



Investigating child raising attitudes of fathers having or not having a child with hearing loss

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ABSTRACT

Aim: The main goal of this study is investigating child raising attitudes of fathers having or not having a child with hearing loss.

Material and method: The fathers of 20 children with hearing loss who attend the Training Unit of Hearing and Speaking Abilities in Hacettepe University Department of Audiology and Speech Defects and 20 fathers having children who have a normal hearing have participated in this study. Demographic Information Form and P.A.R.I (Parental Attitude Research Instrument) have been used as devices for data collecting.

Results: Sub dimension of overprotection scores (42.76 ± 5.59) of the fathers having a child with hearing loss are found higher on a statistically meaningful level than the scores (40.16 ± 6.55) of fathers who do not have a handicapped child ($p < 0.01$). Together with this, the fathers having a child with hearing loss get lower scores from the democratic/equality and strict discipline sub dimensions as compared to the fathers who do not have a handicapped child, and this situation is found meaningful statistically ($p < 0.01$).

Conclusion: It is very important that the father's having enough information and support help the father to be encouraged and feel himself enough for this issue. Moreover, the wrong attitudes and behaviors towards the child can be corrected upon noticing them.

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1. Introduction

In traditional families usually the mother is most important caretaker of a child with a hearing loss. In early intervention programs relatively little attention is given to fathers. However, the fathers are influential family actors. Father involvement has been associated with increased breastfeeding; improved childhood social, cognitive, and emotional outcomes; less childhood depression and anxiety; and fewer childhood delinquent behaviors [1–4]. A substantial body of evidence has shown that, on average, children whose fathers are involved with them have better behavioral outcomes compared with children in single-parent families with absent fathers [5–8]. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has encouraged pediatric clinicians to actively support and promote fathers' involvement in their children's care and development [9].

A child growing and developing healthily depend on positive, logical and adoring attitudes of the members of the family he belongs dating from birth. The family is a milieu which is significant for the child and where the child gains his first social

experiences [10]. The children who are future guarantee and youngest members of the society are the ones growing under a healthy family relationships atmosphere. Their own characters and demographic features or qualifications of the child may affect the attitudes of mothers and fathers responsible for the child care. If it is desired that children are socially and mentally competent individuals, there is a need for parents who are pliable, tolerant and not repressive. The parents who are repressive, permissive or insensitive cause the constitution of behaviors beyond control in children. Mothers and fathers must know development features of their children at first and be adults who behave in accordance with the children's needs when they discipline their children [11–13].

The diagnosis of a hearing loss is a critical life event with profound effects on parents and the family system. An extensive body of literature has been published in recent years focusing on stress in parents who have deaf or hard of hearing children. Findings from studies specific to stress levels reported by parents of children with hearing loss have been inconsistent. Some evidence suggests that hearing parents of children who are deaf/hard of hearing (hoh) feel more stress than parents of hearing children while some studies report no difference in stress levels between the two groups of parents [14–18]. The first person getting information from the experts about the handicap of the child is usually the mother, so the father accepts the loss of the child later than the mother [19]. It is stated that the fathers who

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Table 1
Impact of parenting styles on children (Stein's classification).

