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ORIGINAL PAPER

Perceived Parenting, Self-Esteem, and General Self-Efficacy of Iranian American Adolescents

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Abstract We examined whether Iranian American adolescents' perceptions of parental support, parental knowledge, and parental psychological control relate to general self-efficacy directly, and indirectly through positive esteem and self-deprecation. To investigate this, self-report surveys were collected from 158 Iranian American adolescents attending Iranian American youth groups, Armenian private school, and one public school. Results indicated that positive esteem, self-deprecation, mother and father knowledge, and mother and father psychological control were directly related to general self-efficacy. Furthermore, the parenting variables were indirectly related to general self-efficacy through either positive esteem or self-deprecation.

Keywords Iranian American · Adolescents · Parenting · Self-esteem · Self-efficacy

Introduction

General self-efficacy is defined as an individual's ability to effectively manage new situations, initiate effort, and persist in the face of adversities across numerous domains (Schwarzer 1994; Sherer and Adams 1983; Tong and Song 2004). Hence, more efficacious individuals will be more likely to initiate and continue tasks and strive for goals even when confronted with novel situations, obstacles, or stressful conditions. In a cross cultural study, Luszczynska et al. (2005) found that individuals who reported higher general self-efficacy also reported more positive youth development (e.g., mental well-being, physical health, academic achievement, coping). According to Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, efficacy beliefs are developed and shaped during childhood and adolescence, and two primary contributors to self-efficacy are social persuasions and affective states. Surprisingly, few studies have examined the antecedents of general self-efficacy in adolescents.

Furthermore, scant research exists which examines adolescent adaptation in Iranian American families, yet self-efficacy may be a very important indicator of success in Iranian American families due to their high emphasis on academic and occupational achievement (Sayyedi 2009). No studies could be found that examined Iranian American adolescents' general self-efficacy. Hence, the purposes of our study were (1) to examine whether perceptions of parenting relate to Iranian American adolescents' self-esteem and general self-efficacy, and (2) whether parenting relates to general self-efficacy indirectly through self-esteem.

General self-esteem has been recognized as an antecedent to the development of domain-specific efficacy (Bandura 1997), coping efficacy (Swensen and Prelow 2005), and general self-efficacy (Judge et al. 2002; Schunk and Meece 2005; Zimmerman and Cleary 2005). Although some scholars have argued that overall self-esteem and general self-efficacy are essentially the same construct because they can be highly correlated (Judge et al.; Stanley and Murphy 1997), other scholars have clearly differentiated between self-esteem and general self-efficacy (Chen et al. 2004; Gecas and Schwalbe 1986; Zimmerman and Cleary 2005). Specifically, self-esteem refers to an affective evaluation of one's overall feelings of self-worth (Coopersmith 1967; Rosenberg 1979); while general

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self-efficacy is a cognitive appraisal of one's capabilities to initiate, persist, and accomplish set goals across various settings (Sherer and Adams 1983; Zimmerman and Cleary).

Although previous scholarship has often viewed high self-esteem and low self-esteem as two ends of the same continuum, some scholars have argued that these may be two separate constructs (i.e., positive esteem and self-deprecation; Farruggia et al. 2004; Quilty et al. 2006). Boucher et al. (2009) demonstrated that individuals could possess feelings of positive esteem and self-deprecation simultaneously (i.e., dialectical self-esteem). Similarly, scholars have found that self-regard and self-deprecation can differentially relate to other variables such as depressive symptomatology (Greenberger et al. 2003; Owens 1994). Also, evidence for the bi-dimensional aspect of self-esteem has been found with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Farruggia et al.; Owens; Quilty et al.). This study examined whether two affective states (i.e., positive esteem and self-deprecation) relate differentially to general self-efficacy.

Self-deprecation refers to feeling unworthy, inferior, deficient, and/or inadequate (Rosenberg 1979). These self-deprecating feelings could result in feelings of incompetence and/or an inability to handle life's challenges, influence events, and achieve one's goals; hence resulting in less general self-efficacy. However, individuals reporting more positive esteem (i.e., a stable and positive sense of personal worth) may feel more optimistic and competent (Rosenberg), and possess a higher sense of internal locus of control (Enger et al. 1994; Griffore et al. 1990). Hence, individuals with more positive esteem may expect to be able to accomplish their goals and attribute it to their own abilities (Zimmerman and Cleary 2005).

