

## **Cross-sectional study on parenting behaviors and intrapersonal functioning among adolescent students of Tabor Secondary School, Hawassa**

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### **Abstract**

The main objective of the study was to examine the relationship between the parenting behaviors and intrapersonal functioning among adolescent students at Tabor Secondary School, Hawassa. Cross-sectional research design was used to achieve this objective. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select students based on sex and grade level and systematic random sampling technique was used to include respondents in the sample. 353 (182 males and 171 females) students were participated in this study. A demographic questionnaire, parenting behavior scale and adolescent intrapersonal functioning scale were administered. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of Hawassa Tabor secondary school students had high level of intrapersonal functioning. Independent t-test for group mean difference revealed that there was no significant mean difference between male and female students in terms of parental support and parental psychological control. On the other hand, there was significant mean difference between male and female students in terms of parental behavioral control. There was also no significant mean difference between male and female students in terms of intrapersonal functioning. Finally, the result of Pearson correlation indicated that there was a positive relationship between parental support and adolescents' intrapersonal functioning. Parental psychological control had a negative relationship with adolescents' intrapersonal functioning and parental behavioral control had a positive relationship with adolescents' intrapersonal functioning. It was recommended that parents, schools, governments, and non-government organizations better work together to improve intrapersonal functioning of adolescents.

**Keywords:** Adolescent, Intrapersonal Functioning, Parenting Behaviors, Self-Esteem, Perspective Taking

## **Introduction**

Child's socialization research has been progressed along the two traditions investigating the parenting practices or behaviors and parenting styles (Darling and Steinberg, 1993). Researchers asserted that the distinction between parenting practices and styles is useful to explain existing contradictory findings between cultures. Whereas parenting practices were defined as specific behaviors and socialization goals, parenting styles refer to a more global concept that creates an emotional climate including practices, attitudes and parents' belief systems. Therefore, it is assumed that the effects of parenting styles are similar in all cultures, but practices and goals can be varied among the contexts (Darling and Steinberg, 1993).

As Maccoby and Martin (1983) described, parental support was found to be related to an internal locus of control, creativity, cognitive development and self-esteem even when other parenting variables controlled. They studied on parental support yielded that supported children have fewer psychological and physical symptoms during adolescence. Additionally, lack of parental support in the early years predicted later internalized distress, substance use and abuse (Wills and Cleary, 1996). It was also found that parental support predicts academic achievement and self-esteem. Furthermore, the link between parental support and adjustment was found to be consistent after controlling for psychological and behavioral control. However, the effect of parental support on academic achievement was found to decrease after entering the psychological and behavioral control as independent predictors (Darling and Steinberg, 1993).

Parental monitoring is the second parental dimension of interest. Monitoring or behavioral control is usually understood as adequate behavioral regulation and measured in terms of supervision, monitoring, keeping an eye on things, rule-setting and other forms of behavioral control. Clear and consistent expectations and limit-setting are believed to foster internalization of rules and the development of self-efficacy (Flammer, 1995).

As Barber (1996) defined psychological control, it is socialization pressure that is nonresponsive to the child's emotional and psychological needs (but instead) stifles independent expression and autonomy. Specifically, psychological control refers to parental behaviors that are intrusive and manipulative of children's thoughts, feelings, and attachments to parents.

According to Barber (2003), developmental theory suggests that adolescent is characterized by at least two fundamental domains of adolescent functioning: the intrapersonal and interpersonal. Competent functioning is both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains which are used as a

marker of successful development and preparation for advancement to the challenges yet to come in the adult years. Barber also suggested that competent intrapersonal functioning emerges with the development of two interrelated components of identity formation: the consolidation of self and the self's increasing awareness of others. The same author indicated that a basic of adolescence is the establishment of an autonomous self-concept that recognizes a self in the past, present and future. Further, with increased cognitive and emotional capacities coincident with adolescence, youth develop the capacity to recognize others, understand their differences, and assume their perspectives during social interaction. These skills or attributes are critical to successful navigation of the many interactions adolescents will encounter in the educational, occupational, romantic and family realms of life. Therefore, one way to examine intrapersonal adolescent functioning is to assess adolescent feelings or satisfaction with self and the degree to which adolescents have the capacity to focus outside of self on to others. In the present study, this domain is labeled as intrapersonal functioning, and assessed specifically by measures of self-esteem and perspective taking.

