

INTERGENERATIONAL EFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD PARENTAL CONFLICT ON PARENTING STYLES AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN DISTRICT PESHAWAR, KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the intergenerational transmission of childhood parental conflict to parenting styles and conflict resolution strategies of married daughters in District Peshawar, Pakistan. Childhood family conflict is recognized as a significant social and psychological problem that can impact emotional functioning, parenting, and adult relationships. The focus of the study was to explore the effect of parental conflict on parenting behavior, communication style and conflict resolution among married daughters in their own family. A qualitative research design and case study approach were employed to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' lived experiences. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with married daughters who had experienced parental conflict during childhood. The selection of participants used a purposive sampling technique, and the collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify the major themes and patterns among the data. The results indicated that participants' parenting styles, emotional responses, and marital communication were significantly affected by their childhood experiences of parental conflict. Participants described a variety of protective and emotionally supportive parenting behaviours to prevent repeating negative childhood experiences, and some described strict or avoidant communication patterns within their parental families. The study also revealed that the approaches used to resolve conflicts (silence, emotional withdrawal, aggression, negotiation, compromise) were strongly linked to childhood family experiences. The study concludes that parental conflict has long-term intergenerational effects on parenting behavior and family relationships. The study suggested the importance of parenting education, counseling services, emotional support programs, and healthy conflict resolution awareness for promoting positive family environments and emotional well-being.

Keywords: Parental conflict, parenting styles, conflict resolution, intergenerational transmission, married daughters

Introduction

Family conflict is widely recognized as a significant social and psychological issue that affects the emotional stability, interpersonal relationships, and behavioral development of individuals within the family environment. The family is considered the primary social institution responsible for providing emotional support, protection, socialization, and moral guidance to children. However, when families are characterized by persistent parental conflict, hostility, emotional tension, and dysfunctional

communication, the home environment may become emotionally unstable and psychologically distressing for children. Family conflict not only affects the relationship between spouses but also influences the emotional and behavioral development of children who are exposed to such experiences during their formative years. Continuous exposure to parental disputes may create fear, emotional insecurity, anxiety, and psychological distress among children, which may continue to shape their interpersonal relationships and

behavioral patterns in adulthood. Researchers have emphasized that unresolved family conflict can contribute to long-term emotional and relational difficulties, particularly among daughters who are emotionally connected to family interactions and parental relationships (Cummings & Schatz, 2012).

Childhood experiences play a critical role in shaping adult behavior, emotional responses, and interpersonal relationships. Children generally learn communication styles, emotional regulation, conflict management, and social behaviors through observation and interaction within the family environment. When children repeatedly witness parental conflict, hostility, or emotional instability, they may internalize these behaviors and unconsciously adopt similar patterns in adulthood. Early family experiences significantly influence personality development, emotional functioning, and relationship expectations later in life. Children exposed to destructive parental conflict may develop emotional insecurity, fear of confrontation, mistrust, and maladaptive coping behaviors, which may continue to affect their marital and family relationships during adulthood. Social learning perspectives explain that children imitate behaviors observed within the family environment, especially parental interaction patterns (Bandura, 1977).

Parenting behavior and family interaction patterns are also strongly influenced by childhood experiences and learned behaviors within the family system. Parents often serve as role models from whom children learn parenting practices, emotional responses, and communication strategies. Married daughters who experienced parental conflict during childhood may consciously or unconsciously adopt similar parenting styles and conflict management approaches within their own families. Some individuals may replicate harsh communication patterns, emotional withdrawal, or aggressive behaviors observed during childhood, while others may consciously attempt to avoid repeating negative family experiences by adopting supportive and peaceful parenting approaches. The process through which family behaviors and emotional patterns transfer across generations is commonly referred to as intergenerational

transmission. Research suggests that parenting practices and family interaction styles are often transmitted across generations through learned family experiences and emotional socialization (Belsky, Conger, & Capaldi, 2009).