According to Cooley's (1902) looking glass self and self-efficacy theory (Bandura 1997), significant others, such as parents, can play an integral role in shaping youth's perceptions of self worth and abilities. Hence, the parental behaviors perceived by adolescents can set the stage for reflected appraisals that are integral to the development of self (Harter et al. 1998). Similarly, Bandura (1997) argues that one way to strengthen youth's efficacy beliefs is through social persuasion. Specifically, when parents engage in behaviors that boost confidence in their children's abilities, their children will exert more energy to succeed and maintain this effort. Conversely, when parents undermine or constrict their youth's confidence in their abilities, then the youth will be more likely adopt less efficacious beliefs and behaviors.

Prior studies have often referenced a tripartite classification of parenting (Amato and Fowler 2002; Barber et al. 2005; Schaefer 1965; Steinberg et al. 1992). Specifically, three central characteristics of parenting were examined: (1) support (also referred to as warmth and nurturance); (2) psychological control (also called intrusiveness), and (3) knowledge (also known as behavioral control and monitoring). Parental support refers to the use of behaviors within specific parent-adolescent repertoires that convey acceptance, warmth, nurturance, and affection (Peterson 2005). Perceived parental support reflects warm and affirming messages that may be internalized by the adolescents, resulting in feelings of positive esteem (Felson and Zielinski 1989; Plunkett et al. 2007a, b). Also, perceived parental support can provide a secure base for adolescents that enable them to explore their environment and feel more confident to meet challenges (Peterson and Hann 1999); hence, promoting higher self-efficacy (Gecas and Schwalbe 1986; Swensen and Prelow 2005).

Similar findings have been associated with parental knowledge, defined as the extent to which parents know of their child's friends, locations, and activities (Crouter and Head 2002; Kerr and Stattin 2000). Parental knowledge is derived from an open line of communication between the adolescent and parent in which the parent is informed of the child's activities and social networks (Crouter and Head; Kerr and Stattin). Hence, knowledge is an overt gesture by parents that reflects an interest and concern about the adolescent and his/her activities that can promote feelings of positive esteem (Bush et al. 2004; Peterson 2005). According to Peterson and Hann (1999), effective monitoring by parents (i.e., knowledge) enhances the development of social competence in adolescents. Thus, it is conceivable that youth who report higher levels of parental knowledge will have stronger parent–child connections, feel valued, and consequently report higher positive esteem and self-efficacy.

Parental psychological control is defined as a parent's attempt to assert authority over the child through manipulative techniques such as love withdrawal and guilt induction (Steinberg 2005). These intrusive behaviors can reflect negative images (e.g., unworthy, inadequate) that can result in negative self-appraisals ultimately resulting in more self-deprecating feelings and lower positive esteem (Barber 2002; Barber and Harmon 2002; Plunkett et al. 2007a, b). Also, parental psychological control can impinge on adolescents' autonomy and lead them to question their adequacy and competence, ultimately resulting in lower self-efficacy (Barber 2002; Peterson 2005).

Iranian immigrant families in the US are characterized by an ingrained sense of Iranian identity, including cultural morals, values, and familial dynamics (Hojat et al. 1999; Sayyedi 2009). This is especially true in the greater Los Angeles that is home to the largest population of Iranian Americans (Hakimzadeh and Dixon 2006) and has a high concentration of Iranian media outlets (e.g., television,

radio stations, newspapers), cultural celebrations, religious organizations, and clubs. In Iranian families in both Iran and the US, familial relationships are viewed as sacred and more important than individual desires (Jalali 2005; Sayyedi 2009). In addition, Iranian families are characterized as patriarchal, thus deference to parents and family harmony are expected (Jalali; Sayyedi). Also, Iranian American youth may experience emotional turmoil between their need for individuality and identity and their strong and ingrained sense of duty toward their family (Hojat et al.; Safizadeh 1999). Hence, perceived parent-child interactions may be especially relevant to the development of self-esteem and general self-efficacy in Iranian American adolescents.

In the traditional Iranian family, mothers and fathers have distinct roles (Jalali 2005). The father is generally the undisputed authoritarian and has the responsibility to discipline the children, while the mothers' power is described as subtle and indirect. She may try to curtail conflict when it arises, but she does not undermine the fathers' authority. Although both mothers and fathers are viewed as providing love and affection, mothers in Iranian and Iranian American families are often turned to for basic survival needs, cultural socialization, and love and affection (Hojat et al. 1999; Jalali). Given the distinct parental roles, it is expected that youth perceptions of mothers and fathers may be related to developmental outcomes differently.