One of the important concepts during adolescence is self-esteem and it is considered as basic to understand the adolescent's behavior. According to Coopersmith (1967), self-esteem consists of the evaluation that an individual makes and upholds about himself/herself. Throughout the lifespan, self-esteem is influenced by interpersonal relationships in a variety of contexts of which the parent-adolescent relationship holds a significant role. For instance, Joubert (1991) examined the relationships that fathers' and mothers' interactive disciplinary behaviors have with college students.

An essential social cognitive skill for adolescents' understanding of social group differences is social perspective taking, which refers to the uniquely human capacity to identify, assume, and coordinate multiple and often conflicting points of view. Often described as the capacity to "step into someone else's shoes", social perspective taking is a critical social cognitive mechanism by which humans structure and make sense of the social world (Martin et al., 2008). Parental support was positively related to intrapersonal functioning, parental psychological control was negatively related to intrapersonal functioning and parental behavioral control was positively related to intrapersonal functioning (Xia, 2011).

Parents are believed to be important socializing agents in the early years of our lives, and results from previous studies indicate that parental socialization practices influence children's school

adjustment. Although children become more independent from their parents during adolescence, it is possible that parental socialization practices can also influence positive functioning of students in late adolescence. However, few studies have addressed this issue, thus it is unclear as to whether the relationship with parents remains important for their intra-personal functioning or not (Studsrød and Bru, 2009).

The reasons that motivated the researchers to conduct this study were; firstly, a limited body of research has investigated all three parenting behaviors in relation to adolescent development (Galambos et al., 2003). Further, previous researches have aggregated parenting behavior into parenting styles (Barber and Olsen, 2004). Therefore, this research disaggregated parenting behavior from parenting style. Secondly, to address the present situation of Ethiopian adolescents, which are a large number of adolescents, are exposed to various adjustment problem and maladaptive behaviors, beside this adolescents are not getting the required support from their family. As a result, by studying the relationship between parenting behavior and adolescent intra-personal functioning, the researchers tried to study the relationship between parenting behaviors on adolescents intra-personal functioning and recommended to the concerned body on how to improve the intra-personal functioning of adolescents, in order to reduce adolescents' adjustment problem and promote family support. Finally, this study also aims to bridge the research gap by exploring the relative and unique influence of parental support, behavioral control and psychological control on critical aspects of adolescents' intra-personal functioning. For instance, a research conducted by Tadesse (2015) in measuring interpersonal and intrapersonal functioning did not include a measure of perspective taking which has an indispensable contribution for adolescents' intra-personal functioning. Therefore, the researchers believed that this study could make a bridge on the influence of the abovementioned variables in measuring of adolescent intra-personal functioning. Therefore, the objective of the study was to examine the relationship between the parenting behaviors and intrapersonal functioning among adolescent students at Tabor Secondary School, Hawassa.

#### Operational definition

Adolescent: it refers to participants of Tabour Secondary School students within the chronological age range of 13 to 18 years, which corresponds to the period of adolescence.

**Intrapersonal Functioning:** it refers to adolescent feelings or satisfaction with self and the degree to which adolescents have the capacity to focus outside of self on to others. Self-esteem and perspective taking are intrapersonal functioning of adolescents for the purpose of this study.

**Perspective taking:** it refers to the ability to perceive and understand another's point of view.

**Self-esteem:** is defined as the value or worth placed on the self and behavior or it is the way in which how people perceive and value themselves.

**Parental behavioral control:** involves managing adolescent behavior and activities in an attempt to regulate their behavior and provides them with guidance for appropriate social behavior and conduct.

**Parental psychological control:** is characteristic of parents who pressure their children to behave and think in accordance with parental goals and norms through internally controlling and manipulative means, such as: guilt-induction, shaming, and love withdrawal. **Parental Support:** is generally conceptualized as the level of acceptance or warmth that parents express toward their children.

**Parenting behavior:** it is used to conceptualize parent-adolescent relationships, which includes adolescent perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' psychological control, support, and behavioral control

## **Methodology**

### **Design of the study**

A cross-sectional research design was used to examine the relationship between parenting behavior on adolescents' intra-personal functioning. In a cross-sectional study, data were collected at a single point in time to examine the relationship between the variables of interest.

