problems in society would be solved if parents would not restrict their children's activities, decisions, and desires as they are growing up.	1	2	3	4	5
18. As I was growing up my parents let me know what behavior they expected of me, and if I didn't meet those expectations, they punished me.	1	2	3	4	5
19. As I was growing up my parents allowed me to decide most things for myself without a lot of direction from her.	1	2	3	4	5
20. As I was growing up my parents took the children's opinions into consideration when making family decisions, but they would not decide for something simply because the children wanted it.	1	2	3	4	5

21. My parents did not view themselves as responsible for directing and guiding my behavior as I was growing up.	1	2	3	4	5
22. My parents had clear standards of behavior for the children in our home as I was growing up, but they were willing to adjust those standards to the needs of each of the individual children in the family.	1	2	3	4	5
23. My parents gave me direction for my behavior and activities as I was growing up and they expected me to follow their direction, but they were always willing to listen to my concerns and to discuss that direction with me.	1	2	3	4	5
24. As I was growing up my parents allowed me to form my own point of view on family matters and they generally allowed me to decide for myself what I was going to do.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My parents has always felt that most problems in society would be solved if we could get parents to strictly and forcibly deal with their children, when they don't do what they are supposed to as they are growing up.	1	2	3	4	5
26. As I was growing up my parents often told me exactly what they wanted me to do and how they expected me to do it.	1	2	3	4	5
27. As I was growing up my parents gave me clear directions for my behaviors and activities, but they was also understanding when I disagreed with her.	1	2	3	4	5

28. As I was growing up, my parents did not direct the behaviors, activities, and desires of the children in the family.	1	2	3	4	5
29. As I was growing up I knew what my parents expected of me in the family and they insisted that I conform to these expectations simply out of respect for her authority.	1	2	3	4	5
30. As I was growing up, if my parents made a decision in the family that hurt me, they were willing to discuss that decision with me and to admit it if they had made a mistake.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX D: MULTIGENERATIONAL INTERCONNECTEDNESS SCALE

MIS

Instructions: For each of the following statements, circle the number on the 7-point scale (0= *Never*, 6 = *Almost Always*) that best describes how that statement applies to you.

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually	Almost Always
1. I feel upset when family members do not approve of people I am intimate with.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I feel guilty about continuing a relationship with someone family members do not like.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. When . . . family member disapproves something I have done, I feel obliged to change . . .	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I rely on family members' approval to let me know I am doing things right.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I feel obliged to spend time with family.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

6. If I did not follow advice that a family member offered, I would feel guilty.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I feel guilty when I do not take the side of a family member in a disagreement with others.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. When family members ask me to do certain things, I feel guilty when I have to say no.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I become upset when family members criticize my behavior.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I ask whether or not family members approve of people I am intimate with.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I feel obliged to stop associating with friends my family members do not like.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. When I am told I have done something which hurt other family members I feel guilty.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I become upset at the thought of telling a family member they are interfering in my life.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

14. There are certain things I do for members of my family because I have an obligation to.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I choose friends that family members will like and feel comfortable with.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDEX E: ACCULTURATION RATING SCALE FOR ARAB AMERICANS II

Acculturation Rating Scale for Arab Americans II (ARSAA II)

Circle the number that best describes your response to each of the items below

No.	Item	Not at all	Very little or not very often	Moderately	Much or very often	Extremely often or almost always
1.	I speak Arabic	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I speak English	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I enjoy speaking Arabic	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I associate with Americans	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I associate with Arabs or Arab Americans	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I enjoy listening to Arabic language music	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I enjoy listening to English language-music	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I enjoy Arabic TV	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I enjoy English language TV (American TV)	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I enjoy English language movies (American movies)	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I enjoy Arabic language movies (Arabic movies)	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I enjoy reading e.g., books in Arabic	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I enjoy reading e.g., books in English	1	2	3	4	5

14.	I write (e.g., letters, notes) in Arabic	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I write (e.g., letters, notes) in English	1	2	3	4	5
16.	My thinking is done in English language	1	2	3	4	5
17.	My thinking is done in Arabic language	1	2	3	4	5
18.	My contact with my home country has been	1	2	3	4	5
19.	My contact with the U.S.A. has been	1	2	3	4	5
20.	My father identifies or identified himself as An Arab	1	2	3	4	5
21.	My mother identifies or identified herself as an Arab	1	2	3	4	5
22.	My friends, while I was growing up, where of Arabic origin	1	2	3	4	5
23.	My friends, while I was growing up, where of American origin	1	2	3	4	5
24.	In my family, we cook Arabic foods	1	2	3	4	5
25.	My friends now are of Anglo origin (Americans)	1	2	3	4	5
26.	My friends now are of Arabic origin (Arabs)	1	2	3	4	5
27.	I like to identify myself as a White American	1	2	3	4	5

28.	I like to identify myself as an Arab American	1	2	3	4	5
29.	I like to identify myself as an Arab	1	2	3	4	5
30.	I like to identify myself as an American	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX F: SYMPTOM CHECKLIST 90

SCL-90

Below is list of problems and complaints that people have. Please read each one carefully. After you have done so, please fill in the number (0 to 4, see below) which best describes **how much that problem has bothered or distressed you during the past 4 weeks including today.** Choose only one number for each problem and do not skip any items. If you change your mind, erase your first answer and fill in the new one.