Also, Iranian parents may monitor their youth to keep them on track academically and out of trouble. This may be particularly true for Iranian immigrant families due to Iranian parents' concerns about social problems impacting adolescents in the US (Hojat et al. 1999). Conflict in Iranian families may result in silent treatment (one form of psychological control) between family members (Jalali 2005). Shame is another psychologically controlling technique used by parents to ensure children do not embarrass the family and act obediently. Autonomy and separation from the family unit are viewed as disrespectful and ungrateful (Hojat et al.; Jalali). Hence, if Iranian youth try to loosen the ties from their traditional and familial norms and values, parents may assert their authority through psychological control.

Informed by the present literature, a theoretical model was developed (see Fig. 1) to test the following hypotheses. First, we expected positive esteem to be positively related, and self-deprecation to be negatively related, to general self-efficacy. Next, we expected adolescents' reports of knowledge and support by mothers and fathers to be positively related to positive esteem and general self-efficacy and negatively related to self-deprecation. We also expected adolescents' reports of psychological control by mothers and fathers to be negatively related to positive esteem and general self-efficacy and positively related to self-deprecation. Hence, we expected that Iranian American adolescents' reports of parenting would be directly and indirectly (through positive esteem and self-deprecation) related to general self-efficacy.

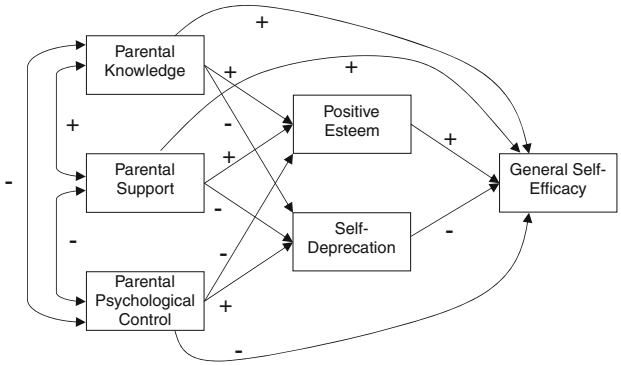

Fig. 1 Theoretical model: perceived parenting, self-concept, and self-efficacy of Iranian American adolescents

Methods

Procedures

The data for this study were drawn from a larger study examining family and neighborhood variables in relation to adolescent adaption in multi-ethnic communities. Self-report surveys were collected from adolescents in one ethnically-diverse public high school, a private Armenian high school, and Iranian youth groups in the greater Los Angeles area. Many Armenians in Los Angeles identify as Persian (i.e., Iranian) Armenians, hence some of the Iranian American youth in the study came from data collected at an Armenian private school as well as a public school with Persian Armenian youth. Also, data came from Iranian youth groups whose purpose is to enhance native culture and language (i.e., Farsi) of young Iranian American adolescents. Many participants self-identified as Persian Jewish or Persian (often Muslim). Criteria for inclusion in this study follow: (1) adolescents indicated on their survey that they were Iranian or Persian, or (2) at least one parent was born in Iran and Farsi was spoken in the home. Consistent with national data that shows Iranian Americans are from higher income and more educated families (Mostashari and Khodamhosseini 2004), most of the adolescents in the study were from families with middle to upper socioeconomic backgrounds (as determined by the director of the Iranian youth groups, the principal at the private Armenian school, and the school counselor at the public school).

Permission was obtained from officials at each data collection site. Parent and adolescent consent forms (in English) were administered to the youth by the researchers

at the data collection sites. At the Iranian youth groups and the Armenian private school, the primary researchers were Iranian Americans. At the multi-ethnic public school, the research team was comprised of researchers from different ethnicities. The researchers returned approximately one week later, picked up the signed consent forms, and distributed the surveys to the students. At the high schools, the students were given one week to complete and return the surveys to their teachers. At the Iranian youth groups, the students completed the surveys in a classroom. They were given as much time as needed to complete the surveys. The researcher remained in the room during data collection to answer questions. Data were collected, coded, entered, and verified for accuracy by trained undergraduate and graduate research assistants.

