

Parental socialization styles as a predictor of suicidal ideation in high school students

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Abstract

Introduction: According to the World Health Organization, suicide is the second leading cause of death in the 15-29 age group. The family plays an important role in the development of adolescent mental health. It is believed that the style of parental socialization with which they were educated may be a protective or risk factor for developing problematic behaviors.

Objective: To know if there is a significant difference between the types of maternal vs. paternal parental socialization and if they are predictors of suicidal ideation in students of Ignacio Carrillo Franco (ICF) Preparatory School, May 2017.

Material and methods: Observational, transversal, prospective study. The student population was the high school students ICF. The parental socialization styles of both parents were measured using the ESPA-29 scale and the suicidal ideation (Roberts scale) of the students. Descriptive and inferential statistics were performed using ANOVA and multiple linear regression with the IBM SPSS Statistics 20 program.

Results: There were 144 students, aged 15-17 ($m=16.31 \pm SD 0.68$). The maternal parental socialization style (Negligent vs Authoritarian Games-Howell $m: 1.84, SD 0.57, Sig .011$) shows significant difference vs paternal and maternal axes Acceptance/Implication ($t: -2.85, Sig .005$), Coercion/ Imposition ($t 3.35, Sig .001$), maternal dysplacation ($t 5.913, Sig .000$) and paternal ($t 3.343, Sig 0.001$) are predictors of suicidal ideation.

Discussion: The mother plays the most important role in the suicidal ideation of adolescents; since according to their parental style they are the most predicted.

Key words: Styles of parental socialization, suicidal ideation, adolescents.

Introduction

Suicidal ideation is defined as a concern on the part of the individual that is expressed in the form of thoughts about ending one's life that are introduced without reason; which includes feelings of being tired of living, the belief that it is not worth living, the desire not to wake from sleep, and that can be conceptualized as the first phase of a behavior that ends with the individual's life.^{1,12}

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), suicide is the second leading cause of death in the 15-29 age group. In South America, suicide rates are highest among young people.³

According to statistical data on suicide in Mexico published by INEGI (National Institute of Statistics and Geography) in 2011, 5,718 suicides occurred, of this total 4621 were men and 1095 women. In the state of Nuevo León these figures corresponded to 218 people; with 174 male cases and 44 female cases. By age group, 10-14 years represented 11.4% of above-mentioned total, 15-19 years 9.1%, and the group of 20-29 years 31.8%; which represents a higher proportion in adolescents.⁴

Parental socialization styles can generally be defined as a constellation of attitudes that are communicated to the child, and which together create an emotional climate constituted by the expression of the behavior of both parents.¹¹ These, according to Baumrind's contribution in 1971 have been categorized into four models. First, the Democratic (Authorizing) style stands out: it is characterized by demonstrating control and restriction of the behavior of the children through clear norms and limits; promoting autonomy and independence is favored; communication is effective and bidirectional, show balance in affection and support with control and democracy.^{5, 6}

The second model is the Authoritarian; with which parents exercise a specifically restrictive and severe control, try to have absolute control of their children's behavior and attitudes, develop a one-way communication, lack emotional support and sensitivity.

A third model is permissive, it is the opposite of the one described above, where parents avoid using behavior control, are lenient and do not set restrictions. Communication is ineffective and unidirectional, they are tolerant, maintain great flexibility in following up rules. The fourth model is the Neglectful one that denotes the absence of demands and responsibility of the parents towards the behavior of their children and there is lack of control and support.^{5,6}

Describing the relationship of parenting styles to the final outcome of risk behaviors, it has been defined that the children of Authorizing parents have good academic performance and behavior, stronger relationships and low levels of problem behaviors or risk factors. Not so the children of Authoritarian parents, who demonstrate as well as the children of Authoritative parents good school performance, however these have low levels of self-esteem and exhibit more aggressiveness and substance use. When parents demonstrate a permissive (forgiving) parenting style, their children are sociable, but have poor school performance and are prone to risky behavior and substance use. For this reason, children who show greater risk and vulnerability behavior are those of negligent parents due to their characteristic of low acceptance and support to their children.⁷