How much were you bothered or distressed over the past 4 weeks by:

	Not at All	**A Little Bit**	**Moderately**	**Quite A Bit**	**Extremely**
1. Headaches	0	1	2	3	4
2. Nervousness or shakiness inside	0	1	2	3	4
3. Unwanted thoughts or ideas that won't leave your head	0	1	2	3	4
4. Faintness or dizziness	0	1	2	3	4
5. Loss of sexual interest or pleasure	0	1	2	3	4
6. Feeling critical of others	0	1	2	3	4
7. The idea that someone else can control your thoughts	0	1	2	3	4
8. Feeling others are to blame for most of your troubles	0	1	2	3	4

9. Trouble remembering things	0	1	2	3	4
10. Worried about sloppiness or carelessness	0	1	2	3	4
11. Feeling easily annoyed or irritated	0	1	2	3	4
12. Pains in heart or chest	0	1	2	3	4
13. Feeling afraid in open spaces or on the street	0	1	2	3	4
14. Feeling low in energy or slowed down	0	1	2	3	4
15. Thoughts of ending life	0	1	2	3	4
16. Hearing voices that other people do not hear	0	1	2	3	4
17. Trembling	0	1	2	3	4
18. Feeling that most people cannot be trusted	0	1	2	3	4
19. Poor appetite	0	1	2	3	4
20. Crying easily	0	1	2	3	4

21. Feeling shy or uneasy with the opposite sex	0	1	2	3	4
22. Feeling of being trapped or caught	0	1	2	3	4
23. Suddenly scared for no reason	0	1	2	3	4
24. Temper outbursts that you could not control	0	1	2	3	4
25. Feeling afraid to go out of your house alone	0	1	2	3	4
26. Blaming yourself for things	0	1	2	3	4
27. Pains in lower back	0	1	2	3	4
28. Feeling blocked in getting things done	0	1	2	3	4
29. Feeling lonely	0	1	2	3	4
30. Feeling blue	0	1	2	3	4
31. Worrying too much about things	0	1	2	3	4
32. Feeling no interest in things	0	1	2	3	4

33. Feeling fearful	0	1	2	3	4
34. Your feelings being easily hurt	0	1	2	3	4
35. Other people being aware of your private thoughts	0	1	2	3	4
36. Feeling others do no understand you or are unsympathetic	0	1	2	3	4
37. Feeling that people are unfriendly	0	1	2	3	4
38. Having to do things very slowly	0	1	2	3	4
39. Heart pounding or racing	0	1	2	3	4
40. Nausea or upset stomach	0	1	2	3	4
41. Feeling inferior to others	0	1	2	3	4
42. Soreness of your muscles	0	1	2	3	4
43. Feeling that you are watched or talked about by others	0	1	2	3	4
44. Trouble falling asleep	0	1	2	3	4

45. Having to check and double check what you do	0	1	2	3	4
46. Difficulty making decisions	0	1	2	3	4
47. Feeling afraid to travel on bussed, subways or trains	0	1	2	3	4
48. Trouble getting your breath	0	1	2	3	4
49. Hot or cold spells	0	1	2	3	4
50. Having to avoid certain things, places or activities	0	1	2	3	4
51. Your mind going blank	0	1	2	3	4
52. Numbness or tingling in parts of your body	0	1	2	3	4
53. A lump in your throat	0	1	2	3	4
54. Feeling hopeless about the future	0	1	2	3	4
55. Trouble concentrating	0	1	2	3	4
56. Feeling weak in parts of your body	0	1	2	3	4

57. Feeling tense or keyed up	0	1	2	3	4
58. Heavy feelings in your arms or legs	0	1	2	3	4
59. Thoughts of death or dying	0	1	2	3	4
60. Overeating	0	1	2	3	4
61. Feeling uneasy when people are watching or talking about you	0	1	2	3	4
62. Having thoughts that are not your own	0	1	2	3	4
63. Having urges to beat, injure or harm someone	0	1	2	3	4
64. Awakening in the early morning	0	1	2	3	4
65. Having to repeat the same actions such as touching, counting, washing	0	1	2	3	4
66. Sleep that is restless or disturbed	0	1	2	3	4
67. Having urges to break or smash things	0	1	2	3	4

68. Having ideas or beliefs that others do not share	0	1	2	3	4
69. Feeling very self-conscious with others	0	1	2	3	4
70. Feeling uneasy in crowds such as shopping or at a movie	0	1	2	3	4
71. Feeling everything is an effort	0	1	2	3	4
72. Spells of terror or panic	0	1	2	3	4
73. Feeling uncomfortable about eating or drinking in public	0	1	2	3	4
74. Getting into frequent arguments	0	1	2	3	4
75. Feeling nervous when you are left alone	0	1	2	3	4
76. Others not giving you proper credit for your achievements	0	1	2	3	4
77. Feeling lonely even when you	0	1	2	3	4

are with people					
78. Feeling so restless you couldn't sit still	0	1	2	3	4
79. Feeling of worthlessness	0	1	2	3	4
80. Feeling that familiar things are strange or unreal	0	1	2	3	4
81. Shouting or throwing things	0	1	2	3	4
82. Feeling afraid you will faint in public	0	1	2	3	4
83. Feeling that people will take advantage of you if you let them	0	1	2	3	4
84. Having thoughts about sex that bother you a lot	0	1	2	3	4
85. The idea that you should be punished for your sins	0	1	2	3	4
86. Feeling pushed to get things done	0	1	2	3	4

87. The idea that something serious is wrong with your body	0	1	2	3	4
88. Never feeling close to another person	0	1	2	3	4
89. Feelings of guilt	0	1	2	3	4
90. The idea that something is wrong with your mind	0	1	2	3	4

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