### **Population of the study**

The population from which the sample of this study was obtained is Tabor Secondary School students. The target population from which the sample participants was selected from all sections of grade nine students (24 sections), and grade ten students (26 sections), with total population of 2993 (1547 males and 1446 females).

### **Sample size and sampling technique**

The sample size of this research was determined by using Slovin's formula (Ariola, 2006) that is,

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \text{ Where, } n = \text{sample size}$$

$N$  = population and  $e = 0.05$  which is level of precision with 95% confidence interval.

Hence using this formula with significance level  $p = 0.05$  and population size  $N = 2993$  yields

$$n = \frac{2993}{1+2993(0.05)^2} = 352.84 \approx 353$$

Therefore, the total sample sizes who take part in this study were 353.

To select participants, stratified random sampling technique was served as the basis for selecting samples from the target population based on sex and grade level. This sampling technique is important to select both males and females equally based on their proportion. Firstly, 10 sections (five sections from grade nine and five sections from grade ten) were selected using systematic random sampling technique from the existing 50 sections (as shown in the Table 1). To determine the class size based on systematic random sampling technique was implemented and the  $K^{\text{th}}$  interval was fixed from the ratio of the class size of 50 (fifty) sections (i.e.  $N = 50$ ) to the sample class (i.e.  $n = 10$ ), where

$$K = \frac{N}{n} = \frac{50}{10} = 5$$

Therefore, every fifth section was taken as sample class.

Following this, to include respondents in the sample, systematic random sampling technique was implemented and the  $K^{\text{th}}$  interval was fixed from the ratio of the population size of 10 section (i.e.  $N = 650$ ) to the sample size (i.e.  $n = 353$ ), where

$$K = \frac{N}{n} = \frac{650}{353} = 1.84 \approx 2$$

Therefore, the researcher used a class list of 10 section students as a sample frame by putting male and female students separately and every 2<sup>nd</sup> name on the class list of each section was selected beginning from the 1<sup>st</sup> participant, until the expected numbers of students were obtained from each grade level. Finally, 353 (182 male and 171 female) students were included in the sample as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Number of participants selected by grade level and sex

Grade	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
No of students in each grade level	1600 F = 871 M = 729	1393 F = 575 M = 818
Sample size of students by grade level	189	164
Sample size by sex	F = 103 M = 86	F = 68 M = 96

NB:

Sample drawn based on grade level =  $\frac{\text{Number of students in each grade level}}{\text{total number of students(9-10)of the school}} \times \text{total sample size}$

Sample drawn based on sex =  $\frac{\text{Number of female students in each grade level}}{\text{Total number of students in each grade level}} \times \text{sample size of each grade}$

#### Data collection instruments

This study involved quantitative approaches of data collection. These instruments were structured questionnaires in the form of self-inventory reports in order to gain a comprehensive input which reflects the right feeling of respondents.

#### Demographic questionnaire

The self-developed instrument for measuring general information of the participants consists of four items which provide information about sex and grade level.

#### Measure of parenting behaviors and adolescents intrapersonal functioning

Adolescent students' filled in the self-report data by way of school level administered questionnaires. All respondents were separately reported their perceptions of both their mothers and their fathers on 23 paired items used to measure parenting behaviors. Respondents who reported as living with their male and female guardians or relatives were considered

correspondingly for their parents. Adolescents also reported to 15 intrapersonal functioning (self-esteem 10 and perspective taking 5 items) measures relating to their own perceptions.

These standardized scales are adopted from the below listed authors in English version. In order to be more understandable and to gain reliable data the scales were translated in to Amharic version, which is a local language of the participants.

Parental support: it was measured using the 10-item acceptance subscale from the revised Child Report of Parent Behavior Inventory (CRPBI) (Schaefer, 1965). Subjects responded on a 3-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 “not describe her (him)” to 3 “a lot describe her (him)” as to how well items described their mothers and fathers.

Parental psychological control: it was measured by 8-item Psychological Control Scale-Youth Self-Report (PCS-YSR) (Barber, 1996). Subjects responded on a 3-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 “not describe her (him)” to 3 “a lot describe her (him)” as to how well items described their mothers and fathers.