Conflict resolution within marital and family settings is an important aspect of healthy interpersonal relationships and family stability. Effective conflict resolution strategies, including communication, compromise, emotional regulation, and mutual understanding, contribute to stronger marital relationships and positive family functioning. However, individuals who grow up in conflict-ridden households may experience difficulties managing disagreements constructively because their childhood experiences shape their understanding of conflict and communication. Exposure to frequent parental hostility may lead individuals to adopt avoidance, silence, aggression, or emotional withdrawal as coping strategies during marital disputes. Consequently, unresolved childhood experiences may negatively influence emotional intimacy, trust, and relationship satisfaction within marriage. Previous studies have demonstrated that destructive family conflict during childhood significantly affects adult conflict management styles and interpersonal functioning within intimate relationships (Conger, Neppl, Kim, & Scaramella, 2003).

Parental conflict is considered an important factor influencing children's behavioral development, emotional responses, and interpersonal relationships within the family environment. Children spend a significant portion of their early lives within the family system, where they observe and learn behaviors through interaction with parents and other family members. Family relationships therefore serve as the primary source of socialization through which children develop communication patterns, emotional responses, and behavioral attitudes. When children are repeatedly exposed to parental hostility, aggression, emotional withdrawal, and dysfunctional communication, they may internalize these behaviors and unconsciously adopt similar interaction patterns in adulthood. Persistent parental conflict may also normalize aggressive or avoidant behavior among children, influencing how they respond to interpersonal

disagreements and family relationships later in life (Cummings & Davies, 2010). The process through which children learn behaviors from observing others is explained by Social Learning Theory proposed by Albert Bandura. According to this theory, individuals learn attitudes, behaviors, and emotional responses through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within their social environment. Children often imitate the behaviors and communication styles demonstrated by their parents because parents are considered primary role models during childhood. When parental conflict involves aggression, emotional neglect, or poor communication, children may perceive such behaviors as acceptable methods of handling disagreements and emotional stress. Social Learning Theory therefore suggests that exposure to dysfunctional family interactions during childhood may contribute to the development of similar behavioral patterns in adulthood, including ineffective parenting practices and maladaptive conflict resolution strategies (Bandura, 1977).

Parenting styles are an important factor in children's emotional development, social adjustment and psychological health. Parenting behavior tends to mirror the emotional climate, communication style and relationship dynamics of the family system. The parenting styles are typically divided into three categories: authoritarian, permissive, and supportive or authoritative. Authoritarian parenting is marked with strict discipline, emotional distance and strict control, while permissive parenting is marked with low discipline and high permissiveness toward children. In contrast, supportive or authoritative parenting is characterized by parents' emotional warmth, appropriate discipline, communication, and understanding with their children. Parenting practices play a significant role in shaping children's emotional security, self-confidence, and social behaviour (Baumrind, 1991). Parenting practices during the childhood of the child have a strong influence on the parenting they will incorporate into their adulthood. Parents are inclined to imitate their own parenting styles, whether positive or negative, based on their own experiences with their parents during their childhood. When daughters learn to observe harsh

communication, emotional distancing, or controlling behavior within the family, they are likely to adopt the same tactics in their own parenting. Highly severe communication, emotional avoidance, or controlling patterns can be seen by daughters and may be consciously or subconsciously adopted in their parenting practices. Conversely, some individuals attempt to avoid repeating negative childhood experiences by creating emotionally supportive and peaceful family environments for their children. Researchers have found that parenting practices are influenced by learned parenting and emotional adjustment to childhood experiences (Belsky et al., 2009). As such, it is crucial to understand the relationship between parental conflict and parenting styles in order to explore the intergenerational implications of family instability.

Conflict resolution skills are vital for healthy marriage and family relationships and emotional stability. Conflict resolution and emotional management styles between family members can differ, ranging from aggression, avoidance, negotiation, compromise, to productive communication. Aggressive conflict resolution is marked by hostility, verbal abuse, anger or emotional confrontation, while avoidance is characterized by emotional withdrawal, silence or refusal to discuss problems. The process of negotiation and compromise, however, has to do with family members understanding one another, managing their emotions, and working together to solve a problem. The effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies significantly affects marital satisfaction, emotional intimacy, and family harmony (Gottman & Silver, 1999). Communication and emotional regulation play a role in effective family conflict resolution. Healthy communication is an opportunity for people to express feelings, discuss differences without harm, and handle interpersonal issues well. Children growing up in sharp conflict situations, however, may experience challenges with emotional regulation and effective communication as a result of frequent exposure to conflict and dysfunction. The childhood experiences, or past patterns of emotional response and conflict, can cause these people to become emotionally reactive, avoidant, or fearful when their relationship conflicts.