Participants

Data were collected from 158 Iranian American adolescents at Iranian youth groups (62.7%), Armenian private school (10.8%), and public school (26.6%). Participant ranged in age from 13–20 ($M = 15.1$) with 38.0% males and 62.0% females. Their identified religion follows: 38.9% Christian, 31.0% Jewish, 25.3% Muslim, and 4.8% other. The vast majority of the sample (89.9%) lived in a two-biological parent intact household while 6.3% lived in single-mother homes, 1.3% in stepmother households, 1.9% in stepfather households, and .6% in single-father homes. In terms of country of origin, 48.1% of the adolescents were born in the US, 38.0% were born in Iran, 9.5% were born in Armenia, and the remaining 4.4% were born in other countries (i.e., Canada, England, India, Italy, Israel, and Sweden). Of the youth who were foreign born, 49.4% came before the age of six, and 86.4% came to the US before the age of thirteen. The mean age for these youth immigrating to the US was 6.1 years old. For the parents, 5.1% of mothers and 3.2% of fathers were born in the US, 90.5% mothers and 93.0% fathers were born in Iran, and the remaining were born in different countries (four other countries for mothers and five other countries for fathers). Over 56.2% of the mothers and 65.4% fathers had some college or higher education.

Instruments

Demographic variables were measured using standard fact sheet items while other variables in the study were assessed using previously established self-report instruments.

General Self-Efficacy

To assess adolescent's general self-efficacy, the 15-item, general subscale of the Self-Efficacy Scale was used (Sherer et al. 1982). The response choices follow: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, and 4 = *strongly agree*. Ten items were reverse-coded. A sample item follows: "Failure just makes me try harder." The scores for each item were averaged to create a scale score. A Cronbach's alpha of .83 was found.

Self-Esteem

The 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg 1979) was utilized to measure two aspects of self-concept: positive esteem (5 items) and self-deprecation (5 items). Response choices ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*. Sample items include: (a) "I feel that I have a number of good qualities" (positive esteem), and (b) "At times I think I am no good at all" (self-deprecation). Evidence exists that the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale is sometimes better as two separate factors (e.g., Farruggia et al. 2004; Owens 1994). Principle axis factor analyses with direct oblimin rotation indicated a two-factor solution. Specifically, examination of the eigenvalues (>1), scree plot, pattern matrix, and structure matrix indicated two very distinct factors comprised of the five positively worded items (i.e., positive esteem) and the five negatively worded items (i.e., self-deprecation). Responses to the five items in each factor were averaged to determine scores for positive esteem and self-deprecation. In the current sample, internal consistency reliabilities (i.e., Cronbach's alphas) of .81 for positive esteem and .83 for self-deprecation were found.

Parental Behaviors

To measure adolescents' perceptions of parental support, monitoring, and psychological control, the Parental Behavior Measure was used (Bush et al. 2002). The participants in the study were asked to respond to each item twice, once for their primary mother figure and once for their primary father figure. The response choices ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*. The responses for the items in each subscale were averaged to get subscale scores.

The 4-item parental support subscale assessed the adolescents' perceptions of the parent figure providing emotional support and warmth. A sample items follows: "This parent has made me feel that he or she would be there if I need him or her." The current data indicated Cronbach's alphas as follows: .78 for mothers' data and .77 for fathers' data.

The 6-item parental monitoring/knowledge subscale examined the adolescents' perceptions of the degree to which their parent figure know where they are, who their friends and parents are, how they spend their money, and

what they are doing. A sample items follows: "When I go out, this parent knows where I am." The current data reported Cronbach's alphas of .81 for mothers' data and .81 for fathers' data.

The 14-item parental psychological control subscale assessed adolescents' perceptions of whether their parents used guilt induction, love withdrawal, and punitiveness to obtain compliance and assert their authority. A sample items follows: "This parent avoids looking at me when I have disappointed her." Using the current data, Cronbach's alphas were .93 for mothers' data and .93 for fathers' data.

