



Are your parents deteriorating your mental health?

**The effects of helicopter parenting on self esteem
and anxiety within emerging adults**

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the effects of Helicopter parenting in emerging adults; More importantly, how helicopter parenting contributes to the anxiety and self esteem of an emerging adult. The participants were college students that completed a survey ($n = 138$). The three themes illustrated specific issues for the emerging adults population:

“My parents have had a big influence in my life”

“My parents approval is my biggest concern”

“The expectations of my parents fills me with anxiety”

Through this exploratory study, we can see that emerging adults are influenced by their parents behavior. Therefore, they develop certain behavioral patterns.



Introduction

- Overprotection involves a level of maternal or paternal protection that is excessive, taking into account the developmental level of the child (Thomasgard et al. 1995).
- There is not much evidence as to why parents are overprotective but there is evidence on the effect of this behavior.
- We are interested in seeing how parenting styles contribute to the overall mental health of an emerging adult. For example, we believe that helicopter parenting can cause an emerging adult to have a low self esteem; furthermore, we also believe that it puts emerging adults more at risk of developing anxiety.



Methods

The participants that were used were both males and females. Because the study was aimed at emerging adults, the participants were required to be eighteen years or older. The goal was to recruit 50 participants for each member or 150 participants in total. However, because this study took place in a very unprecedented time, during the COVID-19 outbreak, 150 participants were not gathered. The participants were to be gathered in person via a survey sheet but because of Covid-19 they had to be gathered electronically via email or canvas email. Both survey and informed consent forms were sent electronically. The people who were allowed to participate were asked the following questions: Age, if they attend college, if yes what college they attend, and whether they identify themselves as an adult or not. The three variables used in this study are helicopter parenting, self esteem, and Anxiety.



Measures

- Helicopter parenting - Helicopter Parenting Scale (HPS)
 - 10 item questions
 - Asses what kind of parenting you received (autonomy or helicopter parenting)
 - *Cronbach's a*=.051
- Self Esteem - Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale
 - 10 item scale
 - Scoring ranges between 0-30- scores between 15-25 normal range
 - Will assess how participants feel about themselves
 - *Cronbach's a* = .051
- Anxiety- Beck Anxiety Inventory Scale (BAI)
 - The scale contains 21 items
 - 0-21 indicates low anxiety, 22-35 indicates high anxiety
 - *Cronbach's a* = .051



Participants

N=138

52.2% of the sample was female, 44.9% of the sample was male, and 2.9% preferred not to answer.

$M_{\text{age}}=21.19$ $SD=3.63$

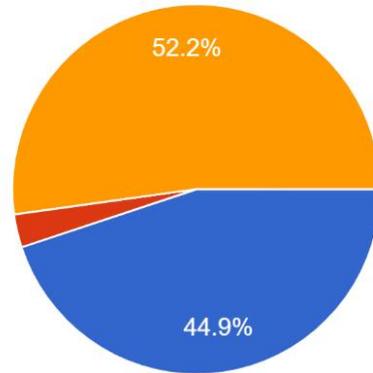
The participants either (54%) considered themselves as an adult , (45.3%) felt sometimes they did and sometimes they did not consider themselves as adults and (0.07%) did not consider themselves as adults



Population

What gender do you identify as?

138 responses



- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Female



Results

Hypotheses: It was hypothesized that emerging adults who experienced helicopter parenting would have a lower self esteem which correlates with anxiety

Our results showed that there is no significant relationship between helicopter parenting and the anxiety an emerging adult contains; therefore, fail to reject the null hypotheses, $r = .15$, $n = 123$, $p = .11$, two tails.

Our results showed that there is a significant relationship between helicopter parenting and the self esteem of an emerging adult; therefore, reject the null hypotheses, $r = .26$, $n = 132$, $p = .03$, two tails.



Table of results

Correlations

| | | parentavrg | selfesteemavrg | anxietyavrg |
|----------------|---------------------|------------|----------------|-------------|
| parentavrg | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .260** | .145 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .003 | .109 |
| | N | 135 | 132 | 123 |
| selfesteemavrg | Pearson Correlation | .260** | 1 | -.159 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | | .082 |
| | N | 132 | 133 | 121 |
| anxietyavrg | Pearson Correlation | .145 | -.159 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .109 | .082 | |
| | N | 123 | 121 | 124 |



Discussion

- The positive relationship between helicopter parenting and an emerging adults self esteem could be due to an emerging adult wanting to meet the expectations of their parents.
- The goal of 150 participants was not reached; furthermore, many participants did not finish the whole survey which left incomplete and missing data.
- It was predicted that self esteem could be a possible mediator variable between helicopter parenting and anxiety; however, since there was no significant relationship between helicopter parenting and anxiety, a mediator test would not be appropriate.



References

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