INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE AMONG DIFFERENT AREAS OF PSYCHOLOGY: TESTING IN CLASSROOM PRACTICES A THEORETICAL MODEL OF PARENTING*

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Abstract

This work presents an innovative education project, developed at the University of Valencia, for the integration of theory and practice among two different broad areas of Psychology (Social Psychology and Methodology). Psychology graduate students will be split up into small research groups (2-4 members). Each research group will collect a small sample data in order to: (1) establish the relationships between parenting styles (using a two-dimension four-typology model of parenting styles) and parenting practices, and (2), establish the relationships between parenting styles and adolescents’ outcomes. Parenting practices will measure with the ESPA29 Parental Socialization Scale (Musitu & Garcia, 2001 [1]), the Parenting Scales of Steinberg (Lamborn et al., 1991 [2]; Steinberg et al., 1994 [3]), the Psychological Control Scale (Barber, 1996 [4]), and the Short-EMBU scales (Arrindell et al., 1999 [5]). The outcome measures will be six indicators of psychological adjustment measured with the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Rohner, 1990 [6]), five indicators of self-esteem measured with the AF5 Multidimensional Self-Esteem Scale (García & Musitu, 1999 [7]), and three indicators of personal competence and another three of problem behaviors (García & Gracia, in press [8]). The research design of the project involved four steps where each research group will complete a closed questionnaire about the same research hypothesis.

Keywords
Innovation, educational research projects, psychology graduate students, social psychology, methodology, four-typology model of parenting styles, adolescents’ outcomes.

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1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research examining relationships between parenting styles and children’s outcomes follow largely a four-typology model of parental socialization styles. In 1983, Maccoby and Martin [9] proposed, after Baumrind’s (1967 [10], 1971 [11]) tripartite model –authoritative-authoritarian-permissive– a bidimensional model of parental socialization in which the dimensions demandingness and responsiveness were theoretically orthogonal (Darling & Steinberg, 1993 [12]; Smetana, 1995 [13]). These dimensions have similar meanings to those of the traditional dimensions of firmness and affect, or others, more recently proposed, such as those of strictness/imposition and acceptance/involvement (e.g., Chao, 2001 [14]; Lamborn, et al., 1991 [2]; Steinberg, et al., 1994 [3]) (see Fig. 1). From the combination of the two dimensions of demandingness (strictness/imposition) and responsiveness (acceptance/involvement), four typologies emerge: authoritative parents –high in demandingness and responsiveness; neglectful parents –low in demandingness and responsiveness; indulgent parents – low in demandingness and high in responsiveness; and authoritarian parents –high in demandingness and low in responsiveness. This four-typology or quadrupartite model stresses, according to Lamborn et al. (1991 [2]), the need to consider the effects of the combination of the two parenting dimensions in the analysis of their relationship to children’s outcomes.

In general, research conducted Anglo-Saxon contexts with middle-class European American samples has traditionally identified the authoritative parenting style (i.e., warm and responsive parents that provide at the same time firm control and maturity demands) as the optimal parenting style as it has been consistently associated with optimum developmental outcomes of children and adolescents.
with cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs (Greenberger, Steinberg, & Vaux, 1981 [72]).
Although self-reports of deviant behavior are subject to both under and over reporting (see McGord,
1990 [73]), most researchers agree that these provide a closer approximation of youngsters' true
involvement in deviant activity than do "official" reports (e.g., police records), and the practice of using
self-report data in the study of adolescent deviance is widely established (see Gold, 1970 [71]; Jessor
& Jessor, 1977 [74]; McGord, 1990 [73]). The three problem behaviour indexes will key so that higher
scores represent a greater sense of adolescent problem behaviors.

(C) Analyses by aims. (1) Represent the parental practices in the two parenting dimensions axes. The
accuracy of hypothesis pattern predictions will be until 8 positions (Fig. 2) and the basic statistical
technique for testing the predictions will be the Pearson's correlation coefficient. (2) The four parenting
styles and each adolescent's outcome. The accuracy of hypothesis pattern prediction will be until 4
levels (Fig. 3) and the basic statistical technique for testing the predictions: ANOVAs and Bonferroni's
tests.

3. WORK PROJECT ORGANIZATION

Phase 1. Hypotheses from the theoretical background (about 4 weeks). (A) Research teams (2 to 4
students). Each team has a leader. The leader of each team will send their hypotheses to the web
page of the Paper. (B) Hypotheses are coded in the web questionnaire. (C) Each team will provide 30
research questionnaires. (D) Each team will introduce their questionnaires in a data base according to
previously defined criteria.

Fig. 3. Sample of a pattern of response for 2 levels: 2-1-2-1

Phase 2. Every team will have their own results (a partial sample). Each team will analyze their own
data set, testing their own hypotheses.

Phase 3. Each team will reconsider their initial hypotheses (phase 1) from their own results (phase 2).
(Estimated time for phase 2 and 3 is about 3 weeks)

Phase 4. Data from the whole sample will be use to give feedback to the each group, and to discuss
results and research implications.

References