Statistical Analyses

PASW (2009) version 17.03 was used for computing descriptive statistics and correlations. Zero-order correlation analyses (i.e., Pearson correlations) were conducted to examine the strength and direction of the bivariate relationships among the variables. Because of the high correlations between youth reports of maternal and paternal support ($r = .77$), knowledge ($r = .71$), and psychological control ($r = .92$), separate models were run for reports of mothers and reports of fathers. Because acculturation might be related to the variables in the study, bivariate correlations were computed between generational status (1st generation, 1.5 generation, etc.) and each of the variables in the study. Generational status was not significantly correlated to any variable, hence it was not included in the subsequent analyses. Also, ANOVAs examined whether there were significant differences between youth coming from private school, public school, and Farsi youth groups on the variables in the study, no significant differences were found. ANOVAs were also conducted to examine whether there were differences between the three primary religions (i.e., Muslim, Christian, Jewish) on the variables in the study. Only one difference was found with Jewish adolescents reporting significantly higher ($p < .05$) self-derogation than Muslim adolescents. However, the sample size did not allow for examining separate models for religious groups.

Next, structural equation modeling was used to evaluate the causal hypotheses with correlational data (see Tabachnick and Fidell 2007), represented in Fig. 1. Specifically, EQS for Windows version 6.1 (Bentler 2007) was used to examine (1) the path coefficients from all three exogenous predictor variables (i.e., parental behaviors) to two dimensions of self-esteem and general self-efficacy; (2) the relationships between positive esteem and self-deprecation to general self-efficacy; and (3) the possible indirect relationships between parenting and general self-efficacy via dimensions of self-esteem. The Wald test was used to determine which parameters could be removed from the models without significant loss of fit (see Chou and Bentler 1990).

Results

Zero-order correlations (see Table 1) indicated that positive esteem was positively related to general self-efficacy (GSE), while self-deprecation was negatively related to general self-efficacy. Also, mothers' and fathers' support and knowledge were significantly and positively related to general self-efficacy and positive esteem, but negatively related to self-deprecation. Mothers' and fathers' psychological control were significantly and negatively related to general self-efficacy and positive esteem, but positively related to self-deprecation.

Results revealed good fit for a path-analytic model predicting general self-efficacy for both mothers (see Fig. 2) and fathers (see Fig. 3). An initial test of model fit for mothers was not rejected, $\chi^2_1 = 0.05$, $p = .83$; fit statistics suggested that the model fit the data very well (Comparative Fit Index [CFI] = 1.00; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA] = .00). Post hoc model modifications were then performed in hopes of achieving a more parsimonious model. Accordingly, the Wald test (see Chou and Bentler 1990) indicated that the following parameters could be removed from the model without significant loss of fit: (1) the direct relationship between mothers' support and GSE, (2) the links between self-deprecation and a) mothers' support and b) mothers' knowledge, and (3) the residual correlation between mothers' support and psychological control. Figure 2 reflects the final, modified model for mothers with these parameters removed. Fit statistics for this model still showed excellent fit: $\chi^2_5 = 3.73$, $p = .59$; CFI = 1.00; RMSEA = .00.

For fathers, a similar initial test of model fit was not rejected, $\chi^2_1 = 0.26$, $p = .61$; CFI = 1.00; RMSEA = .00. Here, the Wald test suggested removal of the following relationships: (1) the direct link between fathers' support and GSE; (2) the relationships between self-deprecation and a) fathers' support and (b) fathers' knowledge; (3) the links between positive esteem and (a) fathers' knowledge and b) fathers' psychological control; and (4) the residual correlation between fathers' support and psychological control. Figure 3 reflects the model without these parameters. Fit statistics for this model were as follows: $\chi^2_7 = 9.80$, $p = .20$; CFI = .99; RMSEA = .05. Ultimately, as seen in both Figs. 2 and 3, positive esteem and self-deprecation are related to general self-efficacy. In addition, for both mothers and fathers, all three parenting variables are directly or indirectly (through either positive esteem or self-deprecation) related to general self-efficacy.

Table 1 Means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations between Iranian American adolescents' perceptions of parenting, self-concept, and general self-efficacy

	1	2	3	4	5	6	*M*	SD
1. General self-efficacy	1.00	.39**	−.65**	.22**	.22**	−.55**	2.76	.50
2. Positive esteem	.39**	1.00	−.16*	.27**	.37**	−.17*	3.12	.59
3. Self-deprecation	−.65**	−.16*	1.00	−.11	−.11	.52**	2.25	.75
4. Parental knowledge	.36**	.35**	−.14*	1.00	.48**	.07	3.07	.64
5. Parental support	.27**	.37**	−.18*	.42**	1.00	−.16*	3.43	.58
6. Parental psychological control	−.60**	−.22**	.57**	−.12	−.19**	1.00	2.23	.74
M	2.76	3.12	2.25	3.33	3.55	2.34		
SD	.50	.59	.75	.57	.54	.77		