Studies have revealed that growing up in an environment where parents are engaged in destructive conflict has a detrimental impact on adult communication, emotional stability, and conflict management in intimate relationships (Davies, Martin, & Cicchetti, 2012). Unresolved conflicts in childhood can then have an impact on adult marital and family dynamics.

Intergenerational transmission of conflict is the process by which dysfunctional family behaviors, communication patterns and emotional responses are passed down from one generation to the next. Childhood interactions within the family can influence an adult's behavior and relationships. When children witness frequent conflict from parents, they are likely to unconsciously use similar communication, emotional expression, and conflict resolution strategies in their own relationships. This is because early life experiences in the family have a profound impact on emotional development, social awareness, and behavioral adjustment. Thus repeated patterns of aggression, emotional instability or non-functioning communication can, in turn, lead to similar patterns being passed on from one generation to the next (Bowen, 1978). Intergenerational family communication dynamics can influence parenting, marital and adult child relationships. Parents who experienced high conflict in their childhood may engage in similar conflict dynamics in their marriage or actively work to establish a non-conflictful family environment to shield their kids from emotional upheaval. Even if a person is trying really hard to avoid negative behaviors, they can still have some issues with communication, emotional responses and parenting due to unresolved childhood trauma or emotional insecurity. Researchers have shown that emotional reactions and social communication styles from family conflict can be transmitted from generation to generation (Erel & Burman, 1995). Therefore, examining the intergenerational transmission of parental conflict is important for understanding how childhood family experiences continue to influence parenting styles and conflict resolution strategies among married daughters.

Theoretical Framework

The present study is based on two theories, first is Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura and second is Family Systems Theory by Murray Bowen. These theoretical frameworks are suitable for explaining the relationship between childhood family conflict and parenting practices and conflict resolution behaviors of married daughters in adulthood. Both theories stress the significance of intergenerational relationship and family functioning, as well as the role of family interaction, emotional experiences, and learned behavioral patterns in shaping interpersonal relationships and family functioning across generations. The theories also have implications for the way in which children internalize family behaviors in childhood and engage in emotional responses and interaction patterns in their own marriages and families.

According to the Social Learning Theory, children imitate behaviors, attitudes, emotional responses and communication patterns of important role models in their social environment, especially from their parents. Bandura noted that children watch family members closely, and observed behaviors are sometimes repeated by them, particularly if they are repeated in the family environment. If children witness interpersonal aggression, emotional distance, hostility, or difficulties in communicating between parents, they can internalize this as an acceptable method of managing conflict and emotional stress. These learned behaviors can persist throughout adulthood and impact one's parenting, marital life, and interpersonal communication. Children who had experienced parental conflict during childhood, as a result, may then exhibit learned aggression, emotional avoidance, fear of confrontation or dysfunctional communication patterns in their own families. Thus, Social Learning Theory can offer a valuable explanation of how negative family interaction patterns can be learned and imitated from one generation to the next (Bandura, 1977).

The study also influenced by Family Systems Theory developed by Murray Bowen, which sees the family as an emotional system where the actions of one family member affects the emotional functioning of the other members. This theory suggests that family interactions,

communication, emotional reactions, and conflict patterns become ingrained in the family and can be passed down to the next generation. Children growing up in conflictive families can learn to behave in a similar way, to react on the emotional level and to cope in the same way as their parents or caregivers. Therefore, the unresolved conflict, emotional tension, and dysfunctional interaction styles that may have occurred in the parental family can still impact adult relationships, parenting, and conflict resolution. Family Systems Theory also states that the emotional experiences children have in their childhood have a significant impact on their adult marriage and family relationships. Together, these theoretical perspectives help explain the intergenerational effects of childhood parental conflict on parenting behavior and family relationships among married daughters in District Peshawar.