Parental behavioral control: A 5-item scale often used in family research with adolescents, was used to measure parental behavior (Barber, 1996). Students responded on a 3-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 “doesn't know” to 3 “knows a lot” relative to how much their parents “really know” Higher scores indicated higher levels of monitoring.

Intrapersonal functioning: are internal skills, perceptions and attitudes that occur within a person's own mind that are: Self-esteem: Participants responded to a 10 item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (Rosenberg, 1989). Response options ranging from 1 “Strongly disagree” to 5 “Strongly agree”. Relevant items were reverse-coded so that the scale represents low to high self-esteem. Perspective taking: Participants responded to a 5-item sub-scale (Davis, 1996). Response options range from 1 ‘Does not describe me well’ to 5 ‘Describes me very well’.

#### Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to ensure that whether the instruments are suitable to be used within the school's context and in order to establish their reliability. The questionnaire was administered to a group of 50 grade nine and ten students who were not involved in the main study. The pilot participants was selected based on gender proportions, which is 24 females and 26 males and the piloting process took 30 - 40 minutes to be filled in by the students.

To test the reliability, SPSS version 20 was used and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was computed for each scale as listed in Table (2).



Table 2. Reliability comparison of original and present study measures

Behavior and domain	Scale	Original Cronbach alpha	Present study Cronbach alpha
Parenting behaviors	Maternal support	0.85	0.83
	Paternal support	0.86	0.89
	Maternal psychological control	0.72	0.76
	paternal psychological control	0.71	0.78
	Maternal behavioral control	0.81	0.82
	Paternal behavioral control	0.83	0.73
Intrapersonal functioning domains	Self esteem	0.83	0.87
	Perspective taking	0.85	0.94

### Data analysis

The data collected using the questionnaires were organized and analyzed in line with the objective of the study. The data was cleaned and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. In this process, descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies, percentage, mean, standard deviation) of the students was employed to describe and present demographic characteristics of the participants such as: sex, age, grade level, current living condition and level of intra-personal functioning of adolescent students as well as parenting behaviors and adolescent self-esteem and perspective taking. Independent samples T-test was computed to test whether there is a significant mean difference between male and female students in parenting behaviors and intra-personal functioning. In order to measure the relationship between parenting behaviors and adolescents' intra-personal functioning Pearson product moment correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) was computed.

## Results

### Demographic characteristics of respondents

This section gives the demographic information of 353 students from Tabor Secondary Schools participated in the study. The demographic characteristics of respondents were analyzed based on sex and grade level and presented below in Table (3). It indicated that out of the total

respondents male students were 182 (51.6 %) and female students were 171 (48.4%). The difference between the percentages of the two sexes was only 3.2%, reflected almost equal representation of the views of both boys and girls (Table 3).

Regarding with grade levels of the students 189 (53.5%) were grade nine students and 164 (46.5%) were grade ten students.

Table 3. Demographic characteristics of respondents

Grade level	Sex			Percentage
	Male	Female	Total	
9 <sup>th</sup>	86	103	189	53.5
10 <sup>th</sup>	96	68	164	46.5
Total	182	171	353	100
Percentage	51.6	48.4	100	

#### Level of adolescents intra-personal functioning

To determine the level of adolescents intra-personal functioning, firstly mean score of the domains of intra-personal functioning is computed i.e. 3.8, 3.5, and 3.7, for self-esteem, perspective taking, and average intrapersonal functioning, respectively. To determine domains (Self-esteem and Perspective Taking) of intra-personal functioning as high or low, mean split was used, that is those who scored a certain score above the mean of average intra-personal functioning were considered as high level in the domains as well as average intra-personal functioning and those who scored a certain score below the mean were considered as having low level in the domains as well as in average intra-personal functioning. Therefore, the frequency count and percentage value was computed for the total sample respondents. Finally, the level of adolescents overall intrapersonal functioning was computed in Table (4).

Table 4. Level of adolescent’s intrapersonal functioning summary

Variables	High level		Low level		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
SE	193	54.7	160	45.3	353	100
PT	166	47	187	53	353	100
INTRA-PER	198	56.1	155	43.9	353	100

\*SE= Self-esteem, PT= Perspective Taking, INTRA-PER = Intrapersonal

As it is indicated in Table (4), 193 (54.7%) of students had high self-esteem and the rest 160 (45.3%) of students had low self-esteem, 166 (47%) and 187 (53%) of students had high and low level of perspective taking respectively, 198 (56.1%) and 155 (43.9%) of students had high and low level of intrapersonal functioning respectively. Therefore, the majority of adolescent students had high level in their intrapersonal functioning even though a considerable amount of students experienced low intrapersonal functioning.