Note Data about mothers are below the diagonal, while data about fathers are above the diagonal

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

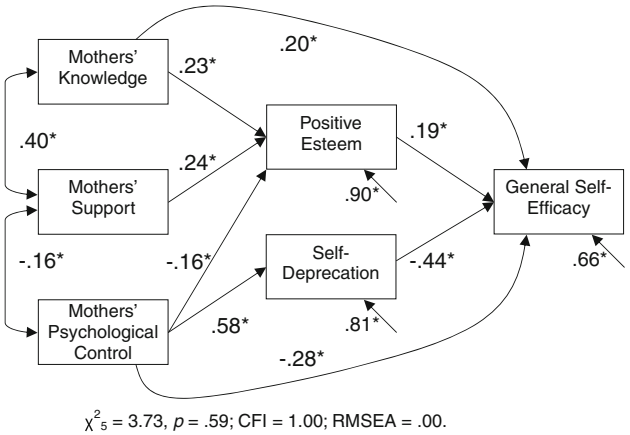

Fig. 2 Path analytic model: perceived parenting (mother), self-concept, and self-efficacy of Iranian American adolescents. *Straight arrows* represent regressions. *Straight arrows* leading to dependent variables represent error estimates. *Double arrows* stand for correlations. Parameter estimates are standardized regression coefficients. * $p < .05$

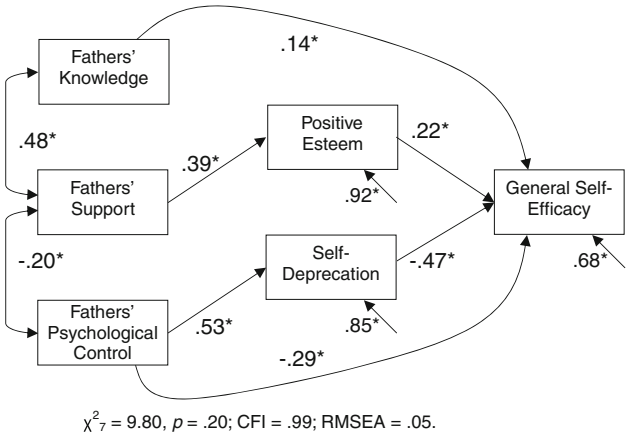

Fig. 3 Path analytic model: perceived parenting (father), self-concept, and self-efficacy of Iranian American adolescents. *Straight arrows* represent regressions. *Straight arrows* leading to dependent variables represent error estimates. *Double arrows* stand for correlations. Parameter estimates are standardized regression coefficients. * $p < .05$

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine whether perceptions of maternal and paternal behaviors related to general self-efficacy directly, and indirectly through self-esteem, to Iranian American adolescents in immigrant families, an understudied and often overlooked population. Consistent with the looking glass self (Cooley 1902) and self-efficacy theory (Bandura 1997), the results confirmed our theoretical model (see Fig. 1). Specifically, positive esteem, self-deprecation, parental knowledge, and psychological control are related to general self-efficacy for both mothers and fathers. In addition, for both mothers and fathers, the parenting variables were indirectly related to general self-efficacy through either positive esteem or self-deprecation (except for fathers' knowledge).

Both affective evaluations of self (i.e., positive esteem and self-deprecation) were significantly related to general self-efficacy. The findings indicated a much stronger relationship between self-deprecation and general self-efficacy. When Iranian American adolescents have self-deprecating feelings, these negative feelings can erode their perceived competence and ability to accomplish goals (Rosenberg 1979). This becomes especially apparent when these youth are faced with obstacles. They may give up easier, attributing their perceived failure to events outside of their control. Although not as strongly related, feelings of positive esteem can enhance an Iranian American adolescents' confidence in accomplishing their tasks or goals. When they have secure sense of self, they may be less likely to give up when confronted with barriers (Zimmerman and Cleary 2005).

For both mothers and fathers, higher levels of perceived support were related to positive esteem, and indirectly related to general self-efficacy. According to Peterson (2005), when offspring perceive and internalize affirming and uplifting messages from their parents, they gain a secure foundation from which to set and pursue goals. In Iranian American families, parents are viewed as being providers of love and affection (Jalali 2005), hence Iranian youth may interpret their parents' supportive behaviors as reflecting positive images about their self and their competence.