Research Methodology

This study used the qualitative research design to investigate the inter-generational impacts of parental conflict in childhood on parenting styles and conflict resolution strategies of married daughters in District Peshawar. The study was designed using a case study method to explore the phenomenon in the actual social and cultural context. The case study method works well in tackling complex social and psychological problems in depth in a particular context. District Peshawar was selected as the study area because of its traditional family structure, collectivist social system, and strong cultural values related to marriage, parenting, and family relationships. Purposive sampling technique was used to select participants for the study. The participants included married daughters residing in District Peshawar who had experienced parental conflict during childhood and were willing to share their experiences. The selection process ensured that the samples were relevant to the aim of the study and contained participants who were able to give rich and meaningful data on parenting style, emotional experiences, and family conflict management. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which enabled the researcher to maintain focus on the research objectives while also allowing participants the

freedom to discuss their experiences openly. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which is widely used in qualitative research for identifying, organizing, and interpreting patterns and themes within textual data.

Findings and Analysis

Theme 1: Learned Parenting Behaviors from Childhood Experiences

The findings of the study revealed that childhood exposure to parental conflict significantly influenced the parenting behaviors adopted by married daughters in their adult family lives. Most participants reported that the behaviors, communication styles, and emotional interactions they observed during childhood continued to affect their parenting approaches after marriage. Several participants explained that they unconsciously replicated certain parental behaviors they had experienced within their own homes, particularly during stressful family situations. Participants stated that aggressive communication, emotional withdrawal, and strict disciplinary practices observed during childhood sometimes appeared in their interactions with their children. One participant shared, *"Sometimes I react harshly to my children because that is the way conflict and discipline were handled in my childhood home."* Another participant explained, *"I realized that some of my parenting behaviors are similar to my mother's behavior because those patterns remained in my mind since childhood."* These findings suggest that childhood family experiences strongly shape parenting practices and emotional responses among married daughters.

At the same time, many participants reported making conscious efforts to avoid repeating the negative parenting behaviors they had witnessed during childhood. Participants explained that their difficult childhood experiences motivated them to become emotionally supportive and understanding parents. Several participants emphasized that they intentionally tried to maintain peaceful communication and emotional warmth within their families in order to protect their children from emotional distress. One participant stated, *"I always try to speak calmly with my children because I do not want them to experience fear and*

tension like I did." Another participant remarked, *"My childhood taught me how painful family conflict can be, so I try my best to create a peaceful environment for my children."* These findings indicate that although childhood parental conflict may influence adult parenting behavior, some individuals consciously attempt to break negative family patterns through emotional awareness and positive parenting practices.

Theme 2: Parenting Styles Adopted by Married Daughters

The findings further revealed that participants adopted different parenting styles influenced by their childhood experiences and emotional backgrounds. One of the most common parenting approaches identified among participants was protective parenting. Many participants described themselves as emotionally protective and highly concerned about their children's emotional well-being because of the emotional insecurity they had experienced during childhood. Participants explained that they attempted to provide affection, emotional support, and psychological safety to their children in order to prevent them from experiencing fear, anxiety, or emotional neglect. One participant shared, *"I always make sure my children feel emotionally secure because I never experienced emotional comfort in my own childhood."* Another participant explained, *"I try to spend more time listening to my children because I know how painful emotional neglect can be."* These findings suggest that childhood parental conflict may encourage some women to adopt nurturing and emotionally protective parenting behaviors.

However, the study also found that some participants adopted strict and controlling parenting styles within their families. Participants explained that exposure to parental authority, harsh discipline, and emotional tension during childhood influenced their attitudes toward discipline and family control. Some participants believed that strict parenting was necessary for maintaining family order and preventing conflict within the household. One participant remarked, *"I sometimes become strict with my children because I fear that too much freedom may create problems in the family."* Similarly, another participant stated, *"I was raised in a strict environment, so controlling behavior*

became normal for me as a parent." These findings indicate that learned family behaviors and childhood experiences may contribute to the continuation of controlling parenting patterns across generations.