#### Adolescent sex differences in terms of parenting behaviors

In order to compare sex differences in parenting behaviors (i.e. parental support, parental psychological control and parental behavioral control) independent sample t-test was conducted.

In Table 5, using an alpha level of 0.05, an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the parental support scores for males and females. The examination of parental support score indicated that there was no significant differences in scores for males ( $M = 2.33$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ ) and females ( $M = 2.36$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ ;  $t(351) = -0.474$ ,  $p = 0.636$ , two-tailed). The 95% confidence interval for parental support ranged from -0.11 to 0.07. Similarly, the examination of parental psychological control score indicated that there was no significant differences in scores for males ( $M = 1.72$ ,  $SD = 0.43$ ) and females ( $M = 1.68$ ,  $SD = 0.36$ ;  $t(347.576) = 1.072$ ,  $p = 0.285$ , two-tailed). The 95% confidence interval (CI) for parental psychological control ranged from -0.04 to 0.13.

Table 5. Independent Sample t-test between male and female respondents regarding parenting Behaviors

Parenting Behaviors	Sex						95% CI for MD	t	df
	Male			Female					
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n			
Parental support	2.33	.43	182	2.36	.43	171	-.11- .07	-0.474	351
Parental psychological control	1.72	.43	182	1.68	.36	171	-.04- - .13	1.072	347.576
Parental behavioral control	2.33	.51	182	2.48	.49	171	-.26- - .05	-2.869	351

Therefore, male and female respondents were not different to each other in parental support and parental psychological control. This implied that being male or female may not have significant influence on getting parental support such as nurturance, warmth and affection and parental psychological control which forces adolescents through internal compulsion to engage in the requested behavior.

In contrary, the examination of parental behavioral control score indicated that there was significant differences in scores for males (M = 2.33, SD = 0.51) and females (M = 2.48, SD = 0.49;  $t(351) = -2.869, p = 0.004$ , two-tailed). The magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -0.15, 95% CI: ranged from -0.26 to -0.05) was small (eta squared = 0.03). This indicated that female students had higher parental behavioral control than that of male students. Therefore, this implied that female adolescents had more experienced adequate behavioral regulation such as supervision, monitoring, rule setting and other forms of behavioral control than their male counterparts.

#### Adolescent sex differences in terms of intra-personal functioning

Independent-sample t-tests were conducted to compare intra-personal functioning of adolescents' scores for males and females.

Table 6. Independent sample t-test between male and female respondents regarding intra-personal functioning

Intra-personal Functioning	Male			Female			95% CI for MD		Sig	t	df
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n					
SE	3.85	.79	182	3.89	.67	171	-.19, .11		0.603	-.520	347.59
PT	3.44	.72	182	3.48	.83	171	-.21, .12	-	0.584	-.549	336.82
INTRAP	3.71	.66	182	3.75	.62	171	-.17, .09		.541	-.613	351

In Table (6), using an alpha level of 0.05, an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the intra-personal functioning scores for males and females. The examination of average intra-personal functioning score indicated that there was no significant differences in scores for males ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ) and females ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ );  $t(351) = -.613$ ,  $p = 0.541$ , two-tailed). The 95% confidence interval for intra-personal functioning is ranged from -0.17 to 0.09. This indicated that males and females students were not different from each other in their average intra-personal functioning.

Similarly, the examinations of both domains of adolescent average intra-personal functioning indicated that there was no significant differences in scores for males and females in terms of self-esteem, and perspective taking (i.e.  $t(347.595) = -0.520$ ,  $p = 0.603$ ;  $t(336.820) = -0.549$ ,  $p = 0.584$ ) respectively.

#### Relationship between parenting behaviors and intra-personal functioning of adolescents

The relationship between parenting behaviors and domains of intrapersonal functioning among adolescents of Tabor Secondary School students was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient as shown in Table (7).