Perceived mothers' and fathers' knowledge were correlated to general self-efficacy and self-esteem. In the path analyses, parental knowledge was directly related to general self-efficacy, and indirectly related through positive esteem in the mothers' model. When youth perceive their parents as knowledgeable of their activities, they may feel a sense of support and validation of their actions (Bush et al. 2004; Peterson 2005). Thus, the youth are more likely to continue the activities, even when faced with adversity. Conversely, if youth perceive their parents do not condone their actions, they are more likely to abandon or give up the activities, especially when barriers exist. Also, since Iranian and Iranian American mothers devote more time in the upbringing and socialization of their children (Hojat et al. 1999; Jalali 2005), youth may internalize positive esteem when they perceive their mothers taking an active role in their lives by being knowledgeable about their activities.

Perceived psychological control by both parents were directly related to general self-efficacy, and indirectly related through positive esteem (for mothers) and self-deprecation (for both parents). When youth perceive their parents as intrusive and manipulating, their autonomy, confidence, and competence may all be diminished (Barber 2002). Hence, their ability to set and accomplish goals may be compromised. Parental psychological control (e.g., love withdrawal and guilt) can reflect negative self-appraisals that can promote self-deprecating thoughts and impair feelings of positive esteem (Barber and Harmon 2002). Since Iranian American mothers are more actively involved in their children's upbringing and expected to be a primary sources of warmth and affection (Jalali 2005), the youth's ability to develop positive views of self may be hindered by the mothers' use of psychologically controlling behaviors.

An auxiliary finding of the study is support for the bi-dimensional aspect of self-esteem using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Farruggia et al. 2004; Owens 1994; Quilty et al. 2006). Specifically, the two dimension of self-esteem (i.e., self-deprecation, positive esteem) were predicted by different parenting variables and related differentially to general self-efficacy. This provides additional evidence for the belief that individuals can have feelings of positive esteem alongside feelings of self-deprecation (i.e., dialectical self-esteem; Boucher et al. 2009). This finding is consistent with scholarship that describes Iranians as both fatalistic and boastful (Jalali 2005).

Although the findings provide insight into the relationship between perceived parenting, self-esteem, and general self-efficacy of Iranian American adolescents, certain limitations should be acknowledged. Due to the nature of the study (i.e., cross-sectional design), it is difficult to know for certain the direction of the causal relationships in the model. It is possible that general self-efficacy predicts self-deprecation and/or positive esteem (Gecas and Schwalbe 1983). Similarly, it is feasible that parents may respond differentially to adolescents based on the youth's self-esteem (Bean et al. 2003) and self-efficacy (Bandura 2005). Longitudinal studies would allow a better understanding of the direction of causal relationships between the variables and/or possible reciprocal relationships between perceived parenting, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. Also, the data in this study were from youth self-report, however, parents' reports of their own behaviors may add additional insight. Next, this study collapses various Iranian American groups together in the statistical model; which did not take into account intra-group differences (e.g., different religions, generation statuses, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses). In addition, other populations of Iranian American youth should be examined outside of Los Angeles. And finally, gender differences were not investigated in this study due to sample size limitations. However, future studies should consider gender differences because mothers and fathers tend to treat sons and daughters differently in Iranian American families (Hojat et al. 1999; Jalali 2005; Sayyedi 2009) and may influence the adolescents' perceptions regarding parenting.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, this study provides a contribution to the literature by examining perceived parenting related to self-esteem and general self-efficacy in an understudied population (i.e., Iranian Americans). The results would suggest that practitioners and parent educators working to promote self-esteem and general self-efficacy in Iranian American youth should encourage responsive parenting (e.g., support, monitoring) and discourage the use of psychological control. Also, practitioners could teach Iranian American adolescents to recognize responsive parenting (support, knowledge) by their mothers and fathers. And, practitioners could provide cognitive tools to Iranian American youth to help minimize self-deprecating feelings resulting from parents' use of psychologically controlling behaviors (e.g., guilt, love withdrawal). Given the support for the dialectical self in this study, programs designed to enhance self-esteem in Iranian American youth may want to develop strategies to promote positive esteem as well as activities to diminish self-deprecating thoughts.

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