The family plays an important role in the development of the child's mental health; it is believed that the style of parental socialization with which they were raised may be a protective or risk factor for the development of problematic behaviors.³ The unsatisfactory family environment for adolescents is related to an increase in suicidal ideation.⁸

The study of the styles of parental socialization and its relation to suicidal ideation gives us an overview of this problem, taking into account the fact that the adolescent population is one of the most vulnerable given the increase of suicide in adolescents.

The author of this work aimed at answering the following question: Is there a significant difference between the types of maternal vs. paternal parental socialization types and are these predictors of suicidal ideation in Ignacio Carrillo Franco high school students in the period of May 2017?

Material and methods

An observational, analytical, cross-sectional, prospective study was performed. The study population included students from Ignacio Carrillo Franco High School (ICF) in Montemorelos, Nuevo León. All enrolled students who gave their consent were included at the time of data collection. The exclusion criteria were; being over 18 years old and being absent on the day the survey was applied. The criteria of elimination were refusal to participate on the survey day and the returning of an incompletely completely answered instrument.

For the collection of the data the Scale of Styles of Parental Socialization in Adolescence (ESPA 29) of the authors Musitu and García was used. The identification sheet included gender,

age and religion. To know the type of parental socialization of the participants, the instrument was used; which assesses the performance of the father and mother through 29 situations (13 negative - 80 possible responses and 16 positive - 32 possible responses). In the different scenarios it was evaluated with a scale of 4 points (1, never, 2, sometimes, 3, many times, 4, always) that estimates the frequency in qualitative terms of each parental performance.

The styles of parental socialization in turn are defined by two dimensions that are: Acceptance / Implication and Coercion / Imposition. From these dimensions, the means of each group were used to name the style of parental socialization in the 4 styles of parental socialization to be studied, Authoritative (high acceptance - implication and high coercion - imposition), Indulgent (high acceptance - implication and low coercion - imposition), Authoritarian Low acceptance - involvement and high coercion - imposition) or Negligent (low scores in both dimensions), the 4 styles of parental socialization to study.

In the same way for the proper study of the axes; the instrument subdivides them into 7 subscales which are: Affection ("Shows me affection"), Indifference ("Is indifferent"), Dialogue ("Talks to me") and Displacement ("Does not care") that define the axis of Acceptance / Implication. Verbal Coercion ("Argues with me"), Physical Coercion ("Hits me") and Deprivation ("Deprives me of something") for the axis Coercion / Imposition.

ESPA 29 has been shown to have a high internal consistency in the 7 socialization scales of the father and the mother independently. The highest coefficient of consistency corresponded to the "affection" scale of the mother (0.943) and the lowest to the "displeasure" of the father in problematic situations (0.820). Thus, a factorial analysis has been carried out where the theoretical structure of the two-dimensional model is satisfactorily confirmed.⁹

For the evaluation of suicidal ideation, the 1980 Roberts Suicidal Ideation Scale was used, adapted for the Mexican population by Mariño, Medina, Chaparro and González in 1993; composed of four reagents: R1: I could not go forward, R2: I had thoughts about death, R3: I felt that my family would be better off if I were dead, R4: I thought about killing myself. Which evaluated the occurrence of symptoms in the last week. 1: 0 days, 2: 1-2 days, 3: 3-4 days, 4: 5-7 days. The scores are from 4 to 16; where at higher scores, greater suicidal ideation exists. It has reliability in Mexican adolescents of α : 0.78, α : 0.83, α : 0.88.21.¹⁰

In this study a sampling by judgments was made because the population is small was included to all students that fulfilled the inclusion criteria, reason why it the sample size was not calculated.