In contrast, several participants demonstrated supportive and emotionally responsive parenting styles shaped by their desire to avoid repeating negative childhood experiences. These participants emphasized open communication, emotional understanding, and mutual respect within family relationships. Participants explained that they encouraged their children to express emotions freely and attempted to resolve family issues through discussion and understanding rather than anger or punishment. One participant shared, *"I want my children to feel emotionally comfortable with me, so I encourage them to talk openly about their feelings."* Another participant stated, *"I try to solve family issues through understanding because I know the emotional damage caused by harsh conflict."* The findings indicate that some married daughters consciously transformed their painful childhood experiences into positive parenting practices focused on emotional support and healthy family relationships.

Theme 3: Conflict Resolution Strategies in Marital Life

The findings revealed that childhood parental conflict significantly influenced participants' conflict resolution strategies within their marital relationships. One of the most common strategies identified among participants was avoidance of confrontation. Many participants explained that they feared arguments and emotional tension because childhood exposure to parental conflict had created emotional anxiety associated with confrontation. As a result, participants often preferred silence, emotional withdrawal, or avoidance during disagreements with their spouses in order to prevent conflict escalation. One participant explained, *"I usually remain silent during arguments because conflict makes me emotionally uncomfortable and anxious."* Another participant stated, *"I avoid discussing sensitive issues because I fear that disagreements may become emotionally damaging."* These findings suggest that childhood experiences of family conflict may contribute to avoidant communication patterns

and emotional suppression within marital relationships.

The study also identified aggressive communication patterns among some participants during marital disagreements. Participants reported that exposure to parental aggression and hostile communication during childhood influenced the way they responded to emotional stress and interpersonal conflict in adulthood. Some participants acknowledged that they occasionally reacted emotionally or aggressively during marital disagreements because such behaviors had become normalized within their childhood family environments. One participant remarked, *"When I become angry, I sometimes speak harshly because that was the communication style I observed growing up."* Another participant shared, *"I realized that my reactions during conflict often resemble the way my parents communicated with each other."* These findings indicate that aggressive communication behaviors learned during childhood may continue to influence adult marital interactions and emotional regulation.

At the same time, several participants demonstrated negotiation and compromise strategies within their marital relationships. These participants explained that their childhood experiences motivated them to handle disagreements more constructively in order to avoid emotional instability within their own families. Participants emphasized communication, patience, and mutual understanding as important strategies for maintaining peaceful marital relationships. One participant stated, *"I always try to solve disagreements calmly because I do not want conflict to damage my family relationships."* Another participant remarked, *"My childhood experiences taught me the importance of compromise and emotional control during conflicts."* These findings suggest that while some participants replicated negative conflict behaviors, others consciously adopted healthier communication and conflict management strategies in adulthood.

Theme 4: Intergenerational Transmission of Family Conflict

The findings demonstrated that family conflict patterns and communication behaviors often transferred across generations through learned emotional responses and interaction styles.

Participants frequently reported that the communication patterns they observed during childhood continued to influence their behavior within their own families. Emotional withdrawal, harsh communication, silence during disagreements, and fear-based responses were commonly identified as repeated family interaction patterns among participants. One participant shared, *"Sometimes I feel that my family behaves in the same way as my parents' family because the same communication patterns continue."* Another participant explained, *"The way my parents handled conflicts influenced how I respond to family problems even today."* These findings support the idea that childhood family experiences significantly shape adult interpersonal behavior and family functioning. The study further revealed that childhood memories of parental conflict continued to influence participants' emotional responses and family relationships in adulthood. Many participants described painful memories of fear, emotional instability, and domestic tension that remained emotionally significant even after marriage. Participants explained that these childhood memories affected their parenting behavior, emotional security, and reactions to marital disagreements. One participant remarked, *"Whenever conflict happens in my home, my childhood memories immediately return and affect my emotions."* Another participant stated, *"The emotional environment of my childhood still influences the way I think and behave within my family."* These findings indicate that unresolved emotional experiences associated with parental conflict may continue to shape family relationships and emotional functioning across generations.