Table 7. Pearson product correlation between parenting behaviors and domains of adolescent intra-personal functioning (N=353)

Variables	Statistics	PS	PPC	PBC	SE	PT
PS	Pearson	1	-.570**	.665**	.711**	.406**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					
PPC	Pearson	1	-.385**	-.600**	-.317**	-.317**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					
PBC	Pearson	1	.540**	.258**	.258**	.258**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					
SE	Pearson	1	.440**	.440**	.440**	.440**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					
PT	Pearson	1	.440**	.440**	.440**	.440**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N					

\*PS = Parental Support, PPC = Parental psychological control, PBC= Parental behavioral control, SE= Self-esteem, PT= Perspective Taking

As it is indicated in Table (7), there is statistically significant and high positive relationship between parental support and self-esteem ( $r = 0.711, p < 0.01$ ). Parental psychological control has significant and moderate negative relationship with self-esteem ( $r = -.600, p < 0.01$ ). Parental behavioral control has significant and moderate positive relationship with self-esteem ( $r = 0.540, p < 0.01$ ).

There is statistically significant and low positive relationship between parental support and perspective taking ( $r = 0.406, p < 0.01$ ). Parental psychological control has significant and low negative relationship with perspective taking ( $r = -.317, p < 0.01$ ). Parental behavioral control has a significant and low positive relationship with perspective taking ( $r = 0.258, p < 0.01$ ) (Table 7).

Table 8. Pearson product correlation between parenting behaviors and adolescent intra-personal functioning (N= 353)

Variables	Statistics	PS	PPC	PBC	INTRA-P
PS	Pearson	1	-.570**	.665**	.701**
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
PPC	Pearson	1	-.385**	.000	.000
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
PBC	Pearson	1	.000	.000	.512**
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
INTRA-P	Pearson	1	.000	.000	.512**
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				

\*PS = Parental Support, PPC = Parental psychological control, PBC= Parental behavioral control, INTRA-P = Intra-personal.

There is statistically significant and high positive relationship between parental support and intrapersonal functioning ( $r = 0.701, p < 0.01$ ). Parental psychological control has significant and moderate negative relationship with adolescent intrapersonal functioning (i.e.  $r = -0.581, p < 0.01$ ). Parental behavioral control has significant and moderate positive relationship with adolescent intrapersonal functioning ( $r = 0.512, p < 0.01$ ) (Table 8).

## **Discussion**

In this section, the results presented in the previous section are discussed. Explanations and provided reasons for obtained results are forwarded. The results are also compared with similar previous research findings.

### Level of intrapersonal functioning of adolescents

Majority of adolescent students (56.1%) had high level in their intrapersonal functioning even though a considerable amount of students experienced low intrapersonal functioning. Consistent with the finding of Tadesse (2015), in measuring status of adolescent positive (Intra and Interpersonal) functioning among Entoto Secondary School students, he found that majority which is 51.10% of students had high positive functioning.

### Adolescents sex difference in terms of parenting behaviors

Among the three parenting behaviors, the computed independent sample t-test value indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female students in terms of parental support and parental psychological control of adolescents. Therefore, in the study area context the result revealed that in secondary school male and female students receive similar support and psychological control from their parents. According to the findings of Tadesse (2015), females receive more parental affection and are more verbally interactive in general with parents than males are. Parent daughter relationships are characterized by greater warmth and confidence in trustworthiness and truthfulness, greater reluctance to punish and greater encouragement of the daughter to reflect on life, which is not consistent with the present study.

On the contrary, regarding parental behavioral control of adolescents, the current study revealed that there was statistically significant difference between male and female students in parenting behavioral control. Therefore, female students had relatively high parental behavioral control than that of male students. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small.

In the study area context, it can be argued that this gender difference in parental behavioral control might have resulted from the cultural system of Ethiopian society which prohibits female students to spend their free time outside home especially during the night, this is due to the fact that the society believes that females are vulnerable to different forms of physical and psychosocial attacks. On the other hand, this gender disparity might be attributed to the influence of societal expectation. Societal expectation simply to mean socially constructed gender roles,



perceive spending time outside home as a male role, may appear to control more females and influence girls to stay home most of their time. To sum up, the result of independent sample t-test concerning the difference between male and female students in parental behavioral control revealed that female students more experienced supervision, monitoring, rule setting and other forms of behavioral control than male students.