Parental style	Image or metaphor	Parental attitude	Child's response
Democratic and encouraging	Child is seen as equal, integrated part of family, cooperative, and doing his share. He is loved and accepted. Child is offered reasonable progressive challenges and permitted to develop at his own pace.	Accepts child's uniqueness. Provides love, respect, and feeling of equality. Encourages child to correct mistakes and develop capacities. Guides child to find significance in contribution.	Feels security of love and acceptance. Experiences own strength by conquering difficulties. Finds satisfaction in achievement and contribution. Not afraid to try and fail. Sees world as safe and friendly.
Over-indulgent	Child at a receiving end of a cornucopia with goods and services endlessly pouring out. Child is passive, bored and discontented in the midst of this indulgence	Shows the child with presents, privileges, and services, with little regard for the child's actual needs.	Child is bored, and indifferent. He loses initiative and spontaneity. Expects everything to come to him. Sees adults as providers of pleasure and comfort.
Over-submissive	Child sitting imperiously on a throne, placed there by parents who bow low. Child is active, impulsive, and demanding.	Submits to child's whims, demands, temper, and impulsiveness. Makes child the boss, and becomes a slave or servant. Cannot say no.	Child insists on having his demands fulfilled. Has tantrums, ignores the rights of others, lacks any sense of limits.
Over-coercive	Child is like a trained dog or stubborn donkey. Pushing-resistance cycle.	Constant direction and supervision. Endless instructions and constant reminders. Overly strict, tends to drill.	(a) Submission: submits to direction. Results in docile obedience. (b) Active rebellion: overt defiance. Results in verbal refusal. (c) Passive resistance: dawdling, daydreaming, forgetting. Results in covert, devious rebellion.
Perfectionistic	Child is a perpetual runner, trying to go faster, but never finishing the race. The finish line keeps moving up. He is constantly trying to do better.	Accepts child only when performance is exceptional. Very high standards, impossible to please.	Excessive striving and preoccupation with performance. Cannot meet standards, feels unworthy, may give up (or develop physical symptoms such as ulcers).
Excessively responsible	A giant child shouldering excessive responsibility, blind to anything but work and responsibility.	Parents may heap excessive household, childcare, or companionship responsibilities on child because of economic circumstances, personal problems, death or illness of a parent.	Child may carry out burden resentfully, missing normal childhood carefree play.

learn that their children are hearing impaired during or after birth are shocked and stressed, and their life purposes working lives are influenced negatively as a result. Also, the fathers fall behind lots of things, and their time and energy waste away, working life and social life are ruined because of the constant stress they experience [20].

There are usually different cultural and traditional ideas upon child raising attitudes. Child care is accepted as the responsibility of mother, and the father undertakes the responsibility of being the person who meets the economic requirements of the home [21]. However, children are more compatible psychologically, more successful in the school and show less antisocial behaviors and establish better relations with their friend along their lives when they have a close and warm relationship with their fathers [22]. It is underlined that the children who have a positive relationship with their father show more success than the children who do not have a positive relationship with their fathers and whose fathers do not play an active role in their lives. Also, motivation of the children who are in an interactive relation with their father is higher, and these children are more social than the other children [23]. There are different approaches of interaction in child raising. A classification of the most common child raising styles is summarized below. In addition this classification, Stein's chart of parental attitudes styles [24] is showed in Table 1.

1.1. Overprotective approach

Acceptance and care are also high together with the control. It is presented as controlling and caring the child more than needed. The mother and father behave as if they protect their child against an inimical environment. They make self-sacrifice intemperately for the child. The parent expects the child to understand this devotion by considering that he obtains the right to have all kinds of wishes in the presence of this devotion. The mother assumes even the tasks which the child can perform. The mother feeds the child herself, and makes him sleep in her own bed even if the child reaches the ages 8 and 9. She acts with anxiety for the possibility

that something bad can happen to the child at any moment. The child is not allowed to play freely, because it is thought that he will sweat or catch a cold. He is forbidden to play in the street with the fear that he may fall and get hurt. The mother thinks that she exhibits her love to her child and helps him. In fact, she satisfies her loneliness and sadness [25,26,27]. The child is put in an artificial world which is isolated from the real life. The child is left unprepared for the life as all the things are simplified for him [28,29].

1.2. Repressive (authoritarian) approach

It is the approach in which the control is high and acceptance and care is low. The rules are determined without explaining them to the child. The child is supposed to obey these rules rigidly. The mother and father regard themselves as the representative of the societal authority, and expect an absolute obedience from the child. Indulgence is seen as a virtue. The parents try to govern their children in the way they contemplate in compliance with the social standards [24,30–32].

It is seen that the children who are raised up with the repressive approach are shy, reluctant and poor in self-expression skill, and especially the boys have a high tendency to aggression and low self-respect [33]. The child may have such feelings as anger and hostility and behaviors such as defying and rebelling against all kinds of authorities as the results of repressive approach. The child is angry with his parent for the reason that he is belittled and his necessities are not met as well. The child is afraid of making something wrong in every step he takes. He abstains from trying new things [25,29,30,34,35].

1.3. Permissive approach

Control is low, and acceptance and care is high in this approach. The mother and father are quite sensitive and caring for the child. The child is not informed about the rules which he must obey in the family and society. When some simple rules are in question the

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