Theme 5: Breaking the Cycle of Conflict

An important finding of the study was that many participants demonstrated emotional awareness and self-control in their efforts to break the cycle of family conflict. Participants explained that their painful childhood experiences increased their awareness regarding the harmful effects of conflict on children's emotional well-being. As a result, several participants consciously attempted to regulate their emotions, avoid aggressive communication, and maintain peaceful family environments within their marriages. One

participant shared, *"I try to control my emotions during disagreements because I do not want my children to experience emotional fear."* Another participant remarked, *"My childhood experiences taught me the importance of patience and emotional control within family relationships."* These findings suggest that emotional awareness may help individuals reduce the repetition of negative family behaviors across generations.

The study also revealed positive parenting adaptation among participants who consciously adopted healthier parenting practices despite experiencing parental conflict during childhood. Many participants emphasized emotional support, open communication, and understanding within their relationships with children. Participants explained that they wanted to provide emotional comfort and psychological security to their children in order to prevent the continuation of emotional trauma across generations. One participant stated, *"I want my children to grow up in a loving and peaceful environment unlike my own childhood."* Another participant explained, *"I always try to solve family problems peacefully because I know how harmful conflict can be for children."* The desire to provide a peaceful family environment emerged as a strong motivational factor influencing participants' parenting behavior and conflict resolution strategies. These findings indicate that despite the long-term emotional effects of childhood parental conflict, many married daughters consciously strive to create healthier family relationships and emotionally supportive home environments for future generations.

Discussion

The findings of the present study strongly support the assumptions of Social Learning Theory proposed by Albert Bandura, which explains that individuals learn behaviors, emotional responses, and communication patterns through observation and imitation. The study revealed that married daughters exposed to parental conflict during childhood often adopted similar parenting behaviors and conflict resolution strategies within their own families. Aggressive communication, emotional withdrawal, avoidance of confrontation, and controlling parenting styles identified among participants reflect the influence of learned family behaviors (Bandura, 1977). However,

some participants also demonstrated conscious efforts to avoid repeating negative family patterns by adopting supportive parenting and peaceful communication practices.

The findings further highlight the intergenerational transmission of family conflict and dysfunctional communication patterns across generations. Participants reported that childhood experiences of parental hostility, emotional instability, and harsh communication continued to influence their marital relationships and parenting behavior in adulthood. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that parenting styles and family interaction patterns are often transferred from one generation to another through learned emotional and social behaviors (Belsky, Conger, & Capaldi, 2009). The study therefore suggests that unresolved childhood experiences may continue to shape emotional functioning and family relationships during adult life.

The study also aligns with previous literature emphasizing the long-term effects of parental conflict on emotional regulation, interpersonal trust, and relationship adjustment among adult children (Cummings & Davies, 2010). Within the sociocultural context of Pakistan, particularly in District Peshawar, traditional gender roles and collectivist family values further influenced participants' parenting behavior and conflict management strategies. Many participants prioritized family harmony, emotional restraint, and avoidance of confrontation due to cultural expectations placed upon women. At the same time, several participants demonstrated emotional resilience and positive parenting adaptation by consciously attempting to provide emotionally supportive and peaceful family environments for their children. These findings indicate that emotional awareness and resilience may help break the intergenerational cycle of family conflict and promote healthier family relationships.

Another important finding of the study is that childhood parental conflict not only influences parenting styles and conflict resolution strategies but also affects emotional attachment and family bonding within adulthood. Many participants reported becoming emotionally cautious and sensitive within family

relationships because of the fear, insecurity, and emotional instability experienced during childhood. These emotional experiences often shaped their communication with spouses and children and influenced their efforts to maintain peaceful family environments. Previous studies similarly indicate that unresolved childhood family conflict may weaken emotional security and affect relationship satisfaction in later life (Davies & Cummings, 1994).

Conclusion

The present study examined the intergenerational effects of childhood parental conflict on parenting styles and conflict resolution strategies among married daughters in District Peshawar. The findings revealed that childhood exposure to parental conflict significantly influenced participants' emotional behavior, parenting practices, communication patterns, and marital relationships during adulthood. Most participants reported that frequent parental arguments, emotional instability, harsh communication, and dysfunctional family interactions experienced during childhood continued to shape their parenting styles and responses to conflict within their own families. The study identified various parenting approaches among participants, including protective parenting, strict and controlling behavior, and supportive emotionally responsive parenting. Similarly, participants demonstrated different conflict resolution strategies such as avoidance, emotional withdrawal, aggressive communication, negotiation, and compromise during marital disagreements.