The null hypotheses were: a) there is no significant difference between maternal vs. paternal parental socialization and suicidal ideation. B) The styles of parental socialization are not predictors of suicidal ideation.

For statistical analysis, the data were transcribed in the Microsoft Office Excel program, and later transferred to the IBM SPSS Statistics 20 statistical package. Descriptive statistics were obtained from the mean and standard deviation of the quantitative variables, as well as the

frequencies as percentages of the rest of the variables. For the inferential statistics, ANOVA and multiple linear regression were used.

Data collection was carried out by the researchers. The pertinent permits were obtained from the educational institution and the instrument was applied to the students during established class time.

The study was carried out according to the Helsinki declaration and according to the General Health Law regulation, in the field of health research: in Title II, Chapter I, Article 17, it was considered without risk, since it is a study that only involves answering an instrument. The student was not subjected to any physical, social or legal risk because the data will be totally confidential, solely for statistical use.

Results

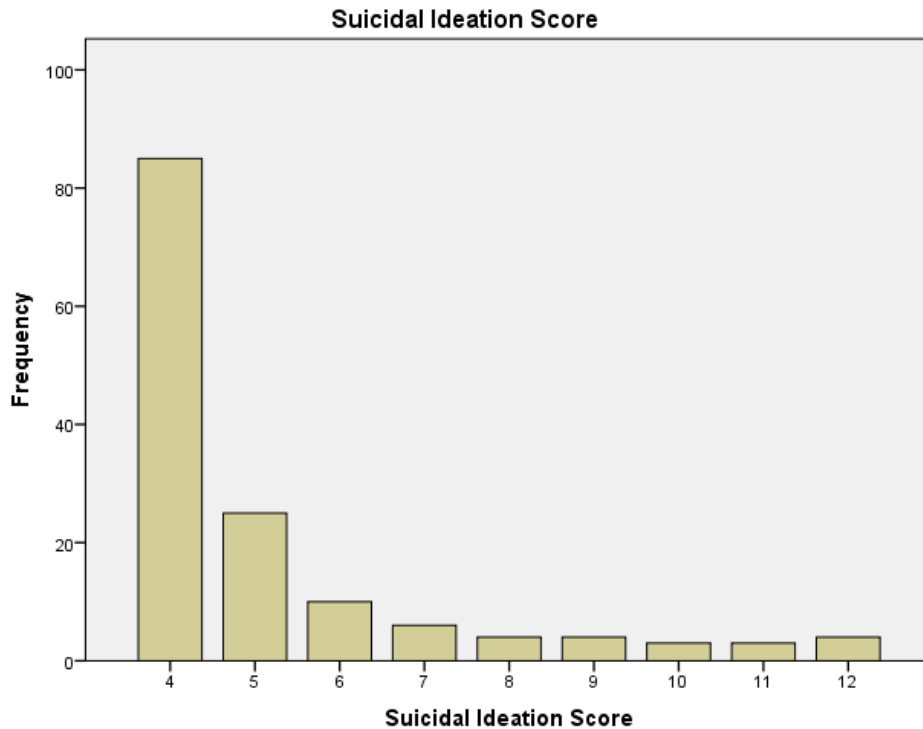
The studied population consisted of 144 ICF high school students, where 54.2% (n = 78) were men and 45.8% (n = 66) women. The age range comprised 15-17 years (m16.31 years, SD 0.684). According to their religion, 87.5% (n = 126) were Seventh-day Adventists, 7.6% (n = 11) Catholics and 4.9% (n = 7) belonged to another religion. As for the styles of paternal parental socialization the most frequent was the Authoritative with 27.8% and the maternal was the Indulgent with 32.6%. The rest of the parental socialization styles in percentages are described in table 1.

| Parental socialization styles | Paternal | | Maternal | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| | Frequency (n) | Percent (%) | Frequency (n) | Percent (%) |
| Authoritative | 40 | 27.8 | 35 | 24.3 |
| Authoritarian | 32 | 22.2 | 32 | 22.2 |
| Negligent | 35 | 24.3 | 30 | 20.8 |
| Permissive | 37 | 25.7 | 47 | 32.6 |
| Total | 144 | 100 | 144 | 100 |

Table 1. Styles of paternal and maternal parental socialization.