#### Adolescents sex difference in terms of intrapersonal functioning

The examination of intra-personal functioning score indicated that there was no significant difference in scores for males and females. This indicated that males and females students were not different to each other in their average intra-personal functioning. Similarly, the examinations of both domains of adolescent average intra-personal functioning indicated that there was no significant difference in scores for males and females in terms of self-esteem, and perspective taking. The present finding is not consistent with other finding like Quatman and Watson (2001) that investigated gender differences in global self-esteem among secondary school students. Their study showed that boys achieved higher in global self-esteem scores than girls did. Regarding with social perspective, the current study depicted that there was no statistical significant difference between male and female students in adolescents' perspective taking. This goes along with study by Selman (2003) and Quintana (1998), who did not report significant differences among male and female.

#### Relationship between parenting behavior and intrapersonal functioning of adolescents

The study examined the relationship between parenting behaviors and adolescents' intrapersonal functioning. There is statistically significant and positive relationship between parental support and intrapersonal functioning. This means, as support from parents increases intrapersonal functioning of adolescents also increases. Therefore, supporting behavior of parents like nurturance, warmth and showing affection more likely to promote adolescents intrapersonal functioning. This result is consistent with results of previous finding by Tadesse (2015), which concluded that parental support and intrapersonal functioning are positively related.

The second dimension of parenting behaviors which is parental psychological control has significant and moderate negative relationship with adolescent intrapersonal functioning. This indicates that the more adolescents reported intrusion or manipulative behaviors from their parents, the more likely their level of self-esteem as well as their perception and understanding of

another's point of view tendency is negatively affected. Self-determination theory supports the current research finding which explains that children who experience parental psychological control would thus feel an internal compulsion to engage in the requested behavior, while simultaneously wanting to avoid the behavior altogether. Such an internally conflicting (and hence controlled) regulation is hypothesized to create a vulnerability to maladaptive patterns of development (Ryan et al., 2006).

The third dimension of parenting behaviors which is parental behavioral control has a significant and moderate positive relationship with adolescent intrapersonal functioning. This indicates that parents who manage their adolescents' behavior or activities and provide them with appropriate social behavior and conduct are more likely to make their adolescents to experience high level of self-esteem and perspective taking. The current study is consistent with Flammer (1995), which indicated that parental behavioral control, clear and consistent expectations and limit-setting are believed to foster internalization of rules and the development of self-esteem.

## **Conclusion**

Students' high level of intrapersonal functioning helps them to experience positive competencies, emotions, feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and activities regarding their own perception, and ability to understand others' point of view. Being male or female may not have significant influence on getting parental nurturance, warmth and affection as well as in parental psychological control which is forcing adolescents through internal compulsion to engage in the requested behavior. But, there is statistically significant gender difference in parental behavioral control. Thus, to be female implies having a high level of behavioral control from their parents. Therefore, female students more experienced supervision, monitoring, rule setting and other forms of behavioral control than their male counterparts. Being male and female may not have a significant difference to experience better intra-personal functioning. The relationship between parental support and intrapersonal functioning implied that supporting adolescents emotionally and practically through the provision of nurturance, warmth and affection leads to better adolescent intra-personal functioning. Parents that imposed pressure on their children to behave and think through internally controlling and manipulative means (parental goals), most likely result in adolescents' low level of intra-personal functioning. Parents, who manage their adolescents' behavior or activities and provide them with appropriate social behavior and conduct were more likely to make their adolescents to experience a high level of intra-personal functioning.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the major findings of the study, the researchers would like to recommend the following points:

- School guidance and counselors are recommended to develop effective strategies to improve intra-personal functioning of adolescents such as: training provision of life skills and arranging peer education programs; as well as provide counseling service for students with a low level of intra-personal functioning and who manifest adjustment problems;
- Concerned bodies especially the Ministry of youth and sport and ministry of education need to arrange training for school teachers and counselors that would help them to support students on their gap of intra-personal functioning;
- As intra-personal functioning play a vital role in the academic and social life of adolescents; parents, schools and non-government organizations would be more effective to work together in designing practical strategies to improve intra-personal functioning of adolescents;
- Mass-medias are recommended to give much emphasis on family and incorporate parenting practices issues in their programs, which can raise awareness of parents on quality parenting;
- Further studies need to be conducted since there is lack of research findings on the relationship between parenting behaviors and different components of intra-personal functioning of adolescent students in the context of the country.

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