The study further revealed that parental conflict affects not only emotional well-being during childhood but also long-term family relationships and interpersonal functioning in adulthood. Childhood exposure to dysfunctional family environments influenced participants' emotional regulation, communication styles, and responses to interpersonal conflict within marriage and parenting roles. Many participants unconsciously replicated behaviors observed during childhood, while others consciously attempted to avoid repeating negative family patterns by creating peaceful and emotionally supportive home environments for their

children. The findings therefore demonstrate the intergenerational transmission of family conflict and parenting behaviors across generations. At the same time, the study also highlighted the role of emotional awareness, resilience, and positive adaptation in helping some participants break the cycle of dysfunctional family behavior.

The study contributes significantly to family sociology and behavioral studies by providing an in-depth qualitative understanding of how childhood parental conflict influences parenting styles and conflict resolution strategies among married daughters within the cultural context of Pakistan. Unlike many previous studies focusing primarily on children's emotional outcomes, the present research specifically explored how childhood family experiences continue to shape adult parenting behavior and marital relationships across generations. The findings further contribute to existing literature by emphasizing the role of sociocultural values, gender expectations, and family structures in shaping women's emotional experiences and family interactions. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of emotional support, parenting awareness, and healthy family communication in promoting positive family relationships and reducing the long-term effects of parental conflict on future generations.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

The findings of the present study highlight the importance of introducing parenting education programs aimed at promoting healthy parenting practices and constructive family communication within society. Since childhood exposure to parental conflict significantly influences parenting styles and emotional behavior in adulthood, parents should be educated regarding the psychological and emotional effects of family conflict on children's long-term development. Parenting education initiatives may help parents develop effective communication skills, emotional regulation strategies, and supportive parenting approaches that contribute to healthier family environments. Such programs may also increase awareness regarding the importance of emotional support, positive discipline, and peaceful conflict management within families.

The study also emphasizes the need for family therapy and counseling services to support families experiencing marital conflict and emotional instability. Professional counseling services may assist couples in resolving disagreements constructively, improving communication patterns, and reducing emotional tension within the household. Counseling interventions may further help individuals address unresolved childhood trauma and develop healthier coping strategies within marital and family relationships. In addition, awareness campaigns regarding healthy conflict resolution should be promoted through educational institutions, community organizations, healthcare settings, and media platforms. These initiatives may encourage families to adopt constructive communication, emotional understanding, negotiation, and compromise instead of aggression or emotional withdrawal during conflicts.

The findings further indicate the importance of strengthening emotional support services for women and families, particularly within traditional communities where emotional distress and family conflict often remain unaddressed. Psychological support centers, women's counseling services, and community welfare organizations may help women cope with emotional difficulties associated with childhood trauma and marital stress. Community-based interventions involving social workers, educators, religious scholars, and local leaders may also contribute to improving family well-being and reducing the intergenerational transmission of conflict within families. Such interventions should focus on promoting emotional awareness, peaceful family relationships, healthy parenting, and mental health support in order to create emotionally secure family environments for future generations.

Limitations and Future Research

The present study has certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings. First, the study was limited to a relatively small sample size and focused specifically on married daughters residing in District Peshawar. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to all women or family settings across Pakistan because sociocultural

conditions, family structures, and parenting practices may differ in other regions. Secondly, the study employed a qualitative research design, which provided in-depth understanding of participants' lived experiences but limited the generalizability of the findings to the broader population.

Future research may address these limitations by conducting quantitative and longitudinal studies examining the long-term effects of childhood parental conflict on parenting behavior, marital relationships, and emotional adjustment over different stages of life. Quantitative studies involving larger and more diverse samples may provide broader statistical understanding regarding the relationship between parental conflict and adult family behavior. Longitudinal research may further help examine how emotional experiences and family interaction patterns evolve over time across generations. In addition, future researchers may conduct comparative family research focusing on differences between rural and urban families, different socioeconomic groups, or varying cultural contexts within Pakistan. Such studies may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how sociocultural factors influence parenting styles, conflict resolution strategies, and intergenerational family relationships.

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