The 59% (n = 85) suicide ideation score scored 4 points and 2.8% (n = 4) 12 points, indicating that there is a low suicide risk in this student population. See graph 1.

Graph 1. Scale frequency of suicidal ideation score.



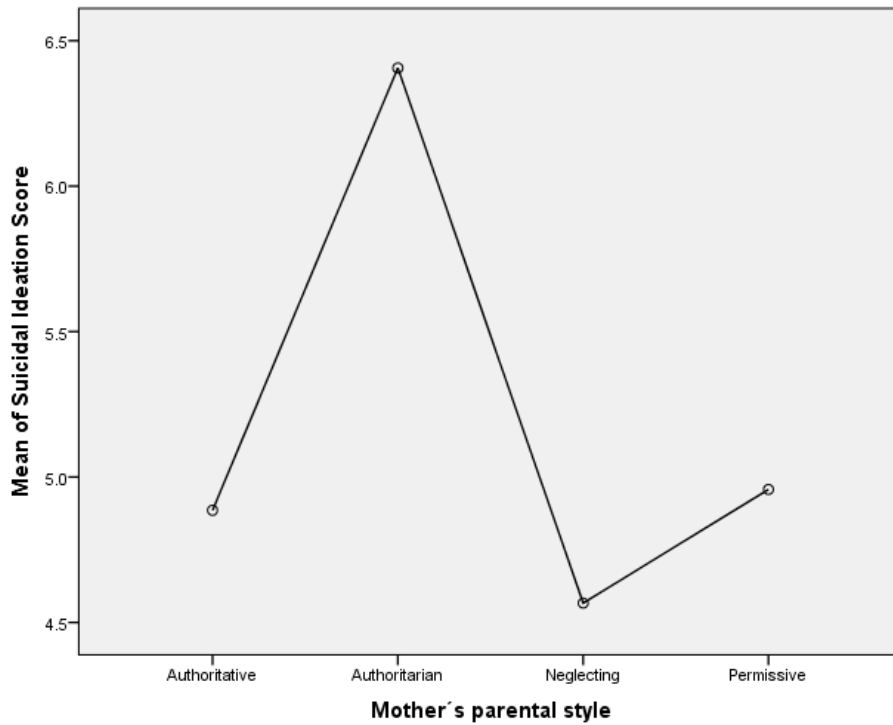
Inferential statistics

ANOVA was used to search for the difference in suicide ideation scale score between maternal and paternal parental socialization style. It was found that paternal socialization style does not exert a significant difference (F1.729, Sig 0.164); however, the style of maternal parental socialization was statistically significant (F 5.718, Sig .001, Leven Sig test), so the null hypothesis is rejected. See table 2.

| Mother’s parental style | N | Mean and Standard Deviation |
|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|
| Authoritative | 35 | <u>m</u> 4.89 ± 1.53 S.D. |
| Authoritarian | 32 | <u>m</u> 6.41 ± 2.88 S.D. |
| Negligent | 30 | <u>m</u> 4.57 ± 1.35 S.D. |
| Permissive | 47 | <u>m</u> 4.96 ± 1.73 S.D. |
| Total | 144 | <u>m</u> 5.18 ± 2.03 S.D. |

Table 2. Score of suicidal ideation and style of maternal parental socialization.

Of maternal parenting socialization styles, the Authoritarian vs Negligent style shows difference, which is obtained through the Test Games-Howell $m: 1.84, DE 0.57, Sig .011$ as seen in Figure 2. Therefore, students with Authoritarian mothers presented greater suicidal ideation than the children of Neglecting mothers.



Graph 2. Suicidal ideation score means according to maternal parental socialization style.

According to the multiple linear regression analysis, the axes of socialization that predict suicidal ideation are Mother's Acceptance / Implication (Standardized coefficient beta $-0.234, t: -2.85, Sig .005$), thus the lower this axis is, the more predictive will be of suicidal ideation; and Mother's Coercion / Imposition (Standardized coefficient beta $0.281, t 3.35, Sig .001$); where the highest Coercion / Imposition predicts suicidal ideation; however, the paternal axes were not significantly predictive (see Table 3). In the maternal variance analysis, the value of F obtained is $12,895, Sig. 000$, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and there is a real effect of these axes on the suicidal ideation score.

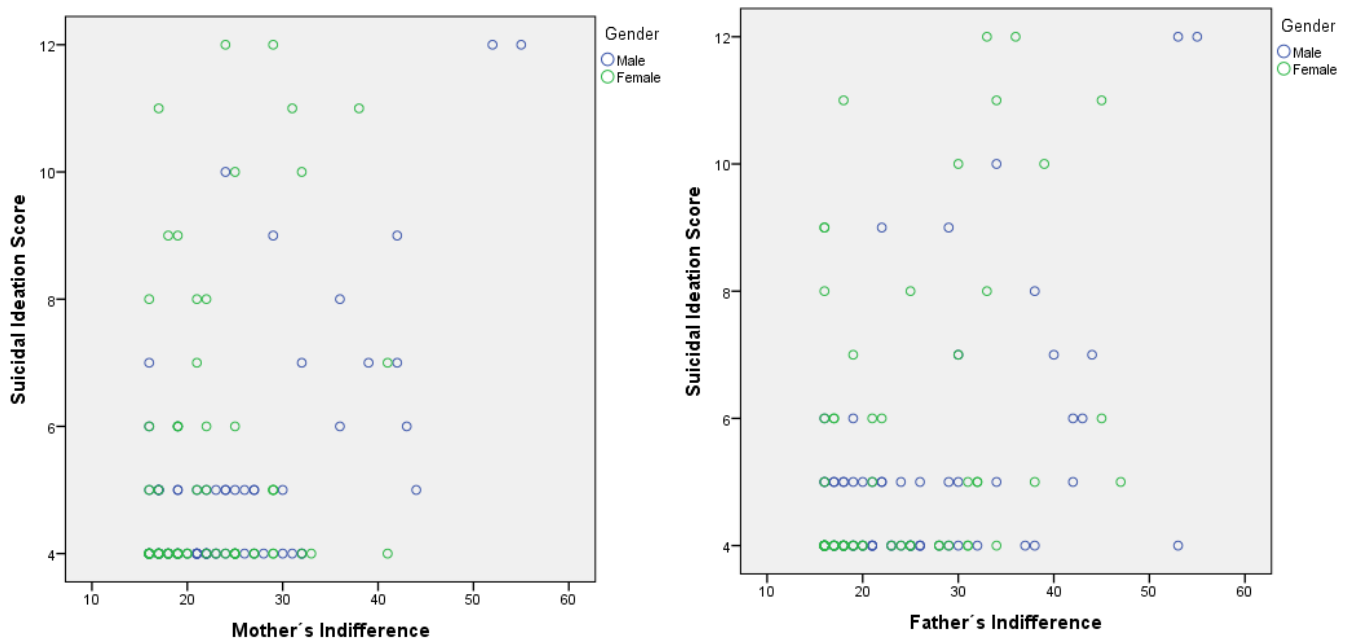
| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 5.550 | 1.366 | | 4.062 | .000 |
| Father's Coercion / Imposition | .163 | .228 | .060 | .714 | .477 |
| Father's Acceptance / Implication | .162 | .287 | .046 | .566 | .572 |
| Mother's Acceptance / Implication | -.967 | .338 | -.234 | -2.859 | .005 |
| Mother's Coercion / Imposition | 1.118 | .333 | .281 | 3.355 | .001 |

Table 3. Regression models showing significance of maternal axes

According to the subscales of the two axes of styles of parental socialization; the regression model indicates that the predictors of suicidal ideation are Mother's Dyslexia (Standardized Coefficient beta: .465, t 5.913, Sig .000), Physical coercion of the mother (Standardized coefficient beta .315, t 3.616, Sig .000) and the Father's Indifference (Standardized coefficient beta .291, t 3.343, Sig 0.001). As well as the analysis of variance test, the value of F obtained is 16.30, Sig .000, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This model accounts for 26%, indicating a small effect size (see Table 4). In this way it is possible to show that adolescents who are exposed to indifferent behaviors of the father and mother, as well as the use of corporal punishment by the mother tend to present higher scores of suicidal ideation.

| Subscale | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Physical coercion of the mother | .507 ^b | .257 | .245 | 1.834 |
| Father's Indifference | .530 ^c | .281 | .264 | 1.811 |
| Mother's Indifference | .523 ^d | .274 | .262 | 1.813 |

Table 4. Value of R squared according to subscales.



Graph 3. Distribution of students by suicidal ideation score according to the father's and mother's displeasure.

Discussion

Parental socialization styles influences adolescent behavior.

In the evaluation of this population it was found that the maternal parenting Authoritarian style exerts significant difference in suicidal ideation, which compared with the father did not yield significant results. However, when contrasted with other populations of adolescents studied, such as African-Americans and Caucasians, who had depressive symptoms, it was found that the authoritarian parental style was a buffer of suicidal behavior, which shows us that the results will depend on the population chosen.⁷

In the same way, we found that the style of parental socialization of the Negligent type (characterized by the absence of demands) was the one that generated a high score of suicidal ideation. Not so in the study described above where it was reported that greater flexibility of limits had a greater suicidal ideation.⁷

In the German population it was found that having a negligible parental style represented a risk of a suicide attempt of 1.5 times; contrary to that found in this study, where the style of parental socialization Negligente presented or lower score of suicidal ideation.

According to the model of regression found to be higher, there will be a higher suicide ideation score in adolescents whose mothers present a higher coercion / imposition, so that adolescents whose parents exert greater parental acceptance, expression of physical affection and friendliness have less suicidal ideation. However, this study in Chile includes whether or not adolescents present depression, finding that young people without depression had more protective

factors related to the style of parental socialization, so it is suggested that in the future it may be studied if the participants in the research study suffer from depression.¹²

In Mexico, the role of the style of parental socialization and its influence on suicidal ideation in a similar school population has also been studied, which reported the father's role in suicidal ideation in terms of communication and affection; in contrast with the present study, which did not find significant difference in the style of paternal socialization, nor as predictor variable, according to the axes of said styles. Nor do we find significant results according to gender; other than previously reported. However, the importance of maternal parenting characteristics as a predictor of suicidal ideation is emphasized.¹³

We can say that the mother plays the most important role in the suicidal ideation of adolescents; however, they contrast in that the style of parental socialization of the Negligent type was the one that mostly predicted suicidal ideation.¹⁴

The styles of parental socialization exert a great influence in the suicidal ideation of its adolescent children. It is vitally important to emphasize the responsibility that falls on the mothers, since according to their style they are the ones that most predict the suicidal ideation. The indifference of both parents and the use of physical punishment by the mother function as predictors; so it is necessary to work towards improving parental behaviors in order to reduce suicidal ideation in this case. Despite not having found a significant contribution of the father in this population, it is necessary to work together with the adolescents, because the family has a great impact on the life of the adolescent.

In future studies, factors that favor paternal nonparticipation in some specific adolescent developmental behaviors must be sought, with a goal of pursuing personal growth, more consistent and with better results in adult life; since suicidal ideation can be easily prevented by promoting healthy parental socialization styles and the development of family communication.

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